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## THE INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPATION OF THE BURGHERS OF WROCLAW IN MILITARY EXPEDITIONS

The fact that cities had military obligations to the ruler cannot be questioned. Similarly, the inhabitants were also responsible for the defence of the place where they lived. The author of the present paper, however, is only interested in a certain technical aspect of these obligations. How did the townspeople fulfil their duty towards the “outside” factors and did it have an influence on the “inside” division of duties? In other words, were the townspeople obliged to appear in person if summoned by their lord because they possessed civic rights? Did they leave the city as a result of mobilization and did they take part in war expeditions or did they only provide a certain number of soldiers? The above questions have, of course, been answered in the case of the numerous European cities where written sources contain sufficient information. However, in the majority of cases, researchers have at their disposal only some very general information found in very brief publications dealing with the history of military arts.<sup>1</sup> The Silesian towns of the Middle Ages belong to the second group. Unfortunately, the present military research output or in fact lack of such research makes it impossible for the author to satisfactorily answer the questions asked above. Therefore, I will limit myself to discussing the issue briefly and will not attempt to solve the problem in the present paper. As military activity is best documented in the case of Wrocław, the city will serve as an example here.

An exceptional accumulation of political circumstance, that is, weakening of the monarch’s status as a result of the civil war, the Hussite revolution and finally the wars for Czech succession, forced Wrocław to become a militarily active and self-dependent city. The situation lasted from the

end of the fourteenth century (the time of the plot of the dukes of Opole) to the close of the fifteenth century (the time of the pacification of Silesia by the Jagiellons. At that time, Wrocław permanently maintained mercenaries in the service of the town. The number of troops and soldiers present in the city varied. With the passage of time, these forces, being either part of the army gathered by the confederations of Silesia or by the city of Wrocław itself, became one of the elements of the city’s sense of identity and independence. As after 1527, the Habsburgs respected the so-called *ius praesidii* – the right of a city to have its own crew while not allowing any other troops to pass through its gates – the forces of Wrocław, organized as an infantry banner, survived until the Prussian conquest of Silesia in 1740.

Fifteenth-century sources frequently contain information about mercenaries remaining in the service of the people of Wrocław. Thus it is possible for the researcher to examine the phenomenon in successive years, to find out about the composition of the troops, the number of soldiers, their pay and even the nationality of the commanders.<sup>2</sup> There were both foot and mounted soldiers among the warriors, though the infantrymen were much more numerous. Some of the forces were big while others were small. Some of the men were experienced warriors and some of the forces were organized on the spot. However, the fifteenth-century sources mentioned above contain no information about the civic militia, which was the second pillar of Wrocław’s military independence

<sup>1</sup> Cf.: T. M. Nowak, J. Wiśniewski, *Historia oręża polskiego 963-1795*, Warszawa 1981, pp. 93-96.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the agreements of 1470, signed only with Germans, with the agreements of 1488, according to which the city hired mainly Polish mercenaries. *Politische Correspondenz Breslaus im Zeitalter des Königs Matthias Corvinus*, ed. V. B. Kronthal, H. Wendt, section 1-2, *Scriptores Rerum Silesiacarum*, vol. 13, Breslau 1893, no. 31; vol. 14, Breslau 1894, no. 476.

in the modern period. Although the militia was several thousand strong and was characterized by stable quarter organization, it played a purely theoretical role in the city's defensive system as it never faced an enemy outside the city walls. It did, however, perform well during the soldier uprising of 1636, when it surrounded and disarmed the rioters remaining in the town's service.<sup>3</sup> The situation in Prague is a good example of the function performed by the quarter organization of the militia in the Middle Ages. The military organization of militiamen according to the quarter plan of the Old City was introduced in Prague in the time of Charles IV (1346-1378). In the beginning the mobilization system was inconsistent. Sometimes only selected quarter banners were mobilized and sometimes the contingents created by particular guilds. In 1371, a special body, 12 strong, was appointed to collectively control the just division of military duties among the quarters of the Old City. The body consisted of four councillors and eight representatives of the common people. Only two quarters took part in an expedition outside the "land". These pairs were chosen by chance (the Virgin Mary's and St Leonard's quarters or St Nicolas' and St Gallus' quarters). All the inhabitants of a particular quarter had to participate in such campaigns and covered the expenses and in return they were exempt from paying two successive taxes. The exemption was prolonged for every additional month spent on the battlefield. Their tax was paid by the inhabitants of the quarters staying at home. Each quarter had its own commander – the hetman. Hetmans were chosen in a very special way. If one of the quarters was commanded by a councillor, the other commander had to be a commoner. The most important thing, however, is the fact that the people of Prague hardly ever participated in war expeditions in person. They normally provided soldiers who fought in the name of the king, for internal security and for status purposes.<sup>4</sup> Of course, the people of Prague participated in some war expeditions. For instance, 300 *platen* took part in the expedition of 1363 and the city was particularly active during the Hussite revolution.<sup>5</sup>

