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ATTITUDE OF THE POLISH NOBILITY TOWARDS TOWNS IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 17TH CENTURY

Dyskurs o pomnożeniu miast w Polsce [Discourse on Increase and Development of Towns in Poland] and Krzysztof Opaliński's satire *O sposobach pomnożenia miast i na nierząd w nich* [On the Means of Increasing and Developing Towns and on Their Bad Management]

Krzysztof Opaliński's views on the development of towns in Poland, which he expressed in his satire *O sposobach pomnożenia miast w Polsce i na nierząd w nich* (first edition 1650), have been analysed many times¹ as well as all the political, social and economic ideas of this magnate.² But it is worthwhile to take up these

¹ E. Lipiński, *Studia nad historią polskiej myśli ekonomicznej* [Studies on the History of Polish Economic Thought], Warszawa 1956, pp. 226 - 242. See also works by S. Dobrzycki and H. Olszewski quoted below.

² The full bibliography concerning Krzysztof Opaliński and his work is contained in *Nowy Korbut* [New Korbut], vol. III, Warszawa 1965, pp. 38 - 41, and A. Sajkowski in Opaliński's biography published in *Polski słownik biograficzny* [Polish Biographical Dictionary (further as PSB)], vol. XXIV, 1979, p. 90. See the survey of research about Krzysztof Opaliński, S. Grzeszczuk, *Spór o Krzysztofa Opalińskiego. Przegląd badań nad biografią i twórczością Opalińskiego* [Controversy about Krzysztof Opaliński. Survey of Studies on the Biography and Writings of Opaliński], "Pamiętnik Literacki", vol. XLVII, 1956, No. 3, pp. 248 - 282 ; also idem, O "Satyrach" Krzysztofa Opalińskiego. *Próba syntezy* [About Krzysztof Opaliński's Satires. Attempt at Synthesis], Wrocław 1961, p. 5 ff. See particularly S. Dobrzycki, *Krzysztof Opaliński jako statysta* [Krzysztof Opaliński as a Statesman], "Biblioteka Warszawska", 1898, vol. IV, pp. 446 - 473 ; B. Baranowski, *Spoleczno-polityczne tendencje "Satyr" K. Opalińskiego* [Socio-Political Trends in K. Opaliński's Satires], *Prace Polonistyczne*, series IX, 1951, pp. 25 - 41 ; H. Olszewski, *Poglądy Krzysztofa Opalińskiego na państwo i prawo* [Krzysztof Opaliński's Views on State and Law], "Czasopismo Prawno-Historyczne", vol. VII, 1955, No. 2, pp. 99 - 132 ; W. Czaplinski, *Ideologia polityczna "Satyr" Krzysztofa Opalińskiego* [Political Ideology of Krzysztof Opaliński's Satires], "Przegląd Historyczny", vol. XLII, 1956, No. 1, pp. 103 - 125.

matters again and again, not in order to criticise or explode the ideas of old authors, but simply because the views of the Poznań voivode, expressed in his satires and other writings, on customs, social, economic and political matters, are so interesting and so strongly rooted in his times that without a comprehensive knowledge of those times it would be impossible to grasp and explain all Opaliński's ideas. Our knowledge of the 17th century has been steadily growing, progress in research has been adding ever new important elements and thus our possibilities of interpreting Opaliński's views have been undergoing constant change. Let us add here that Krzysztof Opaliński's writings are highly controversial. In some cases it has even been impossible to establish the authorship of some of the works ascribed to him.³ His views have been interpreted in completely different ways. Opinions about him oscillate from an egoist, careerist, trouble maker and traitor to his country, to a man enlightened and progressive, with each of these opinions substantiated by appropriate quotations from his works or events from his biography. Probably, some of those controversies could be explained by the fact that Opaliński had lived at a time when people loved contrasts and deep differences of opinion, and that as a writer he was an erudite eclectic and liked to show off his erudition, culled from readings and during his short and not very thorough studies at universities in Louvain, Orléans and Padua ; he would introduce into his writings the thoughts of various authors, often differing in their essence. The fact remains though that the opinions expressed by Opaliński contradicted each other, that they lend themselves to various interpretations.⁴ I think that, basically, the difficulties encountered in the appreciation of Opaliński's views lie in that so

³ Among other writings "*Dyskurs o pomnożeniu miast w Polsce*" [Discourse on the Increase and Development of Towns in Poland], published anonymously in Cracow in 1648, has been ascribed to Krzysztof Opaliński (see below on the authorship of that book), as well as *Krótką nauka budownicza dworów, pałaców, zamków podług nieba i zwyczaju polskiego* [Short Exposition on the Building of Manors, Palaces and Castles in Accordance with the Polish Climate and Customs], also anonymously published there in 1659.

