

Krzysztof Zajas

Absent Culture

The Case of Polish Livonia

Polish Studies - Transdisciplinary Perspectives

Edited by Krzysztof Zajas / Jaroslaw Fazan



PETER LANG
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Volume 4



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Introduction

The Re-creation of a Nonexistent Land

1. Theses on Absence

This book must start with a simple and troubling statement: Polish Livonia does not exist. In Polish writing and scholarship spanning over four and a half centuries, a stubborn seeker will find only a few volumes containing the term “Livonia” in the title (and the referent will not always be Polish Livonia). Reading these volumes will offer our reader a vague concept of their subject—one filled with hidden tensions, obstinate omissions and local patriots’ appeals which summon the world to notice this exotic land, located in the borderlands of the borderlands. Our seeker will not find a separate chapter called “Polish Livonia”¹ in any of the major contemporary scholarly works on Polish history, and he will notice that the Livonian Wars described in textbooks apparently take place in an unspecified region between Vilnius, Riga and Tartu. Gustaw Manteuffel, the most eminent historian of the Livonian lands, and author of countless historical, ethnographic, travel-related, and cultural publications, does not figure in the contemporary *Leksykon historii Polski* [Lexicon of Polish History] at all,² and none of his works have been reprinted in the last hundred years. Some fundamentally important works concerning the history and culture of Livonia have remained in manuscript form, and the possibility of their publication appears increasingly remote.³ One could keep multiplying such examples, but instead it should suffice to mention that even very erudite scholars

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- 1 Among significant exceptions here there are works like Andrzej Chwalba’s *Historia Polski 1795–1918* [The History of Poland, 1795–1918] (Krakow: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2000), in which an entire chapter is dedicated to the Polish episode in the history of old Latvia; it is, however, marked by a certain conceptual confusion.
 - 2 See Michał Czajka, Marcin Kamler, and Witold Sienkiewicz, *Leksykon historii Polski* [Lexicon of Polish History] (Warsaw: Wiedza Powszechna, 1995).
 - 3 See, for example, Kazimierz Konstanty Broel-Plater, “Dzieje Królestwa Polskiego za Stanisława Augusta” [The History of the Polish Kingdom under the Reign of Stanisław August Poniatowski], n.d. (this work, which seems to have been lost, consisted of 16 manuscript volumes!); Michał Świerzbiniński, “Martyrologia Infant Polkich” [The Martyrology of Polish Livonia] (Warsaw, 1937), 57, PAN Archive.

tend to associate Livonia exclusively with an anecdote from Henryk Sienkiewicz's *Trylogia* [Trilogy]; indeed, a fusion of two separate anecdotes often takes place, and in the geo-historical imagination of some humanities scholars there is an inclination to locate Livonia in the Netherlands.⁴ Its enigmatic existence is well-illustrated by toponomastic variations, since—depending on the time period, political configuration, and cultural orientation of the author—this region has been given a wide variety of designations: Liwonia, Livonia australis, Southern Livonia, Liflandia (Lyfflandya), the Voivodeship (Duchy) of Livonia, Vitebsk Governorate, Daugava Land, Western Baltic Colony, Livonian Borderlands, Latgale, and Eastern Latvia. And these are only the terms that appear in Polish-language texts. Vagueness of concepts blurs the contours of being.

Our second statement is a consequence of the first, and it is simultaneously an attempt to deny it: Polish Livonia has been attempting to come into existence. The most easily perceptible common feature, the link which connects Livonian writings which are otherwise very diverse, is the intention to represent Livonia as a self-subsistent and a politically, historically, and culturally autonomous land whose “otherness” derives from the specific pedigree of the local aristocracy (Polonized German knights) and the privileges granted to Livonians in the so-called *Pacta Subjectionis*, and, above all, in the *Privilegium Sigismundi Augusti* of King Sigismundus II Augustus. It is also said to derive from fervent defense of the Catholic faith, and from adamant patriotism, which went hand in hand with sentimental admiration of local landscapes. The obstinate process of differentiation observable in these texts takes on truly dramatic proportions when contrasted with the tendency to simply omit Livonia as an inconvenient and somewhat embarrassing chapter of Polish history. This tendency includes not only certain selection biases among historians who could be seen as

4 The saying about “selling Livonia” has two sources. In the third volume of Sienkiewicz's *Potop* [The Deluge], when the Swedish army lays siege to Zamość, Sir Zagłoba proposes that the town's prefect should, in return for the Lublin Voivodeship which had already been returned to him (and where he already ruled), offer Carl Gustav the Netherlands, which Sweden fought for in vain during the Thirty Years' War (Henryk Sienkiewicz, *Potop* [The Deluge], vol. 3, chap. 3). In another place the same Zagłoba demands Livonia and money from the Swedes, this time in exchange for peace: “Let them give up Livonia and give us their fortunes, and we shall leave them in peace.” (Ibid., chap. 7). In both cases Livonia is an object of bargaining, a commodity to be exchanged; it does not have a specified value, and the transaction itself has suspect and caricature-like character.

submissive to various political interests,⁵ but also the attitude commonly encountered among politically-inclined gentry—deputies to the *sejm* [parliament] of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 17th and 18th centuries—who clearly demonstrated their *desinteressement* regarding the Livonians. Ignorance in this matter existed among both external observers, and inhabitants of the region themselves, as Jan August Hylzen put it in emphatic and charmingly flowery words:

It is not on account of the rashness of fleeting private considerations, from which my mind and my condition remain far removed, but specifically for the sake of the public good, for the honor of the Livonian Nation, for the proof and confirmation of the laws and prerogatives which serve the Citizens who live there, that as a Livonian, I present Livonia before the Poles in Polish, in a comprehensive characterization. Because I have observed that in political conversations, diverse as they happen to be, when Livonia's revolutions and its form of government and laws are brought up—both the old form from the Teutonic era and the mediocre one from after the Union with the Commonwealth—not only otherwise good men from among the Commonwealth's Citizenry, but even native Livonians themselves often stumble, or fall altogether silent.⁶

Gustaw Manteuffel fought for the existence of this land in a similar spirit when he accused Poles that they knew less about Livonia than about Sumatra or Borneo. It is worth listening to his grievances because they illustrate the power of the complexes of the local intelligentsia—complexes which fed on a profound sense of injustice and rejection:

5 This is how one should understand, for example, Warsaw historians' resistance against Gustaw Manteuffel's *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands]; for a contemporary edition see Gustaw Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych Inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], ed. Krzysztof Zajac (Krakow: Universitas, 2007). This work was accused of excessive bias and it was initially prevented from being published in its entirety. I discuss this more extensively in Chapter 4: "Project Livonia."

6 Jan August Hylzen, *Inflanty w dawnych swych i wielorakich aż do naszego wieku dziejach i rewolucjach; z wywodem godności i starożytności Szlachty tamecznej, tudzież praw i wolności z dawna i teraz jej służących zebrane i Polskiemu światu do wiadomości w Ojczystym języku podane* [Livonia in its old and diverse history and revolutions, extending up to our own era; with proofs of the dignity and immemorial history of the local Aristocracy, and with laws which served the gentry of old and still serve them today, collected and presented to the Polish world in its Native language] (Vilnius: Drukarnia Akademicka, 1750), A2. To make reading easier, I use contemporary transcriptions of this and other citations from older Polish literature; I respect, however, the authors' intentions in their use of small and capital letters. Contemporary English is used in the translated version of the titles.

It would seem that these borderlands, initially hidden under the protective wings of the Commonwealth, stained with much Polish blood and blood of their own sons who turned the tide of victory in our favor, or themselves routed our enemies at Kirchholm, Goldynga, etc.—that these lands which, at least in small part, have been inhabited by Poles, should interest us greatly. Yet one must confess that we have always sinned by a more particular kind of indifference which is difficult to explain when talking about the fate of the inhabitants of the eastern shores of the Baltic; we thereby continue, in a sense, the traditional politics of our forefathers who, having started a war with their northern neighbor, conducted it with unforgivable slothfulness, and in the end left the Livonians, who were exhausted by the struggle that lasted many years, to the mercy of the happy and vital invaders.⁷

According to the author, the political mistake of his contemporaries consists in making it possible for the partitioning powers to fight over Livonia, as the Commonwealth had done three centuries earlier, when it had turned its attention away from the Baltic countries to the south—an action diligently exploited by Sweden and Moscow. Besides tones of lament, in this fragment one can easily discern traces of the split identity of the Livonians, who admittedly place themselves under the “wings of the Commonwealth” but whose blood is not Polish but “their own” (that is “local,” knightly-Teutonic as one could surmise, but essentially also heeding from elsewhere). Manteuffel, who came from the aristocracy, which settled in Livonia in the 18th century, speaks of them in the third person, that is, in the company of “his own,” he is the spokesman of “others.” These others are not, however, foreigners since they are fighting in their own land. Regional identity is thus subjected to turbulence in the encounter with national identity. Manteuffel’s “we” stands against the Baltic “they,” and contains a clear declaration of identification with Polishness—even though the historian belonged to the “native sons” of medieval Livonia, and spoke to the citizens of Lithuania and the Polish Crown in their name.

To this day, among the last descendants of Livonian families there lingers a conviction that they come from an unknown and forgotten region, a *nowhereland*, which must be described historically and geographically, at least in its broad outlines, before any personal recollections can begin.⁸ One should

7 Gustaw Manteuffel, *O starodawnej szlachcie krzyżacko-rycerskiej na kresach inflanckich* [On Ancient Teutonic Knightly Aristocracy in the Livonian Borderlands] (Lviv: Księgarnia Gubrynowicza, 1910), 5.

8 See Józef Weyssenhoff, *Kronika Rodziny Weyssów Weyssenhoffów zestawiona podług dokumentów przez Józefa Weyssenhoffa* [The Chronicle of the Weiss Weyssenhoff Family, Constructed by Józef Weyssenhoff on the Basis of Documentary Evidence], ed. Waldemar Weyssenhoff (Vilnius: Drukarnia Artystyczna, 1935), from which I refer to the introduction by Waldemar Weyssenhoff; Leon Broel-Plater, *Kraslaw* [Kraslava] (London: Broel-Plater, 1975), 5; Ryszard Manteuffel-Szoega, *Inflanty, Inflanty...*

thus see it as a particular local phenomenon that the sense of disappearance and incomplete existence of this territory in the general imagination has accompanied its inhabitants from the very beginning. The simple consequences of this included an obstinately constructed myth of separateness, meticulous patriotism and ceaselessly proclaimed loyalty to the king, fervent Catholicism, ostentatious aversion against Germans (Protestants) and Russians (barbarians), and finally a knightly aristocratic sense of injured pride, which went hand in hand with disregard for the common gentry and the peasants.

Historical and political nonexistence

Problems with coming into existence attended Polish Livonia from the very beginning of its formation, and this process has never come to an end. Local gentry took pride in the fact that Livonia was united with the Polish-Lithuanian state not as a result of conquests, but through voluntary submission to the Polish Crown, which meant, in a sense, that the union took place on the basis of an agreeable choice.⁹ The long process of specifying the political, legal, and administrative status of these lands began with the annexation of the territory by the Commonwealth in 1561. According to the incorporation pact, the king himself was in charge of Livonia, negotiations were conducted by Lithuanian deputies who planned to attach the new voivodeship to the Grand Duchy, while the Livonians themselves needed only the military commitment of Poland, which, for its part, kept a skeptical distance.¹⁰ And so already at the moment of

[Livonia, Livonia...], ed. Zbigniew Szopiński (Warsaw: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1991), 7–11.

- 9 One can see pride in this statement both in Hylzen's *Inflanty w dawnych swych dziejach* [*Livonia in its Ancient History*], A6, and in most of Manteuffel's historical works: e.g., Gustaw Manteuffel, "Inflanty Polskie poprzedzone ogólnym rzutem oka na siedmiowiekową przeszłość całych Inflant" [Polish Livonia, with a Brief Overview of the 700-year History of all of Livonia], in Manteuffel, *Pisma Wybrane* [Selected Writings], ed. Krzysztof Zajas, vol. 1 (Krakow: Universitas, 2009), 6; also Manteuffel's *O starodawnej szlachcie krzyżacko-rycerskiej* [On the Historic Knightly-Teutonic Aristocracy].
- 10 I discuss this further in the chapter entitled "The Polish History of Livonia." Here, I would like to refer the reader to the following studies: Edward Kuntze, "Organizacja Inflant w Czasach Polskich" [The Organization of Livonia during the Polish Period], in *Polska a Inflanty* [Poland and Livonia], vol. 39 of *Pamiętnik Instytutu Bałtyckiego* (Gdynia: Instytut Bałtycki w Gdyni, 1939); Jürgen Heyde, "Kości niezgody – Inflanty w polityce wewnętrznej Rzeczypospolitej w XVI–XVII wieku" [Bone of Contention: Livonia in the Domestic Politics of the Commonwealth between the 16th and 17th

its formation, Polish Livonia was an arena of conflicting and mutually exclusive interests. Their character was eminently instrumental, and the local citizens' oft-repeated declarations about a voluntary union with the Polish Crown should be treated as an unsuccessful attempt at blackmail, which only later gained the status of virtue in the works of chroniclers.¹¹

Livonia's problems with historical existence were reinforced by the historiographical politics of its closest neighbors, whose writings minimized and eliminated Polish participation in the history and culture of old Latvia. The most advanced German-Baltic historiography saw its mission in terms of struggle for dominance and for monopoly of knowledge; it mentioned Polish influences reluctantly and with difficulty.¹² Nationalist tendencies which blossomed in the historical sciences in the second half of the 19th century played a part in this, but the tension reaches back to the time of the struggles between Protestants and Catholics in Riga in the 16th and 17th centuries. In the elimination of the Polish presence on the banks of the Daugava River one can also see traces of the struggle for existence, since Baltic Germans also wrestled with nonexistence in the history of Germany, and they share some of their dilemmas with the Poles.¹³

Centuries], in *Prusy i Inflanty między średniowieczem a nowożytnością: państwo – społeczeństwo – kultura* [Prussia and Livonia between the Middle Ages and Modernity: State, Society, Culture], ed. Bogusław Dybaś and Dariusz Makiła (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2003), 159–168; Enn Tarvel, “Stosunek prawnopaństwowy Inflant do Rzeczypospolitej oraz ich ustrój administracyjny w latach 1561–1621” [Livonia's State and Legal Relations with the Commonwealth, and its Administrative Structures between 1561 and 1621], *Zapiski Historyczne* 34, no. 1 (1969): 49–77.

- 11 See Heyde, “Kość Niezgody – Inflanty w Polityce Wewnętrznej Rzeczypospolitej w XVI–XVII wieku” [Bone of Contention: Livonia in the Domestic Politics of the Commonwealth between the 16th and 17th Centuries], 165.
- 12 It is impossible to find Gustav Manteuffel's name in most German scholarly works, even though he published much in German; for example, he began his passionate work as an historian with the book *Polnisch Livland* [Polish Livonia], published in Dresden in 1869. One can find a peculiar example of this in Arnold Feuerisen's *Livländische Geschichtsliteratur* [Livonian Historical Literature], Riga, 1908—a work which discusses the entire historical literature concerning Livonia, but which does not include Manteuffel, who was Feuerisen's contemporary and author of *Inflanty Polskie* [Polish Livonia], but which does include Teresa Wodzicka née Potocki's marginal work “Z ostatnich dni Polski i Kurlandii: Pamiętniki barona Karola Henryka Heykinga 1752 do 1796” [The Final Days of Poland and Courland: Baron Karol Henryk Heyking's Memoirs, 1752–1796], *Przegląd Polski* 1 (1905). Exceptions like August Bielenstein or the 20th-century researcher Herta von Ramm-Helmsing only prove this rule.
- 13 The most exhaustive analysis of this tendency has been provided recently by Armin von Ungern-Sternberg in his impressive work entitled “*Erzählregionen*”: *Überlegungen zu*

In turn, in the period immediately after the partitions, tsarist censorship prohibited the use of the name “Polish Livonia” in printed publications (it was for this reason that Manfeffel published his foundational work in Poznan); with time, Russification-related repressions were transformed into physical annihilation of Livonian Polishness, and its replacement by the Russian and Belarusian population.

The leveling factor had a somewhat different character in the framework of Latvian historiography. During the interwar period, this historiography sought to describe, or rather create anew, Latvian history in opposition to the writings of all the colonizers; it drew a wide arc between the pre-Christian medieval era and 19th-century aspirations to independence, ignoring the seven-hundred-year presence of other cultures on Latvian lands.¹⁴ From this perspective, Gustaw Manteuffel—who in his youth was an avid collector of Latgallian songs and an author of calendars written in the local language—appears not as a local historian, but as one of the fathers of the Latvian language and literature. It is only in recent years that a new generation of historians has emerged; historians who explore Polish writings in search of materials for a multicultural history of Latvia.¹⁵ For decades, the problem of Latvian historiography consisted in the narrow-minded conviction that it should develop independently from the influences and pressures of the literatures of its former invaders (which is right), and that it should therefore minimize and reduce the themes introduced by these literatures (which is erroneous). In the eyes of its creators, the history of Latvia was thus to confirm Latvia’s existence, much as the existence of Polish, German, Swedish, or Russian Livonia needed confirmation in earlier times. The history of the lands which interest us is thus a theater of competing national historiographical perspectives.

literarischen Räumen mit Blick auf die deutsche Literatur des Baltikums, das Baltikum und die deutsche Literatur [“Regions of Narration”: Reflections about Literary Spaces with a Glance at the German Literature of the Baltic Countries, at the Baltic Countries, and at German Literature] (Bielefeld: Aisthesis, 2003), and especially the chapter “Selbstdarstellung des baltischen Raumes” [Self-representation of the Baltic Space].

- 14 The historical work of a native Latgallian, Bolesław Breżgo, who writes in Latvian, Russian, and Polish, is a commendable exception here.
- 15 The many years of work carried out by the Rigan historian Ēriks Jēkabsons are invaluable in this respect; he scrupulously examined the Polish materials available in the Latvian State Historical Archive in Riga, and published the results in “Polak na Łotwie” [A Pole in Latvia]. In his monograph about “Polish Latvia,” however, the name “Polish Livonia” does not appear at all, and in its place there appear such interesting terms as “the Polish period” or “Transdaugava” [Transdźwińsk]—see Ēriks Jēkabsons, *Polji Latvijā* [Polish Latvia] (Riga: Etnisko pētījumu centrs, 1996), 9–11 and 136.

Sociological nonexistence

The fact that Livonian gentry descended from medieval Teutonic knights made it foreign in the eyes of the Polish gentry from the very beginning. The Livonians—who were suspect because of their foreign language (many of the Polonized families began speaking Polish only in the 19th century), who aroused hostility as descendants of the hated Teutonic knights, and who adhered to strict genealogical hierarchies and guarded the distinctiveness of their aristocratic blood—were, to a certain extent, ignored in the negotiations carried out between the various social classes of the Commonwealth. Lithuanians sought to incorporate the lands around the Daugava into their territory. This would bring benefits in the form of new offices to be filled, and they therefore wanted the formal incorporation of Livonia into Lithuania. Livonians were thus forced to emphasize their separateness and to remind others about it, which made them vulnerable to accusations of a lack of patriotism, of dual Polish–German loyalty, of being “hidden Teutonic knights,” and so on. In this case, the dual local and national identity, which is natural in all small regions, was an almost insurmountable obstacle, and it led to paradoxical declarations, such as the one we saw in the above-cited passage from Manfeuffel. The astounding persistence of this “Polish” suspiciousness has outlived Livonia itself. One can see it in Michał Świerzbński’s interpretations which appear in a story about Livonian martyrology, and which are marked by nationalism and xenophobia:

Particularism shrouded in Teutonic traditions was the characteristic quality of the pre-partitions era in Polish Livonia. Magnates with German ancestry (...) saw themselves as the only legitimate masters and rulers of Livonia. They were, it is true, loyal to the Commonwealth and they served it loyally, so long as it guaranteed their prosperity, freedoms, and privileges. (...). The knightly-German families, although they formed affiliations with Polish gentry, were never Polish in spirit. They did not know Polish traditions, attachments, and national feelings—they had their own Teutonic ones. (...). It was only the loss of the Fatherland (...) which awakened patriotism and a sense of national affiliation in Polish Livonians. In this trial by fire, the Korffs and Borchs broke with Polishness forever, others became honest Poles, and still others (...)—who knows what they are.”¹⁶

This text is from 1937, and it was motivated by the pressing need to delimit the boundaries of nationally-understood “Polishness,” but it nonetheless reveals the

16 Świerzbński, “Martyrologia Inflant Polskich” [The Martyrology of Polish Livonia], 43 (as cited by Juliusz Bardach, “Piśmiennictwo Polskie w Inflantach (do 1918 Roku)” [Polish Writing in Livonia (until 1918)], in *Między Wschodem a Zachodem* [Between East and West], no. 2, *Piśmiennictwo pogranicza* [Borderland Writing], ed. Ryszard Łużny and Stefan Nieznanowski, *Dzieje Lubelszczyzny 6* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1991), 251.

distrust which interwar scholars felt toward Livonians. Here, the category “Livonian Pole” serves the purpose of differentiating and undermining loyalty, which is shown as unreliable and a function of private interests. At the same time, the author brings out and emphasizes the internal fracture within a society divided into “old” aristocracy and “new” citizens who arrived in the middle of the 16th century as colonizers and officials, and who were given local land and aristocratic titles by the king. In Świerzbński’s understanding, patriotism was born here only with the arrival of the Polish gentry (that is, those other than Livonian Poles) and theirs was a “true” patriotism, to be distinguished from the pretend patriotism of the “Teutonic knights.”

Livonian aristocracy loyally took part in the Polish national uprising of 1830, and this is why Polish martyrology includes, among other figures, Emilia Plater, who was the daughter of one of the most eminent German-Teutonic families of the Baltic region. The hero of the November Uprising made her way into Polish textbooks, but it would be futile to examine the biographies of this female colonel with the aim of finding an analysis of the Livonian sources of her patriotic bravado.¹⁷ Another Livonian, Gustaw Manteuffel’s brother Richard, took part in the January Uprising of 1863, and was exiled to Siberia while the possessions of the family were sequestered, which effectively meant that the Manteuffels lost them. And on Muravyov’s command, the young Leon Plater was executed by a firing squad for his participation in the January revolt. The Livonians’ devotion did not, however, change the general state of knowledge about their lands, and, while writing his foundational work in 1879, Manteuffel felt that he needed to form rather than to reconstruct the historical-social-cultural existence of the region, with a large dose of post-factual creation:

The rarely encountered information about this part of the country, which at one time belonged to the Teutonic state, even when found in more extensive works that deal with the Baltic provinces, not only does not allow for the resolution of many of the important questions, but it also repeats a number of coarse mistakes that concern

17 Donata Ciepieńko-Zielińska came close to tackling this problem, but she saw it mainly as an argument in favor of the attractiveness of Polish culture: “Emilia Plater did not come from a Polish family. It is yet another example of the attractiveness and the power of influence of our native culture in our history, thanks to which so many families of foreign descent became fully Polonized.” Donata Ciepieńko-Zielińska, *Emilia Plater* [Emilia Plater] (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Książka i Wiedza, 1966), 41. NB, in his poem *Śmierć pułkownika* [The Death of the Colonel] Mickiewicz prematurely gave Plater a military promotion—she actually had the rank of a captain—see Józef Bachórz, “O Emilii Plater i Śmierci Pułkownika: narodziny i dzieje legendy” [About Emilia Platter and “The Death of the Colonel”] in *Jak pachnie na Litwie Mickiewicza* [The Scents of Mickiewicz’s Lithuania] (Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Słowo/Obraz Terytoria, 2003), 7–60.

geography, statistics, ethnography, and the history of local intellectual development. Such works do not allow the confused reader to learn where this country lies, what political system it has, or who inhabits it.¹⁸

The country was inhabited mostly by Polish Livonia's peasants—they were the object of German-Teutonic, Polish, Swedish, and Russian colonization. As the “tutejsi” [locals] they were in essence Latvians; a small percentage were Belarusian and Lithuanian, and after these lands were added to the Commonwealth, Polish peasants also appeared among them. They primarily spoke Latvian, or rather an East-Latvian dialect, the so-called Latgallian, as a result of which they constituted a separate linguistic and identificational formation within the larger “Pribaltika” region. This particularity has persisted into the present time, and in today's Latvian state, Latgalia constitutes a region which is separate economically (it is the poorest part of the country), culturally, religiously (Catholics dominate), and, as a result of intensive Russification—also nationally.

Cultural nonexistence

The “Livonophiles” were also unsuccessful in their attempts to clearly differentiate the culture of Polish Livonia. If by culture we understand a set of regularities in the inward and outward behaviors of the members of a specific society,¹⁹ then—despite the efforts of chroniclers, poets, historiographers, and publishers—a Polish-Livonian identity was never formed. The exceptional sociological attribute of this region—its multiculturalism—constituted a significant obstacle. Specific groups and classes which comprised the society of the former Livonian Voivodeship, were a cluster of subcultures which were so distant from one another that it seemed impossible to call them by the single name of the “culture of Polish Livonia.” Because of their ancestry, the aristocracy used either French or German until the 19th century; they fiercely defended their privileges and emphasized their somewhat haughty otherness

18 Gustaw Manteuffel, *Inflanty Polskie poprzedzone ogólnym rzutem oka na siedmowiekową przeszłość całych Inflant* [Polish Livonia, with a Brief Overview of the 700-year History of all of Livonia] (Poznań: Księgarnia Jana Konstantego Żupańskiego, 1879), 19. The author's use of a capital letter in the adjective “Baltic” indicates semantic underscoring, an intensification of meaning through emphasis. Manteuffel frequently uses this tactic of “calling into existence” by means of repeating a name.

19 See Philip Bagby, “The Concept of Culture,” in *Culture and History: Prolegomena to the Comparative Study of Civilizations* (Berkeley; Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1959).

rather than their participation in a shared culture. The aristocrats tended to point to their cultural connections with Courland, with the ethos of European knights, or sometimes also with Hanseatic traditions, rather than to emphasize kinship with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth or the indigenous inhabitants of the region. In contrast, the newly arriving gentry spoke and wrote in Polish or Latin, they identified with Sarmatian traditions, and they readily saw Polish Livonia as part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, rather than as an autonomous land; they considered Polonization of the country as their fundamental cultural duty. Peasants used the Latgallian dialect, sometimes speaking in Russian or Belarusian, and as objects and victims of various colonizations, they did not feel a sense of belonging to any of the cultures imposed on them.²⁰ In the 19th century there also appeared, extraterritorially as it were, elements of Polish bourgeois culture in Riga, Tartu, and (on a smaller scale) in other Baltic cities—they were only loosely connected with the life of Latgallian provinces, and they introduced yet another cultural discourse into the Livonian space. To this, one should add the Jewish community which had a strong presence in the region, and Russian-speaking, Belarusian, Lithuanian, and other subcultures.

The only work that puts Polish Livonia back on the humanities research agenda is also a paradoxical example of the difficulties inherent in the attempts to differentiate this region as a separate entity. In his *Pozytywizm na Litwie* [Positivism in Lithuania] Andrzej Romanowski uses an impressive range of archival sources to provide an extensive sketch of Polish cultural life in the so-called northern borderlands (yet another name of this land)—yet he places Polish Livonia in a chapter entitled “A Lithuanian Province.”²¹ If the term “Lithuanian-Belarusian-Livonian lands” (used in the work’s subtitle) constitutes—as the author himself suggests—a contemporary variation of the notion of the “Grand Duchy of Lithuania,” then we are back in the realm of 16th-century arguments about incorporation, when the Livonian Voivodeship simultaneously belonged and did not belong to historic Lithuania. Romanowski

20 The peasants were most frequently identified as Catholic, and they felt a certain connection with the Catholic faith. The intense—and often brutal—Christianization of the Latvians created, however, a specific religious dualism: ostentatious Catholicism on the one hand, and an illicitly-practiced paganism on the other, the signs of which Manteuffel observed even at the end of the 19th century. The role of religion and the church in the history of Livonia is fundamentally important, and it will receive much attention in subsequent chapters.

21 Andrzej Romanowski, *Pozytywizm na Litwie: polskie życie kulturalne na ziemiach litewsko-białorusko-inflanckich w latach 1864–1904* [Positivism in Lithuania: Polish Cultural Life in the Lithuanian-Belarusian-Livonian Lands between 1864 and 1904] (Krakow: Universitas, 2003).

insightfully realizes that this identification is not at all obvious, and he therefore calls it obvious and indispensable:

The inclusion of Polish Livonia (i.e., the former Livonian Voivodeship and contemporary southeastern Latvia/Latgale) in the region which interests us seemed obvious and indispensable, since shared political fortunes and Catholic faith linked this region to Lithuania incomparably more strongly than to lands located to the west of it – lands inhabited by Protestant Latvians and Germans.²²

While the indispensability of this step seems understandable in light of the need to keep the designated object of investigation unified, the step is far from obvious. Immediate geographic proximity, similarity of the colonization and Christianization processes carried out by Poland, along with the corresponding experiences under Russian rule—all these organize the historical material to an extent, but this organization excludes phenomena that characterize Livonian regionalism. The Polish-Lithuanian identity discourse seems to be of little use for these lands, while their specificity is attested to by what Juliusz Bardach referred to as “complicated relations,” which

... created certain configurations in the awareness of the inhabitants of this land, where the sense of national identity, and the patriotism which was related to it, did not arise automatically from ethnicity, but resulted from such factors as historical and state traditions, or as the cultural milieu, which was often associated with one’s professed religion, and which often came from a conscious choice dictated by many motives that are sometimes difficult to capture. This resulted in a variety of identity options, also within the bosom of a single family. Even in the life of a single individual, one could sometimes differentiate various phases in this regard.²³

Because these factors were difficult to capture, cultural activity in the region that interests us was often largely reduced to incessant calling attention to itself, and to providing proof of an existence which was, in a sense, *ex definitione* problematic, because it did not fit into any of the previously designated frameworks.

22 Ibid., 17; In *Młoda Polska Wileńska* [Young Poland in Vilnius] (Krakow: Universitas, 1999) Andrzej Romanowski provides information about Polish Livonia in a chapter devoted to Polish culture in the Vitebsk province, which is in agreement with the administrative nomenclature of the early 20th century, but which, again, has the effect of fusing our land with another, larger region (the Vitebsk province consisted of the Vitebsk, Polotsk, and Livonian Voivodeships), see *ibid.*, 408–411.

23 Juliusz Bardach, “Piśmiennictwo Polskie w Inflantach (do 1918 Roku)” [Polish Writing in Livonia (until 1918)], 247.

2. Pretexts for Coming into Existence

The traditionally understood beginning of Livonian history, established on the basis of the initial mentions of it in European texts, is linked with the landing of merchants from Lübeck at the mouth of the Daugava River in the second half of the 12th century; the merchants were soon followed by missionaries, Teutonic knights, and other explorers, who desired bounty and adventure. During the Middle Ages, this land was under German influence, which from then on was burdened by the difficult inheritance of the colonial ventures of the archbishops and grand masters of the Teutonic Order. The establishment of settlements and cities, as well as the erection of countless castles, laid the foundation for the strong presence of the knights for many centuries; it later supported the presence of the Baltic-German bourgeoisie in the region, a presence which lasted until the 20th century. After World War II, many summaries of the history of Baltic Germans appeared, but one cannot say that their presence in the region came to an end—today, there are a number of associations and periodicals, which not only investigate the past, but also seek ways of inscribing German culture into the multicultural landscape of the Baltic states.²⁴ For this reason, it seems justifiable to begin our analysis of Livonia with German-language historiography, which provides certain clues for reading the Polish phenomena which took place here.

German historiography represents the Poles' participation in the history of these lands in a variety of ways; mostly, however, mentions of Poles are scarce and superficial. Unfortunately, this scarcity of references is also confirmed by contemporary Polish historians.²⁵ The comparison of Polish and German histories of this region seems justified because both cultures share a similar status there today: each appears as a difficult and foreign legacy, which influenced the history of this land extensively, and the influence of each is difficult to acknowledge unambiguously. One can turn to the capital of Latvia for an example. In the Municipal Museum in Riga, the main historical exhibit contains detailed information about prehistory, paganism, and peasant culture, and there is a plethora of artifacts from the interwar Latvian state. Between the two parts of the exhibit there are unspecified (and unmarked) pieces of armor, model castles, gothic sculptures of unclear provenance, and then, all of a

24 Here, I am thinking about organizations like the Carl-Schirren-Gesellschaft in Lüneburg and its publication, the “Jahrbuch des baltischen Deutschtums,” or the Institut Nordostdeutsches Kulturwerk Lüneburg, which publishes the “Nordost-Archiv.”

25 See Marian Biskup's introduction in *Inflanty w średniowieczu: władztwa zakonu krzyżackiego i biskupów* [Livonia in the Middle Ages: The Rule of the Bishops and the Teutonic Order] (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2002), 6.

sudden, one sees Danzig and Biedermeyer furniture. Several hundred years of “foreign” history created an insurmountable difficulty for the hosts. Methodological helplessness peeks out from behind the immense amount of historical material.

In Polish historical scholarship, Gustaw Manteuffel has decisively played the greatest role in establishing the Polish-Livonian identity, and this is why he occupies a central position in this book. This aficionado and propagator of Polish culture throughout Livonia, this collector of folk songs, historian, ethnographer, and member of the “Kurländische Gesellschaft für Literatur und Kunst” [Courlandish Literary and Cultural Society] was an avid supporter of distinguishing Polish Livonia as a separate land, which has the right to its own history, and thereby also to its own research as well. He came from one of the oldest Teutonic families—his ancestors belonged to Polish aristocracy since the 16th century but his family converted to Catholicism only at the beginning of the 19th century, and it was also then that they began to use the Polish language. His publishing activities best illustrate one of the theses of this book: there is not a single objective history of Livonia; we have clashing tendencies, ideological narrations and syntheses made to answer the needs of particular national, cultural, state-building, and other orientations. Gustaw Manteuffel, acting like a great precursor of 20th-century cultural studies, knew perfectly well that one cannot write the history of Livonia—and especially of Polish Livonia—from a single perspective. Though he was inclined toward compromise, with time he sharpened his attitude toward German historians and opposed their tendentiousness with his own exaggerations, as if to confirm Nietzsche’s words: “every man and every nation requires, in accordance with its goals, energies and needs, a certain kind of knowledge of the past, now in the form of monumental, now of antiquarian, now of critical history...”²⁶ The broad range of Manteuffel’s interests also resulted in something which would be called an interdisciplinary perspective today: he combined historiography with studies of folklore, numismatics with the history of commerce, genealogy with heraldry (he was an absolute expert in Livonian genealogy!), art history with military history and the history of religion. The specificity of his personality was anchored in charming contradictions. He combined incredible meticulousness and precision of documentation with the passion of an ideologue, and local chauvinism with loyal Polish patriotism; his aristocratic conceit was accompanied by an authentic

26 Friedrich W. Nietzsche, “On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life,” in *Untimely Meditations*, ed. Daniel Breazeale, trans. Reginald J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 77.

and sympathetic interest in Latgallian peasants, for whom he helped invent a written language.

Literature was a pretext with the help of which Livonian culture could come into existence. In the history of Polish scholarship, there is not a single separate chapter devoted to Polish-Livonian writers, even though many texts bear traces characteristic of Livonia. Reading these texts poses difficulties for the literary scholar who has to confront an unknown cultural milieu. Kazimierz Bujnicki's novels or Olga Daukszuta's poems become readable through interpretation only after the conditions in which they were created are designated. What is important here is not the network of social or political determinants, but those factors which form the mentality of a writer whose life is inscribed into various communal perspectives. On the declarative level, local multiculturalism is expressed in a series of discourses which show a tendency to express identity; these discourses, moreover, constitute a dynamic system which is not necessarily harmonious. In Chapter 5, an example set of discourses is applied to the Livonian case, but these discourses seem to be fairly typical of cultural borderlands more generally considered.

What interests us, however, is not only that which the writer consciously puts into the framework of discourse, but also all the unconscious operations of exclusion and denial. Polish-Livonian literature constitutes an extreme example of local writing, which underwent subjective disintegration in the process of establishing its identity. If we say that Polish Livonia did not exist as a separate culture and literature, then one should see the main cause of this in the fragmentation of the subject into a variety of identificatory aims, which are contradictory to one another, and which cannot be reconciled. The multicultural situation, characteristic of certain types of borderlands, forces the local-foreign opposition into individual existential experience, and this leads to the constantly revived question about identity. Discourse suggests a ready-made solution, but it simultaneously denies specificity. Polish-Livonian literature consists of a mosaic of incongruous discourses and of refuse, trimmings, and points of experience which remain beyond discursive expression. Livonian culture did not come into existence because it could not fully fit into any of the communal discourses which were imposed on it from without.

Historiography has been included in Polish-Livonian literature as an essential component, which constitutes local identity, and also as a strong representation of a re-creating ideology. From the beginning of the coming into existence of a historical fact called "Polish Livonia," historians have tried to introduce it into general awareness. As a result, their writing carries clear marks of tendentious and constituting literature, which inscribes itself into diachronic rules of reference, and which at the same time consists of a series of literary and

rhetorical devices. Historical narration, especially in the case of multicultural local milieus, is subject to fictionalization which is carried out on the level of conscious ideology, and to unconscious tendencies in the existential experience. Here, one can see especially clearly the connection between the specification of a place, its naming and establishment, and the search for a distinctive identificatory form, on both the individual and collective levels. In a certain sense, Polish-Livonian literature is an excellent example of the incompatibility between individual experience and the general language of discourse.

3. Toponymy as a Realm of Conflict

If, following the nominalists, we assume that only that which has a name has existence, Polish-Livonia should exist with a manifold intensity. Each locality there has several names, and the whole territory has more than a dozen designations. The problem lies in the fact that most of them, even though they still appear in literature about the subject, do not mean anything to a contemporary Polish reader; and so we have here a certain form of the crisis of reference.²⁷ One could solve this problem by following the example of Norman Davies' solution in *Microcosm*, and alternate between all known names of a given place to signal the problem and multiply perspectives, but this would dim the already vague contours of this land even more.²⁸ It is difficult to deny the correctness of the Welsh historian's claim that names "do much more than merely identify people and places. They reveal the viewpoint and the prejudices of those who use them"—but for centuries Livonia has been a battlefield in this

27 A recently published *Pascal* tourist guide to the Baltic states is an excellent illustration of this problem; some of the Latgalian names are provided in Polish and some in Latvian. And thus next to the Polish Rzeżyca [Rēzekne] and Krasław [Kraslava] there is Ludza (Polish: Lucyn), which, in the section on bus connections is given as... Lucyna! [a common female name in Polish] and Preiļi (Polish Prele). A famous center of Catholic worship also has its Polish name—Aglona (instead of Aglona). See Medard Masłowski et al., *Litwa, Łotwa, Estonia oraz Obwód Kaliningradzki* [Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and the Kaliningrad Oblast] (Bielsko-Biała: Pascal, 2002), 242–244.

28 In the case of Wrocław, historical changes played an important role; as a result the city had different names during different periods in its history, and the change of name signaled a change of socio-historical context. This approach is fruitless in the case of Polish Livonia because various names functioned at the same time for various ethnic groups! What is more, the same group often simultaneously used various names, as for example, the Poles' use of Dyneburg and Dźwińsk. See Norman Davies and Roger Moorhouse, *Microcosm: Portrait of a Central European City* (London: Pimlico, 2002), xvi.

regard as well.²⁹ A name was a demonstration of national affiliation and political sympathies, a declaration of loyalty to colonizers or defense against the destruction of national identity. This last issue is particularly poignant in the case of the Latgallians, who were able to preserve names from the 12th century in spoken language for seven hundred years, thanks to which, for example, a village called Maryenhauz (German: Marienhausen) in Polish and German historical writing, today bears its ancient name Viļaka.³⁰ To facilitate communication, I chose to use Polish names, i.e., those encountered in Polish-language literature. When I use a name for the first time, I also provide the contemporary Latvian name in parenthesis. In the case of names which have several variations, I use those which appear in the literature more frequently.³¹ By doing this, I expose myself, of course, to the accusation of “Polonocentrism.” Yet, first of all, this is one of the ways of bringing Polish Livonia back to our scholarship, and secondly, it is a way of bringing it to Latvian, Latgallian, German, and Russian scholarly literatures, where its presence is overwhelmingly deficient. And thirdly: disappearing names, like disappearing lands, also deserve to be rescued.

In the introduction to his *Listy znad Bałtyku* [Letters from the Baltic] Gustaw Manteuffel was frustrated that correspondence addressed to him gets sent to “Riga en Courlande” or “Riga in Courland,” while a critic from “Kurier

29 Ibid.

30 The problem of terminology can still arouse emotional responses today, and one should be tactful when using the names Dyneburg (Latvian: Daugavpils), Rzeżyca (Latvian: Rēzekne) or Warklany (Latvian: Varakļāni) in today’s Latgalia. Father Józef Łapkowski, who is now deceased and who was a prelate in Krasław, was a Polish patriot and knew the history of the region very well, but in a brochure about the city and the church, which appeared several years ago (*Kościół w Krasławie*) [The Church in Kraslava], he used the Latvian-Russian name Krasława. In Polish historical writing, it was always Krasław.

31 A relatively exhaustive comparison of the Polish, German and Latvian geographic names (though it includes mainly locations that once had castles) is included in the “Indeks Nazw Geograficznych i Etnicznych” [Index of Geographical and Ethnic Terms], edited by Paweł A. Jeziorski, in Biskup, *Inflanty w średniowieczu: władztwa zakonu krzyżackiego i biskupów* [Livonia in the Middle Ages: The Rule of the Bishops and the Teutonic Order], 139–146. One can also always reach for Manteuffel’s *Inflanty Polskie* [Polish Livonia], where in the appendix the author included an exact list of all the estates of the old Livonian Voivodeship, together with their (19th-century) Latgallian names. Manteuffel might have made up some of the Polish names, since they do not appear anywhere else. One can also consult the index of geographic locations, which I constructed and included in Manteuffel’s *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 309–314.

Poznański” [The Poznan Courier] wrote a review of *Inflanty Polskie* [Polish Livonia] without noticing the difference between Swedish Livonia, “Livonia proper,” Estonia, and Courland.³² Regardless of the high standards which Manteuffel expected his newspaper reviewers to meet, let us try to specify our terminology for the purposes of our analysis.

The Polish term **Inflanty** [Livonia] (Latvian: Vidzeme) comes from the Finnish-German linguistic cluster **Livland**, or “land of the Livs,” and refers to the territory that stretches from the mouth of the Daugava River (Polish: Dźwina) all the way to southern Estonia—a territory which includes today’s northern and central Latvia, including Riga.³³ Since 1660 this land, like most of Estonia, was ruled by Swedes and hence it was sometimes called **Swedish Livonia**. The name **Courland** (Latvian: Kurzeme)³⁴ comes from the Baltic Kur (or Kursz) tribe and refers to western Latvia and the Baltic coast stretching almost to the Lentava River (Latvian: Lielupe). Sometimes (rarely), these territories were referred to as “German Livonia.” Further east, on the left bank of the Daugava, stretching from Mitawa (Latvian: Jelgava) to Dyneburg there is **Semigallia** (Latvian: Zemgale; in old Latvian *semgale* meant “low country”), which also includes the historic **Zelonia** (Latvian: Selija).³⁵ Between the 16th and 18th centuries, Courland and Semigallia, together with Zelonia formed the **Duchy of Courland**, and the three are therefore often jointly referred to as Courland. In German literature, one can frequently find the cluster “Liv-, Est- und Kurland” [Liv-, Est-, and Courland], which refers to all the lands, which were at one time under direct influence of the Baltic Germans, and which correspond to today’s Estonia and Latvia without Latgale/Latgalia (Latvian:

32 See Gustaw Manteuffel, *Listy z nad Bałtyku* [Letters from the Baltic] (Krakow: Anczyc i Spółka, 1886), 3–4. Manteuffel repeated these accusations almost literally in his *Tum rylski i jego ciekawsze zabytki* [The Rigan Cathedral and its More Interesting Artifacts] (Krakow: Spółka Wydawnicza Polska, 1904), 5–7.

33 The etymology of the word “Inflanty” [Livonia], and its semantic range is explained in an accessible way by Mieczysław Buczyński in “Recepcja łotewskich nazw geograficznych w języku polskim” [The Reception of Latvian Geographic Terms in the Polish Language], in *Polacy na Łotwie* [Poles in Latvia], ed. Edward Walewander (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, 1993), 103–112; Henryk Wisner is less precise in his essay “Rzeczpospolita i kwestia inflancka” [The Commonwealth and the Livonian Question], in *Łotwa–Polska: materiały z międzynarodowej sesji naukowej* [Latvia–Poland: Materials from an International Conference], ed. Jarosław Sozański (Riga: Ambasada Rzeczpospolitej Polskiej, 1995), 7.

34 The term “Courland” appeared for the first time in 1231.

35 Recently, a native Latgalian who was walking with me along the right bank of the Daugava River in Dyneburg, pointed to the other side of the river and said: “Zels live there.” The division has survived eight centuries of colonization.

Letgale).³⁶ Latgale overlaps almost exactly with the borders of our lands, i.e., with old **Polish Livonia**, with a capital in Dyneburg.³⁷ Polish Livonia is thus not just part of Livonia; on the contrary, it is that which is left over once Livonia is delineated from the perspective of the Germans, Latvians, Swedes, and Estonians.

It is important to emphasize that the term “Polish Livonia” practically does not exist in Latvian scholarship (where the name Latgale is typically used), and it appears only sporadically in German historiography. Paradoxically, it is only in the administrative papers of tsarist Russia that one can find the expression “Polskaja Liflandija.”³⁸ Since the 1660s, we can also talk about the **Livonian Voivodeship**, and, starting in 1677, about the **Livonian Duchy**. What Manteuffel probably meant then, is that neither Estonia nor Courland is located in Swedish Livonia, and Riga lies not in Courland but in Livonia. The general term “Livonia” refers to the so-called Swedish Livonia and Polish Livonia—excluding Courland and Estonia.³⁹

36 See Reinhard Wittram, *Baltische Geschichte: Die Ostseelände Livland, Estland, Kurland 1180–1918* [Baltic History: The Eastern Districts of Livland, Estland, and Courland, 1180–1918] (Münich: Verlag Oldenbourg, 1954), 7–9. Livs and Ests belonged to Ugrofinnish tribes, while Cours (also Kurons) belonged to Baltic tribes. Analogously to Estonia, in the Middle Ages all of Livonia was also called Livonia, and Courland was called Kuronia.

37 The term “Polish Livonia” is written in a variety of ways. I follow G. Manteuffel and use capital letters for both words. Parts of the historic Livonian Duchy today belong to Semigallia, and a small part is in Belarus.

38 In “Complete Collection of the Laws of the Russian Empire” (*Полное собрание законов Российской Империи*), vol. XIX, 1796, on page 553, “Polskaja Liflandya” [Polish Livonia] is listed first among the lands taken from Poland; see also vol. XXIV, pages 229 nn., and 259. As cited by Gustaw Manteuffel, *Bibliografia inflancko-polska (Obejmuje dzieła traktujące o Inflantach Polskich, a wydane w ciggu ostatnich 5-ciu stuleci, mianowicie od roku 1567 do 1905-go.)* [Polish-Livonian Bibliography (including works which deal with Polish Livonia, and which have been published during the last 500 years, namely between 1567 and 1905)] (Poznań: Drukarnia “Dziennika Poznańskiego”, 1906), 13; and Gustaw Manteuffel, *Krasław* [Kraslava] (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo “Kroniki Rodzinnej”, 1901), 7, footnote 1.

39 Andrzej Chwalba’s above-mentioned *Historia Polski 1795–1918* [History of Poland 1795–1918] testifies to the fact that Manteuffel’s protests and corrections did not amount to much; in the “Index of Geographic and Administrative Terms” Livonia is described in parenthesis as Latgalia, while Polish Livonia—as is usually the case—does not appear at all, even though it appears in the text several times. See *ibid.*, pages 20, 152, 217, 391 and 643. Even the contemporary editor of Kazimierz Bujnicki’s *Pamiętniki* [Memoirs] took the liberty of being imprecise, and located Livlandia, i.e., Livonia, to the south of the Daugava’s mouth, and Courland in southern Livonia. In

Today, the inhabitants of our region are called the **Latgallians**; they are also referred to as “Latvians of Polish Livonia” when a distinction needs to be made between them and other inhabitants of Latvia. **Latgale** enjoys a separate identity, marked not only by its own dialect, but also by folk culture, religion (mostly Catholic), ethnic composition, and—above all—its own history. The gentry and the aristocracy of the region are often referred to as **Livonians**, to distinguish them from Courlandish knights and Lithuanian gentry. Practically since the Middle Ages, one can talk about the presence of the Baltic Germans (German: *Baltdeutschen* or *Deutschbalten*—the second term is more contemporary and more neutral) in Livonia; in German (but not Polish!) historiography they were also referred to by the shorthand term “Balts.”⁴⁰ Following the example of the Latvians, one could use the term “Balt-Russians” to designate the Russian-speaking minority in the region; this is problematic because this term actually refers to Belarusians (Latvian: *Baltkrevija*), and it was sometimes also used to refer to Latgallian Poles, which did not help clarify the ethnic puzzle. It seems more straightforward to use the universal terms **Polish-speaking minority** and **Russian-speaking minority**, with the awareness that the latter term also sometimes refers to segments of the Belarusian and Ukrainian minorities.

4. Where is Polish Livonia?

In the Middle Ages, this territory belonged to the state ruled by the Teutonic-Livonian order, and it was called *Livonia australis* [Southern Livonia]. The Livonian Voivodeship, later Polish Livonia, took shape after the 1617 Stolbovo

reality, the Livonian province was situated to the north of the Daugava, and the Courlandish province was to the south, while Courland itself had never been a part of Livonia since the very beginning of its existence. See Kazimierz Bujnicki, *Pamiętniki (1795–1875)* [Memoirs (1795–1875)], ed. Paweł Bukowiec (Krakow: Collegium Columbinum, 2001), 189, notes 137, 138.

40 German: *die Balten*. See Max H. Boehm and Helmuth Weiss, *Wir Balten: Heimat im Herzen* [We, the Balts: Homeland in our Hearts] (Salzburg; München: Akademischer Gemeinschaftsverlag, 1951); see also note 26. In Polish historical writing the word “Bałtowie” has come to designate the citizens of the Baltic states: Lithuanians, Latvians, and Estonians, as Czesław Miłosz did by devoting the final chapter of the *Captive Mind* to the Ugrofinnish and Baltic peoples, who were dying out in the shadow of 20th-century totalitarianism. I see the mechanical repetition of German onomastic habits—as evidenced, for example, in Piotr Łossowski, *Kraje bałtyckie w latach przelomu 1934–1944* [Baltic States during the Watershed Years 1934–1944] (Warsaw; Sejny: Instytut Historii PAN; Fundacja Pogranicze, 2005), 100—as distinct lack of precision.

Peace Treaty, and it was fully established by the Oliva Peace Treaty of 1660; its area constituted approximately a quarter of the Polish lands, possessed by the Commonwealth after the 1561 Treaty of Vilnius. Its southern boundary ran along the middle portions of the Daugava River (Semigallia was located on the other side); in the east it neighbored Russia (Vitebsk Oblast and Pskov Oblast), more or less along the rivers Saria (Russian and Latvian: Sarjanka), Sina (Russian: Siniaja, Latvian: Zilupe), Indryca (Latvian: Indrica), Issa (Latvian: Issa), Łudza (Latvian: Ludza), Kukwa (Latvian: Kūkova), and Niedrupia (Latvian: Niedrupīte); in the north and northwest it bordered the so-called Swedish Livonia, or the Walk (Latvian: Valka) and Kieś (Latvian: Cēsis, then German: Wenden) districts, and the border was marked by the Pedeść (Latvian: Pededze) and Ewikszta (Latvian: Aiviekste) rivers. Within the voivodeship's borders in the west, there was also Lake Łubań (Latvian: Lubāns), the region's largest lake. As this description makes clear, the borders of these regions were formed largely by natural barriers (river watersheds and lakes, and wooded swamps to the north and east); one can still sense their distinctiveness today when crossing the Daugava toward the south and toward the west, or when crossing the swampy marshlands which separate this region from Belarus in the east. After crossing the northern boundary of old Polish Livonia, one leaves the zone of deciduous and mixed forests, and enters abundant evergreen forests, characteristic of Estonia. The abundance of rivers and lakes had great economic significance during a time when river transport dominated commerce with the East, and floating goods down the Daugava to Riga brought substantial profits, including those from the so-called customs chambers and secondary customs houses. Thick and wild forests were a rich source of building materials and animal hides (whose apparently exceptional softness and fluffiness made them valuable), on which the locals made profits in regional markets.⁴¹ In the 19th century, two railroad tracks crossed Polish Livonia: the Warsaw–St. Petersburg line, and the Riga–Vitebsk line; they intersected in Dyneburg.

Dyneburg (Latvian: Daugavpils, Russian: Dvinsk, German: Dünaburg—all these names mean “a city on the Daugava River”) was the capital and Polish Livonia's largest city. It was located on the right bank, midway along the Daugava, approximately 200 kilometers northeast of Vilnius. Further north (about 300 km) there was Dorpat (Estonian: Tartu), and going west along the

41 See “Opisanie miasteczek w Księstwie Inflanckim Roku 1765” [Description of Towns in the Livonian Duchy in 1765], quoted from no. 3811, fol. 72–73 of *Archiwum akt dawnych b. litewskiej skarbowej komisji* [Archive of the Historical Documents of the Former Lithuanian Treasury Commission], vol. 6984, file 1, doc. 7/2, Latvijas Valsts Vēstures Arhivs.

Daugava, there was a 200-kilometer-long picturesque road to Riga. Since the end of the 16th century, i.e., since its founding,⁴² Dyneburg was the site of municipal and country courts and the treasury chamber; until the end of the 18th century, the municipal *sejmiki* [local assemblies] met here and elected deputies to the countrywide *sejms* [parliament meetings] in Warsaw. The city was famously multiethnic—it was inhabited by Latgallians, Russians, Belarusians, Poles, Jews, Lithuanians, Germans, and Ukrainians, to mention just the most numerous groups. At the beginning of the 20th century, the city was inhabited mostly by the Jewish minority (though this “minority” in fact represented a majority of the city’s population at the time), which gave it the character of a rather wealthy merchant province. Because two important international railway lines crossed there, Dyneburg became a large communications nexus, and with time it gained the features of an industrial center. It was destroyed almost entirely during the two World Wars, and after the post-1945 restoration it looks like most Soviet cities, with wide avenues, which intersect at right angles, and which are lined by low-rise buildings made of concrete. In the center of town, however, and especially around the Rigas and Saules streets, a stubborn seeker will find some old buildings which hint at the erstwhile commercial greatness of the native “The Town of N” of Leonid Dobychin.⁴³

In addition to Dyneburg, one should count Krasław (Latvian: Krāslava), Dagda (Latvian: Dagda), Lucyn (Latvian: Ludza), Rzeżyca (Latvian: Rēzekne), Prele (Latvian: Preiļi), Warkłany (Latvian: Varaklāni), and Wielony (Latvian: Vilāni) among the most important urban centers of Polish Livonia—most of them were also home to Polish-Livonian, Lithuanian, and Polish aristocratic families, which took over castles built during the Teutonic times, or built grand palaces, which still exist today (their number is incredibly large and their condition pitiful).⁴⁴ Furthest north was Marienhauz (Latvian: Viļaka), furthest

42 The city of Dyneburg was created almost from the ground up at the end of the 16th century; it was founded on the basis of Magdeburg Rights, which it received in 1582; see Bolesław Breżgo, *Przywilej miasta Dyneburga* [The Rights of the City of Dyneburg] (Dyneburg: Wydawnictwo “Naszego Głosu”, 1932). About 18 km upstream along the Daugava there was a 13th-century castle and a Teutonic settlement (referred to as Dźwińsk, Dynaburg, Duneborch in the chronicles); all that remains of it today are picturesque ruins on an overhang over the river, in the vicinity of the village called Żidina.

43 See Leonid Dobychin, *The Town of N*, trans. Richard C. Borden and Natalia Belova (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1998).

44 See Roman Aftanazy, *Województwo trockie, Księstwo Żmudzkie, Inflanty Polskie, Księstwo Kurlandzkie* [The Trakai Voivodeship, the Duchy of Samogitia, Polish Livonia, and the Duchy of Courland], vol. 3 of *Dzieje rezydencji na dawnych kresach*

east—Posiņ (Latvian: Pasiene); in the west, at the intersection of the borders of Polish Livonia, the so-called Swedish Livonia, and the Duchy of Courland, there was Kryzbork (Latvian: Krustpils, today Jēkabpils). These fascinating places will receive more attention in the chapter devoted to the Polish history of Livonia.

Today's Latgale is an eastern province of Latvia. It is inhabited by a Russian-speaking majority, and it borders on Lithuania, Belarus, and Russia; Latvians from Riga therefore treat it like a poor cousin.⁴⁵ One can immediately see that it is one of the poorest regions of unified Europe, with only weakly developed industrial and agricultural production, and high unemployment. On the other hand, Latgale's beautiful landscapes are its undeniable asset; they are characterized by gently rolling wooded and meadow areas, punctuated by lakes, and they are strikingly empty, with only an occasional family farm. When it comes to sightseeing and tourism, one should note the value of the centrally located Latgalian Lakes; they cover a large territory with great recreational potential, which, unfortunately, lacks the necessary infrastructure. This lack, however, brings back the charm of a virgin state of nature to Latgale. Former Polish Livonia—the object of imperial bargains and wars that lasted for several centuries—is now abandoned, a no-man's-land.

In his *Zbiór rozmaitych pomników inflanckich* [A Collection of Various Livonian Artifacts], written at the end of the 18th century, Johann Christoph Brotze draws and describes German, Russian, Lithuanian, Latvian and other traditional dress of the many inhabitants of Riga; there are even images of Siberian Samoyeds with reindeer pulling their sleds—but there are no Poles! The only Pole is “Ein wohlhabender Polnischer Jude” [a well-to-do Polish Jew], even though the Jews who lived in Riga at the time were Russian.⁴⁶ To a certain extent, Brotze's choices were a result of an already active censorship, and the need to use political correctness when referring to the Russians, who are represented in the album with dignity and in a variety of ways. Noblemen are

Rzeczypospolitej [The History of the Residences in the Historic Borderlands of the Commonwealth] (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1992).

- 45 In the center of Riga, near the Brīvības bulvaris [Freedom Boulevard], there is a Freedom Monument from the 1920s: mother Latvia (the so-called Milda) stands there with three stars in her crown, each of which symbolizes one of the three lands: Livland, Courland, and Semigallia. There is no Latgalia. I owe this observation to Erik Jakobson, whom I would like to sincerely thank here—and not just for Milda.
- 46 See Johann Ch. Brotze, “Sammlung verschiedener Livländischer Monumente” [A Collection of Various Livonian Artifacts], in *Zimejumi un apraksti* (parallel title: *Aufzeichnungen und deren Beschreibungen*) [Drawings and their Descriptions], (Riga: Zinātne, 1992), 55, pic. 24/III.

Ruthene or Lithuanian, merchants are German or Russian, there are Ukrainians, Cossacks, and Bashkirs—but only the Jews are Polish. As if the very word “Pole” was either frowned upon or outright prohibited. Brotze was an excellent ethnographer and a very scrupulous graphic artist, educated in the Enlightenment cult of encyclopedic precision. Such omissions were therefore a result of a conscious choice, not an oversight. On the other hand, his cultural and social horizons suggest that he was able to go far beyond nationalist divisions into Germans, Russians, and Latvian peasants. He realized that the specificity of these lands consisted in their multicultural character, and that this very differentiation is already an interesting object of scientific research. Against this general principle, Poles do not exist as a sociological and cultural group; they have been pushed out of Livonia, removed from its historiography, geography, and ethnography. Livonia was, in a sense, taken away from them.⁴⁷ That is why the Livonian mosaic should be supplemented with the historical and cultural fact of the nearly 350-year Polish presence in the lands of today’s Latvia. Let us therefore try to diagnose and overcome the paradoxes of the absent presence of Polish Livonia, keeping in mind Fernand Braudel’s statement that history progresses only when our conclusions are examined, discussed, and replaced by new ones.⁴⁸

47 There are many examples of such statements. Let me cite one, given by a Polish historian at an international forum: “... in 1900, German historians announced the publication of the *Baltisches historisches Ortslexikon* [The Baltic Historical Lexicon of Locations] for Latvia, but more specifically only for Courland and central Latvia (Vidzeme) with Riga, without consciously including Latgalia (Polish Livonia)”; see Marian Biskup, “Niektóre potrzeby historiografii do dziejów Polskich Inflant (Łatgalii) i Kurlandii w 16.–18. wiekach” [Some Gaps in the Historiography of the History of Polish Livonia (Latgalia) and Courland between the 16th and 18th Centuries], in Sozański, *Lotwa–Polska: materiały z międzynarodowej sesji naukowej* [Latvia–Poland: Materials from an International Scholarly Conference], 15. Similar examples will accompany our reflections throughout the book.

48 Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 18.

Chapter 1

German History of Livonia: The Conquistador Complex

Sibirien beginnt auf dem Stettiner Bahnhof
[Siberia starts at the Stettiner Bahnhof]

Christine Brückner, *Jauche und Levkojen*

In writing about the culture, past, and society of the Baltic region, it is all too easy to undermine, negate, or erase the full semantic range of key terms; it is therefore necessary to define these before they are put to use. This problem concerns terms like nation, heritage, colonization, minority, autochthon, partition, and even words like Baltic, Balts, and so on. When I speak about the German history of Livonia, I mean the history of the Baltic Germans who are also referred to as Baltic Germans, Balts, or German-Balts.⁴⁹ German-language historiography most often uses the term “Deutschbalten,” which should be translated as “German Balts” or “German-Balts.” Less frequently, one encounters the version “Baltdeutschen”—the exact translation of which is “Baltic Germans”—a term that has become common in Polish historical scholarship. This may be because it emphasizes that it refers to Germans in the Baltic countries; it points to the colonizers who wandered far beyond their rightful place in Europe in the course of their conquests. In the word “Deutschbalten,” in contrast, we encounter Balts, who admittedly have some connections with German culture, but whose fundamental sense of territorial belonging is connected with the Baltic lands—like that of other indigenous

49 Using the term “Balts” to refer to Baltic Germans, as Piotr Łossowski does, for example, is a vast and probably illegitimate simplification, even though Germans themselves would probably happily agree to this solution. The term Balts is typically used to refer to the indigenous inhabitants of these lands (Baltic peoples, Baltic languages, etc.), precisely to distinguish them from those who arrived later. This word is connected with the fundamental right to self-determination, to independent statehood, culture, and finally to sheer physical survival, which was recently threatened by Stalin who attempted to annihilate the Balts. See Piotr Łossowski, “Przesiedlenie Niemców z państw bałtyckich w 1939/1941 roku,” [The Expulsion of Germans from the Baltic States, 1939–41] in Łossowski, *Kraje bałtyckie w latach przełomu 1934–1944* [Baltic States during the Watershed Years 1934–1944], 100.

inhabitants of the region. The name itself thus already intimates fundamental complications in the history of Germans who both were and were not Balts.

The Germans' relationship to their own Baltic past has, from the start, been marked by contradictions and objections implicit in the very fact of colonization. On the one hand, over the course of nearly 800 years, the German minority left genuine traces of European civilization in the territories of present-day Latvia and Estonia, and it is difficult not to notice them when visiting Riga or Tallinn. On the other hand, however, this history is bracketed (by a parenthesis as it were) by the bloody conquests of the Middle Ages and the cruelty of the Second World War, in which Hitlerism became entangled in local Latvian and Estonian nationalisms. Over the course of seven centuries, a series of tendencies, faults, atonements, elevations, and humiliations emerged, and these have sentenced German historiographers and cultural scholars to endless digressions about something they tend to designate by the term *Baltisches Erbe* (the Baltic inheritance).⁵⁰ It is difficult not to agree with Michael Garleff who pointed to the ambiguities of German presence in Livonia in his aptly titled lecture *Die Deutschen im Baltikum – Leistung und Schicksal* [Germans in the Baltic Region: Accomplishments and Fate]. German presence in this region was a bridge between the East and West, it guaranteed progress and civilization, and it could be seen as an undeniable success of the German *Kulturträger* (bearers of culture). It was, however, the result and tangible evidence of aggression perpetrated against local nations, and it functioned more as a bastion of Protestant superiority and protector of merchant property, than a universal cultural matrix. When this problem is transposed onto the wider canvas of European history, it often becomes an attempt to make generalizations and thereby relieve the pangs of one's own conscience; the transposition cannot, however, overcome the historical splitting of identity:

The history of the Baltic region largely reflected European life in general: the coexistence and antagonism of peoples, the constant exchange, constant giving and taking back. In this nexus of various interdependencies, from the very beginning, the role of the Baltic Germans was marked by two opposing tendencies: to be a bastion and protection while simultaneously being a bridge and an intermediary; sometimes these tendencies succeeded each other, and sometimes they appeared almost

50 Here, I am referring to the title of a two-volume work edited by Erik Thomson: *Baltisches Erbe: Fünfundsechzig Beiträge in Berichten und Selbstzeugnissen* [Baltic Heritage: Sixty-five Articles and Testimonies], vol. 1 (Frankfurt am Main: W. Weidlich, 1964), and *Baltisches Erbe: Beiträge und Zeugnisse über Balten* [Baltic Heritage: Articles and Testimonies about Balts], vol. 2 (Frankfurt am Main: W. Weidlich, 1968).

simultaneously. One can find historical achievements in both, depending on which aspects of each of the two directions are brought out and accentuated.⁵¹

The uncomfortable dilemma of medieval expansion was resolved by clearly dividing the 800-year-long German presence in the region into two parts. Bloody Christianization and colonization organized by German archbishops and the Teutonic-Livonian Order (which was, however, referred to as the German Order) belonged to the realm of the Crusades, and constituted only one of many possible variants of Western civilization in the Middle Ages. In contrast, later eras could be evaluated entirely differently since one could emphasize the aristocracy's and the bourgeoisie's meticulous work, which sought to uplift the region economically and culturally—work which required many sacrifices and compromises. Continuity between these two periods of Baltic-German history does not have to be obvious, and thus German scholars are able to evade the problem:

The extent to which these “Livonian states” [monastic and episcopal states—K.Z.] were incorporated into the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation remains open to dispute; they nonetheless remained strictly bound to the “motherland,” both through cities founded primarily on the basis of Lübeck laws, and through membership in the Hanseatic League.⁵²

German historiographers view German cultural activities as commendable, especially when they set them against the actions of the other colonizers in the region. The Livonian Wars of the 16th and 17th centuries, which ended the medieval rule of the Teutonic Order and led to the division of old Livonia among neighboring states, became a convenient starting point in the process of asserting distance from the newly arriving colonizers. For decades, the Baltic

51 Michael Garleff, “Die Deutschen Im Baltikum – Leistung Und Schicksal” [Germans in the Baltic Region: Accomplishments and Fate], in *Die Deutschen im Baltikum: Geschichte und Kultur* [Germans in the Baltic Region: History and Culture], ed. Horst Kühnel (Münich: Haus des Deutschen Ostens, 1991), 45–46. The title of the article can be translated as “Germans in the Baltic Countries: Achievements and Difficult Fate.” The subtitle could be rendered more neutrally as “Accomplishments and Fate”; the context makes it clear, however, that the author meant to provide a juxtaposition of positive and negative elements, where *Schicksal* is equivalent to being exposed (*Ausgesetzsein*) to the action of great historical forces. Incidentally, copyright to the title “Leistung und Schicksal” belongs to Eberhard Schulz, editor of the collected volume *Leistung und Schicksal: Abhandlungen und Berichte über den Deutschen im Osten* [Accomplishments and Fate: Essays and Reports about Germans in the East] (Cologne; Graz, 1967). Whenever I cite foreign sources without giving the name of the translator (unless the citation is from an English original or from an existing English translation), the translation is my own – K.Z.

52 Ungern-Sternberg, “*Erzählregionen*,” 133.

countries were a great battlefield, an arena of long and bloody struggles between various invaders—struggles paid for by great sacrifices, also on the part of the local population. Germans did not take part in these wars as belligerents, and assumed the role of observers (best-case scenario), of an oppressed social group, or even of spokesmen and defenders of the independence and religion of the indigenous inhabitants:

When the combined Swedish and Polish-Lithuanian forces succeeded in halting Moscow's advance into the region of the Baltic Sea, and forced Ivan IV to give up Livonia (in the 1582 Treaty of Jam Zapolski), the country which was already extremely weary from the war soon became the object of contention in the Polish-Swedish War of Succession (1597–1629). It was thereby drawn into the historic conflict between Protestantism and the Catholic Counterreformation. In this war, which in the end was settled by the victory of Gustav Adolphus Magnus, it was not insignificant that the German population of Livonia, and especially the Rigan bourgeoisie, staunchly defended its Lutheranism against re-Catholicization and Polonization; and that the aristocracy, with their bitter experience of Poles' violation of the Vilnius Treaty, believed that they had the right to resist and, for the most part, they voluntarily joined the side of the religiously kindred Sweden.⁵³

Here the Germans, as colonizers who were already firmly established in the conquered territory, speak on behalf of the local population's right to self-determination, guaranteed by treaties written by the new invaders. The fact that Latvians and Ests did not take part in this discussion, as they had no opportunity to join in, did not stand in the way of generalizations which asserted that it was the determined attitude of the Baltic Germans, which brought about a situation where "in addition to having its Evangelical religion, the country received the guarantee of enjoying German laws, German administration, and the German language."⁵⁴ Poland and its program of intensive re-Catholicization play the role of the main adversary here. Incidentally, these attitudes of German historiographers make for an interesting contrast with the later identity-related inclinations of Polish Livonians, who wished to preserve the last remaining traces of their "Germanness"—and thus exposed themselves to accusations of double loyalty.

From the perspective of their own understanding of their identity, Baltic Germans found themselves (and probably still find themselves) in an interesting

53 Arved Freiherr von Taube, *Die Deutschbalten—Schicksal und Erbe einer eigenständigen Gemeinschaft* [German Balts: Fate and the Inheritance of an Autonomous Community] (Lüneburg: Carl-Schirren-Gesellschaft, 1973), 26. Reprint of a new and changed edition: Wilfried Schlau, *Die Deutsch-Balten* [German Balts] (Munich: Langen-Müller, 1995).

54 Garleff, "Die Deutschen im Baltikum – Leistung und Schicksal," 48.

situation, since, in contrast to Latvians and Ests, they were not Balts; and when the Latvian and Estonian national movements began to take shape in the 19th century, this criterion constituted one of the key differentiating factors. But they were also not Germans, they never formally belonged to the German state, their “ethnic roots” faded in the Dark Ages (which, in this case, were especially dark). Only twice, in the face of dramatic threats from the East—in the middle of the 16th century and during World War I—did the idea of a political union with the German states arise among the Baltic Germans; in both cases, it did not come to anything, mostly because of the unclear position of the “center.” It was only during World War II that the three Baltic states were incorporated into the German Reich.

1. “Aufsegelung Livlands” (“The Discovery of Livonia”)

The German historical narrative about Livonia typically begins with the landing of the merchants from Lübeck at the mouth of the Daugava River around 1158–59 (various dates are provided); the merchants got lost on their way to the island of Osilia (German: Oesel, Estonian: Saaremaa) or to Visba in Gotland; they were either carried off by the storm, or they simply decided to depart from their planned route in order to look for new trade possibilities. Trading contacts between Germans and Novgorod had been established much earlier, and already in the first half of the 12th century transactions between merchants and trading exchange took place along the Neva River. The arrival of merchant ships at the mouth of the Daugava should therefore be treated not so much as an accident around which legends were subsequently constructed, but rather as an attempt to find a new trade route, which would lead inland and to the East.⁵⁵ To this day, in the town hall in Bremen one can see an 1839 painting by Ludwig von Meydell, showing German merchants trading with the local Livs on the banks of the Daugava; the painting thus perpetuates the myth of a peaceful, partner-like coexistence of the visitors and the locals. In German historiography, this fragment of history has come to be designated by the term “Aufsegelung Livlands,” which roughly means “the Discovery of Livonia”—on the model of the sea voyages of Magellan or Columbus.⁵⁶ This expression is characterized by

55 Philippe Dollinger, *The German Hansa*, trans. Dennis S. Adult and Sigfrid H. Steinberg (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1970), 3–30. The author clearly connects the conquest of the eastern shore of the Baltic with the presence of merchants in Gotland.

56 The word “Aufsegelung” comes from the Low German “upsegeln” and means “reaching the shore,” or “sailing” to a new place. It is actually a neologism used only in

a comfortable neutrality, and it points to civilizational contacts, which were friendly and full of mutual benefits—as displayed in the painting. It also signals a watershed moment for each of the parties in this historic meeting, symbolically establishing, as it were, a turning point in history. As Paul Johansen has shown, however, the myth itself was created much later, and it was probably an invention of one of the scribes who, in the 16th century, copied a 13th-century chronicle written by Henry of Latvia, and simply added the passage about merchants from Bremen. A Polish theme, by the way, was also present in exposing the legend which stifled German historiography for centuries:

Meanwhile in 1862, the Polish librarian August Bielowski found the oldest manuscript of Henry's chronicle from around 1300 in Count Zamoyksi's Warsaw library; in 1865 Carl Schirren compared the manuscript with previously-existing editions and discovered many mistakes, additions, and oversights, and, above all, the fact that an unknown 16th-century scribe added a sentence about the arrival of Bremen merchants at the Livonian port.⁵⁷

As is typically the case, however, the power of legend easily overwhelms scientific arguments, and “Aufsegelung Livlands” continues to function as a descriptive historical category to this day⁵⁸—despite the fact that archaeological excavations and notes in Scandinavian chronicles point to much earlier contacts between Western Europe and Livland.

An undoubtedly important element of the merchant landings, however, was the arrival of Mejnard (German: Meinhard), the first Augustinian missionary whose name has been recorded; he arrived on one of the ships in approximately 1180, and soon founded the first churches in Uexküll (Latvian: Ikšķile) and Kirchholm (Latvian: Salaspils), about 20–25 kilometers upstream from the mouth of the Daugava. Mejnard probably came from Segeberg in Holstein, and his life can be a satisfying subject for historians since, according to the chronicles, he established excellent contacts with the Livs whom he converted en masse, and who gave him permission to build fortified stone-walled castles in the inland territories. In 1184, he was appointed the bishop of Livonia; he peacefully propagated Christianity with great diplomatic skill and eagerness

this context—the conquest of the Baltic countries. See Paul Johansen, “Die Legende von der Aufsegelung Livlands durch Bremer Kaufleute,” in *Europa und Übersee: Festschrift für Egmont Zechlin* [“The Legend about the Discovery of Latvia by Merchants from Bremen,” in *Europe and Overseas: Festschrift for Egmont Zechlin*], ed. Otto Brunner (Hamburg: Verlag Hans Bredov-Institut, 1961), 42–68. Today, German historians tend to agree that the merchants were from Lübeck and not from Bremen.

57 Ibid., 44.

58 This term was last used by Gero von Wilpert, *Deutschbaltische Literaturgeschichte* [History of Baltic-German Literature] (Münich: Beck, 2005).

until his death in 1196. For this reason—according to Manteuffel—he rightly deserves the title of the “Apostle of Livonia.”⁵⁹ The situation changed significantly with the accession of the second bishop, Bertold, who decided to undertake an armed crusade against the Livs and came to Bremen with a powerful Teutonic regiment; he reached Üxküll, attacked, and met his unlucky end in battle (in July 1198), when he was carried by his horse into the ranks of the enemy who supposedly tore him to pieces while he was still alive. Relations between the locals and the invaders worsened to the point, however, where the next Livonian bishop, Albert de Bekeshovede (contemporary spelling: Albert von Buxhoeveden), saw no other way of claiming authority over his diocese than by heading an armed expedition. His considerable diplomatic talents aided him in this endeavor (he gained the favor of several important Low-German princes), as did the favor of Pope Innocent III, who called the faithful to “defend the Livonian Church” in a bull from October 1199, and announced that the expedition to Livonia was equivalent to a pilgrimage to Rome. He also made Albert the commander of the newly organized crusade.

Albert arrived in Livonia in the spring of 1200, heading a fleet of 23 ships and 1500 people, driven by a strong determination to strengthen the Christian mission along the eastern Baltic, primarily through building a separate bishopric there. He knew his two predecessors personally, and was perfectly aware of the complex cultural mosaic which already existed in these lands—a place where interests of local Liv leaders clashed with those of Ruthene princes (from Polotsk, Pskov, and Novgorod), with Kievan Rus, and with Dutchmen, who managed to establish their own colony in the territory of today’s Estonia. In order to assert his position in this difficult situation, Albert had to take decisive action. During his first meeting with the Lithuanian leaders from Turaida (German: Treiden, Treyden), he imprisoned them and forced them to give up their sons so that they would be brought up in Germany and prepared for priesthood. He used the sons as hostages, and unscrupulously resorted to extortion against the fathers. Even though available information suggests that he was simply a brutal and ruthless ruler, German historiography tends to emphasize his far-sightedness, effectiveness in realizing his plans, determination in action, and great diplomatic skill.⁶⁰

59 Gustaw Manteuffel, “Inflanty Polskie poprzedzone ogólnym rzutem oka na siedmiowiekową przeszłość całych Inflant” [Polish Livonia, with a Brief Overview of the 700-year History of all of Livonia], in Manteuffel, *Pisma Wybrane* [Selected Writings], ed. Krzysztof Zajac, vol. 1 (Krakow: Universitas, 2009), 1.

60 Volker baron von Buxhoeveden and Christina von Buxhoeveden-Reuter describe Bishop Albert’s personality in an interesting manner—though not without a certain tendency to whitewash his image—in “Bischof Albert: Historische Gestalt und

Albert earned a permanent place in Livonian history as a double founder: of the city of Riga and of the Livonian Brothers of the Sword. In 1201, he marked the place where the future capital of Latvia would be, with the intention of creating a trading port and an authentic merchant city on the right bank of the mouth of the Daugava. For this purpose, while building the city and the castle where he later moved the episcopal capital from Üxküll, he introduced special customs and tax exemptions for merchants and issued guarantees, which protected their wares from pirate robberies. He was able to enlist the participation of German merchants from Gotland, thanks to which the port quickly expanded its trading activity and helped the city develop rapidly. In order to emphasize the spiritual dimension of his conquests, he entrusted the new lands to the care of the Virgin Mary, and introduced the term *Terra Mariana* to refer to them. While planning to create an autonomous ecclesiastical state on the shores of the Baltic Sea, Albert had not only to win political and economic support from Germany, but also organize a military force capable of defending the new state's borders. He satisfied the first requirement by means of an extensive propaganda campaign, focused especially on northern Germany, from where German warriors and civilian settlers came to populate Riga. To meet the second requirement he needed to create a permanent military contingent. This is how the idea of the Brotherhood of the Sword first arose.

2. The Livonian Brothers of the Sword

Allegedly, the idea that a knightly monastic order modeled on Knights Templar should be brought to Livonia came from Albert's advisor Theodorich, a Cistercian abbot from Diament (German: Dünamünde, Latvian: Daugavgrīva), who obtained the Pope's permission to found the order in 1202. Albert himself was more inclined to bring German gentry to the region and let them settle there, so that once they felt at home they could become a reservoir of recruits for the

Persönlichkeit" [Bishop Albert: Historical Profile and Personality], *Jahrbuch des baltischen Deutschtums* 50 (2003): 18–28. See also the monograph by Gisela von Gnegel-Waitschies, *Bischof Albert von Riga: ein Bremer Domherr als Kirchenfürst im Osten 1199–1229* [Bishop Albert from Riga: The Bremen Priest as a Church Official in the East, 1199–1229] (Hamburg: Velmede, 1958). An excellent introduction to the history of medieval Livonia is provided by the extensive collected volume *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas: Baltische Länder* [History of the Germans in the East of Europe: The Baltic Countries], ed. Gert von Pistohlkors (Berlin: Siedler Verlag, 1994). Heinz von zur Mühlen is the author of the chapter "Livland von der Christianisierung bis zum Ende seiner Selbstständigkeit" [Livonia between Christianization and the End of Independence].

armed forces necessary for new conquests. Theodoric was, however, a proponent of a permanent and obedient military force. The popular name of the Livonian Brothers of the Sword (its official name was *Fratres Militiae Christi de Livonia* or Brothers of Christ's Militia in Livonia) came from the red cross and sword, which was the emblem and battle insignia worn by the brothers on their cloaks. Volunteers were recruited primarily from among knightly German families, though sometimes the sons of the bourgeoisie were also recruited, especially to the so-called ancillary brotherhood; soon, the new formation counted approximately 1,700 armed knights.⁶¹ Those who would like more detailed information about the order should consult the relevant scholarly sources, but it is worth mentioning here that despite the brothers' vows of poverty, the Order quickly developed an appetite for goods from conquered territories; it also wanted to create its own state, since they were formally subject to the Bishop of Riga, who obtained the rank of prince in 1225.⁶² Struggles between the Holy Roman Empire and the pope in Western Europe affected the Christian periphery by causing, among other things, local authorities to tolerate one another reluctantly and often resort to accusations of disloyalty, treason, and the abandonment of religious priorities. After a few years of strong tensions, Bishop Albert gave the Order a third of the lands taken from the Livs, and in this way two small competing missionary states were created in Livonia. German history became fragmented into the lawless autonomy of bishops and equally lawless autonomy of the monastic order.

During the thirty years of their energetic "missionary" activity, the Livonian Brotherhood of the Sword managed to march through nearly all of today's Latvia and Estonia, and reach the island of Osilia, pushing out the Danes and making it possible for Albert von Buxhoeveden to appoint bishops who were subject to him. It is from these appointments that we learn, among other things,

61 See Marian Biskup, "Uformowanie się duchownych władztw terytorialnych w średniowiecznych Inflantach i ich granice państwowe" [The Formation of Ecclesiastical Territorial Governments and their State Borders in Medieval Livonia], in *Inflanty w Średniowieczu* [Livonia in the Middle Ages], ed. Marian Biskup (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2002), 11.

62 The most interesting works about the Livonian Brotherhood of the Sword include: Friedrich Benninghoven, *Der Orden der Schwertbrüder: Fratres milicie Christi de Livonia* [Brothers of the Sword: *Fratres Militiae Christi de Livonia*] (Cologne: Böhlau, 1965); Lutz Fenske and Klaus Militzer, *Ritterbrüder im livländischen Zweig des Deutschen Ordens* [Knights in the Livonian Branch of the German Order] (Cologne: Böhlau, 1993); Biskup, *Inflanty w Średniowieczu* [Livonia in the Middle Ages]; and William Urban, *The Teutonic Knights: A Military History* (London: Greenhill, 2003)—and especially chapter 6: "The Crusade in Livonia," 79–108.

about the conquest of the Courlandish, Selonian, and Semigallian bishoprics. The Order thus gained control over all Livonian lands, except for the territory which would later become Polish Livonia—it was ruled by Ruthene princes at the time, and it would fall into the hands of the Brotherhood only toward the end of the 13th century. The Brotherhood's expedition south, which was intended to conquer the Lithuanians, and which ended with the death of Grand Master Volquin and a crushing defeat in the Battle of Saule in 1236, was a grave mistake.⁶³ Given this situation, the Brothers determined that their only option was to join the Teutonic Order, which was quite successful in Prussia, and the merger took place in Rome in 1237. From then on historians begin to talk about the Teutonic-Livonian Order.

The Brothers' growing power and the ambitions of the bishops of Riga were a source of constant conflicts in the German colony; and there were also numerous feuds and divisions among bishops who formed their own armies, built fortified castles, and promulgated their own local laws. Until the beginning of the 16th century, six centers of power on Livonian territories were controlled by the Brotherhood and the clergy—one of these was monastic, one urban, and four connected with the church.⁶⁴ If we also take into account the temporary influences and territorial annexations carried out by Danes, Ruthene princes, Letts, Livs, Ests and Lithuanians, we get a multicultural formation characteristic of *non-homeland states* from Walker Connor's classification.⁶⁵ Given such complicated political constellations, successes could be claimed by those who—like von Buxhoeveden—were capable of entering into multilateral negotiations, yielding and entering alliances, sometimes by means of knights' marriages with Liv and Ruthene princesses. The Brothers of the Sword proved to have few talents in this realm; they dug in their heels and resorted to blunt terror, which only multiplied the number of their enemies. Not only did they lose the

63 A suggestive description of this battle can be found in Urban, *The Teutonic Knights*, 86–88.

64 Detailed information about this (along with relevant maps) is provided by Janusz Tandecki in “*Struktury i podziały administracyjne w zakonie krzyżackim w Inflantach z Estonią*” [Structures and Administrative Divisions in the Teutonic Order in Livonia and Estonia], in *Inflanty w Średniowieczu* [Livonia in the Middle Ages], ed. Marian Biskup, 43–54.

65 See Walker Connor, *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994), 76–81. Here, I draw on remarks about Connor made by Wojciech J. Burszta in a very useful review of anthropological theories that have a bearing on cultural studies in *Antropologia kultury: tematy, teorie, interpretacje* [The Anthropology of Culture: Topics, Theories, Interpretations] (Poznań: Zysk i S-ka, 1998), 143–144. On contemporary multiculturalism see *ibid.*, 150.

sympathy of papal circles, they also squandered their military power, as they were incapable of guaranteeing an adequate economic base for it. Their conflicts with all of their neighbors were doubtless among the most important reasons for their downfall:

If the Swordbrother organisation had great strengths, it also had weaknesses. Foremost of these was its need for more convents in Germany. This lack of local contacts made sustained recruiting drives difficult and hindered efforts to solicit contributions among the faithful; also, incomes from estates would have eased the order's chronic financial crisis. Secondly, the Swordbrothers' revenues from Livonian taxes and their own estates were insufficient to hire enough mercenaries (...). This perennial financial crisis drove them to expand their holdings in the hope of increasing the number of 'converts' who would pay tribute and provide the warriors (...). This resulted in conflicts with the king of Denmark over Estonia; with the Lithuanians (...) and with the Rus'ians, especially those in Nowogrod.⁶⁶

William Urban put “converts” in quotation marks not only to point out the disingenuous nature of official justifications of ruthless invasions, but also to mark the conventionality of the very system of Christianization, which was often limited to a few symbolic gestures. From the point of view of the Livs, Christianization was not permanent, and it was dictated by immediate political interests rather than by profound experiences of conversion.⁶⁷ In essence, the order was mostly concerned with gaining new sources of income through tributes, feudal obligations, and similar forms of providing for the church. In the conquered territories, the Brotherhood carried out general and superficial baptism ceremonies, extorted tributes for sacral purposes, and left behind a garrison, which was to oversee expressions of piety and, with even greater zeal,

66 Urban, *The Teutonic Knights*, 86.

67 In the chronicles, we encounter reports about natives who, soon after being baptized, washed the baptism off in Daugava's waters, in order to return to their pagan practices; Gustaw Manteuffel provides an intriguing description of these: “In various wild clearings in the forest they [the Latvians—K.Z.] bowed to “sacred trees,” in front of which, during times known only to them, they brought their own 90-year-old priest who gave their triple offering: a *black* ox, a *black* rooster, and a keg of *black* beer. At the end, they offered their deities eggs, butter, smoked cheeses, suet, and a *black* ram, after which, having already killed the ox and the rooster, they performed their own dances and celebrated their own feast.”— G. Manteuffel, *Z dziejów Kościoła w Inflantach i Kurlandyi (od XVI-go do XX-go stulecia)* [From the History of the Church in Livonia and Courland (from the 16th to the 20th Century)] (Warsaw: Druk “Gazety Rolniczej,” 1905), 9, probably citing Leonard Napiersky, ed., *Die Annalen des Jesuiten-Collegiums in Riga 1604–1618* [Annals of the Rigan Jesuit Collegium, 1604–1618], in *Mitteilungen aus dem Gebiete der Geschichte Liv-, Est- und Kurlands* [Information about the History of Latvia, Estonia, and Courland], 14 (1890), 364–386.

collect regular income and deliveries. The region remained under the influence of the Christian faith so long as the garrison was able to maintain its position (i.e., stay alive); after the garrison was dismantled, everything returned to its previous state. Christianization therefore resembled Sisyphean work; it seemed like a battle against a seven-headed monster—the heads were constantly growing back while there were fewer and fewer knights, and the problem of finding fresh replacements only became more urgent.

The bishops carried out somewhat different policies—they brought in gentry from Germany to settle in the occupied lands, gave them vast possessions and, in accordance with the ideology of the crusades, promised them eternal salvation. The aristocracy was followed by scores of burghers, merchants, and peasants, and so over the course of a hundred years, starting at the beginning of the 14th century, most of the cities in the Livonian territory were inhabited by Germans, and all of Livonia, together with Latgale, was in the hands of the Brotherhood and the Church. Only northern Estonia was held by the Danes (it was bought by the Brotherhood in 1345). It is worth noting, by the way, that the Teutonic-Livonian Order controlled approximately 60% of the Livonian lands, while the bishops controlled only 40%. The medieval Baltic-German Livonia was something like a federation, which consisted of five church republics.⁶⁸ In 1255, an archbishopric was established in Riga, which complicated the spheres of influence even more.

3. The Ecclesiastical State of the Teutonic-Livonian Order

In 1242, the Teutonic-Livonian Order suffered a crushing defeat at Lake Peipus at the hands of Prince Alexander of Novgorod (whose sobriquet Nevsky referred to his victory over the Swedes on the banks of the Neva River in 1240), but it nonetheless kept consistently expanding its territories until it controlled all of today's Latvia and Estonia. In 1330, the Order also managed to subjugate the Bishop of Riga, and thereby became practically the sole ruler of Livonia. Admittedly, feuds and conflicts with bishops lasted throughout the 14th century, but the Order's military power proved decisive. Formally, the Livonian Confederation was integrated into the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, but it nonetheless functioned largely independently; it had its own law (the so-called Livonian law), judiciary, monetary and financial systems, and so

68 See Biskup, "Uformowanie się duchownych władztw terytorialnych" [The Formation of Ecclesiastical Territorial Governments], 13.

on. Internally, there were permanent feuds, especially concerning the economy (G. Manteuffel says: “*Business* was the only thing that inspired action”);⁶⁹ externally, however, state structures appeared to be fairly uniform, the general *sejm* [parliament] sessions were held regularly, and a unified policy of Christianization was in effect. The Livonian ecclesiastical-monastic Confederation presented itself as a separate state, or at least it voiced such aspirations from time to time.⁷⁰ It also does not seem that its paradigm of separateness stood out against European norms of the time, where the proliferation of separate duchies was the rule (e.g. the entire Italian Peninsula was divided into several dozen tiny states). As a result, Livonia’s dubious incorporation into Germany—and therefore also its linkage with the German cultural heritage—still commands the attention of certain historians today, and provides a good pretext for denying linkages with one of the bloodiest of all colonization projects. One cannot easily claim that something like Livonian nationality emerged, but the description “Livonian” started to designate a certain set of sociological, political, and cultural features which were, above all, linked to the fluidity of borders and criteria, multilingualism, and separatist ambitions.

When encountering the ruins of the numerous medieval castles, which adorn the landscape of the Baltic states today, we should remember that most of them were built in the first half of the 18th century; in contrast, castles in the region that would later become Polish Livonia were built in the second half of the 13th century and at the beginning of the 14th. They were often built with haste, situated where previously there had been pagan strongholds; much effort was put into their construction since maintaining control of the surrounding territory depended on the durability and defensive capability of the castles. The dates of

69 Manteuffel, *Inflanty Polskie* [Polish Livonia], 3.

70 At a conference in Toruń in 1988, the Estonian researcher Priit Raudkivi protested against using the term “ecclesiastical-monastic state,” and insisted that—unlike in Prussia—such a state did not exist in Livonia. See Priit Raudkivi, “Historia zakonu krzyżackiego jako część historii Lotwy i Estonii (XIII w. – I połowa XVI w.)” [The History of the Teutonic Order as Part of the History of Latvia and Estonia (from the 13th Century to the First Half of the 16th Century)], in *Ekspansja niemieckich zakonów rycerskich w strefie Bałtyku od XIII do połowy XVII wieku* [The Expansion of German Knightly Orders in the Baltic Region from the 13th to the Middle of the 17th Century], ed. Marian Biskup (Toruń: Towarzystwo Naukowe, 1990), 85–92. Setting aside the author’s risky arguments—which try to prove that before 1159 Baltic countries were a federation of small independent states, each with a developed administration and economy, which also included, for example, seaports—it is worth noting that stubborn problems attended Livonia’s coming into existence from the very beginning. Postcolonial historiography written by researchers from the Baltic states is, paradoxically, the newest “negation” of Livonian existence.

the erection of these castles make it possible to trace the speed and extent of the military undertakings of the Teutonic Order, which pressed both north and east, paying no heed to the important ideological fact that it was entering the lands of Eastern Orthodox Christianity.⁷¹ The number and size of these structures arouses both admiration and questions about the means that had to be amassed, materials that had to be transported, and people who had to be forced to work in order to build over a hundred castles during the course of several decades! The castles which survived intact seem very large even today; they still arouse respect, a feeling which must have been incomparably greater during the Middle Ages. They were built as a system of defenses against local rulers; with time, however, these castles—and especially those located in Latgale—gained the character of a bulwark of western Christianity against aggressive Eastern Orthodoxy. Or at least this was the argument used by the Teutonic Grand Masters when they addressed Rome and the German and Dutch princes in whose domains they sought support and new recruits.⁷² A religious pretext was also associated with an important political argument: the Baltic colony belongs to Western civilization, and as such it requires protection against invasions from the east and the north. Manteuffel would later reference this ideological premise in the title of one of his books on Livonian culture.⁷³

The population structure of the Teutonic state had all the features of multi-ethnicity that develops in colonial situations; there was the typical division between urban centers, formed by the newly arriving foreigners, and the countryside, which evolved according to the customs of the local population. Germans were a majority in large Livonian cities. In Riga, they constituted more than half of the population, while Latvians and Livs accounted for 33%, and the Ruthene minority accounted for approximately 20%; in Reval (today's Tallinn) Germans accounted for approximately 40% of the population, Ests for another 40%, and Swedes for 20%. These cities were thus multiethnic, and they were

71 For a thorough description of the structure, architecture, and functionality of Livonian castles see Marian Arsyński, “Średniowieczne budownictwo warowne na obszarze Inflant” [Medieval Defensive Structures in the Livonian Lands], in *Inflanty w Średniowieczu* [Livonia in the Middle Ages], ed. Marian Biskup, 75–105.

72 When we encounter the confusion of the terms “Livonian” and “Dutch,” such as that which takes place, for example, in the anecdotes about Zagłoba, perhaps one of the reasons for this is the Dutch ancestry of some of the Teutonic-Livonian knights, as well as the close trade and cultural ties between the Hanseatic cities, to which nearly all larger Livonian ports belonged.

73 Gustaw Manteuffel, *Cywilizacja, literatura i sztuka w dawnej kolonii zachodniej nad Bałtykiem* [Civilization, Literature, and Art of the Old Western Colony on the Baltic Sea] (Krakow: Spółka Wydawnicza Polska, 1897).

also diverse in terms of their laws and legal systems.⁷⁴ Since the middle of the 14th century, in Riga there were laws which discriminated against the local population (which was collectively designated by the term “Undeutsche” or Non-Germans); for example, they were not allowed to enter merchant guilds, buy real estate, or brew beer. Urban centers nonetheless offered a large job market, attracted local peasants, and offered a way of escaping from countryside areas, which were particularly exposed and vulnerable to plunder. This last argument was especially important in small towns and villages built around castles, which provided the best protection and which were constructed with the idea that they would provide shelter for the townsfolk during attacks. We are talking about lands where invasions were among the most permanent features of experience, and they were also a centuries-long source of trauma. A 1582 memorandum from Livonian gentry to Jan Zamoyski testifies to the role and importance of stone castles in the area; among other claims, it makes a case against demolishing old castles or altering their defensive features which had served the local population for centuries.⁷⁵ Social life was characterized by both discrimination and protection. The castles were initially built as a defensive measure against the attacks of local indigenous tribes; later they sheltered Latvian Christians from the aggression of Latvian pagans and Orthodox Ruthene princes, and in the south they provided protection against Lithuanians who attacked Livonia both as pagans and as Christians.⁷⁶ There was no single ideology, no single cohesive program which could sensibly explain all the divisions which determined the shape and functioning of the “Livonian Confederation”—unless we remain with the intriguing notion of business.

4. The Hanseatic League

Merchants’ trade interests accompanied German colonization of the Baltic region from the very beginning, and for centuries these interests dictated the

74 See Roman Czaja, “Miasta inflanckie i estońskie w XIII–XVI wieku” [Livonian and Estonian Cities between the 13th and the 16th Century] in *Inflanty w Średniowieczu* [Livonia in the Middle Ages], ed. Marian Biskup, 55–74.

75 See Józef Siemieński, *Archiwum Jana Zamoyskiego, kanclerza i hetmana wielkiego koronnego* [The Archive of Jan Zamoyski, Chancellor of the Crown and Grand Crown Hetman] vol. 3: 1582–1584 (Warsaw: Druk F. Wyszyńskiego i S-ki, 1913), 126–129.

76 One should see it as an example of historical irony that in the 16th century, after these lands were incorporated into the Commonwealth, the crews defending most of the castles were Lithuanian, as shown by military inspections from 1582 and 1599. Defense was directed mainly against invasions from the East.

conditions in which Livonia kept evolving. The construction of large ports in Riga, Vindava (Latvian: Ventspils), Reval (Tallinn), and Parnava (Estonian: Pärnu) served, above all, the goal of facilitating efficient transport of goods imported from and exported to Europe. The main exports included hides and wax, and later also wood, flax, hemp, and suet; when agricultural production of large landed estates became more efficient, and their products started to meet western standards, grains (especially rye) and beer became important export products as well. Cloth, non-ferrous metals, iron wares (including arms), salt, spices, and wine were brought from Europe; they dominate the bills of lading preserved from the ports in Reval and Riga.⁷⁷ Once the borders of the Livonian state were more or less established, the Teutonic Order began building an internal infrastructure system to support efficient handling of imported products. Waterway connections with the east, a dense network of castles and fortifications, which made it easy to protect merchant transports, large numbers of subjects forced to perform slave labor—these and similar factors placed medieval Livonia among countries whose state apparatus was organized in the best and most modern of ways; this in turn, as Henryk Samsonowicz has argued, quickly resulted in great wealth:

77 See Norbert Angermann, “Die Bedeutung Livlands für die Hanse,” in *Die Hanse und der Deutsche Osten* [The Significance of Livonia for the Hanseatic League: The Hanseatic League and the German East], ed. Norbert Angermann (Lüneburg: Nordostdeutsches Kulturwerk, 1990), 97–115. The Hanseatic League in Livonia has been analyzed exhaustively by Paul Johansen, “Die Bedeutung Hanse für Livland” [The Significance of the Hanseatic League for Livonia], *Hansische Geschichtsblätter* 2, no. 65/66 (1941/1940): 1–55; Friedrich Benninghoven, *Rigas Entstehung und der frühhanseische Kaufmann* [Early Hanseatic Trade and the Foundation of Riga] (Hamburg: August Friedrich Velmede Verlag, 1961); Johannes Schildhauer, *The Hansa: History and Culture*, trans. Katherine Vanovitch (Ed. Leipzig: Dorset Press, 1986); Kurt von Schloezer, *Die Hansa und der deutsche Ritterorden in den Ostseeländern* [The Hanseatic League and the German Knightly Order in the Baltic Countries] (Wiesbaden: VMA-Verlag, 1981); the following works can also be recommended as useful sources of information: Henryk Samsonowicz, *Hanza władczyńi mórz* [The Hanseatic League: Ruler of the Seas] (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1958); Uwe Ziegler, *Die Hanse: Aufstieg, Blütezeit und Niedergang der ersten europäischen Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft: eine Kulturgeschichte von Handel und Wandel zwischen 13. und 17. Jahrhundert* [The Hanseatic League: Emergence, Blossoming, and Downfall of the First European Economic Community: A History of the World of Trade between the 13th and the 17th Centuries] (Bern: Scherz, 1994). Philippe Dollinger’s impressive monograph about the Hanseatic League is a true compendium of knowledge: *The German Hansa*, trans. Dennis S. Adult and Sigfrid H. Steinberg (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1970). To learn more about the situation of the League in Polish and Livonian cities see *ibid.*, 230–237.

Together with the development of exchange between Eastern and Western Europe, Teutonic Knights organized state trade, creating a system, which was practically unparalleled in medieval Europe. (...) [W]e know that there was an extensive bureaucratic infrastructure (...) responsible for providing advance payments to producers, buying goods, transporting them to Western European states, and transporting and selling products, which were in demand...⁷⁸

The Livonian Confederation thus had a modern banking system (which, among other things, established an extensive network of credit operations, advance payments, etc.). The Confederation also had a modern taxation system, as well as a complex administrative apparatus; it organized and oversaw production, services, and trade, guaranteed secure transport of goods (for which it charged hefty sums), and constantly entered into new trade agreements with neighboring states. Samsonowicz also points to the particular role played by the Teutonic state in Europe, since it combined the functions of an ecclesiastical corporation and a knightly organization, and claimed to be the representative of Christianity in the borderlands of civilization; its Grand Masters, moreover, were princes who enjoyed great prestige and maintained extensive diplomatic relations with European courts.⁷⁹

The monastic state was thereby also an important trading partner for German and Dutch port cities, which, because of their participation in the early stages of the colonization of the region, rightfully claimed they had a right to special benefits and advantages. Historians disagree about the precise moment of the formation of the Hanseatic League, but 1159 is one of the proposed dates, and German colonization of Livonia began exactly at that time. This confluence is understandable since the first landing at the mouth of the Daugava River was inspired by trade; it was the undertaking of merchants from the Gotland merchant guild. By the 14th century, the Hanseatic League was extraordinarily large; it included approximately 160 cities around the Baltic Sea and controlled practically all sea trade. Because trade with the East was one of the main sources of revenue, the efficient organization of the monastic state and its close proximity to Novgorod, Polotsk, and Pskov was an important bargaining asset.⁸⁰

78 Henryk Samsonowicz, "Gospodarcza ekspansja Zakonu krzyżackiego nad Bałtykiem w XIV i na początku XV w." [The Economic Expansion of the Teutonic Order in the Baltic Region in the 14th and Early 15th Centuries], in *Ekspansja niemieckich zakonów rycerskich* [Expansion of the German Knightly Orders], ed. Marian Biskup, 148.

79 *Ibid.*, 147.

80 The location of Livonia on the transit route between Russia and the Baltic was dominant if not decisive here. The task of the Teutonic-Livonian knights was to make trade with Novgorod as easy as possible; one of the main trading houses of the Hanseatic League was located in Novgorod. Trade with the East was seen as one of the main sources of

It is difficult to unambiguously determine whether it was the trade aspect of their conquests that brought about Teutonic-Livonian successes, or whether the victories of the “knights of the Holy Virgin Mary” enlivened trade and made it more dynamic. In either case, there is no doubt that the connection between religious and material interests was close and permanent. Just as in earlier times Popes supported the formation of the Teutonic order by calling for participants to join the Baltic crusades, they later continued the work of cultivating faith by giving commanders successive economic monopolies, and granting them princely titles in their conquered lands.⁸¹

Connections between religion, politics, and economic interests are very obvious in the history of colonialism, and there is no need for us to provide arguments that show such connections. A knight who was setting out to conquer pagan lands would take along a priest, who provided the necessary ideological pretexts, and a merchant, who provided adequate economic support. In fact, it is difficult to judge exactly who took whom along, since in the history of Livonia it seems that the merchants were first. For our purposes, it is the result of colonization that matters, namely, the founding of a Confederation which existed for 400 years, and which bore all the marks of an independent territorial organization. It had its own foreign policy, and a strong and modern economic basis. The wealth of Livonian cities soon reached mythological proportions; as members of the Hanseatic League, Riga, Reval and Dorpat equaled the wealthiest Western European cities, and their architectural styles and internal

the wealth of both Livonian cities and the entire League: “According to a general conviction, the historic role which the Livonian cities played in trade stemmed precisely from the fact that they were transit points for trade with Russia. The wealth which characterized Livonian cities in the years before the Livonian Wars, was thus to have come primarily from trade with Russian Duchies—trade which, in a more general sense, started to be seen as an inexhaustible source of wealth for the Hanseatic League.” Angermann, “Die Bedeutung Livlands für die Hanse,” 100.

- 81 A detailed compilation of the most important facts of the Livonian ecclesiastical state can be found in Harry von Pistohlkors’ *Livlands Kampf um deutschtum und Kultur; eine Übersicht aller bedeutungsvollen Ereignisse aus der Geschichte der alten Ordensgebietes Livlands* [Livonia’s Fight for Germanness and Culture: A Review of All the Significant Events from the History of the Old Monastic Territories in Livonia] (Berlin: Puttkammer & Mühlbrecht, 1918). Although this book is written from the perspective of the Baltic-German *Kulturträger* and begins with words which are symptomatic of the colonial thought process—“History is the most valuable good of the nation. Livonia [In 1917 there was no Latvia yet—K.Z.] owes its statehood to the creative pressure (*Schaffensdrang*) exerted by the German nation”—it nonetheless presents facts rather thoroughly. One should use the provided facts and ignore the propagandizing tendencies.

organization were extremely similar to those of their Western European counterparts. Their position within the Hanseatic League was strong since they constituted something of an East-Baltic regional league within the Hansa framework; they also had a common economic policy. They strove for independence and, in the course of the 14th century, they achieved it to such an extent that they became equal partners for Lübeck, which had originally initiated the formation of the League.⁸² Germans constituted the active core of the aristocratic and bourgeois population of these cities, and they also accounted for the largest percentage of settlers in conquered territories. The recruitment of ever more knights to serve in the monastic order resulted in internal differentiation of the population of the colonizers; they were divided into old “entrenched” settlers, who had lived in these lands for generations, and “recent and forward-pushing” settlers, who increasingly found themselves in the position of “foreigners” vis-à-vis former settlers. Although no separate “Livonian nationality” emerged, in 15th-century monastic registers recruits were divided into foreigners and Livonians, while Rigan, Revalian, and Dorpatian merchants formed their own guilds to protect their common interests. If to this we add the missionaries who were learning Latvian and Estonian—not only to spread the Gospel, but also to establish closer contacts with the Latvian peasants—and the Ruthene and Scandinavian merchants who settled in large cities, we get an image of Livonia as a dynamic, multinational, and differentiated society with its own character. This process proceeded until the end of the 15th century, and its importance became poignantly clear when the

82 Initial rivalry among Livonian cities, and their individual trade relations with Lübeck, was transformed into a strong sense of community and competition with Lübeck. See Ilgvars Misāns, “Riga, Dorpat und Reval im Spannungsfeld zwischen den wendischen und preußischen Städten vom Ende des 14. bis zur Mitte des 15. Jahrhunderts” [Riga, Dorpat, and Reval in the Field of Tensions between Prussian and Wenden Cities, from the End of the 14th Century to the Middle of the 15th Century] in *Prusy i Inflanty między średniowieczem a nowożytnością: państwo – społeczeństwo – kultura* [Prussia and Livonia between the Middle Ages and Modernity: State, Society, Culture], ed. Bogusław Dybaś and Dariusz Makiłła (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2003), 29–43. Misāns emphasizes the economic self-subsistence of Livonian cities in the context of the general independence of the ecclesiastical-monastic state. See also, Marian Biskup, “Livland als politischer Faktor im Ostseeraum zur Zeit der Kalmarer Union” [Livonia as a Political Factor in the Baltic Region during the Kalmar Union], in *Der Deutsche Orden in der Zeit der Kalmarer Union, 1397–1521* [The German Order in the Time of the Kalmar Union, 1397–1521], ed. Zenon H. Nowak and Roman Czaja (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 1999), 99–133.

Teutonic Order fell and the Livonian Confederation ceased to exist⁸³—an historical moment when Rigan burghers identified as “tutejsi” [locals] against the new Polish and Russian colonizers.

5. The End of the Teutonic State and the Beginnings of Dependence

When in 1525 the Teutonic Knights succumbed to the so-called secularization, and the independent Teutonic Prussian state was dismantled, the Livonian Confederation was still doing quite well. After the 1502 victory of the Livonian Master Wolter von Plettenberg over Moscow’s army in a battle on the shores of Lake Smolina (near Pskov), a peace treaty was signed for 55 years, providing a relative sense of security for the Teutonic Order. In 1553, however, Tsar Ivan IV the Terrible once again demanded the payment of tributes, and the Order found itself facing war with Russia. Moscow’s armies entered Livonian territories in 1558, thereby starting the first Livonian War, which lasted 25 years. Master Gotthard Kettler started to feverishly search for allies among his neighbors; he started with Sweden, but Swedes were only interested in Estonia which they promptly occupied. The Commonwealth was the closest of the great powers, and negotiations were soon undertaken to pull Poland into the war for Livonia. This initiated several hundred years of Polish presence in the northeastern borderlands.⁸⁴

83 Bogusław Dybaś proposes to call this form of statehood the “Livonian Confederation”; see Bogusław Dybaś, “Problemy integracji terytoriów inflanckich z Rzeczpospolitą w drugiej połowie XVII wieku: przypadek piltyński” [The Problems of Integrating Livonian Territories into the Commonwealth in the Second Half of the 17th Century: The Piltene Case], in *Prusy i Inflanty między średniowieczem a nowożytnością* [Prussia and Livonia between the Middle Ages and Modernity], ed. Bogusław Dybaś and Dariusz Makieła, 169.

84 Doris Marszk relates the course of these negotiations in detail in “Polen-Litauen und der Untergang Alt-Livlands” [The Polish-Lithuanian State and the Decline of Livonia], *Nordost-Archiv* 90 (1988): 57–80. The text suggests that this kind of solution, based on the Prussian model, was already considered earlier, before the conflict with Moscow, whose aggression only hastened the decision. See also Gustaw Manteuffel, *Upadek państwa inflanckiego* [The Downfall of the Livonian State] (Lviv, 1894), copied from *Przewodnik naukowy i literacki* [Scholarly and Literary Guide]; Heyde, “Kość niezgody – Inflanty w polityce wewnętrznej Rzeczypospolitej w XVI–XVII wieku” [Bone of Contention: Livonia in the Domestic Politics of the Commonwealth in the 16th and 17th Centuries].

Because of its economic condition, its geopolitical position, and its military weakness, which followed the secularization of the Teutonic Knights in Prussia, Livonia seemed like an obvious target for Moscow's attack. Livonia, as was already mentioned, was responsible for the transportation of goods from almost the entire vast Russian state (which grew twelve-fold between the middle of the 15th century and 1584!), and it derived immense profits from this; control of this region thus *de facto* meant control of trade with Europe. The effectiveness, wealth, and domination of the Hanseatic League gave rise to understandable imperialist designs, especially in the Baltic Sea basin, which is why the war for the so-called *dominium maris Baltici* focused in largely on Livonia. Because from our perspective the history of Livonia is also, to a certain degree, a history of Livonian paradoxes, we should note one more paradox here: Livonia had been settled by German colonizers but Germany did not participate in the war to control Livonia. For Moscow, this war (the so-called Northern War) was linked to the pressing problem of gaining access to the Baltic Sea and thereby winning economic independence from Hanseatic intermediaries; for Sweden and Denmark it was a means of breaking the Hanseatic League's maritime monopoly, and asserting control over Baltic navigation; for the Livonian Confederation it was a battle for survival.