According to Janusz Tandecki, in Prussian towns, which although guilds covered some of the expenses connected with maintaining troops needed by the state, had not the guild but the quarter military organization system at least from the first quarter of the fifteenth century onwards, the forces of townspeople were responsible only for the defence of the city walls and for fighting fires.<sup>6</sup> This hypothesis seems to be supported by the fact that in Toruń the number of quarters rose to 12, which resulted in a much smaller number of men in particular banners. Militiamen in Wrocław are first mentioned in the sixteenth century, the time of the Habsburgs. The force may have come into being when the war law was established in the statute book of 1527-1534. The statutes introduced the mobilization system according to quarters – the four parts of the city. These first modern regulations directly mentioned only the obligation to arm all the townspeople and their servants, if possible, as well as the tenants in order to provide city security. The law also included some fire safety regulations.<sup>7</sup> The idea to use the demographic resources of the city was compatible with the general conceptions of sixteenth-century military thought, which originated in the time of Machiavelli, who was not only a theoretician but the father of Florence's militia in 1506.<sup>8</sup> Therefore it was not accidental that the civic laws and the general Silesian national defence law of 1529, which introduced the division of the province into four quarters and the recruiting organization of service (every X man was drafted into the army) worked well together.<sup>9</sup>

However, the way the townspeople used to fulfil their personal military obligations, which might have extended well beyond the task of protecting and defending the city walls, earlier remains unclear. In the opinion of law historians, these obligations resulted from possessing civic rights (the personal obligation) or having a plot in the city (the property obligation). Consequently,

<sup>6</sup>J. T a n d e c k i, *Pozazawodowe funkcje i powinności korporacji rzemieślniczych w miastach Prus Krzyżackich i Królewskich w XIV-XVIII wieku*, "Zapiski Historyczne", vol. LX (1995), fasc. 1, pp. 9-10.

<sup>7</sup>A. I g e r t, *Das Wehrrecht der Stadt Breslau unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der habsburgischen Zeit*, (Beiträge zur Geschichte der Stadt Breslau, H. 10), Breslau 1939, pp. 16-17, 67-71.

<sup>8</sup>S. O k ę c k i, *Niccolo Machiavelli o sztuce wojennej*, "Studia i Materiały do Historii Wojskowości", vol. V (1960), pp. 421-422.

<sup>9</sup>J. M a r o ń, *Militarne aspekty wojny trzydziestoletniej na Śląsku*, Wrocław 2000, pp. 44-45.

<sup>3</sup> See: J. A. G i e r o w s k i, *Powstanie żołnierskie w 1636 r.*, "Rocznik Wrocławski", vol. 1 (1957), pp. 83-100.

<sup>4</sup>V. V. T o m e k, *Dejepis mesta Prahy*, part VIII, Praha 1891, pp. 351, 371-373.

<sup>5</sup>*Jahrbuecher des zittauischen Stadtschreibers Johannes von Guben*, [in:] *Scriptores Rerum Lusaticarum*, N. F. vol. 1, Goerlitz 1839, p. 16.