⁴ W. Czapliński drew attention to it, *op. cit.*, p. 105 - 106 and 124 ; B. Baranowski, *op. cit.*, p. 29 ; S. Grzeszczuk, O "*Satyrach*"..., p. 17.

far none of the researchers—except Henryk Olszewski and Andrzej Grodek who has written a short, unfinished but very pertinent essay on the subject⁵—have tried to analyse them simply as the views of a Great Poland magnate who represented the interests of this own social group, and primarily his own ; none have tried to ponder over his opinions in the context of the complicated political and economic situation in 17th century Poland. They mostly treated Opaliński as a great ideologue independent, as it were, of the reality around him. I think that many questions will turn out to be simple and clear, when we examine his satires, including the one *O sposobach* as the writings of an aristocrat who owned more than 75 villages (not counting parts of villages and leased royal demesne) and a few towns in Great Poland, who lived and worked in the Commonwealth in the first half of the 17th century (he was born in 1609, died in 1655) and, as Poznań voivode since 1637, was one of the most important senators.⁶

When starting to analyse the satire *O sposobach*, it should be remembered that Krzysztof Opaliński owned three towns. He took Tuliszków in east Great Poland in 1634 in the dowry of his wife, Teresa Czarnkowska.⁷ In 1636, he bought Szubin in the north of Great Poland from his mother-in-law, Katarzyna Czarnkowska of Leszno.⁸ In 1644 - 45, he tried to buy the borough of Mrocza near Szubin.⁹ Finally, in 1647, he purchased the family town of Sieraków on the Warta from his brother Łukasz.¹⁰ The voivode was a keen manager, particularly in Szubin and Sieraków; he

⁵ H. Olszewski, *op. cit.*, pp. 108, 116 ; A Grodek, *O magnackim merkantylizmie [On Mercantilism of the Magnates]* in *Studia z historii myśli ekonomicznej*, Warszawa 1963, pp. 481 - 491.

⁶ Biography of Krzysztof Opaliński by A. Sajkowski in PSB, vol. XXIV, 1979, pp. 57 - 90, and *idem*, *Krzysztof Opaliński, wojewoda poznański [Krzysztof Opaliński, Poznań Voivode]*, Poznań 1960.

⁷ S. Ostrowski, *Tuliszków*, "Tygodnik Ilustrowany", 1899, No. 31, p. 611 ; A. Sajkowski, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

⁸ A. Sajkowski, *loc. cit.* ; B. Janiszewska-Mincerowa, F. Mincer, *W okresie staropolskim (XIV w — 1773 r.) [In the Old-Polish Period. 14th c.-1773]*, in : *Dzieje Szubina*, Warszawa 1974, p. 47.

⁹ *Listy Krzysztofa Opalińskiego do brata Łukasza 1641-1653 [Krzysztof Opaliński's Letters to his Brother Łukasz, 1641-1653]*, ed. R. Pollak, et al., Wrocław 1957, pp. 199, 202, 217, 228, 241, 253, 260, 269, 360, 367 ; B. Janiszewska-Mincerowa, F. Mincer, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

¹⁰ A. Sajkowski, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

used to build a lot, carrying out in practice what he would later recommend in his satires to the owners of private towns to do.

Yet, it is well known that the satire *O sposobach* is not Opaliński's original work but an almost literal repetition of the *Dyszkurs o pomnożeniu miast w Polsce*, published anonymously in Cracow in 1648. This has even served as the basis for Edward Lipiński's hypothesis that Krzysztof Opaliński was also the author of the *Dyszkurs*.¹¹ This hypothesis has been questioned by Władysław Czapliński who has pointed out that Krzysztof's brother Łukasz was the more probable author of the *Dyszkurs*.¹² Both these suggestions have been rejected by Alojzy Sajkowski who has convincingly argued that neither Łukasz nor Krzysztof could have written the *Dyszkurs*.¹³ In 1649, Krzysztof wrote to his brother: "Thank you for that discourse about towns. *Exequar it fideliter*."¹⁴ If he wanted to make use of it—reasoned Sajkowski—he could not have been its author. Neither could Łukasz, because Krzysztof would then have written about "your discourse." Even the almost identical contents of the *Dyszkurs* and the satire *O sposobach* does not prove Krzysztof's authorship, for in the 17th century there was nothing surprising or offending in transcribing whole fragments of other people's works, and the practice was pretty general.¹⁵ Henryk Barycz has firmly rejected the possibility of ascribing the authorship of the *Dyszkurs* to either of the Opaliński brothers, and suggested that it was the work of Szymon Starowolski.¹⁶ Although for the time being this view has remained only a hypothesis, it seems obvious that it is impossible, in the light of present research, to connect the authorship of the *Dyszkurs* with Krzysztof Opaliński, and that, therefore, it must

¹¹ E. Lipiński, *Rozprawa "O pomnożeniu miast w Polsce" z roku 1648* [Essay on Increase and Development of Towns in Poland of 1648], "Zeszyty Naukowe SGPIŚ", 1953, No. 1, pp. 115-131. In his later works E. Lipiński relinquished this hypothesis.