Livonians had many reasons for entering a vassal relationship with Poland:

- a) the example of the Prussian Homage, thanks to which the Hohenzollerns—by a cunning maneuver used to create an ambiguous incorporation treaty—saved themselves from obvious military defeat and downfall, meanwhile preserving their holdings and some of their influence;
- b) the attractive privileges enjoyed by Polish gentry appeared to the Livonian aristocracy as a chance for preserving, or even reinforcing, their domination in the social hierarchy of Livonia;
- c) Poland's military power could guarantee effective resistance against invasions from Moscow
- d) among neighboring states, Poland had closest connections with the Roman-Catholic church, and it was therefore most susceptible to the Teutonic Order's traditional ideological arguments about the "bulwark of Christianity."

This last condition was certainly important for the Catholic members of the Livonian aristocracy; among German settlers, however, it mostly caused vehement resistance against Polish rulers, and became the most often repeated justification for unyielding hostility. By the same token, it contributed to the emergence of the first fierce internal conflicts within Livonia immediately after

incorporation.⁸⁵ The difficulties were caused by Livonian Protestants, who entered into sharp conflicts with Catholics (from whom they had just taken land) during the Reformation and the Counterreformation; they also introduced—often by force—new rites among the subject population, an action favored by local feudal law:

The anti-Church revolt made it possible for those city governments which declared their support for the Reformation to claim authority over Church-related matters. Starting in the middle of the twenties [1520s—K.Z], Church property was requisitioned, and new liturgical rites were introduced in many localities. This process was crowned by a formal declaration, made at the beginning of 1533, in which Livonian cities recognized Luther's teachings as binding. (...) [T]he simultaneous reinforcement of Lutheran influences among the gentry in the thirties and forties made the victory of the Reformation possible in the countryside, since the privilege of patronage made it possible for owners of landed estates to assign parishes to candidates of their own choosing.⁸⁶

Apparently, the original version of the Polish–Livonian treaty—which, after long negotiations and many alterations, was signed in Vilnius on November 28, 1561—was lost soon after it was signed; only copies were available in public and private archives, and their credibility could be undermined according to one's needs:

The original of the *Privilegium Sigismundi Augusti* soon disappeared. For a long time afterwards, doubts issued from various quarters, questioning whether King Sigismund II Augustus actually granted these privileges in Vilnius, or whether the document was rather a list of wishes and expectations constructed by representatives of the Teutonic Order. In either case, the text was a basic guideline for the Baltic-

85 The very word “incorporation” is not the most fortunate, and a precise description of the object and the result of the agreement between the Commonwealth and Livonia is not available. For more on doubts concerning vassal laws and exploration of what the so-called incorporation actually meant see Dariusz Makiła, “Prusy Książęce a Korona Polska po roku 1525: prowincja czy protektorat?” [The Duchy of Prussia and the Polish Kingdom after 1525: Province or Protectorate?], in *Prusy i Inflanty między średniowieczem a nowożytnością* [Prussia and Livonia between the Middle Ages and Modernity], ed. Bogusław Dybaś and Dariusz Makiła, 63–72; Marszk, “Polen-Litauen und der Untergang Alt-Livlands”; Alexander Schmidt, *Geschichte des Baltikums: von den alten Göttern bis zur Gegenwart* [History of the Baltic Countries: From Ancient Gods to Modernity] (Munich: Piper, 1992), chap. “Die Polenzeit” [The Polish Period], 81–88. On page 84, Schmidt notes the characteristic Livonian uncertainty about the entity to which Livonia submitted itself, and the actual conditions of submission.

86 Wolfgang Froese, *Historia państw i narodów Morza Bałtyckiego* [The History of the States and Nations of the Baltic Sea], trans. Maciej Dorna, Ewa Płomińska-Krawiec, and Katarzyna Śliwińska (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2007), 135–136.

German gentry for centuries. Other landed lords—Poles, Swedes, and Russians—followed it more, or, as in the case of Swedes, less strictly.⁸⁷

Wishing to match the cunning of their Prussian predecessors, Livonian gentry fortified their surrender to Polish rule with a series of conditions, which, among other things, included the following:

- preservation of German law
- preservation of mass in the “Augsburg” or Evangelical rite
- reservation of ranks and offices exclusively for the local owners of landed estates, i.e., for German-Livonian aristocracy
- landowners’ judicial authority over peasants
- perpetuation of serfdom

The most spectacular benefits guaranteed by the Treaty of Vilnius (whereby Livonia became a vassal state of the Commonwealth in 1561) include the establishment of the perpetual rule of the Kettler family—the family of the Grand Master who signed the treaty—in Courland and Semigallia. Arguments about the intentions that motivated his negotiations with Poland continue to this day, but it is impossible to overlook the immediate benefits he derived from the dissolution of the confederated ecclesiastical state, and the surrender of its lands to Polish rule. The descendants of Gotthard Kettler ruled the Duchy of Courland until 1737, when Prince Ferdinand, the last member of the Kettler dynasty, died childless; he actually lost control over Courland in 1701 when Sweden occupied it.⁸⁸ In addition, a separate administrative unit was created inside Courland—the

87 Schmidt, *Geschichte des Baltikums*, 84.

88 Until this day, one can view a collection of beautifully ornamented sarcophagi, which include almost the entire dynasty of the Kettler princes, in the underground crypt of the castle in Mitawa (Jelgava), the capital of the old Duchy of Courland. For more about the history of the Duchy of Courland, see, for example: Erwin Oberländer, *Das Herzogtum Kurland 1561–1795: Verfassung, Wirtschaft, Gesellschaft* [The Duchy of Courland, 1561–1795: Political System, Economy, and Society] (Lüneburg: Verlag Nordostdeutsches Kulturwerk, 2001); Mārīte Jakovļeva, “Das Herzogtum Kurland zwischen Branderburg-Preussen, Polen-Litauen und Schweden an der Wende vom 17. zum 18. Jh.” [The Duchy of Courland between Prussia and Brandenburg, between the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and Sweden, around 1800], in *Prusy i Inflanty między średniowieczem a nowożytnością* [Prussia and Livonia between the Middle Ages and Modernity], ed. Bogusław Dybaś and Dariusz Makiła, 195–200; Georg von Krusenstjern and Kurländische Ritterschaft, *Kurland und seine Ritterschaft* [Courland and its Knights] (Pfaffenhofen: Ilmgau-Verlag Ludwig, 1971); Almut Bues, “Stosunki Kurlandii z Rzeczpospolitą u schyłku XVI i w XVII wieku” [Courland’s Relations with the Commonwealth at the End of the 16th and in the 17th Century], *Zapiski Historyczne* 63, no. 1 (1998): 43–57; Gustaw Manteuffel, *Przewroty w dziejach księstwa kurlandzkiego XVIII w.* [Turning Points in the History of the Duchy of

so-called Piltene Land, or the medieval Courlandish Bishopric, which, thanks to its later connections with Denmark, became separate from Courland and conducted its own politics. Without exploring all the historical details which Bogusław Dybaś describes exhaustively and with erudition, it is necessary to note that the old ecclesiastical Livonian state was fragmented into smaller units in accordance with the spheres of influence of the neighboring states, and in direct proportion to the ambitions of local magnates.⁸⁹

The actual end of Livonia's independence was formally marked in Riga on March 5, 1562, during a ceremony, which a historian of the region describes in the following way:

And thus after nearly four centuries of full independence, the self-subsistent existence of the confederated Livonian state ended in the second half of the 16th century.

On the 5th of March 1562, the newly commissioned Courland Prince Gotthard Kettler swore an oath of allegiance to the Polish King before Mikołaj Radziwił Czarny in Riga, and after him all of Livonia took the oath of vassal loyalty. This magnificent ceremony took place at the Rigan castle, which stood outside the city limits at the time. Gotthard laid down the Teutonic cross, the Landmaster's seal and the Livonian-Teutonic cloak, and, after donning the scarlet cloak of the reigning prince, he ceremonially received homage from Courlandish knights. Actually, or rather formally, the dissolution of the Livonian-Teutonic order took place ten days later, on the 15th of March.⁹⁰

Polish–Livonian negotiations were also attended by a representative of the city of Riga, which ended up not participating in the treaty, and enjoyed relative political independence for twenty years; meanwhile, it sought to obtain the status of a free city, which it received from the German Kaiser Maximilian II in 1576. Five years later, however, the Polish King Stephen Bathory, who had

Courland in the 18th Century] (Krakow, 1896); Gustaw Manteuffel, *Z dziejów kościoła w Inflantach i Kurlandyi (od XVI-go do XX-go stulecia)* [From the History of the Church in Livonia and Courland (from the 16th to the 20th Century)] (Warsaw: Druk "Gazety Rolniczej", 1905). An extensive bibliography of the history of Courland is provided by Bogusław Dybaś in *Na obrzeżach Rzeczypospolitej: sejmik piltyński w latach 1617–1717* [On the Borderlands of the Commonwealth: The Piltene Sejmik between 1617–1717] (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2004), 321–334.

89 Dybaś, *Na obrzeżach Rzeczypospolitej* [On the Borderlands of the Commonwealth]. This work not only fully displays Livonia's extensive territorial fragmentation, which took place after 1561, but it also shows the stubbornness of princes who took whatever they could from the downfall of the Livonian Confederation.

90 Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 107.

strong motives to re-establish Catholicism in “Lutheranized” Livonia, affirmed his authority over Riga, and immediately demanded that the Rigan Cathedral, which had been taken over by the Protestants, be returned to the Catholics. In response to humble requests of the burghers and to Piotr Skarga’s intercession, he changed his demand and instead asked for two churches, including the Church of St. James, which is still a Catholic church today. The decisive and not particularly nuanced policy of bringing Livonia back to Catholicism (which was also clearly perceptible in the quick formation of Jesuit seminaries in Riga and Wenden, where a bishopric was founded, and in the prohibition of attempts to convert peasants to Lutheranism) was received with aversion and a sense of injustice by the Hanseatic free city. Granting a series of privileges to the Rigan patriciate (the so-called *Corpus privilegiorum Stephaneum*) did not change much. Riga—like all of the Hanseatic League—was permeated by the spirit of Protestantism, and it treated Poland’s control as a coup against religious freedoms; hence one of the most important postulates which the city presented to the Polish king was the request to guarantee the security of the Lutheran faith. The King’s affirmative answer did not calm the burghers’ anxieties, however, and a religiously-inspired bloody rebellion, the so-called “calendar dispute,” broke out in 1585.

According to German historiography, especially works written in the 19th century, Livonians’ resistance against Polish policies on their territories was justified by the restriction of the rights and privileges which they had enjoyed for centuries.⁹¹ Poles’ entry into Livonia, and the dismantling of the Teutonic state, was often described by appealing to the notion of treason. The appearance of the Polish king and the Jesuits in Riga, together with the imposition of Catholicism, was treated as a coup against political and confessional freedoms. Anti-Polish sentiments accompanied this forced marriage from the very beginning, but the writ ordering the introduction of the Gregorian calendar in 1584 proved to be the straw that broke the camel’s back. All of Livonia accepted the new calendar without serious reservations; in Riga, however, conflict emerged between the city council, which attempted to remain loyal to the Commonwealth, and the burghers, who were goaded into opposition by staunch

91 See Theodor Schiemann, *Russland, Polen und Livland bis ins 17. Jahrhundert* [Russia, Poland, and Livonia up to the 17th Century], vol. 2 (Berlin: G. Grote, 1887), 308; Pistohlkors, *Livlands Kampf um deutschum und Kultur*, 61–62; Herta von Ramm-Helmsing, *Studien zur Geschichte der Politik der Stadt Riga gegenüber Polen-Litauen im Zeitalter des beginnenden Kampfes um das Dominium maris Baltici* [Studies from the History and Politics of the City of Riga vis-à-vis the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth during the Beginning of the Wars for the *Dominium Maris Baltici*] (Poznań: Concordia, 1937), 43–45.

opponents of Catholicism. Because the course and the background of the so-called Kalender-Unruhen (Calendar Upheavals) have become lost in the mists of time, it is worthwhile to cite a short report about them, written by Manteuffel—our authority on all things Livonian:

Already in 1584, the city council announced its readiness to celebrate Christmas in accordance with the new style, and all of Livonia accepted the Gregorian calendar. Only the Rigan bourgeoisie was against it, hating the calendar reform only because it came from the temporal Head of the Roman-Catholic Church, Pope Gregory XIII. The Rigan notary Martin Giese kept stirring up the bourgeoisie's aversion. With the help of an angry crowd, he was able to force the city council to request a delay, which was initially granted. In the end, however, at the king's demand, the council was forced to introduce the new calendar. In 1585, all this brought about the so-called Calendar Upheavals, to which there was soon added a movement of burghers who opposed the city council. This movement quickly expanded, causing many cruelties to be perpetrated during the reign of Prince Jerzy Radziwiłł, whose position in Riga was becoming increasingly tenuous. When the first violent storm passed, both sides (the bourgeoisie and the city council) brought accusations against each other before the king, who decided that the city council was to maintain its former position. Martin Giese was able to direct the bourgeoisie's antipathy against two members of the city council—Tastius and Welling. The burghers subjected them to torture and forced them to make confessions, which were demanded by the enraged crowds. Despite pleas and the brave defense provided by the mayor, the bourgeois opposition soon proceeded to issue death sentences for both of the accused; the first, Tastius, was killed in the same town square on June 27, 1586, and the second, Welling, was killed on July 1 of the same year. The king ordered the banishment of Giese, sent his army to Riga, and ordered the construction of a watchtower on the left bank of the Daugava; it was finished by the end of November, while the main instigator, Martin Giese, managed to escape to Sweden. Then, on December 2, King Stephen dies suddenly in Grodno, and Sigismund III Vasa is elected to the Polish throne. When the demand for an homage to the new king was made, the Rigan bourgeoisie, again incited by Giese, who was back from Sweden, decisively declared that it would pledge its loyalty only if the king affirmed old municipal privileges, and returned the Church of St. James to the Protestants, since it had been given to Catholics by King Stephen. Further bloody street skirmishes ensued, and could not be quelled until Martin Giese and his companion Brinck were sentenced to death by the Polish Commission. The Commission was headed by the young Lew Sapieha, whose beautiful appearance and rich garments are painted by the chroniclers. The sentence against the guilty was carried out on August 28, 1589, in the same historic town square, between the house of the Blackheads family and today's city library, or the former town hall.⁹²

92 Gustaw Manteuffel, *Przewodnik po Rydze i jej okolicach* [A Guide to Riga and the Surrounding Area] (Riga: Księgarnia Jonck & Poliewsky, 1906), 23–24.

The Gregorian calendar was evidently only a pretext which concealed strong aversion against Polish rule. In essence, this dispute reflects growing tensions between Catholicism and Protestantism, which developed in response to the pan-European Counterreformation.⁹³ From the point of view of the Polish historian, the Calendar Upheavals were an illegal rebellion inspired by unyielding instigators who eventually had to be killed. The “beautiful appearance and rich garments” of the leader of the Commission, which announced the death sentence for the rebels, suggest an equivalence between “the beautiful,” “the noble,” and “the good,” which is in full agreement with suggestions made by Nietzsche in *The Genealogy of Morals*.⁹⁴ From the German perspective, however, the unrest of 1585–89 was justified by the Poles’ violations of treaty agreements, by religious repressions, and by assaults on personal freedoms. German historians interpreted the violence of the burghers’ actions not only as defense of civil liberties, but also as a moment when a distinctly Livonian identity emerged. Confessional solidarity was its important component:

Together with it [the Polish–Swedish War of Succession, 1597–1629—K.Z.], a worldwide conflict between Protestantism and the Catholic Counterreformation began. In this war, finally settled by the victories of Gustav II Adolph, it was not insignificant that the German population of Livonia, and especially the Rigan bourgeoisie, firmly defended its Lutheranism against re-Catholicization and Polishization; and that the gentry, with their bitter experience of the violation of the accession treaty by the Poles, believed that they had the right to resist, and most of them voluntarily went over to the side of religiously kindred Sweden. (...) The development of political awareness of the Baltic Germans was significantly

93 The facts of the so-called “Calendar Upheavals” have recently been described by Anna Ziemelewska, “Rozruchy Kalendarzowe” w Rydze (1584–1589)” [“Calendar Upheavals” in Riga (1584–1589)], *Zapiski Historyczne* 71, no. 1 (2006). See also Anna Ziemelewska, *Ryga w Rzeczypospolitej polsko-litewskiej (1581–1621)* [Riga in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (1581–1621)] (Toruń: Towarzystwo Naukowe w Toruniu, 2008).

94 “The signpost to the *right* road was for me the question: what was the real etymological significance of the designation for ‘good’ coined in the various languages? I found they all led back to the *same conceptual transformation*—that everywhere ‘noble,’ ‘aristocratic’ in the social sense, is the basic concept from which ‘good’ in the sense of ‘with aristocratic soul,’ ‘noble,’ ‘with a soul of a higher order,’ ‘with a privileged soul’ necessarily developed...”; Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals and Ecce Homo*, ed. Walter Kaufmann, trans. Walter Kaufmann and Reginald J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), 27–28. This theme continues to develop in an interesting way further down, when Nietzsche discusses the construction of the morality of the “weak” on the basis of *ressentiment* against aristocratic power, see *ibid.*, 36.

influenced by the fact that in the Protestant struggles for self-determination the demands of the gentry were fused with the dignity of free choice.⁹⁵

The gentry's demands, as other sources show, concerned—above all—privileges equal to those which the Polish and Lithuanian gentry enjoyed, and which were allegedly denied to the Livonians. In all cases of disputes, parties involved in the conflict are not credible historical sources, and it is good to seek the opinion of independent observers. According to an Estonian historian, at the beginning of the 1680s Livonian gentry had few reasons to complain about violations of rights:

In his religious policies, Sigismund II Augustus did not make the smallest departure from the accords signed in Vilnius. There is no data suggesting that any Counterreformation activities were carried out in Livonia before 1582 (...) [I]t would be irresponsible, at a time when even in Poland the fate of the Reformation had not yet been decided, to cause religious animosities in Livonia, where everything could still be gained (...) In scholarly literature there are several erroneous conclusions, which suggest that the king granted land to Polish and Lithuanian feudal lords and thereby violated the rights of the German gentry. Source materials show, however, that in the 1660s the privileged status of German gentry was in no way undermined, and there can be no talk about estates supposedly granted to Polish and Lithuanian lords.⁹⁶

The situation changed somewhat after the signing of the Polish-Lithuanian Union of 1569, and it changed even more after the 1582 Peace of Jam Zapolski, when Stephen Bathory, who had just vanquished Moscow, was hardly inclined to negotiate; through a series of administrative steps (the so-called *Constitutiones Livoniae* or Livonian Constitutions), he sought to bring Livonia closer to other parts of the Polish state. As Tarvel emphasizes, however, many of the ensuing changes and restrictions were provoked by the Livonian gentry themselves, since they constantly undermined Polish control, and gave themselves over to stubborn scheming against Gotthard Kettler, who had been appointed governor by the king. Opposition was both a fundamental principle and a point of departure, and all particular clashes were only a consequence of the oppositional attitude. Numerous examples suggest that many Livonians saw Poland as nothing but a defender against threats from the East, and they had little desire to submit to anyone's rule. This unruliness and disloyalty reappeared much later in the skepticism with which Polish-Lithuanian gentry treated the

95 Taube and Thomson, *Die Deutschbalten – Schicksal und Erbe einer eigenständigen Gemeinschaft* [Baltic Germans: The Fate and Inheritance of an Autonomous Community], 26.

96 Tarvel, "Stosunek prawno państwowy Inflant do Rzeczypospolitej" [Livonia's State and Legal Relations with the Commonwealth], 60–61.

Livonians, who, in turn, felt the need to constantly prove their loyalty to Poland.⁹⁷

Disputes about the Gregorian calendar and Livonian Constitutions—besides their literal political meanings—also pointed to the formation of diverse interest groups in Livonia, and these did not necessarily overlap with national divisions. The struggle for privileges was carried out separately by the different groups: there was the Rigan bourgeoisie, which had its own traditional attachments to extensive freedoms within the framework of the Hanseatic League; there were also German feudal lords who were interested in maintaining broad administrative and legal freedoms on their estates; and finally, there were the representatives of the Church, who wished to combine the task of reigning over human souls with control over property. Regional interest groups formed and interfered with state-level politics, fragmenting Livonia economically, socially, legally, and so on. The federal character of the territory persisted to some degree—it was only subjected to chaotic changes, which gave rise to new conflicts. Even during the years of actual Polish rule (1561–1621), Livonia as a whole was still a place where great power interests intersected, since Swedes, Danes, and Russians maintained different degrees of influence in various parts of the Livonian territory.

This period is particularly important for us because it is here that one finds the sources of Polish–German animosity and rivalry, which lasted well into the 20th century; various traces of it can still be found in scholarly literature. As the above discussion makes clear, the resistance of the German population (which had established itself in Livonia) against Polish invaders was one of the realms of conflict, and an important displacement of accents, or even a reversal of the situation, took place. Erstwhile colonizers took on the role of the “locals,” whom the external aggressor tries to deprive of civil liberties. In German historiography, the adjective “enforced” [Zwang-] is readily used to describe the Polish political order, and to emphasize the violations committed by the invaders. From a common-sense point of view, resistance against the new calendar—introduced quickly and efficiently throughout all of Europe—seems absurd; nonetheless, to this day the “Kalender-Unruhen” continue to function in

97 Here, it is difficult not to notice that in our descriptive terms and terminology we often have to use the hyphen, as in the amalgams “Polish-German,” “Baltic-German,” “Teutonic-Livonian,” and, in an extreme case, even “Polish-German-Knightly-Livonian.” We are traversing a multicultural terrain where certain basic sociological and anthropological phenomena can only be expressed through the interconnection of several layers.

German awareness as a rightful protest of the locals against violence perpetrated by newly arriving foreigners.⁹⁸

The stereotype of a hostile, dangerous, and treacherous Livonian German (which in the 19th century was used, paradoxically, by Gustaw Manteuffel who was himself a descendant of German-Livonian noblemen) derives not only from the medieval era, but also from the beginning of the 17th century, that is, from the time when Livonia was subject to various spheres of influence. In 1621, the Swedes occupied most of Livonia along with Riga, and—since there was no Polish counterattack—the city surrendered after six weeks of siege.⁹⁹ After 1629, only a quarter of Livonian territory remained within Poland’s borders, and it was, in a sense, pushed aside by German historiography, and footnoted as the Polish-Russian district. From this point on, each of the regions—Courland, the so-called Swedish Livonia, and Polish Livonia—would have its own history. Together with the end of the Commonwealth’s reign in Livonia, German historians introduced the term “Liv-, Est- und Kurland” into their writing; this serves the function of describing the sphere of influence and domination of Baltic-German culture. Thus at the very moment of its coming into existence, Polish Livonia starts to be pushed into nonexistence by its neighbors.

The end of the Livonian Confederation may be seen as the symbolic end of the Middle Ages. Together with the arrival of modern colonial powers, modern armies equipped with firearms and artillery, and new religious ideologies, one can observe the downfall of the old conception of a state based on fellowship of knights that combined monastic rules and military principles. Perhaps the most telling example of this change, one still observable today, are the many ruins of castles which once belonged to knights and bishops, and which are now scattered throughout all of Livonia. The romantic charm of these massive structures goes hand in hand with the image of their indifference to the methodical cannon fire to which they were subjected. Especially in the territory of former Polish Livonia, near the border with the Grand Duchy of Moscow, all

98 For those who would like to learn about the persistence of these images in literature until the end of the 20th century, I recommend two Livonian stories about Christmas in Riga in 1584, where the protagonist is interrogated and sentenced to death for rejecting the Gregorian calendar. The ecclesiastical court resembles the Spanish Inquisition, and the figure of Jürgen Wullenwever clearly serves as an apologia of Rigan resistance against Poland. At the same time, the story can also be read as a rightful critique of the ruthlessness of the clergy in fighting against bourgeois liberalism, something which would be met with the censor’s approval in the former GDR. See Heinz-Jürgen Zierke, *Eine livländische Weihnachtsgeschichte: zwei historische Erzählungen* [A Livonian Christmas Eve Story: Two Historical Tales] (Rostock: Hinstorff, 1981).

99 See Pistohlkors, *Livlands Kampf um deutschum und Kultur*, 67.

that is left of these castles are the rolling grassy hills, where one can notice individual stones, pieces of walls, or larger wall fragments with outlines of window openings, pointing at the sky. Not a single castle has survived in its entirety. Old descriptions and prints show that two hundred years ago these ruins looked exactly the same. They succumbed to the destructive wars of the 16th and 17th centuries, when modernity was eliminating the last remaining traces of the Middle Ages. Unfortunately, in many cases the history of these castles disappeared along with them, and today we can only admire the picturesque but anonymous ruins and scale models.

6. The Baltic Identity of the Germans

The partition of Livonia—partition is also a legitimate term here—was a threat to the extensive autonomy of the Baltic-German community, signaling restriction of their colonial privileges. The maintenance of an influential position was therefore among their most important goals, and they were largely successful in achieving it. First Poland, and later Sweden and Russia made guarantees that Baltic Germans could keep their own laws, local administration, as well as their existing network of social and economic relations, which was particularly important in the countryside. Under Swedish rule (1621–1710), certain land reforms liberalized the status of Latvian serfs somewhat, but the feudal system remained basically unchanged.¹⁰⁰ These factors are important since, over the course of the next two centuries, they influenced the decisively conservative character of German rule in Livonia, where the maintenance of the status quo and avoidance of Enlightenment reforms were among important priorities. One of the fundamental problems that plagued the German historiography of Livonia consisted in the fact—perhaps most emphatically expressed by Reinhard Wittram—that in the Baltic provinces the Middle Ages

100 In the 1880s, the so-called Great Swedish Reduction was carried out, as a result of which a large percentage of landed estates was nationalized, while former landowners became leaseholders of these lands. This way, the peasants' duties with respect to their masters were specified with greater precision. The peasants were still prohibited to leave the estates; moreover, they could not be thrown out from their land, and this was seen as progress. Hence, from the Latvian perspective, that period in history is still sometimes called the "good Swedish times." In Livonian-Swedish negotiations regarding the emancipation of the serfs there appeared, among other things, the argument that Latvian autochthons were not sufficiently civilized ("zu niedrige Kulturstufe") to cope with rapid economic changes, and that they would not be able to manage without the protection of their masters; see Schmidt, *Geschichte des Baltikums*, 94.

were still present well into the 19th century.¹⁰¹ Nostalgia for the recent past (when, toward the end of its existence in the first half of the 16th century, the Livonian Confederation flourished both economically and culturally) caused instinctive distrust toward novelty and change; Livonian Germans believed that novelty could only make their complicated situation worse. Incidentally, the Teutonic Master Wolter von Plettenberg who ruled at that time, is among the most luminous figures of Livonian history. All that was past had to be seen as good, if only in the sense that it constituted the basis of existence and the ground for claims in negotiations. On the one hand, to legitimize their presence in Swedish, Russian, or Polish lands, Livonians were forced to point to the causes, beginnings, and the legitimacy of medieval colonization, and to re-evaluate and soften its meaning. On the other hand, they had to cut themselves off from colonization as a phenomenon, which was both foreign and distant in time. This dialectical identity conflict brought about internal consolidation, thanks to which the Germans could face the partitioning powers as hosts with a determined Livonian identity. Conservative consolidation of the old order was a natural and unconditional element of this identity. The ecclesiastical state no longer existed, the difficult colonial issues thereby also did not exist, and they were replaced by problems of settlers who had put down roots and identified as the immemorial, and therefore also legitimate, owners of the Baltic lands.

The first and a particularly telling sign of the new Baltic consolidation among Germans was the case of David Hilchen, which was analyzed in the already referenced dissertation of Herta von Ramm-Helmsing.¹⁰² Hilchen was a trustee (governor) of Riga on behalf of the Polish king; he was accused and later sentenced to death *in absentia* for his supposed responsibility for the Calendar Upehvals. Setting the details and the backstage events of the trial aside, we should note that Hilchen was tried primarily as a traitor who put the interests of the Polish state before the public good in his native city. He was a native Rigan, but he was educated in Poland, he was “instated” as a governor by the occupiers, he did not decisively support the burghers in the conflict—in other words, he had all the characteristics of an apostate. And because the city council was looking for an opportunity to avenge the killing of the leaders of the calendar rebellion, it evoked its right to its own judicial courts and filed suit against Hilchen. From the city’s point of view, the trustee was guilty of treason—a

101 Reinhard Wittram, “Methodologische und geschichtstheoretische Überlegungen zu Problemen der baltischen Geschichtsforschung” [Methodological and Theoretical Remarks about the Problems of Baltic Historiography], in *Zeitschrift für Ostforschung* 20 (1971), 625.

102 Ramm-Helmsing, *Studien Zur Geschichte Der Politik* [Studies in the History of Politics].

major offense. Ramm-Helmsing, for her part, sketches Hilchen's portrait in such a way as to draw attention to his attachment to his native city, his objectivity and impartiality in making judgments, and his willingness to compromise and understand the motivations of each of the sides involved in the conflict. To put it simply, she makes him out to be a true Rigan patriot. The author clearly sympathizes with the trustee, who ultimately had to flee his native city, where his patriotic ordinances were not understood, and where only one type of loyalty was binding—loyalty to the local community. This awareness of being local and having one's own laws, which no one could breach, increased throughout the 17th century, and strengthened the Baltic Germans' sense of their distinct identity.

For the same reasons, when Livonia was occupied by Russia in 1710, during the third Northern War, the fundamental objective of the Baltic Germans was to obtain the triple guarantee of protection for their religion language, and law (*Sprache, Glaube, Recht*). The so-called "Magna Carta" was placed in Livonia's capitulation statute; it was an updated version of the Livonian Constitutions, in which Tsar Peter I not only guaranteed that Livonians would have freedom of religion, their own law, and German as the language of administration, but also abolished the effects of Swedish restrictions, giving feudal lords those lands which they had lost to the state due to land reform. It was therefore not without a certain sense of satisfaction that the local population welcomed the new occupier. Later historical works emphasized the longevity of the peace and the economic stability of the region in the 18th century. This change also had economic advantages since it simplified trade with the East and made it more functional, and this trade was particularly important for Livonia. Old order was restored when the tsar ceremonially confirmed the privileges enjoyed by knights and cities; at the same time, Livonians confirmed their conviction that they constituted a significant political force in the region, that they could dictate conditions, and, above all, that they were a separate, autonomous republic on the periphery of the Russian Empire.¹⁰³ German historians tend to proudly

103 "...as the case of language privileges reveals, the aristocracy received complete supremacy when Germans became recognized as the sole rulers. However, the particular status of the Germans did not derive from determinations concerning their ethnic superiority, but rather from their claims to class autonomy." Gert von Pistohlkors, "Der Wiederaufbau nach dem Nordischen Krieg: Die Gouvernements Estland und Livland im 18. Jahrhundert" [Reconstruction after the Northern War: The Estonian and Livonian Provinces in the 18th Century], in *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas: Baltische Länder*, ed. Gert von Pistohlkors, 268. The second sentence, to which the author was probably prompted by political correctness, wonderfully displays the duality of German historiography's relationship to Livonia: privileges were granted

underscore the fact that successive rulers of the Russian empire confirmed Livonian privileges as soon as they ascended to the throne. This should be seen as an act of mercy and tolerance performed by despotic rulers, but Livonians understood it primarily as reinforcement of their sense of “being at home,” and their autonomous Livonian citizenship, which helped them throw off the weight of the medieval legacy. Since they were no longer the only colonizers, they did not have to explain their presence in Livonia (there was no appropriate tribunal for such explanations, and even if one existed somewhere in the Latvian forests, it did not command respect). They were not—for a variety of reasons—driven away as former invaders; they were granted status, which in their own eyes was equal to (or higher than) that of the indigenous population—and that was what mattered most. Together with the growth of local patriotism, Baltic Germans began to feel responsible for their acquired fatherland, and, under foreign rule, they turned to the meticulous work of propagating their culture in Livonia.

7. *Kulturträger’s Pride*

Livonia’s relatively extensive autonomy under Russian rule was linked with some fundamentally important social and cultural transformations. The country suffered damages during the Northern Wars and required rebuilding. Russian occupiers assumed that the engagement of local gentry and bourgeoisie in the process would prove immeasurably helpful. Hence the guarantee of laws and the autonomy of the region largely had the character of a political transaction; Baltic Germans were allowed to govern their settled territories relatively freely, and in return they were to remain fully loyal to Moscow. Obviously, this did not happen without tensions. In 1712, for example, against the loud protests of the city councilors, the tsar established a Russian superintendent’s office in Riga. This superintendent was to oversee the development of trade, and his enormous salary of 2,000 German thalers was to be paid by the city treasury.¹⁰⁴ In addition, local Livonian councils were to serve as models for administrative reform, which was being prepared for the entire Empire. Tsarist administration attempted to introduce general registries of the gentry and divide the gentry into six categories; according to official reassurances, these were intended to standardize nomenclature and make governing the country more efficient. Livonian landowners and inhabitants of Riga, Reval, and Dorpat, however, saw

to Germans (language!), but, according to Pistohkors, it was not about Germanness, but rather class privileges. In reality, only the German-speaking knights, bourgeoisie, and merchants took advantage of the tsarist guarantees.

104 Ibid., 277.

this as a coup against their existing privileges. On the one hand, they were aware of the fact that recourse to German-Livonian models “would elevate Russia to a higher level of development.” On the other hand, however, the fact that rights and ranks throughout the empire would be the same as those in the Baltic provinces was difficult to swallow; this was perhaps most emphatically expressed by Johann Heinrich R. Neuendahl, a chronicler and secretary of the Rigan magistracy, who said: “German provinces and Siberia shall be organized according to a single formula.”¹⁰⁵

The solution came in the form of a general census of Livonian landed gentry, entrusted to special registry commissions (*Matrikelkommissionen*), which worked for several years. Rank tables were constructed to record titles and possessions while preserving, as much as possible, differences between the old knightly aristocracy and the new gentry who were either descendants of distinguished members of the military or heirs of administrative workers who had been rewarded for their services. The granting of offices and trade rights was codified according to rank, but so were details of dress and ceremonial ritual. This, among other things, gave rise to arguments about ancestry, honors, and rights, which characterize much Livonian writing from the 18th and 19th centuries. It was immensely important for each citizen to claim the highest possible rank in the local hierarchy, as this came with measurable benefits in the form of more prestigious offices. On the other hand, to weaken the domination of old aristocratic families, Russian rulers introduced the custom of granting aristocratic titles (primarily the baron title) to administrative workers, members of the military and merchants; this was intended to break the existing uniform and hermetic social formation. Over the course of the 19th century, the baron designation underwent complete degradation. In all of this feudal confusion, old Livonian families guarded their exceptional position and meticulously observed all laws which delineated the range of their political, social, and economic freedom; the consistent anachronism of this phenomenon would have been surprising throughout all of Europe. Each citizen had a very specifically designated place in society, and administrative workers were very careful to make sure that nothing changed.

Nonetheless, political and economic stabilization increased Livonia’s attractiveness as a region which was once again enjoying prosperity. Artisans and merchants from Germany began to arrive in great numbers, and as institutions of secondary and higher education evolved, scholars and men of letters came to Livonia as well. They were, in fact, responsible for initiating the Enlightenment in the Baltic states, and for dismantling Livonia’s conservative

105 Ibid., 290.

order from within, so to speak.¹⁰⁶ Foreigners enjoyed central prominence among the most eminent figures of the era: travelers, scholars, theologians, and writers, who would sometimes stay longer to enjoy the hospitality of this feudal knightly enclave, which seemed to call for the propagation of Enlightenment ideas. During the hundred years after the middle of the 18th century, German history of Livonia focuses, above all, on the dynamic activity of those who were educated in Western Europe, and who introduced new currents and new thinking into this land, which seemed calcified to the reformers. At the forefront of the ranks of influential figures of that time, one should count Johann Gottfried Herder, Garlieb Merkel, the brothers Johann Christoph and Reinhold Berens, Johann Christoph Schwartz, and Johann Friedrich Hartknoch.

Rather surprisingly, German historians include Tsarina Catherine II among the initiators of Enlightenment reforms in the Baltic states; her imperial ambitions tended toward the idea of “enlightened absolutism,” which in turn posited fundamental social transformations, carried out in the spirit of rationalism. Thus when adherents of freedom movements appeared in Livonia and Estonia, they quickly gained strong support of the Russian administration. Of course, the feudal structure of the countryside constituted the main—and also the most easily perceptible—problem. For those who arrived from Germany, where peasants had owned land and enjoyed personal rights and freedoms since the Thirty Years’ War, Livonian serfdom testified to the inordinate backwardness of the country. An emphatic expression of this was the so-called Rosen Declaration from 1739 (*Rosensche Declaration*—named after the leader of the local diet, Otto Fabian von Rosen); it stated that peasants belonged to their masters in “body and soul,” that they were the masters’ property together with the cultivated land, and that they could not issue any appeals against duties imposed upon them by their masters. The Livonian Diet’s 1803 pronouncement that the peasant should not be treated like a thing was a watershed transition in the attitudes of local landed aristocracy. It was more common for the socio-economic views of the knightly landed gentry in the Baltic states to be based on the conviction that “it is in the peasant’s nature to always be dissatisfied with his

106 Much information about the spirit of Enlightenment in that region can be found in Henryk Rietz’s *Z dziejów życia umysłowego Rygi w okresie oświecenia* [From the History of Riga’s Intellectual Life during the Enlightenment] (Toruń: Uniwersytet Mikołaja Kopernika, 1977). The author is concerned with the period between 1750 and 1810, when Riga became a nearly obligatory destination of the educational travels of German intellectuals; their travelogues, feuilletons, memoirs, and literary sketches constitute a valuable source of knowledge about cultural changes in Livonia.

lord, no matter how just or humane he might be”¹⁰⁷—a conviction articulated in the answer provided by the Livonian Knights’ Chamber to a complaint filed in 1765. The formal abolition of serfdom took place in 1816 in Estonia, and in 1819 in Livonia (it was not enacted until 1864 on the territory of Polish Livonia, which was then part of the Vitebsk province). The final character of Livonian agricultural reform was, however, determined only in 1849 by Baron Hamillkar von Fölkersahm, leader of the Livonian Diet, whose agricultural law abolished serfdom and made it possible for peasants to own land.

The development of education and the revival of the university in Dorpat was undoubtedly a result of Enlightenment reforms, which rivaled the abolition of serfdom in its importance. Before this revival, intellectual elites were trained in Western European universities, primarily in German cities (Halle, Göttingen), but also, for example, in Helsinki (mainly theologians), and in Königsberg. The wave of Enlightenment movements in Russia resulted in the founding of universities in Moscow, Vilnius, Kazan, Dorpat and Kharkov. Dorpat already boasted an academy which had been established in 1632 by the Swedish king Gustav II Adolph (the so-called *Academia Gustaviana*), and which, with some interruptions, functioned until the end of Swedish rule in Livonia in 1721. Its revival as the imperial Dorpat University (*Universitas Dorpatensis*) in 1802 (with seven professors and nineteen students) initiated an immense construction project, which included the erection of the main hall, library, *theatrum anatomicum*, clinic, and botanical garden, and required the enormous sum of 805,000 rubles. The main architect of the complex, which still serves as the center of the campus today, was Johann Wilhelm von Krause. Among the first spectacular successes, the university could count the participation of its lecturers in the first Russian circumnavigations around the globe, in which they took part as both officers and researchers. Adam Johann von Krusenstern, who educated a large number of eminent Russian navy officers (Dorpat lies 100 kilometers away from the sea!) was the commander of the first of these voyages. In the second

107 As cited by Gert von Pistohlkors, “Die deutschen Ostseeprovinzen Russlands”: Äussere Einflüsse und innerer Wandel” [Russia’s Baltic-German Provinces: External Influences and Internal Transformation], in *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas: Baltische Länder*, ed. Gert von Pistohlkors (Berlin: Siedler Verlag, 1994), 325. This text also includes information about the Rosen Declaration (324), and the landrat statute (330). Pistohlkors provides a detailed description of the path of the Livonian countries toward the emancipation of serfs, and he also provides statistical data from the end of the 18th century, which give some sense of the social composition of towns and villages (even though information about peasants and petty artisans is scarce and very imprecise). He also succeeds in accurately characterizing the opposition between two ideologies: rigid conservatism and earnest rationalism.

half of the 19th century, the university had six renowned departments: theology, law, medicine, philosophy (with the dominance of the natural sciences), economics, and agriculture; but it specialized in natural and medical sciences. In subsequent decades, Dorpat University became one of the most important academic centers in Eastern Europe, as witnessed by, among other things, its popularity among Polish students in the 19th century.¹⁰⁸

Various examples of educational, scientific, and economic collaborations clearly show that Livonian Germans were not only the Russian Empire's loyal partners, but that this community also served as a rich reservoir of educated, competent, and trustworthy administrative workers. The process of assimilation lasted throughout the 19th century, and large numbers of German aristocrats entered the tsarist civil service:

It was characteristic of the small Baltic provinces that families who came from there, and especially aristocratic families, gave their sons into the service of the currently reigning—and often foreign—powers. That is why many Baltic lords served Swedes, Russians, and also, for example, the French, like the Marshal of France Count Conrad von Rosen; or the Austrians, like Baron Gideon Ernst von Laudon.¹⁰⁹

The process of assimilation of Baltic Germans into the tsarist administration was not only a simple consequence of Russification; it seems that in many cases it also gave rise to a new sense of state-belonging and national identity. Livonians were praised by tsarist authorities for their “unshakable loyalty—to God, the tsar, and the fatherland.”¹¹⁰ Having lost—irretrievably, it seemed—the chance for their own Baltic statehood, they accepted the limited autonomy of their province, and for the price of maintaining their class privileges they cooperated with the overlord. And because some of them chose loyalty toward Germany, the division of a single family into “Germans,” “Russians,” and sometimes also “Swedes” was a relatively frequent occurrence. In neighboring Polish Livonia, there was another type of loyalty as well: loyalty to Poland.

108 The fact that most lectures and seminars were in German, and that one could write master's theses and dissertations in German as well, was doubtless among the key reasons for the popularity which both Dorpat University and the Rigan Polytechnic enjoyed among young Poles.

109 *Ibid.*, 337. One of the most eminent representatives of Livonian aristocracy who served foreign powers was the tsarist minister of war Michael Barclay de Tolly, who, along with Kutuzov, was also the second commander of the Russian army during the Napoleonic wars; he received the Prince title from Alexander I. As Pistohlkors points out (*ibid.*, 359), at least 760 officers from Livonia, Estonia, and Courland served in the Russian army during the war against Napoleon.

110 *Ibid.*, 360.

When one considers the unexpected consequences of a certain sermon given by Ferdinand Walter—the Evangelical General Superintendent—in the Livonian Diet in March 1864, it becomes clear that the assimilation process must have progressed quite far by the middle of the 19th century. The sermon concerned the gentry's need to return to their German identity, something the pastor considered to be every Livonian's responsibility toward his inheritance, culture, and religion. Evoking Biblical quotations about seeds and harvest, appealing to respect for order, and demanding the correction of errors, the pastor (a student of Hegel and Schleiermacher) used exalted words to call for the defense of the Evangelical faith against the quickly advancing process of conversion. His words were largely a reaction against the mass conversions of the rural populations—mainly the Latvian peasantry—from Protestantism to Orthodoxy; they were brought about by the so-called *Livländische Konversionsbewegung* (Livonian Conversion Movement), which dated from the 1840s. The Russian press magnified the incident inordinately to make it a political scandal, in which Baltic Germans were accused of Germanizing the province, and carrying out secret activities to make Latvians and Ests into “sons of Germany” once again. Arguments around the whole issue lasted over two years and found many echoes in the German press; they diminished trust in the cautious cooperation, which already seemed somewhat suspect from the Russian point of view.

Walter tried to defend Baltic Germans by appealing to a regional identity legitimized by centuries-long presence in the area; he emphasized loyalty to Russian rule, but he also underscored the German majority's right to its privileges. Tensions in Russian–Livonian relations were nonetheless growing, and the journalism of Yuri Samarin was a serious sign of it, and one pregnant with consequences. In a series of articles in 1868, he attacked Baltic Germans for supposed conspiracy against Russia, accused them of Germanizing Latvians and Ests, and even suggested high treason. In his sharp polemics in the press, Samarin expressed all the emotions that were at the source of emerging Russian nationalism.¹¹¹ After the experiences of the Crimean War (1853–56) and the January Uprising in Poland (1863–64), Russians displayed increasing aversion against the West, an aversion which—as a result of military triumphs—quickly led to nation-building and state-building ideas. Until then the tsarist empire was more of a federation of various economically and culturally diverse provinces, and the imperial will of the Kremlin was the only unifying factor. From the

111 Samarin's articles have been translated into German, and published with a commentary by Julius W. A. von Eckhardt in *Juri Samarins Anklage gegen die Ostseeprovinzen Russlands* [Juri Samarin's Accusations against Russia's Baltic Provinces] (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1869).

middle of the 19th century, however, Russians began to embrace nationally-oriented policies, which were expressed in attempts to unify and Russify individual sub-regions and reduce their autonomy; these undertakings were perceptibly driven by the growing influence of the Slavophile and Panslavist ideologies.¹¹² When it came to Baltic lands, Russian attacks were aimed at the limitation, or rather the elimination of the aristocracy's privileges.

Carl Schirren took on the role of the spokesman on behalf of Livonian autonomy, and came to the Germans' defense; he was a professor of Russian history at Dorpat University (1860-69), a publicist, founder and editor of the "Dorpatener Tageblatt," as well as a poet and playwright. In 1869, he published the polemical essay *Livländische Antwort an Herrn Juri Samarin* [A Livonian Answer for Yuri Samarin] in Leipzig—it summarized the convictions of the relatively conservative Baltic-German faction which did not represent the majority, but which was nonetheless characteristic of a certain type of Livonian thinking.¹¹³ He juxtaposed immemorial Livonian privileges against Russian nationalism, citing the rights of the majority, and defending the right to maintain their own language and religion; he called upon his countrymen to remain steadfast in their cause ("Feststehen ist unsere Aktion") and to persevere in their Baltic homeland at any cost ("Ausharren, das soll die Summe unserer Politik sein"). In his emotional and exalted speech he declared that the Baltic provinces were obligated to be loyal only to their own rulers (Herrscher), and not to the "national assembly of all Russians." He also warned Russian ideologues against nationalist pipe dreams about "the master race" (sic!). He went even further in his warnings when, in an impassioned and a very partial interpretation of history, he pointed to the examples of Poland and Sweden, arguing that whenever great powers broke their promises to protect Livonian privileges, they quickly lost these lands. Because the anti-German character of Russian nationalism proved attractive for Latvian and Estonian autochthons, Schirren reminded them that they gained their sense of national identity mainly thanks to their German teachers and educators, and that "emancipation is not

112 A particularly interesting element here is the fact that, according to Boris Yegorov, Russian Slavophiles developed their views by reading Hegel and Schelling! See Boris Egorov, *Oblicza Rosji* [Russia's Faces] trans. Dorota Żyłko and Bogusław Żyłko (Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Słowo/Obraz Terytoria, 2002); and especially the chapters "Filozoficzne podstawy światopoglądu rosyjskich uczonych, publicystów i pisarzy" [The Philosophical Basis of the Worldview of Russian Scholars, Journalists, and Writers], 113, and "Rosyjskie utopie" [Russian Utopias], 155.

113 Carl Ch. G. Schirren, *Livländische Antwort an Herrn Juri Samarin* [A Livonian Answer for Yuri Samarin] (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1869); reprint: Hannover 1971.

Russification.”¹¹⁴ In this way, he presented a quintessential example of the convictions and arguments of the entire conservative wing of the Livonian aristocracy; the conservatives were not a small group since the aristocracy’s economic and political existence was based on their administratively-guaranteed position of dominance.

That very year (1869), Carl Schirren was removed from Dorpat University for an anti-Russian address he delivered, and he went to Germany, where in a few years he became the head of the history department at Kiel University. The decision to immediately remove Schirren was signed by his ideological opponent, the curator of Dorpat University, Count Alexander von Keyserling. He preferred the stance of loyalism toward Russia and represented a moderate position, driven by the hope to win “the protection and sympathy” of the Russians. Increasing tensions within the Russian Empire led him to draw conservative conclusions about the necessity of subordination to tsarist rule:

The configuration of forces makes it impossible for Baltic provinces to have security under the auspices of foreign powers. Since 1710, we were able to enjoy safe development only under the protection of the Russian tsars. So long as the tsar rules over the nation, we will continue to stand firmly on our historical foundations, and we will continue on the path of secure development. Peter the Great ruled over the Russian nation with violence, and his successors acted similarly, until the most extreme nationalists hideously murdered Alexander II, who was known for his kindness and his humane character ... now terrorism reigns there along with nationalist fanaticism, which cannot stand anything that belongs to a different nation. So long as the tsar rules over the nation, we shall not perish.¹¹⁵

In light of the revolutionary upheavals that were about to come, these words have a truly prophetic ring. Paradoxically, soon after Schirren’s dismissal, Baron Keyserling himself had to resign from the post of university curator, and his submissive and compromising attitude also suffered a defeat. In his arguments, one can nonetheless clearly see the ideological trap into which the Baltic Germans fell in the 19th century. It was difficult to embrace an advantageous

114 Quotes from Schirren’s journal are cited by Taube and Thomson in *Die Deutschbalten – Schicksal und Erbe einer eigenständigen Gemeinschaft*, 50–51 and Garleff, “Die Deutschen im Baltikum – Leistung und Schicksal,” 56. The latter also points out that Schirren’s speech strongly influenced the opinions of the Baltic Germans, who maintained a negative image of Russia for decades. This claim, however, seems to be exaggerated. The negative image of Russia had more complex roots, just like German nationalism. What Schirren certainly did, was to reawaken Germanophilic attitudes among German-speaking citizens of the Baltic countries.

115 “List do barona Ottona Taube-von der Issen” (1889) [Letter to Baron Otto Taube-von der Issen (1889)], as cited by Pistohlkors, *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas: Baltische Länder*, 382.

political stance in the face of inevitable conflict with growing Russian nationalism. Stubborn defense of one's privileges escalated social tensions, while the loosening of the rigid social hierarchy led to the dissolution of German identity in the melting pot of Livonian nationalities. In addition to German-Russian tensions, there was also the increasingly visible ethnic confrontation with Latvian and Estonian national movements, which—for traditional social reasons—also had an anti-German character. Enlightenment education, which was widely introduced by the reformers, seemed equivalent to allowing a snake to suckle at one's breast. Cooperation with the tsarist administration was plagued by various technical problems (range of competence, access to privileges, etc.) and ideological problems (defense of Livonian autonomy); coexistence with Latvians and Ests, however, seemed self-evident until then. The situation changed radically with the emergence of Latvian and Estonian intellectual elites in the 19th century. Pointing to new social and agrarian programs, these elites began to petition Russian authorities with requests to protect them from German landed aristocracy's repressions. Religious and linguistic differences were thus augmented with other divisions (not to say abysses), which had existed for centuries, but which were only now being clearly formulated; Baltic Germans had to take a clear stance in this regard.¹¹⁶

Because the rigid and privileged position of the knightly aristocracy was at the root of these conflicts, it was subjected to fundamental re-evaluation. Among the tsar's ambitious plans there was the attempt to eliminate the domination of the Baltic-German landed aristocracy by means of transposing the principles of its functioning to other regions. Because of the decisive resistance of the Livonians, this aim was never realized, but it undermined the previously uniform, feudal foundation of the local community. Tsarist administration introduced, moreover, its own regulations and its own judiciary, with judges who were appointed from above, and who were not—as had previously been the case—elected by local councils; it also abolished the judicial rights of

116 An overview of the problem of Russian-Baltic-German relations can be found in Andrzej Topij's *Ludność niemiecka wobec rusyfikacji guberni bałtyckich, 1882–1905* [The German Population and the Russification of Baltic Provinces, 1882–1905] (Bydgoszcz: Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej w Bydgoszczy, 1997); on p. 107 we read: "If we are talking about the Baltic Germans, they opposed Russification in every possible way. They clutched their rights and privileges, which dated from before the Polish and Swedish periods. This caused many conflicts with the state administration. They often appealed to the general good of the Baltic provinces and demanded that local conditions be taken into consideration."

municipalities and introduced Russian as the language of administration.¹¹⁷ The Evangelical Church, which had been the dominant denomination, became a barely-tolerated one; and this toleration appears tenuous indeed when one considers the trials of pastors, which took place practically throughout the entire second half of the 19th century. If to this we also add the gagging of the local German press, the extension of the Russian educational system, and the introduction of Russian as the language of instruction at the universities, we obtain an image of a country where an immemorial, customary autonomy was radically curtailed, and found itself facing the specter of impending elimination. The fundamental Livonian privileges (*Sprache, Glaube, Recht*) became nothing but reminders of a glorious past.

In 1905 and 1906, growing tensions and differences—economic, political, social, as well as religious, cultural, and linguistic, i.e., all the possible differences—radically claimed center stage. In the Baltic provinces, they took the form of violent peasant rebellions, which quickly changed into national struggles (since the national and social questions were intertwined). Revolutionary and anarchist emotions of the Latvians and the Ests simultaneously turned against the traditional class enemy and immemorial colonizer—that is, against the Baltic Germans. Large numbers of landed estates were destroyed and plundered, members of the gentry and aristocracy were murdered, and both industry and trade were plagued by strikes; all this was directed primarily against those who saw the peaceful coexistence of all indigenous communities as self-evident. An additional complication was created by the attitudes of the tsarist police and the army, who did not rush to make decisive interventions, despite the anxiously repeated pleas issued by city councils and Chambers of Knights. The situation was somewhat similar to the Krakow peasant rebellion of 1846, when enraged peasants took to settling accounts with their masters, and the administration looked on with silent acquiescence, thereby winning its own political battle. When at the beginning of 1906 tsarist authorities finally decided to intervene, the intervention was

117 “On the one hand, the separation of the judiciary and the administration was belated; old aristocratic offices were less and less capable of adjusting to the changing social relations. On the other hand, new structures sought to level police headquarters and courts with the rest of Russia, but this leveling was inadequately prepared since none of the local languages was allowed in courts any longer. In addition, German bureaucrats were replaced mostly by Russians, who were forced to apply laws ,with which they were not familiar and to make decisions about people whose mentality was entirely foreign to them.” Pistohlkors, *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas: Baltische Länder*, 400.

uncommonly brutal, and its victims were far more numerous than the victims of the revolution itself.¹¹⁸

In these circumstances, the ambiguity of the German *Kulturträger's* position became fully evident. On the one hand, he strove to play the role of the highest representative of the local community, in which he situated himself alongside Ests and Latvians, and he justified his privileged position with notions of the social order and the harmonious coexistence of nationalities and social strata.¹¹⁹ Enlightenment-positivist education was to serve as the manifestation of the good will of the Baltic Germans toward other nationalities, even as it simultaneously reinforced the existing socio-economic order. On the other hand, however, to maintain this order, the *Kulturträger* was forced to work with the tsarist administration, which gave rise to something like a coalition of colonizers. The scale of the Revolution of 1905 surprised the Russians, but it mainly surprised the Baltic Germans, who faced the end of their domination.

Paradoxically, the results of the revolution gave them certain significant advantages. As a result of revolutionary demands, the tsar's administration allowed national languages to return to schools and offices, it loosened censorship and allowed freedom of the press; it also granted the right of association, which was meticulously used by the inhabitants of the Baltic provinces. Numerous new schools and German organizations were founded; this time they were no longer local organizations representing only the immediate interests of particular groups, but countrywide associations (e.g. "Deutsche Verein in Estland," "Deutsche Verein in Livland," "Deutsche Verein in Kurland"). It was one of the outcomes of the Revolution of 1905, during which Baltic Germans clearly realized the need to congregate and participate in political life as members of large associations, which guaranteed greater protection:

118 According to data cited by R. Wittram, between October 1905 and the beginning of 1906, over 184 landed estates were destroyed or devastated in Livonia, and over 80 Baltic Germans were murdered. Meanwhile, as a result of the so-called army penal expeditions (ruthless Cossack regiments were used, among others), several hundred peasant farms were burned, 908 people were sentenced to death (partly by ad-hoc field courts), 2,652 were sent to Siberia, and 1871 were deprived of citizenship. See Wittram, *Baltische Geschichte 1180–1918*, 231–232.

119 The tendency to refer to themselves as Balts (*die Balten*)—a term which was applied to Latvians and Ests—was an example of this identification tendency of the Livonian Germans. This is clearly perceptible in the much publicized exchange between Jaan Tõnisson, a representative of the Estonian Association, and German conservatives, who pointed out with satisfaction that even Estonian nationalists use the term "Balts" to refer jointly to both Germans and Ests. See Pistohlkors, *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas: Baltische Länder*, 438.

The Revolution had a dual influence on the Baltic Germans. The state, which disappointed and embittered the German community by delayed intervention, and simultaneously by a change of course in educational policy, relaxed its policies—which was received with relief. (...) On the other hand, the Revolution showed the Germans the necessity of organizing national self-help. Independently of each other, in all three provinces small groups and individual citizens decided to permanently unite in countrywide associations...¹²⁰

8. 1914–1918: The Beginning of the End

The outbreak of the First World War suddenly shattered all Baltic-German efforts directed at rebuilding proper relations with the Russian state. Immediately after Prussia's declaration of war, the recently suppressed anti-German campaign started anew in Russia; accusations of treason and spying were the chief weapons in this campaign, despite the fact that the accused made great efforts to emphasize their loyalty, and they eagerly served in the tsar's army. None of this changed the fact that a certain kind of splitting of identity took place again—or rather a tripling of identity—which the German historiographers referred to as the “tension between attachment to the country and national consciousness.”¹²¹ As subjects of the tsar, Baltic Germans fulfilled their duty to the state—apparently they initially did so with a measure of sympathy toward the Russians¹²²—and they enjoyed the respect of their Russian comrades-in-arms.¹²³ With time, their sense of belonging to German culture took precedence, especially in 1917, when the tsar's Empire lay in ruins, and Prussian armies were advancing into the heart of Livonia.¹²⁴ On the other hand, the policy of increasing anti-German repressions—which included the closing of schools, the prohibition against using German in speech and in writing, searches, arrests, and exile to Siberia, as well as the designation of Germans as persons outside the law (the so-called *Vogelfreierklärung*)—caused a turn toward the Reich in

120 Wittram, *Baltische Geschichte 1180–1918*, 233.

121 See Michael Garleff, “Die Deutschbalten als nationale Minderheit in den unabhängigen Staaten Estland und Lettland” [Baltic Germans as a National Minority in Independent Estonia and Latvia], in *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas: Baltische Länder*, ed. Gert von Pistohlkors, 454.

122 See Wittram, *Baltische Geschichte 1180–1918*, 248.

123 Schlau, *Die Deutsch-Balten*, 83.

124 They had been occupying Courland since 1915, after which time, the Eastern Front stalled along the Daugava River for two years. On September 3, 1917, Germans occupied Riga, and in late February and early March of 1918—after the breakdown of peace negotiations—they entered Dorpat, Reval and Narva.

the political consciousness of the Livonians, who began to see it as the only guarantee of the inviolability of their Baltic laws. Within the Reich, in turn, the idea emerged that the Livonian countries should be joined into a single autonomous republic with a separate parliament; the republic would be formally united with the German state and it would thus enable the gradual Germanization of the entire Baltic territory.

In January 1918, Heinrich von Stryk, a plenipotentiary of Livonian and Estonian knights, presented a declaration of Livonia's independence in the name of the entire country before the Russian ambassador in Stockholm. In this manifesto, the third aspect of Livonian identity became manifest: the striving for independence, in the framework of which the Baltic Germans would enjoy their privileged social and political position, while also taking advantage of the protective umbrella of the Reich. Propaganda efforts now turned toward once again enlisting Livonia in the service of the German cause, and the term "general Germanizing" (*allgemeine Eindeutschung*) of Livonia was coined to replace the previous notion of "Germanization," which sounded too aggressive. Von Stryk's declaration preceded a similar declaration put forward by advocates of Estonian independence, whose point of view and interests had been passed over entirely by the Livonian knights.

Both sides not only undertook the struggle for international recognition, but also engaged in rivalry, which had a negative effect on relations between national groups throughout the entire interwar period. Baltic Germans counted mainly on the support of the Reich, and after its defeat in 1918, they lost the possibility of realizing their plans for autonomy. The acceptance of Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian governments and parliaments by western powers sealed the end of the conservative, pro-German concept of postwar political order in Livonia. It was, *de facto*, also the end of Livonia as such, since this concept (Livland, Livonia) receded into the past, and was replaced by the names of the independent Baltic states.

These rather clear binary Estonian-German and Latvian-German relations were complicated by the Red Army's invasion of the Baltic states at the turn of 1918 and 1919. Both pro-German aristocratic conservative groups and democratic independence parties faced the fundamental problem of survival—that is, the problem of halting the Bolshevik onslaught. In the case of Estonians and Latvians, this gave rise to a conflict of interest; in their struggle for national existence they had received significant support from local communists who were now welcoming the Red Army with joy and hope to soon settle old accounts. National interest took precedence over social interests, however, and the hastily formed Estonian and Latvian army divisions fought against the Bolsheviks alongside German army units, Baltic-German regiments, and the

White Guards—and later also Polish forces.¹²⁵ German participation in the battles for independence partially alleviated intra-Baltic tensions and became a starting point for the redefinition of the situation of the German-speaking Balts in the newly formed countries, or at least the situation of those among them who remained after the great exodus of much of the local population.¹²⁶

The extent to which the events of the First World War transformed the mentality of the Baltic-Germans is best attested to by the difficulty with which they adjusted to their new position within the independent Baltic states. They lost their privileged status, their traditional “estate-based self-governance” (*ständische Selbstverwaltung*) was eliminated, many of their landed estates were nationalized, and they themselves became simply an accepted social group among the Balts, and that only with difficulty:

Thanks to their participation in the defensive battles of the Baltic Wars of Independence against the Red Army, Baltic Germans again secured their right to their fatherland in the young republics, which were formed in 1918 on the territory of old Baltic lands. But the situation in which their status of the leading nation changed to what seems to have been that of a barely tolerated minority, did not make it easier for them to embrace positive attitudes toward the new states, of which they were now citizens.¹²⁷

During the period between 1914 and 1918, the actions of the Baltic Germans largely resembled their earlier reactions to sudden changes and threats. They sought to stay loyal to the ruling authorities, while at the same time maintaining the *status quo* which gave them advantages within the framework of local autonomy. It was not only about temporary opportunism or the desire to curb foreign influences, though these factors cannot be passed over entirely. In their desperate attempts to save their own position, the problem of their identity-related disorientation occasionally became perceptible. Baltic Germans were not Balts, though they made many efforts to assume the position of local

125 In November 1918, Baltic Germans first formed the so-called *Baltische Landeswehr* in Riga, and it became famous for its heroic defense of Riga in May 1919; it later fought—alongside Polish armies, among others—against the Bolsheviks in Latgalia, or in former Polish Livonia. The so-called Baltenregiment played a similar role in Estonia. See Michael Garleff, “Von den baltischen Provinzen zu den Republiken Estland und Lettland” [From Baltic Provinces to Estonian and Latvian Republics] in *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas: Baltische Länder*, ed. Gert von Pistohtkors, 465–480.

126 This also helped alleviate the awful impression, which the 1918 Liepāja Coup (Putsch von Libau, from the Latvian city of Liepāja) made on the Latvians; during the coup, Baltic Germans overthrew the Latvian government of K. Ulmanis, occupied Riga and proclaimed their own pro-German government. *Baltische Landeswehr* provided military support for the coup.

127 Schlau, *Die Deutsch-Balten*, 87.

autochthons; they were also not Germans, and their connection with the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation— and later with the German Reich—was very loose, and arguments in its favor derived from the Middle Ages.¹²⁸ That is why in the face of the Bolshevik threat in 1918, one of the suggestions put forward by the German-speaking Balts was to create an autonomous German province, which would have its own parliament, and which would be bound with the Reich by something like a federation treaty.¹²⁹ Like other political projects prepared in the heat of the moment, this concept was defeated along with the defeat of Germany, and its adherents were pushed to assume the role of passive objects in broader Latvian and Estonian independence conflicts.

The experience of World War I was traumatic for the Baltic Germans primarily because of the loss of their earlier social and political position in Livonia. Although these changes actually amounted to an extension of their Livonian existence, they required the fundamental reformulation of their previous sense of identity, the reduction of demands and expectations, and the delineation of rules of coexistence with the new hosts of this land; and—most importantly—the determination of their position in the societies of the Baltic states. While in Estonia these relations were normalized relatively quickly, in Latvia, the situation of the new minority was never to reach the status of stable and tension-free coexistence.¹³⁰

128 See Ungern-Sternberg, *Erzählregionen*, 132–135. Among other things, the author points out the questionable nature of the thesis about connections between the Livonian monastic state with the German “fatherland,” which is practically based only on Lübeck law, used in the establishment of Livonian cities. Ungern-Sternberg uses the word “Mutterland” in quotation marks. The Baltic countries were never a German colony in the political sense.

129 Even more peculiar propositions were made. On April 19, 1918, under the leadership of the conservative faction of the Baltic Germans, the Rigan country council (*Landesrat*) attempted to restore the monarchy, which would include all the Baltic provinces, and enter into a personal union with Prussia. Adolf Friedrich von Mecklenburg was even elected as the founder of a dynasty of Livonian princes. This grotesque example is not only an excellent illustration of this nearly “genetic” form of Baltic-German conservatism, but it also reveals the dismissal of Europe’s political realities, ideological disorientation, and elements of panic regarding state formation.

130 The watershed years 1917–1919 are described succinctly, and not without self-criticism, by Paul Schiemann, leader of the democratic and progressive wing of Baltic-German politics, in a text from 1929, which he wrote for the 10th anniversary of the Latvian Republic; among other things, he says: “[The First] World War, which, along with the persecution of Germans, brought about a rapid turn away from the Russian regime, subsequently brought the German occupation with its illusion of establishing German rule on the Baltic Sea. The illusion was strengthened by the unexpected appearance of

9. 1919–1939: The Great Minority

Baltic Germans shook off the effects of political shock relatively quickly, and they began the intensive work of organization. Parties and self-government associations quickly began to form, along with educational, cultural, and other institutions. The first democratic elections to the Estonian parliament (*Maapäev*) were boycotted by the knightly-aristocratic faction, but Max Bock, a bourgeois representative, won a seat. In the 1919 parliamentary race, three representatives from the united Baltic-German Party (*Deutsch-Baltische Partei*) were elected. This way the Baltic Germans were able to mark their presence, and even assert some political power, which gave them a relative guarantee of civil and cultural rights. In Estonia, majority–minority relations were constructed on the basis of the rational assessment of gains and losses, which included the reconstitution of privileges and assurance that the German minority would receive certain pragmatic advantages allowing it to maintain a small degree of influence.¹³¹

Cooperation was more difficult in independent Latvia, where the German minority was not only more surprised by the loss of their privileged position, but also more involved in German plans to colonize Livonia; the German minority did not recognize the new Latvian state and this made any form of German-Latvian agreements impossible from the outset. In addition, the Baltic-German community was split into a conservative faction gathered around the Baltic-German National Committee (*Deutsch-Baltischer Nationalausschuss*), and the Baltic-German Democratic Party (*Die Deutschbaltische Demokratische Partei*); these two competed for leadership of the German minority. The spirit of national and ethnic solidarity prevailed, however, when the leaders of both factions, Baron Wilhelm von Fircks (DBNA) and Paul Schiemann (DBDP) reached an agreement. Only at that point could the Latvian Baltic Germans take a unified stance against impending agrarian and social reforms.

Land reform was to further the social consolidation of the new Baltic states, and its main aims could be summarized as follows:

the possibility of turning away from the previous inclusion in Eastern culture, and entering—this time with Latvian compatriots—the realm of Western cultural influences. An illusion that did not even have the time to realize its own internal and external limitations.” Paul Schiemann, “Die Deutschbalten und der lettländische Staat” [Baltic Germans and the Latvian State], *Baltischer Almanach* (1929): 67–70. Reprinted in Renate Adolphi, ed., *800 Jahre: unser gemeinsames Riga* (Lüneburg: Carl-Schirren-Gesellschaft, 2001): 31–32.

131 Pistohlkors, *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas: Baltische Länder*, 486.

1. To weaken Baltic German hegemony in land ownership. Knightly aristocratic families constituted a definite majority of land owners, and they enjoyed a dominant economic position.
2. To meet the needs of an enormous number of workers and landless peasants who, thanks to the reform, were to gain ownership of the means of production and thereby gain the ability to independently support themselves.
3. To create a counterweight against communist propaganda by giving small amounts of land to a large portion of the population.

It proved impossible to realize all these aims to the degree that would have been satisfying to the young Baltic democracies. Although the problem of abject poverty of the lower social strata was partially solved, Latvian and Estonian agriculture would continue to rely on state subsidies for quite a long time. The blow against the aristocracy and the German magnates, however, was undoubtedly successful, as they were deprived of almost all of the land which they had owned; so, too, was the blow against the rural middle class, which functioned symbiotically with the large estates. Long years of protests, bargaining, and complaints against the reform, which evoked minority rights and which were filed with the League of Nations, resulted in a small percentage of former landowners regaining their lands (up to 50 hectares), while others received miniscule indemnities (approximately 3% of the value of the land). Permanently strained relations and growing emigration—or simply, the escape—of young German-speaking Balts to the Reich were among the most important consequences of this state of affairs. Statistical data show that there were approximately 40,000 escapees, refugees, and émigrés who moved from the Baltic states to Germany between 1918 and 1920. This loss caused further weakening of the position of the Baltic Germans, who became a minority, which accounted for a few percent of the population, and lived primarily in larger cities.

Their cultural and educational situation, however, gave reason for more optimism. In 1919, educational reforms came into effect in the Baltic countries, and granted certain rights to national minorities. Latvian and Estonian Germans eagerly took advantage of this to strengthen their identity; they founded German-language schools, wrote textbooks, trained their own teachers, and formed local unions and associations where teachers, parents, and local self-government representatives came together to oversee the identity-formation processes of their charges. In the early years after the war, over a hundred elementary schools (*Grundschule*) that taught German were founded in Latvia alone, and just in the city of Riga there were twenty of them. Middle schools (*Mittelschule*) and high schools were also founded, though the resistance of the

central authorities was greater; additionally, a pedagogical institute (*Deutsches Pädagogisches Institut*) was founded in Riga. To this, one should add the *Herder Institut* which was founded in Riga in 1921, where an autonomous college (*Hochschule*) also began to function in 1927.¹³²

The autonomy of their schools allowed the Baltic Germans to redefine their place in the Baltic region, while also serving as a touchstone of the innovative minority rights reform, whose functioning was carefully observed by all of Europe. Their internal organization, especially in Estonia, where relations with central authorities evolved more favorably than in Latvia, constituted a model of sorts for similar solutions in other European countries, which were grappling with the difficult problem of the presence of “others.”¹³³ The struggle for autonomy, however, was also marked by the reemergence of the centuries-old German myth about independence, which was accompanied by a begrudging acceptance of the need to cooperate with other nations, especially with Latvians or Estonians. From behind the declarations about mutual respect and cooperative construction of an independent state, there peered out a sense of injured pride, of a superiority forced to concessions by political circumstances. The fact that the young Baltic republics had to build their independence and their separate national identities not in solidarity with centuries-old Baltic elites but in opposition to them, was typically not viewed as a positive factor, and it did not help either side in the process of normalizing social relations.

The very concept of a minority gave rise to controversies and arguments. Indeed, while those who came from Germany over the course of the previous century could be considered a minority, this designation had little meaning when applied to the knightly families who had been living there for centuries, and whose ancestors did not come to the country but—however we ultimately judge

132 Renate Adolphi provides a vivid description of the organization and function of German-language education in interwar Latvia: “It seems to me that much of what we see as the virtue of these schools was a result of the clarity of relationships [between students and teachers]. Self-discipline and simultaneous freedom in school life were possible only because of these relationships. Teachers and students did not just meet in school, friendly social circles formed around certain homes as well. In this context, I would like to point to the vital influence of tradition, and to the efforts put into forming the personality. Students and teachers were joined by trust which stemmed from mutual respect.” Renate Adolphi, “Das deutsche Schulwesen in Lettland zwischen 1919–1939” [German Schooling in Latvia between 1919 and 1939], in *800 Jahre: unser gemeinsames Riga* [800 lat:nasza wspólna Ryga], ed. Renate Adolphi, 124.

133 See Georg von Rauch, *Geschichte der Baltischen Staaten* [History of the Baltic States], 3rd ed. (Munich: Taschenbuch, 1990), 138; see also Michael Garleff, “Aspekte Deutschbaltischer Politik und Kultur” [Aspects of Baltic-German Politics and Culture], in *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas: Baltische Länder*, ed. Gert von Pistohlkors, 499.

it—created its very foundations. When the Second World War cut short the brief life of the Baltic states, denial of their minority status was among the most typical reactions of the Baltic Germans, a sentiment expressed by the eminent historian Reinhard Wittram: “We were older than the states which one day gave us passports.”¹³⁴ In this sentence one can perceive not only superiority, but also an undermining of the legitimacy of the governments of the independent republics. To be precise, one should add that Livonian Germans had never been a majority from a demographic, sociological, or anthropological point of view. As descendants of medieval Teutonic knights, they could be described as colonizers, with all the attributes that belong to this discourse. An argument against this view, however, derives from the aforementioned fact that Livonian states had never been a German colony in the same sense, as, for example, Third World regions were colonies of the European powers. They never actually belonged to the German state, and if they had been a colony, it was rather a Russian, Swedish, Danish, or even a Polish one. “Relic” is a term that would probably be most appropriate here, and it explains, to some degree, the unclear and very difficult situation of the Baltic Germans, not just in the interwar period.

The sudden leap from the feudal social system to 20th-century democracy, in which the Baltic Germans only had a few mandates for every hundred parliamentary representatives, was a veritable shock, and one that did not respond to quick and effective therapy. Their hasty organization of hermetic forms of functioning as a minority mostly served the purpose of surviving in difficult conditions, and it by no means went hand in hand with recognizing that other minorities had the same rights. Rather, they focused on German minorities in other European countries, as attested to by the formation of the Union of German Minorities Abroad (*Verband der deutschen Minderheiten des Auslands*) in 1923; it was founded by Rudolph Brandsch, a German from Transylvania, and Ewald Ammende, an Estonian Baltic-German. By the 1930s, the autonomy of the Baltic-German minority was strengthened to the point where its members felt more secure, and entered into sharper conflicts with Estonian and Latvian authorities; their sense of security was reinforced by the awareness of support—both financial and ideological—from the Weimar Republic, and later from Hitler’s Reich. Political organizations, education, the press, and Protestant communities—i.e., all the important spheres of social activity—were enthusiastically supported by the Berlin government, which saw German

134 Reinhard Wittram, *Livland: Schicksal und Erbe der baltischen Deutschen* [Livonia: Fate and the Inheritance of the Baltic Germans] (Berlin: Volk und Reich Verlag, 1940), 47. It is significant that during the Nazi era the expression “baltische Deutsche” reappeared.

minorities abroad as important agents of political expansion. This support was also encouraged by the Baltic Germans who lived in the Reich, and who attempted to influence the attitudes and political decisions in the *Baltikum* from the outside.¹³⁵

The imperial propaganda of the Third Reich met with favorable responses among the Baltic Germans. In the 30s, many newly-formed political organizations, parties, and associations rallied around the National Socialist notion of “new forms of politics.” This euphemism concealed not only hopes for regaining political influence in the region, but also provided occasion for the final—for the first time in history—annexation of the Baltic “colony” by the German state. This was particularly significant in light of the difficult experiences that came with the independence of the new Baltic states, which were clearly not interested in protecting the aristocratic privileges of the Baltic Germans. For the young generation, the turn toward National Socialism provided a simplified solution to the dilemma of dual loyalty, to the humiliation of being designated a minority, to social and professional marginalization, and so on:

The quick growth of the power of the German Reich in the 1930s, together with Nazi propaganda, caused tensions between state and national loyalties to be felt with ever greater intensity. Organizations called “movements” were formed; they sought to become leaders of nationalist groups, and established contacts with the structures of the NSDAP. The youth were responsive, above all, to the idea of an all-German community, which gave hope for strengthening the position of the German national minority and promised a new social order.¹³⁶

Postwar German historiography explains the emergence of pro-Hitler sympathies among the Baltic Germans by pointing to growing conflicts, growth of dictatorial and nationalist tendencies among the Balts, and chaos in domestic politics of the Baltic states. Young Baltic Germans felt pushed aside from profitable posts which had historically been the provenance of their forebears, and they had more and more difficulties in conducting trade or advancing science and education; in a word, they were deprived of an appropriate start in life.¹³⁷ Disillusioned, they either escaped to study in Germany, where they

135 As we already noted above, a significant percentage of the Baltic Germans emigrated to Germany during World War I and shortly thereafter; many of them never returned to their native region. Their social status was marked by a rather interesting complication. They were (Baltic) émigrés, who were at the same time (German) re-émigrés, and some of them were also victims of expulsions.

136 Taube and Thomson, *Die Deutschbalten – Schicksal und Erbe*, 66.

137 Pistohlkors, *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas: Baltische Länder*, 528.

diligently listened to the language of the new propaganda, or they escaped into political activism at home, in countries which were less and less their countries.

These arguments, which have their validity, can, however, be answered by other arguments which derive from a different perspective. First, the expectations of the descendants of the Baltic-German elites were based on old privileges, and so they were rather exaggerated, and much higher than the expectations of other Baltic minorities (Russians, Belarusians, or Poles). Second, their susceptibility to Hitler's propaganda derived not only from dissatisfaction with the loss of privileges, but also from admiration of the growing power of the Reich, which generated a vague hope for the reappearance of the old colonial model. It was no accident that one of the main political proposals of this faction consisted in the annexation of Livonia by Germany. Third, over the course of several centuries, the Baltic-German community grew all too comfortable with conservative convictions about its own superiority, about the necessity of a social hierarchy, and the need to cultivate civilization in Livonia; it therefore felt awkward in the narrow corset of the status of an unwanted minority. The ideological (and later military) support from the Nazi Reich tempted them with the possibility of easily throwing off these unpleasant limitations.¹³⁸

10. 1939–1945: The War. Expulsions. The End.

In September 1939, the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact and the entry of the Red Army into Poland's eastern regions were much more significant for the Baltic Germans than the outbreak of the war itself. For Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, this turn of events caused difficulties in maintaining their fragile neutrality, while the German minority felt threatened by the close and aggressive presence of Soviet forces. Soviet-Estonian and Soviet-Latvian tensions directly affected all inhabitants of historic Livonia. Despite reassuring statements from Moscow, anxiety quickly turned to undisguised fear, attested to by the many German minority delegations, which went to Berlin with dramatic appeals for intervention. In the address which ended the September military campaign in Poland (dating from October 6, 1939) Hitler announced both Germany's brilliant victory, and the need to incorporate German minorities in Eastern

138 Andrzej Topij provides an accurate analysis of the conditions of the formation of National-Socialist sympathies among Baltic Germans in his *Mniejszość niemiecka na Łotwie i w Estonii 1918–1939/41* [The German Minority in Latvia and Estonia, 1918–1939/41] (Bydgoszcz: Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej w Bydgoszczy, 1998), 346–399.

Europe into the Reich.¹³⁹ A lightning-fast relocation campaign was organized, and over 100,000 Baltic Germans were moved to the Reich, or, to be more precise, to the just-conquered territories to the east of the middle of the Odra River; that is, to the Reichsgau Wartheland (*Warthegau*). The descendants of Baltic colonizers thus received a new colonial task, this time in Greater Poland.¹⁴⁰ By moving their “countrymen” from their birthplace to a new place of settlement, the Nazi administration initiated a series of immensely large forced migrations, which became the somber background of the Second World War. The attitude of those who were relocated was far from unambiguous. Nazi propaganda alternated between imbuing fear (the Red Army will enter any day, and the Baltic German socio-political position is getting worse) and giving encouragement (the new territories are richer and better), while fascist organizations called for new colonization. Estonians and Latvians openly expressed their joy at getting rid of their inconvenient neighbors (“We shall not see each other again,” the Latvian president Karlis Ulmanis is said to have told the Baltic Germans when they departed). Most of the migrants, however, experienced, above all, the personal drama of leaving their native land, with the feeling that it was forever. In countless memoirs of the migrants, published in the last fifty years, the moment of leaving the Latvian or Estonian land is described in detail, with the tiniest and most insignificant episodes—as it was

139 Even at that point, Baltic Germans still had problems with their Germanness, something which can be seen in a minor remark from the memoirs of Gertrude Adolphi, who was among the participants of the great historical finale. When, in the course of listening to the Führer’s speech, she heard about the problem of Germans in the East, referred to as ‘minorities,’ the author fearfully asked herself: “Does this also concern us?” The apolitical descendants of the colonizers did not identify with National Socialism, with Germans, or with the category of “the German minority.” See Renate Adolphi, *Erinnerungen meiner Mutter* [My Mother’s Reminiscences] (Lüneburg: Carl-Schirren-Gesellschaft, 2004), 177.

140 Piotr Łossowski describes the entire process of resettlement in detail in “Przesiedlenie Niemców z państw bałtyckich w 1939/1941 roku,” [The Expulsion of Germans from the Baltic States in 1939–41] in *Kraje bałtyckie w latach przełomu 1934–1944* [Baltic States during the Watershed Years 1934–1944] (Warsaw; Sejny: Instytut Historii PAN; Fundacja Pogranicze, 2005), based on Dietrich A. Loeber’s excellent study *Diktirte Option: die Umsiedlung der Deutsch-Balten aus Estland und Lettland 1939–1941: Dokumentation* [A Dictated Option: Expulsions of the Baltic Germans from Estonia and Latvia, 1939–1941: Documents] (Neumünster: K. Wachholtz, 1972). In Polish this topic is also explored by Topij, *Mniejszość niemiecka na Łotwie i w Estonii 1918–1939* [The German Minority in Latvia and Estonia, 1918–1939]; Janusz Sobczak, *Hitlerowskie przesiedlenia ludności niemieckiej w dobie II wojny światowej* [Nazi Resettlements of the German Population during World War II] (Poznań: Instytut Zachodni, 1966).

preserved by memory, which is particularly sensitive to high emotional registers. Let us evoke once more the reminiscences of Gertrude Adolphi, who tends to be rather restrained and sensible throughout her memoir:

On November 17th [1939] it was our turn. We had to travel by the steamer “Der Deutsche.” In my memory, I go back and think about our last family trip to Segewold—in the final days of October. The leaves were already less dense than a few weeks earlier, but they still shimmered with bronze, gold, and yellow hues in the autumn sun. We looked on from the hills at the beautiful landscape in front of us; the river Aa glistened in its many meanders; Jörg, who was 8-years-old, saw all this for the first time: the ruined castles, the tree-covered hills (...)

We were saying farewell to our country. I experienced an equally painful farewell on another occasion, when I stood over my father’s grave at the cemetery. In my deep sorrow, the words of the psalm sounded like a consolation: “to God belongs the land and all that fills it...”

Departure from our childhood home, the home of youth and active life: November 17th in the morning. The empty rooms, I wave to my beloved garden from the windows. Apples still hang on many apple trees: small white and pink doves [an old German apple variety], which we always ate for Christmas, and which adorned our Christmas tree. Who will eat them this year?—The end.

(...) The anchor of “Der Deutsche” was raised at 2 pm. The ship orchestra played “Dievs sveti Latviju”—many cried out loud—and then “Die Lieder der Nation”—a moving German song, and finally the kitschy “Die Fahne hoch.” The ship floated down the Daugava. The silhouette of the city revealed itself in all its beauty: the church towers and the castle. The end.¹⁴¹

Theoretically, relocation had the character of an option, which could be voluntarily chosen, but in reality it was dictated by necessity—it was simply the only solution in a politically tense situation. As Michael Garleff suggests, in light of the military weakness of the Baltic republics, for the Baltic Germans, the “fight or flight” alternative became the more passive “relocate or perish.”¹⁴² This was indeed a “dictated option.” The whole sad operation was made paradoxical by the fact—brilliantly expressed by one of the German historians—that the criminal was to protect the victim from the effects of the crime.¹⁴³ Accurate but also symptomatic: Baltic Germans as victims of the international situation. Instead of enthusiastic approval—as was the case among the inhabitants of

141 Adolphi, *Erinnerungen meiner Mutter*, 179–181.

142 Pistohlkors, *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas: Baltische Länder*, 540.

143 Rex Rexheuser, “Die Umsiedlung der Deutschbalten 1939: Versuch einer historischen Einordnung” [The Expulsion of Baltic Germans in 1939: An Attempt at an Historical Ordering], *Jahrbuch Des Baltischen Deutschtums* 36 (1988): 16.

Silesia or Eastern Prussia—Baltic Germans felt a sense of injustice, and they kept their distance from the new *Heimat*, which was forced on them.

In 1939 and in 1941 (the second wave of relocations), altogether approximately 85,000 people left the Baltic territory, but several thousand remained and lived to experience the brief return of hope when Hitler's army marched to the east. Officially, returning was out of the question, but thousands of Balts from the Reich nonetheless rushed into volunteer civil service in the east—to prepare the ground for rebuilding German hegemony on the shores of the Baltic Sea.¹⁴⁴ Historians are somewhat more restrained when they mention Baltic participation in the military, which must not have been insignificant, given the Baltic Germans' skills that would have been useful in the conquest. They were used as translators, intelligence agents, and specialists on Russian. Unfortunately, their rather extensive participation in General Vlasov's army and in SS units belongs to the darkest aspects of their activity. There can be no denying that among the defendants at the Nuremberg Trials there were a number of Livonians of German ancestry.

The relocation of Baltic Germans—temporary and reversible in intention—was in fact the end of the 700-year-long German colonization of the Baltic countries, the longest colonization in European history. It was also the end of their actual presence there. Today, one can admire magnificent manifestations of Western European culture in the Baltic region: mighty castles and palaces, great Hanseatic-style transportation ports, historic town centers with beautiful, centuries-old buildings, merchant houses, and town halls. There are traces of an entire civilizational structure—but there are no people. Today's inhabitants of Riga, Tartu, Tallinn, Jelgava, and Kuldīga live in a space filled by the ghosts of others, with whom it was difficult to find a common language. Denial takes meaning away from history. What should be done with these “others”? The first impulse is to reject them as foreign, but can a community which established its culture here for seven hundred years be entirely foreign? Estonians and Latvians, however, seem to be searching for a new type of understanding. Here and there one can already encounter a new approach to the subject, and find attempts to look at the unknown past of their own country.¹⁴⁵ After years of

144 *Meine Siedlungsarbeit in Kurland* [My Work as a Colonizer in Courland] (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1941), a small book about German settler activity in Courland at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, which was published in 1942 by Karl von Manteuffel, a veteran of the settlement movement, can be seen as testimony to the increased activity of the Baltic Kulturtragers during the conquest of the “Baltikum” by the Nazis.

145 A good example here is provided by the modern multimedia museum in the former castle of the Livonian commanders in Ventspils, where one can read about and listen to the multicultural history of the city in several languages (but not in German!).

distrustful distance and ostentatious *desinteressement*, there is an awakening of scholarly curiosity directed at those who have disappeared; and it is no longer clear whether they should have the status of guests or fellow householders.

11. Life After Life. The Relic. Dying Out.

Those who were relocated from old Livonian lands into the Federal Republic of Germany worked with effort and difficulty to lose the adjective “Baltic” that described them. It was not only about their somewhat antiquated German, with its hard northern accent, but also about centuries-long social customs, formed in a different time and place, and not fully explainable by the term “conservative.” This social group was said to be characterized by a “phase displacement” (*Phasenverschiebung*) in social development, and it was said that it needs time to adjust to life in a modern, progressive, and democratic society.¹⁴⁶ The problem lies in the fact that, for the most part, Baltic Germans were not modern democrats; and this was not (extreme cases aside) because of any ideological colonialist racism, but because this is how they were brought up with the help of their centuries-old educational models. This was the natural form of their existence. After two episodes of hasty relocation (from Latvia and Estonia to *Warthegau* and four years later into the heart of Germany), deprived of nearly all their belongings, all they had kept was their Livonian identity, which they now had to shed in the process of the forced democratization of postwar Germany. It is perhaps not an exaggeration to say that as victims of Nazi superpower propaganda, they paid a high price for Hitlerism. In the new German society, they were a relic of an uncomfortable and badly-regarded past, and their destiny was not adaptation but disappearance.

The breakdown of the Soviet Empire, and the regaining of independence by the Baltic states brought some hopes for the reanimation of the old myth—though in a vestigial or substitute form. Baltic-German associations proposed extensive cooperation with Latvia and Estonia, which would include joint historical research, bilingual publications, conferences, and scholarship programs. The scholarly perspective of Baltic-German historians also changed, and they shifted their attention from establishing, emphasizing, and calling attention to the German heritage in the Baltic region, to interdisciplinary, multicultural, and anthropological studies, focused primarily on relations between Germans and other Balts. The Baltic *Heimat* now appeared in their field of interests not as an object of native or national sentiments but as a source of new and interesting findings, which were often surprising for the Livonians

146 Schlau, *Die Deutsch-Balten*, 102.

themselves. The beneficial effects of distance, and of what postcolonial researchers call the “cultural politics of difference,” became perceptible.¹⁴⁷ In an emergency lifesaving operation, the monolithic myth of the lost Arcadia was transformed into a subject of research.

The last generation of Baltic Germans who were born in the Baltic region, and who remember that lifestyle, is dying out. Judging by the research, publishing, and educational activity of this group, the myth of the lost (revoked?) identity has not been erased by complete denial; on the contrary, along with multicultural objectification, it constitutes a parallel realm of meaningful referents. And this latter realm is more authentic, subjective, more one’s own and more basic than the former.¹⁴⁸ When it ends, the experience of time and place—the fundamental framework of culture, of that which Clifford Geertz defined as “interworked systems of construable signs”—will be lost irretrievably.¹⁴⁹

12. Coda

During my first visit at the *Carl Schirren Gesellschaft* in Lüneburg, I had occasion to speak with a Baltic German woman who was in her eighties; she was born and raised in prewar Latvia, and took part in the 1939-45 relocations. I was intrigued not only by her interesting brusque accent (she was also fluent in Latvian), but also by the great energy with which she moved about the cultural home of old Livonia. There was much northern hardness in her; above all, there was the dignity with which she endured this strange variation of a non-German

147 See Cornel West, “The New Cultural Politics of Difference,” in *The Cultural Studies Reader*, ed. Simon During (London; New York: Routledge, 1999), 256–267.

148 In Lüneburg, two institutions are located in the same building: the Carl-Schirren-Gesellschaft and Nord-Ost-Institut. The former is an association of Baltic Germans which has been functioning since 1932, the latter was created after the war, and its workers research the history and culture of the lands of North-Eastern Europe. The difference between the periodicals published by these two institutions (both are primarily historical) best exemplifies the duality which we are discussing here. In the yearly “Jahrbuch des Baltischen Deutschtums” the Carl-Schirren-Gesellschaft published mostly descriptive and memoir texts written by German authors, while the “Nordost-Archiv” journal offers a broad range of German, Polish, Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian, and other texts; it also regularly includes reviews of historical works produced in these countries. It juxtaposes the perspective of partnership against the perspective of hierarchy.

149 Clifford Geertz, “Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture,” in *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*, by Clifford Geertz (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 14.

German existence. During our conversation, she was constantly surprised that I did not know anything about certain matters, which were obviously clear to her, like the relocation office organized in the town hall in Riga in October of 1939, or existence of a German college at the *Herder Institut* in Riga before the war. The following day, I wanted to ask her one more thing, and for a long time I searched for her in the rooms of the *Carl Schirren Gesellschaft*; I found her in a bright room poring over a pile of pictures. There were over two hundred photographs from prewar Mitawa, with lots of people in them, and she was concerned that she did not recognize everyone. The pictures had been recently developed from an old film, and they were being archived. They should be carefully labeled, but there was no one who could be asked about them. She was puzzling it out alone. Dying out. But slowly.

Chapter 2

Polish History of Livonia: *Nowhereland*

*Casting out demons is a praxis
we should practice as well as study.*

Clifford Geertz

1. Incorporation: Voluntary Coercion

In the center of Riga, by one of the windows on the second floor of the building at 14 Kaļķu Street, there is a golden hoof attached to the wall. It commemorates the ceremonial entry of one of the monarchs into the city; local legends talk about a rider in the procession, whose restless horse kicked his leg so violently that the hoof flew off and hit the second-story window. The owner of the building took this as a good omen and nailed the hoof to the wall. There are several versions of the legend because several rulers ceremonially entered Riga, but historians associate one of the versions with the arrival of the Polish King Stephen Bathory, who received solemn homage of loyalty from the city in 1582. Gustaw Manteuffel scrupulously recorded this fact in his guide to Riga:

Walking along Kalkstrasse, the traveler will notice a golden hoof in the window on the second floor of the building under number 14. It is to remind passersby that on the occasion of the arrival of the first crowned figure to ever enter Riga's city walls (King Stephen Bathory), such a hoof was lost in front of this house by the horse carrying the *laufer* (king's rider), who rode ahead of the heroic monarch's procession.

And in a footnote he added with indignation:

Vicious members of the Hakata (among whom the heroic King Stephen hardly enjoys popularity) replaced this centuries-old traditional description by an entirely unlikely version from more recent times; it is currently promulgated with great caution in one of the German tourist guides in the following words: "Nach einer unverbürgten, verschiedene Varianten aufweisenden Tradition, war während des nordischen Krieges im J. 1701 oder auch des französischen im J. 1812 ein Reiter durch die Kalkstrasse gesprenzt, und hatte sein Pferd ein Hufeisen verloren, welches in das zweite Fenster des oberen Stockwerkes geschleudert wurde" [According to an unconfirmed tradition, which has several versions, during the Northern War of 1701 or the French War of 1812, a rider galloped through Kalkstrasse and his horse lost a

hoof, which was hurled upwards to the second-story window] (Oberlehrer Konstantin Mettig, *Führer durch Riga*) [A Guide to Riga].¹⁵⁰

Manteuffel reacted strongly against the attempt to deprive Poland of participation in the knightly legend because he was generally sensitive to signs of minimizing the Polish history of these lands; he also viewed this particular story as especially significant and worthy of recalling. Bathory came to Riga not only to receive homage; he also began reclaiming churches which Protestants had taken from Catholics during the Reformation, he brought Jesuits to the city, and appointed the Lithuanian magnate Jan Hieronim Chodkiewicz as the royal governor, and thereby ended the twenty-year-long process of incorporating Livonia into the Commonwealth. Indeed, Rigans did not have much reason to remember him fondly, and it is not surprising that they were driving Poles out of their native legend. In fact, they were driving Poland out of all of Livonian historiography as well, something Menteuffel intensely opposed. From this perspective, Poland appeared as the most loathsome of the colonizers, even though its appearance in Livonian history was actually the result of the Livonians' own wishes.

Polish history in Livonia started a quarter century before the memorable flight of the hoof. In 1557, the confederated Livonian states, which had belonged to the Livonian-Teutonic Order (or rather to what remained of it after the secularization of Prussia), found themselves caught in a vise between two powers: the Kingdom of Poland and Moscow. Both clearly intended to occupy all of Livonia, and the armed forces of the Teutonic Order were incapable of holding either of them back. By then, King Sigismund II Augustus had for some time been planning to occupy the northeastern coast of the Baltic in order to cut off Russia's access to the European sea, while Ivan the Terrible made this access his central goal.¹⁵¹ When a fresh round of conflicts concerning the office of the coadjutor erupted between the Teutonic Order and the Rigan archbishop, the Polish king used it as a pretext for amassing his armies at the Livonian border, in the vicinity of Pozvol (Lithuanian: Pasvylas).

150 Manteuffel, *Przewodnik po Rydze i jej okolicach* [Guide to Riga and the Surrounding Area], 17.

151 For a reliable description of various interests, plans, and diplomatic maneuvers connected with the secularization of the Livonian state in the middle of the 16th century see Henryk Łowmiański's chapter "Stosunki z Moskwą i wojna o Inflanty" [Relations with Moscow and the War for Livonia] in *Polityka Jagiellonów* [Politics of the Jagiellonians], ed. Krzysztof Pietkiewicz (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2006), 580. See also the skillful analysis provided by Doris Marszk in "Polen-Litauen Und Der Untergang Alt-Livlands," 57–80.

The display of force alone proved sufficient and a massive battle was unnecessary; the Teutonic state signed the so-called Treaty of Pozvol (September 14, 1557), on the basis of which it became administratively subordinated to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The Teutonic state also signed a treaty of mutual assistance against Moscow, thereby simultaneously choosing both an ally and an enemy.

Indeed, immediately at the beginning of 1558, Ivan the Terrible invaded the Livonian lands under the pretext of needing to collect overdue tributes (Livonian wars are full of trivial pretexts), and it quickly became obvious that Lithuania was incapable of properly defending all of Livonia by itself. It became necessary for the Polish Crown to enter the war as well; and this required the permission of the *Sejm* [parliament] and that of all the gentry and aristocratic estates. Three players thus entered into conflict over Livonia:

1. **The Grand Duchy of Lithuania**, which saw the rich neighboring Duna lands as an inherent part of Lithuania, and for whom occupation offered the chance to strengthen its independence from the Polish Crown. On the other hand, the border with Moscow was becoming dangerously long and increasingly difficult to defend against the open aggression of the eastern neighbor.
2. **The Polish King**, who saw Livonian countries as a new and abundant source of profits, and a means of blocking the economic and military development of Moscow. His secret plan consisted in occupying Livonia by relying on the dynastic ambitions of the Hohenzollerns, who, in turn, dreamed of making Courland into their own Protestant duchy.¹⁵²
3. **The Polish aristocracy**, who became involved in the conflict with reserve and aversion, primarily in order to block Lithuania's separatist aims. Preparations were underway for changing the personal Union between Poland and Lithuania into an actual one (the Lublin Union of 1569 was the outcome), and therefore all independent military undertakings of the Grand Duchy were looked down upon.

152 In the long run, this intricate plan of the Polish king had catastrophic results and led to the reinforcement of Prussia's power in the Baltic: "And thus the king who led Polish politics in the direction of *dominium maris Baltici*, simultaneously prepared the ground for the Germans to drive a wedge between the sea and the Polish hinterland. In the final account, these policies brought pitiful results. Although Albrecht did not establish a stronghold in Livonia, the Hohenzollerns strengthened their position in Prussia, and thereby weakened Poland's position on the sea." Łowmiański, *Polityka Jagiellonów* [Politics of the Jagiellonians], 564.

The fourth player—the **Livonian aristocracy**—who were not entirely passive either, even though they were cornered by the simultaneous invasion by two great powers; they wished, at any price, to avoid the incorporation into Lithuania and to instead submit to the direct rule of the Polish king. This twisted tangle of events and plans was complicated further by the political ambitions of individual magnates (like Mikołaj Radziwiłł Czarny or Jan Hieronim Chodkiewicz), who obviously fantasized about gaining political sovereignty in the Baltic provinces.

After the spectacular successes of Moscow's army units, which occupied Polotsk and Dorpat and which approached Riga, the ambitious and pro-Polish Teutonic Grand Master Gotthard Kettler convinced Sigismund II Augustus to sign what became known as the 1559 Treaty of Vilnius, in which the Polish King promised to place Livonia under his personal protection:

[Gotthard Kettler] went to King Sigismund II Augustus, who was then in Vilnius, where the treaty was signed on August 31, 1559. In it, the king committed himself to protect the Livonian Confederation on the condition that a significant portion of the lands around the middle of the Daugava River would become his property, and on the condition that he would put a lien on the defensive castles of Dyneburg, Selburg, Ludza, Rezekne and Bauska.¹⁵³

This moment marked the beginning of the Polish Crown's military involvement in Livonia; Poland now manned the castles that had been given to the king (it did so badly, according to Manteuffel), but it did not rush to provide more serious military support for the Teutonic Order, as a result of which Moscow's forces easily plundered various regions. When in June 1561 Sweden extended its protection over the Estonian part of Livonia (the Harju and Virumaa provinces, the Järven district and the city of Reval, all of which fully surrendered to the Swedish King Erik XIV), the remaining Livonian regions asked the Polish Crown for the same kind of protection.

In the previous chapter, we have already discussed the motivations of the Livonians, and the advantages they derived from Polish protection; on the Polish side, the situation was so tangled that it is actually not clear who received Livonia and on the basis of what legal statutes. At first it was Lithuania that received it, but primarily as a military obligation in the framework of the war between Moscow and Poland. Livonia was then officially put under the protection of the Polish king, but it is not entirely clear what this meant, since the king did not take Livonia personally, but as head of a federated state. Although Sigismund II Augustus promised to take care of the formalities at the

153 Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 101.

next meeting of the *Sejm*, the negotiations and legal procedures were so protracted that an actual vote on this matter never took place. The Polish *Sejm* voted on Livonian War expenditures, the king confirmed the privileges of the Livonian gentry, but Livonia's political status within the broader federal structure of the state was never delineated. Lithuania sought incorporation, but this was opposed both by Livonia, which was concerned about its autonomy and its privileges, and by the Polish Crown, which wanted to be able to make joint decisions regarding all Baltic matters. With the best of intentions, a German historian sought to disentangle these issues:

The incorporation of Livonia into the Duchy of Lithuania was planned as a special safeguard against Moscow's designs. Livonian representatives accepted this idea with reservations, however, because it was very important to them that the Polish Crown should also participate in Livonia's defense. This is why they also demanded incorporation into Poland. Polish aristocracy opposed this demand, realizing that as a consequence Poland would have to enter into the war with Moscow. That is why in the *Pacta Subjectionis* from 1561, which sealed Livonia's final surrender, we find the formulation about surrender to the personal rule of Sigismund II Augustus. The monarch promised to seek the confirmation of this act from the Polish *Sejm*. In the event that the *Sejm* refused to ratify the act, Livonia was to be incorporated into the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.¹⁵⁴

Seemingly, the issue appears to be clear: since the Polish aristocracy did not make the necessary decision, Livonia became part of the Grand Duchy. And this is indeed how subsequent events seemed to unfold, at least until the 1566 Union of Grodno, in which there was talk about the formation of an Ultra-Duna Duchy (*ducatus Ultradunensis*), which was to be annexed to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.¹⁵⁵ However, during the very same Grodno meeting of the *Sejm*, the Polish side demanded that the Ultra-Duna Duchy become annexed by the Polish-Lithuanian Union as a whole, and not just by Lithuania. The king promised Livonians that he would reaffirm their privileges, which he failed to do, and the Lithuanians sharply objected to the form of incorporation proposed by the Poles. In this way, Livonia simultaneously was and was not part of the Polish-Lithuanian Union; it was annexed by the Grand Duchy by force and

154 Heyde, "Kość niezgody – Inflanty w polityce wewnętrznej Rzeczypospolitej" [Bone of Contention: Livonia in the Domestic Politics of the Commonwealth], 161.

155 The secularization of the Rigan Archbishopric was also carried out during this Grodno session of the *Sejm*. Enn Tarvel is surprised that the name "Ultra-Duna Duchy" did not become an official title in Poland's royal registers, and was instead replaced by the common name "Livonia" there; see Tarvel, "Stosunek prawnopanstwowy Inflant do Rzeczypospolitej" [Livonia's State and Legal Relations with the Commonwealth], 61. Perhaps the reason for avoiding this name was precisely the fact that it was too closely connected with the Grodno decisions, where Livonia was deprived of its separate status.

deprived of autonomy (“incorporation”), while at the same time it voluntarily surrendered itself to the Polish king’s rule; it had its own separate Livonian privileges which were outlined in the *Pacta Subjectionis* and the *Privilegium Sigismundi Augusti*, while also receiving—in Grodno and again three years later in Lublin—all the privileges which the Lithuanian gentry enjoyed, without the king’s confirmation of the old privileges. It was brought in, but its status was never precisely determined.¹⁵⁶

At first, Livonian knights perceived this chaos as convenient: they were able to claim the freedoms enjoyed by the Polish-Lithuanian gentry—while simultaneously having the status of a separate political formation in both acts of incorporation—and they kept their old rights to their own language, religion, and laws (*Sprache, Glaube, Recht*). Livonians also received the so-called Livonian *indigénat*, or the local gentry’s exclusive right to staff local offices, modeled on the Prussian *indigénat*.¹⁵⁷ This privilege, however, was not actually upheld, and it was blatantly violated by the establishment of the office of the royal administrator of Livonia (given to Gotthard Kettler between 1561 and 1566, and Jan Hieronim Chodkiewicz after 1566); the privilege nonetheless stressed the political, territorial, and administrative distinctiveness of Livonia—even if this distinctiveness was never actually clearly formulated.

This situation was made even more peculiar by the fact that in addition to Poland’s annexation of Livonia, the incorporation treaty also established the Duchy of Courland, which became a vassal state, given to the Kettler family for the life of the dynasty (which formally died out in 1737). In addition, the first Prince of Courland was also the royal administrator for all of Livonia, and he was detested by the local gentry for his dynastic ambitions. The Duchy of Courland enjoyed greater political freedom and independence from the central government, and this also provoked the Livonian gentry’s envy and aversion. In addition, Kettler had serious difficulties with unifying individual bishoprics and small duchies into a single political unit, not to mention his difficulties with

156 Some historians claim that Livonia was annexed only to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and according to this interpretation, during the period 1557–1569, Ivan the Terrible was fighting the Livonian War only against Lithuania; see Anatolij E. Taras, *Vojny Moskovskoj Rusi s Velikim knjazestvom Litovskim i Reč’ju Pospolitoj v XIV – XVII vekach* [Muscovy’s Wars with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth between the 14th and the 17th Centuries] (Moskva; Minsk: AST; Harvest, 2006), 214–272. In this book, even Sigismund II Augustus appears as a minor Lithuanian prince before 1569.

157 Many of the incorporation documents were modeled on the Prussian example, but while a robust autonomy was achieved by the Duchy of Prussia, Livonia was handicapped by a certain “lack of specificity” in the legal realm.

subordinating his subjects, who—as Gustaw Manteuffel reports¹⁵⁸—did not even want to attend the *sejms* he convened. Within Courland, moreover, there was the Piltene Land, Ziemia Piltyńska, an even smaller territorial unit, whose political system was even less clearly delineated, and where the citizens constructed their own parliamentary system, which—for its time—was extremely democratic; the meetings of the local *sejmiki* [assemblies] were veritable recitals of insubordination and parliamentary factiousness.¹⁵⁹ Livonia disintegrated into several different territories with a barely-specified status and with unstable political affiliations:

While the status of the Duchy of Courland and Semgale turned out to be relatively durable, and, in principle it could change only the extinction of the Kettler dynasty, the situation of Livonia north of the Daugava River changed twice in less than a decade after 1561. In 1566 the so-called Union of Grodno took place, on the basis of which Livonia was incorporated into the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, but already in 1569 it became subject to the joint (...) rule of Lithuania and the Polish Crown. This situation was nullified once again when Ivan the Terrible occupied Livonia. Once Stephen Bathory defeated the tsar, he treated Livonia as the spoils of war and organized it according to his own designs. Among the elements of Bathory's politics there were the attempts to undermine the Protestant character of the country and re-Catholicize it.¹⁶⁰

Things were different still in Riga, which—much like other Livonian cities—was to formally surrender to the king's rule; yet during successive annexation deliberations its representatives refused to undergo the formal surrender procedure, ultimately securing the postponement of surrender for twenty years. Rigan citizens' hostility to the whole process of secularization and dismantlement of the Livonian states became clearly perceptible here. The most important reasons for their aversion were religious (Protestant Riga was anxious about Counterreformation pressures from Catholic Poland) and economic (Riga derived great profits from trade with the East, and the Polish Crown was an unnecessary intermediary, which was, moreover, at war with Moscow). The traditional Hanseatic independence of the city, which also had a political dimension, played a significant role as well, as the city's loyalty extended only

158 Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 132.

159 As Gustaw Manteuffel reports in *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 140–145. An exhaustive analysis of the “Piltene case” has been carried out by Bogusław Dybaś in his historical study *Na obrzeżach Rzeczypospolitej* [On the Borderlands of the Commonwealth].

160 Dybaś, “Problemy integracji terytoriów inflanckich z Rzeczpospolitą” [The Problems of Integrating Livonian Territories into the Commonwealth], 171.

to serious trading partners. Certainly, Riga urgently needed military assistance against Moscow, but it was not willing to exchange its privileges and political freedom for such assistance. Its stalling for time was a way of benefiting from the support of the Polish-Lithuanian army, without, however, making any concessions in return. This policy brought concrete benefits when King Sigismund II Augustus took over Livonia, and allowed Riga to maintain its political independence for twenty years. Aversion against Stephen Bathory was therefore all that much greater, when in 1582 he came to Riga to remind the city about its long overdue homage.

As he sought to convince the Polish aristocracy to support military intervention in Livonia, King Sigismund II Augustus presented visions of a rich northern land, the incorporation of which would bring Poland enormous gains. Lithuanians reasoned similarly when they did not wish to share Livonia with the Polish Crown, and when they treated the Ultra-Duna Duchy as an obvious part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Subsequent decades revealed the illusoriness of all these calculations: Poland became embroiled in the long and exhausting Northern Wars, which ruined its treasury and resulted primarily in successive concessions to the neighboring aggressor states. The blocking of Muscovy's access to the Baltic proved unrealistic in the long run, as did the final victory over its army, which grew together with the territories that were being annexed by the Grand Duchy of Moscow in the 16th century.¹⁶¹ The later attempts to effectively drive the Swedes out of Livonia, undertaken by King Sigismund III Vasa, who had great dynastic ambitions, proved equally untenable. And the 1605 victory over the Swedes at Kirchholm—spectacular but without long-term gains—brought no significant changes to the situation.

2. Stubbornness

Division of the Livonian territories between Sweden on the one hand and the Commonwealth and Courland (as a Polish vassal state) on the other, did not bring expected stabilization; after a few years of gathering strength, Moscow again voiced its claims to these territories. In 1577, Ivan the Terrible once again invaded the Baltic region and forced the newly elected King Stephen Bathory to undertake a Livonian campaign; Poles were successful in pushing the Russian

161 Henryk Łowmiański has shown rather convincingly that the plan to cut Moscow off from the Baltic in 1561 did not make much sense in a situation where in 1553 England established trade relations with Russian lands, using the White Sea, and a trading “Moscow company” was even established in London; see Łowmiański, *Polityka Jagiellonów* [Politics of the Jagiellonians], 563.

forces out in the early part of this campaign, partly because of their cooperation with the Swedish army.¹⁶² One could say that in the initial phase of the War, the Commonwealth fulfilled the obligations it had taken upon itself and effectively protected Livonia against Russian aggression, while simultaneously effectively blocking Russia's access to the Baltic Sea. When Bathory succeeded in taking Livonia back from Moscow, he saw it as the spoils of war and was not particularly concerned about upholding any previously secured treaties and privileges; this complicated the complex relation of dependence even more. One should not be surprised that since uniform domestic policies were lacking, negative attitudes toward Polish rule were intensifying in Livonia; this was perhaps most vividly exemplified by the "Calendar Upheavals," which took place in Riga between 1586 and 1589. Although they ended with the so-called Severin Treaty, in which the new Polish King Sigismund III Vasa confirmed all the historic privileges of the Rigan burghers, aversion against Poland—skillfully sustained by Baltic Protestants—kept growing. Given the actual removal of the Livonian aristocracy from the highest local offices, Livonia was passive in the war against Moscow; it was an object of struggles, arguments, and intrigues, unable to do much to advance its own cause.¹⁶³

Historians tend to agree that the dynastic policies of Sigismund III Vasa were truly disastrous for the Commonwealth, and the resulting political theater of the absurd played out largely on Livonian territory. After the short-lived joint Swedish-Polish-Lithuanian victories over Russia, the Polish-Swedish War broke out in 1600 and lasted nearly 60 years; it led to the loss of much of the Livonian lands. The initiation of this absurd war on foreign territory is ascribed, in no small measure, to the fierce ambitions of Sigismund III Vasa, who dreamt of ruling on both sides of the Baltic Sea, and who pursued this dream without taking into account either the costs to the state or simple common sense. Our Polish-Livonian historian Gustaw Manteuffel put this emphatically: "No other war threw as much light on the reign of Sigismund III as the Polish-Swedish

162 Manteuffel described this campaign in considerable detail in *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 117–121.