the condition for being accepted into municipal jurisdiction was bearing expenses connected with the purchase of the arms and armour required. Guild statutes stated that a new member could be admitted to the organization on condition that he possessed certain arms and armour and was ready to defend the town. According Arwed Igert, a law historian from Wrocław, the commune was obliged to greet the ruler on his arrival in the city. On such an occasion, all the townspeople had to be present displaying their weapons and showing their readiness to fight. In wartime, they also had to transport their lord's arms, even outside the borders of Silesia. In the researcher's opinion, the Council could also call upon the inhabitants to provide horses and carts needed to carry weapons and provisions though the manifesto of 1290 quoted concerns transport of stones within the city and not war preparations.<sup>10</sup> In practice, the burden of military obligations was borne by guild organizations and this is why the modern quarter organization of armed townspeople replaced the medieval guild system. In Zittau, the town scribe wrote in the annals that in 1360, his town, situated in Upper Lusatia, mobilized "all the craftsmen" (*czocho dese stat vz mit groser macht, mit alen hantwerken*)<sup>11</sup> before its own expedition against Wisensee Castle. The costs of the expedition amounted to 600 score grossi and it is only thanks to the mention quoted above that one can find out that the warriors taking part in the campaign differed from those who the king or the Six Towns' Union were "normally" provided with by Zittau, the usual a dozen or so "helms". Georg Kom, the author of some nineteenth-century source editions, mentions a paragraph found in the laws of the bakers from the town of Strzegom, dating from 1393, and points out that the arms and armour being the common property of particular guilds were used by the guild part of the contingent provided by the town to satisfy the needs of the duchy (in the case of Strzegom, the Duchy of Świdnica and Jawor). Without referring to any particular source, the researcher goes further and argues that the Council put forward a demand for a concrete number of armed men and the guilds chose them from among the master craftsmen and journeymen. Of course, their colleagues assumed responsibility for the workshops and families

of the soldiers. A. Igert repeated the conclusions while discussing the situation in Wrocław. The researcher stressed that particular guild members possessed private weapons and had to replenish their supplies.<sup>12</sup> G. Korn ventured to explain that in situations where the supplies amassed by the guilds were not big enough, for example if a more numerous contingent was needed, weapons were also provided by the city arsenal. This hypothesis seems to be quite plausible. The only doubts arise if one examines the letter wrote by Wacław IV to the town Council of Wrocław on 9<sup>th</sup> March 1399. The letter contains no information about using guild or civic arms and armour. The king wanted the craftsmen to return to the town hall the weapons which had been gathered there thanks to the ruler's father, Charles IV, and to store the guild weapons in special chests in the same place.<sup>13</sup>

This episode seems to be connected with another phenomenon, the scale of which has been realized recently. However, the importance of this single incident should not be overestimated. In the years 1362-1363, Charles IV of Luxembourg purchased large quantities of protective arms and armour and sent the equipment out to at least 27-28 towns belonging to the Czech crown (for example, 26 Bohemian towns probably received 5058 so-called plates and 3950 helmets). According to the agreements signed, the townspeople had to amass more supplies and buy more pieces of armour so as to obtain a sufficient number of complete suits of armour (5200 in 26 Bohemian towns). Particular towns were given from 100 to 400 such suits of armour, depending on the size. However, it is unclear whether the king wanted to reinforce the defence of the towns or to strengthen the towns' military capability in general. In 1370, when preparations for a potential war with Poland were being made, 1/3 of all the weapons stored in 24 towns were shipped to Silesia, Wrocław and three other castles situated near the border. Similarly, a few years earlier, different kinds of royal weapons appeared in two towns and seven royal castles in so-called New Bohemia, the Upper Palatinate. One does not know, however, who the arms and armour were meant for: the mobilized townspeople or the soldiers that they provided. In

<sup>10</sup> A. Igert, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-8, 11-12; For information on towns' transport services see: W. Szczygielski, *Obowiązki i powinności wojskowe miast i mieszczaństwa w Polsce od XIII do połowy XV wieku*, "Studia i Materiały do Historii Wojskowości", vol. V (1960), pp. 442-445.

<sup>11</sup> *Jahrbuecher des zittauschen ...*, p. 12.

<sup>12</sup> *Schlesische Urkunden zur Geschichte des Gewerberechts insbesondere des Innungswesens aus der Zeit vor 1400*, ed. V. G. Korn, *Codex Diplomaticus Silesiae*, vol. 8, Breslau 1867, p. XLVIII and document no. 63 § 23; A. Igert, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

<sup>13</sup> Cf.: *Schlesische Urkunden ...*, p. XLIX and document no. 72.