¹² W. Czapliński, *op. cit.*, pp. 121-125.

¹³ A. Sajkowski, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

¹⁴ *Listy...*, p. 411.

¹⁵ A. Brodnicki, *Kilka słów o plagiacie w literaturze polskiej XVII w.* [A Few Words on Plagiarism in Polish 17th Century Literature], "Biblioteka Warszawka", 1912, vol. II, pp. 162-165.

¹⁶ H. Barycz, "Dyszkurs o pomnożeniu miast" i jego przypuszczalny autor [Dyszkurs and his Probable Author], in: *Z epoki renesansu, reformacji i baroku. Prądy—idee—ludzie—książki*, Warszawa 1971, pp. 713-741.

be surmised that his satire *O sposobach* was not an original work and that he simply repeated in it somebody else's ideas.

There remains the question of the relation between the *Dyskurs* and Opaliński's satire, and Giovanni Botero's treatise *Delle cause della grandezza delle città*. The relation has been pointed out by Lipiński. Botero's treatise on towns was published in Venice in 1589 as an annex to a bigger work by the same author *Della ragion di stato*; it was later reprinted several times and translated into various languages. He was known in Poland and his writings were popular as witness the numerous copies of his works in many Polish book collections. According to studies carried out by Kamila Schuster and Władysław Czapliński, one of those copies was the property of Łukasz Opaliński who had studied Botero's treatise on towns with interest, writing notes in his own hand on the book's margins.¹⁷ This became a serious argument in favour of Czapliński's hypothesis ascribing the authorship of the *Dyskurs* to Łukasz Opaliński. Yet, contrary to Lipiński's suggestions, the borrowings from Botero's treatise, found in the *Dyskurs* and in Opaliński's satire on towns, are of a secondary nature. Botero's conception of the development of towns was based on his definition of a town as a conglomeration of people and on the assertion that the development and wealth of a town depended on the number of its inhabitants.¹⁸ Botero devoted the whole treatise to the description of factors which, according to him, favoured the flow of population into cities and its increase such as: favourable siting, defensibility, fertile surroundings, easy access, existence of centres of religious cult, schools, courts of justice, residences of the ruler and the nobility, development of industry, trade. The author of the Polish *Dyskurs* and his imitator, Krzysztof Opaliński, were interested only in the second part of Botero's arguments, ignoring his essential ideas. The similarities

¹⁷ K. Schuster, *Fragment biblioteki Łukasza Opalińskiego w Ossolineum* [Part of Łukasz Opaliński's Library in Ossolineum], "Ze Skarbcza Kultury", 1955, No. 1(7), p. 234; W. Czapliński, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

¹⁸ *Città s'addimanda una ragunanza d'huomini ridotti insieme, per vivere felicemente: e grandezza di città si chiama non lo spatio del sito, ò il giro delle mura, ma la moltitudine degli habitanti, e la possanza loro.* G. Botero, *Della ragion di stato libri dieci con tre libri delle cause della grandezza delle città*, Venetia 1619, p. 308 (I used this edition, copy in the National Library in Warsaw, call number XVII.2.6813).

between Botero's treatise and the two Polish works are very superficial, after all.

Although the contents of the satire *O sposobach* were mostly a repetition of somebody else's views and did not originate in Opaliński's own experience and thinking, there is nothing to prevent us from treating it as the exposition of the voivode's personal opinions. Since he had included them in the collection of his own works, he must have been a believer in these opinions. Besides, a historian is interested in the important matter of fitting these opinions into the Polish realities of the 17th century—and this is what we want to discuss here.

The analysis of the satire *O sposobach* and the social and economic views expressed in it ought really to begin from the end. For in the final verses of the satire Opaliński revealed its purpose : he wanted to indicate to the gentry and the big nobles how to increase the profitability of their estates by developing towns on them. True, Opaliński did not consider private towns only, because earlier he had written about towns "where the main fairs are held, tribunals and Seyms convened, where the royal court is and famous academy" that is about royal towns and, more precisely, probably about the principal towns in Poland : Lublin where famous fairs were held as well as assizes, Warsaw where the Sejm deliberated and the king resided, Cracow with its university and royal residence, perhaps also about Poznań with its famous schools and trade assemblies. Opaliński charged the starosts with oppressing the royal towns. He thought that "it behoves the king to defend offices from oppression". But otherwise, all his remarks and recommendations probably refer to private towns, many of them being comprehensible only when analysed against the situation of private boroughs and in the light of the interests of their noble owners.

