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THE CULTURE OF EASTERN POMERANIA AT THE THRESHOLD OF THE MODERN ERA

In the 16th–18th centuries each part of Pomerania had its own political and, partly, also economic and religious history; this was the reason why culture did not enjoy the same condition for development in the whole region; however, there was one substantial fundamental factor which all Pomeranian regions shared (though not to the same extent): Pomerania with its ports was “a window on the world” for all the territories in the basin of the Oder, the Vistula and partly also of the Niemen. The ports and their immediate hinterland played not only an important economic role but also a specific role in cultural (social) communication in the broad sense of the term. It was therefore not accidental that Gdańsk, which from the point of view of communication and politics enjoyed the most favourable situation in the great Polish–Lithuanian state, was not only the greatest metropolis on the southern shore of the Baltic but also a specific cultural capital of Eastern Pomerania¹. There is no doubt that in the 16th century and, to some extent, up to the middle of the 17th, the cultural links between Royal Prussia and the Duchy of Prussia were much stronger than Royal Prussia’s links with Western Pomerania, which in the 17th century was mostly under Swedish rule and

¹In the period under review Eastern Pomerania comprised Royal Prussia (also called Polish Prussia), i.e. Gdańsk Pomerania, which became part of the Polish state in 1466, and the Duchy of Prussia which became part of Prussia-Brandenburg in the 17th century but was Poland’s fief up to 1657. Let us add that the name “East Prussia” was introduced by Frederick II in 1773, after the first partition of Poland in which he annexed Royal Prussia (called West Prussia in German) without Gdańsk and Toruń.

On the whole my reflections do not cover Western Pomerania which should be examined separately, in particular as regards the period of Swedish rule (not yet sufficiently known); but as far as intellectual culture is concerned, I have mentioned some of Western Pomerania’s links with Royal Prussia and Ducal Prussia as well as its distinctive features.

had from the 15th century gravitated towards the neighbouring Brandenburgian territories². Let us add that from the ethnic and religious points of view Western Pomerania was a monolith to a much greater extent than Ducal Prussia with its large Polish (Mazurian) and Lithuanian populations, to say nothing of Royal Prussia in which the Polish Catholic element competed with elements of German descent, mostly, though not exclusively, Lutheran in the 17th century.

The following essential features should be emphasised in a preliminary characterisation of the Pomeranian territories. Let us start with Royal Prussia.

The structure of population in Royal Prussia was in every respect diversified. Whereas the clergy, the nobility and the rural population were often Polish, people of German descent enjoyed social, if not numerical, predominance in large towns and some smaller ones. The most German city was Gdańsk in which, however, the poorer strata of the population were also Kashubian and Polish. As regards religion, the Lutheran and Catholic denominations enjoyed equal rights in the province and their borders coincided with ethnic borders (but Warmia — Ermeland — had strong Catholic groups from the time of German colonisation, while Toruń and Gdańsk had substantial groups of Lutherans using the Polish language). The third denomination, the Calvinists, combated by the other two religions, played an important role in particular circles in large cities only in the 16th century; at the beginning of the 17th it was on the margin of religious life in the province. As the weight of the Counter-Reformation and the fanaticism of the Polish nobility increased, in any case between 1660 and the middle of the 18th century, the Catholic Church interfered ever more frequently in the affairs of the Lutheran Church, restricting its activity. This is an irrefutable fact, but there were no regular persecutions of Protestants in Royal Prussia. Let us not forget that in the three principal cities of the province, Gdańsk (Danzig), Toruń (Thorn) and Elbląg

²Cf. J. Maliek, *Preussen und Polen. Politik, Stände, Kirche und Kultur vom 16. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert*, Stuttgart 1992. The history of culture in Pomerania has a vast but scattered bibliography. I am quoting fundamental, recent works. As regards Western Pomerania the third part of Volume II of *Historia Pomorza (A History of Pomerania)* has not been published yet. The culture of Royal Prussia and the Duchy of Prussia is discussed in vol. II, parts 1–2 of *Historia Pomorza*, ed. G. Labuda, Poznań 1976, 1984 by Marja Bogucka.

(Elbing), the Lutherans wielded unhampered power in the 17th and 18th centuries and clearly discriminated against the Polish Catholic element; this sometimes led to violent conflicts with the forces of the Counter-Reformation. The ill-famed Toruń tumult of 1724 was such a conflict and it was the Lutherans who, not for the first time, were the aggressive side³. The news of the tumult spread all over Europe, but this was the only incidence when the Polish state authorities strongly interfered in religious matters; this was due both to the principles inspiring King Augustus II's policy at that time and to the pressure exerted by fanatically Catholic circles which sought the punishment of the city whose anti-Catholic policy had for a long time been a thorn in the side of the Polish Catholic nobility in Kujawy and the Chełmno region. Let us stress that the religious dualism of Royal Prussia played an important role in political conflicts: the predominance of the Polish Catholic population was undoubtedly a potential danger to the small islands of Protestants who in defence of their privileges and identity began to stress their religious distinctness and their specific liberties and strove to preserve the German language as an element of their identity in the Polish sea of Catholicism. A substantial role was also played by the system of liberties in force in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, of which Royal Prussia was a part from 1466 to 1772. In the 16th, 17th and especially the 18th century, various disputes broke out between the central authorities of the Commonwealth, which in the 16th century became definitely a state of the noblemen's democracy, and the political forces of Royal Prussia. Contrary to the opinions spread by nationalist German historians, this was a normal happening in every organism of an estate type based on old privileges and jealously defending its distinct privileged position against any attempts at centralisation, unification and imposition of common duties⁴. However, Royal Prussia, incorporated into the Polish Kingdom in 1454, was a part of the Polish state, though it stubbornly defended its distinctness. In the 16th century, the Prussians — as the inhabitants of that country were called

²The question was falsely presented in old historiography; cf. my remarks in *The Toruń Uproar of 1724*, "Acta Poloniae Historica", vol. 47, 1983, pp. 55–80.

⁴Cf. S. Salmonowicz, *Das Königliche Preussen im öffentlichen Recht der polnisch-litauischen Republik (1569–1772)*, "Studia Maritima", VI, 1987, pp. 41–62; the article mentions literature on this subject.

irrespective of their nationality — were treated as a distinct “political nation” forming part of the noblemen’s commonwealth alongside the Poles and the Lithuanians; these names also had only a territorial political meaning without any implication of nationality. From 1569 on, when the Commonwealth was reorganised, Royal Prussia lost the status of a “country” and became a separate province of the Polish Kingdom, but this province, though treated in the same way as Mazovia, preserved some important distinct features. Its separate political and cultural position in the Polish Kingdom was determined by its linguistic, ethnic and religious distinctness and the legal and political privileges enjoyed either by the province as a whole or by its great cities, especially Gdańsk⁵.

The province’s strong economic ties with the economic life of the whole country and its importance for Poland created favourable conditions for its integration into the state, irrespective of disputes, which were mainly of a financial character. Let us stress, however, that the province’s political system as well as its ethnic, social and economic relations were a *sut generis* conglomerate which shaped Royal Prussia’s social, political and cultural reality as well as the atmosphere in the province which in many respects differed from other Polish provinces, for instance, Great Poland; which elements played a subsidiary role and which were of fundamental importance, is a question which still provokes disputes among scholars⁶. In the opinion of historians who glorify the national factor in history and regard it as the most important issue even in epochs in which national consciousness was far from being fully realised, linguistic differences and the ethnic-nationality context were the main element of the situation. In this approach, which was characteristic of old German, and also Polish, historiography, religion and the political system, so important for the population at that time, played but a subsidiary

⁵Cf. the latest volume of collected studies entitled *Pommerellen–Preussen–Pomorz Gdańskie. Formen kollektiver Identität in einer deutsch-polnischen Region*, “Nordost-Archiv”, N.F. B.VI, 1997, 2 (published in 1999), especially the texts by K. Friedrich, M. G. Müller, M. Rezník, H.-J. Bömelburg and S. Salmonowicz.