Wrocław, the royal arms and armour were stored in the town hall to 1418 and this is why in the above-mentioned, letter the ruler demanded that the weapons were returned there. In Střibro, Bohemia, the weapons were guarded by 15 so-called captains, who distributed them among the town inhabitants. Thus everything depended on the town and its organization.<sup>14</sup>

A chronicle account of the Pope's legates' arrival in Wrocław in 1459 provides information about the above mentioned ceremonies held to greet the ruler entering the town. The event of 1459 is especially worth examining as at that time, Wrocław did not acknowledge the supremacy of George of Podebrady, conducted its own policy and respected only the authority of the Holy See. During the ceremony mounted warriors greeted the distinguished guests. According to the chronicler, as the counsellors had called upon the townspeople to provide all the horses they had, three groups of men on horseback left the town to meet the legates. The first "knight" force consisted of 400 mounted men in armour, including 51 lancers. These were enlisted cavalrymen as well as "young townspeople and merchants". The second force, over 100 strong, was composed of counsellors, aldermen, town elders and merchants, who were not wearing suits of armour. The third, guild, force, was about 500 strong. It was very numerous and even the councilors were surprised at the number of horses kept in their town. The craftsmen were dressed in armour. In the force there were eight lancers. The other guildsmen and the twenty mercenaries who belonged to this group were armed with missile weapons. In the outlying part of the city there stood a number of infantrymen: 500 mercenaries and an unidentified force of armed guildsmen.<sup>15</sup> In addition there were about a thousand cavalrymen, some of whom riding on draft horses. Unfortunately,

we do not know how many of the soldiers were professionals. The important thing is that the group of 59 lancers mentioned above must have been composed of both professional soldiers and townspeople. Among the latter there were both patricians, who owned estates and were obliged to appear because of their knight status, and ordinary men as eight of the lancers were guildsmen. Besides, there were 850 mounted men armed with missile weapons. At least 480 of them were commoners.

Therefore the overwhelming aim of this military display was to show the town's offensive capability and its ability to mobilize an army whose structure corresponded to that of the king's forces and which could operate on the battlefield. The people of Wrocław did not want their army to be a group of commoners. They aspired to have an army which looked like feudal, knight and noble forces consisting of mounted soldiers. Bearing arms within municipal jurisdiction was allowed only on special occasions, such as ceremonies of swearing allegiance, arrivals of personages and tournaments.<sup>16</sup> If we examine the contents of the town's arsenals, we can find out whether the weapons stored there could be used only outside the city walls and whether the displays described above corresponded to the reality of the battlefield or to mobilization plans. Of course, we shall never obtain a satisfactory answer. The best method seems to be the identification of weapons meant for mounted warriors as equipment of this type probably was not used within the city walls. As far as defensive arms are concerned, the townspeople who owned closed helmets, full plate armour or plate leg protections may have been cavalrymen. However, a man who did not have at his disposal this sort of equipment may have been a mounted soldier as well. A lance can be considered a weapon typical of men on horseback. In this case, however, one has to be careful while identifying the source name of a shafted weapon. Besides, it should be remembered that at the beginning of the sixteenth century, well armoured infantrymen armed with lances appeared in front of the main infantry force. Undoubtedly, we cannot arrive at any conclusions if we examine the weapons which are generally classified as spears. What is more, the researcher is unable to identify the cavalrymen armed with missile weapons. Their arms were not characteristic

<sup>14</sup>M. G o l i ń s k i, *Rüstungen Karls IV. in den Jahren 1362-1363. Städtischer Aspekt*, "Quaestiones medii aevi novae", vol. 4 (1999), pp. 133-154; M. G o l i ń s k i, R. Ż e r e l i k, *Czeskie przygotowania do wojny z Polską w 1370 r. w świetle nieznanego źródła śląskiego*, "Studia i Materiały do Historii Wojskowości", vol. XXXXXV. (1993), pp. 3-17.

<sup>15</sup>Peter Eschenloer's, *Stadtschreibers zu Breslau, Geschichte der Stadt Breslau*, ed. V. J. G. Kunisch, vol. 1, Breslau 1827, pp. 118-119; for different numbers cf.: K. A. M e n z e l, *Topographische Chronik von Breslau*, Q. 3, Breslau 1806, p. 226. According to this source, there were 5700 men on horseback and infantrymen. It should, however, be remembered that in 1619, when the demographic capability of the town was much greater, the civic militia was 4300 strong and the town had at its disposal 600-800 soldiers; J. M a r o ń, *op. cit.*, pp. 56, 58.