The idea that "there is no other cause for Poland's poverty than the poor, few and badly managed—which anybody will admit—towns", that therefore it is indispensable "to repair that general bad management by any means and steadily to augment *civitatum incrementa*", may only then seem stunningly progressive against the background of the economic situation of Polish

towns in the 17th century and the attitude of the gentry towards the towns and the middle-class, when assuming that the author was referring to the general body of Polish towns. But if Opaliński was considering mainly private boroughs, then everything boils down to the concern for an increase in the income of the owners of private boroughs ; in other words, to the narrow conception of interests of a certain social group, the magnates, to which Opaliński himself belonged. Looking for sources of income in fields other than agriculture and hoping to find them in urban economy was fairly popular among the Polish gentry and nobles, not only in the 17th century, when the crisis in the farm system was becoming more and more apparent, but even earlier.¹⁹

The causes of urban growth, mostly corresponding to Botero's arguments, discussed by Opaliński, were at the same time consistent with what was going on in Polish private boroughs. Opaliński wrote that the cause of a town's development lay in its favourable situation : "*commoditas* of river, port, road, fertile land". Botero said the same²⁰ but it was also consistent with the interests of the Polish noblemen—owners of towns and farms : the best thing for a borough was to lie in a fertile neighbourhood that is near farms with plenty of fertile land ; it should also lie on the banks of a river for easy floating of grain from the farms ; its siting on a busy trade route would also be desirable, because the owner would have no trouble in selling his farm produce, while the merchants going through the borough would leave there various fees for the enrichment of the owner. Further, Opaliński recommended the building of granaries in riverine boroughs, obviously in order to store in them grain from the farms. Many squires and great lords, both spiritual and secular, did it as

¹⁹ Care of private towns was recommended by Anzelm Gostomski, *Gospodarstwo [Managing Property]*, ed. S. Inglot, Wrocław 1951, pp. 100 - 105 ; in practice many magnates did it in the 16th and 17th century Poland, see A. Wyrobisz, *Rola miast prywatnych w Polsce XVI i XVII wieku [Role of Private Towns in 16th and 17th Century Poland]*, "Przegląd Historyczny", vol. LXV, 1974, No. 1, pp. 24 - 30 ; idem, *Polityka Firlejów wobec miast w XVI wieku i założenie Janowca nad Wisłą [The Firlejs' Policy Towards Towns in the 16th Century and the Founding of Janowiec on the Vistula]*, "Przegląd Historyczny", vol. LXI, 1970, No. 4, pp. 579 - 585.

²⁰ G. Botero, *op. cit.*, pp. 317 - 328.

early as the 16th century and later in the 17th,²¹ to the detriment of the middle-class and the towns thus deprived of their role of middlemen in the grain trade. Opaliński did not mention the building of granaries by merchants on the banks of navigable rivers and in port cities. He himself did have some experience in this field, because his Sieraków lay on the Warta, and in 1648 he conducted negotiations with Prince Friedrich Wilhelm of Brandenburg on the freedom of navigation on that river²² In his satire Opaliński seems almost obsessed with the idea of making use of navigable rivers, a matter of great importance to the farming gentry. He wrote : "To organise river navigation so any merchandise could be carried by water". And further on : "But in our country not only the rivers have not been regulated but they are crowded with mills and weirs and thus the flow is not helped along but obstructed". These arguments no longer agree with Botero's, they rather recall discussions in the Sejm about maintaining the navigability of rivers, which represented mostly the interests not of the towns but of the Polish gentry.

In his satire Opaliński devoted much space to crafts. "*Labor cum industria*, artisans with merchants" that is, according to the Poznań voivode, the first of "the outside causes of a city's development". "So first should *promovere* crafts", proclaimed Opaliński thus earning the favourable opinion of some historians as a true mercantilist concerned with home industries. But what was Opaliński's programme of industrialisation ? Besides moralising about the idleness and drinking habits of craftsmen, which "hinder their earning capacity, which break down and destroy their health and prosperity", and demanding that craftsmen should stick to their trades and stop constantly trying other occupations which "offices should forbid", his programme for the improvement of the situation of home crafts, which he developed in his satire, could be reduced to three propositions : bringing to Poland and settling there foreign craftsmen, using domestic raw materials,

²¹ AGAD, MK 51, p. 142^v ; 74, p. 551 - 553 ; ASK XLVI, 103^r, p. 2^r ; Archives of the Cathedral Chapter in Cracow, Inventory of the estates of the Cracow bishopric, 1645, p. 458 - 461^v ; Inventory of the estates of the Cracow bishopric, 1668, p. 460 - 461^v.