⁶Cf. two recent opinions: M.G. Müller, *Zweite Reformation und städtische Autonomie im Königlichen Preussen. Danzig, Elbing und Thorn in der Epoche der Konfessionalisierung (1557–1660)*, Berlin 1997, and K. Friedrich, *The Other. Prussia–Poland, Prussia and Liberty 1569–1771*, in print. Both studies make extensive use of Polish historiography, which is still very rare.

role and in the view of German historians, were only an additional factor in defence of the German state of possession in the province. However, if we look at the matter in accordance with the concept which lays stress on social and economic elements, we will be inclined to regard both the defence of the official and Church language and the importance attached to religious questions only as means used to defend the main aim, that is, the maintenance of the ruling élites' favourable position in the cities, in which power was in the hands of the Protestants. The historians who lay stress on religious question will look at the matter through the narrow prism of a religious struggle.

The question requires caution and a comprehensive examination. Evident national antagonisms appeared in Royal Prussia only as a result of the events of 1767–1772. A community of language or of ethnic origin, a community feeling different from an alien surrounding, had of course existed more or less consciously before, but the sense of distinctness was not of decisive importance, even when it fomented feelings of isolation and xenophobia and made the group feel endangered. From the end of the 16th century on, religious differences were the most important in the view of the masses, but as early as the 17th century a schematic dichotomy struck roots in people's minds: a Pole meant a Catholic nobleman, a German denoted a Protestant burgher. Religious difference, which was but one of many differences, was regarded as the main feature, all the other features being regarded as secondary.

However, for the partisans who held sway over the cities, the defence of distinctness was not an aim in itself or a religious act but a means in the struggle to achieve their main aim: self-defence, an independent status, a privileged position in politics and social life. Manifestations of animosity against people from the Polish Kingdom, the restrictions on the Catholics' access to towns and the ardent defence of the official German language, a defence which was anachronistic in the 17th century, were all intended to preserve the distinctness and cohesion of the urban communities in face of the pressure of the environment. It can be assumed that in view of the victory of the Counter-Reformation in Poland and the steady increase of Catholic forces in the province, the Lutheran burghers in Royal Prussia felt endangered, and this was the reason for their defensive and even

aggressive activities against Catholicism in Toruń and Gdańsk. Toruń, Gdańsk and Elbląg had acquired an important, independent position in the country and ardently defended it, coming out in defence of the rights of the whole province, for they knew that their opinion was of great political weight. However, contrary to what has sometimes been assumed, this was not a sign of disintegrative separatist trends, but a defence of the cities' privileged position. There was no sympathy in the cities for the aggressive Swedish and later Brandenburgian activities because activities of that kind could only impair the position of Royal Prussia cities, which owed their wealth to close links with the vast Polish hinterland and to political system in the Noblemen's Commonwealth, a system which the burghers in Royal Prussia supported no less ardently than the magnates.

Ducal Prussia, the Teutonic Knights' land and Poland's fief until 1657, was a Lutheran country whose population enjoyed estate freedoms. These freedoms were in a way analogous to the estate freedom existing in the state of the noblemen's democracy, Poland. There is no doubt that the influence of the Polish political system was felt in the Duchy of Prussia up to 1660. The Prussian nobility resisted the Hohenzollerns' supremacy and endeavoured to gain Polish support against their absolute power. Their resistance was broken and the further history of the Duchy of Prussia (the Kingdom in Prussia from 1701) was a history of its integration and full subordination to the central Brandenburgian authorities in Berlin.

From the ethnic, religious and economic points of view Ducal Prussia was throughout that period a country with a predominantly German population. In addition to remnants of the old native population, the Pruthenians, the province had a strong Polish minority, the Mazurians, who had come from Mazovia in the 15th and 16th centuries, and Lithuanians. As regards religion, the province was as homogeneous as Western Pomerania, the Lutheran denomination decidedly predominating, though Polish pressure secured some liberties to the few Catholics in the province, while the Hohenzollerns supported the Calvinists, also a small group.

From the economic point of view, Ducal Prussia, like Royal Prussia, was a typical Baltic country whose export interests linked it with its vast Polish-Lithuanian hinterland. However,

since the Hohenzollerns saw to it that the export revenues enriched the state treasury, Königsberg never equalled Gdańsk politically and economically (another reason was that Gdańsk had a more favourable geographic situation). But Königsberg was an important cultural centre and until at least the middle of the 17th century exerted a great influence on Polish Protestantism, and its university influenced the culture of Royal Prussia.

From the 13th century on, German–Polish relations were one of the main threads in the history of Pomerania as a whole. Even though Poland's political relations with the German countries were, on the whole, peaceful from the end of the conflict with the Teutonic Knights' Order to the 18th century, the native Slav populations in both Western and Royal Prussia competed in the economic and other fields with the Germans, not only those who flowed into Pomerania in the Middle Ages but also those who arrived there in the course of later colonisations.

In each province of Pomerania germanisation and polonisation took a different course. For Western Pomerania, the 16th century (after the treaty with Brandenburg at Grimmen, 1529) opened the way to the development of the Reformation in the form of strict northern Lutheranism and to German influence, which became increasingly evident at the court of the Pomeranian Greifen dynasty, giving rise to the rule of the Brandenburg Hohenzollerns after the extinction of the local dynasty (it died out in 1637); one part of Western Pomerania was assigned to Brandenburg only after a compromise with the Swedes in the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648; another part, with Szczecin (Stettin) was taken over by Brandenburg in 1720, and the rest with Stralsund only in 1815. During the period of the independent Greifen state contacts with Poland were at times quite lively. The Greifen tried to gain support against Brandenburg's claims, but Poland did not want to get involved in Pomeranian affairs. The Polish state had no expansionist aims north or west of the Polish frontier and the plans drawn up when the international situation was favourable had no social support, which was indispensable in a state of the noblemen's democracy. As regards integrative trends, the situation in Gdańsk Pomerania, called Royal Prussia from 1466 to 1772, was different. Despite the successes of the Reformation, the German element was not sufficiently strong (with the exception of large towns) to prevent a rapid integration of Royal Prussia

into the organism of the Polish–Lithuanian state, of which Royal Prussia was but a province in 1569, though one enjoying a separate status. What distinguished Royal Prussia from other Polish territories was that three cities, Toruń, Elbląg and Gdańsk, generously endowed with privileges by Polish kings, played an extremely important economic and political role. This enabled Gdańsk, thanks to its enormous economic importance and the usurped powers, to act independently, to assume a quasi-autonomous position in the Commonwealth after the failure of integrative endeavours made under King Stephen Batory. Gdańsk's position was based first and foremost on its monopoly of Polish foreign trade to which Gdańsk owed its wealth and the development of its material and spiritual culture in the 16th and 17th centuries. The other groups of population in Royal Prussia, the nobility and even more so the rural people, corresponded to general Polish standards; there were not many islands of German population in this territory and the Polonisation and Sarmatisation of Pomeranian society was fully evident in the middle of the 17th century, thanks, among other things, to the successes of the Counter-Reformation.

The polonisation of Royal Prussia was in full swing in the 17th century. The opinion that Royal Prussia suffered national oppression (this never existed) or religious persecutions (until the middle of the 17th century Lutheranism developed unhampered; the later violations of religious tolerance by circles linked to the Counter-Reformation did not assume wide proportions and did not affect large towns, which were ruled by Lutherans) was rejected by Władysław Konopczyński, who pointed out that even religious considerations, so important during that time, did not induce Royal Prussia to support the Swedes or the Hohenzollerns⁷.

The Reformations and humanism developed relatively slowly in this territory in the 16th century, but humanism made such an impact, especially on science and education, that it continued to exert an influence in the 17th century, the Baroque epoch, which marked the apogee of the culture of many Pomeranian ci-

⁷W. Konopczyński, *Prusy Królewskie w unii z Polską 1569–1772* (*Royal Prussia in Union with Poland 1569–1772*), "Roczniki Historyczne", 1927, No. 3, pp. 134–136.

ties, in particular Toruń and Gdańsk⁸. The élites in these cities experienced an unforgettable period of welfare and high intellectual culture. The early Enlightenment period which, despite deteriorating life conditions, brought a development of science and literature in the territory from Königsberg to Szczecin (Stettin), especially in Gdańsk, Toruń and Elbląg, exerted a great influence on the processes taking place in the Polish-Lithuanian state.