163 The conflict between Lithuania and the Polish Crown concerning Livonian offices was resolved in the so-called *Ordinatio Livonica* from 1589, in which it was decided that Lithuanians and "representatives of the Crown" would alternate in staffing the offices. Similarly, profits from Livonia were divided in half, and both seals—the Polish and the Lithuanian—were attached to legal documents; see Heyde, "Kość niezgody – Inflanty w polityce wewnętrznej Rzeczypospolitej" [Bone of contention: Livonia in the Domestic Politics of the Commonwealth], 164.

War in Livonia—an unhappy reign, both politically and administratively.”¹⁶⁴ A contemporary historian used similar words:

The Polish Vasas, and especially the first of them, valued, above all, the hereditary Swedish throne, which they preferred to the elected Polish throne. The irony of the situation was that it was only the latter that remained in their possession. The striving to maintain, and then to regain the Swedish scepter was the basic motive of Sigismund III’s activities. This led, among other things, to armed conflict, which—with only small interruptions—was to last for 60 years.¹⁶⁵

The pretext which precipitated the outbreak of the war concerned the northern part of Estonia. The Polish king demanded it from Sweden, or rather, in his role as Swedish king, he simply transferred it to the Commonwealth, and when the Swedish Parliament refused to ratify this action, he invaded Sweden. The initial Polish setbacks resulted from the inept conduct of the war and indolent actions of the Polish aristocracy.¹⁶⁶ One could see old patterns of evasion in their actions, and the attempt to shift the duty to defend Livonia to Lithuania, which, once again, had serious difficulties in meeting this challenge. The first phase of the war nonetheless ended with a lucky victory over Sweden during the Battle of Kirchholm; allegedly, one of the factors which tilted the scales in the Commonwealth’s favor was the arrival of the Courlandish prince Friedrich Kettler, who—honoring one of the demands of the vassal agreement he had signed—arrived on the battlefield with 300 mercenaries. Our historian has provided a colorful image of the battle, with insinuations of divine intervention. This can be seen as an obligatory element of the Polish Romantic vision of history:

Aware of the immense disproportion of forces, Jan Karol Chodkiewicz, staked everything on the first offensive. 300 hussars led by Lieutenant Wincenty Woyna and supported by 300 Courlandish mercenaries, were to strike at the center of enemy lines, and break up the musketeer units, which constituted Charles IX’s main source of power. Chodkiewicz quickly manned the hills with armed camp-followers. They were to play the role of newly arrived reinforcements, waiting for the decisive

164 Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych Inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 147.

165 Zbigniew Wójcik, *Historia powszechna: wiek XVI–XVII* [World History: 16th and 17th Centuries] (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2002), 328. The author also points to the stubbornness of the Polish king, who demanded that Sweden return northern Estonia, but since he was simultaneously the Swedish king, he wanted to take it back from himself.

166 Stanisław Herbst, who describes all the conditions and contexts of the Polish–Swedish conflict with precision, describes the initial phases of this war in *Wojna inflancka 1600–1602* [The Livonian War, 1600–1602] (Zabrze: Inforteditions, 2006).

moment. As they walked, the Polish ranks were so tightly closed that Chodkiewicz's army seemed even smaller than it really was.

(...) Wishing to bring the Swedes out onto the open plain, Chodkiewicz told the skirmishers to feign an escape once more. Just as the Swedes started to follow the escapees, Wincenty Woyna suddenly met them by striking into the very center of their regiments with heavily-armed hussar units. With the support of Courland's knightly cavalry, Woyna broke the enemy formation after a bloody battle (...).

The battle became a carnage: 8,983 Swedes were killed on the battlefield, the rest were lost in the dispersion of the escape (...) and Charles IX himself—who at first made his presence known everywhere with the overly haughty declaration “sum, sum, sum”—escaped without his hat, which remained in Matthias Rek's hands; he hid on one of the ships and quickly returned to Sweden.

There is also scholarly confirmation of the miraculous elements:

The entire camp, nine enormous cannons, a dozen smaller ones, and as many as 56 Swedish flags and banners came into Polish hands; impartial contemporary chronicles offer these descriptions: “It was an accident which should command the amazement of nations rather than belief,” writes Jakub Sobieski, while the German chronicler Bodecker, who cannot be accused of any bias, uses these words to end his description of the Battle of Kirchholm: “And God's omnipotence was most vividly displayed in this battle (...) as, in all, there were only 3,000 fighters on the Polish side, while the Swedish forces numbered more than 15,000 men!”¹⁶⁷

This victory tends to be described as one of the greatest successes of the Polish army, which is probably true from the perspective of military science; yet it is also true that the changes brought by this victory in the political arena were short-lived. It was not until 1609 that the Swedes were finally expelled from Livonia. They returned in 1621 when Gustav II Adolf, the next Swedish king, signed an advantageous peace treaty with Russia and sought to take advantage of the Commonwealth's involvement in a war with Turkey.

In the Polish–Russian and Polish–Swedish Wars for Livonia, a certain unreasonable stubbornness is perceptible in the desire to take Livonia in its entirety, and in the lack of flexible political negotiations among interested parties. It seems likely that the conflict with Russia could have been radically shortened if Russia received a part of Livonia, while the Commonwealth made the rational decision to keep only those lands which it could defend, e.g., only the above-mentioned Ultra-Duna Duchy, which roughly overlapped with Courland and Semigallia. Both Lithuanian and Polish magnates, as well as the king, insisted on keeping everything in accordance with the *Pacta Subjectionis*, and with no concern for consequences. The tangled web of sometimes

167 Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 151–152.

contradictory interests made the solution of the Livonian problem increasingly difficult, but none of the interested parties proposed to give up part of Livonia and end the conflict. The Lithuanians wished to carry out a small annexation near the border and to absorb Livonia, as they had previously done with the Belarusian lands. Polish aristocracy wanted to participate in the conquest to gain influence and financial benefits, while at the same time limiting their own military efforts. The kings were driven first by the desire to extend, later to maintain, and finally to re-establish Polish power in the region, and in the case of Sigismund III Vasa, absurd stubbornness regarding the Swedish crown also became a significant factor.

It is difficult not to notice, however, that stubbornness about occupying Livonia did not go hand in hand with any concrete and comprehensive efforts to develop the infrastructure of the newly acquired lands. During Stephen Bathory's reign a new administrative order was introduced within the framework of the *Constitutiones Livoniae* [Livonian Constitutions] whereby the Wenden, Parnu and Dorpat territories, which roughly corresponded to voivodeships, were divided into counties and districts, but this transition was never actually completed.¹⁶⁸ Clearly, the creation of local administrative offices and the bestowing of relevant titles was what mattered most; it took on absurd proportions when long after most of Livonia no longer belonged to Poland, Livonian titles were still bestowed and used, and "the loss of most of Livonia hardly changed the composition of the Commonwealth's senate."¹⁶⁹

Persistent re-Catholicization of the Baltic lands was also a matter of prime importance for Stephen Bathory, and this not only failed to increase his popularity but also made harmonious assimilation more difficult. In the Livonians' general perception, especially those from Riga and Courland, the Polish Counterreformation violated freedom of religion and culture, which had been guaranteed by the *Pacta Subjectionis*. The longevity of this conviction is perhaps best displayed by Ernst Seraphim's famous *Geschichte Liv-, Est- und Kurlands* [History of Livonia, Estonia and Courland], where the Polish political order is described as the "rape of Protestantism."¹⁷⁰ Thus erstwhile Teutonic

168 See Tarvel, "Stosunek prawnopaństwowy Inflant do Rzeczypospolitej" [Livonia's State and Legal Relations with the Commonwealth], 65–66. Here, the Dorpat historian clearly claims that the enactment of new rules started with staffing the Starost offices, but the nomination and duties of the starosts were not precisely formulated, p. 69.

169 Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 159.

170 Ernst Seraphim, *Geschichte Liv-, Est- und Kurlands: von der "Aufsegelung" des Landes bis zur Einverleibung in das russische Reich* [History of Livonia, Estonia, and Courland: From "Discovery" until Incorporation into the Russian Empire] vol. 2 (Reval:

knights and rulers of vassal bishoprics in Livonia, who had until then busied themselves with enforcing conversions, metamorphosed into defenders of freedom of religion, and redirected their hatred of church-imposed order onto the Poles. This paradoxical turn gave rise to the enduring stereotype of the Catholic-Pole, who, with the Jesuit hood over his head, forces Protestants to abandon their faith and return to the bosom of the Catholic Church; moreover, in both German and Latvian historiography, negative evaluations of the “Polish Counterreformation” have persisted until the end of the 20th century. Especially in comparison to Livonia’s Swedish period—considered “golden” even though it was marked by such spectacular repressions as, for example, the famous Swedish “Great Reduction”—Polish repressions in the region do not appear to be particularly impressive. One only needs to look at statistics, however, to gain a reliable picture. In the famous Jesuit collegiums, allegedly the main tools of re-Catholicization, four to six monks were typically stationed, and two of them went out to the countryside; their poor knowledge of local languages, and their low resistance against the rough climate (they often came from the south of Europe) made the effectiveness of their missionary activity rather meager.¹⁷¹ Local inhabitants differentiated them from Protestant missionaries only with difficulty, and the many wars which took place in the region did not make long-term activity any easier. The great plan of the papal legate Antonio Possevino, envisioning the construction of a Catholic stronghold in the Baltic region, which would then serve as a launching point for the conversion of Scandinavia, remained in the realm of dreams and purely theoretical forays.

When contemporary historians analyze the activities of the Jesuits in the region, they also emphasize the positive aspects of their presence, and especially those that benefited the local populations, for whom the Catholic monks were often the very first literate users of their native languages. Ēriks Jēkabsons has no doubts in this regard:

Kluge, 1895), 61. In his article “Die ‘polnische Gegenreformation’ in Livland – Ziele und Realitäten” [Polish Counterreformation in Livonia: Aims and Realities], Gvido Straube points to the menacing-sounding titles of the chapters that deal with the Polish presence in Livonia in the two-volume work of this German historian known for his nationalist views. He polemicalizes with German and Latvian historians’ negative evaluation of the Polish Counterreformation in the Baltic Countries; see Gvido Straube “Die ‘polnische Gegenreformation’ in Livland – Ziele und Realitäten,” in *Prusy i Inflanty między średniowieczem a nowożytnością* [Prussia and Livonia between the Middle Ages and Modernity], ed. Bogusław Dybaś and Dariusz Makiła, 118.

171 See Straube, “Die ‘polnische Gegenreformation’ in Livland.” The Rigan scholar cites reports from site visits, which include interesting mentions about idle bishops and inept monks; the condition of the interior of the churches is often described as pitiful.

It was precisely the Jesuits who began to study the local population's language in order to make evangelization more profound and more effective. In 1585, the oldest known book in Latvian—the *Catechism* of Petrus Canisius, translated by the Rigan and Wolmar Jesuit Erdmann Tolgsdorf—was published in Vilnius. (...). The Jesuits' attitude toward the locals was one of the reasons why the establishment of Catholicism among the Latvian inhabitants of Polish Livonia was deeper than the establishment of Lutheranism in other parts of Latvia.¹⁷²

Much later, in the 18th and especially in the 19th centuries, it was to turn out that Polish Catholicism in Livonia would become an effective means of defense against Russification, a defense much more powerful than Baltic-German Lutheranism, which—according to Manteuffel's descriptions—always concealed pagan tendencies which had not been entirely rooted out.¹⁷³

The stubbornness of the Protestant German-Livonian majority, in turn, was perceptible in their claims that the Polish political order undermined their centuries-old rights and failed to duly recognize the specificity of the region. All Polish attempts at administrative interventions were met with exaggerated responses, and even the reclamation of property which had once been taken by the Protestants was seen as proof of historical injustice; this was clear, for example, in the famous case of Rigan churches, or the stubborn resistance of Riga's inhabitants against the introduction of the Gregorian calendar. Leaving the issue of the legitimacy of these accusations aside, it must be said that the two entities—the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and Livonia—were not a good match, and their foreignness was perceptible throughout subsequent centuries.¹⁷⁴ Unification took place by mutual consent, and it had been initiated by the request of the Livonians themselves, but in reality the relations that ensued resembled tensions between colonizers and the colonized. In the wars with Sweden, Livonia's instrumental approach to the Commonwealth became clearly

172 Ēriks Jēkabsons, "Stosunki polsko-łotewskie na przestrzeni dziejów" [Polish-Latvian relations throughout History], in *Polacy na Łotwie* [Poles in Latvia], ed. Edward Walewander (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, 1993), 27.

173 Manteuffel, "Inflanty Polskie" [Polish Livonia], 59; Gustaw Manteuffel, *Z dziejów starostwa Maryenhauzkiego* [From the History of the Maryenhauz Starosty] (Vilnius: Księgarnia Stowarzyszenia Nauczycielstwa Polskiego, 1909), 37.

174 "At least since the times of Stephen Bathory, the German population could never fully reconcile itself to Poland." Manteuffel, "Inflanty Polskie" [Polish Livonia], 6. Meanwhile, Enn Tarvel writes with conviction about the illegitimacy of Protestant accusations, which were addressed to Poland, and elevated to the status of historical facts by German Livonian historians in the 19th century; see Tarvel, "Stosunek prawnopaństwowy Inflant do Rzeczypospolitej" [Livonia's State and Legal Relations with the Commonwealth], 70.

perceptible, as it was uninterested in any form of submission and it sympathized with various invaders in ways which were hardly convenient for the Poles.¹⁷⁵ The stubbornness of both sides in this voluntarily coercive union made a reasonable solution of the Livonian question inordinately difficult.

One of the obstacles which deserves an in-depth analysis is the illegibility of the actions and intentions, behind which true aims were concealed. The example of the “Calendar Upheavals” in Riga shows that both sides—Livonian and Polish-Lithuanian aristocracy—resorted to some posturing in the official positions they took. The former surrendered their independence and paid homages, while at the same time protecting their autonomy and loudly complaining when any of their freedoms were infringed upon; the latter ratified privileges and separate laws, while essentially attempting to assimilate the annexed lands into the rest of the Commonwealth. The marriage of this odd couple was not very promising from the very beginning: each side proclaimed more good will than it in fact had, and breakdown was therefore inescapable in one way or another. Unfortunately, the vagueness of these relations affected later Polish-Livonian relations and gave longevity to the stereotypes of the “double-faced Livonian” and the “Catholic-Pole.”

3. Correction: Polish Livonia

The 1621–29 Polish–Swedish Wars served to formalize Livonia’s separation from Poland, as it was already clearly falling away, while Poland was less and less interested in maintaining control over it. The Commonwealth—involved in a war against Turkey in the south, responding to a Cossack uprising, and entangled in another brutal conflict with Russia during its Time of Troubles (1598–1613)—was unable to effectively conduct several wars at once. In addition, in the face of Gustav II Adolf’s obvious victories, Sigismund III

175 The question whether closer integration of Livonia into the state structures of the Commonwealth could have resulted in better outcomes is answered to some extent by a publication from 1693, which summarized Polish rule in Livonia from the perspective of the local citizens. The title itself is significant: *Unmaßgebliche Vorstellung derer anmercklichen Betragenheiten des Willkührlichen Glücks der Liefvländischen Stände* [Unreliable Representations of the Lucky Lawless Self-governemnt of the Livonian Gentry], and the text says the following about the new 1598 constitution which brought Livonia closer to the Polish-Lithuanian political order: “in the end, the metamorphosis which was caused by it [the constitution] itself has led to the pitiful falling away [of Livonia] from the Polish Crown,” as cited by Dybaś, “Problemy integracji terytoriów inflanckich z Rzeczpospolitą” [Problems with Integrating Livonian Territories into the Commonwealth], 174.

Vasa's campaigns to win the hereditary throne of Sweden became senseless, and Polish claims to the Estonian part of Livonia—the initial cause of the Polish–Swedish War—became grotesque. For a few years, Lithuanians attempted to carry on with the unequal fight against the invader, but instead of immediately supporting these efforts, the Commonwealth first ignored them, and then accused Lithuania of separatist politics concerning Sweden.¹⁷⁶

In 1621, Sweden occupied nearly all of Livonia, at which point it practically ceased to be part of the Commonwealth; the explicit declaration of this fact came in the 1629 Truce of Altmark. Only a quarter of previously controlled territory remained in Polish hands, namely, the counties of Dyneburg, Rezekne and Ludza, and the Maryenhauz Starosty. From now on, these lands became known as the Livonian Voivodeship, and with time they took on the name **Polish Livonia** (*Livonia Polonica*). In the north and in the west they bordered on the recently lost lands, which were sometimes referred to as Swedish Livonia; in the northeast they bordered on Russia, and in the southeast on the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (the Polotsk Voivodeship); in the south, beyond the Daugava River there was Selonia—the southernmost strip of the Duchy of Courland and Semigalia. This territorial division maintained its provisional character for thirty years, while the final settlement was spelled out only with the 1660 Treaty of Oliva.¹⁷⁷ Illusions about dominance on the shores of the Baltic were thus finally dispelled, and the Commonwealth's imperial presence was reduced to one quarter of what it had been.

At this point, it is necessary to remind ourselves about an important terminological demarcation which arose at this time, and which became binding in subsequent centuries. The so-called **Swedish Livonia**, a term which one encounters from time to time, was that part of Livonia which Sweden kept after the Treaty of Oliva, and which it retained until 1710; it stretched from Riga, through Cesis (Wenden), Valmiera and Pärnu to Dorpat, while the fortress of Laiuse (Lais) constituted its northernmost tip. This territory should be

176 Krzysztof Radziwiłł, the commander of the Lithuanian forces, twice concluded his own peace with the Swedes (1622 and 1627), primarily to save his own troops, for which Sigismund III Vasa accused him of *trasong* during a meeting of the *sejm*; in the face of the gentry's general aversion against the Livonian War, however, it proved futile.

177 The temporary nature of this arrangement was manifest, among other things, in the fact that for a long time Poles did not want to reconcile themselves to the loss of all of Livonia (stubbornness), and twice—after the death of Gustav II Adolph in 1632, and after the victorious war of 1655–57—they saw possibilities for regaining it. The granting of Livonian titles and offices continued until 1660, even though it was impossible to actually take the offices over because of the Swedish occupation. The Treaty of Oliva ended these delusions.

differentiated from what was then **Estonia**—located to the north of Swedish Livonia—and from the island of **Osilia** and the Wik, Harju, Virumaa, Järven and Allentacken districts, which belonged to the Swedes even before the Livonian Wars. After 1721, Estonia and Swedish Livonia became the so-called **Russian Livonia**, a term which sometimes appears in historiography. South of Swedish Livonia there was the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia, inside of which there were three dispersed territorial enclaves, which together constituted the Piltene Lands (Piltene County). East of Swedish Livonia, to the north of the middle of the Daugava River and beyond the left bank of the Evikste River there was **Polish Livonia**.¹⁷⁸ Because in German historiography the historic federation of Baltic countries was designated by the term “Liv-, Est- und Kurland” (Livonia, Estonia and Courland), while lands which remained with the Commonwealth were omitted, Polish Livonia ended up outside Livonia proper. To put it briefly, starting in 1629 Livonia and Polish Livonia were two separate lands.

4. Courland and Semigallia

It is puzzling that the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia practically disappeared from Polish historiography and became fully appropriated by German historians even though it formally belonged to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth until its very end—that is, until 1795.¹⁷⁹ Although the Duchy’s ties to Warsaw were,

178 Hence the full title of Manteuffel’s work was *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich, czyli Inflant właściwych (tak szwedzkich, jako i polskich), Estonii z Ozylią, Kurlandii i Ziemi Piltyńskiej* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands, that is Livonia Proper (Swedish as well as Polish), Estonia with Osilia, Courland, and Piltene Lands], since the author wanted to clear up terminological confusion among historians, and at the same time inscribe Polish Livonia into Livonia proper.

179 This peculiar historiographical situation was recently reinforced by the German historian Almut Bues, who wrote a book about how Courland figured in the northern politics of the Commonwealth, and analyzed the Duchy’s autonomy and the possibilities of its integrating into Poland. There is an urgent need for Polish historians to write such a book—on the basis of our sources. See Almut Bues, *Das Herzogtum Kurland und der Norden der polnisch-litauischen Adelsrepublik im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert: Möglichkeiten von Integration und Autonomie* [The Courland Duchy and Northern Territories of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 16th and 17th Centuries: Possibilities of Integration and Autonomy] (Giessen: Litblockin, 2001). The Courlandish case was noted as a unique phenomenon only by Andrzej Romanowski in *Prawdziwy koniec Rzeczy Pospolitej* [The True End of the Res Publica] (Krakow: Universitas, 2007), 103. Recently an extensive monograph about Courland was

in reality, rather loose, and oversight became even weaker with increasing Russian intervention, each pretender to the Courlandish throne nonetheless had to go through the formal bestowal of the crown by the Polish king, which the *sejm* then had to ratify. Attempts to win the favor of the successive Polish rulers account for much of Courland's diplomatic history. The rules that governed the vassal state's relationship to the Commonwealth were modeled on Prussian precedents, and the hereditary throne of Courland was given to Gotthard Kettler, the last Grand Master of the Teutonic-Livonian Order. After his line ended (in 1737), Courland and Semigallia were to be incorporated into the Commonwealth, but this never actually took place because of the unusually fierce and complicated succession feuds, in which Russia—which also dominated Poland at the time—was a central player.

The Duchy, which was theoretically founded in 1562, still had to be actually established, and Gotthard Kettler devoted several years just to delineate its borders; even this did not end in clear success, as witnessed by the example of Piltene County. Kettler had difficulties with ruling Courland because of the hostile attitudes of the local gentry; they were clearly unhappy with the diplomatic talents of the last Grand Master, who—as one chosen from among their ranks and supposedly equal to them—was able to secure the hereditary princely throne for himself. The strong anti-Kettler faction, which emerged from the circles of Courlandish knights who opposed the Order's secularization, torpedoed all of the prince's significant initiatives; they used the broad political freedoms granted by the *Privilegium Sigismundi Augusti*. Gustaw Manteuffel saw certain analogies between the Courlandish aristocracy's struggles against their prince and the situation in Poland; this judgment is justified in that the actual combination of old knightly privileges with new privileges of Polish and Lithuanian gentry gave the Courlandish aristocrats an incredible sense of freedom and political autonomy:

The knightly aristocracy of Courland, seeing that they possessed valuable prerogatives which were perpetually guaranteed by the Polish king (...), carried out endless quarrels and conflicts with their new ruler, so that the history of Courland is, to an extent, an echo of Polish disturbances, a small-scale repetition of the struggle conducted in the Commonwealth between the anarchic oligarchy and the kings who attempted to strengthen their authority. Courlandish aristocracy was characterized by the same cantankerousness, the same tendency toward lawlessness and misrule, and the same caste exclusivity—which were the eminent characteristics of the Polish

published in Polish, but it focuses on the period after the fall of the Courland Duchy. See Arkadiusz Janicki, *Kurlandia w latach 1795–1915: z dziejów guberni i jej polskiej mniejszości* [Courland between 1795 and 1915: From the History of the Province and its Polish Minority] (Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, 2011).

gentry—as well as the same aversion against submitting to the rule of a man who came from their own ranks and, having just received his title, was unable to immediately gain the respect of his subjects, as very many among them were hostile and envious of him.¹⁸⁰

Gotthard Kettler was harshly condemned for dissolving the Teutonic Order and elevating himself to the princely throne, despite the fact that during his reign Courland quickly recovered from wartime damages and soon became a wealthy autonomous Baltic province.¹⁸¹ Meeting the legal responsibilities toward Poland did not demand much effort; the most significant among these was the provision of 300 (and later 400) armed cavalymen in time of war (which took place during the Battle of Kirchholm). In addition, each new prince had to personally go to Warsaw to receive the throne directly from the Polish king. Courland had its own courts, its own *indigénat* law, its own legal and business ordinances (it was also to have its own charter, *Privilegium Gotthardinum*, but work on the document was never completed), and its own general *sejms* [countrywide parliaments], which were to meet every two years. It therefore had the character of an independent, parliamentary, modern state.¹⁸²

Strictly speaking, the Livonian Duchy consisted of three regions: **Courland** proper (German: Kurland, Latvian: Kurzeme), which included lands that

180 Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych Inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 132.

181 In tendentious 19th-century historiography, Baltic Germans, inspired mostly by Carl Schirren, went as far as to accuse Gotthard Kettler of betraying Livonia. A contemporary German historian, however, attempts to defend him with arguments which are quite similar to those used by Manteuffel more than a hundred years ago in *Z dziejów Kościoła w Inflantach i Kurlandyi (od XVI-go do XX-go stulecia)* [From the History of the Church in Livonia and Courland (between the 16th and the 20th Century)]; he points to the prince's unusual concern for Courland's economic, social, and religious (Protestant) development; see Heinz von zur Mühlen, "Das Herzogtum Kurland unter der Dynastie Kettler [The Duchy of Courland under the Kettler Dynasty] in *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas: Baltische Länder*, ed. Gert von Pistohlkors, 244.

182 The relative independence of the Duchy is also confirmed by the fact that—unlike, for example, Polish Livonia—it did not have the send delegates to the countrywide sessions of the Polish *sejm*. The *Formula Regiminis*, bestowed by Sigismund III Vasa in 1617, served as Courland's provisional constitution. For an interesting, source-based discussion of the formation of Courland's political system, its laws and types of aristocratic privileges which formed the basis of the state, see Martin Hübner, "Herzog und Landschaft: die Verfassung im Herzogtum Kurland bis 1617," [Prince and Country: The Administrative System of the Duchy of Courland between 1561 and 1795] in *Das Herzogtum Kurland 1561–1795* [The Duchy of Courland, 1561–1795], ed. Erwin Oberländer, 29–55.

stretched almost from Riga, through Tukums (German: Tuckum) and Kuldīga (German: Goldingen), to the Baltic coast, and included the ports of Ventspils (German: Windau) and Liepāja (German: Libau)¹⁸³; **Semigallia** (German: Semgallen, Latvian: Zemgale) with the main city of Jelgava (German: Mitau), which was also the capital of the entire duchy; and **Selonia** (German: Selburg, Latvian: Selija), which was a narrow strip of land between Polish Livonia and Lithuania. Several districts which were dispersed throughout Courland and which together made up the Piltene Lands—which fought against incorporation into Courland for a long time—merit a separate discussion. The unification of these lands into a single political entity was complicated by the social and economic differentiation which persisted in the form of commanderies, Teutonic-Livonian aldermanships, and bishoprics. Medieval struggles between the Church and the Teutonic Order left in their wake significant animosities, not to say hostilities, which made cooperation among Courlandish aristocracy nearly impossible. One of the means available to the prince who wished to control the aristocracy, even if only partially, was the establishment of affiliations with eminent European courts; the Kettler dynasty pursued this in earnest.¹⁸⁴

Courland experienced its greatest period of growth and prosperity in the middle of the 17th century, when Jacob Kettler, the best of its rulers, made it into a state which not only boasted a vital economy and trade, but was also a naval power and a serious partner (or rival) of the largest European states. He had received excellent training in economics, craft, seafaring, and finance; and he was able to skillfully combine his knowledge with a program of economic reform. He built shipyards, founded several dozen production centers throughout the country, bought mines with necessary mineral deposits, and established valuable trading contacts with European courts (he was a godson of King Jacob I of England); he also started large-scale production projects in which military goods like armed ships, gunpowder, cannonballs, and musket bullets predominated. Finally, the agricultural character of the country allowed him to profit from supplying armies, which soon led to the development of yet another economic sector: the arming and sale of mercenary troops.

Jacob's political talent consisted in his ability to be one of the most active arms suppliers in the region, while simultaneously securing Courland's neutrality by signing appropriate treaties with Russia, Sweden, and Poland. This allowed him to sell arms to all these states without risking accusations of treason

183 Riga never belonged to Courland. As an archbishopric it was a separate territorial entity; later it belonged to the so-called Swedish Livonia.

184 Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 162–172.

or lack of loyalty. In his politics, Jacob sought to avoid all conflict-generating situations and in his relations with other countries he was interested solely in the possibility of completing another business transaction.¹⁸⁵ On the one hand, this way of thinking was modern, ambitious, and daring—on the other, it was very risky. Courland soon gained a strong position in sea trade, it infringed on Holland's absolute monopoly in its own ports, it gained customs concessions from Riga and the Hanseatic League, and it became a very wealthy state—something that would soon become a source of its weakness. The politics of neutrality brought great profits, but in the long run it threatened catastrophe; the first signs of this appeared with the upheavals that came at the time of the Cromwellian Revolution and the Anglo–Dutch War of 1652; the fulfillment of the promise of catastrophe came with the Polish–Swedish War.

For Kettler, the politics of neutrality was bound up with a plan to end Courland's status as a vassal state of the Commonwealth. The vassal agreement already seemed rather fictitious and anachronistic, and the formal treaty signed by the two countries nearly a hundred years earlier was not reinforced by any authentic connections. Since the time of Gotthard Kettler's dynamic religious policies Courland became a basically Protestant country; local offices belonged to members of the local aristocracy who spoke and wrote mainly in German or Latin, and the Kettlers' family ties connected them with German duchies; there were no clear bonds between the vassal state and the sovereign. Jacob even attempted to involve the Commonwealth in his undertakings, and in 1647 he sought to convince king Władysław IV Vasa to co-found a joint Polish–Courlandish trading company in the West Indies; faced with the Polish king's refusal, however, the project fell through, and the prince turned to Holland.

Courland was Europe's smallest colonial power. In 1651, Jacob Kettler bought a piece of land from the local cacique in the delta of the Gambia River in West Africa, and built three forts there; soon he also bought the island of Tobago from the English. For several years, these mini-colonies served as trading posts for Courland's ships, while also causing ceaseless tensions and conflicts with the Dutch West India Company. It was to them that prince Jacob lost his colonies when he was arrested in 1658; after his release two years later,

185 He solved internal tensions between the court and the parliament by confirming all the privileges demanded by the gentry immediately upon taking over as Courland's ruler; he also summarily proclaimed the validity of all of the gentry's complaints. It is difficult to know how much of this was motivated by good will and submissiveness, and how much was a result of disregard for what he considered to be petty matters of the gentry; he nonetheless won great respect and the support of the country *sejm* for the decisions he would make in the future.

for the rest of his life he continued to make (futile) efforts to regain his overseas possessions.¹⁸⁶

The downfall and yet another devastation of the Duchy was the result of the Second Northern War, in which Courland became entangled despite its will, mostly because it was attempting to defend its neutrality. The Swedish king demanded homage from Prince Jacob, which would have been equivalent to breaking non-aggression agreements with Poland and Russia. After Kettler's decisive refusals, the king decided to kidnap and imprison him in Narva and force him to make concessions, but this only had the opposite effect—the Courlandish prince's position became even more rigid. It was not until two years later that, as a result of the Treaty of Oliva, Jacob Kettler was able to return to the palace in Jelgava, and once again sit on the throne. Alas, his great work had been completely ruined: shipyards and manufacturing plants were destroyed or plundered, his fleet was hijacked, his colonies taken over, and his treasury was, of course, empty. Hardly anything remained of the magnificent, modern, and highly-developed state. The prince undertook the work of reconstruction, and for the next twenty years (until his death in 1682)—mindful of his previous ordeals—he cautiously attempted to restore Courland's strong economic position, achieving some successes in his endeavor, and refilling the princely coffers once again; yet former magnificence was nothing but a memory.¹⁸⁷

Courland paid a high price for attempting to maintain neutrality; it was necessary for unimpeded economic development, but it could not be tolerated by the surrounding powers. The mechanism of the first Northern War of 1558–1570 was essentially repeated, when the autonomy of a small and inadequately-armed country became unacceptable to its stronger neighbors. One should also note, however, that there were benefits associated with the loose vassal relationship, in which Courland was not subjected to any particular pressures

186 The story of the Courland colonies gave rise to considerations whether the Commonwealth, too, did not deserve the status of a colonial power, in accordance with the principle that “the colony of my vassal is my colony”; see Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, “Czy Rzeczpospolita miała kolonie w Afryce i Ameryce?” [Did the Commonwealth Have Colonies in Africa and in America?], *Mówią Wieki*, no. 5 (1994): 44–47; See also: Heinrich Diederichs, *Herzog Jacobs von Kurland Kolonien an der Westküste von Afrika* [The West African Colonies of Prince Jacob of Courland] (Mitau: Gedruckt Steffenhagen und Sohn, 1890).

187 Courland's economic situation, its industry and economic policies are discussed briefly by Mārīte Jakovleva in a detailed study of Courlandish ironworks; see Marite Jakovleva, “Merkantilismus und Manufakturen: Die Eisenwerke der Herzöge von Kurland,” [Mercantilism and Manufacture: Ironworks of the Courlandish Princes] in *Herzogtum Kurland 1561–1795*, ed. Erwin Oberländer, 99–128.

from Warsaw, and its political system was allowed to evolve toward independence. In the framework of the federated Commonwealth, the Duchy of Courland enjoyed freedom which honored its cultural distinctiveness; it was treated much like other vassal states (e.g. Prussia, or Moldavia), which—while subject to vassal law—were able to maintain their political and religious identity. In the long run, this rather comfortable arrangement within the federal framework, brought about the disintegration of the Commonwealth; but in the early stages it functioned superbly, aiding the successful implementation of the shift from centralized power to local self-rule. In its initial period of development, Courland relied on the liberalism of Sarmatian Poland, and on its loose socio-political forms based on multiculturalism and assimilation. When the wars of the mid-17th century showed the weakness of this system, however, former benefits turned into painful consequences, which prince Jacob Kettler experienced both as head of state and father of the princely family (interned together with him in Narva).¹⁸⁸

Subsequent history of Courland and Semigallia was mainly a story of the gradual loss of the significance of the princely throne, and, along with it, of independence, which was preserved only with difficulty. Jacob Kettler's heir was his son, Friedrich Casimir ("a man in love with luxury and opulence," as Manteuffel said of him),¹⁸⁹ who limited his rule to wasting his father's fortune on lavish courtly life. He was inept in his dealings with the aristocracy, and he destroyed the monarchic-parliamentary stability of the Duchy, which his father had established; he therefore quickly lost his authority and the possibility of being a good ruler. After that things only got worse. When he died in 1698, he

188 Almut Bues sees the multicultural, federated Commonwealth of Both Nations as a modern European country based on a gentry democratic system. It lost the competition against the state-building process which took place in Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries, and in which the monopoly of one church and religion was the first step: "Dieser Schub fehlte in der Rzeczpospolita, denn infolge der polyzentrischen und egalitären Struktur der Toleranz kam es zu keiner Verdichtung und Intensivierung der Staatlichkeit in Polen-Litauen" [The Commonwealth could not take this step, since, as a result of the polycentric and egalitarian structure of tolerance, the reinforcement and intensification of the statehood of Poland-Lithuania never took place]. Gentry democracy made it possible for other territories and cultures to become assimilated, but assimilation extended only to the gentry class; as a result, an abyss was forming between social classes, and the solidarity of the gentry was put above all other interests, including the interests of the state. Courland could maintain its independence only insofar as it fit into this ideological model. See Bues, *Das Herzogtum Kurland* [The Duchy of Courland], 320–321.

189 Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 168.

left behind a six-year-old son, Friedrich Wilhelm (who was named for his grandfather on his mother's side, a famous Brandenburgian elector), and the question about who would be the prince's formal caretaker so long as he was a minor—i.e., the question of who would effectively rule Courland—soon led to conflicts and intrigues. Ferdinand Kettler, Friedrich Casimir's brother, was the first to settle the feud in his own favor, overriding the claims of the widowed princess and Friedrich Wilhelm's mother; soon, however, the Polish king granted her the exclusive right to be the young prince's caretaker. A classical problem of dual power arose. Local aristocracy actively entered the feud, and the conflict seemed impossible to resolve. It was extended by the outbreak of the Third Northern War, during which Prince Ferdinand escaped to Danzig, the Swedish king Charles XII occupied all of Courland, and Princess Elisabeth Sophie was able to obtain from him a guarantee of immunity and protection for the family. Once again, Courland had to pay a price for its autonomy:

The Duchy of Courland, left to itself, deprived of defenders and caretakers, now became a theater of war for a long time. Swedes, Poles and Russians took turns occupying it. Whoever wished to ravage this exhausted and ruined country could do so easily. Emptiness and ruins lay where vibrant life had thrived during Prince Jacob's lifetime; weeds were growing in the fields which had been full of golden wheat before. No one knew who actually ruled Courland—Friedrich Wilhelm Kettler or his mother, Prince Ferdinand, the highest councilors, Augustus II, King Stanisław Leszczyński, the Russian tsar Peter the Great, or Charles XII? Each of these rulers followed his own whims as he gave out offices, proclaimed laws, and announced taxes. It was altogether unknown which of the administrators were fully legitimate in their offices, what law should be recognized and upheld, and what taxes had to be paid.¹⁹⁰

The grown-up Friedrich Wilhelm gave reason for hope that the importance of the Courlandish throne might yet be reconstructed, when in 1709 the highest council recognized him as a fully legitimate ruler and arranged for his marriage to Anna Ivanovna, niece of Peter the Great. This solution seemed to foster friendly relations with Russia and guarantee relative freedom for Courland for some time, and the calculations thus seemed reasonable. In reality, however, they made the throne of Jelgava dependent on Moscow, as they gave successive tsars a pretext for intervention and pressure, and deprived the countrywide Courlandish *sejm* (which had come up with the arrangement in the first place) of the last remaining traces of its actual power.

Friedrich Wilhelm died soon after he was wedded to Anna Ivanovna; the aging Ferdinand took his place, while the young widow arrived from Moscow to assert her rights. From then on, Courland became an object of bargaining and of

190 Ibid., 170.

various Russian, Prussian, and even Polish political designs, since for some time King Augustus II hoped to place his son Maurice de Saxe on the Courlandish throne.¹⁹¹ After the death of Ferdinand, who was the last surviving member of the Kettler dynasty, Russian domination in this region was felt through military force; as a result, Ernst Johann de Biron—Anna Ivanovna’s favorite—was chosen to be the prince in Jelgava. The two periods of his reign in Courland (1737–1740 and 1762–1769) were a display of deft and intelligent self-interest; the family accumulated many valuable goods under the protection of their Moscow patrons. The fall of the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia under Russian control, and the handing over of the Courlandish throne to emissaries from Moscow, removed all remaining vestiges of independence and practically changed the country into a Russian province, which, nonetheless, had some measure of local self-government. The countrywide parliament agreed to all

191 The story about the coming of Maurice de Saxe to the Courlandish throne is colorfully presented by our Livonian historian, who provides stunning details: “The first days of Maurice’s stay in the Duchy of Courland were marked by a series of triumphs. The knightly aristocracy was enraptured by his personality, seeing him as something like the opposite of the hated, spiteful, and almost decrepit Ferdinand, they hosted him with extreme eagerness, welcoming him as their savior, swearing (in the midst of noisy banquets) that they will sooner die under his command than abandon him. The ceramics division of the Courland provincial museum has lavish glass goblets with sympathetic images of Maurice de Saxe that date precisely from this period. (...). On June 26, 1725, 32 deputies for the electoral session of the *sejm* came to Mitawa. Two days later, the deputies began the election process. When the Nakwaski starost ostentatiously presented the *rescriptum inhibitorium* of Augustus II, it did not make the least impression, and was filed away most indifferently, since the Polish king’s way of thinking was well known. Prince Ferdinand’s written protest was sent back, without even breaking the seal. No one deliberated on his proposition that he was willing to abdicate in favor of the landgrave. The candidacies of the Holstein and Holstein-Glücksburg princes did not attract much attention; neither was attention accorded to Menshikov himself, who openly entered the race, but failed to obtain any support and no one even touched the 50,000 rubles, which he sent to win over the Courlandish gentry. The election of Maurice de Saxe was unanimous, and it was pronounced that he would become the prince of Courland upon the expiration of the Kettler dynasty. All who were gathered at the *sejm* took the solemn oath to loyally uphold the decision that has been made regarding potential succession, and never to retreat from it. Inebriated by the pleasant illusion, Maurice was certain of his victory. Events, however, were soon to disappoint him.” *Ibid.*, 213–215. This description contains not only a model example of the functioning of the Sarmatian parliamentary system with all its instability and spontaneous foolishness, but also the image of a complex network of intrigues and dependencies. At this stage of the development of parliamentarianism, democracy no longer made sense.

suggestions and pressures issuing from Russia, and the only thing it demanded in return was the guarantee of privileges. This state of affairs lasted not only until the Third Partition of the Commonwealth in 1795, but also throughout the entire 19th century, when the Courlandish province enjoyed some autonomy, analogous to that of the Livonian-Estonian territories.

Paradoxically, dependence on Russia meant that in the second half of the 18th century the Duchy of Courland was not assimilated into the Russian Empire in the first two partitions of 1772 and 1793; it survived until the Commonwealth's end. Its weak statehood and complete acquiescence posed no threat to Catherine II's interests, and the eager Biron princes took care to maintain a little state for themselves, in which, on the basis of a newly received *indigénat*, they acquired more and more goods for themselves without encountering any significant obstacles. The ultraconservative Courlandish gentry limited their demands to the preservation of their old privileges and delineation of new ones, with time paying less and less attention to the specific ruler who was guaranteeing the privileges.

The Duchy of Courland ended its uncertain existence in 1795 when, during the Third Partition of Poland, it was incorporated into the Russian Empire and transformed into the Courland Governorate. A year prior to this, it still expressed its attachment to its old sovereign and declared the intention to join the Kościuszko Uprising. On June 27, 1794, in Liepāja, which was the Commonwealth's only port at the time, Courlandish gentry joined the insurrection, hoping to weaken Russian influences, and regain Courland's comfortable position of a self-governing vassal. Besides this, the Kościuszko Uprising in Courland was primarily a large-scale movement of the serfs, who enthusiastically welcomed Tadeusz Kościuszko's democratic promises. For them, the most important aspect of the insurrectionary declarations was the hope that outrageous feudal oppression would be eased. Henryk Mirbach, a Major General of Courlandish descent, played a key role in the insurrectionary initiatives.¹⁹²

192 See Władysław M. Kozłowski's monograph "Powstanie kosciuszkiowskie w Kurlandii" [The Kosciuszko Uprising in Courland], *Alma Mater Vilnensis* (London, 1973): 239–285. It is particularly interesting that in the insurrectionary proclamation Courlandish gentry and bourgeoisie declare their unity with the Polish and Lithuanian nations ("as citizens who have been incorporated into this nation long ago, and who are the sons of one and the same fatherland"), but they clearly note that this done on the condition that their right to their own religion, their freedom, and all their privileges would be guaranteed; this appears on p. 267 of the full (Polish!) text of the insurrectionary proclamation from Liepāja from June 27, 1794. According the author of the monograph,

Courland has made only a very weak mark on Polish history, and it should rather be placed among the small independent duchies of modern Europe, and compared with the Duchy of Sabaudia, Principality of Moldavia, or the Duchy of Prussia.¹⁹³ The fact that Courland has been appropriated by Baltic-German historiography is a result of both the Kettlers' dynastic connections and the Teutonic past of these lands, which were pulled into the German sphere of influence by medieval colonization. Courland's socio-political system, however, displayed signs of being significantly influenced by the gentry parliamentarianism of the Commonwealth, and thereby also by broadly-understood Sarmatian culture.

5. Piltene

Paradoxically, thanks to Bogusław Dybaś's edition of reports from 17th-century meetings of the Piltene *sejm*, Piltene Lands left their traces in Polish historiography much earlier than the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia. If we say that Livonia, on account of its weak existence, resembles a *nowhereland*, and Courland has been appropriated by German historiography, the situation seems to be even more dire when it comes to the few small enclaves which together formed the Piltene County; and Dybaś is keenly aware of this when he writes that:

[t]he history of Piltene County is not very well known. This statement holds with respect to both the Commonwealth as a whole and its individual parts. The situation, however, looks exactly the same from the Livonian perspective: against the background of other parts of Livonia or Courland, the history of Piltene County has also been researched particularly poorly and there are very few scholarly works about it.¹⁹⁴

Piltene is among those topics in Polish historical writing which have been most decisively pushed into nonexistence; and, in addition to its odd historical and geographic form, its very name is characterized by transience (who knows, exactly, where Piltene lies?). In the arsenal of rhetorical devices which Gustaw Manteuffel most frequently employs, there are lamentations about the ignorance of his contemporaries, which appear quite often when he writes about Livonian

the failure of the insurrection in Courland was caused by, among other things, the earnest cooperation of the "Courlandish barons" with the Russian army.

193 Almut Bues makes such comparisons in the final part of his book; see *Das Herzogtum Kurland* [The Duchy of Courland], 295–324.

194 Dybaś, *Na obrzeżach Rzeczypospolitej* [On the Borderlands of the Commonwealth], 9–10.

issues. In the Piltene case, the goal of these complaints is, above all, to evoke and emphasize the connection between Piltene and Poland, something of which only a few would have been aware:

Piltene and the so-called Piltene Lands, or Piltene County, “*districtus piltensis* sub *piltinensis*,” are names which we constantly encounter in our historical sources such as *Volumina legum, Kodeks dyplomatyczny Dogiela* [Dogiel’s Diplomatic Codex], or *Teka Podoskiego* [Podoski’s Portfolio] and so many others which span the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. This is because the past of these lands is strictly tied to Polish history. Despite this, we know so little about them that Poles often have to speak of Piltene as if it were a newly-discovered land; it is not very well understood even by the very erudite, and there are many who certainly do not know where this Piltene lies, what political system or stormy past it has, and to what nothingness it was reduced, this quiet corner which once bore so great a name.¹⁹⁵

Piltene Lands were to become part of the Duchy of Courland after the secularization of the Teutonic Order, but financial transactions complicated matters. Johann Münchhausen, the last Courlandish and Osilian bishop, sold the Osilian Bishopric to the Danish king Frederick II in 1159, and renounced his claims to it, counting on Denmark’s active help in the defense against Moscow’s invasion. Frederick II of Denmark passed the land over to his brother, Prince Magnus, and proclaimed himself the bishop—a move reluctantly supported by the aristocracy, which was forced to make concessions in response to the threat of an impending war with Moscow. Because the transaction brought Münchhausen great profits and the protests of the master of the Teutonic-Livonian Order had little effect, the bishop did the same thing with his second dominion, i.e., with lands in Courland which he sold directly to Prince Magnus. This way, property which had formerly belonged to the Church was transferred into Danish hands. The transaction greatly complicated the plans of Gotthard Kettler—who sought to unify the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia into a single entity which would belong to his dynasty—for the bishop’s lands were located in the very center of the Duchy and formed small islands of territory, which were not under the prince’s rule. The diplomatic efforts of later Kettlers were to no avail, and Piltene became a separate entity, which formed its own

195 Gustaw Manteuffel, *Piltyń i archiwum piltyńskie* [Piltene and the Piltene Archive] (Warsaw; Riga: Drukarnia Józefa Bergera; Księgarnia N. Kymmel, 1884), 1. When he speaks about “nothingness” Manteuffel means the fact that the once great Piltene today is indeed a small, provincial town, the smallest of those which have city rights in Latvia, while the magnificent medieval seat of Piltene bishops is a pile of bricks that is barely perceptible among grasses. The downfall of the city dates already from the beginning of the 16th century, when the bishop’s seat was moved to Hasenpot (Latvian: Aizpute).

political system (gentry parliamentarianism) and effectively defended itself against assimilation into Courland.

Prince Magnus parceled out the lands he obtained from the bishop and thereby contributed to the establishment of a peculiar social formation: the Piltene gentry. They did not descend exclusively from old knightly families, but also from former governors of the vassal territory, from administrative and military workers, while some were descendants of gentry who had escaped to the area from other regions. In any case, it was a group formed by representatives of the most diverse aristocratic ranks, not all of whom had legitimate claims to aristocratic titles. Historians agree in their emphasis on the enormous wealth of the Piltene gentry who derived great profits from wheat trade, and—as Dybaś points out—from the so-called shoreline law.¹⁹⁶ The main political aims of this group, following the example of other Livonian regions, was the preservation of as much separateness as possible, and election of rulers who would least interfere in the internal affairs of the county.¹⁹⁷

After Magnus' death, Piltene Lands were claimed by the Courlandish prince, and by Polish and Danish kings. Most of the local gentry preferred the last of these, seeing the Danish king as someone who would guarantee religious freedom and relative peace in Livonia. They feared that Poles would reverse the process of secularization, and take back the recently parceled lands; this was not an entirely unfounded fear, given the fact that Polish bishops were growing louder in their condemnations of secularization.¹⁹⁸ The minority Polish faction gained significant support in the person of the royal governor Cardinal Jerzy Radziwiłł, who simply invaded Piltene. With the active support of Denmark, Piltene gentry fiercely defended themselves and the so-called Piltene War of 1583–85 broke out; it ended with the Treaty of Kronborg, in which the Danish king honorably renounced his rights to Piltene and handed it over to Poland in exchange for the return of a sum of money which he had allegedly paid

196 Dybaś, *Na obrzeżach Rzeczypospolitej* [On the Borderlands of the Commonwealth], 38.

197 The term “Piltene County” is somewhat deceptive, since the real referent is the German word “Stift”, which could mean a bishopric, a chapter, but also a foundation. Stift as a bishopric suggests connections with Scandinavian terminology, where this term also means “province.” The term “Piltene Province” would therefore also be a possibility. The term “Piltene County” is something of a simplification of the complex administrative character of this territory. G. Manteuffel consistently uses the term “Piltene Lands.”

198 Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 142.

earlier.¹⁹⁹ In 1585, Piltene was incorporated into the Commonwealth as one of the Livonian starosties, and it was simultaneously pledged to George Frederick Hohenzollern, Margrave of Brandenburg, an intermediary in the negotiations, who paid the demanded sum of money on behalf of the Danish king. The (temporary) losers at the signing of the Treaty of Kronborg were the Courlandish prince, who once again failed to incorporate Piltene into Courland, and the Catholic Church, which had intended to regain the secularized bishopric and make it a center of Counterreformation activity in Livonia.

The Piltene political system became a quintessential nested arrangement. The Polish king was the ruler and the sovereign; his vassal, the Prussian prince, received Piltene Lands from him as a fief, to which he then appointed his own governor, who answered both to him and to the local *sejm* of the Piltene gentry. The gentry, in turn, in accordance with the *Pacta Subjectionis*, were directly subject to the Polish king. Mutual dependencies created a vicious circle. Piltene Lands received relative autonomy, and, above all, consolidated their separate political existence and avoided being assimilated by Courland, which, on the basis of the very same *Pacta Subjectionis*, claimed that Piltene should belong to it.

Piltene gentry constituted a new social formation, and the norms of their political activities therefore derived primarily from incompetent imitation of Polish and Livonian (meaning Baltic-German) models; they also derived from the spontaneous collective reactions of an endangered local minority. The events of 1585–1617, which determined Piltene’s political character for the next 200 years, were filled with ceaseless changes and modifications of the vision of a gentry republic. In 1617, Piltene was finally incorporated into the Commonwealth as a separate county, with its own constitution called *Ordinatio Regiminis & Judiciorum in Districtu Piltensi*; like Courland, it stayed with the Commonwealth until the final partition. The tendency to protect and extend aristocratic privileges found its most colorful expressions in Piltene Lands, where deep attachment to civil liberties was dangerously close to common factiousness. Manteuffel calls things by name when he claims that in addition to “complete independence,” the country also enjoyed “oligarchic anarchy,” which was extremely similar to that in the Commonwealth; for our Polish-Livonian patriot, this was an important argument in favor of the Polishness of this region:

199 Our history of Livonia is filled with strangeness and absurdities, and this peace also had its share of it. The Danish king demanded the sum of 30,000 thalers, since that is how much he allegedly paid Johann Münchhausen for Piltene in 1560. But at the time, he used that sum of money to buy not the Piltene bishopric but the Osilian one, and Magnus bought Piltene directly for 9,200 thalers, though it is not clear whether he paid this amount himself, or whether it was paid by the Danish king. See, Dybaś, *Na obrzeżach Rzeczypospolitej* [On the Borderlands of the Commonwealth], 26.

The utterly wild lack of discipline and uncommon tempestuousness were characteristic of both the gentry community that lived on the banks of the Vistula and knights from the vicinity of the Venta and Abava (Aa) Rivers. Exceptional hospitality once flourished here, and it continues to flourish to this day. An excessive liking for the pleasures of food and drink was, at one point, a negative aspect of this hospitality. The residences of the historic Piltene gentry were wide open to everyone—just like taverns; one could hear the sounds of merry revelries everywhere. Even the most common of banquets was accompanied by lavish libations. During the feasts, when wine made the guests' blood hot, arguments and fights often broke out. There was a tendency to settle disagreements and legal feuds with the saber rather than with the help of lawyers.²⁰⁰

Above all, however, the citizens of Piltene valued their political freedom and their own judiciary system, which was independent from everyone except the Polish king, and even his authority was purely formal:

In the 17th and 18th centuries anarchy in Piltene was even greater than in Poland; Piltene gentry preferred Poland's direct protection—which they did not find cumbersome—to dependence on Courlandish princes. (...). This state of affairs was very desirable for Piltene aristocrats because it meant that there was no intermediary between them and the Polish king; the councilors, who were chosen from among their ranks and who were committed, above all, to the protection of the gentry's interests, obtained the right to call sessions of the local *sejmiki*, whose decisions were sent to the Polish king for approval only as a matter of pure formality.²⁰¹

Social and parliamentary debauchery in Piltene does not, however, change the fact that it was an excellent example of the maturation of a local community toward awareness of agency and parliamentary democracy. These lands were certainly an oddity, even against the background of peripheral Courland and indefinite Polish Livonia, but Piltene was also a brave attempt to build native and original statehood from the ground up. The few scholars who have investigated Piltene's history emphasize that the complex processes and tangled interests that characterize this land have not yet been properly analyzed; both Dybaś and Manteuffel make such claims. It seems, however, that all these subtle complexities cannot be, and do not have to be, disentangled. More important is the recognition of Piltene as a fascinating case of the development of a local identity from the ground up; the formation of an identity which survived until the beginning of the 19th century, and, according to the words of the Livonian historian, seems to have survived another hundred years.

200 Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 144.

201 *Ibid.*, 145.

Piltene and Courland were also similar in that both had to pay a high price for their independence. From the middle of the 17th century, Piltene began to experience decline while it was still an object of disputes in which the Catholic Church played an increasingly important role as it attempted to incorporate it into the Livonian diocese. Between the Swedish Deluge and the Great Northern War, the rulers (today we would say “the occupiers”) of the tiny country changed many times, as it was passed from Poland to Courland, Courland to Sweden, Sweden back to Poland, Poland to Russia, Russia to Sweden, and then from Sweden back to Russia once again. From time to time, it was also subjected to intense pressure from the Catholic Church, represented by the Livonian bishop Mikołaj Korwin Popławski, who was able to get King John III Sobieski’s permission to form a special commission to investigate the legitimacy of the Church’s claims.²⁰² Each of the invaders, including Poland, which was the formal ruler, ravaged this small independent region and imposed excessive fiscal duties which ruined production and trade, and led to exceptional depopulation. In Theodor Schiemann’s report about the population of Piltene in the early decades of the 18th century (a report cited by Manteuffel), one is struck by the extremely small number of peasants, who simply perished or escaped; consequently, agricultural production declined.²⁰³ When, after a several-decades-long union with Courland, Piltene was once again incorporated into the Commonwealth, in 1717, it was a desolate, impoverished, and depopulated territory, which retained nothing of the old wealthy bishopric’s character.

The so-called **Piltene archive** is another subject which deserves attention. It is a collection of documents, correspondences, protocols, parliamentary reports and other similar archival materials, which were meticulously collected during Piltene’s conditional and shaky independence. The archive has survived in a fairly cohesive form until today, and it can be consulted at the Latvian State Historical Archives in Riga (Latvijas Valsts Vēstures Arhīvs, fond 644, in two

202 Manteuffel, *Piltyń i archiwum piltyńskie* [Piltene and the Piltene Archive], 19–20. Bishop Korwin Popławski, encouraged and actively supported by the papal legate, openly denied the secularization of Piltene, claiming that Münchhausen sold the domain illegally; he then undertook efforts to annex this land to the Livonian diocese. As Manteuffel sneeringly notes, even before any solution was reached, he was already signing his name as the “Bishop of Piltene” (p. 21). The issue of the denial of the secularization of Piltene and the Catholic Church’s infringement into old bishopric lands gives grounds for seeking analogies between Piltene and, for example, Warmia; this is done by Dybaś, who nonetheless points to differences, in *Na obrzeżach Rzeczypospolitej* [On the Borderlands of the Commonwealth], 8.

203 Manteuffel, *Piltyń i archiwum piltyńskie* [Piltene and the Piltene Archive], 26.

parts).²⁰⁴ In light of the above remarks about the unruliness and quarrelsome debauchery of the local gentry, the richness and orderliness of the archive can be somewhat surprising. Manteuffel describes a complete set of parliamentary statutes and decisions (*Landtaggschlüsse*) from the period between 1652 and 1783, which, in many cases, are documented by exact copies of the original documents, suggesting uncommonly meticulous work on the part of the administrative workers and archivists. In his researches Bogusław Dybaś found copies of the other decisions of the Piltene *sejmik*, reaching back to 1618, while the oldest documents in the archive date from 1556. The Piltene archive therefore constitutes a relatively complete collection of source materials which document the functioning of this small gentry republic over the course of over two and a half centuries! It is possible not only to make a detailed investigation of the formation and development of the local gentry community (which is exactly what Dybaś did in his study), but also to analyze the great historical events of the 17th and 18th centuries from a very specific, provincial perspective.

In a certain sense, this collection seems to be the fulfillment of a meticulous historian's dreams; since he has the *entire* source base at his disposal, he no longer needs to resort to the imagination and use literary imagination to fill in the gaps. Piltene's size and its historical lifespan make it possible to become familiar with all of its archival documents, something which is impossible, for example, in the case of Poland, with its history that spans a thousand years. Most of the documents were written in German, while some are in Latin, Polish, French, and Russian. One can therefore envision writing the complete history of this state that covers the entire period of its existence—from its formation, through its development, to the periods of freedom and prosperity, decline and downfall, and finally its complete disappearance. The Piltene archive provides a full set of documents for such an undertaking.

204 The history of this archive, which became part of the Courlandish Country Archive (Das Kurländische Landesarchiv) in 1903, is presented briefly by Dybaś, *Na obrzeżach Rzeczypospolitej* [On the Borderlands of the Commonwealth], 11. The Piltene Archive, recovered after many years and opened to the public in 1983, was Dybaś's main historical source. For more about the history of the entire Courlandish County Archive see also: Beata Krajevská and Teodors Zeids, "Zwei kurländische Archive und ihre Schicksale" ["Two Courlandish archives and their fate"], in *Das Herzogtum Kurland 1561–1795* [The Duchy of Courland, 1561-1795], ed. Erwin Oberländer, 13–28, where the so-called Archive of the Courlandish Princes (*Das Archiv der kurländischen Herzöge*) is also discussed.

6. The Livonian Voivodeship: Churches and Administrative Offices

While the period 1558–1629—or the time of the conquest of Livonian lands and the formation of Polish Livonia—is the subject of a small number of works in Polish historiography, the second half of the 17th century and the 18th century are a void in terms of research studies. It is not entirely clear what was happening in the Livonian lands, or at least there was no spectacular news from the region, during the period that stretches between 1677, when the Livonian Voivodeship was granted a constitution and the status of a duchy with a capital in Dyneburg, and 1772, when it was separated from Poland as a result of the First Partition.²⁰⁵ We do know that local *sejmiki* met in Dyneburg, that representatives who were to go to Warsaw (six of them in all) were elected there, and that, as a result of complex subject relations, the administration in Warsaw treated this region as part of both Lithuania and the Polish Crown. Because the voivodeship was so small, the elevation of its status to that of a duchy had purely symbolic character. From the time of King Stephen Bathory, the title of the Livonian Prince belonged to Polish kings; in addition to a voivode, the duchy had a castellan and a bishop, and was therefore simultaneously also a separate bishopric.²⁰⁶

Despite its unattractiveness and its awful location, the Livonian Bishopric, with its center at Dyneburg, was entrusted with a very important task: to Catholicize (or re-Catholicize) the mainly Protestant and Orthodox region.²⁰⁷ During the Reformation, most of Livonia quickly became Protestant—a rather

205 The exception here is the problem of Livonia (not only Polish Livonia) during the Great Northern War, and Johann Patkul's dishonorable, double-faced political activity; among other things, he promised the Polish King Augustus II the recovery of all of Livonia from Sweden. The details of his overzealous simultaneous service at the courts of several monarchs is described by Manteuffel in *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 173–182.

206 Gustaw Manteuffel speaks with regret about bishops who were so appalled by the pitiful state of their domains that they preferred to reside in Warsaw, and used every occasion to change this position for a more lucrative one, *ibid.*, 162.

207 In Polish Livonia, where a rather large percentage of the inhabitants were Jews, Judaism also had a strong position. The place of Jews in the history of Livonia deserves a separate study; in Polish scholarship there are practically no works about it. It should suffice to say that, according to statistics collected by the Russian Empire, at the beginning of the 20th century nearly 90% of the inhabitants of Dyneburg were of Jewish descent. Manteuffel begins Chapter IX of *Inflanty Polskie* [Polish Livonia] with the words “Jews are the majority of the inhabitants of Polish-Livonian towns, and in smaller numbers Poles, Germans, and Russians live there...,” p. 103.

stark vote on the centuries-long reign of the bishops and the Teutonic Order. The Roman Catholic Church was responsible for the bloodshed of the Livonian Middle Ages; in addition, the embarrassing conflicts between the Church and the Teutonic grand masters—which the successive Popes could not (or did not want to) resolve—aroused fear and did not help improve social relations. Conversions were prompted by brute force, and they quickly turned into economic slavery. Against this background, the open spirit of the Reformation returned the dignity of a spiritual mission to religion, aroused hopes for controlling the unbridled wealth and greed of the priests, while at the same time easing the effects of feudal oppression. It is therefore not surprising that the Reformation met with a favorable response in the Livonian lands, and it was possible to secularize church and monastic property despite caste-based resistance of some members of the aristocracy. By the end of the 16th century, the situation changed to such an extent that throughout Livonia the Reformation was defended by former Teutonic knights and Baltic-German burghers, while the dark and repressive Church was represented by the Polish occupiers.²⁰⁸

After the spheres of influence were stabilized by the Treaty of Oliva, Polish Livonia was subjected to intensive Polonization, which can be characterized in terms of several elements:

1. **(Re-)Catholicization of the region.** The 17th and 18th centuries were a time of establishing a large number of churches, creating seminaries and monasteries (in Kraslava, Pasiene, Dyneburg, or Aglona), and building a network of Jesuit schools intended not only for the gentry but also for peasant children. If in the first half of the 17th century there were only six Catholic churches on the territory of Polish Livonia, twice as many were established just under Bishop Korwin Popławski, in the course of a dozen years. In Aglona, a Dominican church and monastery were founded, and they soon became famous thanks to the painting of the Madonna (the so-

208 According to Kazimierz Tyszkowski, the reinforcement of Catholicism was also an element of the Vatican's broader plan: "In light of the recent defeat of missionary efforts in Sweden and in Moscow's territories, Rome attached that much more importance to Livonia, where the center of Catholic propaganda was to be formed to influence surrounding countries—Sweden and Moscow; illusions and faith in the conversion of these lands to Catholicism remained entrenched at the papal court. The geographic location of this province, the hope for the strong support of the Polish king and his advisors, especially Zamoyski, created favorable conditions for the Catholicization of Livonia." Kazimierz Tyszkowski, "Polska polityka kościelna w Inflantach (1581–1621)" [Church Politics in Livonia (1581–1621)], in *Polska a Inflanty* [Poland and Livonia] vol. 39, Pamiętnik Instytutu Bałtyckiego (Gdynia: Instytut Bałtycki w Gdyni, 1939), 63.

called “Guiding Mother with a Flower”); the town continues to be the largest Catholic sanctuary in Latvia to this day.²⁰⁹ Although the notion of Polish re-Catholicization of the Baltic Region is commonly evoked, the position of Western Christianity was very weak in Polish Livonia before the Reformation; there were practically no churches, and only at the end of the 16th century does one encounter reports about individual monks who were bravely going out into the countryside—it took some time for their clay huts to be transformed into humble chapels. Even though Christianization was carried out over a period of several hundred years, local peasants clearly did not have much of an understanding of Christian principles, they did not differentiate between the confessional affiliations of the missionaries, and they still used forest meadows as temples:

During this time [the middle of the 18th century!—K.Z], Polish-Livonian villages were inhabited by a population which was not yet enlightened and still almost barbarian; even though it professed the Christian faith, it was still far from embracing the Christian life. These people (...) had their own language and odd prejudices, which were still pagan. Their religion was still dominated by superstition and witchcraft, the final remainders of idolatrous times. They worshipped linden trees and oak trees, snakes and vipers. These people, whose lineage was different from that of the gentry, have lived in these lands much longer...²¹⁰

The construction of several dozen churches and monasteries in the course of a single century brought about significant cultural changes, especially when local schools, Sunday schools, orphanages, and hospitals were created alongside the churches (such projects were funded by, for example, the Hylzen, Plater, and Benisławski families). The broader process should therefore be designated as actual, or effective, Catholicization, rather than re-Catholicization, as it was only as a result of Polish assimilation policies that Polish Livonia gained a clearly Catholic character.

2. **Integration of the Baltic-German knights.** As Manteuffel noted with indignation, Livonian Germans (in this case in the person of the publicist Julius Eckardt) treated Polish Livonia as if it were forever separated from German culture, and it was therefore no longer of any interest to Baltic

209 One frequently comes across the claim that the painting of the Aglona Madonna is a copy of a painting from Trakai. Latgallians (stubbornly) claim that it is the Trakai Madonna which is the copy, while the original hangs in the Aglona church. The painting from Trakai was probably either borrowed by Aglona or brought to be kept in storage there; it was then skillfully copied, and subsequently the Trakai parish priest took the copy back with him. See Manteuffel, “Inflanty Polskie,” [Polish Livonia], 120.

210 Ibid., 74.

writers.²¹¹ Eckhardt's position was only partially justified, since, against Manteuffel's suggestions, a significant number of knightly aristocrats from the Livonian Voivodeship remained Protestant for a long time, and the Manteuffel family itself converted to Catholicism only at the beginning of the 19th century. In this sense, the family was not separated from "German culture," and it was also not separated from it in terms of language, customs, and so on. The Tyzenhauz, Hylzen, Felkierzam and other families began to use Polish versions of their names to facilitate the process of making new contacts and advancing their careers, but besides this, they sought to maintain their previous lifestyle. Most of them continued to establish and maintain close contacts with Protestants in Courland. Yet most of these families also provided funding for the many churches and monasteries in Polish Livonia, which probably gave rise to the Baltic-German publicist's accusation about their Catholic re-orientation. Funds devoted to the erection of churches were to emphasize a given family's loyalty to the Polish rulers, to consolidate their position as hosts in the region, win over the clerics who undermined the secularization of the Teutonic Order, and register sympathy for the Counterreformation. Livonians themselves, however, treated the process of Polonization as a joint Polish-Livonian success:

This is the only political and civilizational annexation which has been successful, and which has made up for the numerous losses inflicted on us by the German world. Although Poland lost most of Livonia in battles with Sweden, the part that it retained after the Treaty of Oliva fits more closely with the organization of the Commonwealth and has been incorporated into it more fully than Pomerania or Western Prussia. The process of unification and gradual assimilation has not provoked even that amount of resistance which the Lithuanian and Belarussian gentry put up against Polish influences before the Union of Lublin, or the kind of disturbances and problems which erupted constantly in Danzig/Gdańsk and other Prussian cities.²¹²

3. Influx of Polish and Lithuanian gentry. Among the effects of the many wars of the 16th and 17th centuries, there was the fact that, as a token of

211 Manteuffel, "Inflanty Polskie," [Polish Livonia], 74 and 135. It is particularly interesting that the accusation that the Polish-Livonian aristocracy abandoned German culture offended our historian at a time when he was writing a book in which he was proving the Polonization and Catholicization of this very aristocracy. On the one hand, Manteuffel wanted to prove his unquestionable Polishness, and *eo ipso* show the total loyalty of the historic Teutonic knights toward the Commonwealth; but on the other hand, he felt class solidarity and echoes of historic, federal independence, guarded by privileges.

212 Manteuffel, *O starodawnej szlachcie krzyżacko-rycerskiej na kresach inflanckich* [Historic Teutonic-Knightly Aristocracy in the Livonian Borderlands], 12.

gratitude, a significant number of soldiers received aristocratic titles, land, and administrative posts from the king. Since many of the Livonian knights left the region after the secularization (Manteuffel writes that between 1566 and 1677 the number of knightly families decreased from 55 to merely 24),²¹³ the king found himself in possession of rather large stretches of land, which he gave out as royal estates or hereditary property. By the time the Commonwealth was partitioned in 1795, 44 Polish-Lithuanian families had settled there on the basis of royal endowments, purchases, marriages, or donations from previous owners. It is not difficult to guess that knightly families who had lived there for centuries saw these newcomers as competitors for local offices, which were staffed in accordance with rather confusing principles. According to regulations which evolved over the course of a hundred years, Livonian offices were to be staffed by local gentry, that is, by Livonians or Lithuanians, or by Lithuanian and Polish aristocrats. The confusion made the royal court a site of unhealthy rivalry for titles and privileges.²¹⁴ The competition involved mainly two groups of candidates: the old aristocracy with Baltic-German ancestry, classified as belonging to the first and most prestigious category of noble ranks in the registry of the Fellowship of Courlandish Knights, and the newly arrived

213 Gustaw Manteuffel, “Nieco z dziejów dawnego księstwa inflanckiego i wybitniejszych postaci tego województwa od XVII do XIX stulecia” [A Bit from the History of the old Livonian Duchy and of the More Eminent Figures of the Voivodeship between the 17th and the 19th Centuries], in *Z okolic Dźwiny: księga zbiorowa na dochód czytelnicy polskiej w Witebsku* [From the Daugava Region: A Collective Work for the Benefit of the Polish Reading Room in Vitebsk] (Vilnius; Witebsk: Towarzystwo Dobroczynności w Witebsku, 1912), 2; Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 160.

214 The case of Jan Andrzej Plater can serve as one of the many possible examples here. In 1670, he obtained the privilege to the Dyneburg Starosty, which was then confirmed and extended to include the Livonian Voivodeship, thanks to his conversion from Protestantism to Catholicism, in 1695. According to Manteuffel, the king was so pleased with the desirable change of his confessional affiliation “that he soon bestowed the Livonian Voivodeship to him, and it was not separated from the Plater house from then on.” This example gives us a picture of the tensions and religious expectations which exerted pressure on Polish-German Livonians. Manteuffel sees this as an argument in favor of the preservation of Polishness and Catholicism in Polish Livonia, but it is rather an example of a difficult and complex game, which the knightly aristocracy played with their Polish sovereigns. See Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 160 and 292.

Polish-Lithuanian gentry, who were just gaining lands and local titles.²¹⁵ In this context, both religious and patriotic zeal were important bargaining chips.

7. Livonians: Differentiations

The unification of two very different elements—Livonian and Polish—was necessary for the formation of the Polish-Livonian identity. The former brought with it the medieval tradition of colonization, steeped in the knights' conviction about their exclusive rights to this land, reinforced by the Protestant sense of responsibility and by class solidarity. The latter brought the power of the new, Counterreformation-based colonization, reinforced by the ideals of a parliamentary gentry republic, which organized the multicultural and religiously diverse federal state into a single political entity. Throughout the 17th century the two elements adjusted to each other only with difficulty, and antagonisms between Polish Livonians and Livonian Poles outlived not only the Commonwealth, but also the period of partitions, and became perceptible even in the 20th century.²¹⁶ The beginnings of tensions reach back to the time of

215 The Courlandish Fellowship of Knights (*Kurländische Ritterbank*) was founded, in 1620, with the goal of investigating the Courlandish landowners' rights to aristocratic titles; its activity became the basis for the later formation of similar registers in other parts of Livonia and Estonia. The first and most prestigious category was comprised by knights who had established themselves in these lands long ago, whose membership in the aristocracy was obvious and confirmed by a tribunal on the basis of personal acquaintance. Initially, the chamber helped the knights defend their privileges in the countrywide *sejm* against the authoritarian desires of the Courlandish princes. With time, however, it became the most respectable institution, which dealt with the verification of membership in the aristocracy in the Baltic countries. See Pistohlkors, *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas: Baltische Länder*, 250. The inestimable Manteuffel gives us the information that the Courlandish Ritterbank had its own estates and a building in Jelgava, where "the genealogy books of all the ancient historic families which belong to this organization are kept" and "every Pole who has the means to show authentic proof of the fact that before November 20th, 1561 his ancestors were already recognized as knightly aristocrats by the *Sejm* of the Polish-Republic, gets included in the Courlandish *indigénat*"; Manteuffel, *O starodawnej szlachcie krzyżacko-rycerskiej na kresach inflanckich* [Historic Teutonic-Knightly Aristocracy in the Livonian Borderlands], 13.

216 In the 1930s, Michał Świerżbiński, who was cited in the Introduction, claimed that German-knightly families in Polish Livonia "were never Polish in spirit" and their patriotism became activated only once Poland lost independence. This claim—doubtful, if only because it is not exactly clear what it means to be "Polish in spirit"—was

incorporation, during the reign of Sigismund II Augustus, something Polish Livonians evidently remembered for a long time, since in 1750 their spokesman Jan August Hylzen wrote about it in these words:

It is certain that the loss of Livonia was hastened by the ill-treatment of Livonians, since, in addition to many injustices, Livonian counties and starosties were entrusted not to the locals, as guaranteed by the *Pacta Subjectionis*, but to foreigners, while Livonians themselves were excluded; indeed, even the property which they inherited was taken away from them, under the pretext provided by unconfirmed accusations that they had connections with the enemy; their estates were avariciously invaded by the starosts who had Polish garrisons stationed in Livonian castles, and subsequently incorporated into their starosties, or, having obtained the king's permission, the starosts sold the estates in exchange for money, giving either lifetime or dynastic vassal rights to buyers, as their fancy dictated.²¹⁷

The author then explains the reasons why all of Livonia was ill-disposed toward the Commonwealth:

These and similar injustices inflicted on Livonians in violation of the Pacts sworn by King Sigismund II Augustus—when instead of receiving gratitude for their voluntary union with the Commonwealth they were made to feel different, less loved, and less equal—caused the aggravation of hearts and aroused the victims' loathing for those who injured them; and this brought about the desperate resolution and conspiracy with the Swedish enemy, to whom most of Livonia surrendered.²¹⁸

Livonians thus had a sense of injustice which stemmed from the violation of their right to self-governance, while Poles and Lithuanians became convinced of "Livonian treason." Hylzen writes from the position of a local aristocrat who emphasizes his rights to the land and to local offices, but who at the same time clearly marks the difference and the juxtaposition between "us," i.e. the Livonians, and "them," i.e. the Poles and Lithuanians. The Polish side made the Livonians "feel different," but on the Livonian side the protection and emphasis of difference also had the status of an almost patriotic duty. These divisions gradually became less pronounced over the course of the 18th century, but until

derived from the observation (which happens to be correct) that in the territories of the historic Polish Livonia there were spectacular manifestations of attachment to the Polish national idea during both 19th-century uprisings, as attested to by the examples of Emilia Plater, Leon Plater and Ryszard Manteuffel. The author does not mention, however, that similar declarations of attachment could also be found earlier, (e.g. Kircholm, Polish–Russian wars, the Kościuszko Uprising in Courland). See, Świerzbński, "Martyrologia Inflant Polskich" [The Martyrology of Polish Livonia].

217 Hylzen, *Infalnty w dawnych swych dziejach* [Livonia in its Old History], A5–A6.

218 *Ibid.*, A6.

the very end of the existence of the Commonwealth, or the Republic of Both Nations, a third—Livonian—nation maintained an internal fault line.

According to data which Manteuffel cites in several places, only 24 Teutonic families of German descent remained in Polish Livonia in the 18th century. In order not to repeat the long list of names and landed estates here, we refer the reader to our historians' various works,²¹⁹ which, *notabene*, contain small discrepancies. Only a few of the names, like the Plater, the Borch, or the Manteuffel families have found their way into general awareness, and perhaps the names of the Puttkamers, Hylzens and Dönhoffs are also familiar. The Dönhoffs, as a matter of fact, only had possessions in Piltene, if, of course, one does not take into account the Prussian line of the family. Livonians complained that they were blocked from holding offices, but collective biographies of individual families suggest that their participation in governing—not only on the local level but also in Vilnius and Warsaw—was not insignificant. For example: Jan Ludwik, son of the above-mentioned Jan Andrzej Plater, took over his father's position as the starost of Dyneburg and voivode of Livonia; his son, Konstanty Ludwik, presided not only over the Dyneburg Starosty but later also took over the Mscislav Voivodeship (which was better than the Livonian one), and finally also the Trakai Castellany; in turn, his son, Kazimierz Konstanty, in addition to having local offices, also served various functions in the capital, was twice a member of the Permanent Council, and finally became the Lithuanian vice-chancellor (unfortunately, he was also a member of the Targowica plot).²²⁰ The chronicler Jan August Hylzen, whose work bemoaning the injustices inflicted on the Livonian aristocracy was cited earlier, was sarcastically described as one who "accumulated more and more royal estates in his hands"; in addition to receiving his native Maryenhauz Starosty, he successively received the Bratslav Starosty, the Livonian Castellany, the Tribunal Marshalcy and the Minsk Voivodeship—all of which he subsequently passed down to his son. Meanwhile, the chronicler's brother, Jerzy Mikołaj, became the Bishop of Smolensk.²²¹ Manteuffel mentions numerous similar titles also when he discusses the remaining families, who obviously did not suffer from excessive

219 Manteuffel, "Inflanty Polskie" [Polish Livonia], Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands]; Manteuffel, "Nieco z dziejów dawnego księstwa inflanckiego" [A Bit About the History of the Old Livonian Duchy]; Manteuffel, *O starodawnej szlachcie krzyżacko-rycerskiej na kresach inflanckich* [Historic Teutonic-Knightly Aristocracy in the Livonian Borderlands].

220 Manteuffel, *O starodawnej szlachcie krzyżacko-rycerskiej na kresach inflanckich* [Historic Teutonic-Knightly Aristocracy in the Livonian Borderlands], 39–40.

221 Manteuffel, *O starodawnej szlachcie krzyżacko-rycerskiej na kresach inflanckich* [Historic Teutonic-Knightly Aristocracy in the Livonian Borderlands], 27–29.

deprivation. There is more reason to believe the conclusion that the old aristocracy was reluctant to share some of their privileges with those who were classified as belonging to the second category of ranks in the registry of the Courlandish Fellowship of Knights, and who often had difficulties proving their aristocratic lineage.²²² German-Livonian aristocracy became Polonized to meet the demands of custom and of the Polish political rulers, but—in accordance with the principle of differentiation—they diligently protected their separateness and their higher “otherness.”

The gentry who arrived later, for their part, became successful competitors in the struggle for local estates and offices. The Benisławski, Bujnicki, Sołtan, Szadurski, Kublicki, Sielicki, Karnicki and other families, whether through marriage or inheritance, took over not only Teutonic estates but also Teutonic customs; to an ever greater extent, they thus became “Livonian gentry,” a title which our stubborn historian still denied them in the final decades of the 19th century.²²³ Tensions among various landed aristocracy groups had an interesting character here. While in other regions of the Commonwealth Polish gentry clearly felt their cultural superiority, here they were dealing with an aristocracy whose rank was much higher in the official registers, and who, moreover, jealously guarded their privileged position.²²⁴ We can use the example of Józef Weyssenhoff’s stubbornness to see how persistent this complex was, and what great snobbery of the northern borderland gentry it concealed. The author of the *Kronika rodziny Weyssów Weyssenhoffów* [The Chronicle of the Weyss Weyssenhoff Family] sought to prove that his family descended from the medieval Rheinland Weisses, and became indignant over Gustaw Manteuffel’s arguments which negated this lineage by pointing to the determinations of

222 This was supposed to have been the case with the Szreder, Walden, and Weyssenhoff families. The last of these was the cause of a sharp conflict between Gustaw Manteuffel and Józef Weyssenhoff, in which the latter pointed to the Weyss family in his efforts to prove the German-knightly lineage of his family and to defend his right to the baron title. See Krzysztof Zajas, “Spór genealogiczny Gustawa Manteuffla z Józefem Weyssenhoffem” [The Genealogical Dispute between Gustaw Manteuffel and Józef Weyssenhoff] in *Józef Weyssenhoff i Leon Wyczółkowski* [Józef Weyssenhoff and Leon Wyczółkowski], ed. Krzysztof Stępnik and Monika Gabryś (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, 2008).

223 Manteuffel, “Inflanty Polskie” [Polish Livonia], 37.

224 In formulating certain synthetic theses about Livonian regionalism, Jacek Kolbuszewski has pointed to the cultural attractiveness of Polish-Livonian gentry in “Kultura polska na Łotwie – przeszłość i teraźniejszość: próba zarysu całości” [Polish Culture in Latvia: Past and Present: An Attempted Sketch of the Whole] in *Polacy na Łotwie* [Poles in Latvia], ed. Edward Walewander, 56.

Baltic-German heraldists.²²⁵ The author of *Soból i panna* [The Sable and the Lady] not only considered it fair to casually blend two different families into one (though their identity was not obvious in the least), but he also interspersed his narrative with suggestions about the high rank of his alleged German ancestors:

I found the largest number of mentions of the Rheinland Weisses in the *Georg Rixners Thurnier-Buch* from 1530. It is a register of the so-called “tournament gentry” (...). Not just anyone could join their ranks—besides princes and counts, they included the aristocratic elites; one fulfilled the minimum legitimacy requirement if one had eight ancestors of knightly descent (*les huit quartiers*). To this day, German families are proud of the honor of being descended from the medieval tournament aristocracy.²²⁶

This typical representative of the vanishing landed gentry was not satisfied with tracing his lineage to Polish aristocracy from the end of the 16th century, which was no small thing, could easily be shown, and which the German registers confirmed. Weissenhoff wanted his lineage to match those of German Livonians; this already had practically no significance at the end of the 19th century, and his efforts would have appeared as harmless eccentricity at that time. In the 1930s—when the *Chronicles* were published—it was a truly odd suggestion. Even the emotional temperature of the argument is symptomatic. Manteuffel was a meticulous, matter-of-fact archivist, not without a haughty sense of sarcasm, while Weyszenhoff was an indignant and adamant Sarmatian, which made him, in a sense, an argument against himself. The disagreement which was projected onto the past was proof of lasting differences between the long-established aristocratic families and those who arrived later. The former strictly preserved the segregation of lineages, while the latter attempted, in a

225 Manteuffel, “Inflanty Polskie” [Polish Livonia], 96 and 101.

226 Weyszenhoff, *Kronika rodziny Weysów Weyszenhoffów* [The Chronicle of the Weys Weyszenhoff Family], 23. The reviewer of the book had no doubts about the dubious status of the author’s many pieces of “evidence,” especially those proving that the Weisses and the Wysszenhoffs were the same family; “the authors *Kronika* [Chronicle] found the identity of the two Jans to be self-evident, to us this supposition will appear as a hypothesis (...). It is strange that of the two branches of the family which had been separated in the 17th century, one still goes by the name Weiss, while the other takes the name Wysszenhoff at a time when the process of establishing German names is generally considered to be complete.” Aleksander Gieysztor, review of *Kronika rodziny Weysów Weyszenhoffów* [Review of the Chronicle of the Weys Wysszenhoff Family] by Waldemar Weyszenhoff, *Miesięcznik Heraldyczny* 15, no. 7–8 (1936), 126.

variety of ways, to storm the genealogical fortress of Livonia's historic Teutonic knights.²²⁷

One can usually recognize history written from the old colonial perspective by its attitude toward the local people, who are referred to as natives, autochthons, original inhabitants, and so on (today all these terms sound like insults). In descriptions penned by invaders, the people they encountered appear in two ways: either as those who are utterly different and therefore incomprehensible, silent, as if they were part of the local fauna, or as those who are the same as those arriving, deprived of differences, entirely similar, without their own identity.²²⁸ Both representations deprive the local peoples of their identity and transform them into either tourist attractions or proof of the homogeneity of human nature. In Polish texts, information about the indigenous inhabitants of Polish Livonia appears rarely and late—at the time when the issue of the presence of a local Other became both a social and a political problem in the 19th century. During the Enlightenment, some of the more open-minded among the seigniorial masters noticed the suffering of the enslaved peasants and emancipated them, but they tended to be seen as eccentrics who succumbed to atheist philosophy. One finds an interesting example of a non-conservative, reform-minded way of thinking in the Livonian Voivodeship in the famous will of Józef Hylzen, the son of Jan August, in which (in 1783!) he decided to free his serfs and give away his estate for charitable purposes. Manteuffel wrote down the following fragments of the will from a copy he had in his collection:

Grant permanent freedom to the subjects of my entire estate, giving them the freedom to leave and go wherever they wish, with all their property.

227 Marriages were a seemingly easy means of accomplishing this, though the aristocracy attached great importance to them, and such “mixed” *mésalliances* were rare. Weyssenhoff made this the basis of an argument, and inferred that a lady from the ancient Vietinghoff family, who married Gotard Weiss in the middle of the 17th century, could not have become a wife of a newly-titled aristocrat who only recently arrived in the area. See Weyssenhoff, *Kronika rodziny Weyssów Weyssenhoffów* [The Chronicle of the Weyss Weyssenhoff Family], 44.

228 See Stephen Greenblatt, “Learning to Curse: Aspects of Linguistic Colonialism in the Sixteenth Century,” in *Learning to Curse: Essays in Early Modern Culture*, by Stephen Greenblatt (New York; London: Routledge, 1990). I make use of a remark made by Krystyna Kujawińska-Courtney in her introduction to the Polish edition of Stephen Greenblatt's *Cultural Poetics*, ed. Krystyna Kujawińska-Courtney (Krakow: Universitas, 2006), LXIV–LXV. See also Ewa Domańska, *Mikrohistorie: spotkania w międzyświatach* [Microhistories: Meetings in the In-between-worlds] (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2005), 131–132.

To devote, into perpetuity, half of the income from all my property to the support and encouragement of the arts and sciences, for the education of the impoverished gentry, for the support of those in need, for the building of hospitals and improvement of those already in existence, and also for the support of poor peasants who remain in destitute poverty or adversity.²²⁹

This testament was, of course, not executed in accordance with the will of the voivode who died at a young age; it is nonetheless an early proof of the ability to notice the other inhabitants of the region, early in the context of Livonia's conservative atmosphere.

The so-called autochthons appear as an object of ethnographic descriptions only in the 19th century—when the idea of a nation was endowed with new ethnic meanings, as a result of which the sociologically-understood “peasants” changed into Latvians.

The following description of the Latvian inhabitants of Polish Livonia, taken from *Pamiętniki księdza Jordana* [Memoirs of Father Jordan], written in the 1840s, could be the object of a rewarding cultural and postcolonial analysis:

The Latvian seems to have no notion of the pleasures of a comfortable life; he understands all of his pleasure like all slaves who are used to hard work. And so, even when he is able to save a few pennies, he prefers to bury them in the ground rather than spending them on better food, neater clothing or a more comfortable carriage and equipment. He is very well suited to be a serf. The passivity of his mental powers makes him an obedient executor of his Master's will. He works like an ox, so long as he is enslaved. When left to his own devices, he likes to be idle (...); his religiosity is bound up with superstition. Though converted to Christianity, over the centuries he was unable to get rid of the relics of old paganism. He blindly believes everything the Church tells him to believe, but he believes in witchcraft and werewolves just as blindly.²³⁰

The stereotypes of lazy Latvians, much like remarks about paganism which has not been completely rooted out, appear rather frequently in Livonian writing. The ethnographers of the romantic and positivist eras were certainly not concerned with calling for more intense Christianization, neither were they concerned with scientific rigor—they cared more about presenting cultural oddities, and in their descriptions the villagers were situated alongside interesting landscapes and the benefits of local climate.

229 Manteuffel, *O starodawnej szlachcie krzyżacko-rycerskiej na kresach inflanckich* [Historic Teutonic-Knightly Aristocracy in the Livonian Borderlands], 30.

230 Kazimierz Bujnicki, “Pamiętnik księdza Jordana Soc. Jesu” [Diary of Father Jordan of the Society of Jesus] in *Rubon: pismo poświęcone pożytecznej rozrywce* [Rubon: A Journal Devoted to Beneficial Entertainment] (Vilnius, 1842): 148–149. From the point of view of postcolonial discourse, it would be interesting to hear the answer to the question of why this enlightened author capitalized the word “Master.”

In *Inflanty Polskie* [Polish Livonia], however, the representation of the autochthons is written with more finesse. In his description of the urban population, Manteuffel painstakingly enumerates Poles, Jews, Ruthenes, Russians, and (“smaller numbers of”) Germans, while in the countryside, he says, “among Latvians there are the sporadically interspersed Ests, Lithuanians, Russian Old Believers, or the so-called Raskolniks, Ruthenes, and Polish serfs.”²³¹ For the sake of precision, we should add that by Ruthenes he means Belarusians living in the eastern part of Polish Livonia, in towns which today lie close to the Polish border with Belarus (Pasiene, Lanckorona [Latvian: Skaune]). It is interesting that the scrupulous author did not mention the newly-arrived Russians, though a bit further down in the text he mentions “Russian colonizers.”²³² He did mention “Polish serfs,” i.e., peasants from Poland who either arrived here with their masters from Lithuania or the Polish Crown, who were being “resettled by the voivodes” (after the 17th-century wars all of Livonia suffered from depopulation, see the discussion of Piltene above), or who came looking for work. This was, however, more frequently the case in the second half of the 19th century, after serfs had been emancipated and granted property rights. In any case, the list shows rather extensive ethnic (and religious) diversity of the Livonian Voivodeship, which, with time, gained an eminently Catholic character and reinforced the stereotype expression “Catholic-Pole” in the minds of the contemporaries—an expression which is present in the sociological remarks of Baltic and German researchers practically to the present.

In his characterization of Polish Livonia’s Latvians, who are called Latgallians today, Manteuffel uses epithets similar to those used by Kazimierz Bujnicki thirty years earlier; he tries to balance between an exoticizing and a unifying perspective. The dominant perspective in his description, however, is that of a feudal lord, primarily interested in the efficiency and physical stamina of his subjects:

They [Polish Livonia’s Latvians—K.Z.] are short, not stocky, and in general not strong. In the heart of the country one can, however, encounter vigorous men of appropriate height, who are strong and well-built, as well as beautiful women (...). The temperament of the local Latvians is phlegmatic—they lack energy. Their character is unique only to them, and it is therefore difficult to specify. They are mostly lazy, indifferent to everything except their own interests (...). In relation to the powerful they are lowly and humble, but when they feel themselves to be strong, they immediately become stubborn, false, and devious.²³³

231 Manteuffel, “Inflanty Polskie” [Polish Livonia], 44.

232 Ibid., 49.

233 Ibid., 50; Gustaw Manteuffel, “Listy z nad Bałtyku” [Letters from the Baltic] in *Pisma Wybrane* [Selected Works], ed. Krzysztof Zajac, vol. 1 (Krakow: Universitas, 2009), 10.

Humility before the powerful and ruthlessness toward the weak cannot, of course, be categories of a meaningful ethnographic description; the author might as well have described tsarist officials this way. The critique of physical abilities also seems to be motivated by the master's concern for his inventory rather than by the anthropologist's desire for precision. Especially because in another place, when he characterizes the same Polish-Livonian Latvians, Manteuffel contradicts himself and notes positive aspects where he previously saw negative ones:

By his nature, the Polish-Livonian Latvian is neither bad nor stupid, he shows inborn abilities in every area; he takes to education easily and is able to take care of himself in difficult circumstances. He has much talent and agility, though his mental development has long been impeded by the bonds of serfdom.²³⁴

Manteuffel uses an entirely ethnographically correct approach, however, when he uses detailed examples to paint a precise picture of Latvians' daily life, their eating habits, dress, as well as their customs and rituals; he also makes an effort to point out the specific qualities of their language (those Latvians who see Latgallian as a dialectical variation of Latvian and not as a separate language could use his remarks to bolster their arguments).²³⁵ In Manteuffel's description one also finds, among other things, confirmation of medieval Christianization practices which consisted in replacing pagan holidays with Christian ones celebrated on the same day, so that old habits would not be rooted out, but rather redirected.²³⁶ The author's arguments also support the thesis, still current today, that religious belief has been and continues to be the only essential characteristic of Polish-Livonian Latvians. Finally, there is another thesis here as well, one which does not appear in the meager available information about the region: the notion that for a long time Catholics, Protestants, Orthodox Christians, Old-Believers, and Jews all lived side by side here, and next to these communities there was paganism, still "practiced in the forests."²³⁷

234 Manteuffel, "Inflanty Polskie" [Polish Livonia], 54 and Manteuffel, "Listy z nad Bałtyku" [Letters from the Baltic], 20.

235 See Manteuffel, "Inflanty Polskie" [Polish Livonia], 60.

236 *Ibid.*, 59.

237 For example, in the middle of the 19th century there were 3,530 inhabitants in Ludza. "The number included 1,200 Catholics, 37 Protestants, 54 Roskolniks, 416 Russian Orthodox Christians (...) and as many as 1,778 Jews!" Manteuffel, *Lucyn w Inflantach* [Ludza in Livonia] (Krakow: Ancylic i Spółka, 1884), 19.

8. Microhistory: Tracts and Foundations

Microhistory was to be one of the means of dethroning the great historical metanarrative which derived from the (positivist) methodological project of describing “objective reality,” and which was based on general concepts, wide panoramas, and watershed events. Microhistorical description focuses on everyday life which is filled with minor events; it pays attention to the the surface and the move from great to trivial event, it is concerned with ceaseless verification of one’s own assumptions, and with the polyphonic diversity of perspectives.²³⁸ Microhistory tells a “different” story, it steps away from the great metanarrative—not only in a spatial sense, through the exploration of events that tend not to be mentioned in the chronicles of humanity, but also—and perhaps above all—in a methodological sense, through the negation of the basic *a priori* assumption of meaning, which is made by traditional historiography. It stoops over a historical fact not in order to investigate that fact’s ability to confirm an accepted thesis, but rather to reflect on what this fact does to the historian and his assumptions. Microhistory is therefore a kind of dialogue between two subjects; in its perspective, the message from the past is not an exhibit item, something cognized, but rather something that speaks and conveys its vision of the world, its projection of reality.²³⁹ In microhistorical writing there is, in a sense, abolition of historicity as such, since that which is past stops being distant in time and speaks to us in contemporary language. The accompanying experience of the Other, and the sense of solemnity which flows from the phenomenon of the encounter, transposes history from the realm of science into the realm of culture, making it a humanities discipline.²⁴⁰

Microhistory—as Topolski teaches in the above-cited *Wprowadzenie do Historii* [Introduction to History]—is not identical with regional history because it does not investigate the region but rather the phenomena that construct the region from within, that are “in the region.” It dismantles the image of the whole, which has been consolidated in the traditional perspective; it negates the whole and glorifies variously understood differences. Its “historicity” essentially

238 See Jerzy Topolski, *Wprowadzenie do historii* [Introduction to History] (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2006), 134–135.

239 For more about microhistory as a dialogue and an encounter of two subjects see Domańska, *Mikrohistorie...* [Microhistories], 156–157.

240 Wojciech Wrzosek wrote about the dilemmas of history as a discipline stretching between science and culture, between *science* and *letter*, in the introduction to his interesting *Historia – kultura – metafora. Powstanie nieklasycznej historiografii* [History, Culture, Metaphor: The Emergence of Non-Classical Historiography] (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, 1997), 7–14.

consists only in its point of departure, that is, in the detail that has been fished out from the ocean of past events. It does not have successive stages in which this detail would be worked on so that it could fit into the already existing puzzle. A particular small event, recorded in a secondary, trivial, and marginalized source constitutes a microcosm, it has significance in itself, it is a phenomenon which encourages one to experience the past in the mode of illumination. Therefore, as Paul Ricoeur says, in microhistory everything can become a document, especially the debris and the fragments which have not been recorded, which maintain the purity of events, in contrast to archived facts, which are the content of statements, transformed by consciousness.²⁴¹ From a microhistorical perspective, it is the tertiary, anonymous witnesses that have the most important things to say.

In the case of the history of Polish Livonia, the tension between macro- and microhistory is distorted for the simple reason that a grand, synthetic narration does not exist in this field. If microhistory magnifies minutiae by focusing in on the detail (on the principle of poetic synecdoche)—as a result of which its character is metonymic in opposition to the metaphorical character of grand narratives—then the change of perspective, which is more than a mere supplement, becomes microhistory's foundation:

In microhistory, this precise way of looking gives rise to “magnification.” Since this is ex-actly what causes the zooming aspect of the microhistorical viewpoint: a person, or a certain configuration, which is local in a variety of ways, claims center stage and appears to the his-torian as “quite large.”²⁴²

It is difficult, however, to speak of a change when there is no point of departure, i.e., when there is no established, or even suggested “grand narrative,” when there is no metaphor that creates meaning. Microhistory can be treated as a certain kind of deconstruction of macrohistory, but only when there is something to deconstruct. In the case of Polish Livonia we are forced to first undertake the act of construction, that is, to “create” the history of Livonia as a synthetic image of a chronologically ordered, “locally configured” whole; we must project the meaning which we will later negate.²⁴³ Microhistory can also be used for this purpose.

241 Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), chap. “Documentary Proof,” 176–181.

242 Alf Lüdtke, “Alltagsgeschichte, Mikro-Historie, historische Anthropologie” [Everyday history, microhistory, and historical anthropology] in *Geschichte: ein Grundkurs* [History, a basic course], ed. Hans-Jurgen Goertz (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 2001), 569.

243 The only existing attempt to create such a “metaphor of the whole” is Manteuffel's *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands]. In various places the author repeatedly emphasizes that the book is “only” a

* * *

The four counties of the Livonian Voivodeship were called tracts. Our historian says that this was on account of their “narrowness,”²⁴⁴ but also because of the introduction of the nomenclature used by the Duchy of Samogitia, which retained its old division into 18 tracts after the Union of Lublin. (It is difficult to accurately understand Manteuffel’s intentions, since the Livonian counties were relatively large, larger than the average county of the Commonwealth). He maintains that the division of Polish Livonia was conventional rather than administrative, but it was nonetheless preserved in official documents and writings, which means that it must have had some kind of an administrative dimension. The term tract most likely comes from the Latin *tractio*, *tractus*, meaning “road,” but it also means “stretch,” “a strip of land” and “a long time”; it was probably introduced by the Teutonic knights who occupied Samogitia for some time. The four Livonian tracts—Dyneburg, Rezekne, Ludza and Maryenhauz—were also formed around old Teutonic-Livonian castles, which had urban settlements around them. In this case, the term “tract” seems to be especially apt, since Polish Livonia’s four main trade routes passed through these four towns, stretching (*tractus*) from the heart of Russian and Lithuanian lands to the Baltic ports of Riga, Ventspils, and Liepaja. This region was not particularly economically developed and its production was rather primitive; it included wheat, fur hides (from wolves, foxes, otters, beavers, martens, as well as bear and bobcats), fish, honey, wood, and peat. Not much has changed in this regard over the course of three centuries, and one can find similar lists of products in the 1599 records of the Rezekne castle and in Manteuffel’s *Inflanty Polskie* [Polish Livonia].²⁴⁵ It is therefore not surprising that the collection of various customs and transport fees from the merchants who traveled through these lands on their way to seaports was one of the main sources of revenue of the Livonian Voivodeship.

In *Opisanie Miasteczek w Xięstwie Inflantskim Roku 1765* [The Description of Small Towns of the Livonian Duchy in the Year 1765], made for the Lithuanian treasury commission, we find a characterization of the four tracts in

series of “sketches,” that many chapters should be developed, and that he makes no claims to having exhausted the topic. In all of this, one can hear the concerns and uncertainties of a precursor who has nothing to start from, who creates in the void (hence the only sources he uses to support his arguments are German texts). The book, published only now, a hundred years after it was written, hasn’t thus far had the chance to gain the status of a grand metanarrative.

244 Manteuffel, “Inflanty Polskie” [Polish Livonia], 22.

245 Ibid., 33.

terms of their usefulness in terms of customs collection and trade.²⁴⁶ This was the final period of the Commonwealth's rule in this region. The cities appear rather meager and organizationally rickety:

1-st. The town of PASIENE on the border of the Polotsk Voivodeship, situated in the Ludza Starosty, small and without markets, large roads and tracts do not pass through it, except from Polotsk Voivodeship to Livonia; LUDZA, the second town in this Starosty, also small and without a market.

Ludza was the easternmost Livonian-Teutonic castle, most exposed to Ruthene, Lithuanian, Russian, Polish, and Swedish attacks, and its garrisons were often entirely wiped out. After the demolition of the castle by the Swedes during the Third Northern War, the surrounding town declined as well, and in 1772 its inhabitants included “merely 195 burghers (...) and not more than 32 Jews.”²⁴⁷ The treasury reporter has nothing to say about this county seat, there is simply nothing happening there. It is interesting that the seat of the voivodeship, where the “Treasury Chamber for the Collection of Waterway and Land Customs” was located, was likewise described as a small place without marketplaces. The town of Kraslava, which, according to scholars, was experiencing an economic boom at the time, had very small markets, since they only included goods from the personal estates of the Mscislav voivode. From other sources it is known that a treasury chamber was later established in Kraslava, and it became one of the factors which increased the little town's attractiveness.²⁴⁸ The inspector devoted most attention to the town of Kryzbork (Cruceborch, Krustpils, today part of Jekabpils), which was located on Polish Livonia's border with Russian Livonia and with Courland, in a convenient place along the Daugava River, where several trade routes came together:

The small town of KRYZBORK, located on the Daugava, on the estates inherited by the honorable Korff family, does have markets, since vodka, wheat, tobacco, hides and other items are brought there for sale from Livonia and from the Polotsk and Orsha Voivodeships; Kryzborkian Jews bring some of their wares for sale to Courland but they mostly take them to Russian Livonia beyond the Evikste River

246 The full description of the document kept in the Latvijas Valsts Vēstures Arhīvs [Latvian State Historical Archive] in Riga (LVVA) in unit 6984, vol. 1, issue 7, no. 2, says: “A copy from the book of the archive of historical documents of the former Lithuanian treasury commission no. 3811 r. 1775–1779, from sheets 72–73, kept in the State Archive in Vilnius.” The Latgalian researcher Bolesław Breżgo, who collected all items stored under signature 6984 is probably the author of the copy.

247 Manteuffel, *Lucyn w Inflantach* [Ludza in Livonia], 19.

248 Broel-Plater, *Kraslava*, 21. In Manteuffel's writings (*Kraslava*, 17) we find the information that the customs chamber in Kraslava was established after Polish Livonia was occupied by Russia in the First Partition.

(which divides Kryzborcian lands from Russian Livonia). In this town, Jews have the right to collect excises and rents, and they then pass them on to the Court, they select and impose excises on vodka, cattle, hides, and other goods. They also bring a great amount of tobacco there, floating it down the Daugava and transporting it by land, and they then take it to both Courland and Russian Livonia, also distributing it on the estate of the honorable master Korff. In Žarnobule, on the way to Kryzborck, they also collect a bridge toll; it is unknown on what grounds or by what rights.

Polish Livonia generated such attractive transport revenues that local customs were collected without the knowledge or permission of the capital city of Vilnius. Our anonymous witness shows true concern for Polish interests, devoting quite a bit of attention to unjustified customs activities of the local Jews, who illegally collect fees for crossing the bridge. Among the laconic descriptions of small towns this passage is the longest—Jewish tariffs drew most of the treasury controller’s attention. The problem of Jewish income evidently demanded a solution, since a year later (in 1766) the Lithuanian Treasury Commission sent a special commission to Kraslava, where a *kahal* had been recently established; the commission’s purpose was to “calculate and eliminate Jewish debts.”²⁴⁹ Among the commission’s members there were representatives of the local gentry, but it also included the Polish-Lithuanian representatives Karnicki, Kublicki, and Żebrowski. From a detailed description included in a later part of the document, it is clear that the issue of collecting customs and various transit fees imposed on merchants traveling from the east toward the Baltic must have been of fundamental importance:

1-st. The first, ancient winter road, going from the borderlands of the Polotsk Voivodeship to Riga, passing through the vicinity of these borders with Moscow; going from Reval and Siebież, as it passes through the Sinije Lake it crosses into Livonia, and passes through the Kurianow estate of the honorable sir Sokolowski, the Zaboločie estate of the honorable sir Karnicki, through parts of the Hołysz District belonging to the Ludza Starosty, then through the Mahnow estate of the honorable lord Szadurski, the Lith [Lithuanian] regent, the Krużany and Dyrwany estates, and the village of Idynie located on Lake Luban in the Rezekne Starosty, where a secondary customs house has existed for a long time; from this village, the road goes into Russian Livonia, through which all trade convoys go all the way to Riga. This route is the easiest and the shortest way from the borderlands to Riga, it is also the most comfortable for travelers since they travel most of the way along even stretches of muddy terrain; if, during a capricious winter, the road itself should disintegrate, travelers can comfortably travel over mud and ice as they return from Riga, and happily a secondary customs chamber has long functioned in the village of Idynie above the border with Russian Livonia, and it continues to function to this day; since, however, it sometimes happened that convoys going to Riga through the

249 Broel-Plater, *Kraslava*, 16.

muddy stretches or through Lake Luban dared to bypass this customs house, a chamber would be needed higher up along this road, located in a place which they would not be able to bypass. The best and most convenient place for the chamber would be on the Malnow estate, right by the manor house, where there would be no particular need for guards, since the manor house could provide the necessary services.

Goods were transported to important trade points—ports, and large population centers—for export. They did not remain in Polish Livonia where the population was poor and scarce, where markets were very infrequent, and supplied with local wares. Merchants were only interested in the quickest and cheapest possible ways of crossing this wild, muddy land, and reaching more civilized regions along the Daugava River. For the Szadurski, Kublicki, and Karnicki families, control over customs and tariff payments constituted an important source of income, and it is not surprising that they sought to establish secondary customs houses near their manors. This way, they guaranteed that they would have access to goods more refined than those available in the local markets, and they also increased the attractiveness of the place through which merchants—age-old bearers of news from afar—would pass.²⁵⁰

It is rather amusing to read that the most comfortable route to Riga went through “even stretches of muddy terrain”—one could deduce from this that there were many uneven stretches of mud in the Livonian Voivodeship, and that these were more difficult for travelers to cross. The phrase is explained to some extent by the fact that the passage talks about a winter route, and frozen mud is not an obstacle; on the contrary it is sometimes more passable than damaged roads. In any case, mud and areas of water overflow are inherent features of Livonian realities.²⁵¹

250 Both Gustaw Manteuffel and Leon Broel-Plater clearly emphasize in their respective brochures that Kraslava became an economic, administrative, and cultural center when a customs chamber was established there.

251 One could reach certain towns only in the winter, when the swamps that surrounded them became frozen: “it is worth noting (...) the inaccessible location of some of the villages located in the Maryenhauz forests and bogs. Some of them can at present be reached easily only during the winter when the swamps freeze, others can be reached by traveling on logs placed on poles.” Manteuffel, *Z dziejów starostwa Maryenhauzkiego* [From the History of the Maryenhauz Starosty], 32. In Polish Livonia, a typical landscape associated with gentry hunting scenes stretches along large swamps; see the reminiscences of Leon Manteuffel-Szoega (senior) in the volume *Inflanty, Inflanty...* [Livonia, Livonia...], 107–160. Elsewhere we read: “...a multitude of rivers and streams which flow through the swamplands or which irrigate the meadows, valleys, and plains between mountains, constitute the main features of this country, which is quite

A few lines below the passage just cited, the author of the report again tries to convince his readers that a customs chamber should be established in Małnow, reminding them of the argument about dishonest travelers who try to avoid tariffs. He says nothing about the wide road located along the Daugava, going from Polotsk, through Indrica and Kraslava, to Dyneburg, even though this must have been one of the main trade routes at the time. In a brief sentence, he dismisses this route as a “small” road which goes to the Dyneburg customs chamber, even though the second most important chamber after Dyneburg was established along this road in Kraslava, revitalizing the entire town. The fact that the Szadurski family ruled the small town of Małnow while Kraslava was ruled by the Baltic-German Platers does not provide sufficient grounds for speculations about Polish-German antagonism in this region. But when to this we add that in the middle of the 18th century the Platers and the Karnickis were involved in a legal feud, it becomes clear that the marginalization of Kraslava (which was a large town during this time) in our controller’s report might have had a very specific cause—especially since Karnicki was a member of the Treasury Commission.

The issue of Jews, who—together with Russians—derived illegitimate benefits from trade in the borderland region, also figures twice in the controller’s report; he demands that yet another secondary customs house be established:

7-th. In the very same Ludza Tract, I received reliable information that Jews and Muscovites traveling from Livonia to Moscow bring large quantities of vodka to the Kozodaule estate, which belongs to Siebież [in today’s Belarus], and vice versa, travelers from Moscow to Livonia pass through Kozodaule and buy vodka from the Jews; a secondary customs chamber could therefore be established in Kozodaule to collect tariff on vodka which thus leaves the country.

Evidently, in Polish Livonia there was rivalry between merchants who sought to shorten their way from Russia to Riga by going through Polish territory, and Polish-Lithuanian officials who sought strategic places where customs control could be established.²⁵² The Livonian Tracts must have been attractive, since

interesting in many regards.” Manteuffel, “Inflanty Polskie” [Polish Livonia], 31. Because of the presence of swamps, the region had many peat bog fields for a while.

252 The merchants could take an upper route through Livland and bypass the Polish-Livonian Voivodeship, but this was a roundabout way when traveling from many points in Russia; if one reached the Daugava from Polish Livonia, one could then follow an old, good road all the way to Riga. Besides this, although the former Swedish Livonia belonged to Russia, Livonian Germans—as we saw in the previous chapter—secured all the old privileges for themselves, especially the economic ones, and the very high Hanseatic duties imposed on goods brought from inland areas were among these.

despite the rough terrain trade and transport flourished here to the point that even illegal, “wild” customs collection took place.

There is not much authentic concern for the wellbeing of the area perceptible in all of this; instead there are attempts to derive the greatest possible benefits from the region, so long as it belongs to the Commonwealth. Like Piltene and Courland, successive invaders saw Livonia as an object of desire and exploitation; none of the foreign rulers, however, were interested in the economic development of this territory. When Livonia became an object of international military rivalry, it was a wealthy, excellently-organized, and relatively modern region; the only thing it was missing was an adequate army. Two hundred years later, it was ruined to such an extent that Polish aristocrats had to bring peasants from Lithuania in order to have enough workers on their estates. Many escaped from the area to take offices in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, or even further away in Warsaw. There were no other proposals for the economic revitalization of the region, except for the construction of additional secondary customs houses.