<sup>16</sup>K. M i l i t z e r, *Die Bewaffnung der Bürger westdeutscher Städte im Spätmittelalter*, "Fasciculi Archaeologiae Historicae", fasc. XI (1998), p. 49.

enough though they must have outnumbered the lancers.

The register of the inhabitants of Legnica seems to be a reliable source of information because of its rich contents and the fact that it was written as early as 1404. As we had expected, the merchants, the wealthiest guild, turned out to be the most interesting group from the point of view of our discussion. They did not possess any common arms and used only weapons which they bought on their own. Nine merchants had at their disposal fifteen suits of defensive armour, including 4-5 suits of "full armour" (one person owned 3 suits), consisting of, among other things, plate leg protections probably meant for mounted warriors. This assumption is supported by the fact that the merchants had thirteenth arbalests and thirteen lances (*glewe*). Among the commoners, the butchers seem to have been the richest group. The guild had 18 arbalests and 15 lances. The bakers purchased seven lances. Lances were also owned by the guild of so-called small blacksmiths and ironworkers. Two armourers, who had two suits of "full armour", also belonged to this guild. They did not need to possess any lances because there were lances among the guild's common arms. The weavers, who were much poorer, owned six common spears (*cuspides*). The inhabitants of Złotoryja Quarter owned some lances as well. The people of Legnica had in total 6-7 suits of "full armour", owned by 4-5 persons, 318 other body protections, 7 sets of plate leg protections and single pairs of such parts, 73 lances, 68 arbalests, 3 "semi-lances", and 9 spears.<sup>17</sup> The stand owners, who followed the merchants on the rungs of the social ladder, had 8 *drabegeschirre* – suits of semi-armour used for unknown purposes.<sup>18</sup> The author, however, will not discuss this sort of weapon in the present paper. Thus it may be assumed that at the beginning of the fifteenth century, a small group of townspeople of Legnica possessed suits of "full armour" similar to those worn by contemporary knights. However, only the wealthy and the armourers of Legnica were owners of such equipment. The interesting thing is the large number of lances and the corresponding

number of arbalests. Weapons of this type were owned by both the wealthy inhabitants of the town and some guilds, for example the butchers. A similar situation was observed in Prussia, Elbląg and Toruń, where unlike the other guilds, the butchers were mounted warriors!<sup>19</sup> Therefore if we assume that the *glewe* of Legnica were lances used by men on horseback, we could argue that in towns there existed a concrete, well-planned armament system modelled on the cavalry system. Unfortunately, the above-mentioned interpretation of the term *glewe*, which is the key word here, is not the only plausible one. What is more, a close correspondence between missile weapons and shafted weapons was observed in, for example, Brzeg, where in 1375 the number of arbalests was smaller than the number of spears (45 and 57).<sup>20</sup> In the 1360s, Charles IV ordered some lances (*glefen, glefney*) to be taken to Auerbach and Weiden, in New Bohemia. The number of lances corresponded to the number of suits of armour (80-100).<sup>21</sup>

As early as the thirteenth century, the patricians of Köln and other towns of the Rhine region fought on horseback in a "knightly manner", as was the case near Worringen in 1288. It was only later that they started to employ mercenaries. However, the law of the town of Kalkar, situated in the western part of the German state, dating back to the turn of the fourteenth century, required that each person possessed not only a suit of armour but also a horse.<sup>22</sup> In Teutonic Toruń, each merchant plot had to provide an armed man and a horse. This is why like the knight estates in Chełmno province, the plots remained undivided and their numerous co-owners lived together. The craftsmen fulfilled their military obligation as guildsmen.<sup>23</sup> Therefore the situation of the merchant plots mentioned above cannot be directly compared to the conditions typical of the Silesian towns. However, an incident which occurred in Wrocław in the fourteenth century cannot be disregarded. On 12<sup>th</sup> November 1369, the Cistercian monks in

<sup>17</sup> T. Schönbörn, *Ein mittelalterliches Waffenverzeichniss der Stadt Liegnitz*, [in:] *Liegnitz 700 Jahre eine Stadt deutschen Rechts*, Breslau 1942, pp. 68-76; M. Goliński, *Uzbrojenie mieszczańskie na Śląsku od połowy XIV do końca XV w.*, "Studia i Materiały do Historii Wojskowości", vol. XXXIII (1990), pp. 17-18, 40-44.