The culture of the whole of Pomerania was a mixed Polish-German culture in a large part of that region. The 16th century brought, at least to the élites, a definite victory of German culture in Western Pomerania. This territory was to some, though uneven, extent out of the way, compared with Royal Prussia and Ducal Prussia, which maintained close cultural contacts. In Royal Prussia and especially in Ducal Prussia, together with the victory of the Reformation, mainly in its German Lutheran form, the 16th century witnessed a strong influence of German culture which from that time on was linked not only with ethnic traditions and a smaller or greater sense of linguistic community, but also with religious ties. There was also a Polish form of Lutheranism in Ducal Prussia; it developed under Königsberg's influence and was successful among the ethnically and linguistically Polish Mazurians, but the influence of Polish culture in the 16th century, the Renaissance time, was relatively strong, and many Polish books were published in Königsberg. The period that followed saw a decline of Polish influence also in Ducal Prussia and a decline of intensive Polish-East Prussian cultural contacts. Mazuria remained the only enclave of Polish culture and Polish language in East Prussia in the 19th century; this is proved by the fact that even in the 19th century candidates for preachers at Königsberg University had to attend what was known as the Polish seminar. They were expected to work among the Lutheran Mazurians who had preserved the Polish language. Königsberg

⁸Humanistic ideas were kept up by both Jesuit colleges and Protestant academies well into the 17th century, as I have repeatedly stressed in my studies dealing with the history of science and education. Cf. also P. W. Knoll, *The European Context of Sixteenth-Century Prussian Humanism*, "Journal of Baltic Studies", vol. 22, 1991, No. 1, pp. 29-72.

also trained preachers for the small islands of Lutheranism in Polish towns, such as Toruń and Elbląg, or in Great Poland⁹.

Apart from the townspeople, the basic population groups in Royal Prussia, that is, the Catholic clergy, the majority of the noblemen, even if some of them were Protestants, and in particular the peasant masses and the population of small towns, were linked to Polish intellectual culture. This means that Pomerania as a whole was from every point of view a borderland between Polish and German culture, though this applies to a lesser extent to Western Pomerania¹⁰. But Polish culture, being *par excellence* a Catholic culture from the end of the 16th century, was unable to expand into the linguistically and religiously alien territory dominated by German culture.

The sarmatisation of Polish culture and its xenophobia soon restricted communication processes between the two cultures. On the whole, however, all milieux took part in these processes, though with varying intensity. Let us remember that Pomerania was not only a place of a perennial confrontation between Polish and German culture but also a window on the world. Pomerania was a universal cultural intermediary between Western Europe and the drainage basin of the southern Baltic where every ship plying at a port was a conveyor of the values of European culture. As regards imports, the Commonwealth's sea trade through the Baltic ports consisted mainly of costly highly processed industrial goods, craftsmen's products and luxury consumer goods (wines, southern fruits, textiles, metal goods, works of art, books). Gdańsk's own production, destined mainly for foreign buyers, laid stress on luxury goods produced by furniture makers, gold-

⁹For Königsberg's role with regard to Royal Prussia in the 18th century see S. Salmonowicz, *Königsberg, Thorn und Danzig. Zur Geschichte Königsbergs als Zentrum der Aufklärung*, in: *Königsberg und Riga*, hrsg. von H. Ischreyt ("Wolfenbütteler Studien zur Aufklärung", Band 16), Tübingen 1995, pp. 9-28.

¹⁰Cf. my remarks *Preussen Königlichem Antells und das Herzogtum Preussen als Gebiet der Begegnung zweier Kulturen vom 16. bis 18. Jahrhundert*, in: *Schlesien und Pommern in den Deutsch-Polnischen Beziehungen vom 16. bis 18. Jahrhundert. XIV deutsch-polnische Schulbuchkonferenz der Historiker vom 9. bis 14. Juni 1981 in Zamość*, ed. R. Riemenschneider, Braunschweig 1983, pp. 66-86.

smiths, moulders, the armaments industry, watch-makers, medallion makers and the printing industry¹¹.

Pomerania was also (especially in the 16th and early 17th centuries) an intermediary between Polish and German culture on a global scale. The main role in this respect was played by Royal Prussia, one of the reasons being that the cultural potential of Royal Prussia — of Gdańsk, Elbląg and Toruń — was much higher than that of Western Pomerania with Stettin (Szczecin), Stolp (Słupsk) and Kolberg (Kołobrzeg) and stronger than the potential of Ducal Prussia whose university was only periodically of supra-regional importance. Ducal Prussia played an important role in Polish culture only in the second half of the 16th century. What were the results of the penetration of the two cultures into the territory of Royal Prussia and what role did Polish-German neighbourliness play in the development of culture in Ducal Prussia? The competition between the two cultures, unavoidable in a way, was a result of religious and class antagonisms rather than of ethnic or linguistic differences. In these territories the élites, unless they were separated by politico-religious divisions, maintained good relations and worked together to develop culture in their region. Let us recall F. Znaniecki's view that the socially active German cultural influence in the Polish territories was the work of those creators of culture who "felt attracted to their environment, and tried to grasp and adopt its culture; it was in a process of co-operation, not of a fight, that they introduced their own values"¹².

The work of Gdańsk's great 18th century historian and jurist, Gottfried Lengnich, whose services to Polish culture cannot be overestimated and who was nursed in German culture at home and at the university, is just one of many examples showing that the coexistence of representatives of German and Polish culture could be useful, even though it was not devoid of conflicts and controversies. Lengnich became an expert and perfect interpreter of Polish historical achievements, but he had a deep affection for

¹¹M. Bogucka, *Danzig an der Wende zur Neuzeit. Von aktiven Handelsstadt zum Stapel und Produktionszentrum*, "Hanzische Geschichtsblätter", Jg C II, 1984, pp. 91-103; eadem, *The Baltic and Amsterdam in the First Half of the 17th Century*, in: *The Interactions of Amsterdam and Antwerp with the Baltic Region 1400-1800*, Leiden 1983, pp. 51-58.

¹²F. Znaniecki, *Sily społeczne w walce o Pomorze (Social Forces in the Struggle for Pomerania)*, in: *Polskie Pomorze*. Collective work, vol. 2, Toruń 1931, p. 105.

his native town whose privileges he ardently defended on every occasion¹³.

Royal Prussia was an area of competition between two cultures. This competition was generally regarded as a result of differences between the Protestant (mainly Lutheran) culture and Polish culture, which from the time of the successful Counter-Reformation was mainly, though not exclusively, Catholic. But competition and conflicts did not prevent co-operation, a process of a conscious or unconscious interpenetration of concepts, values and novelties. Until the middle of the 18th century, the coexistence of the two cultures was quite peaceful owing to the fact that even during the reign of the Great Elector the Poles did not feel that their national existence was threatened by their German neighbours. For a long time they mistakenly ignored the Brandenburg electors. In the multinational, multireligious Noblemen's Commonwealth, Polish culture, the Polish language and the predominant religion were never deliberately or consistently imposed on anybody. Even though xenophobia and the religious fanaticism spread by the Counter-Reformation were not alien to Polish noblemen, heterogeneity was universally accepted until the middle of the 17th century in the Polish-Lithuanian state, which knew neither absolutism nor modern bureaucracy. Let us stress once again that the Polish authorities did not think in ethnic categories in the Pomeranian territory; this led to a dangerous situation which did not come to light until the end of the 18th century. Polish national culture was wide open to foreign influence, in particular from the turn of the 16th century to Poland's defeats in the wars of 1648–1660. Even the decline of Polish culture at the turn of the 17th century did not fully eliminate the influence the neighbours exerted on each other, an influence which was a result of direct daily contacts of German Protestant groups in Royal Prussia with Polish culture and the culture of German countries.

¹³See my essay on the great historian, entitled *Gotfryd Lengnich. Szkic do portretu uczonego* (*Gotfried Lengnich. A Sketch for the Portrait of a Scholar*), in: *Idem, Od Prus Książęcych do Królestwa Pruskiego. Studia i szkice z dziejów prusko-pomorskich*. Olsztyn 1992, pp. 72–102, and the first attempt at a comprehensive biography of Lengnich by W. Ziencara, *Gotfried Lengnich, ein Danziger Historiker in der Zeit der Aufklärung*, vols. I–II, Toruń 1995–1997.