* * *

When a German-Livonian descendant of a knightly family wished to show loyalty to his new fatherland and display respect for its Catholic character, he provided funds for the construction of a church. A Polish-Lithuanian aristocrat did not want to be worse than a “German,” and he gave money for a church as well. The number of church endowments in the Livonian Voivodeship, and later in the Vitebsk Province, suggests that this rivalry lasted for quite a long time, and the stakes increased ever more. In an appendix to *Inflanty Polskie* [Polish Livonia] Manteuffel shows that between the beginning of the 17th century and the middle of the 19th century, 82 churches and 33 Roman Catholic chapels were built in this region! For comparison, there were only 3 Protestant churches and 13 Orthodox ones; most of them were built in the 19th century, and were either transformed Uniate churches, or else they were built to meet the needs of the new arrivals (primarily Russian military garrisons). On average, two churches were sponsored by each Livonian family, but if we are to believe the report of our historian, certain families took the lead: the Borch family funded 8 churches, the Hylzens funded 6, the Szadurskis 5, the Ryks 4, and the Zyberks 4. Old knightly families were thus in the lead, and the largest church endowment was created by Ewa Szostowicka from the Borch family, who offered the enormous Wyżkowo (later Aglona) estate for the construction of a Dominican church and monastery, in 1700. Despite a fire which broke out several dozen

years after the church was built, this religious site received enough support to survive as the center of Catholic worship in Latvia until today.²⁵³

Thanks to Manteuffel's archivist inclinations, fragmentary information about the erection of the church in Ludza in 1686 has been preserved, along with the author's formulations of several of the most important goals of this type of activity.²⁵⁴

Ponieważ komisja z Grodzieńskiego Sejmu naznaczona *sub titulo: Approbatio* kościołów Inflanckich zda się być *partibus gravaminosa*, jako Urodzeni Posłowie Ziemszy Księstwa Inflanckiego *deduxerunt*. Chcąc tedy *Religionem Romanam Catholicam, quam florentissimam*, mieć w tej Ziemi, powagą Sejmu terażniejszego *ad instantiam* Urodzonych Posłów Ziemi tamecznej naznaczamy *ex praesentibus* do nowej Komisji Wielmożnych, Urodzonych Komisarzów wyżej mianowanych, którzy zjechawszy się do Inflant, *non obstante unius alteriusve absentia*, zniósłszy się z Starostami tamecznemi, *omni melioro modo* Kościoły postawią w tych Starostwach, gdzie *ad praesens* kościoła nie masz, *Sanctuaria* wydzielią i prowent *pro sustentatione victus et amictus* Kapłanom obmyślą.

[Since the Grodno *Sejm* commission designated *sub titulo: Approbatio* of the Livonian churches seems to be *partibus gravaminosa*, as Native Landed Deputies of the Livonian Duchy, *deduxerunt*. Since they wish to see *Religionem Romanam Catholicam, quam florentissimam* in this Land, by the authority of the present *Sejm*, *ad instantiam* of the Native Deputies of that Land, we designate *ex praesentibus* the *Esteemed*, Native Commissioners who were mentioned above, and who, having come to Livonia *non obstante unius alteriusve absentia*, after reaching agreement with the local Starosts, will, *omni melioro modo*, erect Churches in those Starosties which so far did not have churches, they will designate *Sanctuaria*, and plan *pro sustentatione victus et amictus* for the Priests.]

253 The location of Aglona suggests the missionary character of the center, which was built in a rather depopulated area. The founders were conscious of their aim: "Mindful that the local Latvian folk, inclined toward pagan customs, were not strongly rooted in the faith on account of a lack of priests, and kept being pulled in by sects which ceaselessly formed here and there, they [the Szostowicki family] decided, as they beautifully put it in their endowment, 'to return some of the riches, given by God, for His glory and for the spiritual use of the Polish-Livonian people.'" Manteuffel, "Inflanty Polskie" [Polish Livonia], 95. A fuller picture of the foundation-related euphoria can be found in Manteuffel's brochure *Z dziejów Kościoła w Inflantach i Kurlandyi* [From the History of the Church in Livonia and Courland], where, on page 19, the enthusiastic author represents the Catholic faith as something which "seemed to be described here anew," and summarized: "Polish Livonia became populated and bright lights appeared..." This book largely uses the *Historia kolegium dyneburskiego* [History of the Dyneburg Collegium] from the manuscript holdings of the Jesuit archive of the Galicia province in Krakow.

254 Manteuffel, *Lucyn w Inflantach* [Ludza in Livonia], 21ff.

From this document we first learn that the *sejm* in Grodno appointed a special commission to deal with Livonian churches; we then find out that this commission did not carry out its tasks particularly well, and another commission, a royal one this time, was appointed to establish churches where previously there had not been any. Local (“native”) representatives were chosen as members of the commission, and their first responsibility was to consult Livonian starosts about this matter. The formulae used in the document suggest that the representatives are acting in the name of the king (John III Sobieski), but the declaration of the intention to propagate the Catholic faith in Polish Livonia was clearly their own as well. Not only did the missionary program in this region not end with the coming of the Reformation (but rather at the end of the 17th century, once spheres of influence were firmly established), it also gained in strength, and it was directed primarily against pagans as well as Protestant and Orthodox heretics. In Ludza, the starosty seat, a Catholic church was to replace a Lutheran one:

...zniósłszy się tedy ze wszystkimi Obywatelami Traktu Lucyńskiego a osobliwie Imć Panem Pawłem z Brazczyzni Zakotyńskim Podstarościem Lucyńskim (...), aby Chwała Boża w tamtym kraju jako największe brała *incrementum*, na wieczne czasy *ex mente* Jego Królewskiej Mości Jana IIIgo i całej Rzeczypospolitej *secundum tenorem* Konstytucji wyżej allegowanej fundujemy i stanowimy:

aby Jaśnie Wielmożny JMPan wojewoda Krakowski z włością Starostwa Lucyńskiego zaraz da Bóg na Wiosnę w Roku Tysiąc Sześćset Ośmdziesiąt Siodmym, Kościół wystawił i wybudował ze wszystkim co do chwały Bożej należy, to jest z Ołtarzami, aparatami, kielichami, Chorągwiemi, takóž i Plebanią z mieszkaniem wygodnym dla Księży, Bakałarza, Organisty i kantorów, oraz szkołę, szpital na tej górze na której Zamek stoi, gdzie *quondam* Kościół Luterski był i Krzyże są staroświeckie kamienne na mogiłach;

[...having thus agreed with all the Citizens of the Ludza Tract, and especially with the Ludza under-Starost, the Honorable Sir Paweł Zakotyński from Brazczyznia (...) so that God’s glory would take as much *incrementum* as possible in that land, for all time, *ex mente* his Royal Highness Jan III and the entire Commonwealth, *secundum tenorem* with the Constitution of the above-cited statute, we establish:

that the Most Honorable Sir, the Krakow Voivode with the estates of the Ludza Starosty, as soon as God wills it, in the Spring of the Year One Thousand Six Hundred Eighty Seven would build a church with all that belongs to God’s glory, that is, with altars, altar objects, chalices, banners, as well as a presbytery and comfortable apartments for the Priests, the Teacher, Organist and cantors, and a school, a hospital on the same hill where the Castle stands, where *quondam* there was a Lutheran Church and where there are old-fashioned stone crosses on the graves;]

And in the villages it was to push out remainders of the “Greek schism”:

Po skończeniu tego Kościoła przy Zamku Lucynskim tenże Wojewoda Krakowski Starosta Lucynski *ex pietate et zelo in promovenda Sancta Religione Catholica Romana* wystawi drugi Kościół *cum omnibus necessariis* w slobodzie nazwanej Sładziowo, która do tegoż należy Starostwa, a o mil 10 *distat* od Zamku Lucynskiego dla pozyskania Dusz Krwią Chrystusową odkupionych na tym miejscu *in schismate graeco* jeszcze zostających. My Komisarze JKMci i całej Rzplitej *praevia haec facta* od dawnej funduszach *Inquisitione* na pomienione Kościoły i Plebanią grunt pewny od Zamku Lucynskiego nad Jeziozem Lucynskim nazwanym wydzielamy podług ograniczenia *ut sequitur*.

[After this Church by the Ludza Castle is completed, the same Krakow Voivode, and Ludza Starost *ex pietate et zelo in promovenda Sancta Religione Catholica Romana* will build a second Church *cum omnibus necessariis*, in the village named Sładziowo, which belongs to this Starosty, and which is 10 miles *distat* from the Ludza Castle, in order to win Souls redeemed by Christ’s Blood in this place, which still remain *in schismate Graeco*. We, the Commissioners of His Royal Highness and the entire Commonwealth modify the *praevia haec facta* foundation, which was based on a pervious *Inquisitione* and which mentions the Churches and Presbytery, and we designate solid ground from the Ludza castle on the Ludza Lake, in accordance with the limitation *ut sequitur*.]

The goal of the entire operation, undertaken for the glory of the Church (*Sancta Religione Catholica Romana*), is emphasized several times, and the conversion of the inhabitants takes place mainly at their cost, since—as is clear from the endowment resolutions—the aristocracy got rid of some of the land, while peasants and burghers were subjected to additional economic burdens. Other fragments say that the high commission asked about a former church endowment, which existed in this place as early as the 16th century, but both the local gentry and the serfs agreed in unison that they did not know anything about such a foundation. In the case of peasants and burghers, the explanation of this lack of knowledge can be simple: they cannot remember it because they arrived from elsewhere—the former inhabitants of the region were “slaughtered by Muscovy,” as one of the military auditors vividly put it in 1599.²⁵⁵ Similarly, local gentry might not have known anything, since they, too, arrived later, following the king’s decrees. Actually, on the basis of castle inspection

255 “In this audit done by master Skumin [from 1583—K.Z.] one can find that the parson had a small Farm by the castle, which had enough land to grow 40 barrels of wheat, but no one could report where it was located, since there were no old Subjects who would have been born there, all were slaughtered by Muscovy, and the current ones are recently arrived.” Gustaw Manteuffel, *Lucyn w Inflantach* [Ludza in Livonia] (Krakow: Anczyc i Spółka, 1884), 20. The more extensive fragment informs that presently, in 1599, the church is in Protestant hands.

protocols from 1583 and 1599,²⁵⁶ which Manteuffel cites in his book, one can be certain that in the 16th century a wooden church indeed stood on the castle hill—which would make sense in light of the fact that the Teutonic-Livonian knights' order was a monastic one. No one was able, or willing, to remember this later. The medieval presence of the Church in the Ludza district left practically no marks on the mentality of the local population.

Members of the royal commission and local aristocrats had to “stand each other” as they worked on the specifics of the endowment.²⁵⁷ One can understand that they came to an agreement, which was, however, preceded by intense arguments about the necessity of establishing (re-establishing?) the Ludza Parish. The parish was built in the location of a demolished Lutheran church which, in turn, had been erected on the site of a former Roman Catholic church. Old gravestones with stone crosses that surround the church point to the Roman Catholic tradition. Both buildings were destroyed by invasions from Moscow. Russian influence was not, however, limited to military aspects—the rural population which lived in the countryside around Ludza was still *in schismate graeco* at the end of the 17th century—a hundred and twenty years after the Tract was taken over by the Commonwealth. We should therefore suppose that it was mostly peasants arriving from Belarus that brought Orthodoxy with them.

The re-Catholicization program had sound economic foundations: the endowment statute precisely delineated the sums which were to be devoted to the maintenance of the church and the parish, and the amount of peasant tributes and tithes. The castle hill in Ludza rises between two lakes; the strips of land around the lakes which were given to the parish are among the most fertile. One detail in the construction statute attracts attention: besides the church and living quarters for its staff, a school and a hospital were to be built as well; the church was thus becoming a public center, converting not only through faith but also through work in the community. Surrounded by rather numerous servants (a vicar, a teacher, an organist, and cantors), the parish priest was to remain in the parish all the time and devote himself to missionary work:

Vigore której fundacji powinien będzie Ksiądz Pleban przy Kościele Lucyńskim zawsze być obecnym, i chować Vikariego w Słobodzie, także Organistę i Bakalarza i Kantora mieć i onych z tej Fundacji prowidować. W Słobodzie zaś aby mieszczanie tameczni *in schismate* zostający *ad unionem Sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae* przychodzili, ma *sedulam applicare curam doctrinae Christianae et*

256 Manteuffel, *Lucyn w Inflantach* [Ludza in Livonia], 20.

257 In this context, this phrase could mean understanding, coming to an agreement. In the old Polish language spoken by the gentry, “to stand each other” meant to consult, to come to an agreement about something, see Samuel B. Linde, *Słownik języka polskiego* [The Dictionary of the Polish Language], vol. 6 (Lviv, 1860), 1124.

exercitio Cathesistico i kazaniami jako i w Lucynie *ut populis rudis in cultu Divino erudiatur, tempore zaś hyemali*, gdy droga wczesna, powinien na włość jechać, wizytować Poddanych, pacierza uczyć, Mszą Świętą co tydzień za Króla Jmci Pana Naszego Miłościwego szczęśliwie Panującego odprawować *temporis perpetuis* ma, tudzież drugą za Starostów Lucyńskich, a trzecią *pro Benefactoribus*.

[*Vigore* this foundation the Parish Priest should always be present at the Ludza Church, and keep the Vicar in the Słoboda, he should have an Organist, a Teacher, and a Cantor and provide for them from this Foundation. And in Słoboda, so that the local inhabitants ho remain *in schismate* would come *ad unionem Sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae*, he is to *sedulam applicare curam doctrinae Christianae et exercitio Cathesistico* and with his sermons, as in Ludza *ut populis rudis in cultu Divino erudiatur*, while *tempore hyemali*, when the road is early, his should go to the estates, visit his Subjects, teach them prayer, *temporis perpetuis* say weekly Mass for His Royal Highness, Who is Compassionate and whose Reign is Happy, and a second one for the Ludza Starosts, and a third *pro Benefactoribus*.]

The order that the priest should always be present in the parish suggests that church foundations like this one were commonly plagued by the priests' laziness ("gdy droga wczesna"), or even desertion, since they used any occasion they could to leave this easternmost spiritual post.²⁵⁸ For the third time, the justification appears as *Sancta Romana Ecclesia*; authors of the endowment documents were driven by a sense of mission, but they were also clearly aware that a real religious war was underway here.

If we take the data cited by Manteuffel as a point of departure, before the middle of the 18th century there were 19 churches in Polish Livonia (of which only 8 had secure endowments), while by the end of the century there were 59 parishes, 9 branches, and 43 chapels;²⁵⁹ this should give some sense of the speed of the Catholicization of this region (let us recall that the historian lists 82 churches in 1879, which means that the partitions did not stop the process). The delineation of the rules concerning the support and financing of parishes (outlined in a separate ordinance) favored the strengthening of the influence of the Catholic Church, but it is easy to see that the local peasant population bore the costs of the Church's activities. Perhaps this is the source of a certain dualism, which can be seen in ethnographic and parish documents that concern religion. In these documents, East-Livonian Latvians differ from their fellow Latvians from other regions by their relatively intense Catholicism, but at the same time they are ceaselessly accused of surreptitious paganism or hidden Orthodox heresy. Remarks about the secretiveness, mysteriousness, or

258 Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 162.

259 Manteuffel, *Lucyn w Inflantach*, [Ludza in Livonia], 26–27.

sometimes even outright duplicity of the local population, whose orthodox observance of Catholicism was always in question, appear and reappear in numerous 19th-century sociological observations. Such arguments provided good justification for the necessity of further Catholicization; they also revealed, however, that the true spirituality of a Latgallian was inscrutable for the local citizens. One could hear echoes of medieval colonization here, echoes which were still resonating in the souls of the knights' descendants, but the serious problem of otherness was also articulated here. In Polish Livonia, Latvian or Belarusian peasants accepted Catholicism with all the benefits and economic burdens that came with it, and they dutifully fulfilled their responsibilities to their master and to their parish. They were nonetheless viewed as foreign and unpredictable.

9. Insurrections: Catholic (Meaning Polish?)

Polish Livonia was separated from the Commonwealth in the First Partition of 1772, and in the final years of the Sarmatian republic the Livonian gentry became clearly divided, much like the gentry in other regions of the country. Józef, the penultimate descendant of the Hylzen family, and author of the will which freed his serfs, was the leader of the Lithuanian Tribunal. He ignored the 1767 Radom Confederation, and continued to convene the Tribunal, provoking a harsh reaction from the Russian representative Nicholas Repnin.²⁶⁰ Michał Plater, founder of the Plater-Zyberk family line, was an officer in the Kościuszko Uprising, and for a time he was even an aide to Tadeusz Kościuszko himself; his brother, Ludwik August, also took part in the insurrection, while their father, Kazimierz Konstanty Plater, was a signatory of the Targowica Confederation. Stanisław Sołtan was a member of the commission which prepared the May 3rd Constitution; he also helped organize the Kościuszko Uprising in Lithuania and Livonia, for which he paid by imprisonment in a Russian jail. Konstancja Beniśławska wrote religious poems, which were essentially Polish-Catholic in their character, while Konstanty Beniśławski, her namesake and brother-in-law, became famous for a servile paean in honor of Catherine the Great, with the peculiar title *Pienia całodzienne i całonocne na przybycie do krajów swych białorusyjskich najjaśniejszej Imperatorowej Katarzyny II, cesarzowej, stworzycielki, prawodawczyni i matki całej Rosji, od poddaństwa prowincji dźwińskiej wierszem królewskim złożone* (Wilno, 1780)

260 Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 191. As is well known, the Radom Confederation was formed under Russian influence and eventually made Poland a Russian protectorate.

[Daylong and Nightlong Songs, written on the occasion of the arrival of the most high Empress Catherine II—empress, creator, lawgiver, and mother of all Russia—in her Belarusian countries, written in verse by her subjects of the Daugava Province (Vilnius, 1780).] Above all, however, the end of the Commonwealth meant that the privileges of the Livonian gentry—previously protected with unusual care—were now threatened; the intensifying Russification thus brought about the strengthening of the Polish-Livonian identity.

During the partitions period, moreover, Polish-Latvian social and religious relations gained new meanings, or they were rather fundamentally restructured. In the 19th century, when the concept of the nation was redefined according to new ethnic, linguistic, and religious criteria, the category of “Polishness” included not only local aristocracy and gentry who arrived later from other regions, but it also began to apply to the growing multitude of East-Latvian peasants who were escaping Russification by turning to the Catholic Church and local magnates. We should remember that the peasant community in this region included not only Latvians, but also Latvianized Belarussian, Russian, and Lithuanian peasants who arrived here in search of a better life; there were also Polish peasants who were brought to the region by the masters who took over new estates. The identity lineage of today’s Latgallians thus includes all these elements, and national identification in independent Latvia meanders among Latvian, Belarussian, and Polish elements.

Patriotic declarations of Polish-Livonian gentry were put to the test during the Polish national uprisings of 1830 and 1863. In both cases, the result can be considered positive, since in both cases there were Livonians who took part in the uprisings and their martyrological dramas. It is interesting that a contribution to the November Uprising, which was neither particularly effective nor particularly clear, became immortalized in Polish culture thanks to Emilia Plater, while the more common and tragic participation of the Livonians in the January Uprising passed by without echoes, and became lost somewhere in the shadows of the historical selection of facts.

The figure of Emilia Plater has come to be surrounded by a series of romantic and classical allegories. She was made to personify freedom and beauty, wartime courage, sacrifice for the fatherland, equality, and women’s rights; she was compared to Athena, Joan of Arc, and the Greek fighter Bouboulina.²⁶¹ Emphasis was placed on her Catholic and patriotic upbringing,

261 See Norman Davies, *Europe: A History* (London: Pimlico, 1997), 732. A brief and informative survey of the literary transformations of Emilia Plater’s legend into allegories can be found in Marta Ruszczyńska’s paper “Emilia Plater: przemiany mitu w

on her subtle education, especially in the humanities, on her extensive knowledge of fashionable romantic literature, and on her predilection for Mickiewicz's works. In this fashioning of one of the most important Polish national myths, the standard myth-making tools of Polish literature were put to use, and today no one is able to distinguish reality from literary fiction. In this national process of putting Plater on the pedestal, however, her Livonian lineage was omitted. Polish Livonia does not exist in this all-too-Polish exalted biography, as if this theme were unsuitable for detailed exposition; and so, on account of her insurrectionary actions and the place of her burial, the Polish Joan of Arc became—a Lithuanian.²⁶²

This is perhaps not especially important, but here we are interested in the formation of a specifically Livonian identity, and in Livonia attachment to Polishness had unique qualities, it was certainly neither obvious nor natural. Emilia Plater was brought up in the Plater-Zyberk manor house in Likсна, and her uncle Michał, the aforementioned participant of the Kościuszko Uprising, was her caretaker. He married Izabela Helena, the last representative of the Zyberk (de Sieberg zu Wischling) family. Her father, Jan Tadeusz Zyberk, agreed to the marriage on the condition that his son-in-law would renounce his claims to the possessions of the Platers, and accept the Zyberk family's coat of arms and name along with their possessions. It was allegedly a traditionally Catholic family and it bought Likсна in the middle of the 18th century from the Ludyngshauz-Wolff family; it was therefore only from then on that one can speak about "good priests," who "provided constant leadership to the Polish-Livonian people."²⁶³ In the original prenuptial agreement, however, Count Zyberk made a clear provision that if the male line of the family, which was

literaturze XIX i XX wieku" [Emilia Plater: Transformations of the Myth in the 19th and 20th Centuries] (presented at the conference *Polsko-bałtyckie związki kulturowe* [Polish-Baltic Cultural Connections], Daugavpils, October 2006). The author also describes attempts to deconstruct the myth of the virgin colonel; the most spectacular of these belongs to Józef Bachórz, who stripped Plater of her officer title, denied that she had any spectacular successes on the battlefields of the uprising, accused her of being physically unprepared, and also scrupulously cited all the advice from fellow fighters—and, above all, from General Chłapowski—who sought to dissuade her from military service. See Bachórz, "O Emilii Plater i 'Śmierci Pułkownika': narodziny i dzieje legendy" [Emilia Plater and "Death of a Colonel": The Birth and History of a Legend," 7–60.

262 Even Bachórz's demystifying book concerns Lithuania, and that is the territory which has been ascribed to Plater. This cultural-spatial mystification has not been deconstructed.

263 Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 199.

being preserved by the arrangement, were to die out, the family's estate was to become the property of the German branch of the family, and not of the Polish Platers. He thus showed that his overriding solidarity was with the family, and that it reached beyond national and confessional divisions. The atmosphere in the Liksna manor (which is said to have had an extensive library)²⁶⁴ favored the development of young Emilia Plater's patriotic feelings, but it might just as well have favored pro-German sympathies, as she grew up under the eye of an uncle who was one of the founders of the *Curländische Wissenschaftsgesellschaft für Literatur und Kunst* [Courlandish Scholarly Society for Literature and the Arts], and who had a rather bookish temperament.²⁶⁵ The influence of Mickiewicz, acknowledged by Emilia's biographers, was probably of no small importance in her decision, but this does not change the fact that when she went to join the November Uprising, the young Duchess made a rather extravagant choice. Polish patriotism was new, ideologically attractive, and concordant with the literary fashion of the era (Byron's Greece). The knightly past of the family and Emilia's riding and fencing abilities could be tested in actual battle, and the exciting notion of national patriotism imbued the whole undertaking with nobility.²⁶⁶

In addition to Emilia Plater, several other representatives of Livonian aristocracy took part in the November Uprising—e.g., Cezary and Władysław Plater, Kazimierz Plater-Zyberk, Jan Weyssenhoff, and Adam Sołtan. On the whole, however, the uprising had only weak resonances in the region, and no crucially important military actions took place there.²⁶⁷ Although the insurrectionaries attempted to invade Latvian territories from Lithuania, they only reached Jeziorosy (Lithuanian: Zarasai) and Żagory (Lithuanian: Žagarė), both located on the border with Semigallia. Eriks Jekabsons mentions small

264 Ibid.

265 Kazimierz Bujnicki saw him as a Germanophile: "the only thing of which I would accuse him was a certain predilection for Germans. Of all the Platers he was the one who claimed most emphatically that he believed his family to be descended from German ancestors." Bujnicki, *Pamiętniki (1795–1875)* [Memoirs (1795–1875)], 153.

266 Emilia Plater's biographer points to the unquestionable influence of Mickiewicz and Słowacki, whom the young countess's cousins knew personally; she also points out, however, that Plater read German authors such as Goethe, Herder, and Schiller; Ciepieńko-Zielińska, *Emilia Plater*, 68.

267 Repressions took place, however, in the aftermath of the uprising; among these one should certainly include the expulsion of Stanisław Sołtan from his family estate in Zdzięcioł in retribution for his son's participation in the uprising. Sołtan, a veteran of the Napoleonic Wars and Marshal of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, died, soon after, in 1836. Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 204.

groups of insurrectionaries who made it into Courland in August 1831 and attacked... a Lutheran pastor and Jewish merchants.²⁶⁸ The November Uprising in these lands did not register in history by means of any spectacular events, and no separate military formation was established here. Kazimierz Bujnicki gives a very concrete reason why the uprising in Polish Livonia did not take a different course:

In our Livonia, despite secret temptations experienced by a significant number of the citizens, a certain sense of calm prevailed, which resulted from the agility of Marcin Karnicki, the Marshal of Nobility for the province. General Governor Chowański found himself in great trouble when he received reports from the county police, informing him about a turn of attitudes against the government. (...). When Karnicki, who enjoyed the governor's trust and favor, was notified about this, he advised the governor to call eminent citizens from three Livonian counties to Vitebsk and keep them there, and provided a list of names. And since he knew whom the prince viewed as most suspect, in his list he included those who had the same last names, but who were either decrepit old men or youths with very limited mental powers.²⁶⁹

The argument is not very logical, since the description of the situation suggests that potential insurrectionaries remained in Polish Livonia and could have organized an uprising there. In a conversation with the General Governor, Bujnicki himself sought to convince him that Livonians had no reasons for undertaking insurrectionary action, and no interests that would drive them to it; he thus sought to appear as a cunning player, but in fact he probably expressed the general attitude of the Polish-Livonian gentry. Very few mentions of the November Uprising have been preserved in memoirs, and loyalty toward the Commonwealth often meant nothing more than a sense of empathy.²⁷⁰

268 Jēkabsons, “Stosunki polsko-łotewskie na przestrzeni dziejów” [Polish-Latvian Relations throughout History], 31. The Latvian historian also mentions the unrest which the November Uprising caused among local peasants, a few of whom were even arrested. Another conflict arose later when Courlandish peasants refused to help transport the insurrectionaries to Siberia.

269 Bujnicki, *Pamiętniki (1795–1875)* [Memoirs (1795–1875)], 201–202.

270 “The extent to which the uprising of 1830 affected life in Kraslava is unknown to me. (...) One day it happened that a small group of insurrectionaries was led through there on their way to Siberia. They stopped in front of the monastery for a brief rest. It was time for my children's second breakfast which consisted of hot groats. Our children never saw the groats that day—the insurrectionaries ate them”; a passage from the memoir of Ludwika Plater, which has not been preserved, cited by her nephew L. Broel-Plater in *Kraslava...*, 28. The limited activity of Livonians in the November Uprising is also criticized by Juliusz, the protagonist of *Dramat bez nazwy* [Drama Without a Name] written by Ludwika H. Plater; as a proponent of active participation in the

The January Uprising was much more widespread in Polish Livonia, and it had a much more dramatic course. Although historical and literary documents from this time cannot be compared to Mickiewicz's *Śmierć pułkownika* [The Colonel's Death], they are striking in their realistic sharpness of detail. I am referring especially to the appendix from Kazimierz Bujnicki's *Pamiętniki* [Memoirs], which is devoted to peasant rebellions, in which Polish aristocrats were often hunted down. The seventy-five-year-old writer nearly lost his life, he lost his family estate in Dagda, and his ordeal was not an isolated case, since he situates himself among thirty Livonian citizens—victims of that “terrible catastrophe.”²⁷¹ Without much difficulty, tsarist propaganda was able to transform the national issue into a social and economic conflict, in which the loosely-defined “masters” were the object of attack:

On the second day (April 15) the same atrocities began in other parts of the county. About thirty gentry manors were completely plundered and as many habitations were turned to ruin, among them there were also those belonging to the Germans, which seems to be sufficient proof that the peasants were driven to these crimes by hatred for their former masters, by greed for illegitimate gain, and by demoralization which transformed them into animals, and not by the honest desire to help government authorities in their actions against the Polish insurrection.²⁷²

By “Germans” Bujnicki probably means Protestant landowners, or those among the old Livonian gentry and aristocracy who did not convert to Catholicism and who still used German, or perhaps he is referring to members of the recently-arrived gentry. The aggression of peasants intensified to the point where tsarist authorities, who had incited the conflict themselves, were forced to use armed units to protect Polish-Livonian landowners, merchants, and even priests, since they were also becoming objects of attacks. As he analyzes these events from the point of view of social antagonisms, Bujnicki emphasizes that their participants included not only Russian Old Believers, but also Catholic Latvians. He makes an observation which is interesting for a landlord and a declared conservative:

fighting, Juliusz justifies his choice to join the Uprising in 1863 with the words: “Everywhere in Poland, from east to west and from north to south, our blood is being spilled. Can we remain behind? It is enough that thirty years ago we sat here quietly... today this stain has to be washed off!” Ludwika Hipolita Plater, *Dramat bez nazwy: obraz sceniczny w pięciu aktach, na tle wypadków roku 1863* [Drama Without a Name: A Stage Portrait in Five Acts, with the Events of 1863 in the Background] (Krakow: Księgarnia Katolicka Wł. Miłkowskiego, 1893), 19.

271 Bujnicki, *Pamiętniki (1795–1875)* [Memoirs (1795–1875)], 122.

272 *Ibid.*, 126.

It seemed to be a curious matter that on the estates of local citizens where the work of the serfs was light and the discipline was gentle, hatred toward landlords began to manifest from the very moment the emancipation of the countryside population was declared. This hatred seemed to be waiting for an opportunity to transform itself into action, and the Polish uprising unluckily opened the gates for it. In Belarus, signs of such passion were unusually infrequent among the serfs (...). There, the peasants, both male and female souls, had to perform *pryhon* [work for the landowner] as part of their duties to their masters, which caused excessive amounts of labor that had to be done for the manor, and the serfs were oppressed. (...). Here in Livonia, the peasant met the obligation to work for the landlord by working on his own land, in proportion to its size. (...) And thus when the emancipation of both Livonian and Belarusian peasants was enacted (...) the laws decreased the duties of Belarusian serfs so much that they felt happy (...). It was the opposite here; emancipation did not lessen the peasants' obligations (...) and so, not experiencing any material gains for the time being, the peasant wanted to ease his burdens against the law, not understanding how else personal freedom could be useful to him. He did not believe, or rather he did not want to believe, what the statute said about his obligations, and even though he was comfortable, he desired something better, he dreamt of gaining rights to the land without paying for it, he made claims to the landlord's property, and, incited by itinerant propagators of communist ideas, he began to hate the landlords.²⁷³

The most spectacular military action of the January Uprising in Livonia, that is, the capture of a transport of rifles by the insurrectionaries in the Baltyn Forest in April of 1863, caused vicious attacks against the Poles. The unit was led by the young Zygmunt Bujnicki, Kazimierz's son, who was later able to escape abroad, while Leon Plater, one of the action's participants, was captured as a result of a peasant attack. Not yet aware that his commander had fled, and hoping to protect him, Leon admitted to being the unit's commander during his first interrogation, and he was sentenced to death. The family wrote petitions asking for his pardon and used all the connections at their disposal to make his sentence less severe; even Zygmunt Bujnicki himself wrote a letter from abroad, explaining the situation and admitting his own guilt. Unfortunately, all this was to no avail and the sentence was carried out on June 8, 1863 (May 28 in the Julian calendar). Plater's body was probably buried on the grounds of the Dyneburg fortress, where in the interwar years a plaque commemorating the event was placed.²⁷⁴

273 Ibid., 135–136.

274 Besides Ludwika Plater's already mentioned *Dramat bez nazwy* [Drama Without a Name], literary works which describe this event include, among others: a text by Leon's brother Eugeniusz Broel Plater: "Wspomnienie z 1863 roku" [Reminiscences from 1863], in *Z okolic Dźwiny: księga zbiorowa na dochód czytelnicy polskiej w Witebsku* [From the Daugava Region: A Collective Work for the Benefit of the Polish Reading Room in

The tragic nature of this insurrectionary episode also conceals another truth, one which is much less readily commented upon, namely, the fact that the traditional bond between the manor and the village—a bond which had heretofore organized social, economic, and religious life—was all but gone. The insurrectionaries were captured because of the action carried out by local peasants who eagerly participated in the attack. The expression “Catholic-Pole” which had been used with such conviction by everyone in Livonia, was now undermined; it was shaken by the obvious fact that Catholic peasants were most eager to hunt down the Polish landlords. Attacks against the aristocracy seemed to unify diverse religious, political, and national groups, since the first songs of nationalist movements began to appear in Baltic countries during this time. Polish manors—along with the idea of a return to Sarmatian statehood—seemed foreign and anachronistic. From the point of view of the Latvians, as well as the Germans and the Russians, the January Uprising in Livonia did not fit into the program of creating a modern Europe comprised of nation states.²⁷⁵ This fact is interesting insofar as the formerly accepted ethno-religious identification category of the “Catholic-Pole” nonetheless continued to function in Baltic stereotypes until the middle of the 20th century.

This stereotype is clearly perceptible in the repressions that came after the insurrection, when the use of the Polish language was forbidden, and when the Catholic mass was also banned in churches; a religious criterion was used in anti-Polish decrees, in accordance with the idea that in the depth of his soul, every Catholic is an enemy of the Russian state. Paradoxically, this brutal Russification quickly destroyed disagreements between Poles and Latvian-Catholics, who—following the principle of solidarity in suffering—came together in their attempts to defend themselves. Among the Latgallians, Polishness even seemed to be fashionable in a certain sense:

Polish patriotism was becoming increasingly popular among the emerging Latgallian intelligentsia, and humble peasants were eagerly sending their children to

Vitebsk] (Vilnius; Witebsk: Towarzystwo Dobroczyńności w Witebsku, 1912), 102–107; Bujnicki, *Pamiętniki (1795–1875)* [Memoirs (1795–1875)], 138–139; and “List Ludwika Platerówny z dnia 28 maja 1863” [Ludwika Plater’s letter from May 28th, 1863], reprinted on the Plater family internet page: www.platerak.republika.pl/konarski. Robert Daniłowicz has written about this topic recently in “Odwieczne przewiny Platerów” [The Immemorial Misdeeds of the Platers], *Rzeczpospolita*, August 18, 2007.

275 Although E. Jēkabsons argues against the idea that in the 19th century one could speak about national relations between Poles and Latvians (Jēkabsons, “Stosunki polsko–łotewskie na przestrzeni dziejów” [Polish–Latvian relations throughout History], 26), during the January Uprising, Polish peasants (brought from central Poland) showed greater loyalty, which would suggest that divisions were not simply social.

(...) half-legal Polish schools. A general “hunt” for everything Polish made Poles into heroes of sorts in the eyes of the peasants and the intelligentsia, surrounding them with an aura of martyrdom. The popularity of the Catholic Church was on the rise. By prohibiting the construction (...) or even the restoration of roadside crosses, as well as the building and renovation of Catholic churches, Russian administration contributed to a situation in which Latvian peasants were renovating church roofs and constructing roadside crosses by night. The popularity of Catholic priests increased as never before. Priests who were arrested and sent into exile were sent off by large crowds, like heroes.²⁷⁶

On the other hand, interest in the Latgallian inhabitants of the region was growing among the Poles, a phenomenon emphatically attested to by Gustaw Manteuffel’s early writings, which were largely devoted to Latgallian folklore.²⁷⁷ The activities of the Poles in the final decades of the 19th century suggest that they were searching for their place in a community which was appearing to be increasingly foreign. Russification-related repressions—which took place, by the way, throughout most of the borderlands—caused gradual disintegration of the gentry, migration of many of them to the cities or other parts of the country, and mass divestment of landed estates as a result of forced sales or confiscation; together with the prohibition against the use of the Polish language, all this caused Polishness to die out in Livonia. A symptomatic cultural displacement took place: the former leading cultural role of Polish manors was replaced by the activity of the Polish minority in large cities, especially in Riga, even though Riga was located outside Polish Livonia.²⁷⁸ The gentry who were driven out from the Polish-Livonian countryside by administrative repressions went to the capital of Livonia, where something like a Polish colony was created.²⁷⁹

276 *Ibid.*, 26–27.

277 The first books published by Manteuffel (even before the January Uprising!) were calendars, religious songbooks, and educational brochures written in the Latgallian dialect.

278 For more about this topic see Kolbuszewski, “Kultura polska na Łotwie” [Polish Culture in Latvia], 58; and Romanowski, *Pozytywizm na Litwie* [Positivism in Lithuania], 336 and 342.

279 The term “colony” was used to describe the Polish minority in Riga at the turn of the 20th century by Czesław Jankowski in his memoirs; see Czesław Jankowski, *Z czeczotkowej szkatulki: odgłosy ginącego świata* [From the Siskin Box: Echoes of a Disappearing World] (Vilnius: M. Latour, 1926), 43.

10. Riga and Dorpat: Change of Status

Poles in Riga followed the positive (positivist) example of the Baltic Germans and organized societies, clubs, cultural organizations and informal social circles. Andrzej Romanowski has provided exhaustive factual documentation of these in his *Pozytywizm na Litwie* [Positivism in Lithuania],²⁸⁰ so let us only add that this entire socio-cultural movement was an attempt to give a new status to Polish Livonians; and, like Baltic Germans, Poles sought to culturally mark their distinctiveness, while at the same time confronting the Russian tsarist government as a well-established community of local autochthons. Polish education was developing in Riga, as was Polish theater, which became professionalized in 1893; two student associations were founded—“Arkonia” (1879) and “Welecja”—and they brought together the large majority of the many Polish students in the city.²⁸¹ The Roman-Catholic Charitable Society (established in 1878)—whose eminent activist, Władysław Lichtarowicz (1863–1932), was one of Riga’s leading intellectual figures—focused primarily on promoting education among the poor and running orphanages and parochial schools. Finally, the Rigan Singing Society “Ausra,” founded in 1881, devoted itself primarily to cultural, social, and club activities; among its most frequent social activities—besides artistic performances and charitable balls—were... polyphonic singing practice sessions.²⁸²

Although the activity of the Polish groups was much less extensive than that of the Baltic Germans (and given the size and the intellectual potential of the Polish community, it was disproportionately small), these groups nonetheless managed to create a separate Polish identity and to mark their presence in the multicultural melting pot that Riga was at the turn of the 20th century. The effects of the Revolution of 1905 became evident when, on the basis of legal changes, not only Germans and Latvians, but also Poles received the right to

280 Romanowski, *Pozytywizm na Litwie* [Positivism in Lithuania], chap. “*Poza kresami: w niemieckiej Rydze*” [Beyond the Borderlands: In German Riga], 342–362.

281 Student corporations in Riga are the subject of Arkadiusz Janicki’s book *Studenci polscy na Politechnice Ryskiej w latach 1862–1918* [Polish students at the Riga Polytechnic between 1862 and 1918] (Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, 2005).

282 This is what was presented in the first paragraph of the Association’s first statute dating from November 23, 1881; it was written in Russian for the clerks at the ministry and the censor’s office. “Ustav Rizhskogo P’včeskago Obščestva ‘AUŠRA’” [Rulebook of the Rigan Singing Society Ausra], fond 2840, vol. 1, issue 4, position 19, Latvijas Valsts Vēstures Arhīvs [Latvian State Historical Archive] (LVVA). Of course, singing activities—like the Lithuanian name “Ausra”—were a pretext which concealed the integration of Polish circles.

have their own educational system.²⁸³ During the formation of the multi-national community of the future Latvian state, Poles managed to become a small group which was respected, even if this was accompanied by various types of resistance. And thus in the 19th century they traversed a path quite similar to the Baltic-German one—from socio-economic domination of the landed aristocracy to the status of a barely-accepted minority. Jekabsons speaks about their far-reaching integration:

At that time [after 1905] one could clearly see the integration of the Polish community not only in Latgallian circles, but also in all of Latvia; and, moreover, one could say this about the entire Latvian nation. We can no longer see the Poles as an isolated class of landed gentry. Subsequent years deepened this integration further, despite a decrease in the number of Poles in Latvia (which took place because of political events).²⁸⁴

This opinion is, however, probably somewhat exaggerated, especially in light of the permanent administrative problems faced by Polish organizations, first with tsarist officials, and later with Latvian ones. Certainly, in former Polish Livonia, which was more and more frequently referred to by the Latvian name Latgalia after 1903, Polishness constituted something of a cultural and identity alternative—besides the Latvian, Russian, Belarusian, Lithuanian, German, and Estonian options—but it would be difficult to call this “deep integration.” In these activities one can rather see the former colonizers’ attempts to adapt to an entirely new social and political situation, in which the former position of the gentry evaporated along with their estates and the privileges, while the community still remained, and one “had to do something” with it. Romanowski seems to be closer to the truth when he describes the influence of German culture on the Polish culture in Riga with the term “protective umbrella.”²⁸⁵

During this time Dorpat, also located “outside the borderlands,” was an interesting enclave of Polishness. In the context of the closure of the universities in Warsaw and Vilnius in the 1830s, and Russian repressions in the aftermath of the November Uprising, Dorpat University (along with the Rigan Polytechnic) became one of the Polish youth’s favorite academic centers. Staffed primarily by German professors, with German as the language of instruction, and with German urban culture, it guaranteed not only high academic standards, but also a certain measure of protection against Russification. Sons of gentry families

283 This was, among other things, the goal of the formation of the “Oświata” [Education] society in Riga, which was to build the Polish educational system in Livonia.

284 Jēkabsons, “Stosunki polsko–łotewskie na przestrzeni dziejów” [Polish–Latvian Relations throughout History], 36.

285 Romanowski, *Pozytywizm na Litwie* [Positivism in Lithuania], 362.

from Livonia, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Polish Kingdom (especially after the opening of the Warsaw–Petersburg railway line, which passed through Vilnius and Pskov), as well as from White Russia, Volhynia, and Podolia came here to study.²⁸⁶ Polish life was centered around the student association “Polonia” (founded in 1828), which was later transformed into the so-called Polish Convention since, as Józef Weyssenhoff recalls, the life of the entire city was dominated by the life of the university:

At the time Dorpat was a German city with Czuchóń suburbs (...). Muscovites were even less common there than in Warsaw; officials came from among the Baltic Germans. The city served as something like a framework or a scaffold of the student republic, ruled by the collegiate “Alma Mater.” The remaining inhabitants, though significantly more numerous, were only an appendix to the University.²⁸⁷

The university’s freedoms were taken away by the Russian administration at the beginning of the 1890s, when the university was first closed in 1893 and then reopened as the Russian Yuryev University (that is why, in the title of his work, G. Manteuffel used the term “former Dorpat University”), after which (1895) Russian became compulsory. A radical drop in the number of Polish and German students was an obvious consequence of these steps, and the university was reorganized on the model of Russian academies, where “the once excellent German lectures” were exchanged for “inept lessons taught in the official language by common teachers.”²⁸⁸

During the period between the January Uprising and the outbreak of World War I, Dorpat and Riga were unquestionably the main centers of Polish culture and Polishness in Livonia; this is rather paradoxical given the fact that both cities were located outside Polish Livonia, and their formal ties with the Commonwealth reached back three centuries and lasted only several dozen years. This Polishness, by the way, was largely created by those who came to the city and organized themselves temporarily for the purposes of a short stay in an academic center. In contrast to the two cities, Polishness was either dying out or getting marginalized throughout the rest of Polish Livonian territories; Polish communities focused on the minimalist goal of surviving successive waves of

286 See Gustaw Manteuffel, *Z dziejów Dorpatu i byłego Uniwersytetu Dorpackiego* [From the History of Dorpat and Former Dorpat University] (Warsaw: E. Wende i Sp., 1911), 86.

287 Józef Weyssenhoff, “Wspomnienie z Dorpatu” [Reminiscences from Dorpat], in *Z młodych lat: listy i wspomnienia* [Youth: Letters and Reminiscences] by Konstanty M. Górski and Józef Weyssenhoff, ed. Irena Szypowska (Warsaw: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1985), 405 Chuds are among the northern Ugro-Finnish peoples in Estonia and Russia (in the vicinity of St. Petersburg) who are often identified with Ests.

288 Manteuffel, *Z dziejów Dorpatu* [From the History of Dorpat], 113.

Russification. The situation improved only after 1905, when the tsarist government changed its approach to national issues in the Baltic region.

11. The Interwar Period: A Quiet Funeral

The creation of independent Latvia in 1918 posed similar dilemmas for Baltic Germans and Livonian Poles. Already before 1918, wartime and revolutionary events drove the remaining landed gentry from their estates, and Polish-Livonian gentry practically ceased to exist in Polish Livonia. The period between 1914 and 1918 was a time of nearly systematic destruction of those aristocratic estates which somehow survived half a century of Russification.²⁸⁹ Most of the families moved to territories within the Commonwealth's borders, while battles in Livonia once again reminded those who stayed behind that invasions were their lot. The social structure of the Polish-speaking community was transformed, with the rural population and lower administration officials in the cities becoming the dominant groups. After World War I, the gentry and the aristocracy were almost gone. This fact has not only demographic but also political significance, since the new Latvian government—thinking and acting in accordance with anti-colonial and postcolonial logic—had a tendency to push other ethnic groups into the position of marginal minorities. In the case of the Poles, the lack of a historically established landed gentry class made it easier for Latvians to resort to certain ideological manipulations, since those who remained included recently-arrived peasants, Belarusian-Latgallian autochthons who did not have (or were not aware of having) a specific nationality, or Polish-speaking Jews. The intelligentsia, which consisted of administrative officials and teachers, constituted only a small percentage of the population. During a general census in 1920, Latvian administration used religious, linguistic, and territorial categories rather arbitrarily in order to minimize the official presence

289 A moving documentation of this fact is provided in volume 3 of Roman Aftanazy's monumental *Dzieje rezydencji na dawnych kresach Rzeczypospolitej* [History of Residences in the Old Borderlands of the Commonwealth] (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1992), where brief historical sketches of palaces and manors usually end in 1863 or 1914, and their only traces include etchings by Napoleon Orda or photographs from before World War I. What the war and revolution failed to do was done by Latvian land reform in the 1920s. A few manors survived until World War II, and the palace of the Borch family in Preiļi holds a peculiar record: it survived both wars only to burn down in 1978, *ibid.*, 336. Antoni Urbański wrote about the fate of Polish manors in Livonia in a similar spirit in *Pro memoria: 4-ta seria rozgromionych dworów kresowych* [Pro Memoria: The 4th Series of Destroyed Borderlands Manors] (Warsaw, 1929).

of Poles in former Polish Livonia. Two years later, Edward Maliszewski recorded the complaints of the Polish community:

In Dyneburg County Piotr Gryszań was put in charge of the census. Even if they tried, Latvian government authorities could certainly not have found another person who would have compromised the principle of impartiality more fully. At every opportunity, Mr. Gryszań was fond of repeating that there were no Poles in Latgalia, and that it was only the Polonized Latvians and Belarusians who claimed to be Poles. Starting with this premise, the Dyneburg County census director always denied the local population the right to define its identity.

The author's commentary leaves no doubts as to the legitimacy of the complaints:

In order to diminish the strength of the Polish population figures in this province, Latvian authorities used an approach which was tested by Russian authorities many times before, namely, the assignment of national identity not on the basis of the internal feelings and the conscious will of particular communities, but on the basis of certain external characteristics. In this way, Latvian census clerks created a very numerous "Belarusian" group, even though all these supposed Livonian "Belarusians" identify as Poles, pray in Polish, and advocate for the creation of Polish schools for their children.²⁹⁰

Benedict Anderson, author of *Imagined Communities*, would probably be pleased with the suggestion that "inner feelings" and "the conscious will of a particular community" should play a decisive role in determining national identity, since—in an Andersonian spirit—national identity is understood here as a result of free choice, and not as a result of ideological pressures. Yet the national identity of the rural population of Polish Livonia was, to a large extent, a result of various pressures which also came from their Polish superiors—landowners and Catholic preachers. It is difficult not to notice that Maliszewski's remarks tend to present the Polish situation in Latvia as very unjust and manipulated. This corresponded to reality to some extent, but it was only part of the Latvian government's wider plan to create a relatively uniform state in a place whose previous history consisted almost exclusively of the presence of colonizers. It is not accidental that Livonian Poles, Baltic Germans, and Russian Orthodox peasants all had difficulties with stabilizing and precisely characterizing their presence within the borders of the new state; they all

290 Edward Maliszewski, *Polacy na Łotwie* [Poles in Latvia] (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Towarzystwa Straży Kresowej, 1922), 13–14. In the summary, the author claims that the described abuses and negligence drastically lowered the actual number of Poles in Latvia. Including the alleged (and actual) Belarusians, Maliszewski estimates the number of Poles in Livonia to be over 82,000 (instead of the official 27,000); they would thus have constituted about 18.5% of Latgalia, and not the 6.12% that was reported.

emphasized their own sense of “being at home” and sought to avoid the status of immigrant foreigners.²⁹¹

The Poles’ unhappiness and embitterment with the newly-formed Latvian state was magnified by the recent Polish-Latvian military alliance made during the war against the Bolsheviks. Already in 1919, when Poland recognized Latvia’s independence, it offered to provide military assistance to help push out Bolshevik armies, and it gave such help in 1920. As Jekabsons reports, 30,000 Polish soldiers under the command of Edward Rydz-Śmigły entered Latgale and, together with 10,000 Latvians, drove Russians out of Dyneburg and the surrounding area.²⁹² This maneuver had, of course, tactical significance in the Polish–Soviet War, but it was also a sign of mutual sympathy between the two states, and it gave reason for hope for favorable future treatment of Latvian Poles. This is probably what gave rise to the general sense of embitterment when in subsequent years relations became complicated and the Polish minority had difficulties enforcing their rights.²⁹³

As a matter of fact, the situation of the Poles in independent Latvia does not belong to the history of Polish Livonia, since it ceased to exist in 1918. This was its second descent into nonexistence—the first had taken place in 1772. This time, the idea of a land dominated by Polish-Catholic culture—an idea stubbornly articulated by Polish-speaking writers at least since the middle of the 18th century—disappeared into the past. One of the most interesting aspects of

291 Jacek Kolbuszewski pointed to this aspect of the Poles’ presence in independent Latvia when he criticized the use of the term “Polonia” by the local press, a term usually used to refer to émigré communities; Kolbuszewski, “Kultura polska na Łotwie” [Polish Culture in Latvia], 17.

292 Jekabsons, “Stosunki polsko-łotewskie na przestrzeni dziejów” [Polish–Latvian Relations Throughout History], 37. These events are commemorated, among other things, by a monument dedicated to Polish soldiers who died during the liberation of Dyneburg in January 1920; it stands in the eastern part of the city, close to Warszawska Street (Varšavas iela). Since then the city has had the Latvian name Daugavpils.

293 These difficulties are confirmed by the words of Gwidon Butkiewicz—bookseller, editor and publisher of “Tygodnik Polski” [The Polish Weekly], which came out in Riga between 1925 and the outbreak of the war—who, in the name of the editorial board justified the creation of the journal this way: “... those who kept us [Latvians and Poles—K.Z.] under the same yoke, acted in accordance with the old saying *divide et impera...*, they were able to sow suspicion, sometimes even hatred. This is what explains the behavior of some Latvians, even those who work in administrative offices, who see the Polish State as an an emey, and who wish to treat us—Latvian citizens of Polish nationality—as second-class citizens. We see it as our duty to make all unpleasantness publicly known and to denounce all insults which we encounter”; *Tygodnik Polski* [The Polish Weekly], no. 1, Riga, February 26, 1925.

Polish Livonia's problematic presence (representation) is the fact that it began to exist "more seriously" only after the partitions, and the ideology which had constituted and created it now lost its *raison d'être*. Polish Livonia experienced its cultural flowering at a time when Poland was already gone and Latvia was not yet in existence; a time when local and regional identities and multicultural fascinations were being born in the realm of the behemoth tsarist empire. For a long time, in its arguments with the Latvians, the Polish minority still pointed to its Livonian roots, and emphasized Latgallian Catholicism as a symbol of its local affiliation, but in the interwar period this entire ideology seemed to be suspended in a vacuum.²⁹⁴

Polish Livonia's death was followed by what can be described as a discreet, not to say surreptitious, funeral, where none of the family members want to admit their ties with the deceased. For Latvia, the history of Polish presence in its eastern regions was as uncomfortable as the overconfident presence of the Baltic Germans, and the imperial habits of the Russians. For the Polish minority, excessive emphasis on its historical bonds with this territory threatened to worsen the already complicated relations with the government in Riga. Both results of the general census and troubles surrounding the parliamentary elections of 1922 revealed the hostility of the Latvian authorities; Poles had to affirm their identity with appeals like this one, written three weeks after the elections (which took place on October 7–8, 1922):

We are here and we shall remain in this land—that is what the seemingly clear-cut election statistics tell us. We shall remain—despite the hostility of our enemies who claimed that there were no Poles even in the Vilnius region, and that there could certainly be no talk of their presence on the banks of the Daugava; despite the fact that those who are greedy for careers renounce their nationality; despite the activities of local and foreign speculators who seek to eliminate national distinctiveness.²⁹⁵

294 The activities of the Polish minority focused mainly on education and the establishment of associations, which were often Catholic and social. The situation of Polish education in Latvia is discussed extensively by Agnieszka Durejko in *Polskie życie kulturalne i literackie na Łotwie w XX wieku* [Polish Cultural and Literary Life in Latvia in the 20th Century] (Wrocław: Sudety, 2002). The small periodical *Polak na Łotwie* [Poles in Latvia], published in Riga in the last dozen years, also contains many materials about this subject. See especially the texts by Zygmunt Ignatowicz, "Przyczynek do dziejów oświaty polskiej na ziemi łotewskiej" [A Contribution to the History of Polish Education in the Latvian Lands], no. 1–3 (1991) and Erik Jekabson's "O szkołach polskich w Rydze" [Polish Schools in Riga], no. 1/6 (1992); "Jeszcze o szkołach polskich" [More on Polish Schools], no. 2/7 (1992) and "Kierownictwo szkół polskich na Łotwie (1921–1939)" [Administrators of Polish schools in Latvia (1921–1939)], no. 3/8 (1992).

295 *Głos Polski* [The Voice of Poland], no. 9, Riga, November 2, 1922.

In this same little newspaper, a few issues earlier, Jerzy Bryc, a parliamentary candidate, pointed out that connections between the Polish minority and the old Livonian landowners were loose, at best:

Until recently, our society had leaders who were, so to speak, inherent and hereditary—they were the representatives of the magnate families and aristocratic families who had settled in Livonia long ago, and who were bound with this country by historical tradition and by the land which they possessed. (...). This social class, however, protected its separateness too much, and there was therefore a certain barrier between it and the rest of the Polish population; this shall be seen as a negative quality of our aristocracy. Today, there are not many of them among us, and that is why we should pay close attention to those who, in historical succession, are taking leadership over our society.²⁹⁶

Like a focusing lens, this fragment brings together various kinds of problems that plagued Polish Livonia: on the one hand, for the Polish minority, Polish Livonia meant something that was their own, it designated a Polish and patriotic culture, native religion and tradition; on the other hand, however, Poles in Latvia felt the need to dissociate themselves from the Livonians and their cult of social hierarchy. “Polish society in Latgalia does not consist of magnates and barons,” wrote another author in the same issue of the paper. As a result of this somewhat breakneck articulation of identity, Latgallian Poles emphasized their “age-old” presence in this territory, while also avoiding identification with Polish Livonia, even avoiding its name.

For the government of the Second Republic of Poland, in turn, Polish Livonia was uncomfortable because of the centralizing policies of the National Democrats. After the 1921 Treaty of Riga, which ended the Polish–Soviet War, Poland backed away from Piłsudski’s federalist conception of the state, and turned toward the National Democratic idea according to which Poland’s borders should only include regions which were predominantly ethnically Polish. As a result of this redefinition, territories which had historic ties with Poland, but in which Poles accounted for only a small percentage of the population, fell, as it were, outside the field of vision of Polish politics.²⁹⁷

296 *Głos Polski* [The Voice of Poland], no. 4, Riga, September 28, 1922.

297 Warsaw authorities remembered them only at the end of the 1930s, when great power propaganda was at its height, when the Maritime and Colonial League was at its peak, and Poles in the borderlands became an excellent pretext for imperial pipe dreams. In the archive of one of the Polish organizations in Latvia, I found a letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 1938, informing about the successes of the Maritime and Colonial League and giving exact instructions for how to celebrate the next anniversary of its founding.

“Dokumenty Stowarzyszenia Polsko-Katolickiej Młodzieży w Łotwie ‘Promień’”

Although Polish Livonia had its scholars, like Michał Świerzbński, who was then the Polish consul in Dyneburg, for the most part researchers devoted very little attention to it during the interwar period. Manteuffel's maxim about Sumatra and Borneo was thus confirmed.²⁹⁸ Political issues were also not without significance—good neighborly relations with Latvia were an exception in interwar Poland, which was either at war or in open conflict with most of its neighbors.²⁹⁹ In any case, in Polish politics there is a clear separation between the history and culture of Polish Livonia and the problems of the Polish minority in independent Latvia.

12. The Final Years: Return

For obvious reasons, the topic of Polish Livonia died out once again during the era of Soviet rule in Central Europe. The entry of the Red Army into Latvia in 1944 was followed by mass arrests of Latvian Poles and their exile into the depths of Russia—a signal that local cultural enclaves and regional identities had no right to exist in the Soviet empire. Once more, it turned out that this land was politically, historically, sociologically, and culturally inconvenient. During the entire period of the existence of the so-called People's Republic of Poland not a single book with Livonia either in the title or in the publication announcement was published; one can count the scientific articles about Livonia on the fingers of one hand, and they tend to be narrowly specialized (focusing on, for example, analyses of the press).³⁰⁰ The situation changed after 1990, and

[Documents of "Promień," the Association of Polish-Catholic Youth in Latvia], fond 2396, vol. 1, Latvijas Valsts Vēstures Arhīvs [Latvian State Historical Archive] (LVVA).

- 298 See fn. 3 in the "Introduction" above. The collective work *Polska a Inflanty* [Poland and Livonia] (Gdynia: Instytut Bałtycki, 1939), edited and with a preface by Stanisław Kutrzeba, is a notable exception to this rule, one which, unfortunately, did not really have enough time to become well-known even among historians. In several insightful analyses, authors of this volume formulated the most important problems and topics concerning the history and culture of Polish Livonia.
- 299 This mutual friendliness brought concrete benefits in September 1939, when Polish soldiers were able to reach Sweden through Latvia. This action is described by Jacek Kolbuszewski in the text cited above, where he also mentions the participation of his father Stanisław Kolbuszewski, who was then a professor at the Latvian State University in Riga; see Kolbuszewski, "Kultura polska na Łotwie," 20.
- 300 Here I am thinking about two texts devoted to the periodical "Rubon"—Stanisław Herbst, "Rubon: pismo poświęcone pozytywnej rozrywce" [Rubon: A Periodical Devoted to Beneficial Entertainment], in *Polska w świecie: szkice z dziejów kultury*

Polish Livonia's return to existence was crowned in a grotesque mode by Stefan Pastuszewski's amusing poetic booklet *Pamiętki inflanckie* [Livonian Mementos] (published in Bydgoszcz, in 2003), where on the last page the author profoundly declared that Livonia is the "center of the world." If Livonia indeed finds itself at the center of the world, then it is probably on the basis of postcolonial criticism, which made the previous center null.

In recent years, Polish historiography once again started paying attention to Polish Livonia, and the work of Toruń historians led by Marian Biskup is invaluable in this regard; they introduced Livonia and Prussia into historical research, thanks to which a number of "Livonological" investigations have been undertaken, especially in the realm of the history of politics and military science. In the realm of cultural and literary studies, our land has been introduced into scientific literature by Andrzej Romanowski in his books *Pozytywizm na Litwie* [Positivism in Lithuania] and *Młoda Polska wileńska* [Young Poland in Vilnius], where he also showed the inadequacy of previous political and territorial lines of division in literary studies. During the last few years, Livonian history has been the subject of several detailed studies, such as Bogusław Dybaś's monograph on the Piltene *sejmik*, Arkadiusz Janicki's study of Rigan student associations, and Dorota Samborska-Kukuć literary study of Kazimierz Bujnicki's work. These works are a clear signal that the game of resuscitating Polish Livonia can be played for a long time to come.³⁰¹

Polish Livonia is also making a return "at home," that is, in the investigations of Latgalian historians and literary scholars. A specialization in

polskiej [Poland in the World: Sketches from the History of Polish Culture] (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1972), and Mieczysław Ingłot, *Polskie czasopisma literackie ziem litewsko-ruskich w latach 1832–1851* [Polish Literary Periodicals in Lithuanian and Ruthene Territories between 1832 and 1851] (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1966), 175–199. The latter text is rather peculiar—on 25 pages Ingłot writes about a Polish-Livonian periodical founded by a Livonian, and he noticeably avoids using the word "Livonia"; the term "Polish Livonia" does not appear even once. Moreover, in the conclusion he complains about the severe restrictions of tsarist censorship (sic!), which caused the periodical to fail. *Ibid.*, 199.

301 In the joint Polish–Latvian cultural initiatives, which resulted in the two volumes of conference proceedings which have been cited many times above, one nonetheless sees caution in using the name "Polish Livonia." In the titles of the papers included in the 1993 volume *Polacy na Łotwie* [Poles in Latvia], edited by Edward Walwander, Polish Livonia does not appear at all, even though at least half of the papers deal with it. The situation is similar in *Kultura polskiej na Łotwie* [Polish Culture in Latvia], edited by Jarosław Sozański and Ryszard Szklennik (Riga: Polijas Republikas Vēstniecība Rīgā, 1994), where only one paper talks about Livonia (and not about Polish Livonia!). Political correctness is also against Polish Livonia.

Polish studies has been in existence at the university in Daugavpils for a few years, and it provides the framework for the organization of yearly international conferences entitled “Polish–Baltic Cultural Connections.” For obvious reasons, the culture of Polish Livonia is among the main topics of every debate. Latvian historians like Pēteris Zeile, Henrihs Strods, Ruta Kaminska, or Eriks Jekabsons investigate Polish-Livonian culture with the conviction that it contains much information about aspects of Latvian history and identity. Latgallian scholars like Kaspars Klaviņš or Henrihs Soms are even more interested in Polish Livonia, and for them Gustaw Manteuffel is one of the founders of the cultural distinctiveness of contemporary Latgale. Today, this eastern province of Latvia has problems with identity, not unlike those once experienced by Livonia. Unlike the rest of the country, which is Protestant, the province is Catholic, and a different language—referred to as the Latgallian dialect—is spoken there;³⁰² its national profile also gives it particular features. And, above all, it is a land marked by the centuries-long domination of Polish culture, which is a strong reason for its claims to a distinctively Baltic identity. A Livonian identity.

13. Coda

In my attempts to become familiar with the Polish Livonian landscape, I went to Likсна, the place where the Plater-Zyberk family’s impressive manor—Emilia Plater’s family home—once stood. From historians I knew that the building itself was no longer there, but I was hoping to find some traces of it in the park on the hill from which, as Plater’s biographers point out, there was once a magnificent view looking out on the meadows and the meandering Daugava. One usually finds no traces of the homes of Polish-Livonian gentry that had been destroyed a hundred or more years ago, and it is more useful to rely on topography and the natural landscape for orientation, and look for signs such as an even row of trees, a hill with a stretch of road, or two stone pillars that mark the location of an old entrance gate. After a short search, behind the soccer field of the village sports club, I found a small clearing in the forest, whose rising and falling terrain seemed unnatural. On its other side, by an escarpment that led down toward the meadows, there was a three-meter-high stone column with a large stork nest at the top. On closer inspection, the column turned out to be a

302 Arguments about whether the Latgallian dialect is a separate language have recently returned, and are most strongly advocated by the local patriots who demand political autonomy for the region. Unfortunately, as one of the local historians has told me, they do not have much of a chance, since the remaining Latvians would then constitute a minority in their own country.

preserved cornerstone of a palace; it was still sticking out from the ground, and under the little mounds that surrounded it there were probably fragments of bricks and the manor's foundations. Weeds obscured the view of the Daugava, but its beauty was not difficult to imagine. Beneath one of the trees there stood a wooden display case with three black-and-white photocopies: the first showed a portrait of Baron Tadeusz, the last member of the Zyberk family; the second was an image of the Plater-Zyberk coat of arms; and the third displayed a picture of the palace from before the First World War. The first two came from the works of Gustaw Manteuffel, the third was from Aftanazy's book. There were no descriptions, no information.

It is returning. But slowly.

Chapter 3

First Digression: Formative Historiography

Thus all our judgments on historical epochs as well as on historic personages are like much-worn coins, whose value is only investigated for some special reason. Every tradition survives through the mass of errors that are bound up with it: it could not, indeed, be otherwise, since error is a creative element; it creates the hero and his legend, and invests him with a tradition that can never die. Who could bear the truth, assuming that the truth exists?

Jakob Wassermann, *Columbus, Don Quixote of the Seas*

Well, now that we've finally arrived at the Truth we can relax.

Richard Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth*

The cursory overview of facts from the history of Livonia provided in the previous two chapters does not meet the criteria of an exhaustive synthesis. It emphasizes certain events, minimizes or omits others, and relies on rather arbitrarily-chosen categories external to classical historiography; it is written from the clearly subjective perspective of the author who, moreover, is not a professional historian. This overview may be unsatisfying for many reasons. It pays special attention to those moments in Livonian history when the longings and separatist tendencies of the Livonians came to the fore, when the participants of the story—whether Baltic Germans or members of the Polish-Livonian gentry—marked their distinctiveness and demanded rights and local autonomy. This approach can be undermined by using, for example, documents which show that Baltic knights lost their sovereignty in the middle of the 16th century, or that the Livonian Voivodeship was part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and autonomy was out of the question. One could also dispute the logic of both of these approaches, and focus on the history of the Cours, Livs, Ests, and Latvians, emphasizing, for example, the ethical dimension of the construction of history from the point of view of colonization victims. One could write yet another history of Livonia by assuming a still different

perspective, and emphasizing other facts, something which—as Gustaw Manfeuffel claims—German-Livonian historians have done a century ago, and which those writing about the politically complex fortunes of multinational regions still do today. There is no such thing as “the original text of Livonia’s history” to which one could appeal in order to correct misuses and distortions; there is also no tribunal before which a reader (a chronicler? a historiographer? a historical participant?) who feels that truth and fairness have been undermined, could seek justice. In short, tendentiousness is inevitable and each successive perspective we encounter in the search for the historic identity of Livonians only confirms the old adage that history always serves an ideology.

To get out of this vicious circle of tendentiousness in historical writing one should somehow step out of historiography, and change not just the perspective of description but also the discipline. Within the realm of expectations and limitations which the historian puts upon himself, he is not able to adjudicate whether his domain belongs to the field of science or literature, and, by the same token, he will never free himself from a schizophrenic split. The result is an historian who simultaneously assumes the role of a scholar and a writer. This principle can be seen especially clearly in the writing of Livonian historians because when they wrote, each of them also attended to certain interests connected with the place which he occupied in this history. Moreover, each of them was aware of his tendentiousness (or he sensed it vaguely), and he therefore quoted many facts to justify his perspective. He also simultaneously appealed to both referential and performative qualities of the text, something which is among the most common activities of every historian.

Constant attempts to prove the credibility of a proposed thesis conceal the author’s concern that the thesis itself is, in fact, not credible. As a result, formative writing increasingly blurs the contours of the object of description. Instead of confirming the thesis, each successive argument raises more doubts. This process of getting bogged down in the constituting descriptiveness of Livonian historical “science-literature” paradoxically caused a certain kind of ontological suspension of the land which “did not fully come into existence.” Despite laments³⁰³ that can be heard here and there, there are too many rather

303 In the case of Livonian history, lament about the scarcity of sources was voiced, among others, by Reinhard Wittram, one of the most eminent Baltic-German historians, who complained about gaps in the source base, the fragmentary nature of memoirs, and the disappearance of old institutions, whose downfall offers only very general knowledge about historical upheavals; see Reinhard Wittram, “Die Moderne Geschichtsforschung und die baltische Tradition,” [Modern Historical Research and the Baltic Tradition], *Jahrbuch des baltischen Deutschtums* XV (1968): 47. According to the author, the “modern” aspect of the research alluded to in the title should consist in “experiencing

than too few historical testimonies which one can use to construct arguments; and, in principle, one can always build an arbitrary argument through narration. “In principle” because the only limitation consists in the “hardness” of historical facts. Arbitrariness of arguments here consists in the fact that the meaning of the created image serves an ideology, even if the individual pieces used to create the mosaic are true. As a result, the historian cannot establish “hard” facts through historical narration alone, and he is sentenced to the literariness of his argument; he is sentenced to create subjective syntheses on the basis of factual sources. Only when he steps out of history and reaches toward, say, anthropology, sociology, psychology, economics, or ethnography, will he be able to verify certain theses. Reaching toward literature can also provide a new understanding of history as a narrative discourse:

Like literature, (...) history is also a narrative discourse (...). From this perspective, history and literature become almost synonyms. Both are narrative discourses which enter into interactions with historical situations. Neither has complete or objective understanding of its own meaning or historical situation, since in reality both are continuous conversations with their creators, readers, and cultures.³⁰⁴

The Livonian case contains a difficulty of another kind as well. When a German historian wants to show, say, “Germanness” in the history of the city of Wrocław/Breslau, he can successfully appeal to a broad tradition within German historiography, where he would find a whole range of possible narrations. Similarly, a Polish historian faces no special trouble in showing Polish elements in the history of Vilnius.³⁰⁵ Both can rely on well-established notions of what constitutes “Polishness” or “Germanness” in history— notions confirmed in the texts of their predecessors. The Livonian historian lacks such notions, or such “symbolic structures,” as Hayden White would say. He does not have a clear sense of what “Livonianness” is, and as a result he has difficulty with categories like “German-Livonian” or “Polish-Livonian.” This is especially clear when historiography becomes a battlefield of various national ideologies, and attempts

the truth through the past” (die Wahrheit über die Vergangenheit zu erfahren), something which is an entirely anachronistic approach today. In any case, Wittram contradicts himself when in the conclusion he says that *openness* (Offenheit) and *sobriety* (Nüchternheit) are only half of the truth—*love* being the other half (ibid., 59). Indeed, his Germano-centric Baltic historiography is quite charged with personal emotion.

304 Kujawińska-Courtney, “Wprowadzenie” [Introduction], in *Poetyka kulturowa* [Cultural Poetics] by Stephen Greenblatt (Krakow: Universitas, 2006), XXXIX.

305 I am not addressing the question of the goals of such writing, which is clearly being abandoned by contemporary historiography, as can be seen, for example, in Norman Davies’ *Microcosm* or Tomas Venclova’s *Vilnius: A Personal History*.

are made not only to differentiate among concepts but also to juxtapose them. Baltic historiographers have no particular difficulties with showing the influence of German culture in Livonia. In Polish historical writing, romantic-insurrectionary myths about the Polishness of the lands on the banks of the Daugava River sound most convincing. Problems appear when an author emphasizes separateness and searches for difference. At that point, it turns out that when a historian begins to write about Livonia, he first delineates the shape of the object of his studies, or rather, he tries to convince his audience that this object in fact exists. Wishing to write about Livonia, the historian must *form* Livonia first.

1. Between Fact and Fiction

For a long time, theorists of historiography have been trying to convince us that history cannot be told simply as it was. There is no such thing as “actual history,” which could be distinguished from historical narratives created by various authors. The distinctive feature of the past is that it is not immediately given, and thus every attempt to say something sensible about it is bound up with the need to re-create it and place it within a previously-chosen interpretive framework. As Hayden White, founder of narrative historiography, says, “the reality of (...) events does not consist in the fact that they occurred but that, first of all, they were remembered and, second, that they are capable of finding a place in a chronologically ordered sequence.”³⁰⁶ What we call history is in fact a collection of stories about our imaginings of what took place in the past. This can be seen particularly clearly when one compares the concept of the “past” with the concept of “history.” They do not mean the same thing, and, in a certain sense, they are opposites. The past includes everything that happened, regardless of the kind and amount of evidence that has been left behind (sometimes we complain that the past is unknown even though we know that a certain event *had* to have taken place—e.g. someone must have constructed the first bow). The concept of history, in contrast, assumes knowledge of past events and the possibility of describing them (when we speak about an unknown history, we mean a history which *could* become known). Additionally, the historian decides what belongs to history, and from an ocean of events he chooses those which are to be remembered, those which are to survive as facts.³⁰⁷

306 Hayden White, “The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality,” *Critical Inquiry* 7, no. 1, On Narrative (Autumn 1980): 23.

307 “It is impossible to create history without a record, because, ‘up-front’ the creation of history belongs to the genre of history, to narration, which determines the past of the

On the basis of the fundamental premises of historical narrations, White classified them and distinguished four forms of narrative: tragedy, comedy, romance, and irony (satire).³⁰⁸ When an author begins to write a historical work, he makes a variety of selections: he selects events that took place, he selects facts that have been preserved (a historical fact is an historical event which has been transformed by consciousness), and he then chooses an appropriate form of narration, depending on the accepted *modes of emplotment*. The construction of a story about the past is therefore not that different from the creative process in literature—there are some differences when it comes to the material with which one starts, but in both cases, in the final product this material has been adequately “worked on” by the author’s imagination.

The radicalism of White’s theses consisted in the fact that he practically erased the difference between literature and history—a difference recognized since the time of Aristotle’s *Poetics*. He moved history into the realm of literary fiction and catalogued the figurative possibilities of its language. The historian became a writer who told the story in accordance with the rules of literature, and who was limited by his responsibilities toward the chronicle, that is, toward ordered factual knowledge. The crux of the problem lies in the relation between the chronicle and fiction, a relation which escapes sensible definitions:

world, configuring this past world. History’s activity of attributing to history, or attributing to historicity makes it a discipline (...) which, ‘up front,’ from outside the past dictates what is and what is not history.” Tadeusz Rachwał, “Instytucja zapomnienia (o starym i nowym)” [The Institution of Forgetting (about the Old and the New) in “*Facta Ficta*”: z zagadnień dyskursu historii [“*Facta Ficta*”: Problems of Historical Discourse], ed. Wojciech Kalaga and Tadeusz Sławek (Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 1992), 55–56.

308 See Hayden White, “The Historical Text as Literary Artifact,” in *Topics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism*, by Hayden White (Baltimore; London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 81–100. White used a triple tetragram which describes modes of emplotment in history (romantic, tragic, comic, and satirical), paradigms of historical explication (formist, organicist, mechanistic, and contextualist), and ideological positions (anarchist, radical, conservative, and liberal); in various combinations these create cohesive styles of historical narration, see Roger Chartier, “Four questions for Hayden White,” in *On the Edge of the Cliff: History, Language and Practices*, by Roger Chartier (Baltimore; London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 29. Ewa Domańska provides an elegant discussion of White’s typology in her introduction to *Poetyka pisarstwa historycznego* [The Poetics of Historical Writing] by Hayden White, 2nd ed. (Krakow: Universitas, 2010), 7–30; Teresa Walas also discussed it in *Czy jest możliwa inna historia literatury?* [Is a Different History of Literature Possible?] (Krakow: Universitas, 1993), 33–39, a pioneering work in the field in which we are interested here.

A historian transforms and animates the chronicle, but he cannot do without it, he cannot get rid of it. He cannot tell simply *any* history which he sees as pleasant or edifying. His story-writing activity is more limited than the similar activity of a literary author. It is both limited and shaped by the chronicle and by the chosen narrative form, which delineates the schema of the story. In this way, historiography can be seen as marked by greater “confinement” than literary fiction, that is, as something which is both “more difficult” and more saturated with information, and this—paradoxically—makes it closer—to the literary ideal, to the ideal of literature.³⁰⁹

The schema is simple: the chronicle provides the facts and the chronological order, whereas the historian constructs a story on its basis, in accordance with the rules of literary narration. On the one hand, the chronicle thus precedes history; on the other, it legitimates it and justifies its pretenses to being scientific. The simplicity of the schema, accepted without any qualms by a large majority of historians, conceals a fundamental problem, namely, the fact that the chronicle itself is also a construction. In referring to texts about past events—that is what using historical sources most often means—the historian has no other option but to accept the order, say, of a medieval chronicle in which certain events have been recorded and others omitted. He could also construct his own chronicle by consulting several existing chronicles, but this new chronicle would still depend on the already-existing ones. That which historians view as the scientific verification of historical narration basically comes down to the confrontation of various chronicles. This is because the chronicle is not a type of primary historical source, but one of many “conceptions of historical reality.”³¹⁰ It is therefore possible to establish a new history, to call a new object of investigation into being if one first creates a chronicle of events which justifies this new object. History is equivalent to literary fiction, but it has claims to scientific validity, and it will never give up the chronologically ordered proof of its correctness, thanks to which it situates itself exactly halfway between arts and sciences.

White’s theses about the narrative character of all history provoked strong and often indignant reactions among historians; the theses also attracted the attention of literary theorists, since they brought yet another object of investigation—the historical text—closer to the domain of the theoreticians of fiction. The relationship between literature and history has always been very complex, and the frequently evoked opposition between facts and fiction does not explain anything. The distinctiveness of the two disciplines is often defended, but the boundary between them can be designated rather arbitrarily,

309 Walas, *Czy jest możliwa inna historia literatury?* [Is a Different History of Literature Possible?], 32.

310 White, “The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality,” 10.

sometimes with the help of a picturesque oxymoron.³¹¹ Within the framework proposed by White and his students, history is simply part of literature, and each historical text needs to be treated like a literary work.³¹² This obviously opens a new field of investigation for theorists, hence their enthusiastic response to this way of framing the problem.

Aristotle argued—and theorists of history have accepted his arguments for 2,300 years—that history speaks about what happened, while poetry (literature) speaks about what could have happened, based on our understanding of probabilities, and it therefore has a more universal, or philosophical, character.³¹³ He did not, however, devote more attention to the question of how we determine whether something actually happened; thus the problem of verification, which seems so fundamental for us, did not arise for him. The author of an historical text writes about what took place in the past, and there is no reason to meticulously investigate the question of the legitimacy of his beliefs or the reliability of the reported knowledge. He uses a plot because he is concerned with events. For Aristotle, this distinction was important only because both history and literature were concerned with storytelling and both

311 When Henryk Markiewicz defined fiction for the purposes of literary studies, it was no accident that he chose historical facts and personages as the background of his analysis. Not because this made the difference most clearly visible, but precisely because it made it difficult to notice; we could have endless debates about whether Jeremi Wiśniowiecki or Bogusław Radziwiłł were literary or historical figures in Sienkiewicz's novels. The answer to this question is ultimately speculative and it does not seem all that important, but the very posing of the question suggests that history encroaches onto literature's territory and researchers attempt to address this in some way. See Henryk Markiewicz, "Fikcja w dziele literackim a jego zawartość poznawcza" [Fiction and Knowledge in Literary Works] in *Główne problemy wiedzy o literaturze* [Key Problems in Literary Studies] by Henryk Markiewicz (Krakow: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1980), 118–147. Markiewicz analyzes, among other things, the concepts of "real fiction" and "protagonists who are analogous to real figures" (139), providing an excellent illustration of the difficulties that attend the mutual interpenetration of history and literature.

312 The Polish word "dziejopisarstwo" [literally, "the writing of events"] conveys the narrative character of all historiography quite well. The German word "Geschichtsschreibung" makes the literary aspect of historiography even more prominent since the word "Geschichte" means both history and story. See "Geschichte" in Vladimir Biti's dictionary *Literatur - und Kulturtheorie: ein Handbuch gegenwärtiger Begriffe* [Literary and Cultural Theory: A Handbook of Contemporary Concepts] (Hamburg: Rowohlt Verlag, 2001), 304–307. Paul Ricoeur discusses the difference between *story* (history as story) and *history* (history as document) in *Memory, History, Forgetting*, 241.

313 See Aristotle, *Poetics*, vol. 2 of *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1991), 10 (1451b).

could use verse, but history remained at the level of detail, and made no pretense to providing generalizations. The philosopher felt the responsibility to emphasize this difference not because it was clearly perceptible, but precisely because it was not obvious. The ancient reader encountered historical texts in verse and long prose poems which talked about past events, and the boundary between the two genres was not all that clear. It could not, in any case, be established on the basis of language, since historiography does not use any particular unambiguously-defined vocabulary, which would suggest the existence of a specialized language of history whose only function is cognitive. According to Aristotle, history also tells a story, but it tells a story about something that actually happened.

Although Aristotle distinguishes between history and poetry, he nonetheless places it on the side of *phronesis* or the humanities. While in the *sophia* type of sciences the investigator is hidden behind an impersonal, “objective” point of view, which is separate from the object of cognition, in the case of *phronesis* the element of subjectivity, or of the “historicity” of the cognizing subject is inevitable. In other words, humanities scholars—and historians should be seen as belonging to this group—inevitably bring not only their own knowledge and awareness into the field of investigation, but also their biases, emotions, fears, moral judgments, and so on—i.e., everything that lies beyond awareness. It is therefore impossible to achieve a satisfying level of “neutrality.” This happens,

because the issues which the humanities scholar raises in his work—questions about ethics, aesthetics, politics, religion, language and social communication, and so on—do not pertain (...) exclusively to the object of investigation, which belongs to a delineated “objective field” that is specific to a given discipline and analyzed in light of theories which are binding within its boundaries, but they also pertain to his own self-understanding as a whole. For this reason, he is not able to fully separate them from himself, but as he investigates them he must, in a specific way, always become engaged in the entire “subjective” and historical particularity of his own existence.³¹⁴

314 Paweł Dybel, *Granice rozumienia i interpretacji: o hermeneutyce Hansa-Georga Gadamera* [The Limits of Understanding and Interpretation: Hans-Georg Gadamer's Hermeneutics] (Krakow: Universitas, 2004), 124. For the discussion of Aristotle's and Gadamer's understanding of *sophia* and *phronesis* see *ibid.*, (101–115). Dybel unambiguously classifies historians among humanities scholars who are determined by their historicity; to summarize: “It often also happens that the very researchers who are deeply convinced that they have reliable and legitimate criteria at their disposal, and that their descriptions and evaluations of various phenomena are therefore entirely objective, in fact unintentionally only use these criteria as convenient tools which allow them to make clearly unfair or tendentious judgments.” *Ibid.*, 127. Let us remember this when we discuss the tendentiousness of Livonian historians.

This suggests that, on the one hand, history is written under the pressures of natural-scientific objectivism, but on the other, it is dictated by the author's belonging to a specific era and by his personal biases, which make it impossible for him to gain adequate distance. By paying homage to scientific honesty, the historian tries to renounce particularism and remove the suspicion of being under any type of influence. He puts on two masks as he sets to work: the masks of scrupulousness and indifference.

2. History and Existence

Historical objectivism was actually first put into question not by Hayden White but by Friedrich Nietzsche. At a time when the humanities were solidifying their positivist conviction about their correspondence to reality, i.e., in the second half of the 19th century, Nietzsche undermined their dogmatism and pointed to the unbreakable bond between the past and the present, a bond which exists within the very cognizing subject. That which took place at another time interests us only insofar as it concerns our here and now, that is, when it is related to our horizon of expectations. History draws us in not by what we know about it, but by the new elements which it carries, by the process of self-discovery which it enables. By investigating the past, rather than seeking to penetrate the essence of people, situations, and events which are long gone, we seek explanations about our own place in the world. In history, we should therefore seek elements which are shared with elements of our own experience, since they might become models to imitate, or rather to re-create—in the sense of creating them anew for our purposes. We need history as a carrier of meanings, and our interpretation of history should therefore include our contemporary perspective:

If you are to venture to interpret the past you can do so only out of the fullest exertion of the vigor of the present: only when you put forth your noblest qualities in all their strength will you divine what is worth knowing and preserving in the past. Like to like! (...) the genuine historian must possess the power to re-mint the universally-known [*das Allbekannte*] into something never heard of before [*das Niegehörte*], and to express the universal [*das Allgemeine*] so simply and profoundly that the simplicity is lost in the profundity and the profundity in the simplicity.³¹⁵

315 Friedrich W. Nietzsche, *Vom Nutzen und Nachteil der Historie für das Leben* [On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life] (Zurich: Diogenes, 1984), 61. This text was the second of Nietzsche's *Untimely Meditations* and it was first published separately in 1874. English edition: Friedrich W. Nietzsche, *Untimely Meditations*, ed. Daniel Breazeale, trans. Reginald J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 94.

Nietzsche did attempt to fight perspectivalism in historiography and often pointed to the concept of timeless meaning, which is timeless precisely because it can be evoked at a different time and place, but this thesis sounds rather weak in light of his oft-repeated strong claims about the reconstruction of meaning in accordance with new goals.³¹⁶ Paradoxically, the historian brings out from the past not what is old, but what is new, and the “novelty” consists in direct references to modernity. This paradox is only apparent; “the past and the present are the same” thanks to the mediation of the historian and the requirement that history should say something about existence. No one does history solely to catalogue relics from the past (for want of anything better, this can be done by the so-called ancillary disciplines like archival studies, paleography, genealogy, heraldry, etc.); true historical (historiographical) activity attempts to create foundations for existence—and that is the essential aim of history.

According to Nietzsche, the creation of the past through re-creation is a natural need of the individual and the nation, since both need that kind of knowledge about the past which would be in agreement with their goals, their power, and their judgments (self-judgments). This simple statement contains, however, an important displacement. History is needed to explain the sources, lineage, origins, justification, and constitution of our own *being-in-the-world*, and this allows for a slight veiling of the nightmare of naked, unjust existence. On the other hand, the past does not explain anything fully; it is an unruly chaos of events, whose only truth is that all has value only insofar as it passes and disappears.³¹⁷ It would be better if nothing existed. By investigating his own past, man touches its conditions and its motivating factors: passions, transgressions, mistakes, and insanities. When he evaluates it critically, he would like to reject it, cut it off (“one takes the knife to its roots”), and so he begins to create his second, better, and improved nature. One tries, he writes,

316 See Michał Paweł Markowski, *Nietzsche: filozofia interpretacji* [Nietzsche: The Philosophy of Interpretation] (Krakow: Universitas, 1997), 215. In this analysis, the reader will find an exhaustive analysis of Nietzsche’s approach to the problem of history, and for this reason I do not think it essential to repeat it in its entirety here. For our purposes, let us only note that Markowski notes three strategies, which Nietzsche considered worthy of a true historian: the monumental, which is focused on great problems and themes in the past, which inspire imitation and general reflection; the antiquarian, which is expressed in the “careful domestication and preservation of the traces of history”; and the critical, which introduces the historian’s own judgment, dismantling, and tendentious reconstruction of meaning, which complies with his own needs. Ultimately, the historian uses not justice but the power of creating. Nietzsche’s view of history, by the way, fluctuated and changed, ultimately shifting toward complete denial that history is a science in the strict sense of the word.

317 Nietzsche, *Untimely Meditations*, 75.

to give oneself, as it were *a posteriori*, a past in which one would like to originate in opposition to that in what one did originate—always a dangerous attempt because it is so hard to know the limit to denial of the past and because second natures are usually weaker than first. What happens all too often is that we know the good but do not do it, because we also know the better but cannot do it.³¹⁸

And so history arises as correction of our own self-knowledge. Written into it is our past-future project (Heidegger), in which we try to correct our own image suggested by history, which we treat as insufficient. Here Nietzsche negates the Aristotelian distinction and argues that the past tells us about that which we want to happen, not about that which actually happened. Like literature, history is the actualization of a certain set of premises and desires which we have in relation to the past (existence); it is thus a result of claims and needs, where the need for objective truth is among the least desirable. In both history and literature, the character of imitation is not mimetic but creative, and therefore when we take something from the past, we inevitably subject our needs to transformation.

Nietzsche questioned the possibility of a successful “implantation” of a second nature, claiming that man cannot fully liberate himself from his roots (“it is not possible wholly to free oneself from this chain”);³¹⁹ and, in any case, that this would be a sign of hubris and stupidity. He argued that through the power of his will man should create history which would be a synthesis of three strategies: monumental, antiquarian, and critical; later he departed from these claims toward a concept of creative history *sensu stricto*. This, however, does not change the fact that, for Nietzsche, historiography (in both his early and his late analyses), was not very different from literature. In his opinion, attachment to “objective” statements deformed the historical discipline just as much as complete arbitrariness in reasoning. In the final account, literature and history could be reduced to the same thing: the will to create determinants of existence; this was the case regardless of how much the writer venerated the myth of objective truth.

In *Being and Time* Heidegger went even further in making history dependent on existence. He included historicity (*Geschichtlichkeit*), or the sense of finite existence in time, among the constitutive determinants of a human being (*Dasein*). Each of us is aware that he extends between a beginning and an end, and this primordial historicity affects not only our understanding but also our treatment of the past.³²⁰ Every subject of individual existential experience

318 Ibid., 76.

319 Ibid.

320 Heidegger distinguishes the “primary historicity” of *Dasein* from the “secondary historicity” which consists of objects that comprise the within-the-world being of *Dasein*, and also of the “very soil of history” and nature. See Martin Heidegger, *Being*

(the term *Dasein* can also be described this way), projects his being in the world within a horizon of the past and the future, or, to put it more simply, he tries to do something with the fact that his life has a beginning and an end. The sense of being thrown into historicity, or being-towards-death, is also fundamental because it inclines the person to seek possibilities, consider different ways of existing, and thus to reach for the past as well. Heidegger talks about this in a beautiful sentence: “Once one has grasped the finitude of one’s existence, it snatches one back from the endless multiplicity of possibilities which offer themselves as closest to one—those of comfortableness, shirking, and taking things lightly—and brings *Dasein* into the simplicity of its *fate*.”³²¹

Reaching for the past and turning to history are attempts to repeat and test variants of existence in past *Daseins*, whose presence is evoked again not for the purpose of making them actual, but in order to make a “reciprocatve rejoinder” of their possibility. The motivation of this restoring activity of *Dasein* lies in the constant projection of its being-in-the-world, and not in the intention to restore past existences; “repetition does not let itself be persuaded of something by what is ‘past’, just in order that this, as something which was formerly, may recur.”³²² It is worth noting that in Heidegger’s conception, the turn toward the past is a result of *Dasein*’s historicity and not its cause, and it is preceded by a future-oriented project in which being-towards-death is a fundamental element. To translate this into the language of our historical discourse: man reaches for the past not in order to “discover the truth” about the past, but because gazing back belongs to his essence, it is a primordial impulse of existence.

This claim, which seems obvious at first glance, has several significant consequences. First, historicity as such (the “historizing of history”) does not exist separately, in itself, but appears only as an element of concrete individual experience. Second, the word’s entire historicity (including the “ready-to-hand” aspect of things, natural catastrophes, etc.) derives from the historicity of *Dasein*, i.e., each thing, person, and situation has the need to be treated as a component of history, which is inscribed into it. Heidegger puts it this way:

The historizing of history is the historizing of Being-in-the-world. *Dasein*’s historicity is essentially the historicity of the world, which, on the basis of ecstatico-horizontal temporality, belongs to the temporalizing of that temporality. In so far as *Dasein* exists factually, it already encounters that which has been

and Time, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 433. In the original, the word “Geschichtlichkeit” refers not only to what is past, but also to history as the past which is told. *Dasein* examines its historicity also in the sense that it tells the story about its being-in-the-world. See footnote 312.

321 Ibid., 435.

322 Ibid., 437–438.

discovered within-the-world. *With the existence of historical Being-in-the-world, what is ready-to-hand and what is present-at-hand have already, in every case, been incorporated into the history of the world. (...) The historical world is factual only as the world of entities within-the-world.*³²³

And finally third, each *Dasein* constitutes its existence in the form of a “steadiness which has been stretched along,” which should not be understood as the sum of the individual moments of the present, but as a preceding project which is later imposed onto the surroundings. For theorists of history, this means that every reaching for the past already contains the expectation of the confirmation of continuity; it is, in a way, equipped with continuity. Heidegger ends this argument with the conclusion: “If *Dasein*’s Being is in principle historical, then every factual science is always manifestly in the grip of this historicizing.”³²⁴

In the next argument, Heidegger claims that the project of history understood as science includes the “disclosure” of its historicity, and he also refers to this as the thematizing of history. Such a disclosure, or such exposition of the past is possible only when the past itself has already been disclosed. In other words, if we are to reach the past through history, the path toward it must somehow be previously delineated. Similarly, Heidegger understands historical facts (monuments, documents, objects) as historical material only on the condition that they are already seen as belonging to *Dasein*’s historical horizon. In other words, when they are transformed from events into facts:

The world that has already been projected is given a definite character by way of an Interpretation of the world-historical material we have “received.” Our going back to “the past” does not first get its start from the acquisition, sifting, and securing of such material; these activities presuppose (...) the historicity of the historian’s existence. This is the existential foundation for historiology as a science, even for its most trivial and “mechanical” procedures.³²⁵

Heidegger identifies yet another problem pertaining to the object of historical studies, a problem expressed in the question about the proper subject of history: Should history deal with what is possible, or should it confine itself to facts? He first gives a resoundingly affirmative answer to the first part of the question (history shows the “universal” in the particular), and he then eliminates the whole dilemma and introduces something like the Nietzschean will in its place:

The question of whether the object of historiology is just to put once-for-all ‘individual’ events into a series, or whether it also has ‘laws’ as its objects, is one

323 Ibid., 440–441.

324 Ibid., 444.

325 Ibid., 446.

that is radically mistaken. The theme of historiology is neither that which has happened just once for all nor something universal that floats above it, but the possibility which has been factually existent. (...) Only by historicity which is factual and authentic can the history of what has-been-there, as a resolute fate, be disclosed in such a manner that in repetition the 'force' of the possible gets struck home into one's factual existence—in other word, that it comes towards that existence in its futural character.³²⁶

The choice of the possible object of history has thus already taken place earlier—at the moment when the historicity of *Dasein* was constituted. This is what the philosopher calls the “disclosure” of history: its primordial constitution as a possibility, before it becomes an object of interest. To be precise, it is not a matter of the subject's subjectivization of history, which was the case in Nietzsche's analysis. Heidegger clearly emphasizes the “objectivity” of this framework (though he does use quotation marks), by which he means that it can show the individual the possibilities of becoming. In this sense, the question about the truth and universality of judgments made by historians is pointless, as is the imperative that the models which they use should have “universal significance.” If we transposed these meditations into the categories used in Aristotle's *Poetics*, we would get a conception of history not as a story about what actually happened, but about what could have happened (“existentially there was the possibility”)—i.e. a conception of literature.

Heidegger pushed the analysis back to focus on the sources of subjectivity; he pointed to the internal, pre-scientific, as it were, character of our relationship with history, which is one of the determinants of the horizon of existence. The expectation that historical facts should have objectivity results not from an external, neutral striving for truth, but from the search for existential possibilities. Man reaches back as he looks for answers to elementary, fundamental, existential questions, and that is why he demands factual precision from history. In the branching of historical studies into investigations of tools, products, culture, spirit or ideas, Heidegger saw the realization of man's primordial turn to what benefits him, that is, to the consideration of the possibilities of being.

326 Ibid., 447.

3. Object and Verification

The problem of writing history in the form of narration lies still elsewhere, in the very definition of the object. Let us raise a few naïve questions: What is the object of historiography? Where does that which no longer exists exist? And in what form? Did that which took place in the past have meaning then? Does it have meaning now? And are the two the same (if, that is, they exist at all)? Who or what decides whether we have “understood the meaning of the past”? Quite some time ago, the theory of historiography (or the philosophy of history) has abandoned the notion that the historian’s job is to describe and explain, emphasizing the impossibility of verifying historical determinations, not to mention the historian’s language (terminology). The act of pulling out one specific event from the immense number of past events was not justified by anything other than the author’s intention, which we can safely also designate as a tendency here. Hermeneutics, with its theory of interpretation, was to answer such doubts, since it posits that the past as a whole has a certain hidden meaning, which needs to be inferred from available facts. Certain realms of history can be subjected to this type of activity without difficulty—e.g., the meanings of human acts can be discerned, one can interpret texts, statistical data, and so on. The problem, however, lies in the fact that the vast majority of past events do not mean anything in the context of such analyses. Not only because they do not necessarily conform to causal relationships, but also because of the impenetrable meaning, which the “subject of historical activity” had consciously or unconsciously ascribed to them. Because these remarks are taken from Frank Ankersmit’s *Historical Representation*, we should let him have the floor:

Twentieth-century historiography prefers to see the past from a point of view different from that of the historical agents themselves and this reduces the intention of analytical hermeneutics to a futile enterprise. Moreover, the contemporary variant of intellectual history, the history of mentalities, is not so much interested in meanings (...) as it is in the mentalities of which the text is evidence. And a mentality may be a background for meaning, but is not meaning itself.

This conclusion is in perfect agreement with the thesis about the historian’s situation which we have already repeated several times above:

Although the past consists of what human agents did, thought, or wrote in the past, and the past knows no superhuman agents, the historian’s perspective often both creates and investigates a past that is devoid of intrinsic meaning.³²⁷

327 Frank Ankersmit, “Historical Representation,” in *History and Tropology: The Rise and Fall of Metaphor*, by Frank Ankersmit (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 99–100.

Precisely: the historian “both creates and investigates a past,” that is, the meaning of the past is not so much deciphered as bestowed. Hermeneutic interpretation is defensible only insofar as it honors the fact that meaning exists only when someone reads it (recognizes it as meaningful). We can thus tentatively answer the first question (about the object of historiography): the historian writes about meanings which he has imposed onto past events and facts.

This is because the past exists for us in a particular way, in the form of traces it left behind. No one in their right mind would claim that the past has survived in its entirety, and it would be similarly absurd to claim that it can be reconstructed in its entirety. We have crumbs at our disposal, and we arrange them into meaningful sequences; the argument about the extent to which such sequences are arbitrary and where the boundaries of arbitrariness lie (the second question) remains unsolvable. History exists for the researcher only in a “mental and linguistic” manner.³²⁸ A further complication is introduced by the polyphonic nature of the message which reaches us from the past. Besides the objects of daily use (utility), decorative objects and works of art (aesthetics), we have the entire inherited written tradition whose objects, in their role as carriers of recorded perspectives and ideologies (like palimpsests or even as many-layered palimpsests), contain already imparted meanings, or prior interpretations. While the utility functions can be decoded fairly easily, aesthetic functions are much more difficult to decode (why is something beautiful?). And it is entirely impossible to imagine the re-creation of the full cultural and existential background which accompanied the writing of a given text from a distant epoch (the third question). The past speaks to us with a multiplicity of voices, but we cannot know how much of it is understandable, and how far the understanding extends.

Arguments in favor of historical accuracy, which appeal to the writer’s honesty, tactfulness, and cultural refinement, as well as to his responsibility to the community (arguments which one encounters occasionally, especially among hermeneutics theorists) only seem to make the problem worse, since they appeal to categories which are just as difficult to define as the object of history.³²⁹ The designation of the field within which history can be “honest,” or

328 Topolski, *Wprowadzenie do historii* [Introduction to History], 158.

329 Krzysztof Pomian recently defended the notion that history is a discipline which “reconstructs the past,” and tried to reinforce the scientific validity of the historical text. See Krzysztof Pomian, *Historia: nauka wobec pamięci* [History: Science and Memory], trans. Hanna Abramowicz (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, 2006), and especially the chapter “*Rekonstrukcje przeszłości*” [Reconstructions of the Past], pages 27–36.

in agreement with our understanding of what took place, is impossible not only because of the ontic indeterminacy of what has taken place, but also because of the dynamic variability of our own ideas and concepts, which are also situated in history, in a specific time and place. There is no single permanent point where all the variable elements of the subjective reading of history could come together (the fourth question). The greatest possible standardization could be achieved if one sought to combine the perspectives of authors from a given community, but one would first have to delineate this community, or delineate the similarity of conditions which have shaped these perspectives—i.e., one would have to step outside history.³³⁰ The question of whether certain historical reconstructions should be accepted or rejected is settled not by some tribunal, which is either above or beyond history, but by a concrete community, constituted by the readers of this history. This group—the nation, social stratum, caste, class, or a cultural, religious, or linguistic community—looks to historiography not for objectivity but for the confirmation of the correctness of its ideology. Most frequently, an ideology which legitimates or conditions the existence of that group. We thus find ourselves at the threshold of representation.

4. Representation

The dualism of historiography, which stretches between science and literature, can be seen as the difference between literal and metaphorical expression. At the level of individual claims, the historical text attempts to meet the demands of referentiality, or compliance with (variously understood) scientific accuracy. The simple individual formulations should contain truths that can be verified with the help of the whole available scholarly apparatus of historical research (Nietzsche used to say that absolute precision is demanded at the level of individual sentences). An historical narration as a whole, however, presents a certain vision of history, a message, an author's intention, a metaphorical meaning, or another, different quality which has a general character. Here we are dealing with a metaphor, or the replacement of literal meaning by a figurative substitute.³³¹ The historian mentions true events (i.e., ones which are

330 Frank Ankersmit says that "History cannot be cured by history" in *Sublime Historical Experience* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), 217. In another passage, he complains that today it is the sociologists, writers, and political commentators who give better expression to past experiences than historians. *Ibid.*, 235.

331 Here I am purposely avoiding a detailed consideration of whether literal meaning—veiled by the metaphor—actually exists and allows itself to be unveiled, whether it is

confirmed by evidence and by other citations), and on their basis he creates a grand metaphor, or imputes general meaning. If, as Max Black³³² says, a semantic displacement takes place within the semantic fields of both elements of the metaphor, it means that the historiographical work, or the grand metaphor, is based on a displacement in relation to the literal meanings of its constituent claims. A distortion and a superstructure thus arise—and these are subject to confrontation not with reality, but with other texts. In order to evaluate the “truthfulness” of a given historical narration, we compare it not with “the reality of the past” (even if this reality were immediately given, though it is not), but with other narrations, in which a similar displacement has taken place. We can, however, evaluate the value of a historiographical vision also through its “distance” from literal meanings, its strangeness in relation to the series of true affirmative statements, much as literary theorists typically evaluate the daring of a metaphor. As he tries to introduce a factor which would help evaluate particular historical narratives, Ankersmit writes:

...the more foreign the metaphorical level is in relation to the literal meaning, the better the narration *as* narration. Narration, which has the tendency to break down into its literal components is less satisfying than narration which successfully overcomes the literalness of individual sentences of which it is composed. (...). In other words, the best historical narration is that in which the proposed presentation of the whole is expressed in the best way.

This allows for a certain intersubjective possibility of verification:

A list of true sentences is only a list of true sentences and there can be nothing wrong with it. The historian, however, who uses true sentences to propose a vision of the past which they do not support, risks saying something which is not in agreement with the past itself. A simple list of sentences cannot be undermined by historical research, but the metaphorical, narrative dimension can be.³³³

induced (evoked), or whether it just does not exist. Depending on one’s methodological or philosophical premises, the spectrum of answers includes all thinkable variations, from complete correspondence to what is represented, through various deformations and evocations, all the way to pure conventionality and creativity of metaphorical expression.

332 See Max Black, “Metaphor,” *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 55, New Series (1954): 279–292. When he discusses the interactive theory of metaphor, Black speaks about a displacement of the primary and the secondary object in the semantic field.

333 Frank Ankersmit, “Wprowadzenie do wydania polskiego” [Introduction to the Polish Edition], in *Narracja, reprezentacja, doświadczenie: studia z teorii historiografii* [Narration, Representation, Experience: Studies in Historiographical Theory] by Frank Ankersmit, trans. and ed. Ewa Domańska (Krakow: Universitas, 2004), 43. For a discussion of an obverse understanding of the “daring” of a metaphor, which relies on the closeness of the compared elements, see Harald Weinrich, “Semantik Der Kühnen

Ankersmit does not explain what it means to be in agreement with “the past itself,” since in many other places he speaks about verification criteria that are based on intersubjective notions, on metaphors contained in other narrations, or on aesthetics. For him, the last of these is where science and history can meet.³³⁴ It is important to notice the essential fact that here the historiographical record gets separated from the “list of true sentences” and gets situated in the sphere of intentions, expectations, and confrontations—i.e., in the broadly understood horizon of human behavior. The object of the historical text—the metaphor—makes the author’s vision present, and this vision is the fulfillment of the need for meaning rather than the need for truth. And meaning accepted by an audience is ideology.

As Michał Paweł Markowski argues, ideology is strictly connected with representation. In the act of substituting something for something else, which is the simplest way of explaining representation, a kind of transaction, or exchange, takes place, in which the participants of the act of representation (or the “spectacle” as is often said)³³⁵ expect a benefit in the form of fulfilled needs. At the basis of constructing representations—and Markowski suggests that this is the essence of all human cultural activity—there is the economic principle of creating equivalence, which makes it possible to exchange our needs for goods which will satisfy them. Regardless of whether representation faithfully conveys something which actually exists (mimetic representation), or whether it appears in the place of something nonexistent and deformed (performative representation)—it is the result of a transaction, the essence of which consists in giving the recipient what he needs. As a result, Markowski’s argument arrives at the description of representation as a way in which the I deals with the world: representation replaces a world which is nonexistent or unknown, and therefore dangerous. It is the imposition of meaning onto experience. If the needs of a larger group to whom the representation is addressed converge, members of the

Metapher” [The Semantics of Brave Metaphor], *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte*, no. 3 (1963): 325–344.

334 Frank Ankersmit, *Historical Representation* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), 97–98.

335 One can find theater metaphors applied to historiography in the writings of Markowski, White, Ankersmit, Ricoeur, Foucault, Heidegger and Rorty; they help characterize those of the historian’s procedures which are aimed at authenticating his narration. The historian puts on objectivist masks and carries out an evidentiary process, which ends with a sentence favorable to the historian himself. Presentation supports representation.

group come together in a community, and the formation of an ideology takes place, which can be described as the “representation of representation.”³³⁶

The strict connection between representation and ideology (one does not exist without the other) leads to the obvious and simultaneously subversive conclusion that no cultural product (including historiography) arises altruistically, and each is entangled not only with the conscious intentions of the author, but also with his whole conception of reality, his complex system of relations with the world, his “configuration” of the world:

Representation “configures” reality according to a specified model, which we have called ideology, and in this sense every representation is “thetic” (...), it thus constitutes meaning, which reality would not have without it. (...). Representation thus configures reality, which means that everyone who inscribes himself into a specific ideology of representation takes a specific position vis-à-vis reality, or—quite literally—formulates some *thesis* about it.³³⁷

Reality is given to us directly in sensory perception, but when we try to express it in any way we need an ideology, which will give us the framework for formulating different ways of representing our perceptions. Ideology precedes representation; it conditions representation and imposes all subsequent, speculative solutions.³³⁸ For our purposes, let us therefore note: there is no

336 Michał Paweł Markowski, “O reprezentacji” [On Representation] in *Kulturowa teoria literatury* [Cultural Theory of Literature], ed. Michał Paweł Markowski and Ryszard Nycz (Krakow: Universitas, 2006), 317. This existential-therapeutic character of representation conceals the radical claim, which is also obvious in this context, that reality *as such* does not exist (because if it existed it would not need representation). All national ideologies would thus bring together people whose need for meaning could be satisfied by similar representations. The nation is a community of fulfillment.

337 *Ibid.*, 328. Markowski identifies four ideologies of representation: epistemological—representation is a means of ordering and categorizing the world which is accessible to knowledge; “representation *instead* of reality”; ontological—that which is represented becomes fully present in the representation itself; apophatic—the confession of not believing in representation, lament about the incongruity of words and things, or the prohibition of representation and resignation from representation; and aesthetic—representation is entirely autonomous and has nothing in common with reality; representations are “empty,” untranslatable into the world of experience.

338 According to this typology, Ankersmit’s appeal to the category of historical experience and his departure from the “praise of subjectivity” in his later texts, would be a turn from an epistemological to an ontological model of representation. See Ewa Domańska, “Miejsce Franka Ankersmita w narratywistycznej filozofii historii” [Ankersmit’s Place in the Narrativist Philosophy of History] in *Narracja, reprezentacja, doświadczenie: studia z teorii historiografii* [Narration, Representation, Experience: Studies in Historiographical Theory] by Frank Ankersmit, trans. and ed. Ewa Domańska, 24–25.

historical narration without prior assumptions about how the past should be represented. There is no historiography without ideology.

Markowski mentions one more fundamentally important issue, which is essential for our historical reflection. It is thanks to representation that the world can come into existence. That which has not found its representation does not exist.³³⁹ A given thing can appear in a discursive, communicative—i.e., comprehensible—form only through the mediation of representation, and in that sense—we can repeat after Schopenhauer and the young Nietzsche—the world is will and representation. Referring to narrative historiography, Ankersmit says that it is not only representation that symbolizes reality, but reality is also a symbol of representation.³⁴⁰ A thing is real insofar as it has been represented by means of a symbol, but the reverse is also true: the thing is a symbol of its representation in the sense that it refers to it. In order to be able to create a meaningful representation of reality, one has to push reality a certain distance away, to step outside of it, to “configure” it for representation. So long as we remain inside reality (without distance, reflection, and so on) we cannot ascribe anything meaningful to it. We cannot construct a representation.

The consequences of this mutuality for historiography become clear only alongside another claim which we made several times already: the past does not exist. It does not exist in a way that allows for perceptual verification, unlike objects, whose existence can be represented, for example, in works of art. The past has passed. The historian has evidence of it at his disposal, and this evidence conditions and regulates his choice of the model of representing the past.³⁴¹ He is not able to free himself from his own—individual or collective—

339 “The representability of the world is thus the guarantee of its sense, (...) that which is not represented does not exist, lack of representation also means lack of existence.” Markowski, “O reprezentacji” [On Representation], 321. The constituting is mutual and symmetrical: reality conditions representation, but representation also conditions reality.

340 Ankersmit, “Historical Representation,” 113. This claim appears when Ankersmit discusses the narrativist claims made by Arthur C. Danto in his book *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983).

341 A brief digression is appropriate here. One can find an excellent illustration of the perspectivalism and subjectivism of the historian’s viewpoint in today’s arguments about the Polish IPN [Institute of National Remembrance] and its right to pass judgments on the past. Analogies to a court trial are all too visible. Employees of this institution have access to an impressive amount of historical sources, which, they are convinced, contain solid and true (meaning: verifiable by means of documents) knowledge about the past. But over and over again, the accused, or the protagonists of the files deposited at IPN, protest that the documents do not contain everything, that some of them have been destroyed or falsified, that the truth about the past is entirely different. Yet other participants of this trial—witnesses, journalists, historians—point to

perspective for the simple reason that this is never possible in the process of forming representations; and this means that as he writes history he also writes himself. To be more precise, he writes himself anew.³⁴² In the representation, he evokes not so much the presence of the nonexistent past, but rather his own presence—looking at the past and intending to represent new things. He represents his nonexistent but thinkable self. The past is a great tool in this operation, since it is still surrounded by the nimbus of “objectivity” and “truthfulness,” in accordance with the (seemingly) logical belief that what has taken place in the past is real. The magnetism of history lies not in the representation of truth, but in the historian’s longing for truth. It is another form of the Heideggerian domestication of what is alien in the world, and the realization of what Gadamer calls “effective history.” The same longing is experienced by the audience as well. The grand historical metaphor soothes the pain of existence by providing literary closure.

5. Closure

As Hayden White has shown, rhetorical figures play an important role in the writing of history. When the historian attempts to formulate a statement about his object, language provides him with existing compositional schemas, suggests the use of concrete, proven phrases and expressions, provides metaphors, and displays a range of genres; to put it briefly, language imposes organization onto the text. One of the most frequently observed interventions of linguistic schemas into representations of the past is the composition of a whole, which consists of a beginning, middle, and end—a schema already present in Aristotelian arguments. In this way, too, history differs radically from its object, since it is configured according to literary norms, whose framework is designated by the creative imperative: the narration needs to be started and finished. The choice of the inaugural and final points is in no way accidental, it belongs to the individual

the fact that IPN employees represent (sic!) a certain ideology, political party, fraction, etc., and this makes them a side in the dispute. Because all this concerns recent history, which is still remembered, everyone is partial, and not even the highest office could provide an anchor of “truthfulness.” In evaluating events, everyone sees what he sets out to see.