<sup>18</sup> For the literature and sources cf.: M. Goliński, *Uzbrojenie mieszczańskie ...*, p. 18.

<sup>19</sup> W. Szczygielski, *op. cit.*, p. 451; J. Tandeci, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

<sup>20</sup> Biblioteka Uniwersytecka we Wrocławiu, Dział Starych Druków, MS. 402015 (*Księga miejska Brzegu*, I); M. Goliński, *Uzbrojenie mieszczańskie ...*, p. 36.

<sup>21</sup> M. Goliński, *Rüstungen Karls IV ...*, p. 153 table 2.

<sup>22</sup> K. Militzer, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-48.

<sup>23</sup> K. Mikulski, *Zasady wymiaru powinności woj-skowych kupców toruńskich w świetle wykazów z 1400-1402 roku*, [in:] *Aetas media, aetas moderna. Studia ofiarowane profesorowi Henrykowi Samsonowiczowi w siedemdziesiąt rocznicę urodzin*, Warszawa 2000, pp. 197-198.

Kamieniec, who bought a plot and a house from Mathias, Auxiliary Bishop of Wrocław, (to 1363 the property had belonged to Ludwig I, Duke of Brzeg), agreed to continue to pay taxes to the city, including the tax which replaced their watch duty (*vigilares contributiones*). Because of this purchase the monastery was also obliged to provide the city with a soldier armed with a missile weapon (*Sagittarius*).<sup>24</sup>

As I mentioned above, there is hardly any evidence that the people of Wrocław participated in war expeditions outside the city. The law passed by the confederation of Silesia, organized in 1427 in the face of the Hussite threat, which provided for the mobilization of every fifth inhabitant of a town and a village, set a precedent of no consequence.<sup>25</sup> Similar ideas were never put into practice even at the most hectic moments in Silesian history. This situation corresponds to the conditions characteristic of the neighbouring Kingdom of Poland. A list specifying the military obligations of the inhabitants of the towns located in the kingdom was made in the thirteenth century, to no effect. Wojciech Szczygielski argues that in source material there is hardly any information about townspeople's participation in war expeditions. The historian arrives at the conclusion that the time from the fourteenth to the fifteenth century was a period of the townspeople's mass levy forces collapse. The turning point was observed only in the 1450s, during the Thirteen Years' War between Poland and the Teutonic Order, when the towns had to provide infantry contingents and the landed townspeople were required by law to provide mounted warriors. The regulations did not differ from those imposed on knights by the diet (Sejm).<sup>26</sup> Unfortunately, the above assumption is supported by no evidence. We do not know anything about the way the town contingents were organized and who formed the forces provided by the landed townspeople.

Consequently, one should not be surprised that Peter Eschenloer, a chronicler of Wrocław, mentioned the spontaneous participation of the

people of Wrocław in the war expedition of 1467 against the Duchy of Ziębice, belonging to the family of Podebrady. Thanks to his account, we know that the Council was against the idea put forward by the radical religious group to attack the heretic enemy in force. They argued that if two thousand men set off on a war expedition, the town would become deserted. This argument holds up as the town had less than twenty thousand inhabitants. Therefore in order to limit mobilization, the Council decided to feed, maintain and arm 200 warriors who had fought in the Thirteen Years' War in the castle, situated in the city. As the town had already enlisted 200 infantrymen and 150 mounted warriors, the guilds had to provide 400 men. As a result, the army was not a homogenous body. The mobilized craftsmen refused to obey the commander employed by the city and argued that they were responsible only to the Council even on the battlefield. The expedition ended in defeat. The battle was fought near Ząbkowice. The Wrocław army suffered 10 casualties and 290 men were taken prisoner by the Czech force. According to Eschenloer's account, there were 30 townspeople among them and the rest were soldiers from Prussia and journeymen. This proportion suggests that the majority of the master craftsmen appointed by their guilds to take part in the expedition may have stayed at home and provided a journeyman or that there were a lot of volunteers among the latter. This does not mean, however, that they were treated disrespectfully. The Council helped the prisoners particularly by buying off the poor. The most important thing, however, is that after the defeat at Ząbkowice, the army was still a thousand strong, but it consisted only of mercenaries because, according to the chronicler, none of the craftsmen or townspeople wanted to be on active service.<sup>27</sup> The above incident seems to be the best example of a direct connection between the political situation in the city and the Council's decisions regarding the organization of its armed forces. What is more, the great antagonism between the Council and the guilds ruled out the possibility of the commoners' sacrifice for the benefit of the patricians.