At the turn of the 16th century the culture of Silesia played the role of a specific intermediary between Polish and German culture in Pomerania. Up to the middle of the 17th century a specific symbiosis of Polish and German elements in culture could be observed in Silesia. This was exemplified by a pleiad of Silesian 17th century writers, starting with Martin Opitz, who though writing mainly in German, knew and understood Polish historical traditions and the values of Polish literature (especially those of J. Kochanowski)¹⁴.

It is worth pointing out that the German researchers who have examined Pomerania's culture in the 16th–18th centuries have so far ignored the Polish context and Polish themes, thus passing over in silence the distinctive features of the culture of Ducal Prussia and Royal Prussia¹⁵.

Whereas it can be said that we know the intellectual culture of Pomerania in the 16th–18th centuries in general outlines (the history of science, education, literature and art), we do not know much about the mentality and culture of individual milieux, territories and cultural orbits. Research into the culture of the Catholic milieux in Royal Prussia, the noblemen's culture and culture in rural areas leaves much to be desired¹⁶. Most researchers have concentrated on the achievements of Pomeranian cities, a subject with a rich and interesting material which testifies to the flowering development of their intellectual and material culture. The result is that many questions are not only disputable but are known only in outline. The influence exerted by Pomerania on the territory of the Commonwealth and the European role of Pomerania's cultural achievements have not yet been presented in full, though the region's scientific achievements, e.g. Nicolaus Copernicus' momentous discoveries, the Renaissance philosophy of Bartholomäus Keckermann, well

¹⁴For the Toruń episode in Opitz's life see my article *Martin Opitz i środowisko intelektualne toruńskie lat trzydziestych XVII w. (Martin Opitz and Toruń's Intellectual Milieu in the 1630s)*, "Acta Univ. N.C.", Historia 11, Toruń 1977, pp. 53–70.

¹⁵The concise *Handbuch der Geschichte Ost- und Westpreussens*, II, 1, 2, hrsg. E. Opgenoorth, Lüneburg 1994, 1996, is a positive step forward but H. Neumeyer's chapters on Protestant churches in Royal Prussia, written in the spirit of 19th century Prussian Protestant historiography.

¹⁶Some of the proposals I put forward years ago have not lost their significance, cf. S. Samonowicz, *Uwagi o historii kultury Prus Królewskich XVII–XVIII w. (Remarks on the History of Culture in Royal Prussia in the 17th and 18th Centuries)*, "Zapiski Historyczne", vol. 39, 1974, No. 3, pp. 147–176.

known in Europe, and the great achievements of the 17th century astronomer Hevelius, were on a truly European scale. The role of Royal Prussia and Ducal Prussia in the history of the Polish Reformation, the Polish printing industry, education and science has been stressed many times. On the southern coast of the Baltic, culture reached its apogee during the Renaissance, especially the late Renaissance, and during the Baroque epoch. The 18th century was less favourable for these territories, and this naturally restricted the development of culture, although early Enlightenment culture flourished in Gdańsk and Toruń up to the middle of the 18th c. Later Enlightenment flourished mainly in Königsberg which scored great successes in German culture during the time of Hamann, Herder and Kant. We already know a great deal about the importance of Royal Prussia for the early development of the Enlightenment in Poland¹⁷. But the role of Königsberg, Gdańsk and Toruń in the Commonwealth in the second half of the 17th century has been less thoroughly researched. It is evident that German culture, which was a vehicle of European ideas for the Polish territories, had greater possibilities for expansion than Polish culture. Let us point out, however, that the political ideology of the Noblemen's Democracy for a long time exerted a broad influence in the Duchy of Prussia, and the life style of the Sarmatian nobility did have an impact on the life style and mentality of Royal Prussia's elites¹⁸.

A social history of communication, of the spread of ideas over the vast territories of the Commonwealth in successive epochs, has not yet been written. This is an exciting subject: together with the goods which came to Gdańsk or Königsberg to be sent down the country by carts or boats, there came not only works of art and craftsmanship but also new concepts, new ideas, fresh information and new cultural patterns. It was undoubtedly of great importance for Polish culture that a specific culture composed of Polish, German, Catholic, Protestant, noble and urban

¹⁷Cf. my detailed studies: *Torus Beitrag zur Kultur der Aufklärung in Polen*, "Studia Marittima", II, 1980, pp. 45-56; *Les gymnases protestants dans la Prusse Royale polonaise: leur rôle cultural au XVIII^e siècle*, "Studia Marittima", I, 1978, pp. 89-97; *Die Zeitschriftentypen in Polen und ihre Rolle als Förderer der Aufklärung*, in: *Idem, Polen im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*, Toruń 1997, pp. 54-81.

¹⁸Cf. M. Bogucka's remarks in: *"L'attrait" de la culture nobilitaire? Sarmatisation de la bourgeoisie polonaise au XVII^e siècle*, "Acta Poloniae Historica", vol. XXXIII, 1976, pp. 23-41.

elements emerged in Royal Prussia. "This arrangement of culture-forming factors turned out to be very favourable and bore rich fruit in various fields"¹⁹.

Royal Prussia, a window on the world and a territory where two cultures met, was a region in which intellectual culture developed dynamically from the 16th to the 18th century. The production of the printing industry in Royal Prussia was far above the production in other Polish territories, especially in the 17th and the first half of the 18th century (up to about 1740 anyhow). Royal Prussia was a leading centre of intellectual culture, in particular of science, in the old Commonwealth in the 17th and early 18th centuries. It was only at the end of the Saxon period and the beginning of Stanislaus Augustus' reign that the proportions changed and Warsaw began to play the leading role in intellectual culture. Royal Prussia undoubtedly owed its position to the high level of its economy, especially to the role played by the local burghers. In the 17th century the urban population in other parts of Poland did not play such an important role, one of the reasons being the monopolistic activities of Gdańsk which in a specific alliance with the feudal class undermined the economic welfare of many Polish towns, taking over not only their trade but also their productive functions²⁰. Another reason was the wrong socio-topographic development of Polish culture; owing to the nobility's omnipotence in the state during the Baroque period, Polish culture was subjected to rustication, for the cultural circles led a country life.

What were the main elements of Royal Prussia's cultural dynamism in the 16th–18th centuries?

At the end of the 16th century Royal Prussia became a great centre of humanism in the Polish territories, and later a centre

¹⁹M. Bogucka in: *Historia Pomorza (A History of Pomerania)*, vol. II, part 1, p. 537. Cf. recent remarks by K. Maliszewski, *Gdańsk jako ośrodek transferu informacji i komunikacji społecznej w Rzeczypospolitej szlacheckiej w XVII–XVIII wieku (Gdańsk as a Centre Transferring Information and Social Communication in the Noblemen's Commonwealth in the 17th and 18th Centuries)*, in: *Mieszczanstwo gdańskie*, collective work, ed. S. Salmonowicz, Gdańsk 1997, pp. 223–238.

²⁰M. Bogucka, *Polish Towns between the Sixteenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, in: *A Republic of Nobles. Studies in Polish History to 1864*, ed. J. K. Todorowicz, Cambridge 1982, pp. 135–152.

of Baroque and early Enlightenment culture²¹. The greatest development took place in the printing industry, literature, education, science, the theatre, music, visual arts and artistic crafts. Of basic importance was the development of the Reformation and the role of Protestantism. Since the wave of Polish Protestantism subsided at the end of the 16th century and Königsberg's significance for Polish Protestant culture declined, Royal Prussia became an important centre uniting Polish and German cultural circles in defence of Lutheranism. Whereas in its first phase Polish Protestantism was under the protection of Duke Albrecht in Königsberg, this role was taken over by Toruń and Gdańsk at the end of the 16th century. In the 17th century Toruń and Gdańsk controlled the production and trade in Lutheran books in the Polish language in the Commonwealth. In their content, the Protestant publications published in Latin, German and Polish showed a symbiosis of the values of these both cultures. The main Lutheran works were naturally written by German authors, Polish publications being translations or paraphrases. But there was an interaction in hymn-books: Polish hymn-books adopted many German hymns while some German hymn-books published in Royal Prussia took over Jan Kochanowski's poems. The religious Protestant writings contributed by Royal Prussia in the 16th–18th centuries constitute a glorious page in the history of Protestant writings in Poland, to mention only such authors active in Toruń as Piotr Artomiusz, Jan Turnowski, Jan Giżycki, Aaron Blivernic, Michał B. Ruttich, Bogumił Kölichen and Efraim Oloff²².