²² A. S a j k o w s k i, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

fixing prices for domestic articles lower than for those imported. This was consistent with Botero's ideas²³ and the conceptions of the mercantilists. It was also consistent with the conceptions of the Polish gentry and Polish economic practice. There was nothing that would please the gentry more than the lowering of prices for the products of craftsmen ; with this in view they introduced early in the 16th century voivodship taxes, and attacked the guilds for their policy of maintaining high prices for the products of artisanry. Foreign craftsmen were often brought to Poland and well cared for by owners of private boroughs. The heraldist Bartosz Paprocki wrote about Piotr Firlej that he "established poor craftsmen in need of help"²⁴ while Piotr's son, Mikołaj Firlej, brought to his town of Lewartów craftsmen from Holland and Flanders and granted them special privileges and freedoms.²⁵ Scottish weavers in Węgrów were the concern of Bogusław Radziwiłł.²⁶ The Przyjemskis in Rawicz and the Leszczyńskis in Leszno helped drapers from Silesia, granting them favourable conditions for the conduct of their trade.²⁷ But was it mercantilist policy and could this kind of activity on the part of the Polish magnates as well as Opaliński's advice, entirely consistent with it, improve the situation of Polish crafts in the 17th century ? The answer seems to be in the negative. On the other hand, bringing foreign craftsmen was probably more convenient to the Polish nobles, and also safer than promoting the development of home crafts. Foreign artisans were completely dependent on their patron, the town's owner. Practically speaking, they could not leave him. They usually emigrated from their own country because

²³ G. Botero, *op. cit.*, p. 209 ff.

²⁴ B. Paprocki, *Herby rycerstwa polskiego [Arms of Polish Knights]*, ed. by K. J. Turowski, Kraków 1858, p. 494.

²⁵ Z. Rościszewska, *Lewartów [Lubartów] w latach 1543 - 1643 [Lewartów or Lubartów in 1543 - 1643]*, Lublin 1932, doc. III p. 47 and remarks on p. 31.

²⁶ J. Kazimierski, *Z dziejów Węgrowa w XV - XVIII wieku [From the History of Węgrów in the 15th - 17th Centuries]*, "Rocznik Mazowiecki", vol. III, 1970, p. 275 - 276.

²⁷ A. Mączak, *Sukiennictwo wielkopolskie. XIV - XVII wiek [Cloth Industry in Great Poland. 14th - 17th Centuries]*, Warszawa 1955, p. 268 ff. ; M. Grycz, *Miasta od XVI do XVIII wieku [Towns from the 16th to 18th Centuries]*, in : *Ziemia leszczyńska*, ed. J. Deresiewicz, Poznań 1966, p. 93 ff. ; W. Sobisiak, *Dzieje ziemi rawickiej [History of Rawicz Region]*, Poznań 1967, p. 158 ff.

they could not work there. So they had nothing to go back to. In Poland they could only escape into the protection of another magnate. They could not even dream to oppose their patron if they were a small group, alien to the middle-class environment because of their different nationality, language, culture, customs and religion. Their alienation was deepened by the fact of their being granted by town owners special privileges which were to ensure them particularly favourable conditions of life and work ; at the same time, this created a different legal status for them. The local population could not feel friendly towards them, seeing in them, not unjustly, their rivals and the cause of their own poverty. The villagers could not like them either, because of the age-long conflict between town and country, strengthened in this case by religious and national factors. The foreign craftsmen, at the mercy of the town owner, had to obey him, while the gentry did not have to fear their encroaching in any way on their class privileges.

Characteristically, Opaliński was against the settling in Poland of foreign merchants, because they might compete with the gentry, to wit the careers made in Poland by the Boners, Cellaris, Montelupis or Morsztyns. Instead, he recommended help in the development of fairs. Here, the interests of the town owner came to the fore : he derived a considerable part of his income from market fees and thus was interested in increasing the number of trade assemblies. The efforts of private town owners in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries to secure royal privileges concerning markets and fairs were a good illustration of this tendency.²⁸

Opaliński was in favour of urban privileges, but against the jurisdiction exercised by noblemen and the clergy "when they break municipal laws", against the breaching of municipal laws by starosts. He considered that improvement in the town council and the administration of justice was indispensable. Moreover, he thought that towns should have the right to hold landed estates and even to send deputies to the Sejm ; at least that must be the meaning of *ius suffragii*. But these prerogatives of the nobility

²⁸ A. Wyrobisz, *Polityka Firlejów* [*The Firlejs' Policies*], p. 595 ; idem, *Rola miast prywatnych*, p. 28.

were to be granted only to urban communes, not to particular burghers : "In my understanding, *communitates* should contain and represent the nobleman's *personam*—but *communitates* not particular *cives*". This was in line with the law in the gentry Commonwealth, where the capital city of Cracow, for instance, had gentry rights granted to it as a town as early as the end of the 15th century, while the town council of the capital city of Vilna was nobilitated in 1568, and thus gained the right to send deputies to the Sejm.²⁹ Opaliński also explained that he had in mind the protection of the gentry privileges, not their diminution or sharing with the middle-class. For he wrote : "If the middle-class were free of oppression and contempt then, I assure you, it would not press so much for the gentry preeminence as it now has to do, whether it wants it or not". Respecting the burghers' rights would then stop their desire—at least on the part of the élite of the middle-class—to enter the gentry class, a desire which caused so much anxiety to the nobility in the first half of the 17th century.