342 As Tadeusz Sławek says: “History is the history of my body (...), it is the body that called this history into being.” Further along in his argument Sławek points to the existential aspect of the work of the historian: each time he must rethink the “concept of the human subject,” in other words, he must think himself through. See Tadeusz Sławek, “Morze i ziemia: dyskursy historii” [Land and Sea: Discourses of History] in *Facta Ficta*, ed. Wojciech Kalaga and Tadeusz Sławek, 28.

perspective of the author and—as critics of colonialism have shown—it also serves an ideology. Since we are discussing Aristotle, we should once again return to the theater metaphor. The past takes place in history, the way ancient tragedy takes place on the stage—the past also contains a drama which demands a resolution and an ending. What is at issue is not just the moral of the story, which, by the way, is often part of historical writing and introduces a political-ethical level of evaluation and hierarchical arrangement of texts (ideology). The metaphor must have its full shape in order to be meaningful and to fulfill its ordering-therapeutic role. The story has to end. If we reach for history, it is to find an answer to a series of questions there, and the answer must be formulated in accordance with the rules of rhetoric and poetics, and so it must also have an ending (an answer without an ending is not an answer).

The paradox lies in the fact that history—if it wishes to correspond to reality (truth)—cannot end, for events continue without interruption until the present moment. A historian who introduces a caesura which designates an end of some fragment of the past, carries out a “semantic displacement” within the grand metaphor, and suggests that stopping the story at that particular point is justified, i.e., meaningful. By creating an end, the historian designates the end of history, which makes no sense from the point of view of historicity. By giving a full, closed shape to the metaphor, the author in essence gives up its historicity for the sake of its literariness. Here, once again, the difference between history and literature is obliterated.

On the other hand, the ending of history (or rather, to put it more precisely, ending *in* history) is indispensable from the point of view of meaning, and from the point of view of that function which we call “therapeutic.” Every designation of an ending is temporary and, as it were, substitutive, since the end is situated among events in such a way that it stops their flow for a moment, in order to allow us to see the meaning hidden in them. To put it in the perspective of existential philosophy: through the end of others we can touch our own death. This gives us a sense of how our being-in-the-world can be fulfilled, what possible forms individual experience can take when “fate is fulfilled.” As Heidegger says: “In this way a termination of *Dasein* becomes ‘objectively’ accessible.”³⁴³

343 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 281. Here Heidegger points to the phenomenon of the end as “the constitution of the totality of *Dasein*”; death is the final fulfillment of existence and its closure, but it cannot be experienced because it is also the end of *Dasein*. Through the end of others, *Dasein* tries to experience its own death, i.e., to experience its existence in its entirety. This is impossible, but it is a fundamental imperative for our actions, since *Dasein* is Being-towards-death.

Historiography consists of stories about endings, about the resolution of conflicts which were set up in the beginning, about small catastrophes, which are the essence of historical experience. Because its justification is the formula of fulfillment, of the satisfaction of history (of its isolated part), each individual formulation and each “list of true sentences” is marked by nothing other than existential angst:

The term “catastrophe” must be put in quotation marks, since it is an “apocalypse” that has always already taken place (...), one which does not bring anything to an end, since every subsequent event announces another “catastrophe.” At the same time, the “catastrophe” understood in this way becomes a permanent state, or rather a permanent announcement of apocalypse: since “catastrophe” does not “end” anything, since it is “an end deprived of an end,” it must, as it were, contradict itself. An end “without end” is not a true “end.” The catastrophic character of history consists in stopping, in freezing the apocalypse, in which events and phenomena take place. It is “death” but it is simultaneously the “stopping” of death, and the deprivation of death of its aura of finality.³⁴⁴

When, against the author, we remove the excessive quotations marks from this paragraph, we can see yet another therapeutic aspect of historical writing. History speaks about catastrophes which took place, yet despite these the world continues to exist—everyone can derive consolation from this, experience something like a sense of pity and dread, and then a sense of relief that the end is not final, that it was only played out in front of us in historical costumes, so to speak. Although a catastrophe has taken place in history, the world still exists and events are still happening. It is as if the end of the drama were fabricated, and life goes on. Once again we find ourselves in the world of Aristotle’s *Poetics*: history works in the same way as tragedy. The experience of *catharsis* plays the role of an antidote against the fear of death, and the closure which history receives within the plot is an indispensable component of representation.

History must designate an ending and close the narrative not only to fill out the form of the story (to complete the metaphor) but also to fulfill the expectations of the audience. In other words: to finalize the transaction. The commodity exchanged in this transaction is not the truth about the past, but the principle of pleasure and catharsis needed by the reader. His turn to history is a question about the end, about closure of the past, but it is not a question raised from the position of one who seeks truth, but rather one who needs an ending in order to achieve existential satisfaction. The understanding of history, the discovery of truth about the past is preceded, or rather replaced, by the imperative to recognize one’s own fate. This is the meaning of waiting for the ending, which could be put into a trivial formula:

344 Slawek, “Morze i ziemia: dyskursy historii” [Land and Sea: Discourses of History], 36.

“How will it all end?” with the implication: “What will happen to me?” Questions directed toward the past are questions about identity. History, like literature, eases the pain of existence through repetition. Paul Ricoeur expressed this with precision: “The writing of history becomes literary writing.”³⁴⁵

6. Hermeneutics: The Aporia of Truth

In his hermeneutical masterwork *Memory, History, Forgetting*, Paul Ricoeur attempted to summarize all 20th-century questions and problems concerning historical narration, hence the above sentence about literary creativity is his starting point and not his conclusion.³⁴⁶ For him, all historiographical representation is obviously dependent on narration and he therefore believes that one cannot speak about representation without referring to poetics, rhetoric, and literary fiction. This dependence prevents historical texts from being purely referential, since narrative structure places all extra-linguistic references outside the text, and rhetorical and even simple stylistic devices work similarly. The closeness of representation and fiction causes the ceaseless “entanglement” of history, which is sentenced to realize the “referential impulse of the historical narrative” exclusively through the text of the story. Ricoeur notes a significant difference between history and memory. Both employ representation and both rely on pictorial images, which appear in the mind as certain pictures, since

345 Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, 190.

346 Here Ricoeur largely repeated and developed the main theses of this 3-volume *Time and Narrative* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984–1988); Teresa Walas has provided a useful discussion of these in the already cited *Czy jest możliwa inna historia literatury?* [Is a Different History of Literature Possible?], 65–72. One of the fundamental conclusions proposed in *Time and Narrative* is the thesis about the mutual interpenetration of history and fiction. Ricoeur’s auto-interpretation sounds like this: “This interweaving consists in the fact that ‘history and fiction each concretize their respective intentionalities only by borrowing from the intentionality of the other’ [*Time and Narrative* 3, 181]. On the one side, we can speak of the historicization of fiction to the degree that the willing suspension of suspicion [regarding the truthfulness of *quasi-judgments*—K.Z.] rests on a neutralization of “realist” features not only of the most elaborated kind of historical narratives but also of the most spontaneous narratives of everyday life, as well as (...) narrative conversations. (...) On the other side, an effect of ‘fictionalizing history’ is produced, assignable to the impact of the imaginary in this regard...” Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, 559–560. The argument leads to a thesis about the fictionalization of historical discourse as the interpenetration of readability and visibility in the framework of historical representation.

memory itself has an “iconic constitution.”³⁴⁷ History differs from memory, however, in that in addition to “visibility,” it also operates through the text, or through “readability,” which Ricoeur compares to static and dynamic elements of tragedy in Aristotle’s framework, and which could just as well be compared to Ingarden’s two-dimensional construction of the literary work, in which layers and phases can be differentiated.³⁴⁸ History is thus both illustrative and sequential—the historical story can be both understood and seen.

When he relates history to literature, Ricoeur emphasizes the difference between types of pacts which the authors make with the readers in each case. In literary works (Ricoeur compares historiography and the realist novel, which, as we have already pointed out, is closest to the imperative of referentiality), from the very beginning the reader is directed toward other “unreal” referents, while the reader of history searches for the “real” world in the text:

A novel, even a realist novel, is something other [th]an a history book. They are distinguished from each other by the nature of the implicit contract between the writer and the reader. (...) In opening a novel, the reader is prepared to enter an unreal universe concerning which the question where and when these things took place is incongruous. (...) In opening a history book, the reader expects, under the guidance of a mass of archives, to re-enter a world of events that actually occurred.³⁴⁹

When the historian presents his work to his audience, he promises to meet the audience’s expectations concerning (broadly and imprecisely understood) accuracy and honesty, which means that the history will be presented by means of a solid, scientific representation which Ricoeur calls “standing for” (*représentance*, which is to be distinguished from *representation*).³⁵⁰ The

347 Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, 261. In analyzing the difference between history and memory Ricoeur has probably not paid enough attention to the simple observation that memory allows the mind to see that which has been perceived earlier, while history most often uses representation to evoke the presence of something which was never an object of the author’s perception. And recording someone else’s perception is already representation, a representation with two degrees—with all the existential consequences which we discussed above.

348 Roman Ingarden, “The Basic Structure of the Literary Work,” in *The Literary Work of Art: An Investigation of the Borderlines of Ontology, Logic, and Theory of Language*, by Roman Ingarden, trans. by George Grabowicz (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1979).

349 Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, 261.

350 By *standing for* he understands the entirety of the historian’s operations—expectations, demands, and overcoming of obstacles—undertaken for the purpose of authenticating the reconstruction of past events. *Standing for* is a version of representation, but one which, by evoking the presence of the nonexistent past, creates a substitution of it,

novelistic pact is based on a double convention—suspension of referentiality and maintenance of tension—while the historical pact assumes that the text will speak about events which came into existence before narration turned them into facts. The experiences of involvement and tension which accompany the act of reading history are additional phenomena which, so to speak, just happen to arise.

Ricoeur's entire intricate argument returns, however, to its point of departure with the claim that through "a closure internal to the plot" the novel creates "a sense of an ending," that is, "the very act of recounting comes to split off from that 'real.'"³⁵¹ Lending credence to a historical story by using models from literary fiction does not have to undermine its credibility; on the contrary, as we remember from Heidegger's writings, it can even support it. The conjectured truth of historical representation must, however, depart from the concept of truth and move toward notions which replace truth (from the "real" to "as if"). That which is represented in some form corresponds to that which was, but for Ricoeur the essence of this correspondence is still elusive.

To address this, Ricoeur draws attention to one more aspect of the problem. Representation is the evocation of the presence of something which is absent, but the absence of history is specific and labile:

...the absent thing itself gets split into disappearance into and existence in the past. Past things are abolished, but no one can make it be that they should not have been.

As a result, one can see practically two different absences here, the real and the representational:

Absence thus would be split between absence as intended by the present image and the absence of past things as past in relation to their "having been" [Heidegger's term—K.Z.]. It is in this sense that "formerly" would signify reality, but the reality of the past. (...) And the assertive vehemence of the historian's representation as standing for the past is authorized by nothing other than the positivity of the "having been" intended across the negativity of the "being no longer."³⁵²

The past reveals itself—somewhat like a phenomenon—in one aspect of the mental constitution, which he calls the "historical condition." Ricoeur's position is basically not that different from what Heidegger established regarding the question of the historicity of *Dasein*, though he introduces a small but significant supplement. The ontological positivity of facts derives from their status of evidence of something that has come into existence in the past. They testify not at the level of details, but as witnesses to being which once "was." According to

which has some form of existence (not "is" but "was"). Hence the thesis about the "surplus of being"; Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, 274.

351 Ibid., 276.

352 Ibid., 280.

Ricoeur, historical representation leads to the “surplus of being” which affects that which is to be represented. Markowski designates this understanding of representation by the term “ontological representation,” and Ricoeur believed it to be “the least bad way to render homage to a reconstructive effort.”³⁵³

Our central problem of differentiating between history and literary fiction is not satisfactorily solved by Ricoeur’s hermeneutics, and the proposals and digressions of the author of *Time and Narrative* lead, at best, to the conclusion that this problem is unsolvable. In any case, it cannot be solved in a way that would be satisfying for historians, which is to say a way that would support the notion that their field is scientific in the strict sense of the word. The manner in which past phenomena exist in historical narration is too similar to the operations of representation which characterize literary fiction; this makes it impossible to defend the thesis about the objectivity of the historical discipline, regardless of the degree of truthfulness of the sentences which comprise historical texts. Ricoeur himself arrives at a thesis about the triple character of historical interpretation, which is comprised by the succession of the constituting of archives (the investigation of sources), explanation/understanding (the explication of meanings, establishing of facts, i.e., interpretation proper), and the representative phase (subjective judgments, synthesis, the grand/great metaphor). He then uses Jacques Rancière’s arguments about the poetics of historical terms³⁵⁴ to once again claim something which he already established, and which, moreover, was his starting point: the link between the historian’s present and the past of the events which he discusses is “not entirely transparent to itself.”³⁵⁵ The category of forgetting, which Ricoeur introduces at the end of his impressive work, as well as the connection between memory and forgiveness, transposes all these reflections onto the ethical-political plane, but that is an altogether different story.

7. Tipping the Scales

In closing, let us consider the problem of the “scientific” and “literary” nature of historiography from two more philosophical perspectives—ones which, it

353 Ibid., 567.

354 He refers to Jacques Rancière’s *The Names of History: On the Poetics of Knowledge*, trans. Hassan Melehy (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), which situated historical discourse precisely at the boundary between the social sciences and poetics, since at a certain point it “escapes literature, gives itself the status of a science and signifies this status” [Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, 578].

355 Ibid., 339.

seems, produced the decisive arguments. These perspectives come from two attacks: from the position of “the archaeology of the human sciences,” as Michel Foucault put it in the subtitle of his *Words and Things*, and from the perspective of pragmatism, advocated by Richard Rorty. In two different ways, these perspectives undermined the objective imperative of the humanities, not in order to negate it, but to free it from the unnecessary burden of unrealizable expectations. They treat history as the foundation of all the so-called human sciences, and as the historicity of all interpretive and cognitive processes, which thus also belongs to the very constitution of man’s existence in the world. History in a narrower sense, in turn, as historiography, constitutes a constantly renewed attempt to record experience and understanding, which, by definition—as historical, i.e., as variable in time—can never become universal.

Foucault started with a dual premise: on the one hand, history precedes other human sciences and from the beginning of time it has been something like a reservoir of cultural models (“transmission of the Word and of Example, vehicle of tradition”³⁵⁶); on the other hand—with the arrival of the 19th century and the discovery of historicity in nature—man, who fell out of the “vast historical stream” of things, became de-historicized (or his historicity came to be understood in a different way). In other words, man noticed the divergence between himself and the world, and this knocked him out of the world’s rhythms, deprived him of a central position in the world, and also of harmonious belonging to it:

The human being no longer has any history: or rather, since he speaks, works, and lives, he finds himself interwoven in his own being with histories that are neither subordinate to him nor homogeneous with him. By the fragmentation of the space over which Classical knowledge extended in its continuity, by the folding over of each separated domain upon its own development, the man who appears at the beginning of the nineteenth century is “de-historicized.”³⁵⁷

The search for one’s own history is thus a result of de-historicization. Foucault appeals to Heidegger and brings attention to the historicity which is written into being, and which man discovers and investigates precisely as his own history. This primordial historicity of *Dasein* is revealed through the fact that historiography stops having the form of a simple chronicle of events and takes on the form of searching for “the general laws of development.”³⁵⁸ Its relation with the human sciences becomes complicated by a bifurcation, or by a

356 Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage Books, 1970), 367.

357 *Ibid.*, 368–369.

358 *Ibid.*, 370.

doubling: each particular discipline, seemingly by its very nature, is lined with man's historicity, and it therefore cannot "escape the movement of History";³⁵⁹ historical modifications, in turn, also influence the choice of methods and the object of the human sciences. To simplify, one could say that both the form and the content of the human sciences is historically variable, and they are therefore also variable in historiography. This is the point when the scientific nature of historical description becomes hopelessly entangled with the literariness of its methods and motivations:

The more History attempts to transcend its own rootedness in historicity, and the greater the efforts it makes to attain, beyond the historical relativity of its origin and its choices, the sphere of universality, the more clearly it bears the marks of its historical birth, and the more evidently there appears through it the history of which it is itself a part (...); inversely, the more it accepts its relativity, and the more deeply it sinks into the movement it shares with what it is recounting, then the more it tends to the slenderness of the narrative, and all the positive content it obtained for itself through the human sciences is dissipated.³⁶⁰

Foucault says that history does not give the human sciences a chance to come into existence in the "element of universality," and this claim applies to history itself insofar as it belongs to the humanities. All scientific determinations are displaced and relativized by the historicity of both the subject and the object, which both conditions them and makes them possible in the first place (it constitutes them as subject and object). The presentation of the results, the outcomes of investigation, or the conclusions in the humanities implicitly contain an undermining of their universality, since they concern something variable and are done from a changing perspective. Every particular determination contains hidden information that it may become subject to change, or even that it should change, since only when it changes will it gain (relative) credibility. The actual object of investigation in the humanities is thus the unconscious, i.e., the display of that which is yet to be said. As Foucault puts it: "History shows that everything that has been thought will be thought again by a thought that does not yet exist."³⁶¹

Even though this seems like a step into the abyss of total relativism, it is, instead, solid determination of the ground upon which one can *honestly* construct meaningful statements in the humanities. Honestly, i.e., rejecting the impossible while getting rid of the demands of objectivity that would reach beyond the human perspective, accepting limitations and the endless shifting of

359 Ibid.

360 Ibid., 371.

361 Ibid., 372.

perspectives—and thereby also determining the rational framework of all discourse. Foucault established some points of departure for the humanities, negating former dilemmas and assumptions, removing the notion of single comprehensive meaning, and introducing the play of various “wholes” in its place. There is no type of knowledge which would establish meaning since

... the positive knowledge of man is limited by the historical positivity of the knowing subject, so that the moment of finitude is dissolved in the play of a relativity from which it cannot escape, and which itself has value as an absolute. To be finite, then, would simply be to be trapped in the laws of a perspective which, while allowing a certain apprehension—of the type of perception or understanding—prevents it from ever being universal and definitive intellection.³⁶²

Absolute value can be assigned only to the play of relativities, which provides not so much knowledge but rather something like a “type of perception or understanding.” The lability of this configuration, which I call a configuration of “double historicity” (of both the subject and the object of cognition), does not exclude knowledge, it only deprives it of the illusion of universality. To put it differently still, the fact that we are finite brings about the limitation of knowledge to the level of “regional wholes,” and history allows these to relate to one another, to confront or supplement one another, not on the basis of complementarity, but on the basis of difference. In the case of historiography, this means the constant writing in of successive phenomena as those which are “not yet told;” it means the search for new points of departure and the construction of successive grand metaphors (positivities, as Foucault calls them—fr. *positivité*) with the awareness that they enter into relations with the already-existing ones according to rules of a game, and that they come from an inexhaustible reservoir. What is most important for us, however, is that, according to Foucault, historiography oscillates on the boundary between positive science and *récit*, or a story about existential possibilities which have not yet been exploited a story which is a play of variability. This final point is also the condition of any analysis of man. In Foucault’s formulation, that which was previously seen as an intransgressible boundary of historical scientificity is absorbed by the immemorial dynamism and confrontation of syntheses.

We include Richard Rorty in our survey to bring attention to his profound exploration of the very core of the problem of scientificity, whose objectivity was also questioned in the realm of the natural sciences. For Rorty, the question of verifying scientific claims is synonymous with questions concerning the set of beliefs and desires, which could or should be served by that claim. Moreover, this second question—which expresses the essence of pragmatism—rises above

individual relativism which gives everyone a right to his or her own perspective; it establishes a higher point of reference: the solidarity of the community. As an ideology, pragmatism uses the concept of truth derived not from correspondence between words and things, which is what pragmatism had done, and which one can still encounter today, but from the *utility* of the proclaimed thesis. “From a pragmatist point of view, to say that what is rational for us now to believe may not be *true*, is simply to say that somebody may come up with a better idea.”³⁶³ By making this claim Rorty also situates the acceptance provided by a community above any references to a non-human reality. Pragmatism deprives humanity of metaphysical illusions, which for ages have provided consolation and sanctioned privileges; in its place it introduces the establishment of truth on the basis of a plebiscite. By its act of acceptance, the community establishes rules of utility, which hold until they are replaced by new and better ones. Rorty says that “the desire for objectivity is in part a disguised form of the fear of death,”³⁶⁴ which effectively once more shifts the question back toward Heidegger and Freud.

The situation is particularly unclear in the humanities, where the demand for objectivity encounters serious difficulties in the process of establishing the rules of scientificity in general. The very concept of truth is a source of insurmountable obstacles because:

Humanists—for example, philosophers, theologians, historians, and literary critics—have to worry about whether they are being “scientific,” whether they are entitled to think of their conclusions, no matter how carefully argued, as worthy of the term “true.”³⁶⁵

And since talking about “objective values” which replace “hard” facts (which constitutes avoidance) introduces an even greater level of generality and opaqueness, the social consequence of this is the rejection of all synthesizing strategies. Society

... treats the humanities as on a par with the arts, and thinks of both as providing pleasure rather than truth.³⁶⁶

Rorty’s strategy is based not on a redefinition of the objectivist paradigm, but on the rejection of this paradigm as another superstition, almost religious in nature. In its place, he proposes the concept of “rationality” understood as anti-dogmatism and openness to discussion, whose rational effect would be

363 Richard Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth: Philosophical Papers* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 23.

364 *Ibid.*, 32.

365 *Ibid.*, 35.

366 *Ibid.*, 36.

“unforced agreement.” In the humanities, it is impossible to separate sentences which convey “facts” from other sentences termed “judgments.” (Which are less true? More subjective?) The determination of this difference can happen, according to Rorty, only on the basis of a certain collective agreement, and its value is simply confirmed in action, which practically eliminates division into facts and judgments. As a result, Rorty rejects both. Since objectivity is indefinable, it cannot be arranged on a graduated scale. Social consensus as the criterion of truth in the human sciences, conditioned by the *need* and *utility* of the claim in question, is the only paradigm of scientificity acceptable from the point of view of consistent rationalism.³⁶⁷ Here reaching for absolute truth has aesthetic value—as constant rebounding from the impossible, balancing over the abyss between ourselves and the world, but this activity has nothing in common with traditionally understood science.

From the point of view of pragmatism then, historiography would be nothing more than the fulfillment of a community’s expectations in a story, done in such a way that the community would accept the method for selecting and presenting the facts as *true*, i.e., as conforming to the community’s presuppositions (desires, demands, and needs). The verifiability of facts used in the construction of historical narration is thus based on their acceptance by the community, which has a cultural relationship with these facts. Hence, within the pragmatist perspective, the evaluative test of truth consists in confrontation with cultures which bring counter-representations of reality (and of the past) into our own method:

Beliefs suggested by another culture must be tested by trying to weave them together with beliefs we already have. On the other hand, we can always enlarge the scope of “us” by regarding other people, or cultures, as members of the same community of inquiry as ourselves—by treating them as part of the group among whom unforced agreement is to be sought.³⁶⁸

By the same token, no historiography has the final word in relation to a given cultural experience, and what is more, even within the framework of one community (one epoch, one space, one language, and so on) it is impossible to

367 We saw similar verification regulations in Markowski’s theories of representation. Need and utility govern the exchange of value which takes place when a given representation is used. This is what is at the basis of ideology and politics, which arise precisely from social consensus regarding the utility of certain claims about man (humanities). And because by definition the object of these judgments (as a historical subject) is subject to change, claims about this object change as well. A single truth is out of the question. Rorty claims that “we should relish the thought that the sciences as well as the arts will *always* provide a spectacle of fierce competition between alternative theories”—thereby closing a small garden gate and opening a wide gateway, *ibid.*, 39.

368 *Ibid.*, 38.

imagine the possibility of writing history which would exhaust even a single selected topic.³⁶⁹ This banal claim has consequences in the form of cultural limits that apply to every historiography, limits which are both unavoidable and desirable, limits which make it possible to fulfill communal expectations, while at the same time exposing these expectations to evaluation by other communities. Rorty, however, made one more distinction, which seems to be useful in reflections about history. It is his distinction between “facts” and “events,” or, to simplify somewhat, the distinction between phenomena and description. His attack was directed at science as such; in our case, however, it is a particularly powerful strike against historiography. An individual event appears in scientific investigation thanks to a fact, and a fact is the representation of a given event in a form accepted by a given community. Something appears as a proof then, only because its “proofness” has been already determined as something that is possible to accept. The verification of a scientific hypothesis takes place in the framework of possible pre-existing solutions, which are taken as acceptable. A fact cannot escape its way of existing—i.e., it cannot escape from the theory that precedes it. The theory is not proven by the proof—the theory delineates the framework for the proof. To put it differently, the relationship between a certain event and the sentence which describes it takes place on the basis of prior agreement. This could be expressed in the following way: “The way in which a blank takes on the form of the die which stamps it has no analogy to the relation between the truth of a sentence and the event which the sentence is about.”³⁷⁰ The difference between the event and the explanation is like the difference between a word and a thing. There is no analogy, there is agreement. Something becomes a fact for the historian because it is allowed by the system of communication established by a given group, and not because it somehow “adheres” to the event. A strike at the notion of scientific facts demolishes professorial habits:

369 Historians, for whom the return to certain subjects and fragments of the past is connected with recalling, confirming, or formulating a moral judgment, know this well. And moral judgments are nothing other than the representation of an ideology, which the author shares with a group of potential readers, or members of the community. Another book about Katyn or the Holocaust is not intended to state “objective facts,” since these have already been told many times over, but to convince those who still have doubts, or who disagree, about the correctness about our moral judgment. Belonging to a time and a place—that is, to a given community—is important here. Slaughter carried out by Tamerlane or by the Teutonic-Livonian conquistadors provokes much less moral indignation since they apply to our community to a much lesser extent. The word “our” is decisive here.

370 *Ibid.*, 81.

Facts are hybrid entities; (...) the causes of the assertibility of sentences include both physical stimuli and our antecedent choice of response to such stimuli. To say that we must have respect for facts is just to say that we must, if we are to play a certain language game, play by the rules. To say that we must have respect for unmediated causal forces is pointless. It is like saying that the blank must have respect for the impressed die. The blank has no choice, nor do we.³⁷¹

For the historian, this strike is painful mainly because of the character of the material with which he starts his investigation. The historian supports (props up?) his theses by facts more often than by events, for the simple reason that historical sources are, for the most part, facts, i.e., interpreted events.³⁷² The actual object of historical reflection is thus not constituted by events themselves, but rather by their factual descriptions. Historians not only introduce order which would correspond to the accumulated facts—they also provide keys adequate for their ideological reception. In the evidential process (which is essentially what the historical text is for adherents of objectivism), historians thus rely on material which has been deformed in various ways by the projects of their predecessors—projects which they are not able to reconstruct.

Paradoxically, Rorty's work can also support historians, on the condition that they reconcile themselves to the narrative character of their work and give up the illusion that their theses have "objective truth." By pointing to the aesthetic, social, and linguistic verifiers of the work of humanities scholars, Rorty equates the historian and the writer and suggests that certain positive conclusions should be drawn from this. This does not lead to some general unacceptable arbitrariness where "everyone writes whatever he wants"; it only allows for greater freedom in the construction of narratives. A story about someone whose fate will be interesting to potential readers should be the goal and the referent of this way of conducting the operation of domesticating the past. And this takes place insofar as the narration also speaks about those who take part in this intra-cultural exchange themselves. Necessity determines the

371 Ibid.

372 I do not delve into the complexity of the interpretation itself here; it concerns both the historian and the authors of historical sources in the past. The problem becomes even more complicated when the latter are also historians, and their interpretation thus also has a historiographic character. From this point of view, the ancillary discipline of paleography, which provides descriptions and characterizations of sources, could be interesting. What criteria should one use to describe a find? What should be considered important and what should be rejected? Why should anything be rejected at all? The selection of how information should be read is itself information about the actual contract which is binding for the researcher.

goal. Only in this sense can a historian's vision be "true." Its agreement with reality is determined by its social utility.

* * *

The above remarks, which merely signal important problems, should make it clear that the closeness of historiography and literature is not so much a suggestion put forward by individual theoreticians, as a fact, which has gained a prominent place in contemporary philosophy. To summarize, let us use Stephen Greenblatt's words, words proclaimed, with the best of intentions, in the name of all interdisciplinary studies:

The current structure of liberal arts education often places obstacles in the way of such an analysis by separating the study of history from the study of literature as if the two were entirely distinct enterprises, but historians have become increasingly sensitive to the symbolic dimensions of social practice, while literary critics have in recent years turned with growing interest to the social and historical dimensions of symbolic practice.³⁷³

We can formulate the following conclusions:

- 1) Historiography is a hybrid, constructed with the use of a) individual sentences, which have literal meaning and which lay claim to truthfulness and scientific verification, and b) a totalizing metaphor, which belongs to the realm of literary fiction.
- 2) In addition to individual facts, the historical text also contains the subjective perspective of the author, a perspective which determines the shape and meaning of the totalizing metaphor; as he speaks about the past, the historian essentially speaks about himself.
- 3) The historian is also subject to the pressures of his cultural milieu—his community, political ideology, conventions, etc.—and his vision of the past is thus simultaneously determined in a communal manner.
- 4) That which constitutes the object of history (i.e., *de facto* that which constitutes history) is determined by the individual and his existential project, written into a turn toward the past, and by the community, whose demands are directed at the individual and at history.
- 5) The historical text is not a repetition of the past but its representation; it forms the past by a successive evocation of the presence of that which does not exist (which has passed away); representation constitutes history; history constantly arises anew, it arises as new history.

373 Stephen Greenblatt, "Culture," in *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, ed. Thomas McLaughlin and Frank Lentricchia (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1990), 230.

- 6) There is no such thing as immanent meaning of the past; historiography is the representation of meanings imparted by the author onto a sequence of events, arranged by him according to an *a priori* ideology; history depends on the perspective from which it is written.
- 7) In history, ideology becomes part of a transaction; its acceptance by an audience (the completion of the transaction) is simultaneously its legitimization; ideology is “truthful” insofar as it meets the needs of the audience (consumers).
- 8) Historiography talks about that which is accomplished and completed, and therefore capable of being grasped as a whole—in contrast to individual existence, which is never closed in the immediate, personal experience (it is never a metaphor); history is a synonym of a fulfilled life.
- 9) History serves a cathartic function which is similar to the cathartic function of literature; it leads through existential mercy and angst toward answers about presumed truthfulness (relief), and it finally unmasks its theatrical nature (fiction) in closure.
- 10) Like literature, history poses fundamental questions about identity in individual experience; it is man’s way of dealing with the world.

As we can see, the scientificity of historiography, a founder and member of the humanities, has been put into question from two perspectives—subjectivism and literariness. In the first case, history is subject to the same arguments which deprive other human sciences of their foundations—including literary studies, sociology, anthropology, and so on. Rortian solidarity as the only rational (sensible) criterion capable of providing verification brings all humanities disciplines into the play of representations, which, like stocks on the stock market, are subject to the rise and fall of their value on the market, where needs are exchanged for the pleasure of auto-identification. In the second case, historiography finds itself occupying a risky position insofar as it tells a story; this forces it to rely on the arsenal of literary means and it thus loses the status of a strict science, which it decisively claims. Like no other discipline within the humanities, history demands special respect on account of the importance and significance of its sources; at the same time, however, it exposes their unavoidable ambiguity through the process of writing. And as is often the case when illusions become excessive, their removal can only bring positive, even therapeutic results.

Chapter 4

Project Livonia

*Lepszy chleb s solą z dobrą wolą,
niżli marcypan za niewolą.*

[Bread with salt, with good will
is better than marzipan in slavery.]

Marcin Kwiatkowski from Rożyce

When Livonia was incorporated into the Polish Kingdom in 1561, it became necessary to specify what exactly was incorporated. As we already mentioned in Chapter 2, from the very beginning there were controversies concerning the usefulness and the advisability of this annexation from the point of view of Polish interests on the Baltic coast. In the end, King Sigismund II Augustus received Livonia directly from the last Master of the Teutonic Order, while administratively it was placed under the control of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. This step brought Poland into Baltic conflicts for many years, and, in the context of the middle of the 16th century, it was directed primarily against Moscow; for the citizens of the Polish-Lithuanian federation it constituted a political and administrative curiosity. Livonia was seen as a site of neighborly but unfamiliar exoticism. Its political system, its Teutonic past, its hostile and already anachronistic socio-economic structure, along with unfamiliar peasants who spoke a strange language, infused notions of Livonia with questions and superstitious elements.

The similarity to Prussia, which had been annexed 26 year earlier, was only illusory. Prussia was located nearby; it was linked to Poland by trade interests, migrations around the border region, and intensive political contacts. Historically, it was a familiar country which had been penetrated many times. Livonia, located beyond Lithuania, was culturally foreign, and even though this foreignness was a result of the influence of German culture (which was well-known in Poland), the hermetic Baltic-German knighthood commanded respect. The Polish Crown had had contacts with bourgeois, merchant, and middle class German society; here, however, it encountered a haughty aristocracy, who rigidly demanded autonomy before they deigned to listen. Their Baltic-Germanness was also more difficult to grasp, and it did not fit in with previous experiences. If Polish aristocracy occupied a privileged and superior position

throughout Central Europe, which was a result of knightly traditions, in Livonia they encountered a knightly caste whose position was even higher. This aroused respect but also created distance, which quickly changed into aversion and suspicion. Livonia was not simply unknown—among Poles it had the image of a foreign place.

A 1584 memorandum addressed by the Livonian aristocracy to Jan Zamoyski gives some sense of Polish ignorance of Livonian matters; in it, the authors present the Polish Chancellor with a series of requests concerning the new government's directives about their territory. Among other things, they ask that some of the old castles be preserved since their demolition would destroy the existing structure of the local communities (during invasions the local population hid in the castles, which is why they were so large). They also ask that Catholicism not be imposed by force (since 1533 nearly all of Livonia was Lutheran), and that promises to uphold old knightly privileges be upheld.³⁷⁴ These postulates not only testify to the fact that Livonian citizens felt threatened—they also show that Poles were unaware of Livonia's specificity. At the time, in the eyes of the decision makers, Livonia was a foreign body, and there was a clear lack of good ideas about how to make it adapt to the realities of the gentry republic.

1. Marcin Kwiatkowski from Rożyce: Outline

The first attempt to introduce Livonia into the general awareness of the Poles was undertaken in 1567, or six years after its formal incorporation into the Polish Kingdom, and two years before the Union of Lublin.³⁷⁵ The author was

374 Siemiński, *Archiwum Jana Zamoyskiego* [Jan Zamoyski Archive], vol. 3:126–128. It is worth noting differences in communication: Livonian representatives (Protestants) wrote in German, while the Chancellor (a Catholic who had converted from Calvinism) replied in Latin.

375 Juliusz Bardach's claim that Jan August Hylzen was the first author who wrote about Livonia in Polish, is thus inexact. For the sake of formality we should note that Mikołaj Chwałkowski from Chwałkowo wrote about Livonia before Hylzen in the book *Pamiętnik albo Kronika Pruskich mistrzów i książąt pruskich, tudzież Historya Inflancka y Kurlandya: z przydaniem rzeczy Pamięci godnych, z rozmaitych Kronikarzów zebrana* [Memoir or Chronicle of the Prussian Masters and Prussian Princes, or Livonian and Courlandish History: With Mention of Things Worth Remembering, Based on a Collection of Writings by Various Chroniclers] (Poznań, 1712). In the first part, Chwałkowski repeats Marcin Murinius' *Pamiętnik albo kronika Pruskich Mistrzów i książąt Pruskich* [Memoir or Chronicle of the Prussian Masters and Prussian Princes] (Toruń, 1582), while in the second part, he writes his own history of

Marcin Kwiatkowski from Rożyce (?–1588),³⁷⁶ also known by the Latinized name Quiatkovius. He published a small book, characteristically entitled *Wszystkiew Lifflandczkiew ziemie, iako przed tym sama w sobie była, krótkie a pożyteczne opisanie* [All Livonian lands, such as they formerly used to be in and of themselves, a brief and useful depiction]. The book was published in Królewiec/Königsberg by Jan Daubmann, a well-known Königsberg printer, who specialized in Reformation prints. The small book (27 pages) was clearly

the Livonian lands and Courland, with a title which betrays claims and *resentiment*: *Historia Inflandzka, reprezentująca dawność, która najwięcej to w sobie zawiera, że najsluszniejszym prawem Inflanty, jako to Ryga y inne Fortece Królom Polskim i Rzeczypospolitey przynależały y należą, w czym masz Compromis oddania onych: Anni 1710* [Livonian History, representing antiquity, which contains this truth, above all else, that by most legitimate right, Livonia, like Riga and other Fortresses, once did belong and still does belong to the Polish King and the Commonwealth, wherein you have the Compromise of relinquishing it in the Year 1710]; Murinius's work was recently published in Olsztyn: Marcin Murinius, *Kronika Mistrzów Pruskich* [Chronicle of the Prussian Masters], ed. Zbigniew Nowak (Olsztyn: Wydawnictwo Pojezierze, 1989). See also Bardach, "Piśmiennictwo polskie w Inflantach (do 1918 Roku)" [Polish Scholarship in Livonia (until 1918)], 251.

376 We do not know much about Marcin Kwiatkowski from Rożyce. We could confidently say that he was not only the first in the line of Polish-Livonian writers, but he also started the tradition of Livonia's absence in the history of scholarship. One would look for him in vain in the lexicons of Old Polish writers and in the histories of 16th-century literature. Only Karol Estreicher has made note of his work in *Bibliografia polska* [Polish Bibliography], vol. 20, 430–431, and also mentioned his *Wszystkiew Lifflandczkiew ziemie... opisanie*. [A Description of All Livonian Lands...]. Estreicher's list has to be supplemented with Philipp Melancthon's 1561 *Konfesja Augsburska* [Augsburg Confession], which Kwiatkowski edited for publication. Kwiatkowski's publication suggest that his interests were rather wide-ranging; he wrote about the origins of the Lithuanian state, citizen's rights, and also about the education of youth—compiling works about some of these, and directly translating other works (he gained greatest popularity by publishing his own translation of Pietro Paolo Vergerio's 1402 textbook entitled *De ingenuis moribus ac Liberalibus Studiis...* [On good manners and Liberal Studies], to which he gave the Polish title *Książeczki rozkoszne a wielmi użyteczne o pocziwym wychowaniu i w rozmaitych wyzwolonych naukach ćwiczeniu królewskich, książęcych, szlacheckich i inszych stanów dziełek...* [Delightful and Very Useful Little Books about the Proper Upbringing and Education in Various Liberal Arts for Children of Royal, Princely, Aristocratic, and Other Social Estates] (Königsberg in Prussia, 1564). Kwiatkowski's collected *Pisma: edycje królewieckie 1564–1577* [Works: Koenigsberg Editions, 1564–1577] including his text about Livonia, were recently published under the editorship of Marian Pawlak (Bydgoszcz: Wyższa Szkoła Pedagogiczna in Bydgoszcz, 1997). One can find a collection of biographical information about Kwiatkowski there.

intended to meet the expectations of an audience which did not know much about Livonia, and it was probably for this reason that the description it provided was to be “useful.” In the dedication, Kwiatkowski claims that his work was motivated by the desire to properly welcome the King’s commissioners who came to the princely court at Königsberg. He also apologizes for the small size of the book and for his own barely superficial knowledge:

Gdym sobie z pilnością uważał, jako bym mógł znak niejaki *meae debitae gratitudinis* naprzeciw W. W. pokazać; (...) Przyszły mi ku rękę książeczki o Lifflandckiej ziemi, nie tak wielkie, jako moim malutkim zdaniem potrzebne, i wielom naszym pożyteczne; tymem tedy *cum Mapa mundi* i z inszymi Kosmography, tudzież z powieścią statecznych ludzi jał weryfikować. A iżem około tej Lifflandckiej ziemi szersze i dostateczniejsze językiem polskim książeczki uczynił.³⁷⁷

[When I diligently believed that I could show Your Honor a certain sign *meae debitae gratitudinis*, (...) I came upon certain little books about Lifflandian lands, not very large, but, in my humble opinion, necessary, and very useful for many of our folk; and I set out to confirm their veracity against a map of the world and various cosmographies, and also against opinions of certain esteemed people. I thus created, in the Polish language, more extensive and more satisfactory books about these Lifflandian lands.]

The description of Livonia (which was then still called Liffland) was thus not based on personal experience, but on books and statements of “esteemed” persons, that is, those who are trustworthy. The author borrowed knowledge from written and oral sources, and—as the publisher of Kwiatkowski’s *Pisma* [Works] says—he was thus a compiler and an imitator rather than a geographer.³⁷⁸ At the same time, however, he called his own small work both “more extensive and more satisfactory,” implicitly juxtaposing it against other works, which were not satisfactory. The contrariness of this way of arguing is clearly connected with the rhetoric of a dedication, in which one is supposed to both mark his own humility and the uniqueness of the gift. But it also hides a Prussian citizen’s suspicion that Poles do not know much about their newly-

377 Marcin Kwiatkowski, *Wszystkiej Lifflandczkiej ziemie, iako przed tym sama w sobie była, krótkie a pożyteczne opisanie* [All Livonian Lands, as they Formerly Used to Be in and of Themselves, a Brief and Useful Description] (Królewiec: Jan Daubman, 1567). Here I rely on a photocopy available in the Latvijas Valsts Vēstures Arhīvs [Latvian State Historical Archive] in Riga, (LVVA), 6984, vol. 1, issue 3, no. 1. Kwiatkowski used the form “Lifflandczkiej” only in the title; later on he consistently uses the form “Lifflandckiej.” For all citations originally written in Old Polish, the original text is provided and followed by a translation into modern English.

378 Kwiatkowski, *Pisma: edycje królewieckie* [Works: Koenigsberg Editions], XVI.

acquired lands.³⁷⁹ The description is to be “brief and useful,” i.e., it is supposed to contain the necessary basic information. It is to delineate the shape of that which goes by the name Liffland. It is to be an outline of the whole.

As a whole, Livonia does come across as spectacular. Already in the introduction Kwiatkowski provides a handy list of symbols which he uses to mark the castles and cities occupied by Moscow (22), Sweden (5), Prince Magnus (4), and those which have been demolished and abandoned (11), not counting Courlandish castles and those which belonged to bishops. Foreigners occupy half of Livonia. Despite formal incorporation treaties, it was the presence of the military which decided about actual affiliation, and it was probably this aspect that Kwiatkowski wanted to point out to the king’s commissioners. His attitude toward the Swedes and the Danes was rather benevolent, while he ascribed the worst characteristics to Moscow:

Tu nie oznajmuję ani wypisuję komór, to jest dworów, ani mniejszych urzędów, którą wszystkie ziemice ze wszystkimi kluczami, starostwy, miasta, zamkami, dworami i wszelakimi urzędami, tak wielkimi jako małymi, zapamiętały Moskwicin, naprzeciw przykazaniu Bożemu i prawu świeckiemu, posiadł. A Panie Boże daj, o co się mamy ustawicznie modlić, i sami się do tego z pilnością przyczynić, iżęby jego Królewska M. tego gwałtownika prawa Bożego i Ludzkiego, a rozlewcę niewinnej krwi chrześcijańskiej, mógł potłumić.³⁸⁰

[Here I do not announce or list the customs chambers, i.e., manors, or lesser offices, or all the estates with their villages, starosties, cities, castles, manors, and all kinds of offices, both great and minor, which the fervent Muscovite took over, against God’s commandments, and against secular laws. Grant, Lord God—we are to pray for this ceaselessly and ourselves contribute to it diligently—that his Royal Majesty would vanquish this violator of divine and human law, who spills innocent Christian blood.]

While enumerating the castles, moreover, Kwiatkowski scrupulously noted all the ones which had been burned down and demolished by Moscow. He thus also made his mark as a precursor of Polish-Livonian Russophobia. Kwiatkowski was a Protestant and an active champion of the Reformation; in 1561 he published in Königsberg the famous *Augustanna* or *Augsburg Confession*—which summarizes the principles of the Lutheran faith. When he was composing *Wszystkiew Lifflandckiew ziemie opisanie*, the Reformation was flourishing in Livonia, the

379 Among those to whom the dedication was addressed was Jan Krzysztoforski (1518–1585), a Wieluń Castellan and the King’s Secretary, who was also a well-known bibliophile and art patron, and who thus had a rather extensive humanities background. As often happened in such cases—he was a Calvinist.

380 Kwiatkowski, *Wszystkiew Lifflandczkiew ziemie opisanie* [A Description of All Livonian Lands...], 8–9.

Rigan Archbishopric practically ceased to exist, and the local community became concerned about attempts to bring Catholicism back by force. The author therefore repeated the prejudices and fears, which had caused Livonians to seek Polish protection several years earlier. He was evidently advocating that Polish forces push Moscow's army out of Livonia. We find confirmation of this intention in the conclusion, where he expressed his intense desire for the Polish king to successfully unify all the Livonian lands under his rule.

On the other hand, however, he represented Livonia as a separate geopolitical whole, even though it had been divided between Sweden, Poland, and Denmark by various treaties. As promised in the title ("as they used to be in and of themselves in former times"), Kwiatkowski makes it clear to the reader that he is dealing with a former state, which requires military assistance in the defense against Moscow, but which constitutes a separate entity, whose outline can be drawn. He makes this intention explicit in the conclusion:

"Lifflandckie tedy Państwo ty wszystkie ziemice, powiaty, kontorstwa, landwoytostwa, klucze, miasta, zamki, arcybiskupstwa, biskupstwa, dwory wyszszey opisane zamykało w sobie. A było tego Państwa, a mogę nazwać Królestwa, wzdłuż osiemdziesiąt i pięć mil. A wszcz poczytając z Morzem temu Państwu przysłuchającym mało co mniej. Od wschodu słońca graniczy z Moskwą. A od zachodu morzem z Gotlandią. Od południa z Litwą i z Żmudzią, i nieco ku zachodu z Prusy. Od północy Morzem albo odnogą morską z Swecią i Filandią. A Panie Boże daj, iżeby Jego K. M. z tym znamenitym przystępem, sam z swemi poddanymi to Państwo wszystko z pomocą Bożą, a naszą czujnością, opanował. O co wszyscy Pana Boga prosić ustawicznie mamy. A sami się też do tego z jednostajną wolą i mocą mamy mieć. Amen aby się tak stało. A ma to Państwo w sobie poczytając główne zamki z niższymi pospołu, podług mej wiadomości sto i dziewięć zamków, okrom miast."³⁸¹

[Thus the Lifflandian State included all the estates, counties, trading points, small voivodeships, cities, castles, archbishoprics, bishoprics, and manors which had been described above. And the length of this state, and I could call it a kingdom, was eighty-five miles. And the width of it, including the sea which belonged to it, was not much less. In the east, it borders on Moscow. In the west, by way of the sea, it borders on Gottland. In the south on Lithuania and Samogitia, and somewhat to the west on Prussia. In the north, by way of the sea or a sea bay, on Sweden and Finland. And grant Lord God, that his Royal Majesty, with this excellent approach, could take control of the country, with his subjects, and with God's help, and our vigilance. And we are to ceaselessly ask Lord God for this. And we are also to contribute to this our persistent will and power. Amen. So be it. And this state has, when one counts the main castles together with the smaller ones, to my knowledge, a hundred and nine castles, aside from towns.]

381 Ibid., 26–7.

The final sentence of the book, which seems like a *post scriptum* addition, sounds like an invitation for the conqueror. Speaking about the Livonian state, providing a detailed account of its grand aspirations, and even allowing himself to call it a “kingdom,” though it was never a kingdom, Kwiatkowski conveys the attractiveness and the assets of the land, and his desire for another unification under the Polish scepter is doubtless sincere. It is also difficult not to notice that he is describing a specific territory, which has its geographical parameters (measured in Prussian miles, where 1 mile equals approximately 7.5 kilometers), political parameters, and its neighbors—its specific shape can be differentiated from its surroundings. At the same time, however, this whole does not stand out as a whole, since one has to write a small, superficial, and imprecise pamphlet to describe this territory, which is, after all, supposed to belong to the Polish Kingdom, for the king’s officials, men well-versed in the humanities.³⁸²

This work could have, of course, been commissioned, and the author himself admits that he did not have much time to prepare something attractive; he therefore used casually gathered materials. The fact that he also relied on oral reports, however, suggests either that he had planned to write something a while earlier, and he was now supplementing his data with incidental information, or that the commission concerned a specific topic. One could suppose that this was the case on the basis of the author’s statement in the introduction, where he wrote that he set to work while “leaving Sleidan and other books aside.”³⁸³ Kwiatkowski translated a lot, and if it were a matter of simply publishing something quickly, a translation of an existing work would have been the quickest and easiest solution. He chose, however, to laboriously create a list of castles and domiciles, which contains nothing besides a set order and a listing of the military staff in each place. It seems more probable that someone at the Prussian prince’s court decided that it would be a good idea to present the king’s

382 Kwiatkowski did not delve into the political details of the downfall of the Livonian Confederation, which was discussed in Chapter 2 above. He did not differentiate between territories that belonged to Sweden and those occupied by Poland or Courland (Poland’s vassal state), which did not require any conquering at the time. He listed Virumaa, Järven and Wik separately from Estland, he separated Courland from Semigallia, and also listed the Rigan Archbishopric, which, at that time, had not existed as a separate administrative unit for four years. Today, it is difficult to judge whether he was unaware of these differences or chose to ignore them. One thing seems certain: in 1567, he still saw Livonia as a state, since he spoke about its borders in the present tense.

383 Ibid., 3. Sleidan Johannes (1506–1556), a writer and a critic of Catholicism, put forward arguments in favor of the Reformation in his work *Commentarii de statu religionis et rei publicae Carolo V* (1555).

commissioners from Warsaw with a useful little book, in order to present a certain subject (“show them a certain sign”), point to a political problem, and draw attention to something which was unjustly pushed aside. In order to take care of business.

This business had to accord with the plans of the Hohenzollern court in Königsberg. With Polish help, Prince Albrecht intended to create a new monarchy on the ruins of the Teutonic state, and to initiate his own dynasty. The unification of Brandenburg, Prussia, and Livonia under the scepter of the Hohenzollerns was one of the pillars of Prussian diplomacy, and in these plans Poland had the position of both the main ally, and the most significant obstacle.³⁸⁴ Persuading Poles that they could derive benefits from occupying Livonia was an important aspect of this plan; later, Livonia was to become part of the Prussian-Brandenburg monarchy. In addition, as the author of *Polityki Jagiellonów* [The Politics of the Jagiellonians] suggests, in 1567 Albrecht was already an infirm old man, and plenipotentiaries who came from abroad were already ruling in Königsberg in his name; they decisively put their own private interests before the public good, thereby creating a serious political crisis in the Duchy. It was at the behest of Prussian aristocracy, and precisely to forestall the expected catastrophe, that King Sigismund II Augustus sent the commission to whom Kwiatkowski's dedication was addressed.³⁸⁵ It was thus not only about calling attention to Livonia, but also about calling attention to the whole problem of newly-acquired lands where the protection of the Polish king seemed insufficient to the author.

384 See Łowmiański, *Polityka Jagiellonów* [Politics of the Jagiellonians], 601–608. Lowmiański points to an interesting element in Polish–Prussian relations: the Hohenzollerns relinquished claims to any immediate gains during the process of the secularization of Livonia, in exchange for the Polish king's agreement to the succession of the Brandenburg branch of the family, should the Prussian line die out (which, in fact, happened after Friedrich Albert's death in 1618). Among their political goals was also succession to the Polish throne, which would explain their passionate support for Polish domination throughout all of Livonia. In any event, connections between their politics and the royal court in Warsaw had various aspects.

385 *Ibid.*, 606–607. The historian claims that the commission had wide prerogatives and was successful in completing its task, which consisted in the curtailment of abuses, the restoration of order, and regulation of finances. It is therefore not surprising that it deserved special attention, and a special text was dedicated to it. Marian Pawlak, in turn, suggests that Kwiatkowski hoped to use the dedication and the book itself to simultaneously also take care of his personal interests, that is, to gain the commissioners' support for the endowment of an estate, which, incidentally, took place in 1566. See Kwiatkowski, *Pisma: edycje królewieckie* [Works: Königsberg Editions], XIII.

Marcin Kwiatkowski from Rozyce did not write a history of Livonia. He conceptualized a small text, in which he barely drew the contours of a land that was vast and differentiated in various ways; he made use of elements drawn from geography, politics, military science, and, to a small degree, historiography. In orderly sequences, he enumerated the names of all the cities and castles which he managed to compile and roughly arrange into groups, but without going into details. His writing is rather like the compilation of a catalogue, which lists outstanding matters that need to be brought to the attention of the king's officials.³⁸⁶ In order to achieve this, the main object had to be designated. Kwiatkowski had to have had a sense of the exoticism and the strangeness of a land, which lies nearby but which is unknown to anyone, and is thus of no importance. He constituted Livonia's textual existence by merely recalling names and distances, as if he wanted to prove Foucault's thesis that, in the 16th century, signs were a subset of things, and divisions between observation, document, and fable, did not exist.³⁸⁷ Other people's testimony was as credible as texts. Behind each successive name, there was the author's conviction that anything which helps Livonia come into existence is useful. His is a technical book with a clear purpose. People do not know about Livonia because they have not encountered these names, and by recalling them one legitimizes the very existence of the land. Kwiatkowski's text is actually an anthology of signs, behind which there hide factually existing things. It is enough to repeat names (or, as Foucault says, "restore to language all the words that had been buried"),³⁸⁸ to delineate the outlines of the necessary objects, to give voice to the things themselves through "secondary speech." In 1567, a Lutheran from Königsberg initiated the centuries-long process of evoking Livonia's presence, just at a time when Livonia—so it seemed to him—was ceasing to exist.

2. Jan August Hylzen: Argument

Livonia waited nearly two centuries for another outline of it as a whole, one which could support its frail existence. In 1750, the Livonian Castellan Jan August Hylzen (1702–1767) published a work with the baroque title *Inflanty w dawnych swych i wielorakich aż do wieku naszego dziejach i rewolucjach; z wywodem godności i starożytności Szlachty tamecznej, tudzież praw i wolności z*

386 As M. Pawlak says, "Kwiatkowski reached for his pen whenever he wanted to take care of some business that was important to him." *Ibid.*, XVI.

387 Foucault, *The Order of Things*, 129.

388 *Ibid.*, 131.

dawna i teraz jej służących zebrane i Polskiemu światu do wiadomości w Ojczystym języku podane przez Jaśnie Wielmożnego Jmci Pana Jana Augusta Hylzena, KASZTELANA inflanckiego, STAROSTĘ sądowego brasławskiego, MARSZAŁKA na ów czas W. Trybunalskiego W. X. Lit. Roku Pańskiego 1750, dnia 2 stycznia w Wilnie w drukarni J. K. M. Akademickiej Societatis Jesu. [Livonia in its ancient and diverse history and revolutions, extending up to our own era; with evidence of the dignity and the ancient lineage of the local Aristocracy, and of the laws and freedoms which had served them of old, and which still serve them today, collected and presented to the Polish world in its native language by the Honorable and Esteemed Sir Jan Hylzen, Livonian CASTELLAN, Bratslav Court STAROST, Tribunal MARSHAL of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, *Anno Domini* 1750, on January the 2nd in Vilnius, in Jesuit Academic Printing House of His Royal Majesty]. The title includes all the dominant intentions which guided the author: Livonia's separate history, local aristocracy's long presence in the region and the age-old rights that came with it, Poles as the audience of the publication, and the use of the Polish language as a declaration of patriotism and means of reaching the audience. Hylzen's titles and offices must have been an important component and justification of the content, since they were also placed on the title page, something typically done with the names and titles of those to whom the dedication was addressed, rather than of the author. We also find the very familiar Polish-Livonian juxtaposition here: compilation of the titles and privileges of the local aristocracy, made to "make it known to the Polish world." The work's title also makes it easy to surmise that Hylzen intended to use the history of Livonia as an argument in legal disputes, especially since among his offices and titles he emphasized his post as a Court Starost.

We actually know quite a bit about Jan August Hylzen because of several extensive biographical notes.³⁸⁹ They provide a portrait of an agile politician, greedy for property and official honors, and a rather ruthless player. He amassed significant wealth, not to say a fortune, thanks to which he provided funding not only for churches, but also for schools, hospitals, and orphanages. He had to

389 See Julian Bartoszewicz, *Znakomici mężowie polscy w XVIII wieku* [Esteemed Polish Men of the 18th Century], vol. 2 (St. Petersburg: B. M. Wolff, 1856), 199–237; Manteuffel, "Inflanty Polskie" [Polish Livonia], 73–76; Manteuffel, *O starodawnej szlachcie krzyżacko-rycerskiej* [About the Ancient Teutonic-Knightly Aristocracy] 28–29; Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 187–192; *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* [Polish Biographical Dictionary], vol. 10 (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1962), 128–132; Bardach, "Piśmiennictwo Polskie w Inflantach (do 1918 roku)" [Polish Scholarship in Livonia (up to 1918)], 251–253.

have extensive talents and economic knowledge since he “invested money in various properties, and he used the accumulated interest to support his impoverished subjects,” as our historian puts it.³⁹⁰ Manteuffel is very circumspect in his descriptions of Hylzen’s unusually exploitative practices, and only briefly does he mention the fact that Hylzen’s serfs became impoverished because of their subjection to him. Julian Bartoszewicz is much more abrasive when he points out that the Castellan “amassed more and more royal estates in his hands,” which, in practice, meant that he was involved in numerous intrigues at the Warsaw court, aimed at receiving successive endowments from the king.³⁹¹ As we can deduce from Hylzen’s arguments, this was possible because laws which governed Livonia were multilayered and mutually contradictory, making it impossible to clearly define property rights:

Takowa wielorakość namnożonych praw Inflantskich pokąd porządnej i dowodnej nie było informacji z historii tejże Prowincji pochodzącej; kiedy, z jakich przyczyn i jakimym sposobem jedne ustały, drugie nastąpiły, zawiła sprawowała trudność do pojęcia i rozeznania onych. Przeto nie masz czemu się dziwować (...), że kiedy wszystkie dobra Szlacheckie, które przedtem za Krzyżaków lennym szły prawem, na dziedziczne i wieczyste od Króla Zygmunta Augusta przy inkorporacji Inflant do Rzeczypospolitej wyraźnie są zamienione, a zatem nie innym, tylko dziedzicznym prawem powinny być dzierżane; z tym wszystkim przez niewiadomość esencjalnego tego prawa, po większej części za otrzymaniem niesłusznym przywilejów na lenne lub dożywotnie poszły dzierżawy.³⁹²

[The lack of reliable information deriving from the history of this province resulted in the great multiplicity of accumulated Livonian laws; it was therefore difficult to grasp when, for what reasons, and in what manner, some of the laws ceased to be and others were introduced. One should therefore not be surprised (...) that since all the aristocratic estates, which formerly used to be governed by vassal law under the Teutonic Knights, were clearly subsumed under hereditary and perpetual laws by King Sigismund II Augustus during the incorporation of Livonia into the Commonwealth, they should be governed only by hereditary law; with all this,

390 Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 188.

391 As cited by Manteuffel in “Inflanty Polskie” [Polish Livonia], 187. Bardach writes about mentions of Hylzen’s greed in “Piśmiennictwo Polskie w Inflantach (do 1918 roku)” [Polish Scholarship in Livonia (up to 1918)], and points out Manteuffel’s unfounded leniency, since Hylzen also tried to take the family estates, Drycany (Latvian: Driceni), among others, from von Rycks, Manteuffel’s ancestors on his mother’s side. They had to prove to the king in Warsaw that they had endowments from Sigismund II August and confirmation of the endowments from Jan III Sobieski. Such cases show the practical advantages of the scrupulous collection of aristocratic documents, which was often met not with understanding, but with amusement.

392 Hylzen, *Inflanty w dawnych swych dziejach*, [Livonia in its Ancient History], A3–A4.

through ignorance of this essential law, most estates, based on illegitimate privileges, were given to owners on the basis of vassal or lifelong rights.]

The main motivation which drove the administrative official and aristocrat from the old Baltic-German de Hülzen family to write the history of Livonia was thus the desire to remind Poles that Livonia entered into voluntary union with the Commonwealth (on the model of the Union of Lublin) rather than being conquered; as a result, rights granted to its citizens in the *Privilegium Sigismundi Augusti* were still binding. Later laws were legitimate only insofar as they did not contradict earlier ones. In consequence, property acquired before the union with Poland still legally belonged to its owners, especially when ownership was hereditary. Here history serves a legislative function, by pointing to the original sources of laws. Hylzen's problem consisted in the fact that the aristocracy which arrived from Poland treated Polish Livonia like conquered lands—which could be taken over on the authority of the king's newest endowments; something which, by the way, took place throughout the 17th century. We can guess that the concept of “królewszczyna” [“royal estates”] was interpreted rather arbitrarily, and applied to properties which, according to old laws, belonged to local knights. According to Hylzen, this involved negation of the aristocratic rank of the Livonians, and treatment of their estates as if they were spoils of war:

...wielu się takich znalazło Arystarchów w Rzeczypospolitej, którzy nie doczytawszy się o godności urodzenia Szlachty Inflantskiej, z starożytnych *in Imperio* Familii od wielu wieków pochodzącej, uszczypliwie o starodawnych Jej Imionach sądzili; a drudzy grubym uwiedzeni niektórych Historyków Polskich błędem, stąd ich lekce sobie wazyli: jakoby Rzeczpospolita nie przez traktaty, ale przez miecz i podbicie Inflanty pozyskała.³⁹³

[...there were many Aristarchs in the Commonwealth, who, not having read about the nobility of birth of the Livonian Aristocracy—descended from the ancient families of the state for many centuries—made cutting remarks about their ancient names; and others, seduced by the gross mistakes of some Polish historians, disrespected them as if the Commonwealth gained Livonia not through treaties but through the sword and conquest.]

The conflict between old and new Livonian aristocracy thus had clear legislative and economic bases, which is why Court Starost Hylzen undertook the work of sorting out the legal status of property throughout the region, while also establishing unambiguously who was entitled to feel like the host (“it is better to ascertain what there is in one's own house”). Here the historical book serves as evidence in a court case.

393 Ibid., A2.

Jan August Hylzen ascertained what was in his own house so well that he achieved great financial success; this allowed him not only to multiply his wealth in the provinces, but also to rebuild and maintain a large palace in the center of Warsaw (later the famous Mostowski Palace). Together with his brother, the Smoleńsk Bishop Jerzy Mikołaj, they could do what they wished in Livonia, and without scruples they took over the lands for which they were able to obtain endowments. Although Jan August Hylzen gave large sums to churches and orphanages, his brother controlled these donations, thereby strengthening his authority in the region. As the case of the von Ryck family from Drycany demonstrates, Castellan Hylzen was not very concerned about the lineage and the eminence of Livonian families, even though he declared his concern with such zeal in the introduction to his *Inflanty* [Livonia] (“with evidence of the dignity and the ancient lineage of the Livonian Aristocracy... and all the laws, privileges, and prerogatives, which properly serve it.”) The clarification of laws that were binding in Polish Livonia thus had a very concrete and personal purpose for Hylzen: it was the basis for his successive claims to property.

Hylzen’s strangely composed book is not a historical work, not even according to criteria that were binding at the time. It is also not a chronicle, even though the author calls himself a chronicler of Livonia in a number of places. After the introduction (on which the above discussion was based), there comes a gigantic Part One, which is several hundred pages long, and most of which consists of copies of documents from cases which were of interest to the author. There one can find both the original texts of the *Privilegium Sigismundi Augusti* and *Pacta Subjectionis*, and also entirely marginal decisions concerning local grievance committees, or privileges granted to certain families. According to Gustaw Manteuffel, the most valuable document in Hylzen’s book is an accurate copy of an 1193 letter of Pope Celestine III to Bishop Meinhard—which, allegedly, has not been copied anywhere else.³⁹⁴ Part Two is 57 pages long, and it is devoted to Polish Livonia, Courland, and Piltene.³⁹⁵ Here Hylzen is mostly interested in a listing of Polish-Livonian aristocracy, which he compiled not on the basis of official registries, but rather on the basis of his own, complicated calculations and intrigues. This is why Hylzen was accused of German favoritism and open “glorification of the Teutonic knights.”³⁹⁶ Indeed, in his text

394 Manteuffel, *Cywilizacja, literatura i sztuka* [Civilization, Literature, and Art], 119.

395 Gustaw Manteuffel analyzed Hylzen’s work, along with critical reviews written about it by German historians in “Inflanty Polskie” [Polish Livonia], 37–43 and *Cywilizacja, literatura i sztuka* [Civilization, Literature, and Art], 116–119.

396 Świerzbński, *Martyrologia Inflant...* [The Martyrology of Livonia...], as cited by J. Bardach, *Piśmiennictwo polskie w Inflantach (do 1918 roku)* [Polish Writing in

one can find occasional words of praise for the Teutonic Order and its Christianizing work:

Byłoby to grubej w politycznych rzeczach niewiadomości podlegać cenzurze, nie przyznać Rycerstwu Krzyżackiemu: że będąc sam z najprzedniejszych Rycerstw Chrześcijańskich, jednym był on oraz i po dziś dzień jeszcze jest złożonym z wyboru Dawnych i zacnych Domów.³⁹⁷

[It would be submission to the extensive censorship of ignorance in political matters, if one did not grant that the Teutonic Knights, who are among the finest Christian Knighthoods, included old and esteemed families, and are comprised by members of these to this day.]

But his goal was rather to elevate the status of the knights and correct their negative image among the Poles. Hylzen simply drew a clear boundary between established Livonians and the gentry who arrived in Livonia after 1561, with their much later Polish *indigénat*. They were the main targets of the repossession activity carried out by the Court Starost from Dagda:

A że starodawna Szlachta Inflantska była plemiem i *Seminarium* Rycerstwa Krzyżackiego w Inflantach, jawny stąd idzie wywód Starożytności Familii Inflantskiej, kiedy od tak wielu wieków każdy, który pasowany być chciał na Rycerza Krzyżackiego, próbę szlachectwa swego z tak wielu stopniów czynić był powinien. Wszakże do tego zaszczytu należeć nie mają ci, którzy pośledniej od królów Polskich Nobilitacją i Indygenat w Inflantach otrzymali.³⁹⁸

[And since the old Livonian aristocracy consisted of families and inheritors of the Teutonic Knights of Livonia, the fact that for so many centuries everyone who wished to become a Teutonic Knight had to provide extensive proof of his aristocratic rank should serve as clear proof of the antiquity of Livonian families. But this honor is not to extend to those who received a more mediocre nobility and *indigénat* in Livonia from Polish kings.]

The conclusion of the argument is risky in that the royal endowments for the Lithuanian and Polish gentry were most often given in reward for military service, and so it is difficult to justify calling this way of granting ennoblement “more mediocre.” The author wanted to clearly differentiate between “us” and “them,” and he sought to do this by means of a very difficult argument, that is, by appealing to the high-ranking Teutonic aristocratic lineage. Hylzen was aware that this constituted legal acrobatics, and he therefore supported his

Livonia (until 1918)], 254. In the genealogical part of the work Hylzen relied on Kaspar von Ceumern’s German register of family privileges *Folgen di Alten Verdeutschen Liefpländischen Privilegien* [Registry of Old German Livonian Privileges] (Riga: Nöller, 1690).

397 Manteuffel, “Inflanty Polskie” [Polish Livonia], 41.

398 Ibid.

arguments with numerous documents.³⁹⁹ Here Livonia was evidence in a court trial which sought to defend existing privileges; at the same time Livonia also had to be constituted on the basis of the cited documents. The land was called upon as a witness in the legal case concerning the division of property. It was represented not by names, as in Marcin Kwiatkowski's text, but by documents.

But why did Hylzen write a book? If he intended to provide evidence regarding privileges and property, it would have been sufficient to simply provide the documents. His position and influence gave him ample opportunity for effective action, and he could have advocated for his rights directly before the royal magistrate, not to mention the Tribunal of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, or the city courts in Polish Livonia itself. The compilation of such a large number of documents and the construction of an extensive ideological commentary around them demanded several years of work, and this work might have—as Manteuffel suggests—been “the fruit of ideas that went back to his childhood years.”⁴⁰⁰ When explaining the reasons for writing the book, and the book's goals, besides ignorance and ill-will of the Poles and confusion that plagued legal matters, Hylzen also mentions the disorientation of his countrymen; he makes them aware of their privileges and encourages them to defend these. He also recommends his book

wszystkim Obywatelom Rzplitej, którzy tę szczupłą księgę przejrzyć zechcą; odkryje się kognicja: jakimi stopniami tak piękny kraj na 100 mil rozległy, wybornymi nad portem Miastami i wszelką do handlu zręcznością uszczęśliwiony, urodzajem wszelkiego zboża, zwierzyną, futrami, różnego rodzaju towarami etc. na podziw obfitujący, dostał się Rzeczypospolitej?⁴⁰¹

[to all the Citizens of the Commonwealth willing to browse this slim volume, [so that they] will understand how this beautiful and hundred-miles-wide country—blessed with excellent port cities and all kinds of predispositions for trade, overflowing with an abundance of all kinds of grains, animals, furs, and various types of goods, etc.—was added to the Commonwealth]

In accordance with emerging enlightenment custom, the book also had to have a didactic dimension:

Na koniec, z jakiego powodu część większa Inflant z nienagrodzoną dla Rzeczypospolitej szkodą Szwedom się podała? Zbawienną stąd na przyszłe czasy

399 As one can surmise from these citations, Hylzen ordered that the more important words be printed with a capital letter, and he even printed his titles entirely in capitals. The texts of the documents are also printed with a much larger font size than the author's text. It gives a strange graphic form to the publication, but emphasizes the author's intention.

400 Ibid., 43.

401 Hylzen, *Inflanty w dawnych swych dziejach* [Livonia in its Ancient History], A5.

weźmiemy naukę, żebyśmy do takich awulsji i ujmj krajów Rzplitej przez popełnione w politycznym rządzie soleczyzny, jak się z Inflantami stało, podobnych nie nastęrczali okazji.⁴⁰²

[In the end, on what grounds did most of Livonia surrender to Swedes, causing irreparable losses to the Commonwealth? From this, let us derive a salutary lesson for the future, so that we do not provide similar occasions, as was the case with Livonia, for shock and losses suffered by the lands of the Commonwealth on account of solecisms committed by political authorities.]

Hylzen writes a synthetic description of Livonia, derived from the past and supported by documents, but in fact intended as a project for the future. In his opinion, Poles should realize what a good thing they acquired and what benefits arise from it for them. After nearly two hundred years after incorporation, the Livonian Castellan believes it necessary to remind the citizens of the Commonwealth what lands they have within their borders, and what laws (sanctioned by history) are binding there. He explains the didactic dimension of the (not so slim) book by appealing to the idea of “public good,” a move not without traces of coquetry and precautionary measures, given his tendency to become involved in intrigues, and his greed for others’ estates (“It is not on account of fleeting private interests, which are far removed from my mind and from my constitution”).⁴⁰³ On the one hand, then, Hylzen’s book was to repeat the gesture of constituting Polish Livonia (the term appears in his text), while on the other, it was to confirm the separate identity of Livonian aristocracy, which remains faithful and loyal, but which has its cultural and historical specificity. From yet another perspective, the Castellan’s book presents Livonia to the Poles as a great economic and political gain, which can be lost by acting unwisely. To put it differently, it enumerates gains derived from the Livonian transaction, while at the same time providing a warning that they may yet be lost.

One should remember that Hylzen wrote his work at the end of the Saxon Period, when the decay of gentry parliamentarianism could be seen with the naked eye, and when the first reform-oriented works already appeared (e.g. Stanisław Konarski’s *O poprawie wad wymowy* [On Correcting Bad Linguistic Habits] (1728), or Stanisław Leszczyński’s *Głos wolny wolność ubezpieczający* [A Free Voice in Defense of Freedom] (1743)). The increasing dependence on Russia presented Livonians with the specter of Russification (which, by the way, took place after the First Partition), while administrative and legal chaos made it impossible to undertake reasonable defensive actions. Seeing the Poles’ stubborn *desinteressement* when it came to Polish Livonia, Hylzen sought not so

402 Ibid.

403 Ibid., A2.

much to defend the idea of “Teutonism” (as he was later accused of doing), but rather to bring attention to the untapped economic and cultural potential of the land located in the “borderlands of the borderlands.” He was also representing the interests of the German-Livonian aristocracy, but its members were already largely assimilated and involved in Polish politics—and in Polishness in general.⁴⁰⁴ German-Livonian aristocracy needed a clear articulation of their identity, a designation of their place, and that was the task undertaken by Jan August Hylzen.

Of course, like all other attempts, this one was unsuccessful. German historians accused the author of mixing history and legend, of providing inexact genealogies, and of confusing aristocracy with German lineages with Polish and Lithuanian aristocracy (sic!).⁴⁰⁵ The timid suggestion to translate Hylzen’s work into German, made by the eminent German-Livonian historian Friedrich Konrad Gadebusch, was decisively rejected.⁴⁰⁶ The Polish side tended to ignore Hylzen’s work, and his book found no resonance among readers of either historical or literary works. Its peculiar form and its exotic content did not have great chances for finding a place among dominant conventions. Simply put, no one needed Hylzen’s work. If the author’s undertaking was motivated by a need,

404 *Inflanty w dawnych swych dziejach* [Livonia in its Ancient History] is written in a baroquely flowery style, which conveys the high quality and ease of the author’s Polish. In his introduction, Hylzen claims that the ill will of German historians is responsible for the lack of knowledge about Livonia, since they write exclusively about the sphere of influence of German culture, and they bypass Polish culture, as a result of which Polish-Livonian citizens do not have access to knowledge: “Polish aristocracy and many Livonians, on account of their inability to speak German, have not had occasion to gain sufficient knowledge about Livonia.” And so, despite accepted opinion, Livonian knights were not particularly attached to their German roots (they did not know the language!), and one can certainly not speak about an unambiguous domination of German elements in their identity.

405 German critiques of Hylzen’s work are discussed by Gustaw Manteuffel in “Inflanty Polskie” [Polish Livonia], 39, and in *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 235. One of the reviews cited by Manteuffel includes the harsh claim that Hylzen’s work *must not* be treated as a work of history, since its treatment of sources is not rigorous.

406 „Dem von Gadebusch geäußertem Wunsch, dass es möchte ins Deutsche übersetzt werden, möchte wohl kaum ein Kenner beistimmen” [Perhaps no expert could agree with the wish, expressed by Gadebusch, to translate it (Hylzen’s work) into German], Manteuffel, “Inflanty Polskie” [Polish Livonia], fn. to page 39. In this statement, one can hear tones of superiority and the sense of having a monopoly on truth, both of which were symptomatic of the closed circles of German-Livonian scholars, and which were precisely what Hylzen fought against. A hundred years later, Gustaw Manteuffel undertook a similar struggle, with a similarly meager effect.

the knowledge which was compiled in response to this need did not arouse anyone's interest. And thus Polish Livonia itself did not have a chance to come into existence. The argument did not convince anyone.⁴⁰⁷

Marcin Kwiatkowski from Rożyce wrote something like a cosmography of Livonia. He established the reach of the country and its borders by using geographical names and distances, he enumerated castles and their military personnel—he drew the map of the land as he could—a land which both was and was not (which was nonexistent). He appealed to the present and he carefully delineated tasks for the future. The need he perceived could be described as the desire to outline a land which was disappearing. Almost two hundred years later, Hylzen wrote with the conviction that Polish Livonia had already disappeared, that it was not functioning in the realm in which it should function. He did not outline borders, but rather documented the unique cultural identity, the mentality differences, and the specificity of rules. He justified the right to existence of something which had been deprived of this right. He explained that what is regional can be different, and this otherness does not exclude loyalty, it is not equivalent to hostility. He scrupulously noted similarities and differences in the framework of a certain whole, which Michel Foucault calls the “the grid of identities and differences.”⁴⁰⁸ Unlike Kwiatkowski, Hylzen did not create a duplicate of other narrations; his inspiration to write is clearly marked by reaching into his own experience, into his in-depth knowledge of Livonian realities and Livonian mentality. Here, documents are secondary in relation to the object and the subject; they are to confirm a certain reality, which lies in facts derived from history. The disintegration of the subject and the object creates a situation in which the documents document nothing.

Hylzen knew well that he was creating *ex nihilo*. He was verifying the right to existence of something which was difficult to capture. He supported his arguments with a large number of documents in the hope that he would succeed, even to a small degree, in suggesting this ephemeral existence which belonged to Livonian regionalism. As he himself admitted, Baltic Germans turned away from the Polish part of Livonia and excluded it from their writing, while Polish historians treated Livonia as a conquered land, or a land that had been taken

407 Jacek Kolbuszewski was the first to understand these intentions of Hylzen's, when, a dozen years ago, he wrote about the “regionalism” of *Inflanty* [Livonia], describing its dominant characteristic as “the simultaneous accentuation of belonging to the Commonwealth and the equally strong emphasis on the antiquity of the Livonian aristocracy and its otherness, its different character...” See, Kolbuszewski, “Kultura polska na Łotwie” [Polish Culture in Latvia], 53.

408 Foucault, *The Order of Things*, 239.

over, and which thus did not have its own agency. The Teutonic past of the local citizens, in turn, undermined their regional identity. Livonians were different, but there was no discourse in which their otherness could be described. They were local, but they were of German descent and they were Poles by political choice. In addition, they objected when Poles who were arriving in Livonia identified with this region (though the newcomers were as foreign as their own German ancestors had once been). What is the essence of specificity?

One of the fundamental identity-related dilemmas of the Commonwealth's Eastern Borderlands consisted in the problem of multiple centers. We are simultaneously from here and from there. No other centrally-oriented community could be made to understand this. The citizens of the Sarmatian Polish Kingdom meticulously honored the principle that "a country squire and the voivode are equals," but they applied this principle only to themselves. Hylzen declared that he wanted to make Poles aware of the history of Livonia so that they would understand local specificity, but this was his need, not theirs. What effect did the Castellan expect to have? And what exactly did he want to accomplish with his book? At the very beginning he says that in the course of the "political conversations" in which he engaged from time to time, he became convinced that there was complete ignorance regarding Livonian matters, not only among educated Poles but also among Livonians themselves. The book therefore had the character of a written answer to political disputes; it answered accusations and explained unclear situations or behaviors. One could easily imagine a political argument in the senate (with the problem of royal endowments of estates in the background), in which the Livonian Castellan had to answer mean-spirited questions about what this Livonia of his even was, where it came from, and who actually lived there.⁴⁰⁹ In his answer, Hylzen spoke at length about history, he appealed to privileges granted by the king, and reminded his audience about the loyal service of the descendants of Teutonic knights on Polish battlefields, such as the one at Kirchholm. All this was probably to no avail. Livonia did not have existence that was real enough to become an answer by itself. It had to be described. And so Hylzen wrote *Livonia*.

3. Gustaw Manteuffel: Patchwork

When Gustaw Manteuffel (1832–1916) took up the task of summoning Livonian lands out of non-being, their existence was even more problematic than it had

409 Because the post of the Livonian Castellan was the most prestigious among the so-called lesser castellans, it was probably necessary to justify this privilege as well.

been during Kwiatkowski's and Hylzen's times. When his first book, entitled *Polnisch-Livland* [Polish Livonia], was printed in Riga, in 1869, almost a century had passed since the dismantling of the Livonian Voivodeship, and it was six years after the Livonian drama of the January Uprising. While in the first half of the 19th century local aristocracy enjoyed relative peace, and they were able to cultivate their courtly life without significant obstacles, by 1869, this life was dying out. Polish estates were collapsing under the weight of ruinously high taxes, contributions, and sequestrations, the gentry were departing in large numbers for Vilnius, Riga, or even further west, except for those who had been exiled to Siberia—the country was emptying out. Manteuffel himself settled in Riga, and for a long time he lived on payments he received from his brother Ryszard who had stayed behind in Drycany. He received his schooling in German, which allowed him to blend in with the Baltic-German community. He was more interested, however, as one can infer from his first publications, in the mosaic-like diversity of his native region, where Latvian, Russian, Belarusian, and German nationalities were in conflict, and all were dominated by Polish influence.⁴¹⁰

Manteuffel wrote a small German-language book about this peculiar land, whose most distinct feature was its constant disappearance. The publication did not impress German readers very much, and only a few German-language scholarly studies made note of it, but it aroused interest on the Polish side. Józef Ignacy Kraszewski, praising the diligence and the competence of the author, expressed regret that a book which should be read by Poles was written in an inaccessible language:

Reading it, and seeing the diligence with which the author attempted to recreate this small region, which had once belonged to Poland, we felt great regret that it will

410 Before publishing *Polnisch-Livland* ["Polish Livonia"] Manteuffel carried out ethnographic studies and published folk songs, calendars, prayers, Bible fragments, and educational brochures. He published them mainly in Latvian, or rather in the east-Latvian Latgallian dialect. He wrote music reviews in German. He only started to write in Polish in the middle of the 1870s. I provide more biographical details in the introduction to Manteuffel's *Zarysy* [Sketches], see Krzysztof Zajac, "Nieistniejąca kraina, zapomniany historyk" [A Nonexistent land, A Forgotten Historian], in Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], VII–XXXI; Krzysztof Zajac, "Latgal'skie Fascinacje Gustawa Manteuffelja" [Gustaw Manteuffel's Latgallian Fascinations], in *Telpiskie Modeļi Baltu Un Slāvu Kultura: Komparatīviskas Institūta Almanahs* [Spatial Models of Baltic and Slavic Culture: An Almanac of the Comparative Literature Institute] ed. Fjodorovs, vol. 3 (Daugavpils, 2006). Juliusz Bardach provides an extensive biographical note about Manteuffel in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* [Polish Biographical Dictionary], vol. 13 (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1974), 491–493.

hardly be known here. From the time of Hylzen, whose work is by now very outdated and to whom everyone who wished to learn about this province had to refer, we did not have access to anything more precise about this topic (...). We therefore made great efforts to convince the author to give us the fruit of his researches in Polish, or to have him order and oversee a Polish translation.⁴¹¹

The book was a medley of topics. It gave precise topographical data (with exact geographical coordinates, hydrographic data, botanical characterization of the forests, etc.), it spoke about the social and ethnic composition of Polish Livonia, and its contents were preceded by an historical introduction, which reached back to the 12th century. All this was supplemented with maps. One could say that *Polnisch-Livland* was a synthesis of Kwiatkowski's renaissance cosmography and Hylzen's regionalist project; indeed, Manteuffel made extensive use of Hylzen's work.

Kraszewski's efforts ensured that ten years later a Polish version appeared in Poznań under the title *Inflanty Polskie poprzedzone ogólnym rzutem oka na siedmiowiekową przeszłość całych Inflant* [Polish Livonia, with an Introductory Sketch of the Seven Centuries of all of Livonia's History]. It was twice as long, supplemented with genealogical and heraldic data, a precise list of all towns and estates, along with chapels, Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant churches, as well as names of current and former owners. Once again, this was not a strictly historiographical work, since—as Kraszewski noted—it mixed “the general outline of history” with a report about Livonia's “current condition.”⁴¹² When setting out to once again establish the outline of the disappearing land, Manteuffel gathered data from the disciplines of geography, history, ethnography, economy, genealogy, geology, archaeology, history of art, and literature. He ambitiously envisioned the creation of a synthesis which would be a scientific—i.e., an interdisciplinary—representation of the whole, justification of the whole, and simultaneously its confirmation. From his perspective, Polish Livonia was an autonomous region, which was patched together from segments that did not always fit harmoniously, but which was a separate entity according to all the norms of the contemporary scientific disciplines.

From the arrangement of chapters and the division of the book into two parts (Livonian until 1561, and Polish-Livonian until modernity—a division which Manteuffel would later repeat in his *Zarysy* [Sketches]), there emerges an image of an effortful, carefully-constructed representational composition, which is chronologically ordered and deftly arranged according to the model: introduction, main body, conclusion, and appendices. The author placed German

411 Manteuffel, “Inflanty Polskie” [Polish Livonia], VII.

412 Ibid.

colonization at the beginning of this history, and he intended subsequent chapters to prove that one can speak about a specific history of Polish Livonia, about its economy, about the community which constituted a separate Polish-Livonian nation, about agglomeration, culture, literature, etc. In the conclusion, Manteuffel included something like a subject bibliography for a region he created, and a polemical argument against the mistakes of German historians. *Inflanty Polskie* [Polish Livonia] seems like a solid scholarly proof of the existence of the object of studies named in the work's title—an object about which every well-informed reader should basically already know a lot, but the author nonetheless felt that certain things were worth mentioning again. Manteuffel politely explains the ignorance of the majority by appealing either to the ugliness of the Livonian landscape (which is not true!), or to simple lack of interest:

The purpose of the present sketch is, above all, to introduce a broader circle of readers to the conditions in this province and to its inhabitants. It can serve both foreigners and locals who wish to gain a better understanding of this land. The former, not finding much charm in this area, most often stay here for too short a time to learn about local people and nature, while for the latter mundane everyday matters stand in the way of paying attention to what surrounds them.⁴¹³

But in fact, something much more important is at stake, i.e., the correction of mistakes, or actually the correction of one mistake with a negating effect:

The rarely-encountered information about this part of the country (...) not only fails to provide solutions to many important questions, but it also (...) repeats a series of crude mistakes. A misled reader cannot find out from these works where this land is located, what political system it has, or who inhabits it.⁴¹⁴

The hypothetical “general reader” is mistaken, that is, he lives his life in ignorance, and a positivist scientist undertakes the effort necessary to reverse this disadvantageous situation. Manteuffel's motivations are a somewhat complicated puzzle, however, since it is not actually clear who, and for what purpose, was to learn about the “system” of a country which does not exist. The topos of correcting a mistake is only a pretext. Manteuffel knows very well that, like Hylzen before him, he must create *ex nihilo*. And to be more precise, he must create from Hylzen and *ex nihilo*. He therefore repeats the idea of displaying a list of native Livonian aristocracy, and supplementing it with his own knowledge, which is quite impressive in this regard. In the configuration of the whole, one quickly notices a certain disproportion: the longest chapters are devoted to the Livonian aristocracy and their estates. The author, himself a

413 Ibid., 20.

414 Ibid., 19.

descendant of one of the oldest Baltic-German families (Class I, Number 2 in the Fellowship of Courlandish Knights!), knew much about the aristocracy, but his image of his local fatherland was based mainly on this information. If the picture were to be complete, he had to piece together the rest. Documents and the history of mentality presented by Castellan Hylzen were insufficient. During the positivist era, the existence of the land had to be supplemented by facts chosen according to the needs of the writer.

The most interesting addition concerns the inhabitants of the region, who are scrupulously divided (Kraszewski praised Manteuffel's meticulousness) into specific ethnic and religious groups. Manteuffel—a Dorpat University alumnus, careful reader of German scholarly literature, experienced ethnographer, and Rigan positivist who remained abreast of newest developments—knew the value of cultural anthropology and was able to translate it into research practice. On the basis of various local ethnic groups which he investigated during his many field studies, he constructed a multicultural community of Polish Livonia, and included it in his ontological construction. This ethnic composition was presented in a telling order: the urban population—Poles, Jews, Ruthenes, Russians, and Germans; the rural population—Latvians (serfs), Poles (owners); dispersed among Latvians there were Ests, Lithuanians, Russian Old Believers, Ruthenes, and Poles (serfs). Poles dominated both in the cities and in the countryside where they represented both the masters and the subjects. Germans are pushed out to the margins, even though from Kazimierz Bujnicki's *Pamiętniki* [Memoirs], we know that there were estates of the Baltic Germans in the countryside.⁴¹⁵ The significance of this operation can be seen clearly against the background of the January Uprising, which had taken place a dozen years earlier, and in which radical differences between interests and mentalities of the aforementioned groups emerged (not to mention the fact that it was also then that the estate of the Drycany Manteuffels fell into ruin). The author brushed over these differences, he smoothed out the contours, and made the data fit into a previously-chosen framework of representation.⁴¹⁶

415 Bujnicki writes about German manors destroyed by peasants during the January Uprising. It was thus not about polonized German-Livonian families, since youth from these families went to fight in the Uprising; it was about Protestant Germans, see *Pamiętniki (1795–1875)* [Memoirs (1795–1875)], 126, see also Chapter 2, quotation and footnote 272.

416 One of the various interesting elements here is the fact that Manteuffel speaks kindly about the Raskolniks, or Old Believers who took part in fighting against the January Uprising in Livonia; he praises them for cleanliness and concern with their appearance, and he sympathetically describes their unique customs. It is unclear to what extent this was a result of censorship, or positive local experiences. Things were very different

In many places *Inflanty Polskie* [Polish Livonia] contains this and other types of leveling operations, which allow the pieces to be arranged into one whole. Manteuffel's intentions encountered an insurmountable difficulty, however, in the utter incommensurability between his project and contemporary ideologies. In the 1870s, the Baltic peoples were just beginning to develop awareness of their national identity, and this was accompanied by growing Russian and German nationalism. The determination of who had what rights to identity-related connections with the Baltic province became one of the central topics of discussions and arguments. None of the political sides participating in these arguments was interested in Poland's historic role in the region, as Poland was mostly seen as wearing the pitiful costume of a fallen empire. The topic had always been uncomfortable for the Russians, and the author's flattering supplications directed toward tsarist authorities seem to be rather unnecessary.⁴¹⁷ The Germans, as we have shown above, pushed Polish Livonia—together with a number of German-Livonian families which remained on these territories—out of the sphere of their concern. Latvians focused all their hatred against colonizers on Poles, treating them, somewhat on the principle of *pars pro toto*, as responsible for nearly everything. In this situation, the propagation of harmonious multiculturalism seemed to be as noble as it was utopian. *Inflanty Polskie* [Polish Livonia], with its ontologically imperfect object, did not have a chance to come into existence anywhere except in Poland.

Did it come into existence? At first everything seemed to suggest that it did. In recognition of his achievements in the field of history, Gustaw Manteuffel was invited to the First Historical Congress held in Krakow, in 1880; while there he established contacts with eminent scholars and became known in Polish

with Jews: they were represented according to the worst nationalist stereotypes: "The abject poverty and cramped conditions of the living quarters where many families reside together contributes to the messiness which is particularly typical for Jews, and to this we should add the always beggarly and torn clothes. Even their religious principles forbid them to clean their clothes. A wealthy and well-to-do Jew believes that he breaks the law if he shines his shoes, and if any of them were to wear suspenders or a scarf around his neck, would be considered a heretic and a propagator of novelties by his co-religionists." Manteuffel, "Inflanty Polskie" [Polish Livonia], 105.

417 Even though the book was published in the Prussian partition, Manteuffel repeated in it the words of praise from the original Rigan, German-language edition: "The scope of a short sketch (...) does not allow us to enumerate all the benefits received by this country from the Russian government, which is always concerned about the prosperity of the provinces, which it values so much." Manteuffel, "Inflanty Polskie" [Polish Livonia], 12. In the right context, this sentence can be read ironically.

scholarly circles.⁴¹⁸ In subsequent years, he published a number of brochures and articles, prepared over a hundred entries for *Słownik Geograficzny Królestwa Polskiego* [The Geographic Dictionary of the Polish Kingdom], and nearly fifty entries for *Wielka Encyklopedia Powszechna Ilustrowana* [The Great Universal Illustrated Encyclopedia]. Almost all of these concerned Polish Livonia and Courland, while a few were about Lithuania and Estonia. The systematic spreading of knowledge about Polish-Livonia not only revealed the determination of the author's project, but also seemed to be the starting point for a new and attractive field of cultural studies. It emphasized the richness of cultures in the region, and stressed interdisciplinary investigation possibilities. It invited interest.

Even so, in the introduction to his *Listy z nad Bałtyku* [Letters from the Baltic], written in October 1885, Manteuffel claims that his 1879 book “did not manage to fully eliminate the lack of knowledge about these once-Polish lands,”⁴¹⁹ and he provides evidence of the complete ignorance of critics who wrote about the book. The topic remained unknown and so it demanded continuation, and perhaps also modification. It is possible that it was at this point that Manteuffel began working on his most extensive synthesis, which *Zarysy* [Sketches] was to become. Certain reflections about the concepts of history and nation which we find in *Listy z nad Bałtyku* [Letters from the Baltic] enable us to suppose that it was precisely then that the idea of writing a history of Livonia as a separate federation crystallized in Manteuffel's mind. The insufficient efficacy of evoking Livonia's presence in *Inflanty Polskie* [Polish Livonia] demanded revisions, expansion, deepening, and an appropriate redistribution of accents. The entire topic needed to be situated within the context of European history, and its weight had to be made greater by the use of appropriate historical perspective.

In his *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], written at the turn of the 1890s, Gustaw Manteuffel attempted to achieve several mutually exclusive goals. As he declared in the *Preface*, it was to be a reference book, which, “in a series of shorter and longer sketches” would give the reader a sense of “the complete shape of the history of Livonia, Estonia, Courland, and Piltene, on the basis of primary source research.”⁴²⁰ He did not present his book as either popular or strictly scientific:

418 Manteuffel described his participation in the meeting in a short booklet entitled *Pamiętnik z podróży na Zjazd historyczny imienia Jana Długosza w maju 1880 roku odbytej* [Memoir from the Trip to the Jan Długosz Historical Meeting, Undertaken in May 1880] (Lviv: Wydawnictwo Władysława Łozińskiego, 1903).

419 Manteuffel, “Listy z nad Bałtyku” [Letters from the Baltic], 3.

420 Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 7.

The purpose of the present *Zarysy* [Sketches] is to provide the enlightened Polish public with a collection of the most important, objectively-handled historical facts about old Livonian lands. This work is not a popular work in the typical sense of the word, because nowhere is it concerned with pedagogical or didactic matters, it speaks the language of a strictly scientific contemporary work; since it is not, however, equipped with the full apparatus of explanatory footnotes, it cannot claim to be a scientific study.⁴²¹

The author's subsequent reassurances and hedging also suggest that the book is not a polemic, it is not a repetition of scientifically-confirmed knowledge (since in many cases there is simply no such knowledge), but it is also not an entirely arbitrary subjective impression, since, wherever possible, it takes into account newest studies and does so with "greatest rigor." Because of all these reservations, Manteuffel did not use the demanding term "history" in the title, but rather opted for the much humbler "sketches from history." The former rests on certainties, however, while in the latter "the suppositions of individual historians" are allowable.

What was it that Manteuffel wrote? Let us summarize:

- something which constitutes a whole, which is not a history but which has a strong scholarly foundation (footnotes, contrary to what the author claims, are numerous and extensive)
- a reference work, which arranges longer and shorter sketches in a series;
- a compilation of the most important facts based on primary source research, or, simply, based on sources;
- an unsystematic survey of selected events, in which the author often had to rely on his own knowledge, and
- a correction of dishonest tendentious German historiography.

If to this set we add the numerous polemics against Protestant historians (which is exactly how Manteuffel describes them—as Protestant), which are scattered throughout the book, we get a work unnaturally extended between the demands of positivist scientificity and arbitrary historical narration. At first it therefore appears to be a continuation of the work of Manteuffel's predecessors. Similarly to Kwiatkowski and Hylzen, Manteuffel thinks that public ignorance of matters Livonian is atrocious—that people know less about Livonia than about Sumatra or Borneo.⁴²² It is therefore necessary to put into play descriptions in which the

421 Ibid.

422 The famous statement, which is often cited in Polish-Livonian works, and which Manteuffel used in "List do J. I. Kraszewskiego" [Letter to J.I. Kraszewski], June 23, 1877, rkps P134, k. 267c, Biblioteka Jagiellońska [Jagiellonian Library], sounds like a paraphrase of the words of Gentleman of the Bedchamber from part III of Adam Mickiewicz's *Forefather's Eve*: "I know far more of China, and such capers, than

reader would see the truth about Livonia not only as an interesting story (Manteuffel frequently uses the word “story” to describe his work), but also as a set of indisputable, scientifically proven claims. The first premise requires the application of literary devices, the use of suggestion, tendentiousness, rhetoric, and so on; the second premise calls for rational precision, declared frequently enough that it, too, takes on the form of a literary trope. A mechanism similar to that which operated in Hylzen’s book is at work here—the more dubious the thesis, the more arguments must support it. And, as in the case of Manteuffel’s predecessors, it is the main thesis—the cohesive existence of Livonia—that appears most questionable.⁴²³

This problem can be seen in the very composition of *Zarysy* [Sketches]. The first part is a synthetic history of the federal medieval Livonian state, and emphasis is placed on the history of the Teutonic-Livonian Order and the Baltic Archbishopric and bishoprics. It is supplemented by a register of all secular and clerical rulers, and their years in office. The second part, in turn, presents the history of Polish Livonia, Courland and Semigallia, and Piltene, i.e., only those lands which historically remained in some sort of union with the Commonwealth. The monastic Livonian Confederation thus almost imperceptibly becomes the Livonian Duchy, and Polish colonization in the Baltic region naturally replaces the medieval colonization of the knightly order. There are also a number of other Polish-German parallels in Manteuffel’s text, which suggest that he saw Baltic-German historiography as his constant point of reference. Manteuffel’s polemics and corrections, which are scattered throughout the book as digressions and footnotes, and which suggest the strongly ideological character of his undertaking, therefore seem all the more fierce. He clearly felt the responsibility to correct an historical injustice which consisted in the relegation of Polish Livonia to nonexistence.

Lithuania” (scene VII, “A Salon in Warsaw”). Manteuffel says that in the beginning of “Inflanty Polskie” [Polish Livonia] he wants to include a brief overview of the seven-centuries-long past of all of Livonia “about which, the Polish reading public [G.M.’s emphasis] knows less than about the islands of Sumatra and Borneo.” In both cases it is about a fundamental lack of familiarity with things which are found very close by, in contrast to “a more authentic,” or distant, exoticism.

423 In several places Manteuffel shows his predilection for this corrective-constitutive imperative. An important element of this imperative consists in the delineation of Polish Livonia as a cultural creation, “about which we often have to speak to our compatriots as if it were a newly discovered land. Not only our journalists, but even historians themselves often classify it as part of Lithuania, or White Russia, even though Livonia’s history has nothing to do with these provinces.” Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from Old Livonian Lands], 299.

Zarysy [Sketches] is a tendentious work. It answers unjust judgments and deformations of facts by being unjust. The reader gets to be in the position of a higher authority, who is to decide whether the author's undertaking is right. He is like an independent tribunal, demanding evidence for the existence of Polish Livonia, from which this ontological privilege has been taken away by dishonest historiographers. Unlike his attitude in *Inflanty Polskie* [Polish Livonia], here Manteuffel does not put on the mask of a polite and humble amateur investigator of historical, genealogical, and folkloric memorabilia, whose humble contribution is to supplement the treasury of knowledge. He is a militant defender of the Cause, comprised by historic Truth and Polish Patriotism:

This work is the first attempt to provide a full depiction of the history of Livonia. And since in German works written about this subject to date no attention at all was paid to the so-called Piltene Lands, which were once of great interest to Polish society, nor was attention given to Polish Livonia, or the old Livonian Duchy—we have decided that it is essential to devote much more space to it in our book than a proper architecture of the whole would require. This is because it is the last link which connects Poland's past with the past of old Livonian countries, which today are rather foreign to Poland, and often even unfriendly, since today's Baltic provinces, suffused by the current of aversion against everything Slavic, evoked there in recent decades, are not always able to differentiate between the civilization of the Western Slavs and the altogether different culture of Eastern Slavs; we find examples of this on a daily basis.⁴²⁴

Manteuffel's historiographical creation is quite similar to White and Ankersmit's narrativist declarations, in that its basic scientific premise consists in the juxtaposition of one interpretive tendency against another. Our historian presents his own interpretation of the past, and supports it by a large amount of evidence; he passionately corrects factual mistakes, constructs syntheses, and attempts to convince his readers of their correctness. At the same time, he does not hide his ideological aim, which is to introduce a new Polish factor into the history of the Baltic countries.

There are echoes of other problems here, however, and they concern Polish-Latvian and Polish-Russian relations. While in his earlier synthesis Manteuffel made friendly gestures toward tsarist authorities, in *Zarysy* [Sketches], he presented Russian conquests only in negative light. A dozen years of intensifying Russification and Russia's anti-Polish politics had greater influence on the ideology of the Drycany Baron than the immediate aftermath of the January Uprising, something he expressed already in *Listy znad Bałtyku* [Letters from the Baltic]; the dismantling of the German-language University in Dorpat, in 1893, was probably a decisive moment for Manteuffel. His aversion against

424 Ibid., 240.

Russians seems to have intensified over time, as if to spite the increasingly extensive Russification of the Baltic provinces, which had exactly the opposite goal—it sought to eliminate traces of Polishness from Livonia.⁴²⁵ Throughout *Zarysy* [Sketches], Manteuffel allows himself to draw one other sharp boundary: between East and West. The two are shown as two incommensurate cultures, which do not understand each other, and which cannot reach agreement in any area. Differentiation between Western and Eastern Slavs is only one of the many places in Manteuffel's work where the civilization of Western Europe is juxtaposed against the anti-civilization beyond its borders. Book Five of Part One, which discusses the downfall of the independent Livonian state, uses something like Livonian patriotism, directed against all invaders, and especially against Moscow, which is represented in a truly unpleasant way. The background of the juxtaposition of the evil East against the good West consists of a colonial discourse, in which there is sympathy for some invaders and aversion against others, and a confessional discourse, which takes advantage of tensions between Eastern and Western Christianity.

When he speaks about aversion against all things Slavic in the Baltic provinces, Manteuffel is probably also thinking about the emerging national movements among Latvians and Ests. In Chapter 1, we already showed that Baltic Germans largely supported these tendencies, seeing them as a way of maintaining cultural dominance in the region, and pushing out (the increasingly nationalistically-oriented) Russian influences. In the marginalization of the Polish history of Livonia, our historian thus saw an illegitimate identification of Poles and Russians. Indeed, in German descriptions from the end of the 19th century, Eastern Latvia functions not so much as a former Polish territory, or, to be more precise, as a Polish-Lithuanian territory, as a Russified province, *de facto* separated from Livonia.⁴²⁶ To defend the Polish specificity of the region, Manteuffel brought out and emphasized its Catholic character. This allowed him to mark differences in relation to both Baltic Germans and Russians, and at the same time to remind his readers about the positive aspects of the activities of the

425 Growing Russophobia resulted in a situation where Gustaw Manteuffel was brought to court for his critique of Russification policies in the book *Z dziejów Dorpatu i byłego Uniwersytetu Dorpackiego* [From the History of Dorpat and Former Dorpat Univeristy] (1911) and the publication was confiscated. Given the fact that in the introduction the author underscored Dorpat's Polish past and scrupulously enumerated the University's eminent Polish alumni, however, this should come as no surprise.

426 This was probably also the source of problems, which the Polish minority had in proving its ethnic identity. In Polish-Latvian national disputes, the category "Pole" was often replaced by "Belarusian," "Russified Lithuanian," or simply "Russian."

Jesuits, and of the entire process of Catholicization. *A fortiori*, it later also allowed Latgallian patriots to distinguish a Latgallian from a Latvian.

The synthesis of the history of Livonia formulated in *Zarysy* [Sketches] not only failed to bring about the intended result—the summoning into existence of a Polish history of Livonia—but it failed to come into existence itself. For a dozen years, the manuscript circulated among publishers and scholarly institutions, until it was finally put away, and eventually lost.⁴²⁷ Its individual parts were published separately until the author’s final days, but they never became a single whole for the readers, a whole which they were initially intended to constitute.⁴²⁸ Publishing difficulties must have had political causes, since the reviewers who rejected the manuscript remained anonymous, and their accusations against the author were not content-related; they included things like clericalism, biases, as well as anti-Russian and anti-German sentiments. When critics attempted to show that he was guilty of historical imprecision or factual mistakes, they revealed their own ignorance instead.⁴²⁹ In his polemics against the reviewers Manteuffel cited passages from their critiques—these suggest that the critics’ corrections of the Drycany Baron’s Polish prose were so clumsy as to

427 I write about this in more detail in the introduction to Manteuffel’s *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], subsection “Losy rękopisu” [The Fate of the Manuscript]. In the same subsection I also briefly discuss Manteuffel’s argument with reviewers from Kasa Mianowskiego, who rejected the manuscript.

428 Publications in book form include: *Cywilizacja, literatura i sztuka w dawnej kolonii zachodniej nad Bałtykiem* [Civilization, Literature, and Art in the Old Western Colony on the Baltic] (Krakow, 1897); Gustaw Manteuffel, “Pierwiastki cywilizacji nad dolną Dźwiną” [Elements of Civilization along the Lower Daugava], *Ateneum* 75, no. 3 (1894); Gustaw Manteuffel, “Księstwo inflanckie XVII–XVIII stulecia” [The Livonian Duchy in the 17th and 18th centuries], *Przegląd Powszechny* (1896–97); “Niecico z dziejów dawnego księstwa inflanckiego” [A Bit from the History of the Old Livonian Duchy]; *O starodawnej szlachcie krzyżacko-rycerskiej* [On Ancient Teutonic-Knightly Aristocracy].

429 Two of Manteuffel’s corrections of reviewers’ statements have been preserved in the Scientific Archive of PAN [Polish Academy of Sciences] and PAU [Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences] in Krakow. In one of these, for example, he explains that Rigan archbishops had scepters, since the title of Prince was among their titles; substituting the crozier for the scepter was thus evidence of ignorance of the subject matter. Manteuffel noted dozens of similar unfounded corrections, and he scrupulously corrected each one. See Gustaw Manteuffel, “List do Ignacego Baranowskiego, członka Komitetu Kasy Mianowskiego w Warszawie” [Letter to Igancy Baranowski, Member of Kasa Mianowskiego in Warsaw], *Korespondencje Sekretariatu Generalnego KSG 1714/1895, Archiwum Nauki PAN i PAU w Krakowie* [The Polish Academy of Sciences (PAN) and Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences (PAU) Scholarly Archive in Krakow].

suggest their own linguistic difficulties, and possibly their employment in the tsarist censor's office. It is surprising, however, that the Krakow Academy of Arts and Sciences also refused to publish the book, even though negotiations went on for several years, as the author's 1903 letter to Stanisław Tomkowicz shows:

The conditions which [the publisher Marian Matula—K.Z.] put forward in his reply are, indeed, *mala fide* too difficult, and arranged so that the author would not accept them—I will just cite the example of the condition that the author would not only receive no honorarium, but also accept responsibility for a very large portion of the costs (which cannot be specified at this time), and despite this, he would only receive no more than 20 copies of the book...⁴³⁰

Further down, the author states that he accepted the difficult conditions, which, as we know, still did not give positive results, and the book did not appear in print. As if he sensed the book's later fate, the Livonian historian made several manuscript copies himself, and the copy found at the New York Public Library, which was the basis for the publication of *Zarysy* [Sketches] in 2007, was probably his fourth one, made between 1908 and 1912.

The refusal to publish the only synthetic study of the history of Livonia *as a whole*, written from the Polish-Livonian perspective, seems to be more than symptomatic. The object of investigation was politically uncomfortable, and the author's competences were uncomfortable (an amateur historian who corrects the mistakes and imprecision of professors with scholarly degrees); the declared ideology and passionate style, moreover, were uncomfortable from the point of view of scientific objectivity. To some extent, Manteuffel fell victim to his own high scholarly expectations: he wished to simultaneously construct a popular synthesis, articulate a scientific argument, and provide a provocative polemic. None of these goals was actually realized, and the sick author (in 1911 Manteuffel had a stroke which resulted in partial paralysis) left his work in a manuscript form. Problems with existence were thus not only the rule in the history of Polish Livonia, they became more intensified.

It is not difficult to notice that the reviewers' accusations were pretexts, and that our Polish-Livonian patriot lost the battle against academic historiography. Honoring the requirement of scholarly honesty and loyalty to the sources, he stubbornly fought against mistakes and imprecision, whereby he fell into disfavor with distinguished scholarly institutions. Reading his brochure-length monographs about castles, cities, families, libraries, and monuments of Livonian culture makes

430 "List G. Manteuffla do St. Tomkowicza" [Manteuffel's Letter to St. Tomkowicz], January 5, 1903, manuscript collection, sygn. 1987-k 19-26, Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences (PAU) in Krakow.

it easy to discern that he understood Livonian issues better than anyone else. He used this knowledge, however, in a manner which was inadmissible in the framework of existing norms; he constructed his own Livonian ideology, he added interpretive tendencies to events and sources, and he brought back elements which had been omitted or deliberately removed. To put it briefly: he created his own history of Livonia with the conviction that in this way he was defending the interests of a certain community. The refusal to publish *Zarysy* [Sketches] was a clear sign of the defeat of this ideology—and this community.

Gustaw Manteuffel was the author of at least two other Livonian syntheses. The 1888 bibliophilic rarity *Terra Mariana* should certainly be considered one of them. It was made in a single copy, a gift for Pope Leo XIII for the 50th anniversary of his entry into the priesthood (which was actually in 1887, so the gift reached the Vatican with some delay). It was an artistic masterpiece, with a fine aesthetic finish:

Terra Mariana is a heavy volume; it has a white leather cover with a black cross, the symbol of the Order of the Virgin Mary (...). The cover has decorative metal corner pieces and buckles which hold it together. Meticulous calligraphy with colorful decorative majuscules, and symbolic artistic vignettes in the margins of the pages of the *Introduction*, also makes it a work of art.

And with carefully composed content:

[The *Introduction*] contains an outline of the history of Livonia in Latin; it contains basic information about Livonia's past and its religious and national character. Its author stressed that nearly one quarter of the Latvians, who comprised the majority of the population of Polish Livonia, remained Catholic (...). The landowning aristocracy (...) consisted of nearly 30 families who were descendants of the old Teutonic aristocracy, and about 20 families who were Polish and Lithuanian aristocrats who settled in Polish Livonia after its incorporation into the Commonwealth. The *Introduction* placed strong emphasis on the conflict-free process of Polish Livonia's integration into the Commonwealth.⁴³¹

431 Juliusz Bardach, "Terra Mariana": księga-album ofiarowana papieżowi Leonowi XIII w imieniu ziem inflanckich" ["Terra Mariana": A Book-album Offered to Pope Leo XIII in the Name of the Livonian Lands], in *Christianitas et cultura Europae: księga jubileuszowa Profesora Jerzego Kłoczowskiego: część 1* [Christianity and European Culture: Festschrift for Professor Jerzy Kłoczowski, Part 1], ed. Henryk Gapski (Lublin: Instytut Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej, 1998), 55. Bardach provides a detailed description of the work, and it appears that he is referring to the original, which is why his surprise is especially surprising: "I am not able to explain why some of those who write about this book-album, say that it is 70 pages long, when in fact there are 120 pages." (Ibid., 57). It is difficult, in turn, to explain the researcher's mistake, since there actually are 70 pages! It is unclear whether Bardach was misled by the decorative calligraphy, where the roman numerals that designate page numbers are difficult to

This last sentence suffices to suppose that there was a high probability that Gustaw Manteuffel was the author of the text. This supposition is confirmed by the architecture of the text as a whole, and by the register of secular and clerical Livonian officials, placed at the end of the introduction, and analogous to the register included in *Zarysy* [Sketches], which was written at about the same time. These details are important because the names of the book's authors are not disclosed anywhere, and the donor of the gift is enigmatically described as the Catholic community of Livonia, which in reality meant Livonian Poles.⁴³² The final page shows a map of all of Livonia—within the region referred to by the subtitle of *Zarysy* [Sketches]—with a large superscript description: Terra Mariana. The title was taken from the customary medieval name of the territory which was Christianized by the Livonian-Teutonic Order, which was officially founded as the Order of Brothers of the German House of Saint Mary in Jerusalem. In other words, “The Land of Mary” is one of Livonia's oldest names.

The author wanted the book to confirm historic connections of the Baltic lands with the Catholic Church, and thereby also with Western European culture; this negated the actual situation, in which Livonia was politically dependent on Moscow. As in *Inflanty Polskie* [Polish Livonia] and *Zarysy* [Sketches], Livonian aristocracy was divided into Teutonic-German and Polish and Lithuanian categories, whereby Manteuffel deftly bypassed confessional divisions, and repeated the compositional schema which seems to be an unchanging element of his constitutive operations.⁴³³ Once again, the Polish-

read, and where, indeed, a capital L can look like a C, or whether he confused the original with the later Rigan edition.