An atmosphere of respect for other people's religion became prevalent in Royal Prussia under the influence of Polish culture and its tradition of softening religious conflicts. Despite the disputes during the epoch of the Counter-Reformation, Royal Prussia remained a province where tolerance reigned. It was not

²¹ Cf. my remarks in the study *O sytuacji kulturalnej Prus Królewskich w XVI–XVII wieku* [Royal Prussia's Cultural Situation in the 16th and 17th Centuries], in: *Niderlandyzm w sztuce polskiej. Materiały Sesji Stowarzyszenia Historyków Sztuki, Toruń, December 1992*, Warszawa 1995, pp. 81–92.

²² For Toruń's contribution to Polish Protestant writings see two of my studies: *Obrońcy i miłośnicy języka polskiego w Toruniu XVI–XVII w.* (*The Defenders and Lovers of the Polish Language in Toruń in the 16th–18th Centuries*), Toruń 1979, and *Polnische Literatur und Sprache in Thorn am Anfang des 18. Jahrhunderts*, in: "Suche die Meinung". Karl Dedecius Dem Übersetzer und Mittler zum 65. Geburtstag, Wiesbaden 1986, pp. 155–165.

accidental that the *Colloquium Charitativum* initiated by King Ladislaus IV was held in Toruń in 1645²³. However, it was not accidental either that as a result of the passionate feelings of German orthodox Lutheran circles no agreement was reached and religious antagonism even increased after the Toruń meeting²⁴.

In the 17th century Gdańsk was the capital of Lutheranism, the fortress of Lutheran orthodoxy; in the 18th century Toruń became the main centre of revived Lutheran religiousness, an expression of which was Pietism²⁵.

In the 17th century Catholicism in Royal Prussia was typically Polish (Warmia was a partial exception) and the mentality and cultural attitudes of its believers did not differ from Polish norms. The development of science and education among both the Protestants and the Catholics deserves a more detailed treatment²⁶. Royal Prussia was a province in which education flourished during the era of humanism. Foremost in this respect were the three great Protestant academies in Gdańsk, Toruń and Elbląg and many Jesuits schools, such as the Old Scotland college near Gdańsk and the college in Toruń²⁷. Royal Prussia's Protestant secondary schools had a mixed composition as far as their pupils and teachers are concerned. The professors and teachers of these schools played an important role in the history

²³E. Piśszcz, *Colloquium Charitativum w Toruniu A.D. 1645. Geneza i przebieg (Colloquium Charitativum in Toruń A.D. 1645. Its Genesis and Course)*, Toruń 1995.

²⁴It should however be added that despite the Counter-Reformation propaganda waged by one side and the persecutions of Catholics in Toruń and Gdańsk carried out by the other side, sharp conflicts were extremely rare.

²⁵Cf. S. Salmonowicz, *Pietyzm w dawnym Toruniu (Pietism in Old Toruń)*, "Rocznik Toruński", 13: 1978, pp. 185–197.

²⁶I will come back to this question. Cf. also my article *Jesuitenschulen und Akademische Gymnasien in Königlich-Preussen (16.–18. Jh.)*, in: *Wkład Pomorza Gdańskiego do rozwoju nauki i oświaty. Materiały z sesji naukowej*, Zeszyty Naukowe Wydziału Humanistycznego Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, Pedagogika No. 15, Gdańsk 1985, pp. 15–26.

²⁷The Jesuit college in Braniewo was set up in 1581, the one in Toruń in 1605, the Old Scotland near Gdańsk in 1621, in Chojnice in 1627, in Grudziądz in 1647; cf. also K. Maliszewski, *Zakony katolickie w Toruniu w okresie potrydenckim jako ośrodki religijności i kultury (The Catholic Monastic Orders in Toruń in the Post-Trent Period as Centres of Religiousness and Culture)*, "Studia Pelplińskie", vol. 18, 1987, pp. 33–57.

of education, making an important contribution to Polish culture, even though they were frequently of foreign origin²⁸.

The history of art in Pomerania, with its glorious Baroque monuments, the second great epoch in Pomeranian art after the Gothic, also deserves a more detailed treatment, as does the history of its theatre and music. Neither the German nor the Polish literature of the province was very successful. A turning point came in the 17th century when during the war in Austrian Silesia Royal Prussia became Germany's refuge, attracting many writers of the German Silesian school, including such well known authors as Martin Opitz, Christian Hofmann von Hofmannswaldau, Andreas Gryphius and Andreas Tschering. It is due to these events that Gdańsk's Baroque poetry, theatre and indirectly also its visual arts owed their flourishing development. Let us add that in the 17th century Royal Prussia, in particular Gdańsk and Toruń, became famous for the production of works of art, especially products of the artistic industry, a field in which Gdańsk was the Commonwealth's main supplier until the middle of the 18th century. Royal Prussia's two most important towns, Toruń and Gdańsk, have been a subject of comprehensive research during the last thirty years²⁹. Special attention has been paid to Gdańsk's role in the 17th century. The city and its culture have been presented in a multi-volume history³⁰ and the popular culture has been discussed in the studies by M. Boguc-

²⁸ Cf. S. Salmonowicz, *Die protestantische akademischen Gymnasien in Thorn, Elbing und Danzig und ihre Bedeutung für die regionale Identität im Königl. Preussen (16.–18. Jahrhundert)*, in: "Nordost-Archiv", N.F.B.VI, 1997, No. 2, pp. 515–540; the article mentions literature on this subject.

²⁹ See my history of culture in Toruń in 1548–1793 in the collective work *Historia Torunia*, ed. M. Biskup, vol. II, parts 2 and 3, Toruń 1994, 1996. A balance sheet of research into Eastern Pomerania's history in the 17th and 18th centuries is presented in the volume of collective studies *Prusy Książęce i Prusy Królewskie w XVI–XVIII wieku (Ducal Prussia and Royal Prussia in the 16th–18th Centuries)*, ed. J. Wójcicka, Kielce 1997 (see in particular M. Bogucka, *Spoleczeństwo i kultura Prus Królewskich u progu ery nowożytnej. Spełnione i niespełnione zadania badawcze (Royal Prussia's Society and Culture on the Threshold of the Modern Era. Fulfilled and Unfulfilled Research Tasks)*, *ibidem*, pp. 17–29).

³⁰ Cf. *Historia Gdańska (A History of Gdańsk)*, ed. E. Cieślak, vols. II and III, Gdańsk 1982, 1993. The main parts concerning culture in the 16th–18th centuries have been written by J. Stankiewicz, M. Bogucka, E. Cieślak and Z. Nowak.

ka³¹, E. Kotarski³², and L. Mokrzecki³³. In connection with the city's 1000th anniversary, the last few years have witnessed a development of research, which can only be signalled here.

The years 1526–1626 were a golden epoch of the southern Baltic; it was an era almost completely free of wars. But Gdańsk and Toruń preserved their significance as great centres of art, science and education even in more difficult times, up to the Second Northern War. This is what a researcher into the city's history writes: "Picturesquely situated on the slowly-flowing dark Motława river and the rapid waters of the Radunia, intersected by a network of wide and narrow canals, Gdańsk with the spires of its Gothic churches and the beauty of its Renaissance houses, experienced its greatest prosperity and affluence in the 16th and 17th centuries"³⁴. What did Gdańsk mean for the Commonwealth, for its immediate Pomeranian hinterland in the 17th century? It was a metropolis of art and a city of great opportunities. This is what the poet Georg Greflinger wrote about Gdańsk's role in 1646:

"Was nirgends Platz mehr hat,
das zieht in diese Stadt
Dieweil sie Künste liebt und guten Frieden".