The above unclear picture of the situation in the late Middle Ages can be compared with the "starting point", that is to say, some earlier sources dating from the time when the town was ruled directly by the duke. This period ended when

<sup>24</sup> *Urkunden des Klosters Kamenz*, ed. P. Pfothenhauer, *Codex Diplomaticus Silesiae*, vol. 10, Breslau 1881, no. CCLXIII; M. G o l i ń s k i, *Socjotopografia późnośrednio-wiecznego Wrocławia (przestrzeń – podatnicy – rzemiosło)*, Wrocław 1997, pp. 121-122.

<sup>25</sup> *Geschichtsquellen der Hussitenkriege*, ed. C. Grünhagen, *Scriptores Rerum Silesiacarum*, vol. 6, Breslau 1871, no. 73; C. G r ü n h a g e n, *Die Hussitenkämpfe der Schlesier*, Breslau 1872, pp. 113-114.

<sup>26</sup> W. S z c z y g i e l s k i, *op. cit.*, pp. 432, 434-435, 437.

<sup>27</sup> *Peter Eschenloer's ...*, vol. 2, Breslau 1828, pp. 32, 46, 72.

Henry VI, the last Piast in Wrocław, died in 1335. One of the paragraphs of the instruction addressed to Henry the Bearded, Duke of Silesia, (1201-1238) or Henry the Pious (1238-1241) by the aldermen of Magdeburg seems particularly interesting. This document was meant to regulate the duke's relations with the people of Wrocław (though the name of the city is not directly referred to in the source). The document was not issued later than about 1240.<sup>28</sup> According to the law, whenever the duke set off on an expedition (*expedition*) in order to defend his homeland (*pro defensione patrie*), 40 armed men with servants were to be sent from the city (*de ipsa civitate ad serviendum vobis quadraginta viri bene cum armatures suis preparati et servi ipsorum emittentur*). The city was obliged to bear the expenses, if necessary (*si necesse fuerit in expensa civitatis*). The men who stayed at home were responsible for the defence of the city (*alli vero domi remanentes ad defensionem civitatis invigilabunt*).<sup>29</sup> This document would be best evidence of the existence of the personal military obligation in recruit infantry form in one of the oldest German law municipal communes on Polish territory. The rule, however, is a reflection of the situation in Magdeburg not in Wrocław. We do not know whether the law was obeyed. The fact that the document was an instruction suggests that there were some doubts about the military obligations of inhabitants within foreign jurisdiction, whose legal status remained a bizarre experiment in the reality of Poland in the first half of the thirteenth century.

The first mention of the people of Wrocław's participation in the duke's war expeditions comes from Ottokar of Styria's rhymed Chronicle. It is an account of the events of 1289. According to the source, thanks to the (financial?) support of the people of Wrocław, Henry IV Probus, setting off on an expedition against Kraków, could afford to hire 3500 men and provide them with food throughout the year. The food was transported on 1200 carts and another 100 carts carried the siege equipment.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Cf.: M. Młynarska-Kaletynowa, *Wrocław w XII-XIII wieku. Przemiany społeczne i osadnicze*, Wrocław 1986, pp. 106-110; M. Goliński, *Podstawy gospodarcze mieszczaństwa wrocławskiego w XIII wieku*, Wrocław 1991, p. 21.

<sup>29</sup> *Codex Diplomaticus nec non epistolaris Silesiae*, ed. K. Maleczyński, A. Skowrońska, vol. 2, Wrocław 1959, no. 147, p. 93.