432 For many years, Maria Przeździecka herself was considered the author of the phenomenal illustrations, and she also co-financed the undertaking; this is written, for example, in her biographical note in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* [Polish Biographical Dictionary], vol. 29 (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1986), 44. We now know that the illustrations were made by Livonian artists, mainly from Riga: Bernard Borchert, Oskar Felsko, Arthurs Baumans, J. Czarnocki, and Ignacy Żółtowski. See Bardach, “*Terra Mariana*,” 56.

433 Bardach's suggestion that Manteuffel had difficulties in representing the knightly-German families, most of whom were Protestant, for the Pope, does not seem right to me. In the middle of the 1880s, most of them were no longer Protestant and it did not have to be the case that “the sense of scientific honesty outweighed confessional aspects.” (Ibid., 56.) I think that it was much more important to present them as loyal citizens of Polish Livonia, i.e., as Poles. Let the extended discussion of the annexation of part of Livonia to Poland (which Bardach himself points to) be evidence of this. Pages 37 and 38 in the original edition: the final pages of the introduction have wonderful drawings of Polish hussars with the White Eagle. The intention here was as political as it was religious.

Livonian patriot repeated the two main theses of his historical writing: Livonia constitutes a certain civilizational and cultural whole, and Polish culture has contributed to this whole. In this case, too, it is difficult to speak about the broader reception of Manteuffel's ideas, since there was only one copy of the book, and, as a politician, Pope Leo XIII—author of the *Rerum Novarum* encyclical—was more interested in social issues than in Eastern Europe's national liberation movements.⁴³⁴

The second synthesis, which had a similarly colonial tone, was a part of the rejected *Zarysy* [Sketches], devoted to art and culture in Livonian countries, and published in Lviv, in 1896, under the telling title *Cywilizacja, literatura i sztuka w dawnej kolonii zachodniej nad Bałtykiem* [Civilization, Literature, and Art in the Old Western Colony on the Baltic]. The second edition was published the following year in Krakow.⁴³⁵ By “old western colony” Manteuffel meant the expansion of medieval western European culture into the Baltic territory, i.e., all the phenomena which he described as “the history of old Livonian lands.” It was one of the synonyms of the Teutonic Livonian state. It is worth noting that

434 Manteuffel had a German-language copy of the album published in Riga, adding a postscript, and partially explaining the process of the creation of the original. It was to be a gift from the Livonian country, but the generosity of the citizens quickly died out, and the baroness Maria Przeździecka from the Tyzenhauz family declared her willingness to financially support the project. Hence her signature is the only signature found in the original copy. According to Manteuffel, however, even this source of financing resulted in disappointment, and the author himself bore the remainder of the costs—an author who had come up with the idea, developed the concept of the book, managed the project, and oversaw the work of the artists. One should not be surprised that authorship of the book was attributed to him. The Latgalian historian Henrihs Soms wrote about “*Terra Mariana*” in “*Daugavpils albumā „Terra Mariana” (1888. G.)*” [Daugavpils “*Terra Mariana*” Album (1888. G.)], in *Humanitārās Fakultātes XII Zinātnisko Lasījumu Materiāli – Vēsture*, no. VI (I) (2003): 183–188.

435 *Cywilizacja, literatura i sztuka w dawnej kolonii zachodniej nad Bałtykiem* [Civilization, Literature, and Art in the Old Western Colony on the Baltic] constitutes a separate work, which is much more extensive than the analogous parts in *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Livonian Lands]. Here Manteuffel provides, for example, detailed descriptions of works of art (churches, sides of Gothic altars, tombstones—many of which no longer exist), he cites manuscripts which never appeared in print, and refers to copies of documents which disappeared together with his archive. In addition, the book is filled with drawings and sketches, which is not the case in *Zarysy* [Sketches]. *Cywilizacja, literatura i sztuka* [Civilization, Literature, and Art] is an enormously valuable source for the history of art and literature (and, as is typical when it comes to Livonia, it has not been fully utilized). The “civilization” referred to in the title, in accordance with the terminology of the time, is equivalent to “culture”; see Chapter 6, footnote 526.

Manteuffel saw colonization as something positive. Colonial ideology was simply exactly in line with justifications of the presence of descendants of European knights in these lands. By using the term “colony,” Manteuffel affirmed (or at least he attempted to affirm) the German and Polish-speaking inhabitants’ right to reside in this region, to have roots here, to be local.⁴³⁶ The word “Western” denied this right to Russian colonizers.

Once again, the author gave central importance to the religious imperative, in accordance with the ideology of the Teutonic crusades:

these [Livonian] lands, and their stormy past, simply cannot be understood without taking into consideration the Church’s position in Europe at the time (...).

But this was accompanied by an extensive argument about the culture-creating role of the West in the Baltic region:

The Baltic colony was dependent on its native West in many respects: in the evolution of its legal structures, and the development of art and literature. All these are the branching out of similar phenomena in the West, which, along with the light of the Roman Catholic faith, also brought elements of its civilization here, a civilization completely different from the eastern one (...).⁴³⁷

The attempt to convince the reader that there were Western European cultural influences in the Baltic countries seems not only unnecessary, but simply frivolous. A hundred years ago—and both earlier and later—no one doubted that cities were built by Western artisans in accordance with Western styles; that laws, economic principles, artisan craft, technologies, and cultural fashions, were brought in by the people who created them: artisans, engineers, and writers. The dependence of the Baltic countries on Western European culture was so extensive that the opposite problem—the delineation of their own specificity—was a source of difficulties.⁴³⁸ Manteuffel expressed this in his attempt to reconstruct autonomous Livonian art:

436 As a justification of cultural expansionism, Manteuffel’s historical work would thus have a nationalist character: “For example, 19th-century nationalist historical writing may occasionally have been wholly unobjectionable from a purely factual point of view, and yet have functioned in contemporary political discussion as a historical justification of expansionist purposes.” Ankersmit, *Historical Representation*, 94. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why, to this day, the figure and the work of the Livonian historian continues to be surrounded by an aura of concealments and restraint in commentaries.

437 Manteuffel, *Cywilizacja, literatura i sztuka* [Civilization, Literature, and Art], 5–6.

438 Armin von Ungern-Sternberg speaks about problems with delineating a separate identity from the German point of view in *Erzählregionen*: “[German-] Baltic novels speak about Baltic city very infrequently, however, and in such a way, that Riga could just as well be on the banks of the Elster or the Elbe” (p. 170). Ungern-Sternberg’s monumental work is largely devoted precisely to the problem of differentiating Baltic

As far as we know, no one has yet dared to speak about great Livonian masters in the arts. And yet one should not forget that it is precisely from that time [the 16th century] that we have evidence which, in a way, justifies this conclusion.⁴³⁹

According to the author, the proof of local specificity was to lie in the fact that the Swedish King Gustav I Vasa spoke of the “flourishing art of the Baltic countries,” and ordered that artists from the region be brought to his court. Manteuffel, once again, repeated his project Livonia—or, to be more precise, its artistic version—for the purpose of repeating the main points of his Livonia-centric ideology. It was not about proving the obvious, but about displaying it, reinforcing the representation, and sharpening the picture.

Reinforcement through repetition (with artistic variations) was aimed against Russification and Russophiles. Manteuffel used the juxtaposition of the East and the West as support for resistance against Russian domination, which sometimes led to amusing shifts in emphasis, with the effect that German, Swedish, and Polish colonizers seem to come together in a cultural crusade against Eastern barbarism.⁴⁴⁰ It also served our historian’s highest goal, i.e., the inclusion of Polish-Livonian culture within the sphere of Western influences; this was not insignificant given the fact that dominant German historiography invariably treated the territories of Polish Livonia as if they were simply the Russified East.⁴⁴¹

culture from the West—at least from the point of view of the Baltic Germans. One of the author’s interesting conclusions is the idea that the deficiency of the representations of the Baltic region derived from difficulties associated with regional identification. The term “Baltic” was used to designate so many different phenomena that it was difficult to single out any distinctive features among them. The “Baltikum” was simply a centuries-old, continual literary project.

439 Manteuffel, *Cywilizacja, literatura i sztuka* [Civilization, Literature, and Art], 31.

440 Examples of this can also be found in *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from Old Livonian Lands], where Manteuffel—who was, on the whole, critical of Lutheran Swedes—celebrates the Polish–Swedish victory over Moscow at Wenden in 1578, *ibid.*, 120. Manteuffel’s sympathy and antipathy toward Germans and Swedes shifted back and forth, depending on his immediate ideological needs, while his aversion against Moscow—whose armies Manteuffel enjoyed calling “wild beasts”—was constant.

441 The problem is still relevant today since A. v. Ungern-Sternberg does not include Latgalia in the “Baltikum,” limiting himself to German-speaking territories. He thus repeats the schema which has been compulsory in German-Baltic scholarship for approximately 150 years. See Ungern-Sternberg, *Erzählregionen*, 128–129. This division clashes strongly with the Polish stereotype, where Livonians are seen as Germans in disguise. See Świerzbński.

In *Cywilizacja, literatura i sztuka w dawnej kolonii zachodniej nad Bałtykiem* [Civilization, Literature, and Art in the Old Western Colony on the Baltic], however, these ideological shifts brought about the reinforcement of one other thesis—the claim to autonomy. While giving examples of Livonian literature from earlier centuries, Manteuffel listed equal numbers of writers who wrote in German, Polish, Latvian, Estonian, and Latin—to mention only the main languages. He obliterated national differences, and placed emphasis on regional and thematic criteria, which seemed like swimming against the current during the time of flourishing nationalisms. In his text, the unity of Livonia derived from its territory, while its linguistic, ethnic, and confessional differentiation was a marker of its civilizational specificity. The Livonian historian was aware that his work, which re-created Polish Livonia, would probably suffer a defeat, which is why toward the end of his life he decided to create one more type of “constituting publication”—or the *Bibliografia inflancko-polska* [Livonian-Polish Bibliography]. For years, he sought to win a sympathetic response from various scholarly communities in the country and, often experiencing painful defeats, he sought new audiences for his Polish-Livonian topics. After disillusionment with historians in Lviv, Warsaw, and Krakow, who rejected the project of publishing *Zarysy* [Sketches], Manteuffel brought his offer to the inhabitants of Poznan, and came close to voicing a request for good will in the preface:

My head is bowed low by the weight of my old age, and my final hour may come any day. I am, indeed, unable to make better use of the notes about the works about my native country, Polish Livonia, which I have gathered throughout my long life, than to arrange them into a “Polish-Livonian Bibliography,” and offer it in homage to the Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk [Society of Friends of Learning] in Poznan; may it survive in its “Roczniki” [Annals] for as long as possible, and may it one day be supplemented by our successors!⁴⁴²

Underneath he noted: “I wrote this in Riga, in the 74th year of my life,” as if to justify his request. The preface is permeated by the sadness of defeat, the bitterness of failing to realize his most important goal, which was to make Polish Livonia something more than merely a marginal object of description, appearing in a small number of texts. The bibliography includes both serious scholarly publications by German-Livonian historians, and brief mentions of Livonia in texts dedicated to altogether different issues—including literary texts, memoir literature, correspondence, geographical atlases, and so on. The arrangement and content of the bibliography suggests the incredible scrupulousness and passion of the author, who noted the presence of his native

442 Manteuffel, *Bibliografia inflancko-polska* [Polish-Livonian Bibliography], 5.

land in texts from various disciplines, which, in a way, basically amount to his reading list. Once again, Manteuffel was arranging his Livonian mosaic—summoning and testifying, proving the presence and the importance of that which seemed to be disappearing.

These last examples show an important shift in Manteuffel's vision of how to create Livonia. The researcher steps out beyond the discipline of history, and constructs his stubborn model of Livonia from diverse, and sometimes incommensurate, fragments. He treats the diversity—which undermines unity—as an advantage, as the *differentia specifica* of the object of his investigations. He answers professional historians' accusations that he is not a professional, and therefore does not have the qualifications necessary to write history, in the affirmative—i.e., he steps out beyond history and reaches toward other disciplines. A compilation of disciplines thus arises, and it is justified by the internal differentiation of the object of investigation. In the diversity of evidence, Manteuffel sees the reinforcement of his argumentation; he constructs complex configurations of textual references which mutually reinforce one another. The ethno-centric and religion-centric project of envisioning Polish Livonia is thus accompanied by a multicultural and interdisciplinary project of envisioning Livonia as a whole.

* * *

The historical Project Livonia experienced a downfall at the beginning of the 20th century, when the Baltic republics gained independence. We can view Gustaw Manteuffel's death in 1916 as its symbolic end, since the idea of a Livonian federation as the coexistence of many cultures, religions, languages, and nations, departed irrevocably along with Manteuffel. The anachronistic nature of this project is striking when contrasted against the nationalist states of interwar Central Europe. Livonian culture was strictly tied to hierarchy, domination, borrowings from the center located in the West, and so on, while modern national republics valued uniform cultures, which were democratized, and which strengthened the dominant ethnic group. It sounds like a paradox, but the process of building democracy, which was based on equality, implied acquiescence to the destruction of that which was different. In the Baltic region, this took the form of a struggle of all against all. Reduced to the role of unwanted minorities, individual ethnic groups fought against one another for physical survival, while Latvians and Estonians fought against all of these as remnants of colonialism. Equality, as a right claimed by those who had been wronged, excluded diversity. In this strained situation, there was no room for cheerful, multicultural coexistence, and its traces sometimes took grotesque

forms.⁴⁴³ In addition, from this point of view, Gustaw Manteuffel's culture-creating work did not appear particularly significant.⁴⁴⁴ Neither was there much significance in the entire Polish-Livonian historiography, which was reduced to the status of harmless eccentricity.

Precisely. The striking feature of Project Livonia is its failure. None of our historiographer-creators achieved his goal in the sense that Livonia—either as all of Livland, or as Polish Livonia—failed to mark its specificity in the awareness of Poles, and its cultural situation was reduced to constant remainders about its existence. Kwiatkowski's cosmographic language which identified names with things did not help, Hylzen's documents and legal investigations did not amount to anything, and Manteuffel's complex romantic-positivist constructions, covered with a network of stubborn corrections, also did not make much difference. Although Livonia was written a number of times, it was never properly written, i.e.,—no one read Livonia from the accumulated texts.

From the perspective of scientific pragmatism, we can speak about a failed representation, which—as a cultural product intended for use—did not find an audience. The representational transaction was never made, because no one was interested in the offer. If Project Livonia was undertaken to meet the needs of the Polish reader, there was clearly no demand for it, which could be satisfied. On the contrary, our writers' struggles against resistance and negation suggest that there was a need for something that was quite the opposite: the continuing suspension of Livonia's existence, the maintenance of Livonia in a state of ontological uncertainty. As a project and as an object of investigation, it remained nondescript and unspecified. It proved impossible to assign to it a name distinct enough to constitute a strong emblem. To use Markowski's distinctions: "a work which does not point to clearly revealed needs ceases to represent anything and becomes an empty sign."⁴⁴⁵ The representation of Livonia took a limping form, one constantly undermined by the wider context

443 See the remarks about national minorities in interwar Latvia in Chapters 1 and 2. An example of a grotesque distortion can be found in the fact that the Polish minority in Latvia did not include any descendants of the Livonian aristocracy, i.e., those who had created local Polishness over the course of three and a half centuries. In addition, Polish activists had to ideologically distance themselves from them. See "Społeczeństwo polskie w Łatgalii nie składa się przecież z magnatów i baronów" [Polish Society in Latgale Does Not, After All, Consist of Magnates and Barons], *Głos Polski*, Riga, September 28, 1922, no. 4.

444 It is interesting that Latvians showed some interest in Manteuffel at that time, as exemplified by Bolesław Breżgo, who was researching local, peripheral culture in the interwar period, and came across our historian's folklore studies.

445 Markowski, "O reprezentacji" [On Representation], 306.

and not fully specified. The unequalled Sienkiewicz is proof of this, since he was the only one able to introduce Livonia into general awareness, and with amusing distortions at that. Livonia appears in every part of his *Trylogia* [Trilogy], and always in the context of peculiarity or ridiculousness.⁴⁴⁶

If we looked at this problem of absence from the perspective of narrative historiography, we could follow White and say that the cause lies in *insufficiency of authority*.⁴⁴⁷ An historical narration, especially one whose character is synthetic and ideological, must be supported by the authority of the author, and also—even more important—by the authority of reality. To put it differently, the proposal to represent a fragment of the past requires not only diligent work with the evoked sources and facts, but also their sufficient rootedness in collective experience. To put it still differently: the concrete detail should be supported by the common horizon of events, where the writer and the reader can meet (Gadamer speaks about the fusion of horizons). If one were to translate this into the language of Manteuffel's interpretive tendencies, one should ask about the legitimacy or the usefulness of a Polish-Livonian ideology for a Polish-speaking reader. Answering would require stepping into the uncomfortable realm of political interests, morality, economic interests and so on—and the answer would thus circle around moral judgments.

One could also treat Polish Livonia's historical deficiency as an extreme example of a peripheral cultural amalgam, where Polish Livonia lost its *raison d'être* because of disturbance of relations with its center. One of the reasons for

446 As I mentioned in the beginning, Zagłoba twice treats our land as goods in a political transaction with the Swedes (which could be considered the only successful representation of Livonia, see footnote 4 in the Introduction); this gave rise to the unfounded saying about the “selling of Livonia.” In *Ogniem i mieczem* [With Fire and Sword] Longinus Podbipięta [Podbipienta] mounts “a massive Livonian mare”—a rather clumsy animal (vol. 1, chap. 3). And in *Pan Wołodyjowski* [Fire in the Steppe] (chap. 17), when Ketling wants to break off a painful and complicated relationship with Krzysia, he suddenly leaves for his native Scotland, by way of Courland, which is a good place to disappear. In each of these images, there are different satirical glimpses of Livonia, which appears as a strange, unknown, and not an entirely serious place.

447 “The authority of the historical narrative is the authority of reality itself; the historical account endows this reality with form and thereby makes it desirable, imposing upon its processes the formal coherency that only stories possess”; White, “The Value of Narrativity,” 23. A bit further down White adds: “Has any historical narrative ever been written that was not informed not only by moral awareness but specifically by moral authority of the narrator? It is difficult to think of any historical work produced during the nineteenth century, the classic age of historical narrative, that was not given the force of a moral judgment on the events it related.” *Ibid.*, 24. Gustaw Manteuffel's case fits perfectly with this characterization.

this was the multiplication of referents, the multiplication of centers, which, in this case, were located in German-Livonian culture, in Polish culture, and in the Catholic religion—just to mention the ones that were most obvious. The multi-directionality of orientations led to disorientation, which, among other things, led to constant repetition of identity and emphasis on difference. In consequence, this revolving identification brought about extensive isolation of the Polish Livonians, who lived far from all centers, in the “borderlands of the borderlands.” This is why Polish Livonia never came into existence.

The term “culture of Polish Livonia” is among the most fluid terms which can be envisioned in our history. Even expert specialists, like Gustaw Manteuffel, Kazimierz Bujnicki, or Czesław Jankowski, had significant difficulties with defining it. The fluidity of criteria comes from the indeterminacy of the object itself, which is what we are trying to show in the present study. But it results also—and perhaps above all—from territorial entanglements, from the multi-layered historical, cultural, civilizational, religious, and linguistic space. Polish Livonia is simply an extreme case of the borderland situation, constructed on the basis of the clash between what is one’s own and what is foreign. Multiplicity, diversity, otherness, specificity, difference, undervaluation, shaken ontology, indistinctiveness, and multiplicity of intersecting borders—these are the typical traits of borderland cultures. Bauman’s “fluidity,” or “liquidity,” which consists in constant shape changes, which take place under the influence of even relatively weak forces, gains the status of a dominant substantive category in the borderlands; it defines and at the same time shows how to escape definition.⁴⁴⁸ Such a place results in a difficult, compulsory way of existing—one which is not obvious, which is undermined, and put into question by others. The spatially differentiated Eastern Borderlands of the old Commonwealth had their specificity, and they therefore had cultural differences as well; but for the very same reason they were relegated to the margins.

448 In addition to his explanation of “liquidity” in “Liquid Modernity,” Bauman explains this concept in a brief and accessible form in the article “O tarapatkach tożsamości w ciasnym świecie” [On the Travails of Identity in a Cramped World], in *Dylematy wielokulturowości* [Dilemmas of Multiculturalism], ed. Wojciech Kalaga (Krakow: Universitas, 2007), 13–14.

Chapter 5

Second Digression: Borderlands. Circulation of Discourses

The concept of *borderlands* has been among the most frequently used and abused ideas in recent times. It justifies new approaches to literary studies and replaces traditional ones, it offers attractive and previously unknown research techniques, extends the field of investigation, introduces new concepts, and puts previously unrecognized forms of intercultural dialogue into play. It brings together all the new methodological approaches and novelties that have come into literary studies from anthropology, ethnology, psychology, sociology, philosophy, and theory of history—to mention just the primary disciplines.⁴⁴⁹ The power of the idea of the borderlands derives from the imperative—implicitly contained in this concept (even at the lexical level)—to penetrate boundaries, to step beyond barriers, and from the postulate to pierce the protective armor behind which every discipline hides with its arsenal of methodological tools. The term “borderlands” resembles a battering ram used to demolish walls that separate not only individual objects of investigation—societies, cultures, languages, or literatures—but also individual scholarly disciplines, and the hierarchies and orders established by these disciplines. Thanks to this concept, peripheral phenomena (peripheries is one of the key notions in borderlands studies) are to claim center stage, and that which until now has been pushed into the margins, or even into nonexistence, by authoritative syntheses, gains a dignified place and moves toward the center. The term “borderlands” itself has become a sign of a certain way of thinking and investigating in the humanities, an approach which is not only modern, but also, in a certain sense, culturally superior. A scholar who investigates the borderlands meets the requirements of new civilizational challenges, among which the concern for that which is other, foreign, weaker, marginal, wronged,

449 Here I mention only the main disciplines without further differentiating between, for example, cultural anthropology, literary anthropology, Cultural Literary Theory, narrative historiography, postcolonial studies, geopoetics, etc. All these “sub-disciplines” seek to bridge old divisions among the humanities, divisions which were a legacy of positivism.

etc., occupies a prominent place. Categories invariably associated with these investigations include agreement, neighborhood, coexistence, and mutual penetration. Importantly, it is not easy to move beyond the ethical dimension of these and give them precise scientific definitions. Just as often, borderlands are associated with clashes, conflicts, and competing interests—and thus with a catalog of tensions between identity and difference. The collective fascination with the idea (myth? utopia?) of the borderlands, investigated with the tools of various scholarly disciplines, leads to considerable conceptual chaos; as a result, the calls, made by certain theoreticians (e.g., Ryszard Nycz, Stanisław Uliasz), to contain these impulses and organize borderland studies around a uniform, or at least a coherent, methodological basis, do not have much effect.⁴⁵⁰

The notion of the borderlands refers to such a broad spectrum of subjects and issues that the term itself begins to lose meaning. On the other hand, there is no better term to describe a situation where the experience of identity—both the individual I, and collective identification—is subjected to constant undermining by the presence of the Other. Here the *borderlands situation* signifies a certain type of a cultural amalgam on a given territory, where subjectivity undergoes disturbances and disintegration, and its constitution never reaches a satisfactory level. The main obstacle, but also the main challenge, consists in the intervention, competition, and rivalry with the Other.

The concept of the borderlands itself has a local rather than a universal meaning, the best proof of which can be found in the difficulties with translating this concept into foreign languages. In Polish culture, the concept has become familiar in the context of the Eastern Borderlands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and it therefore belongs to the terminology of our national discourse. In a certain sense, attempts are made to use it to soften the colonial

450 See Ryszard Nycz, “Kulturowa natura, słaby profesjonalizm: kilka uwag o przedmiocie poznania literackiego i statusie dyskursu literaturoznawczego” [Cultural Nature, Weak Professionalism: A Few Remarks about the Object of Literary Studies and the Status of the Discourse of Literary Studies], in *Kulturowa teoria literatury* [Cultural Literary Theory], ed. Ryszard Nycz and Michał Paweł Markowski (Krakow: Universitas, 2006); Stanisław Uliasz, “Literatura pogranicza kultur – aksjologia i poetyka” [Cultural Borderlands Literature: Axiology and Poetics], in *Wilno literackie na styku kultur* [Literary Vilnius at the Intersection of Cultures], ed. Tadeusz Bujnicki and Krzysztof Zajac (Krakow: Universitas, 2008). Nycz warns about the “utopia of interdisciplinarity, which multiplies descriptive perspectives while assuming that description nonetheless maintains a broader integrity, while in fact interdisciplinarity most often leads to the *dispersal* of the object of investigation, and multiplication of incompatible vocabularies. Uliasz sensibly narrows the concept of a borderland to designate a cultural phenomenon which is related to the geographical borderlands; he also emphasizes the singular character of all cultural-anthropological descriptions of borderlands.

dimension of our Central-European expansion, on the model of Edward Said's concept of orientalism.⁴⁵¹ Notions of hybridization or creolization of cultures, which appear in the new analyses of postcolonial societies, are semantically close to the concept of the borderlands.⁴⁵² Contact between cultures in the borderlands is to bear fruit in the form of a new, open, and tolerant mentality of the "borderland man," who, as one researcher argues, through his encounter with the other, learns respect for other people's ideas and partnership in relations:

Contact with the poly-culture of the borderlands used to leave (...) indelible traces. Above all, it favored the formation of a certain type of polyphonic personality, which opened itself to other cultural systems and world views. This did not necessarily have to be active multilingualism, though among borderland writers there is no lack of bilinguals. More often, however, we encounter the so-called potential multilingualism, which makes itself known through heightened awareness of one's own and others' verbal behaviors.⁴⁵³

I therefore understand the borderlands in a spatial sense, as a place of the interaction of cultures, which is not necessarily conflictual, but which is always inscribed into the relationship between the self and the other. The borderlands situation contains a fundamental contradiction: it demands clear identification from the subject, while at the same time making such identification impossible because of the very conditions of multiculturalism. As a result, a text that belongs to borderland literature speaks by means of a series of discourses which comprise a composition (a mosaic of discourses), while also registering the conventional and artificial nature of these discourses. Such a text is a combination of an original text and a negating commentary. It denies its own credibility through the declaration of non-referentiality, outside discourses.

Stephen Greenblatt spoke about the "circulation of materials and discourses"⁴⁵⁴ when characterizing an interpretive model based on assigning cultural autonomy to texts, and on reading transactions between creators and social practices, which take place within the texts. He simultaneously appealed

451 Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin Books, 2003). For a discussion of Said's four different definitions of orientalism and his postcolonial criticism see Anna Burzyńska and Michał Paweł Markowski, *Teorie literatury XX wieku: podręcznik* [20th-century Literary Theories: A Textbook], (Krakow: Znak, 2006), 552–553.

452 See Ulf Hannerz, *Transnational Connections: Culture, People, Places* (London; New York: Routledge, 1996).

453 Stanisław Uliasz, *O literaturze Kresów i pograniczu kultur: rozprawy i szkice* [On the Literature of the Eastern Borderlands and the Borderlands of Culture: Essays and Analyses], (Rzeszów: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego, 2001), 21.

454 Stephen Greenblatt, "Towards a Poetics of Culture," *Southern Review* 20, no. 1 (1987): 14.

to Jacques Derrida and his famous “there is nothing outside the text,” from which he drew the conclusion that

all the products of human culture are, in a sense, textual phenomena, and they have a certain symbolic meaning, while culture itself is a field where constant interactions between various cultural discourses take place, where there is constant circulation of meanings [my emphasis—KZ].⁴⁵⁵

The multiplicity of discourses points to the formation of meaning not within any one of them, but rather in their composition. One can also speak about a play of discourses, between which there appears a place which is empty, without signs, and unnamed. That which was excluded, which did not find its articulation and remained in the form of a “mute word” becomes visible in the the displacement of a discourse under the pressure of other discourses. In the literature of the borderlands those cases are most interesting where this muteness and powerlessness are expressed directly, precisely as an impossibility: I am from here, but that “here” is mine and not mine, since it is disturbed by the Other who is also at home in this “here”; the more I seek myself, the more clearly I see the Other. Naming does not constitute identity—it takes identity away.

Writing about concepts used by Roland Barthes, Derrida called the *punctum–studium* configuration a composition in which the first term designates the entire sphere of what is unnamable, individual, and ethereal, while the second refers to the sphere of analysis, conscious shaping and expression, and the “representation of the representable.” Derrida speaks about a composition,

since both concepts contain a “compromise between each other” and thanks to the “metonymic operation” that which is not coded (*punctum*) arranges itself with what is always coded (*studium*), “it belongs to it without belonging to it and is unlocatable within it; it is never inscribed in the homogeneous objectivity of the framed space, but instead inhabits or, rather, haunts it.”⁴⁵⁶

A rhythmical relation takes place between the namable and the unnamable, a “relation without relation,” which is neither identity, nor opposition, nor dialectic, but “a splitting of the reference between the presumed object that is being referred to (...) and the reference itself.”⁴⁵⁷ In the borderland situation this relation takes on the form of a repeated constitution of a place, which cannot

455 A translator’s footnote provided by Marta Lorek in the Polish edition of Greenblatt’s essays entitled *Poetyka kulturowa: pisma wybrane* [Cultural Poetics: Selected Writings], ed. Krystyna Kujawińska-Courtney (Krakow: Universitas, 2006), 54.

456 Michał Paweł Markowski, *Efekt inskrypcji: Jacques Derrida i literatura* [The Inscription Effect: Jacques Derrida and Literature] (Krakow: Homini, 2003), 292.

457 *Ibid.*, 295.

come into existence as one's own, but whose existence is, in a certain sense, fulfilled in this impossibility.

1. The Elusive Borderlands

Borderlands, like the nation, have their space and time, their history, politics, religion, culture, and literature—and their contradictory aims.⁴⁵⁸ When we wish to say something sensible about borderland literature, sooner or later we must turn to the problem of identity that has been destabilized, lost, or which is stubbornly protected. Postmodern changes in the humanities have brought about a very significant shift of scholarly attention from the text back to the author, and from the author to the set of qualities which encase his existence, that is, to his *cultural milieu*. We can also speak about a shift from hermeneutical and structuralist perspectives to an anthropological perspective, centered on individual and collective experience. Theories of literature have been replaced by the search for a system of references and relations between the text and its surroundings, which plays out at the level of conscious discursive statements and unconscious announcements contained in concealments and ideologies. It is therefore not surprising that in designating points of departure for a new, cultural theory of literature Ryszard Nycz started by delegating structuralism to the dustbin, since “the method of structural analysis resembled the mechanism of a self-fulfilling prophecy.”⁴⁵⁹ It was pushed out by pluralization, by an “anarchy of theoretical conceptions,” which

not only enriches and differentiates access to previously unnoticed realms of knowledge (...) but also fragments, or even atomizes knowledge into mutually untranslatable and irreducible perspectives. (...) It is impossible to hide the fact that

458 Cultural discourses of the borderlands contain both the strengthening of one's own identity (which is exposed to disturbances) as something distinct from the Other, who occupies the same borderland space, and the weakening of one's identity by recognizing the equal rights of the Other. As a result, Polish–Ukrainian borderlands, for example, include both “Polishness” and “Ukrainianness” as boundary forms of a certain strong center (Sienkiewicz's *Trilogy* and Gogol's *Taras Bulba*), and also “Polish Ukrainianness” and “Ukrainian Polishness” as spheres of the mutual interpenetration and coexistence of various cultures in individual experience (the “Ukrainian School” in Polish romantic poetry, Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz's early work). Oleksy Sukhomlynov recently wrote about cultural borderlands in Iwaszkiewicz's work in *Pol'sko-ukrayins'ke kul'turne pogranychya prozi Yaroslava Ivashkevycha (topika i funkcional'nist')* [Polish–Ukrainian Cultural Borderlands in the Prose of Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz (Topics and Functionality)] (Donetsk: Yugo-Vostok, 2006).

459 Nycz, “Kulturowa Natura” [Cultural Nature], 26.

the object of description cannot be clearly separated from (...) the vocabulary or the method of description and it is therefore impossible to maintain convictions about the objectivity and unconditional nature of the results of cognition.⁴⁶⁰

This—as Nycz calls it—“dissemination of theories” brings about the diffusion of the forms of theoretical discourse; i.e., it enables, or even demands, the recognition that the object of literary studies should consist of the entire cultural background, or the “cultural nature” of the literary text. In other words, literary texts lost their status as objects specific to literary theory, and became an area of action (both cooperation and rivalry) of the research methods of many disciplines:

It is impossible—and meaningless—to continue defending the object-based and methodological specificity of literary studies, since the object extends to the entire “discursive universe” of cultural reality, and the methodology consists of individual configurations of the most efficient and operative methods in the humanities.⁴⁶¹

Nycz’s extension of theoretical discourse also works in the opposite direction—it moves toward the textualization of culture. Everything in culture is a record of “social images of reality,” which can be read on different levels: as conscious notes about experience and as carriers of unconscious meanings. A literary text thus loses its specificity and gets included in a broader collection of cultural evidence. By the same token, the boundary between it and other texts, such as historical narration, is also blurred. The investigation of borderlands cultures is entangled in the literary vagueness of adequate objects of description, and in the blurring of boundaries between literary and historical evidence. Traditional definitions, which differentiate between history and stories, are not very helpful here. If one accepts Nycz’s definition that literature is “the institutionalized art of expressing the human experience of reality,”⁴⁶² then literature includes—to limit ourselves just to our Polish-Livonian region—both Konstancja Benisławska’s *Pieśni sobie śpiewane* [Songs Sung to Myself] and Gustaw Manteuffel’s *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands]. According to cultural theory of literature, both texts co-create “the space-time of discursive reality”; they are simultaneously a confirmation and an extension of the framework of discourse, which is specific to a given territory.

That which gives a culture its borderland character cannot be reduced to geographical or political boundaries; it concerns the close proximity of the Other and his laws, which are juxtaposed against one’s own laws. Here, we are dealing

460 Ibid., 28–29.

461 Ibid., 29.

462 Ibid., 32.

with a different spatiality, one which is not geographic: we are dealing with space symbolically understood. We are far from an established center, which could be constituted by both the cultural capital of a state and, for example, the tradition or mythology formed by the culture associated with a given language. The spatial criterion becomes secondary to other categories, which we can generally designate as anthropological, and whose common core is well-expressed by the word *barrier*. To speak sensibly about the borderlands, one should first establish the entity on whose borders the borderlands are located.

This issue could be approached in an even more universal way. The incredible career of the term “borderlands” has resulted in the fact that it has been endowed with the virtue of being one of the fundamental characteristics of existence. Every one of us carries in himself some Other, and in this sense, we all live in the borderlands. When existence is understood this way, it points toward the philosophy of dialogue and describes our fundamental way of being among others, on the one hand, and expresses the basic identity conflict of individual subjective experience, on the other.⁴⁶³ Czesław Miłosz poetically expressed this dichotomy in his poem *What Does It Mean*: “Were I at least not contradictory. Alas.”⁴⁶⁴ The ideology of the borderlands says that the process of self-identification is always disturbed by a sense of foreignness, and our identity is characterized not by harmony but by inner tension. Anxiety and a sense of being thrown into a dangerous world results precisely from the inner bifurcation into the I and the Other. The nationalist monolith suggested by the idea of a nation, a centralized state, or a homogenous cultural community is nothing but a tranquilizer which calms this spiritual discomfort. But the very same ideology of the borderlands suggests a solution in the form of dialogue, compromise, the conversation of cultures, the deconstruction of boundaries, rapprochement, etc. Sometimes these amount to nothing but a collection of devout wishes, but

463 Wojciech Kalaga recently provided a useful analysis of these aspects of the Other in “Obowiązek Innego: trzeci,” [The Responsibility towards the Other: The Third] in *Dylematy wielokulturowości* [Dilemmas of Multiculturalism], ed. Wojciech Kalaga (Krakow: Universitas, 2007), 41–65. The Other is both one who allows me to form my own identity, or even makes its very appearance possible, and a sign of the dangerous foreignness of the world as a Heideggerian place of *Dasein*’s “fallenness”. The Other is a kind of “ontological responsibility” (p. 51–53), but he is also in me, he is a part of me in the same way as my doubts about my identity are a part of me. Kalaga writes: “The Other is an ambivalent part of me,” thus developing Emmanuel Lévinas’ idea which can be simplified as: The Other is me, only other.

464 Czesław Miłosz, *The Collected Poems 1931–1987* (New York: Ecco Press, 1988), 129.

sometimes they constitute a proposal for therapy which is much healthier than ethno-nationalist stupor.⁴⁶⁵

From this point of view, our Livonian case is an extreme one. In one territory, there was (and there still is) a clash of several cultures, languages, traditions, and religions, several regionalisms and patriotisms, several political and national interests. It is a multiple borderland, where each pair (Polish–German, German–Latvian, Russian–German, Polish–Russian, Russian–Latvian, Latvian–Belarusian, Swedish–Latvian, German–Estonian, Polish–Lithuanian, etc., one could keep multiplying these pairings) contains an admixture of additional elements, neighboring and co-participating either intentionally or through inadvertent interference.⁴⁶⁶ One could see this perfectly clearly in the example of nationalist and separatist tendencies: the more strongly a given group developed the ideology of “national unity,” the more it stood out against what is considered to be the universal social and cultural experience in the Baltic region. When Russian nationalism was gaining momentum in the middle of the 19th century, it clashed with German-Livonian, Estonian, Latvian, and Polish ethnic groups. They all declared their right to be local, generally viewing their own rights as more legitimate than those of the Russians. But the same applied to the nationalist pronouncements of the Baltic Germans, Latvians, and Ests—and each of these ideological formations met with efforts to undermine its right to domination, not to mention exclusivity.⁴⁶⁷ It is difficult not to notice that in

465 To provide a counterweight here, it is important to mention those conceptions of nationalism, which take difference into account as nationalism’s immanent component. Eugenia Prokop-Janiec has described these in her search for commonalities between nationalism and regionalism. Nationalist ideologies, however, use difference primarily to affirm segregationism, i.e., movement toward the center, separation from the Other. See Eugenia Prokop-Janiec, *Literatura i nacjonalizm: twórczość krytyczna Zygmunta Wasilewskiego* [Literature and Nationalism: The Critical Work of Zygmunt Wasilewski] (Kraków: Universitas, 2004), and especially her *Wstęp* [Introduction] and the chapter “Idee: figury” [Ideas: Figures].

466 Kalaga places the third in a triangle with the I and the Other, as yet another existential referent, another responsibility which also verifies the I-Other relationship. The ontological debt is divided between many Others, and the binary relationship becomes dispersed in the multiplicity of references. Kalaga is right to see this as the disturbance of the ethical dimension of relations, but the postulate of the equality of responsibilities toward every Other seems to be a theoretical utopia. In the context of concrete cultural borderlands this parity of responsibility does not really occur.

467 The situation of the Polish ethnic group was weaker in that this group did not claim dominance as much as it claimed its very presence. Borderlands of the Livonian type are typically described by the expression “cultural melting pot” which is used to suggest that tensions and conflicts constitute something like a constant *dominant* there. One can

the background of these kinds of relations there is always the context of ethics, which appears like an afterimage of colonialism. After several centuries of colonization, the process of overcoming barriers is long and difficult. In this sense, the paradigm of borderland culture is both the opposite of the paradigm of nationalism, and a challenge against it.

The discourse of nationalism is only one of many discourses associated with borderland cultures. Ethnic tensions do not always dominate, and this can be easily observed in the phenomena of local folklore, where various different identities interpenetrate and cooperate. Sometimes there are multicultural territories, characterized by the coexistence of various ethnic groups, where conflict does not disappear, but is relegated to a secondary position.⁴⁶⁸ Perhaps the fascinating specificity of borderland culture consists in the fact that each particular region is associated with a specific type of circulation of discourses. One could make the cautious proposal that the accurate and adequate description of a given culture requires the formulation of a particular, unique cognitive model, based on the right combination of *studium* and *punctum*. Of course such a selection, like every methodological choice, is arbitrary and subjective; it is dictated, first of all, by the nature of the object of investigation, but also by the researcher's own position with respect to the cultural substrate of the region. It requires presuppositions and a pre-selection of dominant problems. The danger of arbitrariness, which Ryszard Nycz refers to as the "scattering" of scholarly professionalism, or the "crisis of legitimation,"⁴⁶⁹ can be addressed by means of pragmatist verification through reception. An incorrectly-formulated cognitive paradigm would simply be rejected as one which provides insufficient exposition (is deficiently representative). Perspectivalism is unavoidable here,

also assume that it is the paradigmatic situation of all borderlands, which exists everywhere but with various degrees of intensity.

468 It seems to me that Bukovina is an example of this type of borderland, where multi-ethnicity and cultural differentiation appear to be an integrating rather than a conflict-creating factor. Divided between Ukraine, Moldova, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, and Poland, Bukovina is, almost by definition, a culture of the borderlands. The superimposed and intermixed colorful pieces of glass in a kaleidoscope allow themselves to be arranged into many-colored mosaics. For an analysis that describes Bukovina in this spirit see Helena Krasowska and Oleksy Sukhomlynov, "Bukowina jako pogranicze kultur" [Bukovina as a Borderland of Cultures], in *Rumuni i Polacy w Europie: historia i dzień dzisiejszy* [Romanians and Poles in Europe: Past and Present], ed. Stanisława Iachimovschi, Elżbieta Wieruszewska, and Związek Polaków w Rumunii (Suceava: Związek Polaków w Rumunii, 2006), 69–77. See also: *O Bukowinie: razem czy oddzielnie?* [About Bukovina: Together or Separately?], ed. Kazimierz Feleszko (Piła: Piłski Dom Kultury, 2000).

469 Nycz, "Kulturowa natura" [Cultural Nature], 35.

but it is also appropriate, since a multiplicity of perspectives is among the constitutive phenomena of multiculturalism.

Borderlands become the object of description for geographers, historians, political scientists, ethnographers, sociologists, literary scholars, philosophers, and cultural studies experts with various specializations. They are all democratically and equally entitled to their scholarly points of view, but their mutual dependence, or rather compatibility is more important. None of them has the exclusive right to specify what it means to “be in the borderlands.” Moreover, the more their descriptions reach out toward related disciplines, the more verifiable they become. The most obvious interdependence here is the bidirectional dependence between the literary scholar and the historian. Even the geographer, who stands somewhat aside (as the most “independent”), uses literary, historical, folkloric, and other types of evidence. The borderlands, as the object of research in the humanities, clearly expose the artificiality and the inadequacy of traditional divisions into separate disciplines.

Does this mean that in order to write about borderland cultures one has to have competence in all the different humanities disciplines? Perhaps that would be ideal. For the purposes of conducting research, however, it is enough to weave a net of discourses in which a given text is trapped, together with the subject revealed in that text. In the crevice between declarative subjectivity and the specificity of a given cultural milieu, one can hear the voice of actual existential experience, which is of primary importance in borderland situations.

One could say that elusiveness constitutes the borderlands, or that *the elusive* is constituted in the borderlands. In both cases, the dependence between the borderlands and *the elusive* provides an impulse to step “beyond,” to resign from that which easily suggests itself and proposes ready-made solutions. To investigate the borderlands is to consciously choose an insurmountable difficulty, which consists in the ontological vagueness of everything that is located “in the borderlands.” The arrangement of individual phenomena into a meaningful sequence, which suggests regularities, falls apart under the pressure of the very material of investigation; the sum is not a synthesis here, it remains a sequence. A solution which presumes the impossibility of recognizing regularities, and remains at the level of collecting descriptions of individual cases, appears to be relatively simple. It provides comfort that flows from the abundance of source materials, and it exempts one from the obligation to provide theoretical justifications. But the borderlands represent an immense reservoir of resources that belong to the interacting cultures, and the specificity of each of their interactions typically replaces both a broader methodology and scientific conclusions. The investigation of these phenomena appears to be both interesting (the attractiveness of the new), and relatively “scientifically safe”

(the fluidity of criteria) because every inconsistency or doubtful legitimacy can be answered by the claim that “things are different in the borderlands.” A borderland is a different reality, it is the opposite of order; it is vagueness which gains the status of a principle.⁴⁷⁰

2. Deficient Diachrony

The literature of Poland’s Eastern Borderlands cannot be grasped within the framework of the “official” history of literature for a variety of reasons; lack of an adequate sequence of eras is important among these. Criteria used in literary-historical scholarship are not helpful in this context. In the case of Polish–Ukrainian borderlands, for example, we can talk about Romanticism and Modernism (and these are, in fact, discussed extensively); it is much more difficult to meaningfully speak about Classicism or Positivism, however, and the idea of writing the history of the literature of these borderlands from the Middle Ages to the present seems preposterous (it would be a phenomenal work). Similar remarks apply to Polish–German borderlands, which have already become established as a literary phenomenon in our literary studies. Periodization of borderland literature fails even in the seemingly comfortable situation, where close cultural connections existed over the course of many centuries. *Pozytywizm na Litwie* [Positivism in Lithuania], a book by Andrzej Romanowski, an excellent scholar of the borderlands, is a good illustration of these difficulties: in the introduction, the author had to make the clarification that the book is not really about positivism, and it is not limited only to Lithuania.⁴⁷¹ Systematic constructions used in the chronological history of

470 Lech Witkowski wrote about the eastern variants of Polish borderlands in this spirit, describing them as forms of existential reckoning with individual existence: “the loss of the center is painful for those thrown into the melting pot of variety; they feel that their culture (...) is not powerful enough to digest everything and process it in its own ways, which makes cultural experiences shallow, and disoriented by the glimmering of yet another exoticism.” Lech Witkowski, “Bogactwo Kresów – między pograniczem kultury a kulturą pogranicza” [Richness of the Eastern Broderlands: Between the Borderland of Culture and Culture of the Borderland], in *Kresy w literaturze: twórcy dwudziestowieczni* [Eastern Borderlands in Literature: Interwar Writers], ed. Eugeniusz Czaplejewicz and Edward Kasperski (Warsaw: Wiedza Powszechna, 1996), 82.

471 Romanowski, *Pozytywizm na Litwie: polskie życie kulturalne na ziemiach litewsko-białorusko-inflanckich w latach 1864–1904* [Positivism in Lithuania: Polish Cultural Life in the Lithuanian–Belarusian–Livonian Lands between 1864 and 1904]. The subtitle of this book negates its title to some extent, and it is the subtitle which describes the actual extent of the author’s research—in a spatial and not a diachronic sense.

literature are used to identify common features and push highly differentiated material into ready-made, *a priori* frameworks; the literary culture of the Eastern Borderlands requires a somewhat different point of departure. Elements of the historical literary approach can be helpful in creating genealogical descriptions, but their usefulness is limited. Antoni Malczewski's *Maria* [Mary] or Seweryn Goszczyński's *Zamek kaniowski* [The Kaniowski Castle] can be read as instances of the romantic poetic novel, but when we do this we leave their dominant feature—the clash of cultures—outside of the field of investigation. Michał Czajkowski's *Powieści kozackie* [Cossack Novels] can be interpreted as an instance of the genre of the Sarmatian tale, but such a reading will not reach the deep layers of this Polish-Ukrainian literary work.⁴⁷²

This does not mean that the isolation of various phenomena—currents, styles, genres—within the framework of borderland literature is unfounded. On the contrary, it substantiates the link between the periphery and the center, and confirms the mutual congruity and compatibility of what has been recognized and what is only now demanding recognition. The point is that if we constrain the process of looking at borderland phenomena to the critique of their incomplete conformity to the literary-historical model, we will thereby also deprive the borderlands of their fundamental trait, that is, their clash with Otherness (what Lévinas calls the “face to face” situation with the Other). We will eliminate the dynamic configuration of mutual dependencies, a configuration which constitutes the true *challenge* for the borderlands writer.⁴⁷³ A literary scholar who traverses borderland regions is forced to make various

472 Andrzej Fabianowski wrote about the multicultural dimension of Michał Czajkowski's (Sadyk Pasza's) texts in “Wielokulturowość zapisana biografią: casus Michała Czajkowskiego” [Multiculturalism Recorded in a Biography: The Case of Michał Czajkowski], in *Między Wschodem a Zachodem: Europa Mickiewicza i innych: o relacjach literatury polskiej z kulturami ościennymi* [Between East and West: The Europe of Mickiewicz and Others: About the Relations of Polish Literature with Neighboring Cultures], ed. Grażyna Borkowska and Monika Rudaś-Grodzka (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 2007), 65–76.

473 Teresa Walas aptly describes the idea of *challenge* as an impulse which strains the will toward literary expression in her book *Czy jest możliwa inna historia literatury?* [Is a Different History of Literature Possible?], where *challenge* also means *release*, *trigger*, that which releases accumulated experiences. Such a factor can be constituted by “anything which arouses intellectual and artistic activity at any given moment. (...) It can thus be a political event, a change in social relations, (...) a philosophical idea or the sense of a collective mission or a shared fate (...); it can be a civilizational leap or a particular collective experience...” Ibid., 116. One can thus certainly view the author's very act of “being in the borderlands”—with the various factors which shape the author's identity—as *challenge* in this sense.

caveats and justifications at the very outset; before beginning to describe the phenomena which interest him, he seeks to avoid critiques launched from “central” positions. This is just another way of articulating the immediately apparent distinguishing feature of the borderlands, namely, the singularity of the *challenge*. As Teresa Walas says, “each time” literary expression may be evoked by “something else”⁴⁷⁴—and we frequently encounter this in the literary borderlands.

To put it differently: in every isolated fragment of borderland culture one should recognize the type of *challenge* answered by a given literature, or, more broadly, a given culture. Using Jakobson’s categories one can say that the point is to find the *discursive dominant*, which organizes higher semantic configurations.⁴⁷⁵ Here the challenge, or the dominant, does not have determinist connotations, but rather points to the activation of culture-creating activities⁴⁷⁶; it designates a choice made by the author and subsequently accepted by the audience. This is how a literary community forms: a community gathered around a specified stimulus which the creative process transforms into artistic expression.⁴⁷⁷ Borderland literature is thus addressed to a narrow circle of readers who have been selected according to a shared dominant. To simplify, this circle can be described as a *community of shared impressions*.

474 Ibid.

475 The concept of the dominant, as a dominant element of a work of art which organizes all the other elements, was introduced by Roman Jakobson in his 1935 lecture entitled “The Dominant,” reprinted in *Readings in Russian Poetry: Formalists and Structuralists Views*, Cambridge 1971, 105–110. I quote from it here following Brian McHale, “From Modernist to Postmodernist Fiction: Change of Dominant,” in *Postmodernist Fiction*, by Brian McHale (London: Routledge, 1987), 6. McHale used this term to reveal a system at the basis of the “catalogue of postmodern qualities,” or the ordering of heterogeneous sets of qualities, which is what literary theory has become in recent decades. On the example of the shift from modernist to postmodernist prose he showed the usefulness of the notion of the dominant for the description of change in the history of literature.

476 Walas, *Czy jest możliwa inna historia literatury?* [Is a Different History of Literature Possible?], 117.

477 This principle of the “subjectification of the challenge” points to an essential integrating and stimulating element. A community of reception (in the sense of accepting an assimilated stimulus) gathers around the discursive dominant and there arises something which we have called a cultural milieu. In the case of borderland regions this is an important identificational factor; in its cultural activities the collectivity seeks its identity and its specificity, and also a niche, which often becomes a source of help, or even rescue. Ibid., 118.

If one wanted to periodize the literature of a given borderland region, on the model of traditional historical literary periodizations, one would have to trace modifications not within styles and currents, but changes in the dominant, changes in the differentiated challenges which this literature was to meet. The encounter of Polish and German cultures over the last two centuries (after a previous spatial differentiation) can be divided into periods, phases, and currents by taking into account, above all, their dominant thematic ranges, which illustrate the specificity of the challenges they faced. One set of problems will appear in the Silesian region, a different one in Pomorze and Gdańsk, and yet another in Lviv or Vilnius. Polish–German cultural relations play out differently in the second half of the 19th century than in the interwar period, and they are different still after 1945. To capture the specificity of these relations (borderlands are based on specificity), one needs to characterize the challenges which organize the particular localities.⁴⁷⁸ Or: one needs to adequately identify the relevant circulation of discourses, and subsequently bring out both what these discourses say (*studium*) and what they relegate to silence (*punctum*). In light of our main theme, we can take the liberty to claim that there is a yet another circulation of discourses in Livonian culture, and that the combination of discourses—which will be proposed below—generates specific and characteristic meanings there.

3. Identity as Choice and Coercion

The self-identification of the subject of experience in borderland situations is constantly problematized by both the local and the central perspectives. Being in the borderlands means that I am from here, that is, from the most narrowly understood region, and at the same time I belong to a larger community, culture, and ethnic group whose center lies further away, and is typically quite distant. This peripheral multiplication of belonging creates a situation where there is not only no satisfying answer to the question “Who am I?” but this question must constantly be raised anew. The bond of identity with the Site and with the Other takes on a particularly strong, and a strictly spatial meaning here, since one

478 The above examples make it possible to create certain thematic sets. In the first set, to adequately grasp the differences, one could juxtapose, say, J.I. Kraszewski’s German period and the positivist currents from the time of the Hakata (e.g., Bolesław Prus’ *Placówka* [*The Outpost*]); in the second set one can place Stefan Żeromski’s *Wiatr od morza* [*Wind from the Sea*] and Günter Grass’s Danzig Trilogy. The change of era is both a change of perspective and a shift of the dominant. These examples only signal the relevant problematic, it is certainly possible to select other examples here.

cannot meaningfully identify the Site with the Same, which is what Derrida argued in his critique of Lévinas.⁴⁷⁹ The intervention of the Other—one of the fundamental existential events in Derrida’s deconstruction—takes on a concrete form in the borderland situation: the Other is perceptible, visible, he appears distinctly. On the one hand, the linguistic, ethnic, religious, and social perturbations make it possible to make otherness and foreignness concrete; on the other hand, however, they demolish the order of discourses at the very moment of their articulation, they negate the principles of expression.

As Zygmunt Bauman says, we discover our identity not when it is given to us, but when it is a task, when we must come to possess it, since it appears not as coercion exerted by a higher authority, but as a result of our choice.⁴⁸⁰ Choice brings with it another problem: the differentiation of the self from the Other, who defines himself differently on the basis of the same spatial determinants.

In fact, defining identity is a declaration of intentions. In former times, the topic of identity was more clearly tied to a place, and the question “Who am I?” was reducible to the question “Where am I from?” Today, the answer to the question “Who am I?” is a function of choosing from a catalogue of offers available in one’s cultural milieu. Surrounded by various possibilities of designating my individual and collective identity, I accept one option as adequate for my self-representation, in agreement with the self-portrait which I created. The nationalist conviction, contained in discourse, that identity is primordially, or biologically, given, has no justification save an ideological one; one can reply to it by pointing to Benedict Anderson’s recognition that nationality is only a particular kind of cultural artifact.⁴⁸¹ By the way, this universal claim can make

479 See Jacques Derrida, “Violence and Metaphysics: An Essay on the Thought of Emmanuel Levinas,” in *Writing and Difference*, by Jacques Derrida, trans. Alan Bass (London; New York: Routledge, 2001), 97–192. For more about Derrida’s critique of Levinas and invention as an answer to the challenges of the Other, see Markowski, *Efekt inskrypcji* [The Inscription Effect], 172–182.

480 Zygmunt Bauman, “O tarapatach tożsamości w ciasnym świecie” [On the Travails of Identity in a Cramped World], in *Dylematy wielokulturowości* [Dilemmas of Multiculturalism], ed. Wojciech Kalaga (Krakow: Universitas, 2007), 29.

481 Benedict R. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London; New York: Verso, 1991), 4. Anderson shows that a nation is a community which is: imagined—most of its members do not know one another; limited—it occupies a specific territory and does not aspire to global dominance; and sovereign—(variously understood) freedom is both its principle and its goal. As a community, the nation places extensive demands on its members in the name of solidarity, equality, and partnership, even though it actually relies on inequality and exploitation. The patriotic sacrifice of one’s life at the altar of the community is the

itself particularly clear in the borderlands, where the declaration of belonging—national, linguistic, cultural, or religious—takes place in the presence of other, competing possibilities. Setting aside the complex issue of how this choice is motivated, we should say that the borderlands are a cultural space where the number of possible identities is subject to a multiplication effect. There are more possibilities, but the price charged for these is usually also higher.⁴⁸²

Group identification—since this is the type of identification that mainly expresses itself in discourse—carries with it the search for differences, the determination of differences, and the emphasis on difference. The group forms vis-à-vis other groups, using various cultural elements for this purpose, and patching together its identity from the local products of collective experience. Wojciech Burszta speaks about group identity in the following way:

It is thus the case that group identity derives from the concept of difference that appears in confrontation with every other group. In order to protect identity to the greatest possible extent, this difference needs to be constantly emphasized and pointed to—it is outright necessary to create awareness of its existence. It will be no exaggeration to say that today a sense of identity is sought by all kinds of collectivities which differ categorically from the culture of the dominant group, and from one another. Besides religion, ethnicity and race, factors which could become the criterion of identity include history, different national roots, gender difference, or physical or social handicap. It is sometimes also the case that groups which evoke (...) different criteria enter into temporary or permanent alliances, in order to demand their rights all the more adamantly—as a particular “confederation of difference.”⁴⁸³

greatest demand, which also constitutes the culmination of an individual’s identification with the collectivity. (Ibid., 7.)

482 The culture of Livonia, as an eminent instance of a borderland culture, contains many examples of identity choices (especially collective identity choices), which result from the competition of ideologies. To take an example with which we are already familiar: one of Gustaw Manteuffel’s brothers, Ryszard, took part in the January Uprising, for which he was punished with exile to Omsk, and then expelled from his family’s estate and forced to move to Riga. The second brother, Józef, was an officer in the tsar’s army throughout his entire life, and died in the Caucasus, in 1912, having reached the rank of general. Gustaw himself also made a clear choice in opting for the Polish-Catholic identity, and all his works are both testimony to this fact, and the effect of it. The main identity orientations of 19th-century Livonians included Germanness, Russianness, and Polishness, and in the second half of the century Latvianness and Estonianness also appeared as particularly attractive options. None of these were based on linguistic or religious factors. Each of them, however, had distinct cultural consequences.

483 Wojciech J. Burszta, *Różnorodność i tożsamość: antropologia jako kulturowa refleksyjność* [Variety and Identity: Anthropology as Cultural Reflexivity] (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2004), 170.

Belonging thus has the character of a dynamic configuration of forces, it requires constant constitution and confirmation, and it also needs otherness to formulate its own distinguishing features. Difference is not something obvious, it needs to be recalled and even created, since it is thanks to difference that what is vague gains more distinct contours. Cultural borderlands consist of differences—either factual or imagined—but always stubbornly emphasized; this process never reaches a specific goal, since other communities in the same region are also carrying out their constituting work (one could say: they occupy the space of identity). As a result, each person is forced to make choices. Bruszta aptly characterizes this paradox of the *enforcement of choice*:

Every cultural identity is defined by what differentiates it from other identities. This happens because to maintain cultural specificity it is necessary to demarcate its boundaries, which one can then defend as a mental “territory of our culture.” This is possibly the source of the tendency to seek forms of being different at any cost, to impose onto the individual the duty to express solely those messages which support the cohesiveness of the group.⁴⁸⁴

The individual is forced to express only those meanings which confirm the “cohesion of the group” and so the group deprives him of the right to express his own individuality. There arises a conflict between group and individual identity, and in borderland situations it is expressed in the crevice between discourses, in the silences and exclusions used in discourse. Perhaps the imposition of community onto the individual has such a determined character here because choice is not a possibility but a necessity—it is a necessity *vis-à-vis* unclear borders, blurred contours, and the ambiguous sense of belonging.⁴⁸⁵ One can basically differentiate two groups among members of borderland cultures: those who consistently perform acts of collective identification, and those who physically and mentally escape from it. These two ways lead out of the strongly determined situation—one leads to assimilation in a different, “non-borderland” space, while the other leads to intensified communal challenges, which are taken

484 Ibid., 171.

485 The famous uncertainty of the former inhabitants of the Polesie region, who did not know their nationality and described themselves as “tutejsi” [from here], is seen as peculiar and treated as a certain kind of deficiency precisely because the Polish–Lithuanian–Belarusian–Ukrainian borderland offers many possibilities, and the refusal to make a choice appears strange. See Timothy Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569–1999* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 65–68.

up at the expense of individualism. In both cases, problems eventually return with magnified intensity.⁴⁸⁶

4. Stubborn Regionalism

The question of the borderlands as a region and a territory which is both intimately “mine” and shared between me and the Other, remains strictly tied to the process of delineating local identities. Traditional literary studies sometimes took into account the division of national literature into individual regions (e.g. the literature of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Ukrainian Romanticism, the Małopolska Renaissance, or the literatures of the three partitions), but this was always done in the *framework* of a larger whole, and scholars sought to identify commonalities rather than differences. From the point of view of regionalism, this territorially demarcated separateness is primary to ideological or aesthetic discourses; a specified geographic space constitutes the point of departure, and it is the basis of criteria which guide both the choice and the analysis of literary works.⁴⁸⁷ Regionalism, or localism, influences borderland literature as one of its most distinct challenges. The concretely delineated space within which the author’s imagination travels is both a place where the action of literary works unfolds, and a field of interpretive references. In its choice—and also in the declarative record of this choice—the author not only announces his sympathies, emotional ties, and identity tendencies, but also suggests a *cultural* reading of the text. He signals difference, specificity, and separateness, and he therefore

486 Among Livonians, one could include Józef Weyssenhoff and Edward Słoński, and to an extent also Kazimiera Hłakowiczówna among such “deserters” of the borderlands. In the writings of all three of them, Livonia returns in a mythologized form after many years, as an abandoned nest, a collection of extraneous sentiments. One can find similar examples in the Zagary literary group as well: after several years of fascination with the borderland qualities of Vilnius, Czesław Miłosz and Jerzy Zagórski leave the city forever (assimilation and dissolution), and Teodor Bujnicki remains (community), poetically declaring his attachment to the region. Vilnius returns in Miłosz’s texts after many years, among other things, precisely as an unrealized possibility, abandoned cultural milieu, an experience of community which was pushed away, or rather neglected. To save his *principium individuationis* the poet had to leave behind him the local and confining borderland with its determinants and its clear catalogue of challenges.

487 Stefania Skwarczyńska provided an innovative analysis of regionalism as the object of literary studies in her excellent study “Regionalizm a główne kierunki teorii literatury” [Regionalism and the Main Currents of Literary Theory], *Prace Polonistyczne*, no. 1 (1937): 1.

suggests that a correct, accurate, and insightful reading of the work will necessarily involve the confrontation of the text with the culture of the region. The point here is not the banal claim that every work must be related to reality, especially when reality is explicitly referred to in that work. Much more important is the author's intention to mark differences and claim the specificity of a given region as a particular topic and a particular problem—i.e., as otherness. This otherness demands not so much that it be taken into account, as that it be recognized and thereby acknowledged. Literature which declares its local identity starts with the premise that the essence of this localness has not been recognized, or rather that it is impossible to get to know it, since the paradox of regionalism consists in the fact that it can actually never be adequately understood. If this took place, it would lose the status of regionalism. That which is local attempts to break out of its isolation, out of its separation from the center, but at the same time it sees its value in this very separation.

Let us consider an example. When Paweł Huelle locates the plot of his stories in Kashubia, he thereby sends several signals:

- he betrays his interest in a neighboring culture, in the closeness of the Other
- he defines the literary task before him in the categories of discovery, of touching something new, unknown, and foreign
- he announces his solidarity with the Other, respect for the Other and his separateness
- he announces his solidarity with a reader who lacks knowledge—solidarity in ignorance
- he declares the desire to learn, to come closer, and to acknowledge, or, in any case, he declares his good will and openness
- he makes the reception of the story dependent on a similar openness of the reader
- he locates the story in a cultural milieu, which he introduces as background
- he suggests that boundaries are impermeable and that discourse can be questioned, and he thereby also suggests that the text has a limited “readability.”⁴⁸⁸

This example of a set of devices which localize literature turns out to be particularly useful in reading borderland situations. In our Livonian case, each of the writers who spoke about local culture started with a long introduction; that is, he tried to explain Livonia's distinctive identity. Probably none of them realized that “explaining separateness” is a paradox, similar to the paradox of naming the unnamable. The translation of one type of specificity into another, or

488 Here, I am especially thinking about Paweł Huelle's *Moving House and Other Stories*, trans. Antonia Lloyd-Jones (London: Bloomsbury, 1994).

into the “central” discourse is a cultural impossibility, as Clifford Geertz has already argued:

The foundations of legitimacy of even immediate neighbors, the sorts of stories they tell themselves to account for their existence and justify its continuance (...) contrastively phrased, scarcely translatable, in no way homologous. The illusion of a world paved from end to end with repeating units that is produced by the pictorial conventions of our political atlases, polygon cutouts in a fitted jigsaw, is just that - an illusion.⁴⁸⁹

The kind of explanation which Livonians used to constitute their region appeared merely as background for the actual description. In actuality, it served, above all, precisely to mark differences and boundaries, to delineate one’s own familiar territory, which is unrecognizable to others. From this point of view, the attempts to introduce Livonia into general awareness seem to be permeated by a contradiction; Livonia’s specificity was to be based on the fact that it is located elsewhere and that it is different. When Gustaw Manteuffel complained that Poles know less about Livonia than about Sumatra and Borneo, he held a grudge against their lack of interest. Yet he himself clearly divided those who were interested into “us” and “them,” accusing the latter not only of lacking legitimacy, but also claiming that their interest was “inauthentic” and illegitimate. He saw himself not only as an expert (which indeed he was) who knew the region, but also as a guard of Livonia’s unknowability. In his texts, Polish Livonia at times becomes an object of what almost seems like a sectarian cult.⁴⁹⁰ Difference legitimates knowledge which flows from local experience, but it also constitutes a borderland in the strict sense of the word: as the intersection of impassable boundaries.

The otherness of regionalism is a shield behind which it tries to hide its deficiencies. Official national culture which flows from the center to the provinces, is, by definition, higher and better (by a definition which, let us add, it itself provides). From this perspective, the borderlands—with regions which are located far away, near the borders (in the *kresy* [the Eastern Borderlands], as the Polish tradition puts it)—are a kind of a defect, a vagueness, a culturally-

489 Clifford Geertz, “The World in Pieces: Culture and Politics at the End of the Century,” in *Available Light: Anthropological Reflections on Philosophical Topics*, by Clifford Geertz (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000), 229.

490 Manteuffel is not an exception here. In German historiography the “Baltikum” tends to function as a mythical object not so much of research but of sentimental adoration; A. v. Ungern-Sternberg wrote about this at length in *Erzählregionen*. In my correspondence with him, I once called the European Livonia specialists a sect, to which he agreed with amusement. Local culture gives experience and knowledge which are impossible to convey.

lacking product. This is why we encounter the frequent transformation of this (apparent) flaw into a virtue among borderland writers—i.e., their emphasis on regional distinguishing features as not only valuable, but even greater than universal values. This conspiratorial axiology appeals to otherness as a parallel system of assigning value, one based on the almost Gnostic conviction that mystery is ultimately impenetrable.

Stubborn regionalism is also a serious disturbance, or actually a reversal, of the spatial categories of the history of literature; this is mainly because it negates the center and focuses on the peripheries—transforming them into a center. In a way, this is a consequence of the conspiratorial and “sectarian” approach—that which is unspecified, distant, and deficient is more important than that which is universal. From here, only a single step is needed to make the claim (increasingly prevalent in the humanities) that there are only regional values and no universal ones.⁴⁹¹

To a certain extent, cultural and territorial identification also replaces aesthetic criteria, especially when they are associated with strong emotional identification. A mythologization of what is one’s own takes place and, as Aleksandra Kunce says, *cultural identity-related memory* emerges, in which localness, marginalized within the universal perspective, gains the status of an overriding meta-narration.⁴⁹² That which is particular and local (meaning: mine) has not only sentimental but also aesthetic value. To put it simply: the local is beautiful.

5. The Kingdom of Sentiment

The mythologization of the local often takes the form of intimate emotional statements in literature, and it is thereby related to broadly-defined

491 This claim is especially popular among interpretive anthropologists inspired by Geertz; see, for example, Dorota Wolska and Marcin Brocki, eds., *Clifford Geertz – lokalna lektura* [Clifford Geertz: Local Readings] (Krakow: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2003); but it is also present, for example, in Claude Lévi-Strauss’s reflections about ethnocentrism—e.g., see the chapter “Race and Culture” in *The View From Afar*, trans. Joachim Neugroschel and Phoebe Hoss (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

492 Aleksandra Kunce, “Zlokalizować tożsamość!” [To Localize Identity!], in *Dylematy wielokulturowości* [Dilemmas of Multiculturalism], ed. Wojciech Kalaga, 82. The author confirms the dependence of regional identity on the paradox of simultaneous location and dislocation of one’s own culture: “We are hopelessly cultural, rooted in our own moral practices (which are often treated as absolute), that is, in a meticulously elevated and culturally confirmed *locum*. On the other hand, this *locum* is continually dislocated.” *Ibid.*, 80.

sentimentalism. By sentimentalism, I understand not so much the current in the history of literature which bears this name, as what used to be referred to by a word derived from the French term *pittoresque*, and which, over the course of time, has been displaced by the concept of Romanticism.⁴⁹³ **Picturesque** is the essence of a landscape. It contains aesthetic and emotional elements which the author inscribes into his work. One could say that in a sentimental landscape of one's native region one can find that authenticity and "truth" of immediate experience which is typically lacking in reception that follows a "perceptual schema."⁴⁹⁴ In literature, picturesque often takes the form of the ekphrastic translation of vividness into language, a translation which, in accordance with the apophatic ideology of representation, is never satisfying (see the sub-section *Representation* in Chapter 3). Sentimentalism is strictly connected with *place*.

Picturesque perfectly illustrates the problem of translating individual experience into the generality of representation. The experience of the native landscape is intimate, unique, and mine—while its literary figure consists of ready-made clichés, conventions, and aesthetic matrices with which culture is filled. Sentimentalism is among the most codified and "unoriginal" forms of artistic representation, and, at the same time, it is the most frequently encountered form; it is decisively dominant in borderland cultures. The more often the emotional bond with a place—which belongs to the constitution of the subject of the borderland experience—seeks its literary expression, the more it eludes representation. In the discourse of sentimentalism, the authenticity of the experience reveals itself in the rhythm of the representations that are off the

493 Juliusz Kleiner compared the concepts *pittoresque* and *romanesque* by describing the former as nothing but a trivial description, while ascribing to the latter the power of eliciting an emotional response from the subject. In light of the significant extension and modification of the notion of romanticism, this distinction, made over a century ago, is difficult to defend. Sentimentalism is also characterized by emotional engagement of both the author and the audience; the difference lies in the scale and quality of experiences. See Juliusz Kleiner, "Romantyzm" [Romanticism], in *Studia z zakresu literatury i filozofii* [Studies in Literature and in Philosophy] by Juliusz Kleiner (Warsaw: IW "Biblioteka Polska", 1925), 106–108 and 272–273. Jacek Woźniakowski, in turn, juxtaposed the *pittoresque* against the *picturesque*, and pointed out that certain thinkers (e.g. Schlegel) treated them as similar and partially identical. See Jacek Woźniakowski, *Góry niewzruszone: o różnych wyobrażeniach przyrody w dziejach nowożytnej kultury europejskiej* [Unmoved Mountains: On Various Images of Nature in the History of Modern European Culture] (Krakow: Znak, 1995), 173. In what follows, the Polish text uses the term **pitoresk** (from the German *pittoresk*), while **picturesque** is used in the English translation.

494 Here I am referring to Ryszard Nycz's remarks about the artificiality of all institutionalized art, see Nycz, "Kulturowa natura" [Cultural Nature], 10–14.

mark—in the crevice between the intimate experience of Place and the conventionalized articulation of this experience.⁴⁹⁵ Hence, the topos of lamentation, or weeping over the elusive, is the most frequent figure here.

Borderlands are filled with sentimental landscapes which serve various culture-creating functions in literature; those which create separateness are particularly significant. As Georg Simmel says, a set of natural elements—trees, stones, streams—changes into a landscape only when the subject’s imagination connects them into a whole. Our striving to be a whole, and not only a member or a representative of the whole, transforms our surroundings, including nature, into wholes, or rather into little wholes, which facilitate identification:

We are aware of being centered both externally and internally because we, together with our actions, are mere constituents of larger wholes that place demands upon us as one-dimensional parts (...). Yet, we nevertheless want to be rounded and self-determining beings, and establish ourselves as such. Out of this arise countless struggles and disunities in our social (...) lives. Yet, that same form, in relation to nature, produces the conciliatory richness of landscape.⁴⁹⁶

A series of natural objects arranges itself into a landscape because such is the need of the subject. The landscape thus does not, as might at first appear, serve the purpose of admiring external beauty, but the purpose of consolidating the viewing subject’s identity tendencies. The landscape is a unity of perception, emotion, and intellect. It is located beyond everyday life and it satisfies a need which Simmel identifies with basic religiousness.⁴⁹⁷ Man’s bond with a landscape thus has an existential dimension, as an act that constitutes the subject. In this sense, the picturesque signifies the saturation of the landscape

495 According to Derrida, the essence of the relationship between *punctum* and *studium* is designated by rhythm: “poetics of rhythm or of spacing not only concerns the form of the language, it also says something about the origin of meaning”—Jacques Derrida, “Shibboleth: For Paul Celan,” in *Sovereignties In Question: The Poetics Of Paul Celan*, by Jacques Derrida, ed. Thomas Dutoit and Outi Pasanen, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005), 45; see also: Markowski, *Efekt inskrypcji* [The Inscription Effect], 293.

496 Georg Simmel, “The Philosophy of Landscape,” trans. Josef Bleicher, *Theory, Culture & Society* 24, no. 7–8 (December 1, 2007): 22–23.

497 Among religious feelings which are, however, not directly related to the experience of the divine, Simmel includes love, feelings evoked by nature, idealistic impulses, and readiness to make sacrifices on behalf of the community (patriotism). He also refers to these feelings as energies, which give rise to, for example, art. Simmel also gives us a definition of culture: “Everything we call culture is comprised of a series of autonomous entities which have positioned themselves in their self-sufficient pureness beyond the entanglement of everyday life that runs its practical and subjectively-oriented course. As examples, I refer to science, art and religion.” (Ibid., 23.)

not only with emotion but also with experiences which flow from rootedness in a place and unity with it. And, as Simmel proposes, the mood of the landscape and its perceptual unity are two aspects of the same thing.⁴⁹⁸

The native landscape, the mythologized image of the childhood home, and the cult of the experienced past which is elevated to the status of Arcadia—all these elements find strong representation in borderland literature and demand a separate, in-depth reading. Limiting them to the myth of the native realm is insufficient because they are also strongly connected with establishing local culture, delineating the boundaries of the region, and constituting identity—i.e., with differentiating what is one's own from the cosmos of experience. The sentimentalism of borderland literature carries with it a strong identity imperative, and the imperative to appropriate, like jealous love.

Through the establishment of what is “one's own” at the intersection of cultures, the picturesque characterizes a certain set of intentions which create culture and meaning. In opposition to ethnic or confessional discourses, sentimental discourse attempts to ground individual existence within a multicultural space without appealing to communal ideologies. In the cultural borderlands, it is the most common form of an individual's escape from communal declarations. Despite appearances, the picturesque does not create a community – it is only used for this purpose by other discourses. The writer who is overwhelmed by communal ideologies most often escapes into the genre of landscape lyricism. On the other hand, sentimentalism suggests a way of reaching agreement, and, in this, too, it is the opposite of collective ideologies. All those who left the borderlands—exiles, émigrés, and cosmopolitans by fate or by choice—know this perfectly well; and, in various places around the globe, they readily use the language of sentimental attachment to local landscape, especially when the land itself is disappearing into the abyss of history.⁴⁹⁹

6. Writing History

Among the characteristic features of the borderlands there is specific history which, like literature, also cannot be contained within the framework of “official” historiography. It is almost amusing that each of the cultures belonging to a given borderland (participating in the borderland) has its history,

498 Ibid., 27. For more about the role of the landscape in the formation of awareness and identity-related projects see Phil Macnaghten and John Urry, *Contested Natures* (London: SAGE, 1998).

499 This meaning of the concept of *pittoresk* was used by Armin v. Ungern-Sternberg in *Erzählregionen*, 156–158.

which tends to be different (best-case scenario) or rather opposed to and in conflict with other histories. When, a dozen years ago, Poland and Ukraine established their improved neighborly relations, one of the first and most important issues was the question of agreement about history. In the end, both sides made a compromise and let this question go unaddressed, after which they shook hands in a friendly gesture, but each kept its own interpretation of historical facts. The problem concerned not only the fate of Ukrainians in Poland and Poles in Ukraine, it concerned precisely the common territory, the Polish–Ukrainian borderland where it was necessary to live *side by side*, and where everyone felt *at home*. As a result, before a researcher of borderland culture can begin analysis, he must provide a history of the region about which he is speaking—both for himself and for his readers. As we already know, at least since Nietzsche, and certainly since the work of Hayden White, the writing of history is actually an act of establishing one of its versions, and thus, to some extent, it is also an act of constituting the very object of description.⁵⁰⁰

In previous chapters we spoke at length about the different historiographical perspectives that arose in Livonia; here let us therefore only add that history written in the borderlands and about the borderlands is not only very different from “official” history, but, most importantly, it is written consciously with a clear interpretive tendency, that is, with an ideological purpose. This is why borderland history most frequently takes the form of a synthetic, comprehensive story about a specific, unique phenomenon, which actually cannot be penetrated by anyone from the outside. And it is precisely as a story that historiography of the borderlands comes closest to literature—in the process of making the individual universal by turning it into a myth.

A certain lack, which I would call **incomplete documentation**, is a secondary problem in borderland historiography. By its nature, historical documentation is never complete, something is always missing, in fact, more is missing than is available—but in our case, this problem becomes fundamental and it painfully affects the very persistence and the process of constituting the region. The culture of old Polish Livonia is an extreme example of such a lack. Most (sic!) of the artifacts of its written tradition have been lost, and none of the numerous wealthy libraries from the manors of the aristocracy have been preserved. This means not only a lack of research material—although enough of

500 We discussed the use of historiography in literary studies in Chapter 3. For an example of history written in a new key, one can turn to Timothy Snyder’s work on the Polish–Lithuanian–Belarusian–Ukrainian cultural borderlands, where the nation-building process is still unfolding and where certain ethnic determinants are subject to constant change. See Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations*.

it has been preserved to allow historians to make thorough queries⁵⁰¹—but it also, and most importantly, creates the *perception of a lack*. The researcher who investigates a borderland region refers to fragments, traces, and preserved pieces—and has the sense that he will have to fill in many empty places in his conclusions and syntheses.

The geographical removal from the center has two consequences: the borderland region is in greater danger of losing the products of its various cultures in times of historical turbulence, and it receives less protection as the substance of the communities which inhabit it. Those who work on cultural borderlands are all-too-well acquainted with situations where archival documents mention certain works, but the works themselves no longer exist. This is tolerable when individual texts are lost, but unfortunately in the borderlands we often face the loss of entire libraries—and along with them the loss of a coherent picture of local culture and mentality. In those cases researchers scrupulously compile all remaining evidence: fragments of memoirs that have been recovered, parish notes of priests which survived in a presbytery somewhere at the edge of the world, letters which have been accidentally compiled by a librarian or stored in police archives, and so on. Before we begin constructing synthetic meanings we must first—in accordance with the intentions of **microhistory**—create meaning as such, some individual historical fact, i.e., we must create a history of the borderlands. Here, too, historical narration approaches literary narration.

7. Geopoetics

The recent notion of **geopoetics** reveals its usefulness in the context of the literary culture of the borderlands. Like geography of culture, anthropology of space and places, geocriticism, and similar fluid terms, geopoetics demands, first and foremost, that literary studies take the *localization of culture* into account. We have already shown with sufficient clarity that the connection between space and both individual and collective experience has a fundamentally important meaning in investigations of the borderlands. Let us only add that here space is, of course, understood not only as the localization in a specific place (though we mean this as well), but, most importantly, it is a

501 Dybaś's book *Na obrzeżach Rzeczypospolitej* [In the Borderlands of the Commonwealth], which we have already mentioned several times, is an example of a work based on a new and insightful reading of preserved documents; its starting point is the old so-called Piltene Archive (see the section on "Piltene" in Chapter 2).

special referent of the discursive dominant. To put it briefly, borderland studies are based on the relationship between culture and space:

Since culture is always situationally conditioned and framed, space (and with it also time, and political and economic circumstances) becomes one of culture's most important determinants. It is, of course, not the abstract physical space, but the space of cultural and existential experience.

As a result, the cultural investigation of literature is to be an attempt to answer the question:

How do we experience and interpret spaces and places? How do they shape individual and collective identity, as well as gender and ethnic identity? How do they "commemorate" or subversively question dominant culture?⁵⁰²

Geopoetics would thus be a version of regional studies, and it would place particular emphasis on spatial aspects of individual experience. The prefix "geo-" refers to the strong connection between imagination and the earth, while "poetics" points to the linguistic character of all manifestations of this attachment.⁵⁰³ From the geopoetic perspective, a cultural borderland, like our Livonian borderland, has its literature insofar as there are texts which register this relationship. What is implied here is not the model of a relationship with the earth that exists in nationalist myths (as in Zbigniew Herbert's poem *Reflections on the Problem of the Nation*: "willows sandy road wheat field sky plus feathery clouds"⁵⁰⁴), but rather a synchronic convergence of perceptions, moods, and one's sense of identity, which Simmel called "the philosophy of landscape," and which is closely related to the picturesque. This closeness is confirmed by Rybicka's final remark about geopoetics, where she mentions the "twilight of

502 Elżbieta Rybicka, "Geopoetyka (*o mieście, przestrzeni i miejscu we współczesnych teoriach i praktykach kulturowych*)" [Geopoetics (*About the City, Space, and Place in Modern Cultural Theories and Practices*)] in *Kulturowa teoria literatury* [Cultural Literary Theory], ed. Ryszard Nycz and Michał Paweł Markowski, 477. Further down, the author speaks about *postmodern regionalism*, whose most vivid manifestation would be the *decentralization of the map*, as a result of which the peripheries would be in the center of attention, and the center would be pushed into the periphery. Although her solutions concern urban spaces, her analysis of the anthropological aspects of space is also useful in analyzing the eastern borderlands.

503 This is how Kenneth White, the term's author, explains this term. Rybicka cites his work, see *ibid.*, 479. In his perspective, however, geopoetics accentuates primarily identity with the Earth in a global sense, and it has some of the character of ecological literary studies.

504 Zbigniew Herbert, *The Collected Poems: 1956–1998*, trans. and ed. Alissa Valles (New York: Ecco, 2007), 189.

the linguistic paradigm” in cultural studies, and the shift of emphasis to imagery and visualization.⁵⁰⁵

Yuri Andrukhovych used this concept in a somewhat different context, making geopoetics not only a tool of political struggle, but a sphere of the Ukrainians’ collective identification during the time of the famous Orange Revolution. Juxtaposing Moscow’s political creation called “project Yanukovych” against the collective rupture of the adherents of Yushchenko, the author juxtaposed the natural (and therefore more legitimate) reaction against artificial mystification, truth against pretending, and arrived at this conclusion:

In 2004, a miracle took place in Ukraine: society, which seemed to be indifferent, passive, and fragmented over the course of a whole decade, suddenly carried out a consolidated, peaceful, and magnificent protest. “Common” Ukrainians turned out to be much more uncommon than their—and not only their—government could have imagined them to be. They juxtaposed creative geopoetics against banal geopolitics.⁵⁰⁶

Like other ideologies linked to the borderlands, geopoetics is thus an expression of collective emotions; in this particular case, the boundary is not between various parts of Ukraine (various Ukraines, as journalists used to say, something Andrukhovych opposed), but between the false creation of “political con-artists” and the truth of human feelings. Geopoetics is the expression of identification with the land and with the collectivity, and also with a certain ethical sphere—the milieu of the cultural conditions of a given group.

8. Pointillism

Discontinuity is among the most interesting qualities of the borderlands. In addition to the fact that there is no succession of eras and diachrony is deficient, and the fact that boundaries between individual elements of borderland culture are vague—one can also speak about a discontinuous unfolding of phenomena. A topic, a problem, or a discourse which has been initiated by one representative of a given community does not find its successors and remains, as it were, suspended in air. One can therefore not talk about either the continuation of ideas, thoughts, and projects which seek to organize the borderlands, or about the continuity of style or method. It is true that there are references and returns, and that similar points of departure appear among distant heirs, but they have an accidental and non-binding character. It is somewhat as if each of the creators of

505 Ibid., 488.

506 Yuri Andrukhovych, “Ukraińska geopoetyka” [Ukrainian Geopoetics] in *Sny o Europie* [Dreams about Europe], ed. Oleksandra Hnatiuk (Krakow: Nemrod, 2005), 11.

borderland culture was starting from scratch, or reaching toward the work of the predecessors which has been abandoned long ago. It is not only about constant becoming and change, but about the sense of a lack of solid ground under one's feet, about acting in a vacuum. The borderland does not appear to its cultivators as something determinate, or even something that has been "tidied up" (or organized, ordered) to a reasonable degree. It is much more similar to a fizzing ocean of possibilities from which one could fish out an arbitrary set of phenomena. Cultural activities of borderland writers resemble ceaseless, constantly renewed foundational work, which is to enable the "normal" functioning of culture in the future. Their efforts resemble something which theoretical physics describes as "managing chaos."

The principle of discontinuity was already addressed by Foucault who proposed that the world should not be imagined as a set of unsaid and unthought events which must necessarily be thought and expressed.⁵⁰⁷ Discourses should be treated as "discontinuous practices" whose mutual relations may mean something, but they do not have to. Together with the principles of reversal, particularity, and externality, the principle of discontinuity serves the purpose of breaking the hegemony of discourse in its internal self-confirmation and cognitive self-satisfaction. In borderland cases, we are, however, concerned with a narrower understanding of this concept, one where we do not speak about a universal method of exposing discourse, but about its local, cultural rootedness. The concept of pointillism, introduced by Zygmunt Bauman, seems to me to be more adequate here; even though Bauman used it to refer to the contemporary experience of time, it can be transplanted into the cultural situation of the borderlands:

Today time seems to be neither cyclical nor linear, but, one could say, "pointillist." There is no continuity between the points—the talent of Georges Seurat or Alfred Sisley would be necessary to conjure up a configuration of meanings from the scattered and dispersed points. But, again as the cosmologists teach us, every point could explode with a "big bang," and there is no way of predicting which point it will be.⁵⁰⁸

Pointillism imposes specific ways of reading culture. The narrow focus on a single fragment seems to be better than the configuration of the whole. The representation of borderland literature according to, e.g., a personal key, or a

507 Michel Foucault, "The Order of Discourse," in *Untying the Text: A Post-structuralist Reader*, ed. Robert Young (Boston: Routledge, 1981), 67.

508 Zygmunt Bauman, "W fortcach nowoczesności: z Zygmuntem Baumanem Rozmawia Łukasz Gałecki" [In the Fortresses of Modernity: A Conversation between Zygmunt Bauman and Łukasz Gałecki], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, August 25, 2006.

discursive dominant, seems to be more accurate than systematic analysis that uses elements of the historical-literary process. The figures, writers, and separate works, considered as colorful spots which stand out against the background of vagueness, provide a more adequate picture of borderland culture than a synthetic whole.⁵⁰⁹ A pointillist perspective contains the qualities of both the object of investigation and the methodology used to investigate it. It approaches the technique of creating a mosaic; it also resembles a *patchwork*, but it differs in that the combination of colorful spots *does not have to* suggest coherent meaning. Pointillism itself is its own meaning.

Roughly speaking, pointillism is based on the arrangement of spots of primary colors side by side, and when these are viewed from some distance they blend together, creating new colors and outlines of shapes. Each colorful spot is placed on the canvas separately. Viewed from up-close this looks like a set of accidental brush strokes, which have to be viewed from the right perspective in order to form the sign of a concrete object. The attempt to penetrate borderland texts often amounts to the construction of a series which does not add up to a single whole, and which sometimes simply remains a series; the only material which binds it together is the experience of space. Experience of the borderland situation.

9. Discourses in Circulation

The reflections we carried out thus far actually refer to differences in **experience**, since it is in experience that the “borderland” most distinctly stands out against what is “official.” The principle of perspectivalism seems to play a

509 This was Manteuffel’s perspective when he discussed Livonian culture, both during its Confederation period, and in later eras when the Baltic lands did not have political independence. The composition of an image of the historical and cultural identity of Livonia from the portraits of the most eminent figures of the region seems to be not so much the effect of compositional awkwardness, as a conscious strategy, meant to organize the material in the most effective way. This is perceptible especially clearly in Manteuffel’s *Cywilizacja, literatura i sztuka* [Civilization, Literature, and Art] where he tries to organize Livonian art into styles and periods, but he resigns after reaching the Romanesque and Gothic periods. The discourse does not function after that. See also, “Nieco z dziejów dawnego księstwa inflanckiego” [A Bit from the History of the Old Livonian Duchy]; and *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands]. The personal (and family) methodology is confirmed by tables and registers, which our historian has placed in the appendices of his historical works. The inclusion of biographical sketches of certain specific people makes the land more concrete and reinforces its ontological structure.

decisive role in borderland literature, a principle which Stanisław Uliaasz defined in relation to poetics:

The borderland embodies that which is polyphonic and multi-vocal. This dialogical way of being is realized in the constant process in which various points of view relate to one another. In the borderland “one’s own word” becomes overgrown with the contexts of “others’ words.” An utterance is always saturated by the sounds of dialogue.⁵¹⁰

We notice the specificity of borderland literature in the multiplication of perspectives. This multiplication refers to the reading of a work through various discourses which it contains. If we assume that the ceaseless process of differentiation, distinguishing, and comparing its various elements, is among the essential qualities of a borderland then we should place particular emphasis on multiplicity in our perspective. A single perspective is not yet perspectivalism. Postmodernist interpretation theories have taught us that every expression of any subject whatsoever is determined by the subjective point of view, by the place which the subject occupies in his culture, and the place, which his culture occupies among other cultures. It is difficult to speak about a single correct point of view here, since against every perspective one can easily juxtapose another perspective, based on other assumptions, on a differently characterized milieu. One of the possible definitions of culture could therefore be formulated like this: culture is a set of factors which comprise the perspective of a given subject.⁵¹¹ The borderland encounter is a dialogue among perspectives; their constituent elements are exchangeable, parallel, and definable, which makes the construction of discourses possible.⁵¹²

510 Uliaasz, *O literaturze Kresów i pograniczu kultur* [On the Literature of the Eastern Borderlands and the Borderland of Cultures], 17.

511 From the Ukrainian perspective, Sienkiewicz’s *Ogniem i mieczem* [*With Fire and Sword*] is read entirely differently than from the Polish perspective, precisely because of the different elements which comprise the cultural milieu of Poles and Ukrainians.

512 By discourse I understand a set of representations, expressions, and customary norms, which appear as a background, or a field, against which meaning emerges in the realm of a given culture, field of studies, scholarly disciplines, religion, ideology, etc. Discourse can thus be limited spatially, temporally (historically), in terms of disciplines, etc. Above all, however, it uses a system of *exclusions*, *limitations*, and *prohibitions* (Foucault), thanks to which it preserves coherence and is able to use such terms as “truth,” “veracity,” “objectivity,” etc. Discourse thus has its linguistic system, in which it produces successive expressions, a system which is constructed in such a way as to make it possible for the production of coherent meaningful sentences to extend into infinity. This happens because of the dynamic construction of discourse, which possesses and appropriates mistakes (which serve precisely the function of transforming and extending importance), while excluding from the system every statement that is

Discourse is as interesting in what it says as in what it relegates to silence. Following anthropologists, sociologists, ethnographers, historians, literary scholars, and political scientists, we seek those elements of expression which suggest dependence on a certain specified configuration of terms (rules, laws, imaginings, or *a priori* assumptions), which Foucault designated as *procedures (dispositif)*.⁵¹³ An analogous rule could be used to bring out those features of discourse which relegate it beyond procedures, and which simultaneously allow it to come into existence as a separate discourse, differentiating it from other discourses. The place of the leap from one discourse to another is a sphere of vagueness, an inter-space where, through silence, the subject—which is either under-constituted or re-disintegrated—gets to speak. His actual way of existing is manifested in what has not been projected but what has nonetheless been said, or rather what has “said itself” during the formulation of a discursive statement. This is why a text which includes more than one discourse—and this is the kind of text that appears most frequently in the borderlands—speaks with many voices not only in the sense that it contains various dominants, but also in the sense that Others speak from behind the identity disclosed in the text. Their voices reach us from the crevice between discourses and from the rubbish thrown outside the framework of expression. That is why discourses located in the borderlands essentially have (or should have) the character of dialogue.⁵¹⁴

constructed in a different system. I use definitions of discourse provided in the following works: Peter Brooker, *A Glossary of Cultural Theory* (London: Arnold, 2003), 78–79; Julian Wolfreys, *Critical Keywords in Literary and Cultural Theory* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 64–70; and Vladimir Biti, *Literatur-und Kulturtheorie...*, s. 166–179. All of these are, of course, based on the understanding of discourse articulated by Michel Foucault, especially in “The Order of Discourse,” in *Untying the Text*, ed. Robert Young; and *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (London: Routledge, 2002).

513 Foucault, “The Order of Discourse,” 52 and 56. He says that the role of procedures “is to ward off its [discourse] powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its ponderous, formidable materiality.”

514 In *Mglawice dyskursu* [The Nebulae of Discourse], Wojciech Kalaga writes at length about the dialogue of discourses which leads to the cognitive metaparadigm. This paradigm is dependent on four variables, which are responsible for differences among individual cultures: eco-substance: which demands representation (in our case, this is Livonia as a land); infrastructure: the set of cognitive tools (e.g. Manteuffel’s constitutive historiography); inferential habits: the collective experience of community (e.g. the Catholicism of Polish Livonians); discourse: spatial-geographic and temporal-historical conditions which limit knowledge (e.g. provinciality, the status of being an unwanted minority, the defense of Livonian specificity). Kalaga points out the interdependence of the various individual elements of this diagram, which behave like a

One could also say that the series (the configuration, mosaic, pyramid, structure, or cloud) of discourses which refer to the borderland region constitutes a kind of *meta-discourse of the borderlands*.

Based on what we have said so far, let us try to list several of the discourses with which borderland texts speak:

1. **The discourse of historiography:** historical writing bears clear traces of re-creation, i.e., re-determination of the conditions necessary for the object of description to come into being, where by coming into being I understand the “historicization” of the event with the help of narrativization, in accordance with Hayden White’s suggestions.⁵¹⁵ The construction of the authority of historical narration, which White calls “the authority of reality,” is an essential supplement, or even a necessary condition of historiographical discourse, and this authority is justified by remembering something as a fact. In history we deal exclusively with facts, which, from the perspective of this type of authority “deserve” to be remembered, to come into existence in historiography. We should use Frank Ankersmit’s concept of “historical representation” where what is absent is replaced by representation in historical writing.⁵¹⁶ The represented object is summoned to existence, brought out through representation, and thereby transformed into a certain historical fact. Writing which is classified as borderland literature often bears clear traces of the influence of the imperative to constitute a region, a land, or a place, to which one needs to add, *ex post facto* as it were, an adequate history which is constructed from the “right” perspective; here the rules of exclusion and prohibition derive from the discourse of positivist sciences.
2. **The discourse of regionalism** (spatio-temporal discourse): a complex of phenomena which can be grasped as a cultural whole, concerning a specific time and place, where the ways of establishing the boundaries of the **region**

dynamic configuration of mutual couplings. From here, it is not far to our claim that we form a one-time configuration of discourses to answer the needs of the situation. This also seems to be the meaning of the word “nebulae” used in the title. See Wojciech Kalaga, *Mgławice dyskursu: podmiot, tekst, interpretacja* [Nebulae of Discourse: Subject, Text, Interpretation] (Krakow: Universitas, 2001), 113.

515 “In order to qualify as ‘historical,’ an event must be susceptible to at least two narrations of its occurrence. Unless at least two versions of the same set of events can be imagined, there is no reason for the historian to take upon himself the authority of giving the true account of what really happened.” Hayden White, “The Value of Narrativity,” 23.

516 Frank Ankersmit, “Historical Representation,” in *Historical Representation*, by Frank Ankersmit (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), 80–88.

can vary widely (e.g. language, religion, a historically and politically delineated territory, the space of the culture of specific groups and social formations, the economy, etc.). This discourse includes, among other things, such partial discourses as **ethnocentrism** (C. Lévi-Strauss, C. Geertz), which describes relations between national communities; **regional narration** (A. von Ungern-Sternberg), which focuses on literature in which a region is an object and a topic; and the **localization of culture** (Elżbieta Rybicka), a discourse which problematizes the space which shapes a given cultural perspective.⁵¹⁷ In this last case, scholars often examine tensions between the “center” and the “peripheries,” and formulate questions about the immediate neighborhood. Here reflections about the meaning of regionalism as a **peripheral value** vis-à-vis the lack or negation of “official” value is also not without significance. Regionalism also reveals its usefulness in the interpretation of peripheral sentimental literature. In the discourse of regionalism the rules of exclusion, limitation, and prohibition derive from the sphere of family traditions and communal customs.

3. **The discourse of nationalism:** attempts to isolate a certain cultural whole are inevitably tied to ethnocentrism, as defined by Lévi-Strauss, who emphasizes the juxtaposition of “us” against “them.” These criteria often serve the formation of **imagined communities**, which are used in the attempts to define the uniformity of a certain group, formation, etc., for the purposes of defending common interests, strengthening the sense of national or cultural identity, or legitimating the right to self-determination, or even the right to exist. In the framework of the discourse of nationalism there emerges the overriding concept of **nationality**, which constitutes a certain cultural artifact, like nationalism itself. The Polish imagined community in the cultural borderlands was built with the support of the declaration of a three-way loyalty: to the “local” land, to Polishness, and to the Catholic religion. In nationalist discourse the rules of exclusion most often derive from the language of politics and from national literature.⁵¹⁸

517 See Clifford Geertz, “The Uses of Diversity,” in *Available Light: Anthropological Reflections on Philosophical Topics*, by Clifford Geertz (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000), 68–88; Ungern-Sternberg, *Erzählregionen*; Rybicka, “Geopoetyka” [Geopoetics], 479.

518 It was not accidental that when Benedict Anderson summarized his reflections about the birth of nationalism in Europe, he focused on, first, the development of print, and, second, on patriotic songs, hymns, and other poetic works devoted to “political love.” See Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, especially the chapters: “The Origins of National Consciousness” and “Patriotism and Racism.”

4. **The confessional discourse:** related to the discourse of nationalism, but the notion of community is strictly connected to religion rather than an ethnic group; here religion is most often juxtaposed against other religions, with the implication of superiority and distance. In this context, communities not only appeal to a shared system of faith, ritual, and ethical code, but they also emphasize their distinctiveness in terms of their religious language, daily customs, political convictions, philosophy, and so on.⁵¹⁹ In the case of Catholicism (which can be isolated as one of the partial confessional discourses), the religious community takes on a form which is closer to nationalist formation, and serves the purpose of providing defense against threats to faith, which can be variously defined but which are related to the mission of Christianization. In the Eastern Borderlands of Poland, Catholicism was one of the strongest factors which affected the identification, the separatist tendencies, and the culture-creating activities of the Polish community; hence we can see its clear influence in both the historical writing of the region and in literary genres, such as, for example, its poetry. We should also not forget to mention its colonizing, anti-Russification, educational, and other aspects. The Greek-Catholic perspective, in turn, was emphatically expressed in postcolonial points of view, which were largely a reaction against the cultural pressures of religions with expansionist tendencies. A strikingly large number of works which we view as belonging to the Central European Borderlands, “open up” under the influence of this discourse. Its rules of exclusion are the rules of faith, but, to an even greater extent they are constituted by holiday rituals, the sphere of customs, sexuality, hygiene, and so on.
5. **The discourse of colonialism and postcolonialism:** useful, above all, in reading the effects of centuries-long colonial politics, when the multiplicity of cultures, national and linguistic differences, and the remains of empires, in the form of wanted or unwanted minorities, came together to form a landscape full of various tensions, rivalries, tendencies, and antipathies between the ethnic groups that comprise borderland communities.⁵²⁰ The problem of peripherality, typical for colonial structures, here takes the interesting form of the **multiplication of the center**, where each of the ethnic communities develops and situates its basic set of references vis-à-vis

519 Ibid., 12–19.

520 For more about the ethnicity of postcolonial societies see, for example, Thomas Hylland Eriksen’s *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives* (London: Pluto Press, 1993).

a different “center” of civilization.⁵²¹ We have already discussed the *conquistador complex*, which is typical of this type of discourse, and which had interesting consequences—“organic work” in the 19th century, and programmatic, ideological multiculturalism in the early decades of the 20th. In postcolonial discourse one observes the emergence of a revision, or repossession, of history by newly-created states which stand in opposition to old colonizing cultures. On the other hand, there is also the tendency of the former colonizers to break the “new nationalism” and come into existence according to a new formula—as a component of multicultural history. Colonial and postcolonial discourses, when they refer to the Polish Eastern Borderlands, for example, speak in opposing languages: what was positive in one discourse is combated as a negative in the other. Postcolonial discourse is often reduced to an ideological reaction against colonialism, which, in the case of the Polish borderlands, goes hand in hand with the discourse of nationalism. Unfortunately, the popularity of postcolonial criticism brought about a situation where the notion of a post-colonial situation is often misapplied and used as a key to describe all peripheral phenomena. Here the rules of exclusion and prohibition most often derive from the sphere of racist politics and ideology.

6. **The multicultural discourse:** largely a reaction against, and the opposite of, the discourse of nationalism and colonialism; in its framework, one’s own culture is described not so much through differentiation from neighboring cultures, as through rapprochement with these cultures, present in the same region and inspired by similar conditions, but formed within a different language, custom, religion, etc. If we assume that contemporary multiculturalism signifies, above all, “the problem of cultural differences within individual states,” then borderland cases will almost always be inscribed into situations which Walker Connor described as *multi-homeland* situations. This concerns cases where many ethnic groups simultaneously identify with the same region as their “homeland.”⁵²² In older Polish writing,

521 The dialectics of the center and the peripheries in colonial discourse was analyzed most extensively by Eric R. Wolf in *Europe and the People Without History* (London; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982). Marko Pawłyszyn’s remarks about the Ukrainian colonial and postcolonial discourse are also very useful, see his “Ukraiński postkolonialny postmodernizm” [Ukrainian Postcolonial Postmodernism], in *Odkrywanie Modernizmu: Przekłady i Komentarze* [Discovering Modernism: Translations and Commentaries], ed. Ryszard Nycz (Krakow: Universitas, 2004), 530–537.

522 Walker Connor, *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994), 76–81. Here I rely on remarks about Connor’s ideas,

we find a series of attempts—often courageous and pioneering—to treat the borderlands as a multiethnic, multicultural, and multilingual region; this suggests a relatively early awareness of the importance of the subject. Once again, it is necessary to emphasize that the discourse of multiculturalism was opposed to nationalist and colonialist discourse from the very beginning of the existence of “borderland situations,” thus creating a second, different (we might say friendly) point of reference for ambiguous coexistence. The rules of exclusion that operate in this discourse come from the same sources as the rules of exclusion of the nationalist and colonialist discourses, but they are their exact opposite.

7. **Sentimental discourse:** in the isolation of a landscape as a specific whole, what is given comes together with the subject’s *a priori* creation; at the origin of a landscape there is therefore a certain mood, expectation, or emotion which arranges individual elements of the natural world (trees, a meadow, birds, a river, distant human figures) into a coherent composition. The attachment to the chosen (or rather selected) landscapes is thus, in essence, an attachment to the meanings inscribed in them, which are only vaguely related to identity. In any case, these meanings are to confirm the necessity of the bond that connects the subject of experience with a place. Here, one should therefore understand sentimentalism as a predisposition, or a presupposition, present in the writer’s intention, and connected with the emotional demarcation of a place. It is not about opposition against discourses which can be constructed on a similar principle (e.g. romantic, positivist, or other discourses), but about a dominant emotional factor that points to existential situations, which are analogous for many writers. In sentimental discourse, one hears the voices of the lyrics printed in regional press and religious poems, memoir sketches and tourist brochures. Their focus on the vividness and spatial composition has been designated by the term *picturesque* in the above discussion.

* * *

This survey of possible borderland discourses is, of course, not exhaustive. The ceaseless dynamic evolution of literary studies on the margins of the former humanities is constantly opening up new possibilities, and we could easily add

which can be found in Wojciech Burszta’s very useful overview of anthropological theories which have a bearing on cultural studies: Wojciech J. Burszta, *Antropologia kultury: tematy, teorie, interpretacje* [The Anthropology of Culture: Topics, Theories, Interpretations] (Poznań: Zysk i S-ka, 1998), 143–144. About contemporary multiculturalism see *ibid.*, 150.

the following discourses to our list: **patriotic-martyrological discourse, nostalgic discourse, travel (nomadic) discourse, retrospective discourse (the discourse of memory)**, and so on. The selection of discourses, or the decoding of their circulation, requires *a priori* decision, an initial orientation within a culture and within a cultural milieu—it therefore has the character of an apodictic presupposition. This is inevitable insofar as it is impossible to avoid the confrontation between the text and its broadly defined context. To some extent, the multiplication of the combinations of discourses is necessary in light of the claim, which we have often repeated above, that each borderland situation has its own specificity.

It is also necessary to remember what Foucault says about the hidden aspects of discourse: “Discourse is not simply that which translates struggles or systems of domination, but is the thing for which and by which there is struggle; discourse is the power which is to be seized.”⁵²³ Discourses of the borderlands speak about ways of domination, elimination, and possession of space for the sake of asserting a particular communal or individual identity; they speak about expansion or defense against expansion, and sometimes simply about ways of surviving at the intersection of ideologies. What shines through from behind them speaks about man’s impossible work on his own coming into being.

523 Foucault, “The Order of Discourse,” 52–53.

Chapter 6

Polish-Livonian Literature

*Jesteś spod Krasławia.
Nic więcej nie powiem. Będziesz w cieniu stał,
nikomu niewiadomy, nieznamy kształt.*

[You are from around Kraslava.
I will say no more. You shall stand in the shadows,
unknown to anyone, an unfamiliar shape.]

Kazimiera Hłakowiczówna

The preceding remarks were merely an introduction (perhaps a somewhat lengthy one) to the attempt to describe a few authors, works, and literary phenomena, which I take the liberty of calling Polish-Livonian literature. This attempt should not be understood as the establishment of a new current in the history of Polish literature, the composition of its next chapter, or the discovery of lost artistic treasures. Of course, there is no reason why these could not also result from my efforts, but my main goals here are somewhat different. My efforts focus on understanding literature (some of its forms and manifestations) not as means of creating an either locally or centrally defined culture, but as derivative of culture, derived from experience of place.

The apparent banality of this statement gains new significance when we understand that we are dealing with texts located on the periphery, and subject to all the pressures and determining factors described above as the circulation of discourses. In the case of Polish-Livonian literature, there is also the additional fact that it does not exist in the history of Polish writing, similarly to the way in which Polish Livonia does not exist in historiography. We are thus dealing with rubbish, with texts that have been thrown outside the framework of historical-literary discourse; we are dealing with mistakes, or rather with *monsters*, as Foucault calls creations that circulate beyond the boundaries of a discipline.⁵²⁴ According to the arguments of the author of “The Order of Discourse,” this very rubbish allows us to see the system of exclusions and prohibitions which govern historical-literary discourse; the definition of a mistake is the definition of truth.

524 Foucault, “The Order of Discourse,” 60. Our Livonian investigation is thus an example of teratology.

In this sense, I would like for these reflections about Polish-Livonian literature to enable a closer examination of the processes whereby an image of Polish literature was formed; a literature in which there was no place for many borderland phenomena.

A literary text considered from a cultural perspective does not belong exclusively to literature. It contains a record of experiences, rules, and norms which are binding for a certain collectivity. To put it somewhat grandiloquently it is a cultural document. This does not mean that we reject its internal order in the process of interpretation, and deal only with its surroundings. It is rather about finding a certain kind of balance between these, balance which creates the anthropologically understood context of the work. In order not to go into an inept summary of things which have already been elegantly expressed, let us cite a cultural poetics specialist:

Cultural analysis then is not by definition an extrinsic analysis, as opposed to an internal formal analysis of works of art. At the same time, cultural analysis must be opposed on principle to the rigid distinction between that which is within a text and that which lies outside. It is necessary to use whatever is available to construct a vision of the “complex whole” (...). And if an exploration of a particular culture will lead to a heightened understanding of a work of literature produced within that culture, so too a careful reading of a work of literature will lead to a heightened understanding of the culture within which it was produced. The organization of this volume makes it appear that the analysis of culture is the servant of literary study, but in a liberal education broadly conceived it is literary study that is the servant of cultural understanding.⁵²⁵

It is not entirely clear what this “complex whole” is supposed to be (Greenblatt cites it here, following Edward Burnett Tylor, as the substrate of his definition of culture).⁵²⁶ Perhaps it is something close to what we have been calling a milieu, and which amounts to the sum of both the author’s and the readers’ perspectives. To put it briefly, Greenblatt is calling for cultural readings of literature and for literary readings of culture.

525 Stephen Greenblatt, “Culture,” in *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, ed. Thomas McLaughlin and Frank Lentricchia (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1990), 227.

526 He cites one of the first definitions of culture which Tylor provided in his monumental *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art and Custom* (London: Murray, 1871). According to Tylor, “Culture or Civilization (...) is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.” Quoted in Greenblatt, “Culture,” 225. At that time in anthropology the terms “culture” and “civilization” were synonymous (hence the Polish title). See Chapter 4, footnote 435.

1. What does “Polish-Livonian” mean?

The term “Polish-Livonian literature” demands clarification. It refers to a set of texts written in Polish, and bearing the clear mark of local rootedness, that is, a set of texts connected with the region in a cultural sense. To avoid excessive broadening of the field which we wish to describe, we will limit ourselves to works which bear traces of conscious regional identification, and thus to works where “Livonianness” is one of the clearly signaled reference points. The second criterion of selection is the author’s place of birth, which is meaningful as a primordial experience of place, and which shapes later discourses which appear in the text. In our case, it has particular significance in light of our earlier remarks about the imprecise specification of the political, historical, sociological, and cultural identity of Livonians. Polish Livonia’s exoticism inspired writers of various talents and skills to reach for the specificity of this land, to write about things which were not universally known. One can still find a rather large number of such literary mentions of Livonia in Polish writing, and, in fact, as Manteuffel used to say, it is impossible to correct all the mistakes which they contain. This is why the present analysis does not take into account those texts about Livonia, which were written by authors who moved there from elsewhere, by travelers, guests, relatives, and others who were fascinated by Livonia, and treated this land as a noteworthy oddity, on the model of exotic artifacts, displayed to entertain people.⁵²⁷ Such texts amount to a significant collection of writings, but their investigation belongs to a somewhat different type of study.