Gdańsk was a city which attracted works of art and artists from Western countries, mainly from the Netherlands; it was a city with many artists and ambitious energetic craftsmen. Throughout the 17th century Gdańsk buildings, products and artists attracted general attention³⁵. Gdańsk was also a centre with rich

³¹Cf. the bibliography of many studies on Gdańsk by Maria Bogucka in: *Ludzie. Kontakty. Kultura XVI–XVII w. (People. Contacts. Culture 16th–18th Centuries)*. Studies presented to Professor Maria Bogucka, eds. J. Kowceki and J. Tazbir, Warszawa 1997.

³²Cf. E. Kotarski, *Gdańska poezja okolicznościowa (Gdańsk Occasional Poetry)*, Gdańsk 1993; idem, *Muza gdańska Janowi Sobieskiemu 1673–1696 (The Muse of Gdańsk to John Sobieski 1673–1696)*, Wrocław 1985.

³³Cf. L. Mokrzecki, *Początki wiedzy o morzu w dawnej Rzeczypospolitej. Problematyka morska w nauce gdańskiej doby baroku i oświecenia (The Early Knowledge of the Sea in the Old Commonwealth. Maritime Questions in Gdańsk Science during the Baroque and Enlightenment)*, Wrocław 1983; idem, *W kręgu prac historyków gdańskich XVII wieku (The Works of 17th Century Gdańsk Historians)*, Gdańsk 1974.

³⁴M. Bogucka, *Życie w dawnym Gdańsku. Wieki XVI–XVII (Life in Old Gdańsk. 16th–17th Centuries)*, Warszawa 1997, p. 237.

³⁵For general information on Pomerania art see J. Białostocki, *Obszar nadbałtycki jako krajobraz artystyczny w XVI wieku (The Baltic Region as an Artistic Landscape in the 16th Century)*, in: idem, *Refleksje i syntezy ze świata*

musical, theatrical and literary traditions. Whereas in art Gdańsk was a great province of Netherlandic art in the 17th century³⁶, in literature, alongside the still important neo-Latin writings, it (and partly also Toruń) enjoyed a flourishing development of German literature, represented mainly by poets driven out of Silesia and Lusatia by the Thirty Years War, for the tolerant and under-destroyed towns of Royal Prussia were an oasis of peace³⁷.

The first half of the 17th century was the apogee of intellectual life in Gdańsk. The city was the residence of the most prominent 17th century German poet Martin Opitz and of the eminent philosopher and historian Bartholomäus Keckermann³⁸; the well known propagator of Socinianism Martin Ruar (1588–1687), who corresponded with the whole of Europe's intellectual élite, lived in Gdańsk in the 1630s and then dwelt near the city (from 1643 to his death)³⁹. Gdańsk was a centre not only of visual arts but also of the theatre and music⁴⁰. After the ravages of the Second World War it is difficult to visualise the beauty of 17th century Gdańsk⁴¹; let us also remember that a large part of

sztuki, Warszawa 1978, pp. 9–18, and in particular T. Grzybkowska, *Złoty wiek malarstwa gdańskiego na tle kultury artystycznej miasta 1520–1620 (The Golden Age of Gdańsk Painting against the Background of the City's Artistic Culture, 1520–1620)*, Warszawa 1990.

³⁶See the materials from art historians' session devoted to Netherlandism in Polish Art, see fn. 21. Gdańsk Netherlandism was an exceptional artistic phenomenon which combined post-medieval themes and mannerism with Italian and Baroque influence.

³⁷Cf. *Danziger Barokdichtung*, hrsg. von H. Kindermann, Leipzig 1939; F. Schwarz, *Von Opitz bis Reznick. Deutsche Dichtung und Dichter in Danzig*, Danzig 1924; cf. also B. Nadolski, *Ze studiów nad życiem literackim i kulturą umysłową na Pomorzu w XVI i XVII wieku (Studies on Literary Life and Intellectual Culture in Pomerania in the 16th and 17th Centuries)*, Wrocław 1969.

³⁸Cf. B. Nadolski, *Życie i działalność naukowa uczonego gdańskiego Bartłomieja Keckermanna. Studium z dziejów Odrodzenia na Pomorzu (The Life and Work of the Gdańsk Scholar Bartłomiej Keckermann. Study in the History of the Renaissance in Pomerania)*, Toruń 1961.

³⁹Ruar's work has been recently discussed by J. Taźbira, *Intelektualista ariański w Gdańsku (An Antitrinitarian Intellectual in Gdańsk)*, in: *Balticum. Studia z dziejów polityki, gospodarki i kultury XII–XV. I w. presented to Marcin Biskup on his 70th birthday*, ed. Z. H. Nowak, Toruń 1992, pp. 351–358.

⁴⁰Cf. L. Mokrzejki, *Musikleben in Gdańsk und Elbląg im XVI.–XVIII. Jahrhundert*, "Studia Maritima" vol. I, 1978, pp. 98–107. Theatre in Gdańsk has been discussed by T. Witczak, *Teatr i dramaty staropolski w Gdańsku (Theatre and Old Polish Drama in Gdańsk)*, Gdańsk 1959; G. Gross, *Das Danziger Theater in der ersten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts*, Leipzig 1939.

⁴¹As regards Gdańsk burghers' patronage over art and culture cf. M. Bogucka, *Le bourgeois et les investissements culturels. L'exemple de Gdańsk aux XVII^e et*

the wealth of the entire province and of many other territories of the Polish-Lithuanian state was destroyed or plundered during the Swedish invasions in 1655–1660. Architecture, works of art, products of artistic handicrafts, libraries and various collections were all destroyed; consequently, it is not easy to visualise the wealth that had been created from the end of the 15th century to the dramatic years of the 17th.

Gdańsk and Toruń were also important educational centres, though they did not match Königsberg with its university, but in respect of their scientific activity and educational role they surpassed Elbing and Stettin⁴². The other Pomeranian university, the one in Greifswald, could compete with the intellectual circles of Toruń and Gdańsk only intermittently. Royal Prussia's three academies were at the summit of fame throughout practically the whole of the 17th century. Toruń was a city of great renown owing to its interest in Copernican astronomy⁴³, even though Pomerania's most prominent astronomer, Hevelius, was active in Gdańsk. The 17th century leading historians, R. Curicke⁴⁴, K. Hartknoch⁴⁵, J. Pastorius⁴⁶, J. Schultz-Szulecki⁴⁷ lived either in

XVIII^e siècles, "Revue Historique", CII, 1978, vol.: 526, pp. 429–440.

⁴²Szczecin had a most unfortunate history in the second half of the 17th century; the sieges in 1659 and 1676–1677 completely ruined the city. The Swedes partially rebuilt the city at the end of the 17th century; most houses rebuilt then were modelled on the architecture of Amsterdam and Hamburg.

⁴³For more details see S. Salmonowicz, *Nauka astronomii w Toruńskim Gimnazjum Akademickim w dobie baroku i oświecenia (1660–1793) (The Teaching of Astronomy in Toruń's Gymnasium Academicum during the Baroque Period and the Age of Enlightenment (1660–1793))*, "Przegląd Historyczno-Oświatowy", 15: 1972, 4, pp. 614–646; *idem*, *Myśl Kopernika w Toruniu na przełomie XVII/XVIII w. (Copernicus' Thought in Toruń at the Turn of the 17th Century)*, "Studia Warmińskie", 9: 1972, pp. 313–338.

⁴⁴Reinhold Curicke (1610–1667), author of an excellent work *Der Stadt Danzig historische Beschreibung*, which he wrote in 1638–1642; the first edition, censored by the Gdańsk authorities, appeared in 1645; a full edition was published in Amsterdam in 1687.

⁴⁵Hartknoch, deputy rector of the Toruń school gained fame in Europe thanks to his great work *Res Publica Polonica duobus libris illustrata* (1678).

⁴⁶Joachim Pastorius from Hirtenberg, a scholar and politician was known for his schoolbook on Poland's history, entitled *Florus Polonicus* (1st ed. 1641).

⁴⁷Jan Schultz-Szulecki (1662–1704), a jurist and historian, was professor at the Gdańsk gymnasium academicum and author of the well known treatise *Tractatus historico-politicus de Polonia nunquam tributaria*, published in 1694; cf. H. Grajewski, *Jan Schultz-Szulecki i jego Tractatus historico-polonicus de Polonia nunquam tributaria (Jan Schultz-Szulecki and His Tractatus historico-polonicus de Polonia nunquam tributaria)*, Łódź 1964.