Much space has been devoted in Opaliński's satire to his complaints about luxury which, according to him, was ruining the burghers : "Because *industria cum labore* collects to no avail, when luxury disperses it". "*Vivere sua quadra*", the voivode pointed, "the towns ought to promulgate *sumptuarias leges*." The burghers' luxurious life style irritated Opaliński as not becoming that class and thus threatening the social order. He also reproached the gentry with it and in his satires he often took up this subject (particularly in Book III, Satire X *Na polski in genere zbytek* [On Polish in *genere* Luxury]). These statements were only part of an extensive controversy about *leges sumptuarias* which raged in Poland in the second half of the 16th century, and even more in the 17th century, and which lasted until the decline of the Commonwealth.³⁰ In connection with his ideas about luxury, Opaliński

²⁹ L. Rymar, *Udział Krakowa w sejmach i sejmikach Rzeczypospolitej* [Participation of Cracow in Commonwealth's Sejms and Regional Assemblies], "Rocznik Krakowski," vol. VII, 1905, pp. 187 - 258 ; W. Kowalenko, *Geneza udziału stołecznego miasta Wilna w sejmach Rzeczypospolitej* [Origins of the Participation of the Capital City of Vilna in Commonwealth's Sejms], "Ateneum Wileńskie", vol. IV, 1927, pp. 114 - 129.

³⁰ S. Estreicher, *Ustawy przeciwko zbytkowi w dawnym Krakowie* [Sumptuary Laws in Old Cracow], "Rocznik Krakowski", vol. I, 1898,

returned once more to the matter of fighting drunkenness, and proposed the introduction of prohibition on weekdays and restrictions on the opening times in licensed taverns on Sundays and holidays. In these matters Opaliński was very firm, forgetting even about his own interests as well as those of the entire Great Poland nobility who attached much importance to their right to brew and sell spirits as one of the main sources of income.

Opaliński underlined the advantages a town got from the residence of the court, the sessions of tribunals and the Seym. This concerned, of course, not the private but the royal towns, and was lifted from Botero's treatise. But it was also the point of view of a magnate who had spent some time in the king's court, took part in the sittings of the Seym and tribunals, and was interested in the kind of services that could be offered by towns which provided the setting for all these activities.

Opaliński agreed with Botero³¹ about the advantages flowing from the existence of a noble residence in a town. In his opinion, such a residence livened up the borough, providing the inhabitants with income. So he recommended the maintenance of a residence in private towns.

The voivode adhered strictly to his own recommendations. He had a residence in every one of his boroughs. His architect, Krzysztof Bonadura the Elder, was probably the designer of the palace at Sieraków but also the rebuilder of the castle at Szubin.³² Thus, the Poznań voivode realised in practice another of his assertions : undertaking building work in towns in order to liven them up and

pp. 118-124 ; H. Horowitzówna, *Reformacja polska a zagadnienie zbytku* [*Polish Reformation and the Question of Luxury*], "Reformacja w Polsce", vol. IV, 1926, pp. 32-40 ; S. Grodziski, *Uwagi o prawach przeciwko zbytkowi w dawnej Polsce* [*Remarks on Sumptuary Laws in Old Poland*], "Zeszyty Naukowe UJ," 1958, No. 20, Prawo, vol. V, pp. 67-86. St. Salmonowicz, *De la réglementation des coutumes et des moeurs bourgeoises à Toruń au XVI^e-XVIII^e ss.*, "Studia Maritima", vol. III, 1981, pp. 115-128 ; J. Tazbir, *La consommation et la Réforme. Les dissidents polonais et le problème du luxe*, "Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej," vol. XXX, 1982, No. 1, pp. 5-20.

³¹ G. Botero, *op. cit.*, p. 348 ff.

³² E. Foksowiczowa, *Pałace w Sierakowie i Czaczu—domniemane dzieła Krzysztofa Bonadury starszego* [*Palaces at Sieraków and Czacz—possibly designed by Krzysztof Bonadura the Elder*], "Biuletyn Historii Sztuki," vol. XXI, 1959, No. 1, p. 122 ; B. Janiszewska-Mincero-wa, F. Mincer, *op. cit.*, p. 48 ff.

provide benefits to the local population. Similar advice was given at the time by Sebastian Petrycy of Pilzno³³ so that Opaliński was not alone in thinking as he did ; he had many followers in his own social class, too.³⁴