<sup>30</sup> *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Deutsche Chroniken und andere Geschichtsbücher des Mittelalters*, vol. 5, Th. 1, Hannover 1890, p. 281; W. Szczygielski, *op. cit.*, p. 443; for the literature see: M. Goliński, *Czy Wrocław był*

Of course, contrary to some opinions, the source does not mention any direct participation of the people of Wrocław in the war. One can only wonder whether the foreign poet-chronicler told the truth: Were all the members of the expedition really paid by the inhabitants of the city and who provided them with siege machines? The researcher is limited by the fact that the oldest surviving contents of the town's account book date back to 1299. Therefore we have at our disposal no earlier information about any financial assistance with war expenses offered by the people of Wrocław to their duke. From the year 1299 onward, the expenses covered by the city were almost always the same. Firstly, the city paid for soldiers armed with missile weapons (arbalests). The names of the soldiers are mentioned in the records of 1299. In the years 1299, 1300 and 1311, the records mention some soldiers staying in a castle and in 1306, the city covered the expenses connected with a concrete war expedition. Secondly, Wrocław had to pay for the food and transport of warriors armed with missile weapons in 1301 and bear other unspecified war expenses in 1311. Thirdly, there were costs resulting from the townspeople's unclear participation in the expedition of 1311. Finally, in 1306 and 1311, the inhabitants had to hire guards to defend the city itself.<sup>31</sup> Later military expenses, except the guards' pay, were referred to as *capitaneus*. In the years 1321-1325, the captain and his *famulis* were paid over 697.5 marks, including damages for lost horses.<sup>32</sup> However, one cannot assume that the above captain was a commander who acted as a middleman for the city seeking mercenaries because in the accounts of 1344 and 1347 there is information that the captain was paid 120 and 47 marks. The soldiers (*soldariis*) are mentioned in a separate place together with the scribes, guards and civic servants (137 and 214 marks).<sup>33</sup>

Thus no evidence supporting the assumption that the regulations introduced in the oldest instruction of Magdeburg were observed can be found in the instances discussed here. However, one cannot rule out the possibility that they were not obeyed either. The examples dating from the

*partnerem politycznym dla Henryka IV Prawego?*, [in:] *Studia z dziejów średniowiecza polskiego i powszechnego*, Wrocław 1989, pp. 26-28.

<sup>31</sup> *Henricus Pauper. Rechnungen der Stadt Breslau von 1299-1358*, ed. v. C. Grünhagen, *Codex Diplomaticus Silesiae*, vol. 3, Breslau 1860, pp. 3-35.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 48-52.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 71, 75.

end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth centuries were connected with the intense military activities of Bolko I, Bolesław III and Henry VI, who fought against the bishop of Wrocław and the dukes of Głogów. The campaigns took place outside Wrocław province proper but still within the dukes' land. Against such a background the participation of the people of Wrocław in Henry IV's expedition to Little Poland would seem exceptional. The location privileges of towns in Little Poland dating from the second half of the thirteenth century required that the townspeople participated in expeditions organized within the duchy. What is more the location privilege of Kraków of 1257 directly stated that the inhabitants of the city were exempt from military service outside the duchy and in 1306 they were even exempt from military operations outside the city walls.<sup>34</sup> Thus it is surprising that the people of Wrocław were released from the obligation to take part in military expeditions

outside Silesia by Sigismund of Luxembourg's privilege issued only on 27<sup>th</sup> August 1421.<sup>35</sup> Another 200 years later, during the Thirty Years' War, the people of Wrocław argued that there existed an ancient law releasing them and their forces from military service on the battlefield. According to them, the inhabitants were obliged only to defend the city. This attitude was expressed in the resolution of 1623 issued by the merchants' guild and in the townspeople's articles of 1632 and 1663, which stated that the militiamen could only defend the city. However, a similar privilege was not to be found in the soldiers' articles.<sup>36</sup> It seems that the "ancient law" was treated differently, depending on the social group. A privilege of the townspeople could not apply to their hired forces. Modern personal military service regulations obliged the people of Wrocław only to defend the city.

*Translated by Zuzanna Poklewska-Parra*

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<sup>34</sup>W. Szczygielski, *op. cit.*, pp. 428-429, 431, 433.

<sup>35</sup>A. I g e r t, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

<sup>36</sup>Ibidem, pp. 24-25.