Gdańsk or in Toruń. Gdańsk was also the residence of such prominent jurists as J. Nixdorf and E. K. Schröder⁴⁸. The eminent architect and mathematician Adam Freytag, whose work *Architectura militaris*, published in Leiden in 1631, was the most popular handbook of the art of fortification in Europe, was born in Toruń. Reverberations of 16th and 17th century religious disputes, of such events as Toruń's *Colloquium Charitativum* and the ideas of irenics and ecumenicalism, were felt all over Europe; a special role was played by the fact that Polish Socinianism reached Holland and England mainly through Gdańsk, contributing to the birth of early Enlightenment currents (P. Bayle, J. Locke)⁴⁹.

Let us stress once again that the influence of Toruń's gymnasium academicum, which attracted Protestants from Lusatia and Silesia and became a school popular with Slovak Protestant élites oppressed in the Habsburg state, extended far beyond Poland's frontiers. The school played this international role up to the beginning of the 18th century⁵⁰.

Pomerania's port towns and their hinterland, especially the towns in tolerant Royal Prussia, swarmed at times with Dutchmen, Scots, Danes, Swedes and people from various German countries, some of them staying illegally and suffering discrimination. This was a real religious mosaic; in addition to the main religious groups, i.e. the Catholics and the Protestants, Gdańsk was also inhabited by representatives of other religions, by Jews, English Chiliasts, Mennonites, Polish Socinians as well as Quakers and members of various Protestant sects⁵¹.

⁴⁸For Jan Nixdorff (1624–1697), an expert in Polish 17th century law, see L. Pauli, *Jan Nixdorff 1624–1697, pisarz prawa procesowego (Jan Nixdorff (1624–1697), Writer on Trial Law)*, Warszawa 1957). The Gdańsk burgher Elias K. Schröder (1625–1680) angered the municipal authorities of Gdańsk by stressing the Polish kings' rights in the city in his work *Ius publicum Dantiscanum...* (1657); as a result of the municipal authorities' objection, the work was never published and is still in manuscript form.

⁴⁹Cf. J. Tazbir, *Polsko-niderlandzkie kontakty wyznaniowe w XVII w. (Polish-Netherlandic Religious Contacts in the 17th Century)*, in: *Niderlandyzm w sztuce polskiej*, p. 48.

⁵⁰For more details see S. Salmonowicz, *Toruńskie Gimnazjum Akademickie a ziemie Korony Węgierskiej w XVII i XVIII wieku (Toruń's Gymnasium academicum and the Territories of the Hungarian Crown in the 17th and 18th Centuries)*, in: *Księga Pamiątkowa 400-lecia Toruńskiego Gimnazjum Akademickiego*, ed. Z. Zdrójkowski, I, Toruń 1972, pp. 167–205.

Everyday life was colourful but it was not free of terror and the fear of wars, pestilence and diseases. But despite these fears, Protestant rigorism and Counter-Reformation Catholicism, the Baroque man was full of verve and vigour, so that life in great cities and the life of the nobility, especially the Polish Catholic nobility, was colourful. The laws combating luxury and the injunctions to lead a thrifty modest life were of no avail. European fashions quickly reached the port towns. In the second half of the 16th century, the élites and people who wanted to be reckoned as an élite adopted Spanish fashions, which also prevailed at the Vasas' court in Poland. Slightly later Dutch fashions were the rage in Gdańsk, and as time went on, French fashions gained popularity⁵².

The life of rural people, inhabitants of small towns and petty noblemen in the 17th and early 18th centuries is not yet fully known for lack of historical sources. The material culture, mentality and intellectual horizons of these milieux are questions waiting to be researched by scholars who will be ready to make use of unconventional historical sources, such as iconography, written sources requiring toilsome quantitative researches necessary to obtain comparative data (e.g. funeral sermons and occasional literature as a reflection of the mentality of the epoch, leaflets, posthumous inventories and last wills). Rich burghers and even townsmen of modest means as well as prosperous noblemen visited European capitals and great universities, in particular in the first half of the 17th century, adopting the achievements of European culture at its source: Protestants studied first and foremost at German and Dutch universities but also at those in England and France; Catholics went to Vienna and Italy. Let us give an example of a man representing the rich but typical urban élite. Charles Ramsay the Elder (1616–1669) was born in Elbing to a family of Scottish origin. He acquired education at a Polish secondary school in Wilno and at the

⁵¹Cf. E. Kizik, *Mennonici w Gdańsku, Elblągu i na Żuławach Wiślanych w drugiej połowie XVII i w XVIII w. (Mennonites in Gdańsk, Elbing and the Vistula Lowlands in the Late 17th and 18th Centuries)*, Gdańsk 1994, and the volume of collective studies entitled *Protestantyzm i protestanci na Pomorzu (Protestantism and Protestants in Pomerania)*, eds J. Iluk and D. Martińska, Gdańsk-Koszalin 1997. The group of Dutch Remonstrants who settled in Royal Prussia in the 17th century also deserves research.

⁵²See M. Bogucka's remarks on everyday life in Gdańsk: *Das alle Danzig. Alltagsleben von 15. bis 17. Jahrhundert*, Leipzig 1980.

Gdańsk gymnasium academicum. Then came the time for travels: he visited the British Isles, studied at the Cracow Academy for two years (1634–1636), continued his European travels up to 1643 and engaged in short-term studies (at Leiden, Cambridge, Oxford, Paris, a stay in Italy and Vienna). After returning to his homeland, he multiplied the family's wealth, held high municipal offices and also dabbled at writing. In addition to descriptions of his travels and occasional works, he wrote a compilatory history of Elbing⁵³.

The specific culture of Royal Prussia was part of the diversified picturesque culture of the Polish–Lithuanian state. It is undeniable that German influence (comprising all-European achievements) predominated in many fields. This was a result not only of the complex ethnic and linguistic relations in this border province but also of Poland's civilisational underdevelopment caused by 17th century defeats and isolation, that is, a result of the backwardness of Polish cultural consciousness and its content, a result of the radical Sarmatisation of Polish culture. But at the same time German influence went through the filter of the environment which it influenced. It can be said that in the 16th century there was a relatively close coexistence between Polish and German culture; this coexistence was based on reciprocity, because Polish Renaissance culture was then at the summit of its development and was of a European character. Differences between the two cultures came to light in the middle of the 17th century when Sarmatian culture imposed a specific indigency on Polish writings and Polish mentality. This is why from the middle of the 17th century the milieu which succumbed to the influence of German culture and the milieu cherishing the typical Polish noblemen's culture developed on different tracks, far away from each other and their points of contact were relatively rare. Moreover, during the isolation of the noblemen's culture the influence of Royal Prussia's burghers on Polish culture weakened.

⁵³See his biography by A. Groth, in: *Zasługi ludzie dawnego Elbląga*, ed. M. Biskup, Wrocław 1987, pp. 106–110.

But Polish culture continued to interest them⁵⁴. The isolation was one-sided: Toruń and Gdańsk did not isolate themselves from life in the Polish Commonwealth, but their influence decreased markedly. Their role in passing on the achievements of the early Enlightenment Age to Polish culture increased in the 18th century⁵⁵. The influence of urban Enlightenment, weak as it was, led from Dresden through Gdańsk and Toruń to Warsaw⁵⁶. At the same time Pomeranian circles informed Western Europe of Poland's affairs. The precursory role of Gdańsk and Toruń came to an end in about 1740⁵⁷. It was symbolic that the first issues of "Monitor", a Warsaw Enlightenment periodical published in great secrecy, were printed in Gdańsk in 1763. Many scholars and artists active in Warsaw during Stanislaus Augustus' reign were burghers born in Toruń (Michał J. Hube, Efraim Schreger, Cristian B. Steiner); a burgher from Toruń, Samuel Bogumił Linde, the greatest Polish 19th century linguist, was an heir to this great tradition⁵⁸.