His remarks about the role of schools and academies in urban life—again modelled on those of Botero—concern both royal and private towns. It is well known how important were in 16th and 17th century Poland the schools founded in private towns and protected by their owners.³⁵ While encouraging town owners to found “schools, secondary schools and academies”, because they bring various advantages to the towns by attracting people, Opaliński himself founded a school at Sieraków. The idea of this school was probably his own and his adviser’s, Jan Amos Comenius.³⁶ Opaliński advertised his school so well that “both the gentry and the boroughs (offered) their young people”.³⁷ Thanks to this he reaped twofold benefits : economic, because the flow of students brought in its wake an increase in the population and a quickening of life in the borough of Sieraków ;³⁸ and political, because through the school its founder and protector could influence not only the minds of the young people but also of their families. The Sieraków school was to educate not only the sons of the gentry but also plebeians encouraged by Opaliński himself to seek knowledge. Instruction was to last five years in three forms, the curriculum included reading and writing in Polish, La-

³³ Sebastian Petrycy z Pilzna, *Przydatki do Etyki Arystotelesowej* [Remarks on Aristotelian Ethics], in : *Pisma wybrane*, vol. I, Warszawa 1956, p. 377.

³⁴ A. Wyrobisz, *Rola miast prywatnych*, pp. 35 - 36.

³⁵ A. Wyrobisz, *ibidem*, pp. 43 - 44 ; *idem*, *Miasta prywatne w Polsce XVI - XVIII w. jako inwestycje kulturalne* [Private Towns in 16th - 18th Century Poland as Cultural Investment], “Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej,” vol. XXVI, 1978, No. 1, pp. 52 - 53.

³⁶ A. Danysz, *Studia z dziejów wychowania w Polsce* [Studies on the history of Education in Poland], Kraków 1921, pp. 308 - 318 ; Ł. Kurdycha, *Staropolski ideał wychowawczy* [Old-Polish Educational Ideal], in : *Pisma wybrane*, Warszawa 1976, vol. I, pp. 101 - 105 ; *idem*, *Działalność Jana Amosa Komeńskiego w Polsce* [Jan Amos Comenius in Poland], *ibidem*, vol. II, pp. 152 - 166.

³⁷ *Listy...*, p. 398.

³⁸ In his letter to brother Łukasz of 9 November 1647, Krzysztof Opaliński wrote : “The parish priest and the burghers, and the vicars, too, are getting rooms ready” (*Listy...*, p. 398) in the belief that service to students may bring money to the inhabitants of Sieraków.

tin, arithmetic, music, ancient and Polish history, rhetoric, elements of astronomy, geology, physics, anatomy, physiology, law and philosophy. The official opening of the school in Sieraków was held in 1650.³⁹

The extensive digression about Jews may come as a surprise in Opaliński's satire. The author attacked the Jews sharply, charging them with draining Polish towns and reducing their middle-class to poverty through dishonest competition, swindling, treason and "*elaborate roguerizs*". This fierce anti-Semitism would not be anything peculiar in Poland at the time of the Counter-Reformation, growing religious and national conflicts, in the face of an economic crisis and sharpening struggle for profits, had it not come from the pen of a magnate. For in 16th and 17th century Poland the centres of anti-Semitism lay in towns, especially in big cities, where in the face of the growing signs of economic decline an acute competition took place between Christian and Jewish traders and craftsmen.⁴⁰ The gentry also often came out against Jews, particularly when defending their own incomes and economic interests (e.g. in the matter of ceding the collection of public revenue to Jewish leaseholders), and even demanded the application of such drastic sanctions as the death penalty or exile of whole Jewish communities.⁴¹ But there were many cases of noblemen defending the Jews when it was ad-

³⁹ *Oratio in inauguratione gymnasii Opaliniani noviter Siracoviae erecti*, Lesnae 1650 (Estreicher XXIII, 389); A. Danysz, *op. cit.*, p. 318; A. Sajkowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 125 - 128.

⁴⁰ These matters were recently treated extensively by M. Horn, *Zydzi na Rusi Czerwonej w XVI i pierwszej połowie XVII w. Działalność gospodarcza na tle rozwoju demograficznego* [Jews in Ruthenia in the 16th and First Half of 17th Centuries. Economic Activity against the Background of Demographic Development], Warszawa 1975.