In the compound “Livonian-Polish” the reference to Polishness is connected not only with language, or rather it is, above all, not about language. It is about the mentality of the inhabitants of the Eastern Borderlands, about the whole conceptual construct which amounts to the stereotype of a Polish patriot. Polishness meant the declaration of national affiliation, as well as religious, linguistic, and often also class and political (aristocratic offices) identification. It

527 This is an attempt to avoid extending the concept of “Livonianness” to the size of the “Baltikum” as it appears in Ungern-Sternberg’s *Erzählregionen*, where he uses the term “Baltic literature” to denote “the sum of all literary artifacts, regardless of language and provenance” (p. 110). Manteuffel carried out a similar extension, by including among Livonian writers authors like Łukasz Górnicki, on account of some parts of his *Dzieje w koronie polskiej z przytoczeniem niektórych postronnych rzeczy od roku 1572* [History of the Polish Kingdom with the Inclusion of Some Extraneous Matters, Since 1572]. This points to yet another attempt to fortify existence, through the extension of the relevant concept. We are interested in a narrower realm, which is limited both territorially and linguistically.

was also a result of a choice. Not all landed aristocracy in the territory of Polish Livonia made this choice. The thing which matters for us is the fact that this identity factor puts into play several discourses which become audible in the literature of a concrete locality. A specific spatial orientation—toward the West—is also revealed in the declarations of Polishness. To be a Pole in the Eastern Borderlands meant to feel like a person of the West, a person of Western Christian culture, of civilized Europe. In certain cases, such self-descriptions were motivated by historical, political, legal, or social claims. The very fact of explicitly declaring one's belonging to a national community is already telling—in a “central” culture such statements were unnecessary.

The choice of the Polish language as a criterion of selection results in a significant narrowing of the material, since today's researchers have at their disposal a large number of old texts referring to Poland and Poles, written by the inhabitants of Livonia, and published, for example, in Riga, but not written in Polish. This is especially true of old materials which contained panegyrics, long poems, letters, and even dictionaries and Polish–German phrasebooks, printed in Riga during the time of Polish rule, that is, before 1621. A large majority of these were written in Latin, but they also include two texts in Polish written by Stanisław Jan Malczowski; these are not included here since they should be investigated by a different type of study.⁵²⁸ In the present context, it is worth noting that Rigan merchants learned Polish to become more successful in trading with Poland, and printers and publishers wrote numerous panegyrics to praise the Polish government in Riga.⁵²⁹

The concept of “literature” also needs to be specified somewhat more precisely, since for our purposes it also refers to historical and folkloric texts, essays of remembrances, and even natural history texts. Their selection was based on the principle of the domination not so much of the aesthetic function, as of discourses which put the aesthetic function into play; this is thus closer to the concept of writing than the concept of literature. The motto of this approach is Stephen Greenblatt's remark (with its echoes of regret) that contemporary humanities separate “the study of history from the study of literature as if the two were entirely distinct enterprises.”⁵³⁰ To put it differently, texts selected for

528 I obtained the extensive listing of prints from Jakub Niedźwiedź's “Raport z kwerendy w Łotewskiej Bibliotece Akademickiej oraz w Łotewskiej Bibliotece Narodowej w Rydze, 2005” [Report of Research in the Latvian Academic Library and the Latvian National Library in Riga, 2005]. I would like to thank him for our discussions and for kindly making this document available to me. For the full report, see the Appendix.

529 Ibid. As we know from Chapters 1 and 2, this was hardly a declaration of authentic sympathy; it was rather the expression of political and economic interests.

530 Greenblatt, “Culture,” 230.

analysis here were those which clearly contain the tendency, which we have designated as the “summoning of Livonia into existence” throughout this book.⁵³¹

2. Konstancja Benisławska: *Modłka niepusta* [Prayer Which Is Not Empty]

In the procession of paradoxes connected with the strangeness of our land, we can also include the fact that one of the female pioneers of Polish poetry was from Polish Livonia. Konstancja Benisławska (1747–1806), wife of the Livonian Stolnik, was from the old German-Baltic Ryk family, which had been living in Livonia since the beginning of colonization (the de Recke knights co-founded the Livonian Brothers of the Sword, starting in 1209)⁵³²; the family lived in the Livonian Voivodeship since the beginning of its existence because in 1568 King Sigismund II August gave Ernest de Ryk the first vassal endowment of the Drycany, Pilcyny and Strużany estates.⁵³³ To this day, literary historians and biographers repeat the legendary story about Benisławska’s education and uncommon beauty, which can still be admired because her portrait has been preserved.⁵³⁴ Manteuffel also considered her thrifty and a

531 Konstancja Benisławska, who is the first in this series, is an exception here; she did not explicitly declare her Livonianness, and I sought to read it from her texts.

532 Manteuffel, “Inflanty Polskie” [Polish Livonia], 89.

533 This information is taken from Manteuffel, who identifies this family with the German von der Recke family in *Inflanty Polskie* [Polish Livonia], only to negate this in *O starodawnej szlachcie krzyżacko-rycerskiej...* [On Ancient Teutonic Aristocracy...], and assign distinct, Polish roots to it. See Manteuffel, “Inflanty Polskie” [Polish Livonia], 90–91 and Manteuffel, *O starodawnej szlachcie krzyżacko-rycerskiej na kresach inflanckich* [Historic Teutonic-Knightly Aristocracy in the Livonian Borderlands], 53–54. This inconsistency was likely not the result of consulting sources, but rather the outcome of his conscious *ex post* creation of his own Polish biography (Gustaw’s mother was also from the Ryk family, and she was the one who brought Drycany to the Manteuffel holdings).

534 I was able to see this portrait because of the kindness of Mrs. Anna Manteuffel-Szarotowa and Mr. Tomasz Szarota, who currently own it. Czesław Jankowski, the poet’s great-grandson, mentions the portrait in a brief essay devoted to her: Czesław Jankowski, “Konstancja z Ryków Benisławska: sylwetka poetki z XVIII-go wieku” [Konstancja Benisławska from the Ryk family: A Profile of an 18th-century Poet], in *Na marginesie literatury: szkice i wrażenia* [On the Margins of Literature: Sketches and Impressions], by Czesław Jankowski (Krakow: Gebethner i Spółka, 1906), 10. Tomasz Chachulski mistakenly believes this portrait to have been lost; see Konstancja

skillful manager (and we have no reason not to believe him since he had the documents of the Beniśławski family in his private archive); he believed that these traits clashed with her poems:

author of *Pieśni sobie śpiewane* [Songs Sung to Myself]—active and energetic in private life—radiates mental superiority over her surroundings; in her songs she appears to be escaping the mundane daily commotion and noise into some better worlds.⁵³⁵

Indeed, Konstancja had much to escape from, since she raised eight children (allegedly she gave birth to twenty-two!); she was also in charge of the estate of her husband Piotr, who was often away on account of being a Livonian Stolnik and a representative to the *Sejm*. Besides this, we do not know much about her. Konstanty Beniśławski, a mediocre rhymester and author of the embarrassing work praising Catherine II, was her husband's brother, and the Jesuit Jan Beniśławski, the Mogilev Bishop, was their cousin.⁵³⁶

Konstancja became famous when she published a small collection of poems entitled *Pieśni sobie śpiewane* [Songs Sung to Myself], in Vilnius, in 1776; her aforementioned brother-in-law Konstanty encouraged the publication, and wrote a preface to the volume in the form of a rhymed paean praising the Stolnik's wife, entitled *Do wielmożnej stolnikowej przy wydaniu tych wierszów od brata* [To the honorable Stolnik's wife, on the occasion of publishing these poems, from her brother]. The full title of Beniśławska's little volume was *Pieśni sobie śpiewane od Konstancji z Ryków Beniśławskiej, stolnikowej Księstwa Inflanckiego, za naleganiem przyjaciół z cienia wiejskiego na jaśnią wydane* [Songs Sung to Myself, by Konstancja Beniśławska from the Ryk family, wife

Beniśławska, *Pieśni sobie śpiewane* [Songs Sung to Myself], with an introduction by Tomasz Chachulski (Warsaw: Instytut Badań Literackich PAN, 2000), 5.

535 Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 227.

536 The full title of Konstanty Beniśławski's poem was *Pienia całodzienne i całonocne na przybycie do krajów swych białorusyjskich najjaśniejszej Imperatorowej Katarzyny II, cesarzowej, stworzycielki, prawodawczyni i matki całej Rosji, od poddaństwa prowincji dźwińskiej wierszem królewskim złożone* (Vilnius, 1780) [Daylong and Nightlong Songs, written on the occasion of the arrival of the most high Empress Catherine II—empress, creator, lawgiver, and mother of all Russia—in her Belarusian countries, written in verse by her subjects of the Daugava Province (Vilnius, 1780)]; Jan Beniśławski also tried his hand at writing; among other things, he published *Rozmyślenia dla księży świeckich o powinnościach chrześcijańskich z listów i Ewangelii wzięte*, [Reflections about Christian Duties for Lay Priests, Derived from the Letters and from the Gospel], vol. 1–2 (Połock, 1799–1802), a work which is essentially a translation from the French. Allegedly he also published *Institutionis logice* (Vilnius, 1774).

of the Stolnik of the Livonian Duchy, brought out from the countryside shadows into the light, upon the insistence of friends]. The volume fit closely with the poetics and topics of the Saxon baroque, even though it was written during the time of the Polish Enlightenment. *Pieśni* [Songs] have a deliberate arrangement: the first and second books are poetic elaborations on the successive verses of *Our Father* and *Hail Mary*; the third book is a somewhat more free composition of intimate reflections, confessions, and sometimes complaints. Thematic divisions are matched by metrical differentiation: the first book is written in thirteen-syllable lines (7+6), the second in eleven syllable lines (5+6), while in the third, we find a freer meter, which differs from poem to poem, and which resembles poetic exercises based on Jan Kochanowski's songs. The rigorous thematic and metrical order gives a harmonious and deliberate form to the volume as a whole, and the volume thus also resembles a long poem.

The whole volume is, however, first and foremost, a powerful profession of faith, repeated in a thousand ways with the use of the most elaborate poetic formulae and cascades of inspired stanzas. Their abundance and emotional charge make Beniśławska's volume an exemplary model of both purest Christian mysticism, and religious bigotry or devotion. The religious ruptures of the lyrical subject, which move toward dissolution in the object of adoration, give a strongly personal and intimate character to these poems; they emphasize individual experience, and indeed—as Manteuffel noticed—they are a kind of escape from the world, a crossing into a different reality through mystical flight, a way of cutting oneself off from mortal life.

It was difficult for critics and literary historians to reach agreement about the meaning of this little collection. Waclaw Borowy, who situated Beniśławska among noteworthy metaphysical artists of the Enlightenment, called *Pieśni* [Songs] “perhaps the strangest book in Polish literature of the 18th century.”⁵³⁷ Marxist critics opposed this view, taking the anachronism and the irrationality of this poetry as signs of poor poetic technique, or even of intellectual limitations of the author.⁵³⁸ Readers from earlier eras ascribed the greatest value to the first book, which is the longest, most exalted, and most verbose of the three; contemporary readers tend to value the final part of the volume, which is free and intimate.⁵³⁹ Critics have pointed to connections between this poetry and the

537 See Waclaw Borowy, *O poezji polskiej w wieku XVIII* [On 18th-century Polish Poetry] (Krakow: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1978), 189.

538 I am drawing on remarks made by Tomasz Chachulski, in his “Introduction” to *Pieśni Sobie Śpiewane* [Songs Sung to Myself] by Konstancja Beniśławska (Warsaw: Instytut Badań Literackich PAN, 2000), 7.

539 “The song cycle entitled *Ojciec nasz* [Our Father] is the culmination of the author's poetic output, and in its time it established her fame as a writer among those in her

baroque mysticism of the imitators of Saint Theresa of Avila and Saint John of the Cross, and they saw Benisławska as the foremost pre-romantic religious poet.⁵⁴⁰ Pushed into oblivion, and lost among artistic and ideological rubbish during the second half of the 20th century, Konstancja Benisławska has been making a return both as a surprising spiritual phenomenon, and one of the first women writers.

Her poetry can be read on two levels. The first—individual, personal, and intimate—allows one to delve into the deep layers of religious experience of a passionate believer, who is nearly stupefied by the faith from which she derives inspiration to write her poems.⁵⁴¹ On the model of Theresian ruptures, this record of experiences resembles uncontrolled logorrhea, the eruption of words which obsessively circle around a single subject, or even around a single formula. Each line of the daily, common, and apparently mechanically-repeated prayer liberates incredible energy, which creates poetry:

Ojczy nasz! Bowiem w Syna ja Twojego szczerze
Tak, jakę sam mi kazał i jak Kościół, wierzę.
A którzy uwierzyli w Niego, jako trzeba,
Dałeś synmi i córmi moc stawać się z nieba.

[Our father! Because I authentically believe in your Son/Just as you and the Church command./And to those who believe in Him, as one should,/From heaven you gave the power to become daughters and sons].

Ojczy nasz! O przedwieczny Boże Ojczy, który
Równego Sobie z wieków masz Syna z natury,
Tyś z łaski nas przywłaszczył wszystkim za Swe dziatki,
Więc i mnie; o nad wszystkie i ojczy i matki!

[Our father! Oh ancient God the Father who/Has a Son equal to Him in nature through the ages,/By Your grace you have taken us all in as Your children,/And so take me, too, You who are greater than all mothers and fathers!]

immediate milieu.” Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 227; see also Grażyna Borkowska, Małgorzata Czermińska, and Ursula Phillips, *Pisarki polskie od średniowiecza do współczesności: przewodnik* [Polish Women Writers between the Middle Ages and the Present: A Guide] (Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Słowo/Obraz Terytoria, 2000), 32–34; and Chachulski, “Introduction,” 18.

540 Chachulski, “Introduction,” 13–18, provides a full register of allusions, borrowings, and imitations that appear in Benisławska’s work.

541 Freud saw these kinds of states of religious rapture as a type of hysteria. See Sigmund Freud in his studies on hysteria, especially in the “Postscript” to “Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria,” in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. 7, 112–122.

Ojczy nasz! Bo azaliż Ty nie Ojcem moim,
Któryś mię posiadał, stworzył dziwnym dziełem Twoim,
Którego Syn rodzony równy Ci od wieka
Stał się mym bratem, bratem grzesznego człowieka?

[Our Father! Are you not my Father,/You who possessed me, created me as Your strange creation,/Whose begotten Son, equal to You through the centuries/Became my brother, brother of sinful humanity?]

Ojczy nasz! Ach, jak wielką córką mię zdziałałeś,
Gdy tak wielkiego Syna za brata mi dałeś!
Prawdziwie śmiało rzekę: tym człeka do góry
Wzniosteś, Boże, nad wszystkie Serafinów chóry.⁵⁴²

[Our father! Oh, what a great daughter you made me,/When you gave me such a great Son for a brother!/Truly, I say boldly: by doing this you lifted man up high,/Oh God, higher than all the choirs of Seraphim.]

The poem shows no concern for logic; its only formal order is the metrical order. The loftiness and the power of religious experience replaces rules, or rather justifies their lack. The title *Pieśni sobie śpiewane* [Songs Sung to Myself] points to the private, confessional character of these poems, which were allegedly initially not intended for publication at all. They are an incredibly extensive invocation, which at times becomes a soliloquy, and which is often based on rhetorical questions, exalted exclamations, and countless repetitions. The poem is clearly also not concerned with the psychology of reception, hence the accusations of verbosity and exaggeration.⁵⁴³ The final songs of the third book allude to the form of a prayer and end with the word “Amen.” One could say that the *Pieśni* [Songs] are a free, unconstrained expression of passionate religious feelings, written in regular syllabic verse. The entire collection has the form of a three-part prayer book that includes poems dedicated to God the Father, to Holy Mary, and poem-prayers for particular occasions. One cannot speak about either distance or lyricism of the mask here, and there is no doubt that the lyrical subject and the author are identical.

In part three, states of mystical rapture that border on ecstasy are expressed most distinctly; they are characterized by the longing to break away from the earth, on the model of 17th-century Spanish mystics; this can be seen *Song 8*, in

542 Konstancja Benisławska, *Pieśni sobie śpiewane* [Songs Sung to Myself] (Krakow: Universitas, 2003), 19–20.

543 The author devotes between 30 and 70 stanzas to each of the verses of *Our Father* and *Hail Mary*. The record number belongs to the line “Thy kingdom come,” which inspired 74 stanzas in *Song 4* of the first book!

which *Wyraża się potęgą miłości ku Chrystusowi* [The power of love for Christ expresses itself]:

Do Ciebie, Jezu, moja dusza licha
 Strzałą miłości ustrzelona wzdycha.
 Ach, wždy rozewrij pęta niewolnicze,
 Bym przed Twe święte wleciała oblicze!

[For you, Jesus, my poor soul pines/Pierced by the arrow of love./Oh, break the bonds of slavery without delay./So that I could fly up and stand before your Holy visage!]

Spraw, bym miłością Twą, jakoś jest godzien,
 Barziej a barziej ja gorzała codzien,
 Iżby się dusza po rozłące ciała
 Godniejszą świętych Twych obłapów stała.

[Each day fill me more and more/With Your love, as You deserve./So that after my soul leaves my body/It could be more deserving of Your holy embrace.]

Ty bądź jedynym serca mego celem,
 Ty moją karmią, Ty moim weselem,
 Ty mą nadzieją, Ty moim kochaniem,
 Ty bądź jedyną pieczę i staraniem!

[Be my heart's only goal/You are my food, You are my joy./You are my hope, You are my love./Be my only concern and my only striving!]

O dobry Jezu, spraw, abym dla Ciebie
 I świat wżgardzała, i wżgardzała siebie.
 Spraw, aby wszystko prócz Ciebie trąciło,
 Co jest na ziemi, zgnilizną przegniła.

[Oh good Jesus, make it so that for Your sake/I would scorn the world and scorn myself./Make it so that everything on earth/Except for you, would smell like rotten decay.]

Lub złote słońce dzień sieje po świecie,
 Lubo noc czarna sen do oczu gniecie,
 Niech dusza moja doma i w gościnie
 Cię szuka, wzywa, opiewa jedynie!⁵⁴⁴

[Whether the golden sun sows the day throughout the world/Or the black night brings sleep to the eyes,/ Let my soul seek you whether I am home or away/Let it call out to you, and sing only your praises!]

The author is not afraid of either risky combinations (“rotten decay”), or eccentric ambiguities relying on the rich sphere of eroticism (“your holy embrace”), which appears frequently in mystical literature. The author’s requests that she “scorn the world and scorn herself” are no less risky, as they are written by an allegedly excellent estate manager and mother of a whole nursery of children. The world as “rotten decay” here functions as a typical figure of Christian *vanitas* rather than an expression of aversion against daily chores of the Livonian Stolnik’s wife. One is struck, however, by the intensity with which the author rejects mortal life and escapes into narcotic-like prayer:

*Ojczy nasz, o mój Ojczy! Taką w każdej dobie
Z całej duszy i serca chcę być córką Tobie,
Jakim Tyś mi jest Ojcem. Ale któż być może
Tak dobrym dzieckiem, jak Tyś dobrym Ojcem, Boże?
(...)*

[Our father, oh my Father! Every hour,/with all my heart and soul I want to be as good a daughter to you/As you are a Father to me. But who can be/As good a child as you are a Father, oh God?]

*Ojczy nad wszystkie ojczy! Gotowam to przysięć:
Ojczy nad wszystkie matki lepszy razy tysiąc!
Ojczy, po stokroć Ojczy! Ojczy któryś w niebie!
Bo mi Pismo po stokroć tak każe zwać Ciebie.⁵⁴⁵*

[Father, above all fathers! I am ready to take an oath:/Father, a thousand times better than all mothers!/ Father, a hundred times Father! Father who art in heaven!/Because that is how the Holy Book tells me to call you.]

In some places the poem resembles ritual folk songs with a refrain:

*O, błogosławion więc po sto tysięcy!
O, błogosławion i w czasie, i więcej!
O, błogosławion owoc Twój żywota,
Jezus, Twój Synek złoty, Matko złota!*

[Oh, blessed a thousand times!/Oh, blessed in time and beyond time!/Oh, blessed be the fruit of thy womb/Jesus, your golden Son, oh golden Mother!]⁵⁴⁶

Despite the identity of the author and the lyrical subject, there is a radical incommensurability between Benisławska’s social and family situation and the spiritual condition of the heroine of *Pieśni sobie śpiewane* [Songs Sung to Myself]. The private character of these poems does not explain everything, neither does the notion that they follow the example of the writings of mystics

545 Ibid., 17 and 21.

546 Ibid., 100ff.

who were very popular at the time, and whose work had been available in Polish translation on the shelves of the gentry's libraries for over a century.⁵⁴⁷ The raptures of Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus, an inspired nun, reformer and founder of monasteries, belongs to a very different poetic realm than the one which contains the uncontrollable, ecstatic explosions of religiosity of a stately matron, who takes care of mundane chores during the day, and curses them in her evening prayers as “worldly vanity.”

There are many expressions of disdain for the mortal world in this collection, and they are invariably linked with the “late baroque in the borderlands.” Indeed, the delay was rather significant, since the year 1776, when Konstancja Benisławska's *Pieśni* [Songs] appeared, was also the alleged year in which Ignacy Krasicki wrote *Monachomachia*. Enlightenment ideas were flourishing in “central” literature, and one finds a number of them also in the writings of Polish Livonians.⁵⁴⁸ As we already pointed out earlier, the division of borderland literature into eras is characterized by certain dysfunctions, and when one tries to do this with borderland culture, the result is often off the mark. Benisławska's case seems to be no different, and her position within Livonian localness sheds new light on her hermetically religious poetry.⁵⁴⁹ It is the second level on which one can read *Pieśni sobie śpiewane* [Songs Sung to Myself].

As we said above, Konstancja Benisławska came from the German-Baltic von der Recke (later von Ryck) family, most of whose estates were located in Courland. For the most part, old knightly families from Polish Livonia converted to Catholicism only in the second half of the 18th century, practically

547 St. Theresa of Avila's *The Way of Perfection* was published in Polish, in 1625, and her *Interior Castle or The Mansions* appeared in 1633. Both works were published in Krakow, in Sebastian Nuceryn's translation.

548 Kazimierz Konstanty Plater's 1788 *Listy posła i koncyliarza, synów do ojca na wsi mieszkającego oraz odpowiedź tegoż ojca w materiach sejmu dzisiejszy zatrudniających* [Letters of a Deputy and a Conciliator of Sons to a Father Who Lives in the Countryside, and the Father's Reply Touching upon Matters of Concern to Today's Sejm] can serve as an example of the patriotic and civic attitude; French-style Enlightenment literature was written by Michał Jan Borch (1751–1810), author of poems about electricity and Sicilian minerals, among other things. See Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 305.

549 Jan Czyż's analysis in the essay “Mystyk i Pieśń: o Konstancji Benisławskiej” [Mystic and Song: Konstancja Benisławska] focuses exclusively on this hermeticism; see his *Ja i Bóg: poezja metafizyczna późnego baroku* [I and God: Metaphysical Poetry of the Late Baroque] (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1988), 117–129. Although the author discusses the individual in relation to community, “against the background of the collectivity,” he is actually referring to the community of prayer, without a cultural context.

after this territory was already separated from Poland, i.e., when there was a growing threat of Russification. According to our historian, the Drycany Ryck family became Polonized rather late,⁵⁵⁰ from which we can conclude that Konstancja—like St. Theresa of Avila, who came from a Spanish Jewish family—was a neophyte. In turn, the Polonization of the Baltic Germans most often took place by means of marriages with gentry of Polish-Lithuanian descent, which typically also resulted in a change of religious affiliation. The Benisławski family was characterized by exceptional—not to say uncontrollable—religiosity with Jesuit tendencies. Manteuffel uses the following phrases to describe Bishop Jan Benisławski (1736–1806), author of *Rozmyślań dla księży świeckich* [Reflections for Lay Priests], who was almost the same age as Konstancja: “a virtuous man, though not the sharpest of minds,” “a humbly virtuous, quiet priest,” and “a righteous Pole and an exemplary priest.”⁵⁵¹ He made his mark in the history of the Polish Church in a spectacular way when in 1783 he went to Rome and, during his audience with Pope Pius VI, managed to obtain a withdrawal of the decision to dissolve the Jesuit order in the territories of the Russian Empire.⁵⁵² Although the Jesuits were under strict control of the tsarist secret police—they were, by the way, forced to collaborate with it—the very fact of their existence constituted a significant institutional attraction for many monks.⁵⁵³ Jan Benisławski did the most he could for the Jesuit Order, as he was unable to imagine his priestly service without it.

Konstancja Benisławska spent much of her life in Posiń (Latvian: Pasiene), an inherited estate of the Benisławskis, which had once belonged to the Polish Livonian Borch family. The Stolnik’s wife was buried there, in the underground

550 Manteuffel, “Inflanty Polskie” [Polish Livonia], 90.

551 Manteuffel, *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 205–6.

552 To be more precise, the permission concerned the so-called Russian cordon, and it thus also included the territory of the first Russian partition. Although in Benisławski’s presence the Pope gave only a verbal affirmation of the permission for the continued existence of the Jesuit order in Russia (“Approbo Societatem Jesu in Alba Russia degentem”), he confirmed his decision by forming the Mogilev Archbishopric, and making Stanisław Bohusz-Siestrzeńcewicz its Bishop; Prince Potiomkin allegedly said that Bohusz-Siestrzeńcewicz was “no priest, but a cunning, lay politician, a former hussar.” *Ibid.*, 206 and 301.

553 “The Jesuits enjoyed Catherine II’s special favor. In 1773, the Pope dissolved the Order in the Commonwealth, but the Society of Jesus simply flourished under the tsarist protectorate. Jesuits who did not want to submit to the papal edict came here from various places.” Oleg Łatyszonek, Eugeniusz Mironowicz, *Historia Białorusi od połowy XVIII do końca XX wieku* [The History of Belorussia between the Mid-18th Century and the End of the 20th Century] (Białystok: Uniwersytet Białostocki, 2002), s. 24.

crypt of the Posiń church, where one can still see her tomb. It was probably also in the manor on this estate that her *Pieśni sobie śpiewane* [Songs Sung to Myself] were composed. Posiń is located in the easternmost frontier of Polish Livonia, right on the border with Russia. When looking out from the windows of the large manor house, above the trees in the park, one can see the overgrowth along the Sina River (Latvian: Sienāja, Russian: Sinjaja, Posiń takes its name from it), beyond which, for centuries, those who resided here saw the lands of the Eastern barbarians, who, also for centuries, had been invading the Livonian colony of Western Christianity. It was here in 1694 that Bishop Mikołaj Korwin-Popławski founded the Dominican church and convent, which still towers over the local landscape today. Our historian turns to their thankless fate with epic phrases, basing his description on that provided by Dominik Chodźko:

...immediately after the founding of the monastery [in Posiń] twelve monks settled there. They constantly went into the countryside to enlighten those who were wading in the dark. They often traveled so far away from their residence that they could not return to the monastery for the night. Yet they could not find safe shelter among the locals; some of them were living in a state of apostasy, away from the Catholic Church, while others were submerged in wild, dangerous, and blind paganism. On the one hand, they thus met with disdainful inhospitality, and on the other with barbarian hatred.⁵⁵⁴

If the situation of the Catholic Church in the Eastern Borderlands is typically described as difficult and complex, these tensions reached their zenith in the region where Benisławska lived. *Pieśni sobie śpiewane* [Songs Sung to Myself] was written right after the First Partition, when the Russian Orthodox community of Livonia had reasons to feel more secure, while the Polish community would have felt less so. Although Catherine II followed previous rulers in guaranteeing the freedom of religion in the Livonian provinces, Catholicism was subject to certain restrictions, such as the order to convert infidels. After 1772, Livonian Catholics actually found themselves on the defensive, and their most common reaction against this was to finance and build churches, a process which became quite impressive in the 18th and 19th centuries (see “*Microhistory. Tractates and Foundations*” in Chapter 2). The difference between the two ways of reading Benisławska’s poetry—for the sake of simplicity let us call them the internal and the external—comes down to the difference between religious and confessional discourses. The framework of the former is delineated by a mystical flight from the mortal world, and a transposition into a different reality, which allows one to realize the ideal model of union with God without any obstacles. The dominant of discursive

554 Manteuffel, “Inflanty Polskie” [Polish Livonia], 129.

construction in this case consists of ostentatious irrationalism, and submission to the interference of higher powers, which make all justification unnecessary:

Jaki mię Duch, - ehej! – jaki
Na powietrze wznosi z ptaki?
Czy uwodzi sen mię? Czyli
Mara jak zmysły myli?

[What Spirit—hey!—what Spirit/Carries me off into the air among birds?/Am I seduced by a dream?/Or is an apparition confounding my senses?]

Czyż, lotnymi dziana pióry,
Przelatuję niebios góry?
Dokąd, dokąd, prze Bóg żywy,
Rwie mię wicher popędliwy?

[Am I, dressed in light feathers./Flying through the summits of heaven?/Where, oh where, dear God,/Is the impulsive wind carrying me?]⁵⁵⁵

The fullest expression of hermetic religiosity consists in dissolving into prayer which replaces active living, and replaces *vita activa* with *vita contemplativa*:

Poznaj, o Ojczy, słowa Syna Twego
Z ust kobieciny grzesznej dziś, dnia mego,
Dzisiaj, dnia, przyjm w święte Twe uszy
Ku czci Twej, mojej ku zbawieniu duszy.

[Recognize, oh Father, the words of Your Son/on the lips of a sinful woman, today, this day of mine./Today, this day of poverty, accept them into Your holy ears/For Your glory, and for the salvation of my soul.]

Wpród tylko poświęć zmazane me usta,
Ciało i duszę, bym, modłka niepusta,
Mogła modlić się tak do Boga Ciebie:
O Boże, Ojczy nasz, któryś jest w niebie!

[Only bless my sinful lips,/My body and soul, so that I, a prayer which is not empty./could pray thus to You, oh God:/Oh God, Our Father, who art in heaven!]⁵⁵⁶

In religious discourse, despite baroque declarations about the vanity of the world, the lyrical subject focuses exclusively on itself and its relationship to God. At the center of attention it places not so much the object of worship but its own celebration of it. In the case of mystical poetry, the focus on ardent, mantra-like talk serves as the poem's entire content. "Modłka niepusta" [prayer which is not empty] is a figure used by the author who speaks with her being; the act of

555 Benisławska, *Pieśni sobie śpiewane* [Songs Sung to Myself], 9.

556 Ibid., 12.

speaking itself, the act of being a prayer, self-realization through the repeatability of prayerful phrases provides sufficient content. It is not accidental that the first book in Beniśławska's volume received the title *Modlitwa Pańska na pieśni podzielona* [The Lord's Prayer Divided into Songs]. Here, the boundary between religious and poetic speech disappears.⁵⁵⁷

Confessional discourse is concerned with external aspects of religion—with its social, political, and historical contexts. Its framework is delineated not so much by religious themes, as by conventional themes that derive from the realm of customs and collective rituals. In *Pieśni sobie śpiewane* [Songs Sung to Myself] confessional discourse accompanies religious discourse; Beniśławska the mystic is supported by Beniśławska the Catholic of the borderlands. This is perceptible particularly clearly in the images of evil that threatens from without:

Bez Twej woli mach chybny nieprzyjaznej szabli,
Nie straszni bez Twej woli z pieków wszyscy diabli.
(...)

[Without Your will the enemy's swinging sword will miss,/Without Your will, all the devils from hell are not frightening.]⁵⁵⁸

557 For Beniśławska, religious poetry was a substitute means of fulfilling divine will through the talents she was given: “*Ojczy! Chocia-m od Ciebie i ja odstąpiła,/Chocia-m dane talenta próżno roztrwoniła*” [Father! Even though I, too, moved away from you,/Even though I wasted the talents I was given]. This passage can be read in a self-referential way: writing poetry is a kind of penance. Beniśławska repeats her poetic signature several times: “*Pomni na moję kartę, którą, nie przez dzięki,/Na wieczny czas z podpisem daję własnej ręki./Daję, gdy rok dwudziesty ósmy już przemija, -/Biada mi, że tak późno! – daję, Konstancyja*” [Remember the sheet, which, not in gratitude,/I offer, with my own signature,/I offer it now that the 28th year is already passing,/Woe to me that it is so late! I offer it—Konstancyja], *ibid.*, 56. This confirms the thesis about a strong, egocentric individual subject. Its most powerful expression seems to come in *Song 4* of the first book, where the motif of flying toward God first appears. Between the verses “*Żegnam cię, mierzła ziemio, baw się z swymi sługi*” [I bid you good-bye disgusting earth, enjoy playing with your servants] and “*O góry! O doliny! O łąki barwione!/ Mierzło mi na was patrzeć, gdy niebo wspomnione.*” [Oh mountains! Oh valley! Oh colorful meadows!/It was appalling to look at you, when I remembered heaven], *ibid.*, 32–37, there is the fascinating, dreamy vision of the interstellar journey to God, in which we will find many of the figures which Mickiewicz used half a century later in the “Little Improvisation” in Part III of *Forefathers' Eve*. There is God's silence, and the meagerness of earthly matters seen from a cosmic perspective, and a personal theme (meeting with deceased children); there is even a prayer to death, which will bring union with God closer. The analysis of Beniśławska's metaphysics, and especially its comparison to certain passages of the Improvisation, should be done in a separate study.

558 *Ibid.*, 16.

*Ale zbaw nas od złego! Żle tu z nami, Panie!
W wątej łódce na srogim płyniem oceanie.
Tu na nas szturm po szturmie, wał po wale leci,
Tu twarde skały grożą, tu miękkie zamieci. (...)*

[But deliver us from evil! We are not doing well here, oh Lord!/In a meager boat we float upon a ruthless ocean./Here one charge follows another, one wave after another/Here hard rocks threaten, and there soft blizzards.]⁵⁵⁹

Zbaw od wszelkiego złego! Widzisz, jako roje
Padają nieszczęść codzienną na nas dziatki Twoje:
Głód, ogień, bój, powietrze, iż nie liczę więcej,
Duszy i ciała niedol po tysiąc tysięcy.⁵⁶⁰ (...)

[Deliver us from all evil! You see how many misfortunes/Befall us each day, us, Your children:/ Hunger, fire, battles, air, not to count the rest/There are thousands upon thousands of afflictions of body and soul.]

On tym, co go z ufnością wezwą sercem całym,
Jest nieprzebitą tarczą, murem, zamkiem, wałem.

[For those who call upon him with trust with all their hearts,/He is an unbreakable shield, a wall, a fortress, a flood-bank.]⁵⁶¹

The list of plagues which befall man is not exactly the same as that provided in the Bible; battle images dominate (“enemy sword,” “charge after charge,” “fire,” “battle”) and the borderland experience makes its mark in these as if in wax. Benisławska’s mystical prayers strengthen her deep faith, but they also simultaneously clearly delineate its boundaries and seek refuge behind the entrenchment of Catholic zeal. Spatial categories used in these poems include motifs of enclosure, siege, and narrowness, from which the spirit tries to break out into another world. Both metaphysical perspectives and concrete, local perspectives are clearly expressed here.

Reading Benisławska’s poems is not easy. The reader needs to either identify with the author in shared prayer, or claim maximum distance, step outside the discourse which she imposes, and move toward cultural analysis. Each way of reading has its own set of analogies, related texts, and anthropological references; they are partially mutually exclusive, confirming Foucault’s thesis about the mutual impenetrability of discourses. *Pieśni sobie śpiewane* [Songs Sung to Myself] has a religious dimension, which is hermetic, mystical, and metaphysical, and a confessional dimension, which is social,

559 Ibid., 61.

560 Ibid., 64.

561 Ibid., 132.

historical, peripheral, and anthropological. The unique individual religious experience is overlaid on the record of the Polish-Livonian collective experience, which is situated in a specific place and time, and whose framework is delineated by the confessionally fragmented borderland.

3. Rubon: *Pszczelnik z krajowego kwiecia* [A Bouquet of Native Flowers]

Like Beniśawska's poetry, the founding of the journal *Rubon*, and its seven years of functioning under the editorship of Kazimierz Bujnicki, belong among interesting phenomena of Polish-Livonian culture. As Piotr Chmielowski, Bujnicki's ruthless critic, sarcastically observed, this journal "contributed to the emergence of an intellectual movement in a province which had very little inclination toward literary activities," and caused interest in Polish writing among "people who read and spoke only in French before."⁵⁶² In this ambiguous complement given by an adherent of positivism, one can hear both admiration and a weakly concealed suggestion that in that place and time this kind of cultural initiative did not have a *raison d'être*, and was unnecessary. It certainly played a positive role, but it arose in a milieu which was conservative, landowning, not devoted to progress, and not particularly interested in culture; it was therefore more of a response to new fashions than an attempt to cultivate authentic values.⁵⁶³ Chmielowski evaluated *Rubon* in terms of how well it fulfilled the scientific criteria of positivism, and how useful it was in helping meet the ideological challenges at hand, but his definition of culture probably differed somewhat from Kazimierz Bujnicki's. In any case, the Polish-Livonian journal was also criticized for its lack of adherence to rigorous scholarly

562 Piotr Chmielowski, "Bujnicki Kazimierz" in *Wielka Encyklopedia Powszechna Ilustrowana* [Great Universal Illustrated Encyclopedia], vol. 10 (Warsaw: 1893), 682–683.

563 During that time there were only a few similar journals in the Eastern Borderlands, and some of these were more ephemeral than others. For a detailed characterization, see Mieczysław Ingłot, *Polskie czasopisma literackie ziem litewsko-ruskich w latach 1832–1851* [Polish Literary Periodicals in the Lithuanian and Ruthene Territories between 1832 and 1851] (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1966). These periodicals were founded during the time of the region's cultural blossoming, when local intellectual circles formed to provide defense against Russification. This process was interrupted in the late 1840s, when tsarist administrators became more stringent, and undertook a more aggressive Russification campaign. See "Kulturträger's Pride" in Chapter 1.

practices, and for its dismissal of literature, which was included not among but beside “serious matters.”

The journal appeared irregularly between 1842 and 1849; altogether ten thick issues appeared (each was well over 150 pages!). Its title was “Rubon. Pismo poświęcone pożytecznej rozrywce” [Rubon: A Journal Dedicated to Beneficial Entertainment], and it was divided into three very unequal sections: “Rzeczy poważne” [Serious Matters], “Literatura” [Literature], and “Rzeczy użyteczne” [Useful Matters].⁵⁶⁴ Regionalism was one of the most important contexts, and most clearly perceptible ideological programs, of the editorial board led by Kazimierz Bujnicki. In the first editorial note, the region was described very concretely in relation to the authors:

...this journal is a result of the work of a small number of people, nearly all of whom come from a single province; it is, as it were, a bouquet of wild flowers picked on the banks of the Daugava River.

And in relation to potential readers:

In publishing our journal, we have a twofold goal before us. To provide our countrymen with beneficial entertainment; and to encourage young talents to nobly strive for superiority in their intellectual works.⁵⁶⁵

564 For analyses of *Rubon's* history and character, as well as its place in the 19th-century borderland culture see: Ingot, *Polskie czasopisma literackie ziem litewsko-ruskich* [Polish Literary Periodicals in Lithuanian and Ruthene Territories]; Herbst, “Rubon: pismo poświęcone pożytecznej rozrywce” [Rubon: A Journal Devoted to Beneficial Entertainment]; Danuta Ossowska, “Pismo ‘Rubon’ (1842–1849) jako źródło do dziejów kultury Polskich Inflant” [The “Rubon” Journal (1842–1849) as a Source for the History of the Culture of Polish Livonia] in *W kręgu kultur bałtyckich* [Around Baltic Cultures], ed. Walenty Piłat (Olsztyn: Wyższa Szkoła Pedagogiczna, 1998). Romuald Naruniec compared “Rubon” to its contemporary Vilnius-based journals in “Literatura na łamach ‘Rubona’ (na tle czasopism wileńskich doby międzypowstaniowej)” [Literature in “Rubon” (Against the Background of Vilnius Journals of the Era between the Insurrections)], in *Życie literackie i literatura w Wilnie XIX i XX wieku* [Literary Life and Literature in 19th and 20th-century Vilnius], ed. Tadeusz Bujnicki and Andrzej Romanowski (Krakow: Collegium Columbinum, 2000), 37–49. Dorota Samborska-Kukuć devoted a separate chapter to this journal in her monograph on Kazimierz Bujnicki, entitled *Polski Inflantczyk. Kazimierz Bujnicki (1788–1878): pisarz i wydawca* [A Polish-Livonian: Kazimierz Bujnicki (1788–1878): Writer and Publisher] (Krakow: Collegium Columbinum, 2008). She has collected an impressive amount of archival material that bears on the Uprising and *Rubon's* functioning.

565 Kazimierz Bujnicki, *Rubon: pismo poświęcone pożytecznej rozrywce* [Rubon: A Journal Devoted to Beneficial Entertainment], vol. I (Vilnius, 1842), VI.

The true goal could not be formulated explicitly because of censorship.⁵⁶⁶ The euphemism “superiority in intellectual works” conceals an educational program, which essentially had two aims: the protection of Livonian Polishness, and the preservation of the distinct identity of Polish Livonia. The aims were thus simultaneously congruent and contradictory. This is because the first, in the spirit of Mickiewicz, pointed to the national community, while the second demarcated difference and otherness and emphasized specificity; in other words, it put the peripheral value of Polish Livonia into play.⁵⁶⁷

The authors’ point of departure—and this was the rule in Polish Livonia—was the delineation of the boundaries and history of the object of investigation. The name of the journal derived from the ancient name Rubo, which appears in Ptolemy’s works, and which allegedly refers to the Daugava; this river thus constituted the main point of reference, the axis of the periphery—a notion confirmed by Ignacy Chrapowicki’s poem included in the introduction. The river not only designated place and situated existential experience, but, like a chthonic deity, it also mobilized to action:

Dzieci! Któż was z uśpienia martwego obudzi?
 Ja czekam – długo czekać – mkną lata i wieki,
 A kres naszych przeznaczeń, jak wprzód, daleki,
 Ach! Ta zwłoka nieczynna dręczy mię i nudzi.

[Children! Who will waken you from your death-like slumber?/I await—a long wait—years and centuries fly by./And the end of our destinies is still far away, as it was before./Oh! This idle delay torments and bores me.]

Na brzegach Niemna, Wilii, słycać bardów pienie,
 Ponad Wisłą kwitnące wznoszą się osady,
 A tu, pusto w około – i głucho milczenie,
 Jak gdyby mię odbiegły mych synów gromady.
 (...)

[Bards’ singing can be heard on the banks of the Niemen and Wilia Rivers,/Flourishing settlements are raised along the Vistula/And here—all around there is emptiness and dead silence,/As if flocks of my sons deserted me.]

566 One can see concern about the censor in the final sentence of the preface, where Bujnicki reassures the readers that *Rubon* is not a “periodical journal.” The law allowed only irregularly appearing periodicals to be published in the territories of the Russian partition.

567 This observation is confirmed by D. Ossowska: “regionalism is manifested here (...) not so much because of false humility, which limits the goals to defend against possible expectations from demanding readers, as because of the conscious intention hidden in the name of the journal: the desire to create the editor’s own myth of the region.” See Ossowska, “Pismo ‘Rubon’ (1842–1849)” [The “Rubon” Journal (1842–1849)], 34.

Dalej! Dalej do żagla, do liry, do pługa,
 Pijcie moc i natchnienie z moich piersi wzdętych:
 Dla waszego przemysłu otwarta żegluga,
 Dla wieszczów tysiąc marzeń w mych falach zakłętych.

[Onwards! Onwards reach for the sails, the lire, the plough,/Drink power and
 inspiration from my proud breast:/Seafaring is open to your industry,/In my
 enchanted waves there are a thousand dreams for bards.]

Przed laty krwawe łuny barwiły me tonie,
 Pożar zamków inflanckich i siół ruskich dzieci,
 A teraz cichy księżyc spokojnie w nich świeci,
 I zadumane gwiazdy kąpią się w mym łonie.

[Years ago, my waters were colored with bloody hues/Livonian castles and hamlets
 of Ruthene children were burning,/And now a quiet moon calmly shines within my
 waters,/And pensive stars bathe in my womb.]⁵⁶⁸

This poem is a lyrical programmatic declaration of the journal. In it we find identification with history (Livonian castles), the host's concern for the region's development (seafaring that is open to industry), and the Arcadian myth of a "native river," concerned about those under its care ("flocks of my sons"). The poem's author also displays insightful awareness of the historical moment: at one time wars and fires raged here, and now there is peace, which the local community should use to its advantage. Indeed, the years when *Rubon* appeared were characterized by relative peace, especially in comparison to the period after the January Uprising, when Polish Livonia was completely devastated. Chrapowicki could not have made this comparison, but he sensed it in some way.

Besides the poetic designation of a central axis, an *axis mundi*, *Rubon* authors also defined their region as a specific field of scholarly investigation. The section entitled "Serious Matters" was filled with descriptions of Livonian phenomena, and included historical sketches, analyses of archeological findings, descriptions of local inhabitants, etc. Identification with the Teutonic-Livonian past of the land clearly did not pose a problem for the authors—on the contrary, it helped them construct a specific kind of historical continuity. This can be seen, for example, in Baron Adam Plater's sketch devoted to the history of the Dyneburg fortress, where the analysis focuses on the castle as the center of local administration, and a place which organizes public activities.⁵⁶⁹ Identification with historical Livonia could not take place without the work to which we referred to as "the constitution of Livonia" in previous chapters. As it turns out,

568 Bujnicki, *Rubon* I, 1–2.

569 *Ibid.*, 19–42.

even those readers who lived in the region needed a sketch outlining basic information, and Józef Plater formulated it for *Rubon*:

At a time when this small province, called Polish Livonia, together with Belorussia, begins to show signs of literary life—when not only the publication of books begins here, but there also emerges this beehive, where honey gathered from local flowers is collected so that it can be presented to suit the preferences of its other countrymen—it will not be unreasonable to point out what this small land is, a land which many do not know, while many others think that it is the same as Rigan Livonia.⁵⁷⁰

In these words one can hear the confirmation of a thesis which Gustaw Manteuffel was to repeat a number of times later: that Livonia and Polish Livonia are two separate lands (see the section “Toponymy as a Realm of Conflict” in the *Introduction*). Józef Plater begins his text with the discourse of regionalism (native flowers), but in the substantive part he switches to the confessional register and transforms the promised outline into a survey of churches and families which funded their construction. He thereby betrays his class and confessional identity. His joyful welcoming of the local literary initiative, on the other hand, should be treated with full seriousness; the very fact of writing and publishing Polish texts in Livonia and about Livonia was a new and important event for the authors.⁵⁷¹ The Polish-language cultural journal opened unexpected possibilities for fulfilling an old need: the ontological reinforcement of the land. A place which has not been described does not exist, and *Rubon* offered its pages to all those who wished to describe Polish Livonia.

The literary works included in *Rubon* also fit perfectly well in the discourse of regionalism. Among the many poems (selected somewhat arbitrarily), some use this discourse almost ostentatiously, as if the poets were writing rhymed versions of editor Bujnicki’s ideological propositions. One of these was the attempt (which will be familiar from the previous chapters about history) to construct a common past that would include all historical knowledge and findings available in the middle of the 19th century. It is interesting, however,

570 Bujnicki, *Rubon* II, 49.

571 Here J. Plater mentions the publication of books, but we should remember that *Rubon* was published in Vilnius since there was not an adequate printing house in Dyneburg; see Manteuffel “Nieco z dziejów dawnego księstwa inflanckiego” [A Bit from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 37. There were publishing houses in Riga, but Bujnicki chose Józef Zawadzki’s shop in Vilnius, possibly because it was prestigious, and the publication was advantageous for both parties. See Herbst, “*Rubon*: pismo poświęcone pożytecznej rozrywce” [Rubon: A Journal Devoted to Beneficial Entertainment], 306. An extensive separate study should be devoted to the role of Vilnius in the culture of Polish Livonia.

that here the understanding of the Livonian province's past is constructed on the basis of the principle of negation and doubt, and not on the principle of assertion or discovery. From the perspective of *Rubon* authors, history consisted of a variety of incongruent themes, i.e., it was *incoherent*, resembling a collection of colorful stones which do not form a recognizable pattern.

And thus Michał Borch's (1806–1881) poem *Gercike* reaches toward the beginning of Livonian colonization and the final moments of Gercike, the pagan capital of the Latgallians, destroyed during an invasion of the Teutonic knights. This half-mythical story is to support historical evidence provided in the "serious" section of the journal, even though there is no chronological agreement, and the proper names of places and people are imprecise. This, however, is not what is most important for the author—he focuses on the nostalgic history of the primordial inhabitants of the region, ancestors of the autochthons with whom he evidently identifies. Not surprisingly, the Daugava River serves as his medium:

Jam to doznał niedawno. – Księżyc lśnił bladawy;
Z tej strony gercikowe srebrzyły się wzgórza;
Tam, Dżwina biegła szemrząc imię Gorysławy.
Cisza była na niebie, - w duszy tylko burza!
Wtem, wierna towarzyszka, spadek po dudarzu,
Stara gęśla, leżąca przy mnie na murawie
Jęła smutnie – wiatr pobiegł po jodłach, cmentarzu,
Rzeka chyżej pomknęła, - dziergacz uciał w trawie,⁵⁷²

[I experienced it recently. – A pale moon was glowing./On this side the hills of Gercike glimmered/ There, Daugava ran, murmuring Gorysława's name./There was silence in the sky – and only storms in the soul!/Suddenly, a faithful companion, inheritance from the bagpipe player./The old fiddle, which was laying nearby in the grass/Moaned sadly – the wind ran along the fir trees, along the cemetery./The river hastened its run, a sparrow-weaver sang among the grasses;]

The use of sentimental clichés (the river and the moon) for the purpose of awakening poetic invention and making the past a poetic theme, suggests the combination of sentimental and historiographical discourses. The opening of the poem points to Mickiewicz, and the narrator is made to resemble Wajdelota [one of the heroes of Mickiewicz's poem "Konrad Wallenrod"].⁵⁷³ The poem,

572 Bujnicki, *Rubon* I, 62.

573 Wajdelota's story, like all of *Konrad Wallenrod*, deserves careful analysis, conducted from the colonial and postcolonial point of view. Besides metaphorical patriotic meanings, which have dominated Polish exegeses of this work, there are also interesting literal perspectives in it, describing the brutal conquest of the Baltic lands, and the desperate decisions of despairing Lithuanian chieftains, who faced the Christian

however, does not gain any concrete form, and hardly anything happens at the level of events. When the country is ransacked and his wife and child are taken by knights “in white coats with a painted cross,” the main protagonist, the Latgallian chief Wissewald, dreams of great deeds, revenge, and the reconstruction of the might of his people. He wakes up from his dream, however, only in order to... weep. His great dream goes nowhere, it is not translated into actions or emotions, and in the end Wissewald disappears into nonexistence and into indistinct legend:

“O Gercike! – o grodzie niegdyś okazały;
 Ojczyzno przodków moich, kraju dziś jałowy!
 (...)
 I tułam się, gdy wszystkie twoje legły syny,
 I sam jeden, dziś płaczę, na twoim pogrzebie!”
 Rzekł – umilkł – otarł oko i poszedł przez pola.⁵⁷⁴

[“Oh Gercike! – oh city once magnificent;/Fatherland of my ancestors, today a barren land!/(...)/And I roam the places where all your sons fell in battle,/And all alone, today I weep at your funeral!”/Thus he spoke – he fell silent – he wiped his eyes and started walking through the fields.]

The narrator himself admits that he does not know what transpired at the most important moment. His history does not have clear form; it vaguely presents some distant events, or rather outlines of events, whose aim and sense remain unrecognized. Even the basic ideological commitments of the main protagonist remain unknown, and he exists in Michał Borch’s poem as an unclear, blurry sign:

O losach jego dalszych nie pytajcie u mnie.
 Jedni mówią, że wkrótce zmogła go niedola,
 Że skonał, wrogom swoim zawsze grożąc dumnie.
 Inni znów, są tacy jeszcze, co głoszą przeciwnie:
 Że przejednał Biskupa, - Niemcom był życzliwy,
 Z żoną wrócił na Gercik, - chrzcił się; a co dziwniej,
 Braci Pogan wojował, i umarł – szczęśliwy! –⁵⁷⁵

invaders. There is a juxtaposition of nature against culture, of wild peripheries against the civilizational center, and the complexity of life against the simplicity of ideas. The Polish interpretation of *Konrad Wallenrod* ends with the optimistic call to fight against the invader, the Baltic interpretation ends with several centuries of colonization. An honest reading of Mickiewicz from this point of view could possibly make it possible for Poles to rethink the beloved invocation “Litwo, ojczyzno moja!” [Lithuania, my fatherland!].

574 Bujnicki, *Rubon I*, 68.

575 Ibid.

[Do not ask me about his later fate./Some say that he was soon overcome by adversity./And died, while proudly threatening his foes./There are still others who say the opposite:/That he placated the Bishop, was kind to Germans./returned to Gercike with his wife and was baptized; and what is even stranger,/He fought against his pagan brothers, and died – happy!]

Given this haziness of the protagonist, it is difficult to speak about the poem's ideological message, or about its metaphorical call to anything. The poem remains empty. The lack of concrete details deprives history of meaning, the story turns into a short tale, which, moreover, has no moral, and no practical conclusions. Something once happened here in Livonia, some traces were left in excavation sites and folk songs, but the attempt to base a historiographical or a mythological construction on these would be in vain. The deficiency of Livonian representation is manifested in the lack of consistent facts, which history could use in its utterances. The narrator's emotive sphere becomes the only reference—his longing to preserve something from this hazy past. Imperative replaces facts:

Ach, pójdźmy, gęśli moja! pójdźmy spajać wątki
Znikłego nam obrazu; - i siły obiema
raz jeszcze go zwołujmy, ty – nutą pamiątki;
Ja, - głosem Wajdeloty, co ołtarzów nie ma!⁵⁷⁶

[Let us go, my fiddle! Let us go to reconnect the motifs/Of an image that has disappeared; and with our joint power/Let us call it back again, you – with the melody of memory;/I – with Wajdelota's voice which has no altars!]

In the ending, sentimental discourse displaces all other discourses; the poet calls on the Daugava nymphs (rusalkas, dūgnas, and gudallas) to support him in awakening the past (“Chodźcie... błędnej przeszłości mdłe gromadzić nici” [Come... collect the faint threads of the meandering past])⁵⁷⁷ and bringing back at least some semblance of it. Its form, however, is not concrete, and the call remains indeterminate, without, by the way, evoking any echoes. The river and the moon, which suggest sentimentalism, bracket the poem which is not endowed with meaning:

Daremnie! ... wszystko martwe, głuche, jakby z głazu,
Fala płynie za falą, a na wód przestrzeni
Czasem Księżyc ukaże jakby cień obrazu,
I wnet niknie za chmurą – i obraz się zmieni.⁵⁷⁸

576 Ibid., 69.

577 Ibid., 70.

578 Ibid.

[In vain! ... all is dead, hollow, as if made of stone,/Wave follows wave, and over the expanse of the water/Sometimes the Moon appears like the shadow of a painting/And it will soon disappear behind a cloud – and the image will change.]

The poem also suspends the possibility of meaning for an indeterminate amount of time in the future:

Lecz coś sercu szepce,
 Że w tym jest tajemnica, której noc przeminie:
 I ludziom się objawi wówczas... gdy Bóg zechce.⁵⁷⁹

[But something in the heart whispers,/That there is a mystery in this, and its night shall pass:/And it will be revealed to people when... God wills it.]

The question of the narrator's competencies is quite interesting. He does not understand historical events and attempts to awaken the past in some hazy form, while at the same time he is cognizant of his helplessness and lack of knowledge. The mystery of past events will be revealed "when God wills it," which could be read as: in entirely transformed circumstances, in a different reality. The present makes it impossible to read the signs which the past has left in the Livonian lands. Only through some indefinite future changes could there arise a situation which will favor the understanding of that which had been. If we agree with Heidegger that history constitutes existence within a past–future project (see "History and Existence" in Chapter 3), then Borch's poem speaks about an unsuccessful search for the historical basis of the collective experience of Polish-Livonian existence in a familiar-foreign place and time.

We can also read the meaning of Michał Borch's poem in a different, more multicultural context, if we bring up the mental factor which has been called the "conquistador complex" in earlier chapters. Uncertainty about the meaning of the past causes anxiety about the lack of one's local legitimacy. Indeed, the narrator clearly sympathizes with the pagan protagonist, and attempts to empathize with his dramatic situation; he seeks his inheritance in the history which speaks vaguely. But he also betrays his awareness that this is not his history, that he is touching foreign events. At the beginning of *Gercike*, images from a foreign cultural sphere pass through the narrator's imagination; this sphere is unknown and requires explanation. Borch adds a footnote to the verse "Jakież to mury z trzaskiem wał się do Dźwiny?" [What walls fall, crashing into the Daugava?] in order to explain the historical sources on the basis of which he constructed the background of the plot (German-Livonian historians dominate his list). In other words, he appeals to the traditions of this land, but, in a deeply emotional sense, it is not fully his land. That is why history remains inscrutable and illegible; it speaks with signs that cannot be translated into the

579 Ibid., 71.

cultural experience of the subject. Reading it requires a change of perspective, stepping beyond one's own Polish-Livonian horizon of existence.⁵⁸⁰

All of the old culture to which the author of the poem refers is marked by similar illegibility. In the footnotes at the end of the poem, he includes a list of deities, historical facts and figures, and geographic and mythological names, which are to explain the cultural context of the work, or rather to establish this context. Here Borch repeats the gesture of projecting the cultural background, a gesture we already discussed in the context of Polish-Livonian historiography. Livonian writers believed that all movement through the territory of the local Baltic culture had to be preceded by the delineation of the contours of the object, or the establishment of the reference points. *Rubon* authors were convinced that the names and places they mention do not mean anything to anyone, that they sound exotic and mysterious. By using them in his poem, Borch gestured toward the fashionable appeal of wilderness and paganism, but he also used them to ask (himself and his neighbors) about the basic principle of community which connects them. And this question has both a cultural and an existential dimension.

The disintegration of the subject of experience becomes manifest in the transition from one discourse to another. An utterance is empty in the framework of historiography, and thus a leap into the discourse of regionalism, and later a discourse of sentimentalism, takes place. In addition, Polish-Romantic discourse (a variation of the discourse of nationalism) emerges from the transparent allusions to Mickiewicz. A circulation of languages, contexts, and challenges arises, but the resulting whole wobbles in its indeterminacy precisely because it is not a whole. The change of the framework of utterances does not solve the problem of identity expressed in the poem; it only confirms it. The final words ("when God wills it") do not express hope but helplessness.

The brief epic poem *Na dąb w Inflantach* [On the Livonian Oak], published in the second volume of *Rubon*, and signed with the initials P.A.,⁵⁸¹ is also

580 Contemporary Latgallian researchers add a modern moral to Borch's romantic one. They treat *Gercike* as their own, native, story about the beginnings of Latgallian culture, and they are interested in Michał Borch not as a Gothic-Romantic sentimentalist, but as the bard of the Baltic sense of local rootedness. See Kaspars Klaviņš, "Poēma 'Jersika' un patriotisms Latvijē laikmetu gaitē" [The Long Poem 'Jersika': Latvian Patriotism of the Transitional Period]; Krystyna Barkowska, "Dźwina w recepcji Michała Borchy" [Michał Borch's Images of Dźwina]—lectures presented at the international conference *Polsko-baltyckie związki kulturowe* [Polish-Baltic cultural connections], Daugavpils University, October 2006.

581 It is unknown to whom these initials refer. S. Herbst suggests that among *Rubon* authors these initials were used by Adam Plater and Andrzej Podbereski. Both possibilities

inscribed into similar contexts, and at first it also seems to appeal to Mickiewicz-like regionalism. As suggested by the title, the author chose the Baublis oak as the object of his poem, and he added in a footnote—probably to forestall accusations of plagiarism—that this is how ancient Latvians referred to their holy oaks.⁵⁸² The Livonian Baublis stands in “dawnyim Łotyszów kraju” [the ancient land of the Latvians], and carries within itself the history of many nations:

Powiedz mi (...) dębie ubóstwiany,
Coś przez niemało wieków patrzył na narody,
Na przemienne ich losy, ich zbrodnie i cnoty,
Jaka była ich chwała, jakie ich przygody,
Gdzie walczyły, gdzie legły mordercze ich roty?⁵⁸³

[Tell me (...) oh worshipped oak,/you who have looked upon the nations for many centuries,/Upon their changing fate, their crimes and virtues,/What was their glory, what were their adventures,/Where did their murderous army units fight, where did they fall?]

As in Borch’s poem, here, too, the narrator is a traveler who arrived from afar, and who attempts to reach the sources of local culture, to decipher the meaning inscribed into this place. He poses questions about the past as if the past could present a single transparent meaning, even though the questions he formulates suggest the clear negation of such a meaning. His cultural otherness reveals itself in the lack of knowledge and disorientation, as if he accidentally found himself in a foreign place:

Ach, opowiedz mi dzieje ludów tej krainy,
Czyich strzeżesz tu prochów, czyje te mogiły?
Jakichże tam Zameczysków sterczą rozwaliny?
Gdzie są te straszne działa, co w te mury biły?⁵⁸⁴

[Ah, tell me the history of the people of this land,/Whose ashes do you guard here, whose graves are these?/What Castle ruins stick up into the sky?/Where are the terrible cannons which shelled these walls?]

seem dubious, however, given the fact that in some issues, these initials appear in articles printed right next to A. Plater’s articles, and also next to articles signed with the initials A.P... and A.P., which Podbereski typically used. The first hypothesis could be accepted only if one assumes that Baron A. Plater did not want to publicize his poetic talents. This idea is supported by the erudition of the author of the poem, who shows extensive knowledge of both pagan mythology and archaeological findings from gravesites, as well as the history of castles, and Livonian Teutonic Commanders and Bishops. Baron A. Plater wrote about all these subjects in *Rubon*.

582 Bujnicki, *Rubon* II, 81.

583 *Ibid.*, 77.

584 *Ibid.*, 78.

The fashion for regionalism had strong repercussions in the east, while in Livonia it had the additional virtue of helping to pose a number of essential questions about identity. The authors who wrote in *Rubon* were, almost without exception, locals born in Polish Livonia, who felt settled and at home there. The above questions unmask this uncertain sense of “being at home”; they challenge it by confronting it with a complex and multicultural past.

Factual answers to the narrator’s questions have been formulated in the preceding chapters: the graves contain the ashes of Livs and Latgallians, the castles belonged to the Livonian-Teutonic Order, and Polish, Russian, and Swedish cannons shelled their walls. The narrator, however, is not seeking these types of answers; he knows them from his readings, the traces of which can be found in his footnotes. He asks about the connection between individual experience of the place of one’s birth, and collective experience of the specificity of the region. He asks about continuity, about what connects him with his native Livonia. The question about identity is at the same time an undermining of identity, the demarcation of a problem and the need for identification, attested to by the turn to mythology:

Jaką ci cześć, mój dębie, dawały narody,
I bóstwom, których strzegłeś? Gdzie jest Perkun groźny,
Nieubłagany Poklus i bóg Atrymp młody?
Sprawca zaburzeń morskich, Gardoajtis mroźny? –

[What veneration, oh my oak, did the nations offer you,/And the deities whom you guarded? Where is the dangerous Perkun,/Relentless Poklus and the young god Atrymp?/And the one who disturbs the sea, the cold Gardoajtis?]

And also by the turn to history, which follows immediately afterwards:

Znałeś szanowny Baubli, znałeś ty Mejnharda,
Co twych bogów zwyciężył? Bertolda śmiałego,
Któremu śmierć zadała Liwów włócznia twarda?–
Widziałeś wodza Kobbe w bitwie poległego,
I łuna gorejących ruskich Książąt grodów,
Zbrojnego Kokenois i Gercike gmachów,
Zburzonych przez rycerzy germańskich narodów?⁵⁸⁵

[Did you know, oh honorable Baubli, did you know Mejnhard,/Who was victorious over your deities? And the courageous Bertold/Who was killed by the hard spear of the Livs?/Did you see chief Kobbe who died in battle,/And the glow of the burning cities of Ruthene Princes,/Fortified Kokenois and Gercike with large buildings,/Demolished by the knights of the German nations?]

Before voicing doubts about his own identity, the narrator has evidently carefully prepared himself for the conversation with the Latgallian Baublis, studying both Baltic mythology and the history of colonization in the region. For him, the oak represents the impenetrable native qualities of Latgalia. It is a sign of constancy and local rootedness (a useful literalness) among the historical changes which blur the contours of meaning. The oak knows best what “being here” means, and this is what lies at the very core of the essential question posed by the newcomer.

This conversation leads nowhere because the demanded answer cannot be given. The inability to convey “familiarity” is, in fact, among the constitutive features of the “familiarity” of a given territory. Local culture is hermetic and it cannot be opened by means of scholarly keys, whether they are mythological or historical. When the oak attempts to answer, Perkun strikes it with lightning. Ancient Latgalia thus jealously guards the mystery that surrounds it as a place. One who arrives from elsewhere is left with his uncertainty; he is first ignored and then frightened and chased away. Not only is his curiosity left unsatisfied, it also exposes him to danger:

Dreszcz przeszedł podróżnego, spoziera na strony
 Czy po tych grobach Murgów nie wędrują mary,
 Gdy wiatr zawył, zatrąbił rażącymi tony
 Przez różne próżne wnętrza dębu, przez zgniłe konary,
 Jak gdyby ten miał głosić wyrocznie swe dawne.
 (...)

[A shiver went down the traveler’s spine, and he looked on from the side/Whether there were not ghosts around these graves of the Murgs,/When the wind howled, and sounded the trumpet with resounding tones/Through the many hollow spaces within the oak, through its rotten branches,/As if it were about to proclaim its old prophecies.]

Wtem Perkun rozniewany jasną strzałą błysnął,
 W próżne jelita drzewa, wiekiem zwątlatego,
 I gmach ten starożytny na mogiły cisnął. –
 Wszak może powziął zemstę jedynie dlatego,
 Iż ten chciał począc mówić, naruszyć milczenie.
 Tak więc runął z łoskotem odwieczny dąb stary!
 Z pnia tylko słychać było żmijowe syknienie:
 Byłże to gadów świętych potomek, wąż szary,
 Który zwinnie umykał w grobowe schronienia?⁵⁸⁶

[Suddenly, the angered Perkun struck with the arrow of lightning/The empty bowels of the tree, weakened by age,/And he threw the ancient edifice onto the graves. – /But perhaps he only took revenge because/The oak wished to start speaking and to break the silence./Thus with a loud crash the ancient oak fell down!/One could only hear the viper's hiss coming from the trunk:/Was it a descendant of holy reptiles, a gray snake,/Escaping deftly to find shelter among the graves?]

The Livonian land not only hides its secrets from the traveler; it provokes fear and disgust, it discourages him, and threatens him with a curse.⁵⁸⁷ If the past does mean something and the oak's speech could convey some unambiguous truth, the most powerful deities do not allow for these meanings to be revealed. Culture does not have its representation—it is not exchangeable for any discursive concepts. It closes itself in silence which one is not permitted to break.

This entire situation makes an “unpleasant impression” on the traveler, who quickly leaves without receiving initiation, unable to create a meaningful whole out of the collected information; the fragmentary nature of this information is the only answer he gets, and it simultaneously denies the possibility of an answer. The final digression about a small sapling growing from the rotten remains of Baublis seems surprisingly prophetic in light of the fact that today Latgalia is rebuilding its regional identity primarily on the basis of the most ancient, pagan past of the land, which was then known as *Livonia Australis*. This very suggestive picture contains two important things: first, the traveler departs—he leaves the unfriendly and unrecognizable place, he escapes from the inscrutable; and second, from the destroyed and rotting past, something of importance for the future emerges, something which the escaping descendant of colonizers cannot fathom. Dread and presence are mixed with hope:

Rzucił na dąb poległy ostatnie spojrzenie.
 Ne było już w nim życia, słabe tylko krzewo
 Z pnia odrosłe świeciło przyjemnym kolorem...
 Czy się z niego utworzy kiedyś znowu drzewo,
 Czy na wieki spoglądać będzie ojca wzorem,
 Prazminos nie objawił...⁵⁸⁸

587 There was a strongly-developed cult of holy snakes in the Baltic countries. Killing a snake, or disturbing its hole, caused the anger and revenge of the deities. See Czesław Miłosz's poem “Bypassing Rue Descartes” and Aleksander Brückner, *Starożytna Litwa: ludy i bogi: szkice historyczne i mitologiczne* [Ancient Lithuania: Peoples and Deities: Historical and Mythological Sketches], ed. and with an introduction by Jan Jaskanis (Olsztyn: Wydawnictwo Pojezierze, 1984), 79.

588 Bujnicki, *Rubon II*, 80.

[He threw a final glance at the fallen oak./There was no more life in it, only a weak sapling/Growing from the trunk glistened with a pleasant hue.../Will it one day again become a tree,/Or will it, like its father, gaze at the centuries – /This Prazminos did not reveal...]

Several centuries of colonization demolished the primordial identity of Livonia, but Livonia also brought about significant changes in the mentality of those who arrived there. The author of this poem gives up the search for answers to his questions about identity; he relinquishes his claims regarding local culture, and gives the territory back with the sense that its identity has remained alien in two senses: as an un-cognized otherness and as the sense of his own rootlessness. From the perspective of the discourse of regionalism, the poem *Na dąb w Inflantach* [On the Livonian Oak] shows identity dilemmas of the inhabitants of a place where the histories of various nations unfolded, and where several cultures became articulated side by side. From the point of view of colonial and postcolonial discourse, the poem shows the identity dilemmas of the descendants of colonizers, together with their attempts to overcome the conquistador complex and recognize otherness and positive cultural dissemination. Instead of an answer to questions about identity, there appears the acceptance of otherness, acceptance that there is meaning in negation, and the recognition that a lack can be an answer. The traveler thus probably departs with the awareness that he should have asked different questions altogether.

In *Rubon*, the discourse of regionalism also spoke with the language of practical agriculture, to which “Useful Matters,” the third section of the journal, was devoted. This section included texts about farming, agricultural research, botany, hydrography, geology, veterinary medicine, and other similar topics. Józef Gerald-Wyżycki was the most prominent author, and he wrote texts like *Artezyjskie źródła* [Artesian Springs],⁵⁸⁹ *Wyjątki z zielnika ekonomiczno-technicznego* [Selections from the Economic-Technical Herbal],⁵⁹⁰ *O Torfie* [On Peat],⁵⁹¹ and *O sposobach poprawienia gruntów glejowatych* [On the Ways of Improving Gleizated Soils].⁵⁹² Józef Plater wrote about rabies in farm animals,⁵⁹³ and Ignacy Ciechanowski advocated the use of Priessnitz’s hydropathist method in Livonian spas (*O Gräfenbergu i metodzie hydropatycznej Priessnitza*, [About Gräfenberg and Priessnitz’s Hydropathic

589 Bujnicki, *Rubon* I, 235ff.

590 Bujnicki, *Rubon* II, 257ff.

591 Bujnicki, *Rubon* III, 260ff.

592 Bujnicki, *Rubon* IV, 275ff.

593 Bujnicki, *Rubon* V, 285ff.

Method]).⁵⁹⁴ In addition to their practical dimension, these texts had cultural significance in the process of marking the separateness of Polish Livonia and of delineating—also in the literal, geographical sense—the reach of its territory.

Scholarly works of Polish-Livonian researchers are characterized by certain stylistic incongruity. Various discourses are intermixed in these works, and they intersect in carefree ways. On the one hand, these researchers seek to heed the principles of science, while on the other, they introduce a free-flowing and nearly literary narration, which transforms referential language into a figurative one. In this way, the scientific value of the text is put into question, and a treatise changes into a poem:

As if it were the Chameleon of our history, the Daugava soon flaunts its new, and this time, a seemingly significant designation. And even though there have been speculations that Pliny, who was alive 80 years before Ptolemy, had already given the latter a reason for the name *Rubo*, locating a certain *promontorium Rubeus* somewhere in the Wenedian Sea; yet the testimony of this learned naturalist did not succeed in giving permanence to this name—and we will soon see it, if not vanished entirely, then at least forcefully pushed out of its riverbed.⁵⁹⁵

This quote comes from a short treatise entitled *Dwa słowa o Dźwinie* [A Couple of Words about the Daugava], written by Michał Borch, whom Gustaw Manteuffel saw as co-responsible for the collapse of the journal.⁵⁹⁶ Indeed, the scholarly quality of *Rubon* was subject to criticism when it was still coming out, and it was critiqued again later by the circle of Warsaw positivists, who saw it as the ideological organ of conservative aristocrats, seeking primarily to protect their estates against reforms.⁵⁹⁷ Manteuffel—himself rather critical of *Rubon*—

594 Bujnicki, *Rubon* VI, 325ff. Vinzenz Priessnitz (1799–1851), born in Lower Silesia, developed the so-called hydropathist method, where healing was based on sudden splashing of body parts with cold water, wading knee-deep in ice-cold springs, etc. Together with walks outside, it became a very popular hydrotherapy in European spas in the 19th century. The Polish word for shower [prysznic] derives from his name.

595 Bujnicki, *Rubon* III, 56.

596 “The articles written by Józef Plater and Michał Borch are among the weakest of those in *Rubon* and they were the ones responsible for the discrediting of this journal among critics...” Manteuffel, “Niecio z dziejów dawnego księstwa inflanckiego” [A Bit from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 37.

597 See Inglot, *Polskie czasopisma literackie ziem litewsko-ruskich* [Polish Literary Journals in the Lithuanian and Ruthene Territories]; Herbst, “*Rubon*: pismo poświęcone pożytecznej rozrywce” [Rubon: A Journal Devoted to Beneficial Entertainment]; Manteuffel, “Niecio z dziejów dawnego księstwa inflanckiego” [A Bit from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 37. Feliks Zieliński’s texts in “Bibliotece Warszawskiej” were prominent in their critique, while Piotr Chmielowski was the main critic among the positivists.

tried to defend it against the “central” Varsovian attack aimed at the provinces, and pointed out that the reviewers lacked local knowledge;⁵⁹⁸ the journal was nonetheless classified among relatively unsuccessful examples of local writing.

One could be tempted to use Foucault’s concept of procedures (*dispositif*) and claim that the Polish-Livonian writings in *Rubon* did not fit into the framework of contemporary scientific discourse, and violated procedures for establishing facts in natural and human sciences.⁵⁹⁹ The authors conducted scientific research and produced detailed descriptions, while at the same time seeking to create a certain cultural whole. They wrote scientific texts and they simultaneously sought to use them to construct a local myth. The accusation of aristocratic reactionary attitudes applies only insofar as we deem one’s inscription into a local culture as a violation of some “natural” law, and one can speak about this only in the framework of postcolonial discourse. In the case of these authors—whom Bujnicki sought to convince to write about local matters—a different language became manifest; this language was, so to speak, individually constructed, to meet the specific needs of Polish-Livonian culture. In *Rubon*, scientific discourse was mixed with other discourses: multicultural, regional, historical, and sentimental. To put it differently, the authors envisioned the journal as serving not only a scientific function, but also a culture-creating one, in the literal sense of creating Polish-Livonian culture. From this perspective, the mixing of serious matters, literature, and useful matters, and the molding of a Livonian myth from these, seems justifiable.

4. Adam Plater: *Łajwas i zwoszczyks* [Canoes and Rafts]

The confusion of discourses in the texts published in *Rubon* points to a certain interesting boundary phenomenon, related to borderland writing. The disturbance of a scientific argument through sentimentalism, or even through poetic speech, results in the construction of interdisciplinary texts, which disregard the rules of genre, style, and separation into disciplines. There thus arises a series of works situated at the boundary between science and literature, whose main aim is not to investigate a specific phenomenon, but to confirm the very existence of their objects. Historical events, pagan mythology, excavation sites, folk songs, or the composition of soil in a given region, all become only

598 Manteuffel, “Nieco z dziejów dawnego księstwa inflanckiego” [A Bit from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 39.

599 See “Discourses in Circulation” in Chapter 5.

pretexts for writing which constitutes, for notation which calls the region into existence. The detail becomes submerged in the general picture, descriptive speech inconspicuously moves toward poetic speech, *science* changes into *lettre*. Proof becomes a spell.

The significance of these types of texts—which (simplifying somewhat) one can call popular-scientific—for Polish-Livonian culture is best attested to by the writing of Baron Adam Plater (1790–1862), author of naturalist and geographic works, historian and archeologist who was a permanent contributor to *Rubon*.⁶⁰⁰ He investigated scientific problems as an amateur-researcher, using both field research and the rich library of the Kraslava Platers, which, by the way, he augmented significantly during his lifetime. He betrayed awareness of local exoticism, typical for Polish-Livonian writers, when in the introduction to his 1832 pamphlet *Rzut oka na skład geognostyczny Inflant* [A Glance at the Geognostic Constitution of Livonia], he anticipated possible accusations of the specialists, and explained that his short piece concerns “an object which has been only sparsely investigated so far.”⁶⁰¹ Scientists could have had misgivings not only about the content of the booklet, but also about the baron’s language, which often became poetic, as it did in this fragment about the original formation of famous Livonian peat:

Such waters, when they became calm after disturbances, having deposited solid matter dissolved in them, flowing away from newly formed soil, endowed rivers and streams with being; having been blocked only in lower places, they formed lakes, which are numerous in these lands. Winds, which were drying the earth, brought seeds covered with mud into these lakes, and these gave forth saplings; seeding every year, they formed plant layers connected by their little roots; and so each year, one layer covered another, and weighed down with the weight of dry leaves, these first formed bogs which could hold up trees, and later, under their own weight, they settled to the bottom of the lakes, and formed the peat which is used here for fuel with such great benefit.⁶⁰²

The baron’s *Opisanie hydrograficzno-statystyczne Dźwiny zachodniej oraz ryb w niej żyjących* [Hydrographic-Statistical Description of the Western Daugava

600 In “Pamiętnik Księdza Jordana Soc. Jesu” [Memoirs of Father Jordan of the Society of Jesus], Bujnicki says the following about him: “Thus he did not reach the level of a scholar, but in each branch of this discipline he gained the knowledge necessary to collect and classify a rather beautiful collection of minerals, plants, birds, or archaeological finds, artifacts, coins, etc. (...). When he turned 40, he fell ill (...) and he rarely left his office, constantly working there with his beloved scientific objects.” (pp. 233–234).

601 Adam Plater, *Rzut oka na skład geognostyczny Inflant* [A Glance at the Geognostic Composition of Livonia] (Vilnius: T. Glücksberg, 1832), 1.

602 *Ibid.*, 3.

and the Fish That Inhabit It] enjoyed better reception among scientists—it provided a detailed characterization of the central axis of the Livonian spatial imagination, that is, Livonia’s main river. We have already said a few things about the influence of the Daugava on the mentality of the inhabitants of the land located along its shores, and issues broached in *Rubon* only confirm the extent of this influence. *Opisanie hydrograficzne* [Hydrographic Description] is said to be valuable because it describes certain species of fish which are now extinct, and it also introduces an original classification and nomenclature.⁶⁰³ To his detailed systematization, Plater added *Noty* [Notes], where he described certain species more precisely. The precision of descriptions goes hand in hand with stylistic freedom, which allows for anecdotes and digressions. Here is one which comes from Kraslava fishermen, who fished by night using leisters:

The salmon, suddenly illuminated in deep water by the fire, which was burning in the canoe to help find it, stuck his head into the sand at the bottom of the river and stood taut, nearly vertically with his tail pointing upwards; he remained still, mimicking a trunk or a stick placed in the ground, and he would have probably remained in this position for a long time if the canoe, which approached ever more closely with its light, had not finally forced him to flee.⁶⁰⁴

This text, however, is not limited to hydrographic and ichthyological issues. As he describes the Daugava, the author introduces a plethora of information from various disciplines, orders it chronologically, and develops his systematization—as if he were creating an exact portrait of the river. He starts with the historical-onomastic part (*Nazwanie Dźwiny u starożytnych* [The Naming of the Daugava Among the Ancients]), and then discusses the source of the river, its size, tributaries, soil formations, cataracts, navigation, trade on its banks, types of ships, etc. From Plater’s book one can derive natural, historical, social, and economic knowledge:

The products which are shipped down the Daugava to Riga and other cities that lie on its banks, come from Russia, Belarus, and parts of Lithuania, Courland, and Livonia. They include all kinds of wheat, flour, croup, millet, manna, hemp seeds, and Russian and Druja flax seeds, known by the name Drujaner Flachs; they include flax, oakum, down, bones, honey, butter, lard, pork fat, salted and smoked meat, suet, suet and stearin candles, various types of iron and metal, paper, crêpe paper,

603 In “Nieco z dziejów dawnego księstwa inflanckiego” [A Bit from the History of Old Livonian Lands] (p. 38) Manteuffel even claims that fragments of this work were translated into German and published in respected scholarly journals in Dorpat and Riga.

604 Adam Plater, *Opisanie hydrograficzno-statystyczne Dźwiny oraz ryb w niej żyjących* [Hydrographic-Statistical Description of the Western Daugava and the Fish That Inhabit It] (Vilnius: A. K. Kirkor, 1861), 63.

glass, porcelain, pottery, glaze, tea, dried and fried fruit, Astrachan grapes, Crimean and Greek wines, oil, potash, coal, tar, wood tar, birch tar and various other products.⁶⁰⁵

The abundance of goods transported down the river (the list seems to have been copied from customs registers) not only gives practical information about what was traded, but also clarifies the role of the river in the life of local inhabitants. The author scrupulously enumerates and nearly inundates the reader with these wares, to make the greatest possible impression. The Daugava is the support of the country, it bears the responsibility for Livonia and the locals' attention is directed toward it. It also plays the role of an intermediary between East and West:

And with the help of *lajwas* and *zwozczyks* Riga delivers the following goods upstream: wines, sugar, salt, herring, various colonial wares, oysters and saltwater fish, such as *sztokfisz* [dried mackerel], flounders, smoked and marinated salmon, lamprey, Reval lox oranges, lemons, and mineral waters, foreign and artificial Rigan ones, etc.⁶⁰⁶

Plater explains that a “łajwa” was a small Latvian canoe with a sail; in the borderlands the word “zwozczyk” meant a fiacre driver, so here perhaps it means a raft—but the precise meaning remains unknown. The author uses incomprehensible regionalisms to draw the reader's attention to the strangeness, difference, and untranslatability of the local experience into a universal language. In this cult of the river, there is a sudden leap from the scientific to the mythological perspective, and it puts other codes and discourses into play. For the primordial inhabitants of the region, Dźwina was a powerful deity, and its Latvian name Daugava is often evoked by various authors in *Rubon*; it thus had considerable significance for both groups, it was something much more important than simply an object of scientific investigation. As the central point of Livonians' spatial orientation, Dźwina was an emblem of the land, its characteristic feature, a field of semantic and symbolic references, and simultaneously a justification of these references.

In one of the footnotes, Adam Plater complains that he is unable to decide whether the sagittae of the Black Sea Roach (a carp-like fish) are located above the eyes or under the lower jaw, since he receives the skeletons by mail, and the sagittae are always separated from the other bones.⁶⁰⁷ While describing certain species, he scrupulously enumerates the number of bones, the shape and pattern of the scales, hues of their colors, etc. His knowledge is derived from first-hand

605 Ibid., 28.

606 Ibid.

607 Ibid., 66.

experience. On the other hand, the many comparisons to other authors, the scholarly footnotes, and Latin nomenclature point to extensive use of professional literature. The collections of the Kraslava library were renowned in the region, and a special, impressive building was built to house them; during its best days the library is said to have contained 30,000 volumes.⁶⁰⁸ Adam Plater's references to various types of sources show interdependence between theory and practice, typical of the regional mentality. The constitution of Livonia follows two tracks. The material detail is the ontological proof which flows from *doxa*, while literature about the subject introduces the universal *episteme*. Referring to Markowski's typology (see footnote 337 in Chapter 3), one could say that the epistemological ideology of representation crosses over into ontological ideology, or that the multiplication of descriptions and the change of discourses is translated into the increase of the factual being of the object of description. Here, one can see the appearance of the other, positive side of apophatic doubt, which consists in the power of representation that can change the concrete into the general. In the case of Polish-Livonian "serious" and "useful" writing, this change has the benefit of legitimizing the object, and, along with this, of bolstering the writers' confidence in their local identity. In the framework of constitutive tendencies within such local cultures as Polish Livonia, the endowment of a particular phenomenon with general qualities ontologically elevates and strengthens the existence of the entire land.

5. Kazimierz Bujnicki: A Periodical Traveler

Discourses of the Livonian borderlands were represented in a serious key in the novels of Kazimierz Bujnicki. This declared regionalist was an autodidact, and his education consisted of lessons he received at home and at the Kraslava palace, where he resided for a few years.⁶⁰⁹ He must have had excellent teachers

608 See Edward Chwalewik, *Zbiory polskie: archiwa, biblioteki, gabinety, galerie, muzea i inne zbiory pamiątek przeszłości w ojczyźnie i na obczyźnie* [Polish Collections: Archives, Libraries, Offices, Galleries, Museums, and Other Collections of Historical Artifacts in Poland and Abroad], vol. 1 (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Jakuba Morkowicza, 1926), 261. An extensive separate study should be devoted to the role played by libraries in the development of Polish-Livonian culture.

609 Dorota Samborska-Kukuć undermines the hypothesis, frequently repeated by researchers, that Kazimierz Bujnicki graduated from a Jesuit high school in Kraslava. St. Kučinskis' arguments that the Jesuit high school in Kraslava was founded when Bujnicki was already a father and an estate manager, and he thus could not have graduated from it, are also convincing. See Samborska-Kukuć, *Polski Inflantczyk*

there since he knew several languages (German, Russian, English, French, Latin, and Latvian), and was quite well-versed in history and literature. After reaching the mature age of 50, by which time he was a serious citizen and an efficient administrator of the family estate, he began to realize his writing plans, which had accompanied him for many years. When he started editing *Rubon*, he was already the author of *Wędrówka po małych drogach* [Journey Along Small Roads], published in Vilnius, in 1841, and a writer who had opted for prose after several attempts at poetry, which were not particularly successful.⁶¹⁰ Bujnicki's two-volume novel, subtitled *Szkice obyczajowe na prowincji* [Sketches About Life in the Provinces] provoked heated discussion, and divided the few reviewers into decisive adherents and opponents of the writing talents of this owner of the Dagda estate.⁶¹¹ The provincial life of Livonian aristocracy was represented in the form of vignettes taken from daily life, a genre which was quite popular at the time. The accompanying satire and transparent references to specific people resulted in wide and mostly negative reception of the work in Bujnicki's native Livonia, giving him the reputation of a mean satirist.⁶¹²

Kazimierz Bujnicki [A Polish Livonian: Kazimierz Bujnicki], chap. "Bujnicki w mozaice środowisk" [Bujnicki within the Mosaic of Various Milieus].

- 610 In "Nieco z dziejów dawnego księstwa inflanckiego" [A Bit from the History of Old Livonian Lands], (p. 37) Manteuffel claims that K. Bujnicki made his debut in the press with a few poems he published in his youth; allegedly he also wrote odes, which points to his training in rhetoric, which he probably obtained at a Jesuit high school, but in Dyneburg. Around 1810, he is also said to have translated Karl von Holtei's drama *Der alte Feldherr* [The Old Commander] from German, which sounds absurd because this play was written around 1830. Bujnicki could have encountered K. v. Holtei's name much later, since he was the director of a German theater in Riga between 1837 and 1841. Holtei's mother, whose maiden name was von Kessel, and his father, a hussar officer, were descendants of Courlandish knightly aristocracy.
- 611 Kazimierz Bujnicki, *Wędrówka po małych drogach: szkice obyczajowe na prowincji* [Journey Along Small Roads: Sketches of Life in the Provinces] (Vilnius: J. Zawadzki, 1841). Dorota Samborska-Kukuć discusses the critics' initial reactions to this novel in her lecture "Z Kazimierzem Bujnickim po małych drogach: obrazy z Inflant Polskich I poł. XIX wieku w obrazach obyczajowych" [Traveling Along Small Roads with Kazimierz Bujnicki: Images from Polish Livonia in the First Half of the 19th Century in Images from Everyday Life] (presented at the conference *Polsko-bałtyckie związki kulturowe* [Polish-Baltic cultural connections], Daugavpils, October 2005); printed in: *Polija un baltija kultūras dialogā* [Poland and the Baltics in Culture Dialogue], ed. Kristīne Barkovska and Andris Kazjukevičs (Daugavpils: Daugavpils Universitātes, 2007).
- 612 This is how Edward Demobowski described Bujnicki in a review of *Wędrówki* [Journey] in *Przegląd Naukowy*, no. 7 (1842).

The plot of *Wędrówka* [Journey] kept to the popular conventions of the novel of manners: the narrator and his friend Adolf journey into the Livonian countryside with matrimonial reconnaissance intentions. On the first day of their journey, they meet a mysterious beauty, whom they immediately follow, but a series of unfavorable events makes them lose their way. They reluctantly return to their initial plan, and visit Adolf's aunt who wants to arrange his marriage with—as it later turns out—that same beautiful stranger. The first volume of the novel is thus organized around two themes: travel and love. The journey is a pretext for extended descriptions of the life of the aristocracy, and of the dubious beauty of provincial Livonian towns, with “dirty German taverns” and “ubiquitous, intrusive Jews.” In the second volume, Bujnicki devotes more time to the critique of the aristocracy's customs (snobbery, haughtiness of those who held offices, corruption, gambling, litigiousness of the lawyers, intellectual mediocrity, etc.); he gives up the striving to make the plot attractive for the sake of providing mostly critical “vignettes from life,” though he occasionally provides inspiring examples as well.

In this novel the discourse of regionalism manifests itself in a very simple, almost Enlightenment-type form. The author—who doubtless identifies with the narrator, as the relevant passages in his *Pamiętniki* [Memoirs] make clear—delineates the territory of the region by means of the travel theme (the protagonists travel “along both banks of the Daugava”), while the precision and detail of the portraits of the many representatives of the local population situates a specific community in the region. Bujnicki builds his little homeland with the help of satirical-sentimental prose, which focuses on customs, and which is marked by the intention to portray something without a ready-made shape. Both in the introduction to the novel and in the *Pamiętniki* [Memoirs], which were written much later, Bujnicki repeatedly emphasizes the unfinished and sketch-like nature of the literary material which constitutes *Wędrówka* [Journey]. The lack of artistic ambitions, and their replacement by a set of unassuming, provincial sketches, can be explained by the literary fashion of the day, which encouraged writers to produce “faithful images from nature, painted by a Flemish brush.”⁶¹³ These were to be a humble antidote against overgrown romantic metaphysics, and they were to bear the traits of reform-minded modernity. In Bujnicki's work however, one can also see a tendency to isolate,

613 Mieczysław Inglot, *Poglądy literackie koterii petersburskiej w latach 1841–1843* [Literary Views of the St. Petersburg coterie between 1841–1843] (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1961), 104. For a discussion of the fashion for “small-scale and practical” literature see Fryderyk Ancillon's “O stosunku ideału i rzeczywistości” [On the Relationship between Ideals and Reality], *Tygodnik Petersburski*, no. 13–14 (1832).

i.e., to differentiate (both socially and nationally) the Polish-Livonian aristocracy, and to give it a separate status in the framework of the highly differentiated population structure of the Baltic lands. According to historians of the borderlands, this tendency applies to borderland prose more broadly construed, i.e., to the type of prose which uses specific events to point to a group's identity-related problems. A contemporary scholar of the borderlands points to the existence of this tendency in the historical novel, which

determined (...) the character of the behaviors of individuals and the community—both within a given group and in the group's relations with others. Importantly, the historical novel simultaneously helped unify the group from within, and differentiated the group from others. Its social and ideological role was closely tied to its defensive and compensatory tasks. Hence the realm of threats and conflict was an essential component of the plots of historical novels.⁶¹⁴

The phenomenon of the coalescence of borderland communities into separate entities was not just an element of historical novels, it was also engrained in borderland mentality. Polish-Livonian gentry had its customs, and its ideological, religious, and social convictions; it therefore did not allow for casual imposition of foreign influences (in the Livonian case, this argument, a repetition of Enlightenment teachings, was clearly also directed against German-Baltic and Protestant culture). In Bujnicki's aristocratic rendition, the discourse of regionalism was supported by nationalist and confessional discourses.

Bujnicki's conservatism requires a few words of explanation. The writer was accused of it at the beginning of his career, especially from the so-called progressive positions, which, in the realm of literary criticism, were articulated by writers like Edward Dembowski or Piotr Chmielowski. The accusations concerned, above all, ideological support for the aristocracy, defense of its social and economic dominance, and apologetics on behalf of hierarchy and inequality, which could be found in Bujnicki's novels. Indeed, arguments which defend the landed aristocracy against conservative positions and support the *status quo* can be found in many of his texts. The problem is not that simple, however. In 1821, Bujnicki belonged to a committee of landed aristocrats, which worked to abolish serfdom in Polish-Livonian counties, basing their work

614 Tadeusz Bujnicki, "Litwa między Wielkim Księstwem a kresami: powieści historyczne Kraszewskiego na tle dziewiętnastowiecznych wyobrażeń o litewskiej przeszłości" [Lithuania between the Grand Duchy and the Eastern Borderlands: Kraszewski's Historical Novels Against the Background of 19th-century Images of Lithuania's Past], in *Kultura polityczna w Polsce 6* [Political Culture in Poland 6], vol. 1, *Litwa w Polskiej tradycji i kulturze politycznej* [Lithuania in Polish Traditions and Political Culture], edited by Marcel Kosman (Poznań: Instytut Nauk Politycznych i Dziennikarstwa UAM, 2006), 86.

on the model of abolition which had just been implemented in Livonian and Courlandish provinces. The work of the committee did not amount to anything because its members could not reach agreement. Bujnicki—Marshall of Dyneburg County and editor of a draft statute which was several hundred pages long—made the following comments about the attitude of those who rejected the statute:

They were moved to this unhappy step by the citizens of the neighboring county, who are too attached to the right to own serfs to give up this prerogative—one which satisfies the lust to rule over people in the countryside—for the benefit of humanity (and also their own benefit, as they later found out).⁶¹⁵

Marcin Karnicki, a rich and influential aristocrat who led the conservative wing of the Livonian gentry, was chided by Bujnicki in *Wędrówka* [Journey] in the following vignette:

How many Szumnickis and Ciemiężyckis [fictional characters—K.Z.] we have here—they condemn discoveries (...), praise old customs only because they are old, without inquiring if they are good or bad; (...). Sometimes they are able to shift the majority of votes to their side, and block the adoption of many a salutary reform, thus harming the country.⁶¹⁶

Bujnicki decidedly belonged to the opposite, reform-minded faction, which was willing to undertake not only technological but also structural reform in the local agricultural economy. From this perspective, the organization and themes of *Rubon* are a logical consequence of these views.

Bujnicki's reform-minded views are confirmed by the ideological disputes in *Nowa wędrówka po małych drogach* [New Journey Along Small Roads], a two-volume continuation of *Wędrówki* [Journey], published in Vilnius eleven years later. Here too, the plot relies on love and travel themes, with the latter being even more of a pretext for descriptions of countryside manners. The entire justification of the composition is provided by the gentry's custom of paying frequent and spontaneous visits to neighbors and relatives, visits sometimes accompanied by a laconically formulated "problem." The author-narrator is a "periodical traveler" who, after many years, likes to visit places to which he feels close and where he "left something of his thoughts."⁶¹⁷ During one such

615 Bujnicki, "Pamiętnik księdza Jordana Soc. Jesu" [Memoirs of Father Jordan of the Society of Jesus], 189. Bujnicki makes a parenthetical allusion to the events of 1863, which he saw as the tragic outcome of the serf emancipation decree.

616 Bujnicki, *Wędrówka po małych drogach* [Journey Along Small Roads], vol. 2, 6.

617 Kazimierz Bujnicki, *Nowa wędrówka po małych drogach: szkice obyczajowe* [New Journey Along Small Roads: Sketches of Everyday Life], vol. 1 (Vilnius: J. Zawadzki, 1852), 31.

journey he stops at the home of a cavalry Captain, who gives a philippic in defense of the aristocracy to democratically-inclined youth at an evening gathering. The Captain's arguments do not go beyond the standard arsenal of a conservative: he claims that the aristocracy has shaped tradition through the centuries, that it provides a practical and ethical model, that it stimulates civilization and progress, and the faults ascribed to it are an unjustified generalization. Their luxury, criticized by the democrats, in fact makes it possible to maintain the cult of beauty, solemnity, and noble action—virtues which necessarily radiate out to the lower classes:

Forms of decency make the ideas of goodness into reality, for what is really beautiful is also good. Introduce decency into customs and they will become good, drive it away and they will become entirely barbaric. Expel all luxury, splendor, and magnificence from a country, and its inhabitants will grow lazy and impoverished, industry will collapse, agriculture will not be improved, and the fine arts will soon depart.⁶¹⁸

One can reject this argumentation in various ways and undermine its starting premises, but one cannot deny that these words show prophetic foresight when one juxtaposes them with the situation of Polish Livonia over the next century and a half. Only a dozen years later, readers of Bujnicki's novel became witnesses and participants in events which confirmed the thesis about the collapse of the economy in a country from which "magnificence has been exiled." Their consequences, together with the effects of the Revolution of 1905, are perceptible in Polish Livonia to this day.

In the same discussion, the Captain nonetheless defends equal rights and criticizes American democracy for allowing slavery, simultaneously showing that it is marred by the very faults which the democrats ascribe to the aristocracy. He considers equality in American politics as an "empty slogan" and gives examples of American luxuries to prove that "aristocracy is immortal and it is a civilizing force."⁶¹⁹ The Captain's apologia for inequality and hierarchy is inconsistent, however, since he says the following on behalf of Black American slaves:

...it seems to me that the Negro is a human being equal to us, and that is why I do not understand how the notion of a land of freedom can be applied to a country where one man has the right to enslave another, to buy and sell him like cattle, only because he has white skin while the other's skin is black? (...) Compare the medieval privileges of the seigniorial lords with respect to their slaves, and you will see a difference so great that you will have to, *nolens volens*, limit your admiration for this ideal of all liberal institutions.⁶²⁰

618 Ibid., 100.

619 Ibid., 102.

620 Ibid., 103.

For Bujnicki, equality applies to race but not to civil rights. The above words were written ten years before the American Civil War, and it is difficult to deny that in the context of its era his thinking was progressive. To correctly read his intentions, it is necessary to realize the pressures of his time and place. A Polish Livonian's defense of privileged social strata in the middle of the 19th century indicated not so much adherence to a reactionary ideology, as the struggle to survive in a territory which was being lost both politically and economically. The contradiction in the Captain's attitude is only apparent, since, at the time, Polish-Livonian reformers believed it was necessary to both carry out fundamental socio-economic reform, and maintain influence in the region. The defense of hierarchy was motivated not by the struggle to maintain existing income levels of the magnate elites—which is what Piotr Chmielowski accused Bujnicki of doing—but rather to maintain social and administrative order. In the framework of the intellectual horizon of the writer, the possibility facing the Livonian lands was not universal democratic revolution, but decline and Russification. And thus if this thinking was driven by interest, it was not only group interest, but also national interest. Three discourses came together here: the discourses of regionalism, colonialism, and nationalism.

Confessional discourse was also present in this confluence. In the plot of the second volume of *Nowa wędrówka* [New Journey] Adolf sends the narrator to Dorpat, where his task is to pull Adolf's son Zygmunt away from "bad" company, and bring him back onto the "path of virtue." This bad company is the family of a certain Dumalski, a representative of modern, atheist rationalism, who poisons the goodly youth's mind with perverse arguments. The young Zygmunt (who studies at Dorpat University) falls for the rationalist's daughter, making matters even worse. Adolf, worried about losing influence over his son, hopes to convince him to return, with the narrator's help. After many challenges success is finally achieved: Zygmunt returns to his father, to the Catholic faith, and marries a pious aristocratic woman from his native Polish Livonia.

Here religious tensions exist along two axes: Catholicism–atheism and Catholicism–Protestantism. The first conflict is resolved rather simply, relying on the juxtaposition of the serious against the trivial; the polemic against Protestantism, however, is fundamentally important. It is here that the gravest accusations against rationalism are articulated. The narrator's opponent is a professor from Dorpat University, well-versed in the history of the Church, and able to use non-trivial arguments which strike at Catholic politics:

Indeed, I believe that this spirit of proselytizing is a spirit of conquest and enslavement. Your Church attempts to destroy all other Christian confessional

groups in order to remain the single Church with sovereign rule over the community; is this also what is commanded by love?⁶²¹

They also raise the issue of tolerant openness toward other denominations, which could become an intellectual and an institutional stimulator, since:

all governing bodies should feel the need to yield to some control, the need to strive to maintain their position: religious freedom provides precisely this service by maintaining constant control, and preventing abuses or the descent into a numb sense of comfort (...). The Church insists on leading its faithful on the same leash on which it led the newly converted hordes of Vandals, Visigoths, and others in the Middle Ages. To do this is to work against the moral nature of man, whose mind naturally tends toward free development, and requires independent movement to prevent it from becoming numb through idleness.⁶²²

The Catholic's argumentation does not come across as particularly brilliant; it is basically reduced to the repetition of formulae about the Church's infallibility, also evoked to justify Catholic intolerance. Both men politely exchange their views about the social role of both denominations, to finally assure each other of mutual respect, understanding, and the need to join all Christian forces in the fight against progressive and progressing secularization. When the Protestant, in the final instance, suggests a compromise to end the discussion, however, the Catholic narrator responds with inflexibility:

You can do this by the power of your free choice, but I have nothing that I could concede because unconditional obedience to the Church is the principle guiding my behavior. We only have two guides on the path of truth: human reason and God's majesty. I chose the latter by my own volition, and with full faith I grant it to my Church.⁶²³

In parting, the Protestant offers a conciliatory "Let us each go our own way in peace," to which the Catholic reacts by suspecting the opponent of trying to avoid serious discussion. The reader, in turn, can react to these suspicions with astonishment, since throughout the whole conversation, it was the Dorpat professor who showed greater agility and focus on facts, while the Livonian aristocrat responded with generalities about theological writings, in which answers to everything supposedly reside. From outside the framework of Catholicism, it is clear that the Protestant intellectual is better prepared for this kind of discussion.

From the perspective of a century and a half, the assertion that one of the parties in this argument is right is not as interesting as the examination of the

621 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, 84.

622 *Ibid.*, 85–86.

623 *Ibid.*, 89–90.

attitude of the Polish-Livonian Catholic, who assumes a clearly defensive position. Although Protestants, closely related to Catholics in both religion and culture, are accepted with sympathy (knightly-Baltic solidarity), the faith of the Pole, who was brought up by Livonian Jesuits, does not allow for any concessions. Just like the decisive defense of the established socio-economic order, confessional stubbornness serves the purpose of rescuing identity. The cultural amalgam of the “Catholic Pole” appears in an unambiguously positive light in Bujnicki’s writing, and it does not yield to the pressure of any rational argumentation. The author constructed the entire polemic between the denominations—it is hard to say whether this was intentional—in such a way that today’s reader will more readily agree with the Protestant who appeals for dialogue, ecumenism, openness, and equal rights of the different denominations. The Catholic faith does not require justifications, it does not need support from rational argumentation; but it is also, and more importantly, impervious to any progressive corrections. From its perspective, the “idle numbness,” of which the professor accuses the Church, is something positive because it will enable the maintenance of the existing order for some time. And change can only be for the worse.

One of the accusations waged against Bujnicki concerned his Jesuit education and mentality, which the critics perceived in his way of fashioning his protagonists. Indeed, priests occupy a special position in his many portraits of Polish-Livonian character types. In *Wędrówka po małych drogach* [Journey Along Small Roads] there is the figure of father August, a “shepherd surrounded by a thousand simple peasants,” whose prototype in Livonian history was the eminent Michał Roth.⁶²⁴ Bujnicki treats him very seriously: he has the right to morally evaluate facts, he utters the most important statements in the story, and he has a serious mission to accomplish in Livonia. Unlike his historical counterpart, father August is quite wealthy, and uses much of his wealth to

624 Bujnicki, *Wędrówka po małych drogach* [Journey Along Small Roads], vol. 2, 6. The Livonian Jesuit Michał Roth (1721–1785) learned the Latgallian dialect to better communicate with local peasants, among whom he worked as a priest. Manteuffel says the following about him in *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands]: “Enlivened by God’s spirit of the first apostle of Livonia, the blessed Meinhard, he settled in a village in Latvia, and approached through ideas and through his soul. Sweet and gentle, he visited households, he comforted the ill and treated them; he brought word of salvation to the sinners, and remembered the earthly needs of the people, whom he won for the Church forever (...). Father Michał Roth was typically called the Latvian apostle” (pp. 188–189). By comparing Roth to Meinhard, Manteuffel confirms the thesis which he repeated many times, namely that in the 18th century, and even in the 19th century, Christianization was not yet complete.

provide for the faithful in his community. As Bujnicki explained in a letter to Michał Grabowski, the parish priest needs money so that he can carry out his mission more effectively, not having to devote much time to securing his livelihood. The entire argument ends with the sigh: “How fortunate it would be if some enlightened, passionate priest with significant means could be convinced to come here [to Polish Livonia—K.Z.]. The Jesuit era would be back again.”⁶²⁵ Why were the Jesuits, whose order was dissolved 20 years earlier, so important for Bujnicki? Was this longing justified solely by reactionary religious sentiments?

Like Konstancja Benisławska, Bujnicki expresses a borderland Catholic’s anxiety about losing his national and religious identity. He also expresses fear of the barbaric East which destroys the Western European order along with the Roman Catholic faith (a fear with which Benisławska, too, was familiar). The Jesuits were not a tool in the hands of the aristocracy, even though this was typical in colonial situations. One can speak about this in Riga, but not in Polish Livonia. Here, the key issue was the attempt to impose the Catholic framework of belief onto the rural population, an attempt driven by fear of potential Russification of the countryside. These two factors—religious and national—cannot be separated from each other in the Livonian inflection of confessional discourse. One can thus presume that Bujnicki was motivated by honest intentions when he created the figure of father August, making him a wealthy aristocrat so that he could finance his own religious undertakings. The independence of religious institutions from the aristocracy was at stake here, as was the need to limit the expenses borne by the peasants. This solution would make it possible to keep the Latvian community not only in the Catholic Church, but also within the realm of Polish national identity. The idea is, however, rather utopian, considering the minimal attractiveness of Polish Livonia, from where everyone tried to escape to take offices closer to the “center.” “Decorum and devotion” were to shield against brutalization of customs and against Russification. It became clear in subsequent decades that the shield proved insufficient in both instances. The problem of a religiously undeclared peasantry must have been significant for Bujnicki since in *Pamiętniki księdza Jordana* [Memoirs of Father Jordan] he also created a very serious and important figure of a Jesuit—father Anselm—who devoted himself primarily to missionary work, and for whom the “palm of martyrdom” was the highest goal in priestly service. Bujnicki’s narrator characterized the Latgallian peasant—the object of Anselm’s Christianizing efforts—in the following way:

625 Michał Grabowski, *Korespondencja literacka* [Literary Correspondence], vol. 1 (Vilnius: Glücksberg, 1842), 52.

Endowed with a naturally gentle character and blunt intellect, he is strangely gullible; his devotion is thus tied to superstition. Though converted to Christianity, over the centuries he was unable to get rid of the relics of old paganism. He blindly believes everything the Church tells him to believe, but he believes in witchcraft and werewolves just as blindly.⁶²⁶

The Polish-Livonian aristocrat was worried not only by the pagan tendencies of his serfs, but also by their gullibility and instability of beliefs, which they constantly changed. This problem concerned not just the Catholic faith or Polish patriotism—it was connected with a sense of alienation and uncertainty in one's own land. To the Polish master, the Latgalian peasant was unpredictable, and he therefore aroused fear. It was because of him that the Livonian land concealed an unknown mystery, of which one had to be afraid. The narrator—like the lyrical subject of Michał Borch's poem *Gercike* (published in the same volume of *Rubon*)—experiences the native land as both his own and foreign, and he describes this explicitly at the end of the above characterization: "I spent my childhood years in this land, which was half wild and half beautiful."⁶²⁷ In this statement one can hear the sociological concern about the unknown mentality of the Other, and the existential fear of the lack of rootedness. The attachment to Jesuit missions as a moral and social panacea was an attempt to save one's own endangered localness, and search for a local identity. Like colonial and regional discourses, confessional discourse served the goal of constituting Polish-Livonian identity, a process which could not end in success, precisely because it was lost in the circulation of discourses.

Kazimierz Bujnicki's prose did not survive the test of time; labeled "aristocratic conservatism" by critics, it was sent to the dustbin of history. Its discursive content did not fit with the ideological program of its epoch, and it lost to "central" thinking. That which gave it its particular shape—local specificity and the pressures of the Polish-Baltic borderland mentality—was either not deciphered, or discredited by the demands of modern ideological discourses. The ideology of Livonian Poles was not embraced by a unique community, which could accept and thereby legitimize the perspectives built into it. To put it differently, Bujnicki's prose did not have enough power to activate the right audience. In this sense, the program of *Rubon*—the awakening of the local community to "elevation through intellectual creations," as well as Bujnicki's novels of manners with their local color—were attempts to create such a community. Bujnicki's defense of both the aristocracy and reforms, Jesuits and technological progress, and his simultaneous attachment to his native

626 Bujnicki, *Rubon* I, 149.

627 Ibid.

land and fear of it, could not count on understanding in Warsaw or Krakow, where all these regional conditions were simply unknown (“Sumatra or Borneo”). Vilnius turned out to have a better understanding of the writer’s cultural background, and he found both publishers and sympathetic reviewers there. Borderland communities generally read his works much more accurately, as they were much more aware of the weight of local conditions and the significance of factors which made the region unique. In those communities, there was also a much better understanding of the threats posed to local communities by unknown, undomesticated, and unpredictable surroundings.

6. Gustaw Manteuffel: A Hologram of Nationalism

When Gustaw Manteuffel began his literary activity in earnest, Polish Livonia was just emptying out after the dramatic events of the January 1863 Uprising, and subsequent repressions carried out by the Russian administration. The letters of Ludwika Plater, who commented on the Uprising as it unfolded, and whose brother Leon was executed for his participation in it (see “Insurrections: Catholic (Meaning Polish?)” in Chapter 2), give an ambiguous evaluation of events, and this ambiguity is marked by disorientation regarding Polish-Livonian interests:

We have been pushed into an impossible position. We have never been afraid of making sacrifices to save the fatherland, but to make the greatest sacrifices that can be made, to throw our blood, life, property, our entire future, all our hope, all our means of future survival into the open jaws of the enraged enemy—that is madness! Nature itself shudders at such sacrifices, the heart and the mind shudder at them. Today, it is impossible to speak about all our projects focused on educating peasants, and improving industry and agriculture. The possibility of all such undertakings has been closed off, possibly for ages.⁶²⁸

628 Ludwika Hipolita Plater, “Listy z Inflant Polskich” [Letters from Polish Livonia], 3/15 April 1863, *Przegląd Poznański*, vol. 36 (1863): 221–222. Ludwika Hipolita Plater also wrote a drama about the Uprising: *Dramat bez nazwy: obraz sceniczny w pięciu aktach, na tle wypadków roku 1863* [Drama Without a Name: A Theater Piece in Five Acts, Against the Background of the Events of 1863] (Krakow: Księgarnia Katolicka Wł. Miłkowskiego, 1893). In creating portraits of her relatives, and of herself, she shows a conflict within the family where passionate sons plot while concerned women try to stop them from taking irresponsible steps. The mother of Juliusz, the main conspirator, even considers whether to ask the gendarmes to arrest him, which could prevent him from engaging in this “wretched whirlpool.” The Uprising is evaluated negatively mostly because of the conflict between national and local interests. In *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands] (p. 202) Manteuffel mistakenly attributes this drama to Kazimierz Bujnicki.

The writer's doubts are not a result of unstable or suspect patriotism, of which the Livonians were often accused in the Commonwealth, nor are they solely the result of concern for the wellbeing of relatives (the letter was written before the action for which Leon Plater paid with his life). The split is a result of two mutually exclusive patriotisms: a local and a national one. Ludwika Plater's words show despair caused by the lost opportunities for reforms, which were advocated by Kazimierz Bujnicki and others, and which, as one can see, gained adherents in the ranks of Polish-Livonian aristocracy. The true drama of this episode was not limited to the risk of losing property or even losing one's life; the entire community was disappearing into the "open jaws of the enraged enemy." In 1863, Livonian Polishness was losing both the regional and the national aspects of its cultural identity. There was a disintegration of all the frameworks of all the discourses around which local identity constituted itself. Plater was most disappointed when she recognized the breakdown of religious bonds, and saw the full unveiling of the dark, hostile face of those who seemed to be part of the Polish-Livonian community.