The Duchy of Prussia, an enclave of German and Lutheran influence surrounded by Polish territories, experienced a great cultural development in the 16th century thanks to the court of Duke Albrecht and the university he set up at Königsberg. Polish issues (also the publication of Polish books) attracted Königsberg's interest throughout the 16th century⁵⁹. The noblemen's way of life, frequently based on Polish models, predominated in Ducal Prussia with the exception of Königsberg. Ducal Prussia was under Poland's political and cultural influence; what at-

⁵⁴Cf. J. Jarzęcka, *Obraz życia umysłowego Rzeczypospolitej doby saskiej w świetle wybranych lipskich czasopism naukowych (1710–1762)* (*The Picture of the Commonwealth's Intellectual Life during the Saxon Period in the Light of Selected Leipzig Scholarly Periodicals, 1710–1762*), Wrocław 1987.

⁵⁵Cf. the studies quoted in fn. 17.

⁵⁶Cf. H. Lemke, *Die Brüder Zaluski und ihre Beziehungen zur Gelehrten in Deutschland und Danzig*, Berlin 1958.

⁵⁷Cf. S. Salmonowicz, *Toruń i Gdańsk w polskiej kulturze lat pięćdziesiątych i sześćdziesiątych (Toruń and Gdańsk in Polish Culture in the 1750s and 1760s)*, in: *Kultura literacka połowy XVIII w. w Polsce*, ed. T. Kostkiewiczowa, Wrocław 1992, pp. 97–112.

⁵⁸Cf. S. Salmonowicz, *Krystian Bogumił Steiner (1746–1814) toruński prawnik i historyk polskiego Oświecenia (Cristian Bogumil Steiner (1746–1814), Toruń Jurist and Historian Active during the Polish Enlightenment)*, Toruń 1962.

⁵⁹See the volume of collected studies *Królewiec a Polska (Königsberg and Poland)*, Olsztyn 1993; J. Jasiński, *Historia Królewca (A History of Königsberg)*, Olsztyn 1994, the author mentions relevant literature.

tracted the nobility in the Duchy was the Polish noblemen's religious tolerance and pacifism, the vision of a country which under the rule of its elective kings excluded the possibility of predatory wars. Until the middle of the 17th century the noblemen and magnates of Ducal Prussia, who nearly all were derived from German families, were fascinated by the Polish political system and the way of life of Polish noblemen and aristocrats; they were impressed by the Poles' political rights, their verve and their wealth. Poland's cultural influence was strong at that time and the Polish language was widely known, also among (60.

The nobility and burghers of Royal Prussia were linked by strong ties with their counterparts in the Duchy of Prussia. Royal Prussia was a bridge through which Polish influence, cleared of the fanatically Catholic Mazovian stigma, penetrated freely into Ducal Prussia. When in the middle of the 16th century Sigismund Augustus called on Albrecht to become "a good Pole", he had no intention of imposing Polish culture or the Polish language on the duke; he only wanted to make him a loyal liegeman of the Polish crown. It is a fact that Albrecht's court, despite its involvement in the promotion of the new Lutheran religion, focused attention on Poland, also in the field of culture⁶¹. Albrecht's role as a patron of Polish Protestant culture has unfortunately not yet been adequately researched. Polish Lutheran writings flourished in the Duchy; their aim was to meet the religious needs of the Prussian Mazurians (to a lesser extent also of Lithuanians) in whom the Königsberg Reformation took a special interest, crowned with success⁶². As in Royal Prussia, the artistic influence of the Netherlands was strong in Ducal Prussia, especially

⁶⁰Cf. J. Małłek, *Ekspansja kultury polskiej na Prusy Książęce w XVI wieku (The Expansion of Polish Culture into the Duchy of Prussia in the 16th Century)*, in: *Szkice z dziejów Kościoła na Pomorzu*, ed. M. Grzegorz, Warszawa 1987; idem, *Das Herzogtum Preussen und die Reformation in Polen*, in: *Probleme der Reformation in Deutschland und Polen*, "Studien zur Geschichte der deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen", Heft 8, Rostock 1983, pp. 23–40.

⁶¹This is why the Duchy of Prussia, being a fief of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, was a multicultural region, despite the decided preponderance of Lutheranism.

⁶²Cf. P. G. Thielen, *Die Kultur am Hofe Herzog Albrechts von Preussen 1525–1568*, Göttingen 1953, and remarks on Duke Albrecht's cultural interests in: J. Ton del, *Biblioteka zamkowa (1529–1568) księcia Albrechta Pruskiego w Królewcu (The Castle Library (1529–1568) of the Prussian Duke Albrecht in Königsberg)*, Toruń 1992.

in Königsberg⁶³, and Dutch settlers, alongside Mazurians, also played a role in the internal colonisation of the Duchy⁶⁴. The history of cultural relations between Poland and the Duchy of Prussia, an extremely interesting subject up to the beginning of the 17th century, deserves a systematic presentation. However, Ducal Prussia's culture in the 17th century was a culture of a provincial territory in which an important role was played only by Königsberg University, which trained Lutheran priests also for Royal Prussia. It is worth adding that the rigid Lutheranism of Ducal Prussia was softened in the 17th century by the Hohenzollerns' Calvinism.

At the end of the 16th century, noblemen in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth lost interest in Königsberg University but the university remained an important centre of studies for young Protestants, mainly from Royal Prussia and Lithuania⁶⁵. The rank of Königsberg rose in the 18th century, especially in its second half, but this happened during the dominance of German culture whose most prominent representative was the philosopher Immanuel Kant.

In the 16th century, culture in Western Pomerania was also influenced by the Reformation and the slowly developing humanism. The Reformation, which promoted the use of mother tongues in sermons, revived the role of the languages of the native Slav population (Kashubians, Poles), but the culture of the court and large towns was German. The Reformation also exerted a major influence on the development of humanistic schools and schools with greater ambition in towns, such as the Stettin *pedagogium*. In the part of Pomerania which was assigned to Sweden in 1648, the University of Greifswald continued to attract students from the whole of Western Pomerania; this was due to the fact that the part of Pomerania west of the Oder was closely linked with other parts of Western Pomerania. Swedish Pomerania, which at that

⁶³Cf. A. Rzempoluch, *Niderlandyzm w sztuce Prus Książęcych. Twórcy — dzieła — następstwa (Netherlandism in the Art of Ducal Prussia. The Creators. Their Works. The Consequences)*, in: *Niderlandyzm w sztuce polskiej*, pp. 113–138.

⁶⁴For the cultural role of Netherlandic settlers see B. Schumacher, *Niederländische Anstedler in Herzogtum Preussen zur Zeit Herzog Albrechts (1525–1568)*, Leipzig 1903. The later history of these settlers is little known.

⁶⁵Cf. M. Pawlak, *Studia uniwersyteckie młodzieży z Prus Królewskich w XVI–XVIII w. (University Studies of Young People from Royal Prussia in the 16th–18th Centuries)*, Toruń 1988.

time included Stettin, Stralsund and Greifswald, had important achievements to its credit in the printing industry and literature, including historiography.

To sum up: The shape of Pomeranian culture and the role it played in its vast hinterland was influenced mainly by the Baltic sea and its links with German and Dutch culture. Access to the sea, which despite danger offered the most convenient way of communication at that time, determined not only the course of economic events. Social and cultural communication had from the dawn of history been an inseparable factor of trade. For Pomerania, the 16th–18th centuries were a period of intensive contacts with Scandinavia, England, France and even with distant Spain and Italy. However, contacts with Holland, in particular from the middle of the 16th to the middle of the 17th century, predominated over all other contacts, even those with northern Germany. Netherlandic art, technology and economy exerted an enormous influence, especially on Royal Prussia; for some time Gdańsk was practically a colony of Dutch culture, of the culture of the Dutch middle class which was then living through its most glorious epoch.

It is natural that only a few themes of a very vast subject have been raised in this essay. I have tried to make it useful for comparative studies; the annexed bibliography can serve as an introduction to many detailed questions. The enormous progress achieved in historical research does not change the fact that many questions concerning the material and intellectual culture of various milieux are still waiting to be researched. It can be said that as far as Eastern Pomerania is concerned, the best known period is the second half of the 16th century and the first decades of the 17th. Intellectual culture in the late 17th century and at the beginning of the 18th century is relatively little known, the only exceptions being Gdańsk and Toruń. It is essential not to separate research into the culture of the southern coast of the Baltic from its European links thanks to which the region had from the beginning influenced its vast hinterland.

(Translated by Jantna Dorosz)