It is not so much about the Muscovites, who are robbers by nature. It is their old craft; but the fact that the worst devil has possessed our Latvian Catholics—that is cause for weeping day and night. There is no conscience or fear of God, instead there is a frightening mixture of arrogance and Pharisee mentality. Sacrilege was committed, the Holy Host was denigrated, priests were attacked, beaten, and bound, people spat in their faces and insulted them, and if anyone dared to chide these godless men, they loudly answered: We no longer need priests—the Tsar will send Orthodox priests our way!⁶²⁹

The multinational Livonian community bound together by Polish culture turned out to be an illusion, and this was mercilessly displayed for the author exactly at this time. The adjective was erased from the name "Polish Livonia"; half a century later another upheaval would also wipe out the noun.⁶³⁰

We have already discussed cultural readings of Manteuffel's works, but this does not exhaust his literary activity. He devoted his early works to Livonian folklore, or rather, to be more precise, to writing down folk songs collected in local villages; thanks to this, to this day Latvians consider him to be one of the

629 Ibid., 224.

630 Many echoes of the January Uprising appear in Polish-Livonian literature, especially in poetry written for special occasions, and published in Polish-language periodicals in Latvia. Agnieszka Durejko's anthology *Polskie wiersze znad Dźwiny* [Polish Poems from the Daugava] contained a useful overview of these, see especially: Jerzy Manteuffel's *Obrazek z powstania 1863 roku* [A Picture from the Uprising of 1863], Kazimiera Iłakowiczówna's *Puste miejsce* [Empty Place], and Czesława Chądzyńska Fiszer's *Weteranom 1863 roku* [To the Veterans of 1863].

founders of their literary language.⁶³¹ He published calendars, prayer books, educational brochures, and fragments of the Bible in this language; he also translated government documents on the emancipation of serfs, and he was thus carrying out the positivist program of turning away from national problems to social ones. His interest in the culture of Latgallian peasants seemed to be marked by attempts to make up for the centuries-long Polish landed aristocracy's negligence of their serfs. It was also a way of repeating certain culture-creating models of the Baltic Germans, who, throughout the 19th century, sought to find a new identity by creating a community that included Latvians and Estonians (see Chapter 1). One aspect of this search consisted in the proliferation of ethnographic, regional, and linguistic field studies, i.e., studies in places which had heretofore been excluded from science. Among the German Balts, this work was initiated by Johann Christoph Brotze; his impressive *Sammlung verschiedener livländischer Monumente* [Collection of Various Livonian Monuments] is only now gaining recognition among scholars, two hundred years after it was written.⁶³² When Manteuffel set out to conduct his folkloric research with Celina Plater, he was imitating fashionable tendencies in humanities research methodology, while also marking a certain presence, pointing to the object of investigation at a time when this object was dying in an historical, political, and cultural sense.⁶³³

631 See Henrihs Strods, "Gustaw Manteuffel (Manteuffel-Szoege, 1832–1916), życie i twórczość" [Gustaw Manteuffel (Manteuffel-Schoeoe, 1832–1916): Life and Works], in *Kultura polska na Łotwie* [Polish Culture in Latvia], ed. Jarosław Sozański and Ryszard Szklennik, 41–48.

632 Johann Christoph Brotze, "Sammlung verschiedener Livländischer Monumente" [A Collection of Various Livonian Artifacts] in *Zimejumi un apraksti*, (parallel title: *Aufzeichnungen und deren Beschreibungen*) [Drawings and their Descriptions], by Johann Christoph Brotze, (Riga: Zinātnē, 1992–2007). The fourth volume (Riga 2007) also includes Polish-Livonian territories (Polnisch-Livland).

633 Stefania Ulanowska followed Manteuffel's folklore research; she is the author of perhaps the strangest book in Polish-Livonian literature. Her *Łotysze Inflant polskich* [Latvians of Polish Livonia] is not a geographic booklet, but simply a collection of Latgallian folk sayings, which vary widely, which are not organized in any discernible way, and published in a bilingual parallel edition. The subtitle *Obraz etnograficzny* [An Ethnographic Picture] points to the author's intention to provide a descriptive synthesis of some sort, but this intention is not confirmed by the voluminous and almost entirely unedited folkloric material (both scholarly and literary editing is lacking). The three-volume publication can, however, be used in studying the Latgallian language, amateurishly presented by the author with its Polish translation. See Stefania Ulanowska, *Łotysze Inflant polskich, a w szczególności gminy wielońskiej, powiatu rzeżyckiego: obraz etnograficzny* [Latvians of Polish Livonia, and Especially Those of

The 1869 song collection entitled *Lettische Volkslieder gesammelt in der Gegend von Kraslaw im Dünaburgschen...* [Latvian Folksongs Collected in the Vicinity of Kraslava in Dyneburg County] was the fruit of Manteuffel's folkloric passions; it was first published in "Magazin der lettisch-literarischen Gesellschaft" [Journal of the Latvian Literary Society] and reprinted in Polish, in a collection dedicated to Adam Mickiewicz, 30 years later.⁶³⁴ In the introduction, which was added to the Polish edition, the author revealed his emotional relationship to the subject, while simultaneously showing a tendency to poeticize and provide uncommon comparisons:

When we enter the forest on a bright summer day, our sight is struck by an overabundance of transparent dewdrops, charmingly attached to the needles and leaves of trees, to bushes and flowers, grass and weeds. In places where reflections of the summer sun illuminate these drops, they glow with all the colors of the rainbow, and you might say that thousands of rubies, emeralds, and sapphires were hung about, and the grass was covered by a silver-pearly net. (...) Just as the morning dew adorns forests in lavish vestments, and gives magnificent beauty even to many small dry branches, so the folk song elevates, adorns, and sanctifies, as it were, the life of the Latvian people, to such an extent that we would seek it in vain among other communities.⁶³⁵

the Vilani and Rezekne Counties: An Ethnographic Picture], vol. 1–3 (Krakow: Nakładem Akademii Umiejętności, 1891–1895).

- 634 "Lettische Volkslieder gesammelt in der Gegend von Kraslaw im Dünaburgschen von Comtesse Celine Plater und in der Gegend von Dritzan im Rositenschen von Gustaw Manteuffel" [Latvian Folksongs Collected in the Vicinity of Kraslava in Dyneburg County by Countess Celine Plater and in the Vicinity of Driceni and Rezekne by Gustaw Manteuffel] in *Magazin der lettisch-literarischen Gesellschaft* 14, no. 2 (1869): 162–206. In his *Bibliografia inflancko-polska* [Polish-Livonian Bibliography] Manteuffel refers to this small collection as "the most important contribution to local folklore" (22). This work appeared in Polish in the volume *Z ziemi pagórków leśnych z ziemi łąk zielonych: książka zbiorowa poświęcona pamięci Adama Mickiewicza w stuletnią rocznicę jego urodzin 1798–1898* [From the Land of Wooded Hills, from the Land of Green Meadows: A Collective Work Devoted to the Memory of Adam Mickiewicz, for the Centennial of his Birth 1798–1898] (Warsaw: Gebethner i Wolf, 1899), as a text attributed to Gustaw Manteuffel and entitled "Łotwa i jej pieśni gminne" [Latvia and its Folk Songs] (pp. 166–260).
- 635 Manteuffel had a weakness for dew as poetic inspiration, which is attested to by his early 1862 text entitled "A Dewdrop"; it remained in manuscript form, and it was built on the parallel between the fleeting existence of the dewdrop which hangs from a blade of grass, and the fragility of human life: "I felt an inexpressible desire, some unstoppable attraction and longing for everything which is grand and lofty, but I simultaneously felt how meager and impoverished all my previous activity has been in every realm!" I would like to thank Mr. and Mrs. Tomasz and Anna Szarota for allowing me to consult this manuscript.

Manteuffel's actual goal, however, as in his historical texts, is to demarcate the boundaries of a certain cultural whole. In the extensive critical introduction to remarks about folk poetry, he once again delineates the region, this time placing emphasis on the Latvian perspective. The principle of preservation through repetition is at work here, as Manteuffel relies heavily on his previous texts, especially *Inflanty Polskie* [Polish Livonia] and *Listy znad Bałtyku* [Letters from the Baltic], and his many tourist brochures, sometimes pasted in their entirety (e.g. *Ślupi Róg* [Staburags]).

Another imperative is at work here as well, however, and it prompts the author to emphasize connections between Latvian (and especially Latgallian) culture and Poland. The extensive historical-ethnographic introduction ends with the evocation of the works of Napoleon Orda, who made sketches and painted portraits of Livonian ruins, and with a reminder about Manteuffel's own brochures; the whole work, in turn, ends with a poem about witches and commanders in Wolkimbork, written by Marian Manteuffel (Gustaw's nephew).⁶³⁶ On the one hand, our historian constructs his own version of Latvian history; on the other, however, he denies the value of Latvian historical writing, and relies on German and, above all, Polish texts in his analysis.⁶³⁷ He imposes a certain cultural filter onto his narration, an *ideological hologram*, which can be found in most of his texts. It is a sign of a given topic's belonging to culture, the appropriation of facts by national interest, whose diligent representative he

636 Marian Manteuffel (1871–1941)—an economist, bank director, author of finance essays; he also wrote literary texts in his youth. He is, among other things, the author of *Statyści* [Extras], Biblioteka Dzieł Wyborowych 254 (Warsaw, 1902), a novel about Polish youth in the knightly student corporation.

637 Manteuffel said, not without some venom, that 19th-century Latvian intellectuals were constantly striving to “artificially create a national literature in a brief period of time, wishing to quickly assimilate foreign works into it. Besides those translations of masterworks, they bring feature columns, translations of novellas and novels, mostly those with naturalist hues, as well as all kinds of mediocrities. The purpose of the former is to provide grounds for bragging about progress and the advanced civilizational level of the Latvian tribe, while the latter are there to provide the readers with unhealthy but popular nourishment.” (Manteuffel, “Łotwa i jej pieśni gminne” [Latvia and its Folk Songs], 190). This does not change the fact that Manteuffel did much to support local Latgallian culture, by publishing, among other things, *Bibliographische Notiz über lettische Schriften welche von 1604 bis 1871 in der hochlettischen oder sog. oberländischen resp. polnisch-livländischen Mundart veröffentlicht worden sind* [A Bibliographic Note about Latvian Journals Published in Latvian or in the so-called Upper-Latvian, or Polish-Livonian between 1604 and 1871], (Riga: M. Kimmel, after 1886); a copy from the *Magazin der lettisch-literarischen Gesellschaft* 17 (1886): 181–205.

imagines himself to be. This element did not appear in Manteuffel's first publication in German, which he wrote before the "patriotic" radicalization of his views. After thirty years, however, as the land's historical and cultural foundations began to disappear, the imperative to *re-create* the nonexistent land gained a new dimension. At the beginning of the 20th century, Polish Livonia was disappearing forever; the sign of its former cultural identity therefore had symbolic rather than literal meaning.

The hologram of nationalism appears in Manteuffel's texts which are dedicated to regional themes—apparently ideologically contradicting them. The contradiction is only apparent because the process of isolating Polish Livonia is tied to denying and transferring various claims to it. As Polish Livonia loses its Polish character, Manteuffel attempts to cut it off from influences which deprive it of its previous identity, especially Russian ones. Regionalism and nationalism—though they are typically contradictory—support each other in Manteuffel's texts. In his ideology, the familiarity of the native land is mixed with a proud sense of Polish patriotism; an interesting amalgam of both local and national tendencies thus arises. A good illustration of this is provided by the final sentences of a pamphlet about Piltene, which we have already encountered in a previous chapter:

At present, one should also point to the history of old Piltene as an overshadowed and abandoned history of our country. We thereby point to it in this work, providing only a rough sketch for the benefit of those who research our past, wishing to encourage them to carry out exhaustive studies.⁶³⁸

The humble pamphlet about Piltene and its archive does not, however, encourage exhaustive research; rather, it draws this "abandoned" topic and region toward Polish historiography. Manteuffel offers a new subject to historians, while simultaneously reminding them that the reader encounters the past of the Commonwealth here. He gives two competing shapes—regional and national—to indeterminate Polish-Livonian matter.

Manteuffel's other geographical monographs are also marked by a similar hologram of nationalism; these include *Lucyn w Inflantach* [Ludza in Livonia] and *Kraslava*, which we already discussed above, as well as the short history of the easternmost Polish-Livonian tract, entitled *Z dziejów starostwa Maryenhauzkiego* [From the History of the Maryenhauz Starosty]. Since, for a long time, the Maryenhauz estate belonged to the Hylzen family, Manteuffel emphasizes its relatively quick polonization, which took place along with the polonization of their name, allegedly exemplified by the Latin tombstone of a family elder:

638 Manteuffel, *Piltyń i archiwum piltyńskie* [Piltene and the Piltene Archive], 36.

The sons who erected this monument for him [Jerzy Konstanty Hylzen—K.Z.] were already fully Polish. From then on there were no German Hülsens in Polish lands, there were Hylzens, Polish-Livonian magnates, whose numerous and expanding estates grew larger not only in Polish Livonia, but also in Lithuania, Belarus, the Polish Kingdom, Courland and Pommern.⁶³⁹

The entire text is basically formulated in the framework of the discourse of regionalism; the author has chosen the history and culture of a small administrative unit in the “borderlands of the borderlands” as its main object. Patriotic interest appears almost as an aside: it is introduced into the style of this scholarly text as a barely perceptible hue, in a way that would neither irritate the censor nor alienate the reader whose national identity might have been different, since such identity was often a matter of choice in this region. In the introduction, Manteuffel deftly points to historians’ scientific prerogatives, the geographical passions of the humanities, and interest in the distant regions of historic Poland, which appeared in the newly formed cultural journals in Warsaw and Vilnius. To remain, however, within the realm of the chosen ideology, he ends the brochure with a closing formula which says that currently the Starosty is fragmented into the estates of “owners of various social classes and most varied nationalities.”⁶⁴⁰ From his perspective, the present loses the quality of wholeness, and a coherent idea of the Polishness of this region dissolves into nondescript multiculturalism. Quality turns into dullness.

In *Fluid Modernity* Zygmunt Bauman claimed that “there is little else to distinguish between nationalism and patriotism, except our enthusiasm for their manifestations or its absence or the degree of shame-facedness or guilty conscience with which we admit or deny them.”⁶⁴¹ In other words, patriotism and nationalism are based on the same feelings, and only the value signs are different. That which the author sees as the fulfillment of national duty, seems like a chauvinistic distortion from another perspective. “Nationalism A”—as Andrzej Walicki calls the “axiologically neutral,” scholarly form of nationalism—is difficult to imagine in borderland situations in the Polish Eastern Borderlands, since ethnic tensions are more conducive to the clear formulation of identity.⁶⁴² Patriotism is the positive and consolidative version of nationalism, and it is often defensive in character. When they choose their

639 Manteuffel, *Z dziejów starostwa Maryenhauzkiego* [From the History of the Maryenhauz Starosty], 33.

640 Ibid., 38.

641 Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2000), 174.

642 Andrzej Walicki, “Czy możliwy jest nacjonalizm liberalny?” [Is Liberal Nationalism Possible?], in *Znak* 3 (1997): 33; quoted in: Prokop-Janiec, *Literatura i nacjonalizm* [Literature and Nationalism], 21.

national identity, inhabitants of the borderlands simultaneously select a community and enemies, and they thus place opposite value signs on the same ideology, depending on their perspective. That is why, as we have already noted in Chapter 4, Manteuffel saw his writing as the fulfillment of a patriotic duty, while German-Livonian historians and tsarist censors saw it as a sign of Polish-Catholic nationalism.

The problem of Gustaw Manteuffel's patriotism is interesting since, as an heir of Baltic aristocracy of German descent, he was not a native Pole from an ethno-nationalist point of view. He was rather, in National Democratic categories, a half-Pole: although he was born in a land that was more or less Polish, his communal loyalty was suspect.⁶⁴³ He learned his Polishness from literature rather than absorbing it from his family. His attitude can be easily described as serving the Polish cause, affirming Polishness and protecting it from disappearance when it found itself in "besieged fortress" circumstances in the borderlands. This was demanded by the Polish ethos during the era after the 1863 uprising, and it was the expectation of the borderland Polish community, which functioned in a network of complex dependencies. By adding polonocentric accents to regional geographic literature, Manteuffel affirmed a certain model of patriotism and simultaneously stepped beyond it, crossing boundaries between belonging and separateness. Such layering of various discourses gave borderland literature a palimpsest-like character; Tadeusz Bujnicki wrote about it in a particularly interesting way:

In the eastern and northern regions of the old Commonwealth, there were processes the meaning of which cannot be contained within a strictly polonocentric "borderland" perspective. Some of these become comprehensible when we view them through the prism of (both communal and conflictual) contacts at the intersection of various national cultures and literatures, at the intersection of languages, religions, and separate forms of life. In such a situation, what is most interesting often results from the layering of these elements, often in a single work. It then has the character of a peculiar palimpsest, whose layers—not always apparent on a casual reading—become revealed once one recognizes their many sources and ambiguity.⁶⁴⁴

643 Here I rely on Andrzej Walicki's remarks about Roman Dmowski's nationalist vision concerning citizens who were born in Poland but who, in their thinking and their activities, did not fully conform to the categories of collective, i.e., Polish, morality. See Andrzej Walicki, "Dzieje antykomunistycznej obsesji" [A History of Anti-communist Obsession], in *Europa* 47 (138) (supplement to *Dziennik*), November 26, 2006.

644 Tadeusz Bujnicki, "Litwa na polskich kresach: przemiany znaczeń" [Lithuania in the Polish Eastern Borderlands: Transformations of Meanings] in *Dziedzictwo kresów – nasze wspólne dziedzictwo?* [The Legacy of the Eastern Borderlands], ed. Jacek Purchla (Krakow: Międzynarodowe Centrum Kultury, 2006), 98–99.

Manteuffel left his hologram of nationalism even in books which were to serve as tourist guides, i.e., in his detailed guides to Riga. The first of these was created as a result of the author's long-term collaboration with the so-called "Dombauerverein," a Rigan association focused on fundamental renovation of the Rigan cathedral between 1883 and 1903; its descriptions of the cathedral's artifacts could still satisfy even very discriminating specialists. These descriptions are supplemented by an interesting sketch of the relevant historical and genealogical background. In order to properly introduce the Polish reader to the subject, in the introduction Manteuffel raises his umpteenth lament about his countrymen's ignorance of matters Livonian, he undermines the authority of academic researchers, and finally motivates his reader with a positivist argument about snobbery for foreign art:

If this ancient cathedral were located in France, Belgium, or Germany, it would certainly attract Polish scholars from near and far. But one should learn about the Rigan cathedral precisely because it was located in historic Poland lands for nearly a century.⁶⁴⁵

The intersection of regional and national interests is expressed here once again. According to the author, Livonia does not enjoy adequate recognition among Poles either as a local curiosity or a component of national culture; as a result, it is losing the struggle for survival. This is why in his detailed and generally thorough description of the cathedral's artifacts, Manteuffel devotes a disproportionately large amount of space to the Tyzenhauz family, one of whose members funded the epitaph which is still there to this day. Similarly, the author emphasizes the figure of Mayor Mikołaj Ecke, in order to use his tomb as a pretext for a longer digression about the "Calendar Upheavals," which took place in Riga under Polish administration. As he does this, he enumerates many, often superfluous, pieces of information whose character is clearly patriotic. There are mentions of the Kirchholm battle, hetman Chodkiewicz and *Carolomachia*;⁶⁴⁶ there are also elements of confessional discourse, appearing in the form of reminders about Riga's Catholic character.

645 Manteuffel, *Tum ryski i jego ciekawsze zabytki* [The Rigan Cathedral and its Interesting Artifacts]. The word "tum" comes from the German "der Dom," or cathedral. Because 1904 was the year of Manteuffel's campaign to publish *Zarysy* [Sketches], a campaign which he was basically already losing, he did not deny himself the satisfaction of using the preface to point out the embarrassing mistakes of the reviewers from *Kasa Mianowskiego*. These remarks probably sealed the fate of the manuscript.

646 Wawrzyniec Bojer's *Carolomachia* (Vilnius, 1606) appears also in Manteuffel's *Zarysy z dziejów krain dawnych inflanckich* [Sketches from the History of Old Livonian Lands], 150 and 289, when he uses fragments from it to provide a patriotic illustration of the Battle of Kirchholm.

The convention of lament, which flows from the periphery to the center, is ascribed to Polish-Livonian literature as an inseparable prop. This rhetorical device serves four basic functions. First, it elevates the qualifications of the author in the eyes of his audience, entitling him to speak about the subject; second, it draws the reader's attention toward "familiar exoticism"; third, it is a declaration of national identity; and finally, fourth, it isolates the author and the object as *differentia specifica* in both a local and global order. Through the rhetoric of lament, Manteuffel attempts to include in broader culture that which he perceives as absent and worthy of being made present.

The second Rigan guide was envisioned as a handy guidebook for Polish tourists, and the publisher's main goal was to correct falsehoods created by German historians, who "are nearly systematically silent about everything which would remind Poles coming to visit this land that it had (...) once belonged to Poland."⁶⁴⁷ The historical introduction reveals the author's intentions, since the seven-hundred-year-long history of Riga receives four pages, and the same number of pages is devoted to the city's Polish episode. A whole series of digressions in the text are devoted to Polish figures, publishing houses, and associations, and also to the glorification of the time when Riga was under Catholic rule. Two references concern the disfiguration of the Church of St. Peter, perpetrated by Protestants who were attempting to "erase the original impression which this once magnificent Catholic church must have made."⁶⁴⁸ The book as a whole introduces us as much to Riga's tourist attractions as to Gustaw Manteuffel's patriotic discourse, where the scrupulousness of the region's researcher is subordinated to Polish-Livonian ideology.

The designation of regional ideology as a hologram of nationalism is not restricted exclusively to Livonian culture; it belongs to borderlands reality and its discourses in general. The situation of a "besieged fortress," and a "bastion of Polishness," which called for defense and for an unambiguous patriotic attitude, simultaneously ruled out the attitude of friendliness and understanding toward other perspectives. Poles who lived in the eastern borderlands and practiced a joyful local and national patriotism often did not realize how tendentious—and perhaps even offensive—their perspective was to others. Let us take the words of Tadeusz Łopalewski as an example; they were most likely written with the best of intentions, and love for the native landscape:

During the two-centuries-long rule of the Jagiellonian family, Europe witnessed one of the strangest historical processes, when by the will of these monarchs an ever

647 Manteuffel, *Przewodnik po Rydze i jej okolicach* [A Guide to Riga and the Surrounding Area], V.

648 *Ibid.*, 39.

closer unification of Lithuania and Poland took place, ending finally with the memorable achievement of the Lublin Union, and the ever deeper polonization of the lands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Through natural evolution, and as a result of close coexistence, belligerent Lithuania surrendered to the charm of Polish culture, which extended its reach into the northern and eastern regions without rape and plunder, but only by means of its spiritual superiority.⁶⁴⁹

In this mixture of regionalism and nationalism, one can find the most important ideological elements of Polish colonialism in the East, and the fears and pangs of conscience of the invaders, who felt guilty of the “rape and plunder,” which they so vehemently denied. The multi-perspectival history of Eastern Europe teaches us that the picture is much more complicated, and passionate adherents of Łopalewski’s thesis should be referred to the recently published *Kultura Wielkiego Księstwa* [The Culture of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania], written by Lithuanian historians.⁶⁵⁰ The Livonian case differs from the Lithuanian one only in that its ethnic and cultural context fell apart and the weak identity of Polish Livonians lost its regional referent. Gustaw Manteuffel’s writing bristles with various discourses and their detailed analysis would require a separate study. In his works, we undoubtedly encounter literature which does not conform to divisions between referential and aesthetic texts, and which is made dynamic by inner tensions among various ideologies; we encounter literature which is both tendentious and honest about its object. The contradictions which co-create it, paradoxically also make it accurate and allow it to adequately grasp the specificity of the region where all lack of ambiguity was equivalent to tendentiousness. A single, specific perspective, assumed for the purposes of satisfying the needs of a concrete text was subordinated to ideology, and it presumed a transaction within the framework of the selected discourse. The gain to be derived from this was the undermining of the other’s point of view, multiplication of referents and their associated communities, negation of the dominance of others, and, above all, affirmation of one’s own identity. Above

649 Tadeusz Łopalewski, *Między Niemnem a Dźwiną: ziemia wileńska i nowogrodzka* [Between Neman and Daugava: The Vilnius and Novgorod Region] (Warsaw; Krakow: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1990), 8. First published in Poznań: Wydawnictwo Polskie [R. Wegnera], 1938.

650 Vytautas Ališauskas et al., eds., *Kultura Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego: analizy i obrazy* [Culture of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania: Analyses and Images] (Krakow: Universitas, 2006). Several dozen Lithuanian authors present the multinational culture of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in such a way as to avoid theses about the domination of Polish culture at all costs. From their point of view—typical for Lithuanians—the Lublin Union was one of the most tragic events in the history of Lithuania, and it was equivalent to the loss of independence.

all, however, the contradictions reveal the historian's and ethnographer's helplessness in the face of the disappearance of the object of investigation.

Over the course of several decades of Gustaw Manteuffel's writing, one can see how with the passing of time, scientific terseness and restraints in ideological matters gave way to growing partiality, and how from an orderly collector of local curiosities who was ready to heed the censor, Manteuffel changed into a fighting Polish-Livonian ideologist; this change was crowned by a court trial and a subsequent week of imprisonment in 1911, resulting from the book about the "former Dorpat University." As his sense of defeat grew, Manteuffel strengthened his ideological tendencies, which earned him the reputation of not so much a brave borderlands patriot as a harmless eccentric. His death in 1916 was also a symbolic end of the Polish story about Livonia.

7. Picturesque: Or, The Charms of the Daugava

In his characterization of the plethora of scenic images in German-Livonian literature, Armin von Ungern-Sternberg pointed to the fact that attachment to the landscape is almost never associated with realistic tendencies, and such images are constructed only from *topoi*.⁶⁵¹ In its local dimension, space consists of "small districts," which do not contain references to a center.⁶⁵² In creating native landscapes, Livonian writers rely on easy sentimental clichés, and create stereotypical rather than typical images of the territory, which supposedly lies at the core of their individual attachment. Ungern-Sternberg explicitly asserts that German-language literature of the Baltic region has so little specificity that one can practically not find any differentiating features in it—unlike what one finds in the case of, for example, Bavaria or Alsace. The mythical space of the "Baltikum" becomes so tightly sealed in its specificity that it becomes ungraspable, untranslatable into other local experiences. The author concludes that the Baltic space "loses its membership among the regions of German literature's narration."⁶⁵³ In other words, the long-established tendency to emphasize specificity leads to isolation, to a breach in communication with what is not local, and the disappearance of a shared cultural code. German-Baltic literature was unable to work out its distinctive characteristics, which should be understood as the inability to mark local otherness in the framework of a larger community. From the large number of literary texts connected to that region one

651 Ungern-Sternberg, *Erzählregionen* ["Regions of Narration"], 164.

652 "Der baltische Raum ist in 'seiner' Literatur mithin ein Raum der kleinen Kreise," [In its Own Literature, the Baltic Space is a Space of Small Provinces], *ibid.*, 169.

653 *Ibid.*, 829.

cannot isolate something called “German-Livonian literature” not because there is no convergence among these texts, but because it is impossible to draw sensible boundaries of this phenomenon, i.e., to differentiate between “Livonian” and “non-Livonian” works. To summarize, despite countless literary works connected with this territory, Ungern-Sternberg was unable to delineate a specific and separate German-Baltic literature.

His research shows that the efforts and declarations of the authors are not sufficient to localize literature in a given space, and translation of specific experience into universal categories is also necessary. Two mutually exclusive steps have to be taken: differentiation and generalization. Regional literature should be simultaneously unique and capable of exemplifying a general pattern; untranslatable and capable of being expressed in discursive language; original and at the same time typical. This contradiction creates the dual effect of imitation and alienation. In Polish regional literature, we encounter countless plagiarized works, and more or less deft imitations of Mickiewicz, Słowacki, Krąszewski, etc., that is, imitations of artists who represent the “center.” On the other hand, we find attempts to delineate a small, domestic otherness there, one which will be utterly impenetrable and incomprehensible to outsiders. This was the essence of the paradox of “infinite corrections,” carried out by Gustaw Manteuffel, this was the core of the strangeness and scholarly indefiniteness of *Rubon*; it was also the basis of the unintended anachronism of Kazimierz Bujnicki’s prose. Attempts were made to simultaneously *fit in* and *stand out*, to *sign into* the community while simultaneously *signing out* from it; to be both Polish and Livonian. In this splitting of intentions one should also look for the causes of the shapelessness of Polish-Livonian poetry, where individual experience of a specific place clashed with accepted norms of literariness.

The discourse of sentimentalism arises from man’s contact with landscapes. A landscape, however, is not something one encounters in the external world, but something that consists of the awareness of perceived objects. Man creates landscapes in accordance with the existential need for rootedness, for connection with one’s environment, and the affirmation of one’s identity. That is why writing in the framework of discourse of sentimentalism essentially consists not of realistic genre images, but of ready-made emotions transformed into literary clichés. The concept of a “cliché” provides a good illustration of the connection between the individuality of experience and the generality of literary devices—the feeling is one’s own but the means of expression is typical. Hence so many un-individualized poetic creations in borderlands literature, creations which seem to be inept imitations of great works, and which are simultaneously saturated with the subject’s intimate, individual contact with space. One could say that in sentimental picturesque “authentic” feelings are presented in “artificial” literary forms.

To get to what Derek Attridge calls “the singularity of literature,” it is necessary to pierce through the layers of general literariness, and reach toward individual experience, impressed somewhere on the sentimental cliché and hidden under stereotypes.⁶⁵⁴ The borderland picturesque—banal in its derivative literary qualities—has a skeleton built from authentic experiences of the local space, made of images and needs. In the Freudian-Heideggerian perspective of the *heimlich–unheimlich* opposition, the literary cliché corresponds to the intentional familiarization of the surroundings, which, within experience, appear as both one’s own and dangerous. In the borderlands, the relationship between the I and the place remains ambivalent, un-pacified, thrown off balance. Its record in the picturesque constitutes an attempt to pull it into the realm of a larger community (of language), but this operation never reaches a calm end; there remains a tension which is irremovable and thereby close to the existential anxiety of being “thrown into a world” or “not-being-at-home.”⁶⁵⁵ The discourse of sentimentalism in borderland literatures is permeated by the will to tame “uncanniness” (*das Unheimliche*), to tame precisely the very existential situation of “being in the borderlands.”⁶⁵⁶

In discussing the poems *Gercike* and *Na dąb w Inflantach* [On the Livonian Oak] we already mentioned that in Polish-Livonian literature there are strong expressions of anxiety about the foreignness of locality—of one’s own native locality, which escapes domestication and remains unfathomable. The Livonian picturesque consists of the river and forests: two signs of inaccessibility and wilderness, which organize poetic landscapes. Agnieszka Durejko has pointed this out when she created an anthology of Polish-Livonian poetry under the characteristic title *Polskie wiersze znad Dźwiny* [Polish Poems from the Daugava], which is essentially a selection of poems *about Daugava*. There are many referents to Mickiewicz and his Lithuanian romanticism there, and specifically to one poem, as **Tadeusz Łada Zabłocki’s** *Do Dźwiny* [To Daugava] clearly suggests:

Rodzinna rzeko! ileż lat ubiegło,
 Gdy nad twym brzegiem dumał raz ostatni;
 I złożył jadąc w krainę odległą
 Na twojej fali pocałunek bratni.
 (...)

654 Derek Attridge, *The Singularity of Literature* (London; New York: Routledge, 2004).

655 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 233.

656 Michał Paweł Markowski writes precisely and accurately about this Heideggerian notion of *das Unheimliche* as “foreignness within our own selves” in his work about Gombrowicz’s existential angst entitled *Czarny nurt: Gombrowicz, świat, literatura* [A Black Current: Gombrowicz, World, Literature] (Krakow: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2004), 80–82.

[Native river! How many years have gone by,/Since I last sat on your banks, lost in thought;/And, leaving for distant lands/I gave a brotherly kiss to your waves.]

Wszystko to przeszło!... tzy me tylko płyną,
Czemuż, o serce, nie stwardziałoś moje?
Czemuż pełnego nadziei, o Dźwino!
Mnie nie połknęły bystre nurty twoje?

[All that is gone!... only my tears are falling,/Why did you not harden, my heart?/Why did your swift waters, oh Daugava!/Not swallow me up, so full of hope?]⁶⁵⁷

Like many other poems in the collection, this poem clearly points to Mickiewicz's sonnet *To the Niemen River* ("Niemen, the river of my home!"), but this claim does not have much interpretive use, except to say that the individual is here hidden under the typical. The young poet's reckoning with his own past is based on a personification of the river as witness and guard of childhood. The only thing worth mentioning here is the fact that the act of saying farewell to the place of one's birth, symbolized by the native river, appears in nearly every poem in the anthology. The river is a witness of departure, loss, the accident of life, impermanence, un-fulfillment—in short: of existential anxieties. In his attempt at a "river elegy," **Antoni Kruman** addresses a request for remembrance directly to Daugava:

Jeszcze może upłynąć lat i miliony,
Jeszcze niejeden widok przed tobą zabłyśnie;
Ty jesteś nieśmiertelną, a mnie śmierć uściśnie:
Pomnijże, jakem w brzegu twym siedział zdumiony.

[Millions of years may still go by,/You may yet see many a view;/You are immortal and I will be oppressed by death:/Remember how I sat on your banks, lost in thought.]⁶⁵⁸

Here, the parting is both literal and symbolic. The poet leaves the land of his childhood, his own place, a mythical referent—but he also leaves a concrete territory, signed with the name of the river. The individual experience of a place (in this case of Belarusian Polotsk) faintly shines through the Mickiewicz-like cliché, it is faintly drawn, embedded into many similar attempts, sentenced to defeat up front, as it were, by its choice of poetic form. Cases where poets are conscious of the elusiveness of this experience are more interesting:

Zwodnico!... dla każdego chłodnie przymilona,

657 Agnieszka Durejko, *Polskie wiersze znad Dźwiny* [Polish Poems from the Daugava] (Wrocław, 1994), 25–26.

658 *Ibid.*, 29.

A przecież zawsze tęskna! powiedz, ulubiona,
 Jaka myśl tak potężnie pierś twą okowała,
 Że ty głosów nie baczysz, ni lutni zabieg,
 Choć te nieraz cię chciały ukołysać w biegu?

[Oh, deceiver!... Coolly favorable to everyone,/And yet always longing! Say, beloved,/What thoughts preoccupy your heart with such power./That you do not pay heed to voices, or efforts of the lute,/Even though they often wanted to lull you to sleep, even in your movement?]⁶⁵⁹

As are cases when they seek to find the resistance of matter and they encounter alienation, behind which there hides inauthenticity, not to say betrayal:

Myśl wszakże, pomna głosek, owego imienia,
 Co kochanek, lud znikły, twemu nadał stoku,
 Myśl odtąd drugich imion już nie chce uroku:
 Brzegom tylko powierza starej nazwy brzmienia! –
 A brzegi, co nawykły żalom wtórzyc skrycie,
 (...)
 Wciąż wołają za tobą: Daugava! Daugava!...

[Thought, however, mindful of the sound of that name,/Which the lover, a people which have disappeared, gave you,/Thought no longer wants the charms of other names:/It only entrusts the sounds of the old name to the banks! – /And the banks, used to echoing sorrows secretly/(...)/Still call out to you: Daugava! Daugava!...]⁶⁶⁰

The author of this poem, published in the third volume of *Rubon*, is the author of *Gercike*, **Michał Borch**, and, as in *Gercike*, fear of the unknown also echoes here. In this persistent placement of Daugava at the very center of poetic interests, there is something of the pagan cult of a local deity, something which can be seen as an ethnological fascination, but also as solidarity with the original inhabitants of this land (they are the ones calling out the river's Latvian name). And the problem of identity thus returns once again. By evoking a foreign name of the deity, the poet points to impassable limits of language, and marks the inexpressibility of what seems most important to him in his experience of the river. The Daugava motifs—both local and foreign—are not arranged into a sensible, i.e., friendly, landscape; the place does not submit to domestication, and intimacy is exposed to the influence of the “uncanny” (*unheimlich*).

659 Ibid., 21.

660 Ibid., 22.

8. Olga Daukszta: The Eyes of Daugava's Loam

This menacing feature of the sentimental landscape became one of the dominant motifs in the poetry of **Olga Daukszta** (1893–1956), who was perhaps the most Livonian of all Polish women poets. Agnieszka Durejko calls her the “bard of Daugava and Livonia,” mostly because of the title of her first volume of poetry *Dźwina o zmierzchu* [Daugava at Twilight], which appeared in 1930.⁶⁶¹ Yet her Livonianness begins already in her national declaration, which is as complex as the land itself:

I am neither Russian, nor Orthodox Christian, as some think. I am a Catholic baptized in a Rigan church (...). My last name is Samogitian or Tatar (...), I think that I am at peace with my name and my last name, though there are fewer Vikings and Prussians here, but Samogitians, Yotvingians, and Tatars dominate... Though I, too, have slanted eyes, a broad back, and a small stature (...). In my family there is no lack of respectable Polish and German names (...). I write in Polish, and I like Poles because they have always been good to me, which I cannot say about other nations, which life put in my path.⁶⁶²

Here Daukszta emphasizes that the Polish identity and writing in Polish were her choice, which was typical in borderland situations. She was born in Riga and attended Polish schools there, including Emilia Lichtarowicz's famous boardinghouse, where she gained linguistic agility and literary refinement. Her denial of Russianness has an interesting context: toward the end of her life, when she lived in Dyneburg, she wrote requests to work in Russia; they were unsuccessful and she died, in dire poverty, in 1956. Her creativity did not register in Polish culture, like all of Livonia, and there was even less room for her in the Soviet Latvian Republic.

It seems that thanks to her inner independence and her strong embeddedness in Livonian identity, Daukszta avoided the constant affirmation of communal identification, typical among most borderland writers. The above declaration of her membership in Polish culture is also its own negation since Daukszta refers to Poles as “they,” the friendly colonial masters. Her awareness seems to arise strictly from the centuries-long Baltic experience where there was no room for unambiguous ethnic identification, and where “local” mentality was much more prominent. Her poetry bears the very markers of this localness and it is closely inscribed into the Livonian landscape. It is severe, like the land itself: gray, unfriendly, with a menacing river in its midst:

661 Durejko, *Polskie życie kulturalne i literackie na Łotwie w XX wieku* [Polish Cultural and Literary Life in Latvia in the 20th century], 202.

662 Kazimierz Andrzej Jaworski, *W kręgu Kamieny* [Around Kamena] (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Lubelskie, 1965), 131–132.

Inflanty – kraj sosen spalonych wśród piasków,
 ład ptaków przelotnych, wrzosowisk i lasków.
 Szum lodów wiosennych z Wałdajskiej wyżyny
 i pomruk przekorny burzliwej w dzień Dźwiny.

[Livonia – a land of burnt pines among the sands/A land of fleeting birds, moors and
 little forests,/The crackling of spring ice from the Valdaian uplands/And the
 contrary growl of Daugava, turbulent by day.]

Kraj szary, siermiężny, ciąg wichrów z wybrzeża
 morskiego i tęsknot za dałą, ostrożność rubieża,
 przewrotna pokora i piaskiem zawiana
 głąb ziemi gorącej, jak serce wulkana,⁶⁶³

[A gray land, coarse, the draft of winds from the shore/Of the sea and longing for
 the distance, caution of the frontier,/Contrary humility, windblown/The depths of the
 hot earth, like the heart of a volcano,].

Dauksza operates with picturesque which is not very sentimental, she is more concerned with constructing a severe, and in some sense even a threatening landscape (burnt pines, turbulent Daugava) than with the evocation of easy kitsch. The bond with the surroundings exists on such a deep level of feeling that it is represented not by a sense of emotional elation but rather by a rough, repulsive coarsening. Only once the landscape is individualized in this way, does the subject establish its identity within it, as if either through the contrariness or discouragement of others, the poet wanted to take the landscape as a whole for herself: “I nigdzie piękniejszym się niebo nie zdaje/ wśród deszczów gwiazdzistych, jak w szarym tym kraju” [And nowhere does the sky seem more beautiful/among starry rains, than in this gray land].

A confirmation of this strategy of “disfigurement” can be found in the poem *Dźwina*, which starts with the following words: “Nie jest rzeką wierną, lecz zmienną, zazdrosną,/ Piękno swe ukrywa pod świtką z samodziału” [She is not a faithful river, but an inconstant, jealous one/ She hides her beauty under a homemade peasant’s shirt]. The topos of initiation, with which we are quite familiar by now, appears here as well: the beauty of the river can be recognized only by those able to see it under deceiving veils, i.e., those who are from here, who regularly interact with her, and experience her treacherous caprices. Its beauty is engaging, dangerous, and significant, like the charm of a cunning witch from a fairy tale. The river—which represents the land—is most threatening to its admirers:

663 “Inflanty” [Livonia] in Durejko, *Polskie wiersze znad Dźwiny* [Polish Poems from the Daugava], 82.

Otworzy szkarłatne zamki na dnie. Uderzy w dzwony.
 I zbrzydnie ci wszystko oprócz niej na ziemi,
 jak kamień na jej brzegu staniesz w nią wpatrzony,
 niepotrzebny nikomu na świecie i na zawsze niemy.⁶⁶⁴

[She will open crimson castles in the riverbed. She will ring the bells./And everything on earth, except her, will seem ugly to you,/Like a stone on her banks, you will stand gazing into her,/Not needed by anyone in the world, and forever mute.]

Among the ideologies of representation, which stand at the basis of all culture-creating activity, there is the principle of transaction. The work exposes itself to reading, while its value is determined by the extent and type of reception it receives, or, to put it differently, by its causal power in a given cultural circuit. In this sense, the picturesque, which relies on ready-made artistic solutions that are already recognized and active, translates individual emotional experience into general literary models, and, of course, it thereby suffers an ideological defeat. Polish-Livonian poets imitate Mickiewicz and they lose, as a copy loses against the original, and the individual, moreover, becomes blurred and lost.

Dauksza chose the opposite path. Culture is a network of transactions, but the feelings which stand at the source of poetry are non-transactional. The love for a wild, provincial landscape which is unknown to anyone cannot be translated into anything else; the Daugava draws one in and causes one's demise—and poetry provides no models for conveying this intensely intimate experience. It can barely mark its strangeness and seek, unsuccessfully, for ways of escaping. The language in which the poems are written is Polish, but this is where their Polishness ends, since the experience itself cannot be translated into styles available in this language. And so Dauksza writes a non-Polish, originally Livonian poetry—in Polish.

One of her strangest poems is *Il dźwiński* [The Daugava Loam], which starts with the words: “Najgorsze są takie oczy jak dno naszej Dźwiny” [The worst kind of eyes are those like the bottom of our Daugava], where the mutual permeation of the landscape, emotions, and thoughts reaches nearly psychedelic confusion:

Strzeż się tych oczu zielono-złoto-szaro-piwnych:
 w nich szał dźwińskiej wody, gdy się kruszą lody
 wezbrane, gwałtowne; stopione w nich rozbójnicze grzywny,

[Beware these green-golden-gray-hazel eyes:/in them there is the madness of Dźwina's waters, where the ice breaks/overflowing, rapid; robbers' coins melting in them,]

664 “Dźwina,” *ibid.*, 84.

za które przepite – młodość, miłość, talent i dola.
 Dlatego ta woda tak pali; zmartwychwstają zale.
 Uciekaj od tych oczu w szerokie, wielkie pola!

[For this, all was spent – youth, love, talent, and fortune./That is why this water burns like this; sorrows get resurrected./Escape these eyes into the wide, huge fields!]⁶⁶⁵

This fragment is like a lens which focuses the fundamental components of Livonian mentality; not Polish-Livonian, Latvian-Livonian, or German-Livonian, but precisely Livonian: not fully specified, constructed on sorrow, deception, madness, defeat, and escape. Perhaps this local existential experience can be best captured through the word “curse,” which contains the whole fatalism of unwanted but true love:

Inaczej... – zamiast wina, miłości... Jeśli świat ci miły,
 nie trzeba marzyć, bo może się zdarzyć:
 z oczu tych, jak z dna dźwińskiego, łykiesz tylko iłu.

[Otherwise... – instead of wine, love... If you wish to live,/One should not dream because dreams might be fulfilled:/from these eyes as from Daugava’s bottom you will only swallow loam.]

This is what *das Unheimliche* looks like in Livonia—with the uncanniness of untranslatable fate, and the overwhelming existential picturesque. Daukszta does not attempt to meet the demands of “literariness,” she maintains her critical distance, and consciously writes poems which are closed within a hermetic local space.⁶⁶⁶ Love and the meaning of fate find their solution at the bottom of the

665 Ibid., 85.

666 Kazimierz A. Jaworski cites Daukszta’s excellent description of one of the Literary Wednesdays in Vilnius: “I attended the literary Wednesday at the [Writers’—K.Z.] Association only once. Kuncewiczowa read her feminine poems about dress, sounds, Varsovian women, roses, and officers. She was dressed in the vampire vixen style. She had some black crow on her head, something like a renaissance beret, a red rose on her black dress and bright red lipstick. The audience was packed in the room (...). The writers sat behind their table. The midget secretary [Tadeusz Szeligowski—K.Z.] was impressive in the midst of all this. I sat next to Hanka Nieławicka [poet, teacher from Dyneburg—K. Z.], a bit further away from the writers.” Jaworski, *W kręgu Kamieny* [Around Kamena], 133. It was a Literary Wednesday on May 18, 1938, where Maria Kuncewiczowa talked about the modern psychological novel, as a “theater of the soul,” and she illustrated this with fragments from *Cudzoziemka* [The Foreigner] and her unpublished works. See Jagoda Hernik-Spalińska, *Wileńskie Środy Literackie (1927–1939)* [Vilnius Literary Wednesdays (1927–1939)] (Warsaw: Instytut Badań Literackich PAN, 1998), 291. In Daukszta’s description there is distance (“further away from the writers,”) and criticism; there are no signs of an inferiority complex of a

river, there is no way of escaping either one or the other, just as one cannot abandon a place even if it is simultaneously foreign and one's own. Here, sentimental discourse is disturbed by the unsolvable puzzle of existence, intertwined with the borderland situation.

Dauksza also poetically locates elements of confessional discourse, interconnected with multicultural discourse, in the Livonian landscape; both are absorbed by the somber, Livonian picturesque. The fascination with the existential dimension of the bottom of the river continues in the poem *Dno Dźwiny* [Daugava's Bottom], which opens in an esoteric manner, like Tuwim's *Biblia cygańska* [Gypsy Bible], which Dauksza valued greatly:

Opływały kandelabry lepką stearyną,
czadem sinym ostatnie dopalają się knoty.
Świece mdleją pełganiem nad partnera łysiną,
rozwinęły się loki baronowej Szarlotty.⁶⁶⁷

[Candlesticks got covered with sticky stearin,/The last wicks are burning out with blue smoke./The candles are fainting, flickering over the bald head of her partner,/Baroness Szarlotta's curls have come undone.]

The poem has a pretend-plot of a romance that develops over a game of cards, and which leads a libertine baroness and her lover to a tragic death in the Daugava: as they cross the river by sleigh (“Życie jak wyścigi. Galopem! Galopem!” [Life like a race. Galloping! Galloping!]), the ice suddenly breaks underneath them. They are punished for losing a “chapel with a Madonna” in a game of cards, that is, for putting earthly pleasures above respect for faith, which is the truly sacred thing on earth. This faith is symbolized, however, by the Madonna whose veneration—popular in Catholicism and especially in its folk version—is not present in Protestantism. The name (written in a strange Polish-German way) and the title of Baroness Szarlotta point to her German-Baltic family line, and the dramatic end of sinful pleasures brings with it something like a moral catharsis:

Przez lód rzeki. Nad brzegiem z Madonną kaplica...
Trzask lodu, rżenie koni i w przepaść otwartą.
Z miękkiego aksamitu dno spokojnej Dźwiny
i słodsza nad pocałunek płynna woda złota,
chłodna, jak florencki marmur, jak czerwona glina,
lecz wie o tym najlepiej baronowa Szarlotta...

woman from the provinces. In Vilnius, Livonia was not a province, it was something entirely other.

667 Durejko, *Polskie wiersze znad Dźwiny* [Polish Poems from the Daugava], 86.

[Through the ice on the river. On the shore, a chapel with the Madonna.../Crashing ice, neighing horses, and into the open abyss./From the soft velvet – the bottom of calm Daugava/And fluid golden water sweeter than a kiss./Cool, like Florentine marble, like red clay./But Baroness Szarlotta knows this best...]

The juxtaposition of the chapel with the Madonna and the card game is a symbolic defeat of the religious cause. The drama plays out in a Livonian landscape, and the Daugava is the executioner—the Baltic land carries out its revenge. In this configuration of local motifs, the lyrical subject’s sympathy—expressed in the ironic treatment of aristocratic luxuries (“soft velvet” of the bottom of the river, water which is “sweeter than a kiss”)—is with the Madonna, the chapel, and the river, and so with all that is local against what is culturally foreign. Yet since Szarlotta’s name was consciously written in mixed Polish-German spelling, alienation also extends to Polish-Livonian aristocracy, most of whom had baron titles.

Daugava’s water, cool like “Florentine marble” and “red clay,” carries strange connotations. On the one hand, these images might point to the contrast between the luxury of the palace and class oppression, which hides the threat and the specter of a bloody revolution, which took place in Polish Livonia only a dozen years earlier. On the other hand, however, Florentine marble—which is the brightest kind of marble, which Michelangelo used—is white, and in combination with red clay it creates two allusions: to the Polish flag and to the earth-sky opposition. Daugava’s water, in turn, is golden, and all this thus amounts to the golden-white-red aesthetic of both Livonian palaces and... local Orthodox churches. This Livonian picturesque is very unclear and ambiguous.

Dauksza also used a baroness in another poetic image, one which explicitly referred to the sentimental genre of painting (“as if from an old English print”), and which took place in a riverside landscape. The poem *Na promie* [On a Ferry] (“Zawsze o zorzy, raz na rok, kiedy Dźwina cicha” [Always at dawn, once a year, when the Daugava is quiet]) is a shutter image of manners, an image of crossing the river by ferry, where among the local population there appears—as if from another world—“baronówna w czarnej amazonce” [a young baroness in a black riding suit], with white greyhounds; she stands out against her surroundings:

Na promie skrzypią wozy, ryczą krowy,
pieją kogutki w koszach, kłócą się przekupki
i klną pijani przewoźnicy na twarzy purpurowi.

[On the ferry carriages are creaking and cows are mooing,/Little roosters are crowing in baskets, peasant women are arguing/And drunken ferrymen are swearing, red in the face.]⁶⁶⁸

The baroness occupies a separate place on the ferry, on a small elevation, above the loud rabble; she arranges her very specific pose, as if actually posing for a painter:

Na mostku amazonka z koniem i na smyczy charty
 idą jak cień. Nikt ich nie widzi prócz starego Afonia.
 Lecz mówić o tym ludziom na promie czyż warto:
 rykną śmiechem i spłoszą baronównę i konia.

[On the bridge, a rider with a horse and greyhounds on a leash/they walk like a shadow. No one sees them except old Afoni./But should one point them out to the people on the ferry?/They would burst out with laughter and scare away the baroness and the horse.]

Olga Dauksza studied painting in Moscow; later, when she was a teacher in Dyneburg, she did some painting, as her students testify in their memoirs.⁶⁶⁹ The scene on the ferry was captured like a sketch on canvas, or a quickly painted watercolor, without extraneous details, but with thematic tension which extends in space. The painting is properly constructed, and its contours are sufficiently clear to make it possible to imagine the appropriate perspective. In essence, despite the noise, the scene is motionless, or rather it is made motionless by the haughty figure of the baroness on the bridge, and, if it were not for the ironic last line, the entire scene would fit in the discourse of cheerful sentimentalism. The burst of laughter, which breaks out precisely because it should not, destroys the harmony of the scene, while also introducing elements of social, cultural, and manners discourses into it. In her own eyes, the baroness is haughty and dignified, but from another perspective she simply appears amusing, inadequate, not fitting into the picture. She makes herself into the main theme of a scenic impression, but in reality she is an amusing dissonance, a sporadic (“once a year”) disturbance of established order. She is the one who violates the harmony of the Livonian landscape and negates its meaning.

The regionalism of Polish Livonia was most originally expressed in Olga Dauksza’s poetry, and in Polish culture, her case is characteristic.⁶⁷⁰ Her later

669 See Durejko, *Polskie życie kulturalne i literackie na Łotwie w XX wieku* [Polish Cultural and Literary Life in Latvia in the 20th Century], 202.

670 Stefan Napierski (Marek Eiger) sensed these aspects of her poetry when he reviewed *Dźwina o zmierzchu* [Daugava at Twilight], and expressed penetrating insights: “The author’s connection with the legendary Baltic soil is strong, indigenous, and tribal (...). What freshness of words and images, what natural originality of themes!” Stefan Napierski, “U poetek” [Visiting Women Poets], in *Wiadomości Literackie* 38 (1932): 3. There was, however, no place for Olga Dauksza in the somewhat feminist guide *Pisarki polskie od średniowiecza do współczesności* [Polish Women Writers between

Błękitne inicjały [Lazure Initials] (Dyneburg 1933) and *Walec kierowy* [Jack of Hearts] (Lublin 1937) do not match *Dźwina o zmierzchu* [Daugava at Twilight] in terms of the power of poetic imagery, as if lacking that essential connection with the place which structured Daukszta's debut. The poems' combined message about the land on Daugava's banks becomes readable only in this context of the local culture which determines the perspective of the subject. The absence of Daukszta's poems from contemporary Polish literature, at a time when the cultural basis of their localization is gone, proves that it is difficult to read borderland literature without its local contexts, but it proves more than that. More important is the indecipherability of certain existential projects inscribed into this literature, certain attempts to describe one's identity by means of localization—naming fate through landscape. In her imagination, Daukszta locates herself on the banks of the Daugava, at twilight, when the breathtaking colors of the sky announce what they announce always and everywhere, and yet something that is very much one's own: the quickly coming darkness. As in the poem *Refleksy zmierzchu* [Reflections of Twilight] where the I and the stranger are one:

Przed chwilą zmierzchu – na niebie purpurowe miasta,
na wodach Dźwiny – granatowe, czerwone łabędzie,
a przed progiem mego domu – z latarką niewiasta
o twarzy zakrytej wśród milczącej, ponurej gawiedzi.
(...)

[Before the moment of twilight – crimson cities in the sky./In Daugava's waters – navy, red swans./And in front of the threshold of my house – a woman carrying a flashlight/With her face covered, among a silent, somber crowd./(...)]

Podchodzę do okna... Kobieta z dala potrząsa latarką,
w szklach jej – łabędzie Dźwiny, czerwien semaforu...
Spoglądam w twarz niewieście... ta cofa się szparko...
W płachcie jej – próżnia grobów i głębia wieczoru...

[I approach my window... The woman shakes her flashlight from afar./In its glass – Daugava's swans, the redness of the semaphore.../I look at her face... she quickly backs away.../In her cloth – the emptiness of graves, and the depth of the evening...]⁶⁷¹

the Middle Ages and the Present], which, as we know, included an entry on Konstancja Benisławska.

671 Durejko, *Polskie wiersze znad Dźwiny* [Polish Poems from the Daugava], 92.

9. Kazimiera Hlakowiczówna: Kraslavan Existence

Polish-Livonian literature had its poet—**Kazimiera Hlakowiczówna** (1889?–1983)—who won renown throughout Poland. She was born in Vilnius, but she grew up with the Zyberk-Plater family on the Baltyń estate. It was near Kraslava, and her stepmother, Zofia Zyberk-Plater Buynowa, took her there. The Livonian picturesque was expressed primarily in her small 1930 volume of poems *Popiół i perły* [Ashes and Pearls], and, for obvious reasons, the land on the banks of the Daugava also appears in her memoirs *Niewczesne wynurzenia* [Untimely Surfacing] (Warszawa 1958). The Livonianness of her imagination is not just a supposition—concrete geographical names appear in many of her poems. Topography and ethnography have their individual referents, and Polish Livonia has its clear signature there. Despite this, Hlakowiczówna’s biographers are in the habit of summarizing this part of her local experience by the designation “northern Lithuania.”

Hlakowiczówna’s Livonian poems form a cycle of vignettes from everyday life, with local rivers, forests, small towns, villages, cemeteries, etc. One could arrange them into a romantic series about severe, farthest removed, nearly Scandinavian borderlands. Regionalism is introduced by names which do not disclose any information, and which sound as if they are not Polish:

Indra – wartka śród spadzistych brzegów.

Raudawizka – w łąkach ścieg przy ściegu,

[Indra – fast between its steep banks./Raudawizka – in the meadows, stitch by stitch,].

These names seem to refer to exotic rivers which—in accordance with the dominant of the Livonian picturesque—all run in the direction of the Daugava:

I pamiętam rozlew nad rozlewy,
zatonione brzegi, łąki, krzewy
i czajki wiosenne i kry, które płyną
wszystkie do Dźwiny.

[And I remember the greatest flooding,/Banks, meadows, and bushes all
underwater/And spring plovers and pieces of floating ice,/All flowing toward the
Daugava.]⁶⁷²

The poem is entitled *Moje rzeki* [My Rivers], and it also introduces experience as the foundation of the landscape, which is individualized through the use of unique and incomprehensible (meaning non-referential) names. For the uninitiated reader, there is a similar lack of a referent for proper names in the poems *Dwa kościoły* [Two Churches] (Indryca and Warnowicze), *Inwokacja*

672 Ibid., 57.

[Invocation] (Dźwińsk, Mołodeczno), *Cmentarz w Jurahowie* [Cemetery in Jurahów] (Jurahów, Baltyn), as well as Sztarnberg, Liksna, Murowanka, Przydrujsk, Ruchmany, Dorotpol, etc. Hłakowiczówna consciously constructs her poetic myth of place as a concealed, inaccessible terrain which lies somewhere “beyond.” The inhabitants of this region have also been portrayed in miniature images, in which the poet tries to capture specificity: “Starowier Wasyl z synami ośmioma/skrzypiące antonówki zsypywał na słomę” [Old Believer Wasyl with eight sons/placed creaking apples onto straw]

⁶⁷³(*Starowierzy* [Old Believers]); “wychodzili na wierch kupcy z głębokich kramów,/chwiali się na nogach cienkich” [merchants came up to the surface from deep market stands,/wobbling on thin legs] (*Kupcy w Kraslawiu* [Merchants in Kraslava]; “Kacapi jedzą powoli pod jabłonią/barszcz okazały, kapustę pełną woni,” [under the apple tree Kacaps slowly eat/sumptuous borsch, fragrant cabbage] (*Kacapi*); “Nie uwierzycie, choć wam opowiem:/żył Wacław w całym lesie, leśny człowiek” [I will tell you but you will not believe me:/Wacław lived in the forest, a man of the woods] (*Wacław*). Hłakowiczówna is not concerned with the comprehensibility and transparency of the text; she focuses on the specificity of the places and the people, seeing their independent value, which cannot be transferred into a more general, more comprehensible discourse. On the contrary: the partial indecipherability of the referents is a conscious artistic choice. She does not make any attempts to translate these local meanings into more general cultural concepts, refusing cultural translation both because of the lack of possibilities and the lack of need. We can say more: she clearly delineates the boundaries of the community for whom she writes, as, for example, in the tellingly titled poem *Nie dla obcych* [Not For Strangers]:

Ten las, ten ogród, ten dom,
te porośłe cząbrem manowce
- to nie są wiersze dla was,
to nie są wiersze dla obcych!

[This forest, this garden, this house,/These back roads overgrown with savory/-
these are not poems for you,/These are not poems for strangers!]

Stoją tu czcionki zakłete,
grządkami na stronicach,
ale ten, kto to żywcem spamiętał,
tylko ten się może zachwycić.⁶⁷⁴

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674 Ibid., 79.

[Spellbound letters stand here,/In flowerbeds on the pages,/But the one who remembers them/Is the only one who can be amazed.]

This delineation of the community unfolds on several levels, or—to use our language—in several different discourses. There are poems where the picturesque is colored by the discourse of nationalism and patriotism (e.g., *Mogila* [Grave], *Puste miejsce* [Empty Place], *Dusza księdza Budkiewicza* [The Soul of Father Budkiewicz]); there are also ones where local color also includes social tensions (e.g., *Kupcy w Kraslawiu* [Merchants in Kraslava], *Cmentarz w Jurahowie* [Cemetery in Jurahów]), national tensions, religious tensions, and so on. The short poem *Tamtejsi* [People from There] constitutes a particularly striking combination of patriotic, ethnic, confessional, social, and postcolonial discourses:

Jacyż to nasi tamtejsi?
 Bledsi, chudsi, lżejsi, mniejsi.
 Piechotą na jarmark idą,
 by ich podwiózł – proszą Żyda;
 służą starowierom jak parobcy,
 nie strzyżeni, niepiśmienni... Ciche owce!
 Tyfus ich dziesiątkuje i cholera,
 tacy byli w mym dzieciństwie... Jacyż oni teraz?
 Dzieci ich patrzą jak blade kwiatki lnu,
 psy ich zawsze wyją, skomlą – nie znają snu...
 W kościele łanem się chylą zbitym przez grad,
 ten najszcześniejszy z nich, co krzyżem padł;
 Hostia nad nim wzniesiona jaśnieje niezwykle...
 O święci, nieznanzi święci Łotwy i Litwy!⁶⁷⁵

[These our people from over there, what are they like?/Paler, thinner, lighter, smaller./ They go to the market on foot/They ask a Jew to give them a ride;/They serve Old Believers like farm boys,/With hair uncut, illiterate... quiet sheep!/Typhus and cholera kill many of them/This is how they were in my childhood... what are they like now?/Their children look on like flax flowers,/Their dogs always howl, bark – they do not know sleep.../In church they bow down like a cornfield beaten by hale,/And the happiest of them is the one who prostrated himself;/The host raised above him shines magnificently.../Oh saints, unknown saints of Latvia and Lithuania!]

Certain phrases in this poem will remain incomprehensible if in our reading we do not take into account the entire complex and difficult situation of the Polish minority in interwar Latvia. “Our people from over there” refers to the Polish-Catholic minority in Latgalia, pushed into the role of a barely tolerated ethnic and religious marginal group. Poverty and low social standing were magnified

675 Ibid., 77.

by religious tensions (“they ask a Jew,” “they serve Old Believers”) and cultural marginalization (“with their hair uncut, illiterate”). The postcolonial perspective shines through the “worseness” of Latgallian Poles described by Hłakowiczówna: the locals serve those who arrived later, a statement which is—to put it mildly—somewhat in disagreement with the facts. Interestingly, Latvian peasants were likewise represented as local and wronged by others in 19th-century literature. Various antagonistic ethnic groups used the same postcolonial discourse for the purpose of formulating complaints about foreigners.

The martyrology of the Poles in old Polish Livonia was expressed on patriotic and religious levels. It is also worth mentioning that Hłakowiczówna keeps returning to her childhood, that is, to pre-revolutionary times, and so one cannot know whether religious or national elements are dominant in her criterion of “localness.” The answer to this question would actually not provide much significant information—“the locals” are a communal referent for the subject, they are a variation of the chosen ethnic identity.

The lack of specificity of the Livonian identity, scattered and impossible to grasp, found its apogee in an inconspicuous poem entitled *O byt* [For Existence], constructed like a medieval argument about universals:

“Chcę być koniecznie nazwany!” –
 “Jesteś nieznaną” –
 “Tak, lecz me miano, skoro je wymówisz,
 podobne będzie jasnemu błyskowi,
 wywiedzie mnie z niebytu, w którym mnie zostawia
 nawet i własna pamięć”. – “Jesteś spod Krasławia.
 Nic więcej nie powiem. Będziesz w cieniu stał,
 nikomu niewiadomy, nieznajomy kształt.”⁶⁷⁶

[“I certainly wish to be named!” –/“You are unknown” –/“Yes, but my name, once you speak it,/Will be similar to a bright flash,/It will lead me out of nonexistence, in which/Even my own memory leaves me.”/– You are from around Kraslava./I will say no more. You shall stand in the shadows,/unknown to anyone, an unfamiliar shape.]

In a certain sense, this poem summarizes our reflections. Whoever comes from the vicinity of Kraslava—a once charming town located close to the meanders of the Daugava’s middle course, and belonging to the estate of the Livonian Platens—will never be able to meaningfully formulate his subjective constitution. He will remain “in the shadows,” beyond definitions that can be uttered in discursive language. The individual experience of place, familiarity,

676 Ibid., 81.

and experiencing what is one's own cannot be conveyed, and, what goes along with it, the subject of this experience does not exist. The "flash" which will lead out of existence is similar to Miłosz's epiphanies, it preserves the particular, and it is thereby inaccessible in any linguistic form.⁶⁷⁷ The pronunciation of the spell which was to summon into existence ("when you speak it") turns against the subject; it negates waiting, and takes away hope. The phrase "You are from around Kraslava" brings about the opposite of the intended effect: it disintegrates the subject, submerging it in nonexistence. The delineation of the contours of one's own existence through identification with a place is impossible, and especially in this specific case, the Livonian case, signified by the name of a small provincial town at the edge of the world. Who pronounces the spell? God? Fate? The poet herself? It does not matter much. Each of the perspectives brings the same truth—a truth which is negated, and crossed out within the "unknown" and "unfamiliar."

Naming one's place on earth provides specification and explanation, but when the Polish Livonian pronounces the name of his or her place, he or she remains in the shadows. What is more, he sinks ever more into the shadows. A spatial referent does not introduce meaning—it takes away meaning and eliminates it. All Polish-Livonian literature is a story about impossible coming into existence in this place, at the borderlands of the borderlands, on the borderlands of many cultures, where each identity is internally marked by doubt, and externally marked by the uncanny. It is also the story about a particular variation of the general existential model—man's experience of being lost in the world; a world which is subjected to domestication but which always remains dangerous, a world both close and unknown, appropriated and lost to the Other, by turns. The case of Polish Livonia is about forms of localness, which can be translated into universal truth about human beings, but do not have to be. Above all, these forms create stories about concrete people in the unique, strange cultural environment of a forgotten place. A place which is already gone.

677 On several occasions, I wrote about Miłosz's epiphanies as poetic attempts to capture the extra-linguistic experience in words. See Krzysztof Zajas, *Miłosz i filozofia* [Miłosz and Philosophy] (Krakow: Baran i Suszczyński, 1997) and "Czesław Miłosz's Biological Epiphanies," in *Wielogłos* 1 (2007).

Conclusion

The Railroad Tracks Bypassed Pasiene

This work does not constitute a complete monograph of the culture of Polish Livonia. It signals rather than exhausts various topics, many of which are still awaiting exhaustive studies. Books with titles like *History of Polish Livonia* or *Culture and Literature of Polish Livonia* are yet to be written. Here, we attempted to make a preliminary step—a constitutive step, one which delineates possible lines of investigation. This is why our fundamental goal consisted in recalling a certain historical and cultural possibility, which was marked by a few of its advocates within the realm of Polish writing, and which did not gain wider acceptance; one could say that it lost its representation. The *re-creation* of a land called Polish Livonia had to be preceded by its *creation*, by demarcation of orientation points, a search for deposits of raw material which would be useful in fashioning the object of investigation.

At the basis of this kind of search there is *experience*. Man is defined by the place, the region, by the territorially and culturally delineated space in which his mentality evolves and his perspective takes shape. In regions which we called borderland regions here, this situation exerts a particularly strong pressure on the experience of existence, which requires concretization and capturing. The place bears the marks of exceptionality, marks of a singular, essential experience, while simultaneously not allowing itself to be fully translated into the language of possible discourses of a given culture. Precisely this leftover *remainder* is the most appropriate expression of the experience, an expression beyond the communications sent out from a given space. The culture of Polish Livonia consists of voices which flow from beyond the circulation of discourses. It speaks with a double silence: silence of those who were unable to express themselves, and those who did not listen to them.

The Livonian case constitutes a specific model, a clear example of a marginal and peripheral culture, one which, in general awareness, is pushed onto the fringes of existence, and it therefore undertakes the Sisyphean work of constituting itself. Nearly all of the cultural activity of the Livonians can be reduced to the affirmation that a phenomenon named Livonia in fact exists, that this word has a referent, or, to put it differently, that representation is not empty. Their grappling with discourses testifies not only to certain scholarly and literary

ambitions, but also to the deep, fundamental need to sanction a personal, private territory as a domesticated little fatherland which is “one’s own.” This aim falls apart and becomes split into two tendencies which cannot be reconciled: the isolation of specificity and the affirmation of belonging. Hence both historiography and Polish-Livonian literature are subordinated to the same differentiating ideology, and they thus constitute different tropes in a single framework of culture-creating activity.

The construction of a cultural representation for Polish Livonia did not succeed. Testimony did not testify. The sign remained empty. In the context of Polish scholarship, just like three hundred years ago, and a hundred years ago, researching Livonian identity today is characterized as a somewhat extravagant eccentricity. As if the serious, and often also tragic, collective identity of Polish Livonians inscribed into Polish literature, contradicted the rules of belonging that are obligatory within it. Multiculturalism—important for Livonian culture not as a fashionable slogan but as a basic factor that forms awareness—evidently is not fully in accord with what we are used to accepting from the national perspective. One can draw two conclusions from this: first, that Polish Livonia will never fully come into existence as part of Polish culture, and the efforts of its writers will always remain on the margins, beyond the main field of interest, in a region ruled by underestimation, suspicion and disrespect; and second, that the history of Polish culture should be written anew, in a way that would grant a proper place to Polish Livonia with its multiculturalism, alongside several other peripheral regions. Perhaps this would allow for the neutralization of a few demons which trouble historical “Polishness.”

History is never simply given in a readymade form—it is in the process of becoming. Therefore processes of constitution, summoning to existence, differentiation, demarcation of ontological and epistemological claims, etc., never reach a conclusion. Re-creation is ceaseless creation, and its accompanying apophatic lament belongs to the arsenal of peripheral rhetoric. Scholarly and literary texts find common ground here, which can be described as a cultural project with an ideological tendency at its point of departure, and a linguistic representation at the (presumed) point of arrival. Hence both historiographical syntheses of historians as well as literary images and impressions belong to a single current, which eludes division into subjective and objective texts. To put it differently, under various configurations of discourses, the literature of Polish-Livonian regionalism hides a fundamental intention that consists in the ontological causality of the text.

The unfinished story about old Polish Livonia is still unfolding. New local patriots are still appearing in literature, and they use the specificity of an unknown region to justify their complex identity, their private Arcadian myths,

their existential sense of alienation... and their writing. In the 1970s father Leon Broel-Plater published a pretend-biographical novel *Pan Stanisław na posadzie* [Mr. Stanisław Holds an Office] in which he repeated all the basic prose qualities, which Kazimierz Bujnicki had used in his novels of manners; the entire action of the protagonist's romantic reminiscences is only a pretext for the creation of an extensive image of the history and culture of the land which was once Polish.⁶⁷⁸ The author uses a typical set of discourses, thanks to which the characteristic manner of writing about our land is preserved. The description of a reading about the Polish aspect of Livonian history, which Mr. Stanisław gave for the locals in Kraslava, could have easily come from one of Bujnicki's novels, written a century and a half earlier:

I was, however, struck by the lack of youth. Does this signify a gradual progress of indifference toward Polish national issues and problems in the distant borderlands?... If this were the case, Polishness in Livonia, systematically attacked by the tsarist government and gradually pushed out by rising Latvian nationalism, will die out almost entirely in a few decades. Only the larger manors will remain, like oases, small islands disappearing into the sea of alien surroundings.⁶⁷⁹

Here, the imperative to ontologically reinforce a disappearing culture by recording it in a literary text acts in the same way as in Bujnicki's prose, and it results in identical formal solutions. The narrator's expectations regarding "the little islands in the sea" sound troubling from the point of view of Broel-Plater himself, however, who, nearing the end of his life in London, in 1976, knew very well that there was not a single manor left in Livonia.

We can find similar writing that is both evocative and constitutive in the family memoirs *Inflanty, Inflanty...* [Livonia, Livonia...], collected by Ryszard Manteuffel-Szoego, and in Stanisław Butnicki's *Wspomnieniach Polaka z Łotwy* [Memoirs of a Pole from Latvia].⁶⁸⁰ There, one finds the same effort of taking up the Livonian cause as a duty toward a forgotten, abandoned land, which was pushed into nonexistence. In the works of each of these authors one can also perceive a sense of mission and an attempt to articulate knowledge, which is

678 Leon Broel-Plater, *Pan Stanisław na posadzie: z życia polskiego na północnych kresach przed pierwszą wojną światową* [Mr. Stanisław Holds an Office: From Polish Life in the Northern Borderlands before the First World War] (London: Broel-Plater, 1976).

679 Ibid., 61.

680 Stanisław Butnicki, *Wspomnienia Polaka z Łotwy* [A Pole's Reminiscences from Latvia], ed. Jadwiga Plewko (Lublin: Redakcja Wydawnictw Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, 1999), 19: "The corner of Latvia where I was born and spent most of my youth was located near the border, and it was very specific in terms of nationalities." In one breath, the author lists Belarusians, Latvians, Germans, Lithuanians, Russians, and Jews as his neighbors.

possessed only by the select few, and which needs to be proclaimed to the whole world. Polish Livonia thus remains a literary challenge, a historical problem, and an ontological difficulty.

These texts can be seen as examples of a general model, as instances of a peripheral borderland culture where identity difficulties experienced by a multicultural community are translated into specific cultural forms and literary themes. Here, the Polish Livonian citizen exemplifies a scattering, which is characteristic of certain borderland situations, and which is perceptible in the multiplication of the sources of one's identity, and in strong spatial determinations of that identity. He is thus the representative of a culture whose contours are vague and blurred, a culture which grapples with the problem of translating its specificity into discursive language. But Polish Livonia can also be read as a unique individual case, without generalities or transpositions into universal codes. In that case, it is a small and strange land at the edge of the world, and its citizens are attempting to tell its story to this day. But the story does not cohere.

Coda

After carrying out our reconnaissance of the terrain of old Polish Livonia with the determination of globetrotters, after a few hours of driving along a dusty, sandy road, we arrived in Pasiene. From several kilometers away we could see the spires of a baroque church towering over the tiny town right by the Belarusian border. Around it, there were a few carelessly scattered houses, some made of stone; there were also two post-Soviet kolkhoz buildings. There were almost no people. We were interested in two objects: the Benisławski palace and the baroque church in whose crypt Konstancja Benisławska was buried.

The palace building stood there in its entirety, with all its walls, ceilings, staircase, and window frames, some of which still held window panes. The park to the east, which once had a view over the Siniąja River valley, still had a few century-old trees, now surrounded by a thicket of plants and bitter weeds. On the other side, where the access alleys were still preserved, one could see enormous hearths in front of the building—a clear sign of plebeian entertainment at the gates of the manor. Someone had mowed the grass. The palace was empty and locked, but people were living in the farmers' quarters in its right wing. Evidently, the salons were still intimidating. Or perhaps they were just uncomfortable and difficult to heat in the winter. No information or guideposts were anywhere to be found.

Things were different around the church, where we waited helplessly for only a moment. We marveled at the size and the noble structure of the building, which bore the marks of extravagance in this deserted place. After a few minutes a woman emerged; she was wearing casual clothes, to put it mildly, and, in a strange dialect, which sounded like an improvised mix of Russian, Belarusian, and Polish, she offered to give us a tour. She did not have much of interest to say; a few names and local legends deprived of dates and facts, such as one usually gets from amateur tour guides. She took a long time to lead us up the hazardous stairway in the tower to the roof of the church, only to excitedly show us an opening in the ceiling, while at the same time telling us to put our ears to it and check out some acoustic phenomenon. She seemed to be very moved by the special nature of this place. Unfortunately, we could not find Benisławska's grave because of renovations. Indeed, there was scaffolding inside the church and conservation work was under way.

The guide revealed to us the great mystery of Pasiene: the town fell into decline because of fraud. When the Moscow–Riga railroad was built, the mayor of neighboring Zilupe bribed the engineers to make it go through his town and not through Pasiene, which appeared in the blueprints. To make sure that tsarist inspectors would not notice, when the station was opened, the cunning mayor ordered the placement of a sign that read “PASIENE” on the station building. This way, insignificant Zilupe grew to become the county seat, and a once impressive estate of the Borch and Benisławski families became marginalized, and fell into decline, which genuinely troubled our guide. It turned out that the fate of this place was decided not by wars, uprisings, or revolutions, not by the demons of politics and history, which created and abolished empires, but by a cunning move of a single person. The ill will of suspect individuals is responsible for the transition from magnificence into ruin. Nonexistence is the result of fraud. Railroad tracks bypassed Pasiene. Polish Livonia ceased to exist.

Appendix

Report of Research in the Latvian Academic Library and the Latvian National Library in Riga, 2005

Jakub Niedźwiedź

This report was made within the framework of the following research projects financed by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education: *The Literary Culture of Vilnius until 1655* (1 H01C 073 26) and *Polish Culture and Literature in Latvia and Belarus 1772–1940* (2 H01C 021 23)

Riga's First Printed Work

Riga came under the influence of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth during the reign of Sigismund II Augustus; it accepted the Commonwealth's political control in 1582 when King Stephan Bathory entered the city. With Moscow no longer a threat, the city's economy improved, and supported the blossoming of humanist culture. The first printed work published in Riga was the 1588 Latin panegyric dedicated to Sigismund III Vasa and Jan Zamoyski.⁶⁸¹ Poems included in the volume are typical examples of late Renaissance Latin poetry, and it is worth noting that the author, Auselmus Boccius, devotes particular attention to the humanistic education of Chancellor Zamoyski. A copy of the book can be found at the Academic Library, and it is considered one of the most valuable books in its collections. The publisher of this small volume, Nicolaus Mollinus, was a printer who came to Riga from Antwerp, and worked there until his death in 1625.⁶⁸² All volumes printed in Riga during this time come from his printing house.

681 Anselmus Boccius, *Carmen gratulatorim de serenissimi ac potentissimi... Sigismundi Tertii... in Regnum Poloniae ingressu... scriptum. Ad... Joannem Zamoiscium..., ab Anselmo Boccio, Livono*, Rigae Excudebat Nicolaus Mollinus Anno M.D.XXCIIIX.

682 See *Feodālā Rīga* [Feudal Riga], ed. Teodors Zeids (Riga: Zinātne 1978), 169.

Panegyrics for Polish and Lithuanian Politicians

A significant proportion of works created during this time was dedicated to the representatives of the Polish king, and especially to the rulers of Livonia, the General, and the Commissioners. The largest number of printed works was dedicated to Sigismund III and Jan Zamoyski. The latter was especially popular among Rigan humanists. They were impressed not only by his authority, but also by his refinement in the humanities: the Chancellor and Hetman studied in Padua where he earned the title of Doctor at the renowned university. He rescued Riga (as the closest associate of Bathory he contributed to the victory over Moscow) and provided patronage to Rigan scholars.

Daniel Hermann dedicated a paleontological poem about a frog and a lizard trapped in amber—*De rana et lacerta*—to him.⁶⁸³ Hermann, who was rector of a local humanities school, wrote about Zamoyski quite often, and it is likely that he knew him personally, and did business with him. Zamoyski is also one of the protagonists of *Stephaneis*,⁶⁸⁴ an epic poem dedicated to Stephan Bathory. In a posthumous edition of Hermann's poetry, there is a series of poems dedicated to the king and to Zamoyski, as well as many other pieces that refer to Poland,⁶⁸⁵ including the *Meditatio militis Christiani* cycle dedicated to Sigismund III.

There was much interest in the newly founded Zamoyska Academy because the Rigan Gymnasium was reformed in the 1690s. Reforms were initiated by Ioannes Rivius, who was probably inspired by Zamoyski himself. He dedicated the 1595 *Oratio de... benignissima liberalitate Academia Zamosciana* to Zamoyski and to the Academy professors.⁶⁸⁶ Both copies of this work preserved

683 Daniel Hermann, AD ILLUSTRISSIMUM DOMINUM, DN. IOANNEM DE ZAMOSCIO: Regni Poloniae Cancellarium supremum, et Exercitum Generalem, etc. DE RANA ET LACERTA SVCCINO BORVSSIACO INSITIS. DANIELIS HERMANNI BORVSSI Discursus Philosophicus. EIVSDEM DE CERTAMINE INTER Vrsum et Aprum, Carmen. *Rigae Livonum*, Typis NICOLAI MOLLINI. Anno M. D. C. First edition appeared in Krakow in 1583.

684 Danielus Hermannus, *Stephaneis Moscovitica sive de bello Stephani R. Poloniae contra magnum Ducem Moscoviae libri III*. In Riga, I was unable to find the first edition, which was printed in Gdańsk, in 1582; I therefore used the copy included in the collected edition of Hermann's poetry, which I describe below.

685 DANIELIS / HERMANNI BORVS / SI SECRETARII / REGII / *Poemata* / ACADEMICA, AVLICA, BELLICA. / *Excussa Rigae Livonum* / Per Nicolaum Mollinum Typogra / phum Anno 1614.

686 Ioannes Rivius, ORATIO DE INSTITVTA ILVSTRISSIMI DOMINI, D. IOANNIS DE ZAMOYSCIO, R. P. Magni Cancellarii etc. exercitum Generalis etc. *benignissima liberalitate Academia Zamosciana: Cum vindicata simul Illustrissimae Celsitudinis*

in the Academic Library are bound with the ordinance of the newly reformed school in Riga,⁶⁸⁷ possibly signaling connections between the two schools. David Hilchen, who was both Royal Secretary and a city official in Riga, was the co-author of this edition and author of another text praising the Zamoyska Academy;⁶⁸⁸ a few years later, he also published polemical works in Zamość and Krakow.⁶⁸⁹ Before coming into conflict with Rigan authorities, he represented the city as its official speaker, praising, for example, the Livonian Commissioner Lew Sapieha⁶⁹⁰ in 1599, or responding to the Emissary of the Commonwealth Andrzej Wolan in the name of the City Council in 1591.⁶⁹¹ It was typical, by the way, for the most renowned Rigan writers to be responsible

illius, iniquissimis Calumniis oppugnata innocentia et violata integritate, de transitu Tartarorum, seu Scytharum per Pocuciam. ELABORATA STVDIO ET DILIGENTIA Ioannis Rivii, Inspectoris Schloae Rigensis: ET EDITA RIGAE, METROPOLI LIVONIAE, Mense Januario. Anno salutiferi partus M.D.XCV. Typis Nicolai Mollini.

- 687 Nicolaus Ekius, Davidus Hilchen, Ioannes Rivius, *Orationes tres e quibus duae honoratissima dignitate, tum sapientia et virtute ornatissimorum D. D. Scholarcharum Nicolai Ekii proconsulis et Davidis Hilchen syndici, tertia Ioanni Rivii, cum solenni et publico ritu produceretur, ad demandandam sibi ad Amplissimo Senatu Inspectionem Scholasticam ineundam. Habitate in restitutione seu instauratione Scholae Rigensis XV.CLS.VILS. adiuncta sunt iisdem: pimum publicae doctrinae series tabellis expressa; inq; curias V. distributa. Denide docendi in sintulis curiis praescripta ratio: et demonstratum iter, quod utiliter praeceptores huius ludi sequerentur: cum in tradendis artibus: tum in tractando et interpretando omnie genere, utriusque linguae, autorum. Edebantu Rigae, Mense Decembi, Anno Salutiferi partus, in terris, Filiii Dei: M. D. XCIII.*
- 688 Davidus Hilchen, Danielus Hermannus, *ACADEMIAE SAMOSCIANAE RECENS INSTITVTAE INTIMATIO. Ita se comparet in vita, ut mori nesciat. RIGAE. Excudebat Nicolaus Mollinus. ANNO M.D.XCIII.*
- 689 Davidus Hilchen, *CLYPEVS INNOCENTIAE ET VERITATIS DAVIDIS HILCHEN. SERENIS[si]mi SIGISMVNDI III. POLONIAE ET SVECIAE Regis Secretarii, et Notarii Terr. Venden. Contra IACOBI GODEMANNI LVNEBURgen. et Rigensium quorundam, Senatus nomine ad proprium odium abutentium, cum iniquissima crudelissimaq; quaedam decreta, tum alia calumniarum tela, editus. ZAMOSCI. Martin. Lencius Typogr. Acad. excudebat. Anno Domini, M. DC. IV. David Hilchen, *Segenwehr der Duschuld und Warheit. Wieder Jacob Godemans Lunenburgensis, und etzlicher des Rathes zu Riga Rethleinfürer gesprengte calumnien, schme und schandlibellen, zu Krakau, Gedrukt im Jahr 1605.**
- 690 David Hilchen, *Epistola gratulatoria ad... Leonem Sapieha..., qua felix matrimonium illis una cum consorte eius... Elisabetha Radzivilea... exoptat, Rigae M.D.XCIX.*
- 691 Andrzej Wolan, *Oratio ad septebielem senatum et universam civitatem Rigensem nomine... Severini Boneri..., Leoni Sapiehae..., cui annexa est orati Davidis Hilchen, secretarii Rigensis qua... dominis commissariis respondet die 7 septembris anno 1589, Rigae per Nicolaum Mollinum anno M.D.XIC.*

for winning the favor of Polish Commissioners. Salomon Frenchelius a Fridenthal was among them.⁶⁹²

It is worth mentioning that not only the inhabitants of Riga but also authors from nearby Courland, and even Poland, published their works in the city. It was here that Andrzej Lipski's legal study was published in 1602, probably to meet the needs of local merchants and gentry.⁶⁹³ Riga was also the place of publication of panegyrics praising Courlandish princes in the first half of the 17th century, when there was not yet a publishing house in Jelgava. Among these, there is a small collection published to celebrate the granting of a fief to James I by Władysław IV Vasa in 1633.⁶⁹⁴

Responses to Politics

Because Riga was one of the objects of the late 16th- and 17th-century rivalry between Poland and Sweden, the city's inhabitants followed this conflict closely, and they scrupulously collected all printed works which dealt with it. This is confirmed by an approximately twenty-centimeters-thick volume, which includes several dozen texts documenting the propaganda war between Sigismund III and Carl IX, and later between Gustavus Adolphus and Carl

692 Salomonus Frenchelius a Fridenthal, *LIVONIA S.R.M. ET ORDINVM REG. POL. MAGNIQ; DVC. LITH. RELIQVIS GENERALIBUS Commissariis, Riga abeuntibus Adclamat, et bene precatur: Interprete SALOMONE FRANCELIO a Fridenthal. Ea Virtutis vis est, vt laudari veit in omniubus, ullique laudes suas neget, nulli inuideat. RIGAE, Typis NICOLAI MOLLINI Anno ultimae ptienciae, 1599.*

693 Andrzej Lipski, *Praticarum, observationum ex iure civili et saxonii... centuria prima...* (Rigae, 1602).

694 ACTUS GRATULATORIUS Scholasticus IN LAVDEM DEI Honorem Reis et Principis *Ob Impositam felicitatissime ab Altissimo Serenissimo et Potentissimo Principi ac Domino, Dno VLADISLAO Regi Poloniae, Magno Duci Lithvaniae etc. Coronam; Nec non traditam exoptatissime ab Altissimo per Regem Illustrissimo Principi ac Domino, Dno IACOBO, in Livonia Curlandiae et Semigalliae Duci, in Imperio, successionem: Institutus a Pastoribus Ecclesiae,Inspectore, Rectore, et Iuventute Scholastica Scholae Mitaviensis 2. Decemb. Anno. 1633. RIGAE, Typis GERHARDI Schröder.* Courlandish princes were also praised in the Commonwealth, and one of these works is also located in the Academic Library. Interestingly, it was published under Jesuit auspices even though the addressee was a Protestant: Thomas Friderichs Livo, *Oratio solum sapietem esse principem demonstrans. Quam illustrissimi necnon celsissimi principis ac domini d. Friderici in Livonia Curlandiae ac Semigalliae ducis sapientiae et prudentiae dicat, consecrat Thomas Friderichs Livo. In ilustrii Carnoviano Liberalium artium gymnasio Calissiensi a se conscriptam et publice habitam Idibus Septembris Anni M. DC. XV. Typis ibidem Alberti Geli.*

Gustav. It includes prints made in Gdańsk, Vilnius, Uppsala, in German cities, and in Riga itself. Jan Karol Chodkiewicz's 1605 victory at Kirchholm also received much attention, and was documented, among other things, by an epic poem written by Basilius Plinius, a well-known German humanist and rector of the Rigan Gymnasium.⁶⁹⁵ After his victory at Kirchholm, Chodkiewicz, who became governor of Livonia, was frequently the addressee of works written by Rigan humanists, who focused especially on his military accomplishments, as is the case, for example, in a work by Filip Mittendorf.⁶⁹⁶ Dionisius Fabricius' *Historia Livonii* [History of Livonia], a very interesting though little-known short volume, was also dedicated to Chodkiewicz.⁶⁹⁷

Polish military presence in Riga, however, was insufficient both before and after this time. The aforementioned Daniel Hermann is the author of the *Supplicatio*, a dramatic appeal for military help for Riga, which was published in 1601.⁶⁹⁸ Hermann writes with reproach:

Hunc hostem talem semperque in utrumque paratum
Nos pauci dubia frustra oppugnamus arena.

[With so great an enemy who is always ready for both types of battle,/Few in numbers, we fight in vain on uncertain ground.]

The warnings, however, did not help much, and twenty years later the Swedes finally occupied Riga; this was described in the small volume *De expugnatione*

695 Basilius Plinius, *VICTORIA, Quam Iuvante DEO Optimo Maximo SERENISSIMI SIGISMVNDI III. Regis Poloniae et Sueciae etc. exercitus, duce Illustrissimo et fortissimo Iohanne Carolo Chotkewicio aduersus Carolum Sudermaniae, Nerich, et Vvermlandiae Ducem, Stratis et profligatis illius maximis Copijs; Rigaaq; Secunda obsidione soluta, Insignem et ad miraculum usq; foelicem Prope Kerckholmum 17 Septembris, Anno 1605 obtinuerun Conscripta a Basilio Plinio. M. D. RIGAE Livonum Typis Nicolai Mollini.*

696 Philippus Mittendorfus, *Illust[rissi]mo et Mag[nifi]co Heroj ac D[OMI]NO D[OMI]NO JOANNI CAROLO CHODkiewicz Comiti in Sklow et Bichow de Mysza Capitaneo Samogitiae et Dorpaten[sis] Magni Duc[at]us Lithuaniae exercituum supremo Praefecto et per Livoniam Commissario GENERALI etc. de PARNAVAE obsidione soluta CVNAMVNDAAq; recepta hostibus casis et profligatis RIGA gratulatur AVTORE Philippo Mittendorfo. RIGAE Livonum Typis NICOLAI MOLLINI. M.DC.IX.*

697 I used the 18th-century edition: Dionysusii Fabricii, praepositi pontifici Felinensis, *Livonicae historiae compendiosa series in quatuor digesta partes ab nanno millesimo centesimo quinquagesimo octavo usque ad annum MDCX. Curant Gustavo Bergmann P. R. Editio secunda auctior et emendatior, Stanno Ruisiendi MDCCXCV.*

698 Danielus Hermannus, *LIVONIAE AFFLICTAE AD SACRAM Regiam Maiestatem et Ordines Regni Poloniae Magniq; Ducatus Lithuaniae etc. SVPPLICATIO. Rigae Livonum EX OFFICINA TYPOGRAPHICA Nicolai Mollini. Anno 1601.* This work is not included in the catalogues of Polish libraries.

civitatis Rigensis in 1627.⁶⁹⁹ The volume includes four polemical letters, in which the Rigan senate refutes Krzysztof II Radziwiłł's accusations that they had committed acts of disloyalty toward the Commonwealth. At the end, there is a map of the siege of Riga, which was surrounded by Gustavus Adolphus' army. It is significant that Polish military units are not shown: Riga was left to its own devices. Not much later, there appeared a satirical piece criticizing the disparagement of Swedish emissaries by the Poles.⁷⁰⁰ There is quite a large number of such anti-Polish works in the Academic Library, including, for example, a long poem about war, Polish defeat, and the 1635 Treaty of Stuhmsdorf, where the author ridicules and derides Władysław IV Vasa.⁷⁰¹ A whole series of similar texts was created during the time of the Swedish Deluge; most of these, however, were written in Uppsala by talented Swedish academics.⁷⁰²

Many years after Riga had been taken over by the Swedes, a belated religious polemic between a Polish Dominican from Lublin and local pastors was published by the local Möller Publishing House.⁷⁰³ So far, it is the only (and a late) trace of the heated arguments which took place between Rigan Catholics and Protestants. After Stephan Bathory entered the city, he demanded that the Cathedral be transferred to Catholics. In the end, they received St. Jacob's Church, which the Jesuits immediately took under their control, and established a collegium there. It existed until 1621. Efforts to find—in the Rigan libraries—either printed or handwritten books by local Catholic authors proved unsuccessful, since the entire collegium library was transferred to Uppsala and incorporated into the university library there; this also happened to the library of the Braniewo (Braunsberg) Collegium several years later. A hand-written catalogue of this collection has been preserved; it was made by Johannes Bothdivius, and it lists approximately 900 works.⁷⁰⁴ In the second half of the

699 De expugnatione CIVITATIS RIGENSIS... EPISTOLAE IIII, [Rigae] 1627.

700 *FIDES ET HUMANITAS POLONICA ERGA DELEGATOS REGIOS SVEDOOM, Generosum D. ARVIDUM HORN et Clariss. D. IONANNEM SALVIUM, I.U.D. Dignis modis commendata a IOANNE NARSSIO Anastasio Dordraco-Batavo Med. D. RIGAE, Excusa Anno M.DC.XXV.*

701 Joannes Breverus, *INDVCIAE SUECO-POLONICAE*, in *Amplissima frequentissimaq; Panegyri Rigae, in Collegio Publico CARMINE EPICO memoriter deceantatae, a JOHANNI BREVERO Islebiensi. Anno Domini. LaeteMvR Rigae, reDIII paX VIVa LIVonis! ipso die Parasceves. Typis GERHARDI Schröder [1635].*

702 Na przykład zbiór elogiów: *ANIMORVM IN EUROPA ET VICINA ASIA MOTUS. De SVECICI BELLI MOTU In POLONIA. UPSALIAE recus et aucti. Autoritate Sueriorum, Anno Christi M.DC.LVI.*

703 Piotr Nowakowski, *Oratio revocatoria...* (Rigae, 1648).

704 Sign. U 271, manuscript in Uppsala University Library.

17th century, a gymnasium named after Carl XI was established in the buildings of the Rigan collegium; it was renamed after Peter the Great at the beginning of the 18th century.

Riga and the Commonwealth at the End of the 17th Century

After the time of the Swedish Wars, when relative peace was established in the Polish-Livonian borderland, Riga became a main trading port in this part of the Commonwealth. The Dźwina (Daugava) River was the basic route of communication, and served to ship raw materials from Polish Livonia, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and Moscow to Riga. One should remember that Polish Livonia was an important economic supplier for Riga throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, and after the downfall of the Commonwealth. On the other hand, Riga contributed to the economic development of Polish Livonia. Jan Malczowski's lexicographic works are a testament to this long-term process. He studied at the Vilnius Academy and subsequently moved to Riga, where he worked as a translator and teacher of Polish in the last two decades of the 17th century, and at the beginning of the 18th century. In addition, he wrote at least three very short Polish panegyrics dedicated to Rigan burghers in 1682, 1690, and 1701. These works are not cataloged by Estreicher; the two copies of the panegyrics from 1690⁷⁰⁵ and 1701⁷⁰⁶ are held by the Latvian National Library; the third and earliest is mentioned in the catalog of the Academic Library, but it was not found in its storage rooms. One could propose the hypothesis that at least some Rigan merchants knew Polish, and could appreciate Polish works written in their honor.

705 Stanisław Jan Malczowski, OMEN | Powszechnej Szczęśliwości | Złączenia Małzkiego Przezac= | nych Domow | JEGO MOSCI PANA | PAWLA BROCK= | HAUZENA | Sekretarza Masta Jego: Kr: Mści: | Rygi | Z JEY MOSZIA PANNA | SPOHIA BRE= | MEROWNA | Na radość Młodemu Panstwu y Weselnym | Gościom podane y Wierszem | Opisane przez | Stánisláwá Jana Malczowskiego. | W RIDZE / | Drukował Gorg Mathyas Möller W roku | 1690. [sign. R B/1320, National Library of Latvia].

706 Stanisław Jan Malczowski, Lot szczęśliwy do Wieczności. | ztego | Ogniem Marsowym wszędzie zápalonego Świátá | Nieboszczyká godney pámiéci | Sláchetnie Urodzonego J. M. Páná | B. Hansa Hinrycha | Berensa | Radnego Páná / y w Sądách | Kupieckich Assessorá. | Przy Akcie pogrzebowym odpráwujácym | się dnia 22. Aprila roku tera= | znieyszego 1701. | ná pociechę | wszystkim pozostáłym | Ich M. Mościom Pánom | Potomkom / Krewnym y Spowinowácynom | Przyziacióloom / repräsentowány | przez | Stánisláwá Jan Stánisláwá Jana Malczowskiego. Drukował Jerzy Máthysz Möller. [sign. R B/1362, National Library of Latvia].

For Malczowski, three works about the Polish language were probably more important: a book on grammar, a language handbook, and a phrasebook.⁷⁰⁷ All three have the same aim: to make it easier for Rigan merchants to trade with Polish contractors who lived in Polish Livonia and in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. In these books, we find examples of trade letters, sales agreements, and dialogues between merchants with their clients and partners. The support granted by the Rigan senate for Malczowski's translation undertakings testifies to the importance of trade with the Commonwealth; he writes about it in the introduction to the *Compendium*:

Dearest Reader!

With the support of the esteemed senate of my most gracious sirs and benefactors, I am hereby appointed by the honorable sirs—to whom (...) I eternally give thanks—to make it possible for youth to learn and practice the Polish language in their homes.

The Polish–German phrasebook focuses almost exclusively on trade. Here is an excerpt of the Polish text from the phrasebook (*Colloquia*):

Czwarta rozmowa. O towarach korzennych. Korzennik i Polak.

Pol. Dobry dzień waszeci.

Korz. Wielce dziękuję waszeci memu m. panu. Czegóż się waszeci podoba?

P. Chciałbym korzenia kupić, aby bym tylko wiedział, że waszec masz dobre, świeże korzenie?

K. U mnie waszec mój m. pan dostaniesz dobre i świeże korzenie. Zda mi się, żeś waszec mój m. pan i przeszłego roku u mnie kupił, wiem, żeś waszec mój m. pan był kontent; albowiem ja sam z hollenderskiej ziemi zapisuję i tej wiosny dopiero dostałem.

Pol. Jak drogo funt pieprzu?

Korz. Pieprz teraz bardzo drogi, gdzie indziej waszec mój m. pan od orta nie dostaniesz, a ja waszeci przedam, jako mnie samego w hollenderskiej ziemi kosztuje po dwadzieścia groszy.

Pol. Wiele funtów cukru dasz waszec za talar bity?

Korz. Cukier teraz także bardzo drogi, cukru kanaru (kandis brotu) cztery funty za talar, refenatu ośm funtów za talar dam waszeci memu m. panu. Czy siła waszec mój m. pan będziesz brał korzenia?

Pol. Wezmę za siedmdziesiąt albo ośmdziesiąt talarów, możesz tedy waszec dać mi pięć funtów za talar cukru kanaru.

707 Stanisław Jan Malczowski, *Compendium oder kutzer Begriff der Polnischen Sprache (...) Krótke zebranie polskiego języka, gdzie wszystko co do niego potrzebnego jest, się znajduje, króciuchne, jednak rzetelnie zebrane, i wielą reguł i przykładów wyrażone jest, a przydane też są przy tym piękne niemieckie i polskie przysłowia* [A short compendium of the Polish language, which includes everything that is needed, in a very short form, but thoroughly collected, and expressed by means of a multiplicity of rules and examples; together with beautiful German and Polish proverbs], Riga bey Georg Matth. Nöllerei, 1687; *Nova et methodica institutio in lingua polonica...*, Riga bey.

[Conversation Four: Spices. A spice merchant and a Pole.

Pole: Good day, sir.

Spice Merchant: Thank you very much, gracious sir. What is to your liking, sir?

Pole: I would like to buy spices, but I would only like to know whether you have good, fresh spices?

Spice Merchant: Dear sir, you will get good and fresh spices from me. Say, it seems that you, sir, also bought from me last year; I know that you were content, gracious sir; I myself order from the Dutch, and I only received [my order] this spring.

Pole: How much for a pound of pepper?

Spice Merchant: Pepper is very expensive nowadays; elsewhere, you will not, gracious sir, get it for less than an ort, but I will sell it to you for what I myself pay in the Dutch lands: for 20 groschen.

Pole: Will you give many pounds of sugar for a thalar?

Spice Merchant: Sugar is also very expensive today. I would give you, my kind sir, four pounds of cane sugar for a thalar, or eight pounds of refined sugar for a thalar. Will you be taking much spice, my kind sir?

Pole: I will buy for seventy or eighty thalars, you can therefore give me five pounds of cane sugar for a thalar.]

(k. I4 v-I5 v)⁷⁰⁸

In his works, Malczowski familiarizes the German inhabitants of Riga with Polish ways of conducting conversations and correspondence; he attempts to translate the language of the gentry into the language of the merchants. Conversations similar to those found in his books probably took place over the course of the next 150 to 200 years.

Summary

This research makes it possible to view Livonian–Polish relations in a new way: not only from the point of view of the Commonwealth, but also from the perspective of Livonian culture. Work in Rigan libraries allows one to leave polonocentrism aside. Until now, the printed volumes published in Riga were treated as belonging to the literature of the Commonwealth (e.g., this is what Juliusz Nowak-Dłużewski does in his multi-volume treatise on literature, written for special occasions, several centuries ago). Meanwhile, familiarity with large

708 Georg Matth. Nöllerii, 1696; *Colloquia oder Deutsche und Polnische Bespräche (...)* *Niemieckie i polskie rozmowy, listy kupieckie, kontrakty, zapisy i obligacje* [German and Polish conversations, merchants' letters, contracts, notes, and bonds], Riga bey Georg Matth. Nöllerii, 1697.

collections of works created in Livonia, Sweden, and the German Reich makes it possible to grasp the specificity of Rigan literature, while simultaneously reevaluating the role of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the culture of Central Europe. On the one hand, one can see the specificity but also the exceptionality of the culture of the Polish Kingdom and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. This is why it was attractive to the inhabitants of Riga. It is not a coincidence that the beginning of the blossoming of humanist culture in Riga took place during the reign of Poles and Lithuanians (this blossoming is pointed out even by authors of an exhibit in the Museum of Riga's History, who are rather negative in their evaluation of the rule of the Commonwealth, and of the "fanatic Catholic" Sigismund III Vasa).

Suggestions for Further Research

In the future, researchers focusing on the culture of old Livonia should consider how Riga functioned between Vilnius and Warsaw, on the one hand, and between Uppsala and Stockholm on the other; how it functioned between Gdańsk and Königsberg, and between Rostock and Lübeck. Until now, historical research has focused on political and economic issues, while culture still remains on the sidelines. If one takes Huntington's findings seriously, research into Riga's cultural connections would make it possible to at least partially understand the phenomenon of this city. And since literature was the foundation of old culture, historians of literature have an important role to play here.

The second issue which should be considered is Jan Zamoyski's patronage of humanist culture in Livonia. The documents in the State Archive in Riga and those in Polish archives (letters, agreements, etc.) should be examined. Rigan poets often write about the generosity of the Chancellor and Hetman, and so perhaps there are receipts which could document this trait. It would be valuable to show connections between Daniel Hermann and the humanists gathered around the Zamoyska Academy. His poetic works testify that he knew Szymon Starowolski, among others.

Comparative studies of the poetry and prose of Riga, Zamość, Gdańsk, and Vilnius, which pay attention to these issues, along with an examination of connections between these centers, will make it possible to reconstruct the image of the 16th-century *respublica litterarum* in Central Europe.

It would be interesting to determine the role played by Jesuits in the literary culture of the city between 1621 and 1892. During those years, as we have already mentioned above, their collegium functioned in Riga, and its students

and workers certainly produced literary texts. Perhaps there were also controversies and public disputes (as in Vilnius), and perhaps the Jesuits published polemics. Unfortunately, my search did not yield traces of the collegium's existence in either of the libraries, but the search was relatively cursory because of the short period of available time. Some information could probably be gathered in Rome, in the Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu. Perhaps some materials were also preserved in Riga.

The final theme worth considering is the problem of personal contacts between Rigan merchants and inhabitants of Polish Livonia and the Commonwealth in the second half of the 17th century. The former were clearly interested in Polish culture to some degree, and their knowledge of Polish certainly helped them, as Malczowski's panegyrics attest. This is probably an element of a broader process of the influence exerted by "Sarmatian" literature and culture in the second half of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th century on neighboring countries, including Russia. And I certainly do not mean a mechanical influence, but rather the formation of a certain kind of universal culture of the higher social strata (but not the aristocracy) in this region, a culture that included Polish and Polish-language literature.

A List of Attachments

The following is a list of the photocopies of 17th- and 18th-century prints available in the Latvian Academic Library and the Latvian National Library:

1. Anselmus Boccius, *Carmen gratulatorim de serenissimi ac potentissimi... Sigismundi Tertii... in Regnum Poloniae ingressu... scriptum. Ad... Joannem Zamoiscium...*, ab Anselmo Boccio, Livono, Rigae Excudebat Nicolaus Mollinus Anno M.D.XXCIIIX.
2. Davidus Hilchen, Danielus Hermannus, ACADEMIAE SAMOSCIANAE RECENS INSTITVTAE INTIMATIO. *Ita se comparet in vita, ut mori nesciat.* RIGAE. Excudebat Nicolaus Mollinus. ANNO M.D.XCIII.
3. Beginning of Daniel Hermann's *Stephaneis* from the edition: DANIELIS / HERMANNI BORVS / SI SECRETARII / REGII / *Poemata* / ACADEMICA, AVLICA, BELLICA. / *Excussa Rigae Livonum* / Per Nicolaum Mollinum Typogra / phum Anno 1614.
3. The beginning of the following edition of Daniel Hermann's *Stephaneis*: DANIELIS / HERMANNI BORVS / SI SECRETARII / REGII / *Poemata* / ACADEMICA, AVLICA, BELLICA. / *Excussa Rigae Livonum* / Per Nicolaum Mollinum Typogra / phum Anno 1614.

4. Daniel Hermann, AD ILLUSTRISSIMVM DOMINVM, DN. IOANNEM DE ZAMOSCIO: Regni Poloniae Cancellarium supremum, et Exercitum Generalem, etc. DE RANA ET LACERTA SVCCINO BORVSSIACO INSITIS. *DANIELIS HEMANNI BORVSSI Discursus Philosophicus. EIVSDEM DE CERTAMINE INTER Vrsum et Aprum, Carmen. Rigae Livonum, Typis NICOLAI MOLLINI. Anno M. D. C.*
5. Basilius Plinius, *VICTORIA, Quam Iuvante DEO Optimo Maximo SERENISSIMI SIGISMVNDI III. Regis Poloniae et Sueciae etc. exercitus, duce Illustrissimo et fortissimo Iohanne Carolo Chotkewicio aduersus Carolum Sudermaniae, Nerich, et VVermlandiae Ducem, Stratis et profligatis illius maximis Copijs; Rigae; Secunda obsidione soluta, Insignem et ad miraculum usq; foelicem Prope Kerckholmum 17 Septembris, Anno 1605 obtinuerun Conscripta a Basilio Plinio. M. D. RIGAE Livonum Typis Nicolai Mollini.*
6. Philippus Mittendorfus, *Illust[rissi]mo et Mag[nifi]co Heroj ac D[OMI]NO D[OMI]NO JOANNI CAROLO CHODkiewicz Comiti in Sklow et Bichow de Mysza Capitaneo Samogitia et Dorpaten[sis] Magni Duc[at]us Lithuaniae exercituum supremo Praefecto et per Livoniam Commissario GENERALI etc. de PARNAVAE obsidione soluta CVNAMVNDaq; recepta hostibus casis et profligatis RIGA gratulatur AVTORE Philippo Mittendorffo. RIGAE Livonum Typis NICOLAI MOLLINI. M.DC.IX.*
7. The 1612 dedication letter to Jan Karol Chodkiewicz, included in the following edition: Dionysius Fabricii, praepositi pontifici Felinensis, *Livonicae historiae compendiosa series in quatuor digesta partes ab nanno millesimo centesimo quinquagesimo octavo usque ad annum MDCX. Curant Gustavo Bergmann P. R. Editio secunda auctior et emendatior, Stanno Ruisiendi MDCCXCV.*
8. Lucas Eckstormius, *Iudicium Musarum DE MATRIMONIO LITERATI; In Honorem Nuptialem, SPONSIS novis, Viro virtutum, doctrinae et ingenii laude, praestantissimo, DN. M. AGGAEO FRIDERICI, Scholaer Rigensis Rectori dignissimo, NEC NON Virgini pudicissimae et honestissimae DOROTHEAE BAVMGARTEN, etc. Exaratam a LVCA ECSTORMIO, VValkenredensi, Cherusco. Anno, quo M. AggaeVs FrIDerICI SponsVs fVIt. (1619) RIGAE LIVONVM, Ex officina Typographica Nicolai Mollini.*
9. *FIDES ET HUMANITAS POLONICA ERGA DELEGATOS REGIOS SVEDOUM, Generosum D. ARVIDUM HORN et Clariss. D. IONANNEM SALVIUM, I.U.D. Dignis modis commendata a IOANNE NARSSIO Anastasio Dordraco-Batavo Med. D. RIGAE, Excusa Anno M.DC.XXV.*
10. Joannes Breverus, *INDVCIAE SUECO-POLONICAE, in Amplissima frequentissimaq; Panegyri Rigae, in Collegio Publico CARMINE EPICO*

memoriter decentatae, a JOHANNE BREVERO Islebiensi. Anno Domini. LaeteMVr Rigae, reDIIt paX VIVa LIVonis! ipso die Parasceves. Typis GERHARDI Schröder [1635].

11. Stanisław Jan Malczowski, *OMEN | Powszechnej Szczęśliwości | Złączenia Malzenskiego Przezac= | nych Domow | JEGO MOSCI PANA | PAWLA BROCK= | HAUZENA | Sekretarza Masta Jego: Kr: Mści: | Rygi | Z JEY MOSZIA PANNA | SPOHIA BRE= | MEROWNA | Na radość Młodemu Panstwu y Weselnym | Gościom podane y Wierszem | Opisane przez | Stánisláwá Jana Malczowskiego. | W RIDZE /| Drukował Gorg Mathyas Möller W roku | 1690.*
12. Stanisław Jan Malczowski, *Lot szczęśliwy do Wieczności. | ztego | Ogniem Marsowym wszędzie zápalonego Swiátá | Nieboszczyká godney pámięci | Sláchetnie Urodzonego J. M. Páná | B. Hansa Hinrycha | Berensa | Radnego Páná / y w Sądách | Kupieckich Assessorá. | Przy Akcie pogrzebowym odpráwującym | się dniã 22. Aprila roku terã= | znieyszego 1701. | ná pociechę | wszystkim pozostátym | Ich M. Mościom Pánom | Potomkom / Krewnym y Spowinowãconym | Przyjaciolom / reprásentowány | przez | Stánisláwá Jan Stánisláwá Jana Malczowskiego. Drukował Jerzy Máthysz Möller.*

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