⁴¹ *Volumina legum*, vol. I, f. 525; vol. II, f. 691. *Akta grodzkie i ziemskie* [Acts of the Courts of Nobility], vol. XX, No. 211, p. 451, item 47; vol. XXIV, No. 33, p. 44, item 20. *Akta sejmikowe województwa krakowskiego* [Acts of Regional Assemblies in Cracow Voivodship], vol. I, ed. S. Kutrzeba, Kraków 1932, No. 62, p. 193, item 25; No. 24, p. 381, item 44; vol. II, ed. A. Przyboś, Wrocław—Kraków 1955, No. 3, p. 12; 53, p. 163, item 45. *Akta sejmikowe województw poznańskiego i kaliszńskiego* [Acts of Regional Assemblies in Poznań and Kalisz Voivodships], vol. I, part 1, ed. W. Dworzaczek, Poznań 1957, No. 29, p. 78, item 31; No. 53, p. 165, item 29; No. 55, pp. 170 - 171; No. 69, p. 201, item 15; vol. I, part 2, Poznań 1962, No. 243, p. 110; No. 253, p. 126; No. 258, p. 136; No. 283, p. 201, item 11; No. 340, p. 315, item 37. See also not 48 below. Cf. M. Horn, *op. cit.*, pp. 164 - 165, 220.

vantageous to them or when it could be used in their struggle against the middle-class.⁴² Thus the attitude of the gentry towards the Jewish question varied and this was reflected in the passing by the Seym in 1670 of a constitution greatly unfavourable to the Jews and in the violent demands for abolishing this constitution voiced by the regional assembly in Zator in 1672.⁴³ The upper stratum of the nobility, the magnates, generally supported the Jews strongly, not disinterestedly, though. In the 17th and 18th centuries the magnates favoured the presence of Jews in their own private towns, protected them, granted them privileges, sheltered the Jews exiled from royal towns which had been given the privilege *de non tolerandis Iudaeis*.⁴⁴ Jerzy Zbaraski, as the starost of Sokal, sharply criticised Sokal's town council for persecuting the Jews, and bade it "not to hinder Jews in their buildings and homes, to look after peace, because they do not do you any harm, and only your open innate wrath prompts you to lay obstacles"; he threatened that "if you will not behave as I bide you... then I will sweep away that wrath so that it will choke not a few among

⁴² *Akta grodzkie i ziemskie*, vol. XX, No. 54, pp. 90 - 91, item 59; vol. XXIV, No. 33, p. 44, item 20; No. 209, p. 435, item 39; No. 211, pp. 455 - 456, item 88; *Akta Sejmikowe województwa krakowskiego*, vol I, part 2, No. 328, p. 289, item 34; Cf. M. Horn, *Żydzi ziemi sanockiej do 1650 roku* [Jews in Sanok Region to 1650], "Biuletyn ŻIH," No. 74, 1970, p. 15; idem, *Żydzi na Rusi Czerwonej*, p. 114, 164 - 165.

⁴³ *Volumina legum*, vol. V, f. 77; *Akta sejmikowe województwa krakowskiego*, vol. III, ed. A. Przyboś, Wrocław—Kraków 1959, No. 168, p. 934, item 10.

⁴⁴ E.g. the Stadnickis in Zmigród and Niemirów (J. Małecki, *Dzieje gospodarcze i społeczne miasteczek regionu jasielskiego w wieku XVI i pierwszej połowie wieku XVII. Studia z dziejów Jasta i powiatu jasielskiego* [Economic and Social History of Boroughs in Jasto Region in the 16th and First Half of the 17th Centuries. Studies on the History of Jasto and Jasto District], Kraków 1964, p. 210; M. Horn, *Żydzi na Rusi Czerwonej*, pp. 46, 163), the Firlejs and later the Lubomirskis in Janowiec (A. Wyrobisz, *Polityka Firlejów* [Firlejs' Policies], p. 590), the Oleśnickis in Tarłów (A. Wyrobisz, *Ludność żydowska w Tartowie* [Jewish Population in Tartów], "Biuletyn ŻIH", 1974, No. 1(89), pp. 8 - 12), the Zamojskis in Zamość and Tomaszów (J. Morgensztern, *Uwagi o Żydach sefardyjskich w Zamościu w latach 1588 - 1650* [Remarks about Sephardim Jews in Zamość in 1588 - 1650], "Biuletyn ŻIH," 1961, No. 38; eadem, *Osadnictwo Żydów w Zamościu na przelomie XVI i XVII w.* [Settlement of Jews in Zamość at the Turn of the 16th Century], *ibidem*, No. 43 - 44, 1962; eadem, *O działalności gospodarczej Żydów w Zamościu w XVI i XVII w.* [Economic Activity of Jews in Zamość in 16th and 17th Centuries], *ibidem*, Nos 53 and 56, 1965; M. Horn, *Żydzi na Rusi Czerwonej*, pp. 46 - 47, 164), and others.

you".⁴⁵ A certain 18th century author said : "The lords like to have Jews in towns. For you can buy cheaply from them whatever you crave : silks, furs, gold, silver, pearls, lace [...] A Jew is very thrifty. Suffice it to see how he dresses, how he lives : a Jew eats garlic, radishes or cucumbers, economises every penny and starves himself in order to have ready money for the lord".⁴⁶ This attitude of the magnates was due, among other things, to the same reasons which influenced them in their behaviour towards foreign craftsmen : a Jewish community in a private town was an alien body in the urban fabric and completely dependent on the noble owner in matters both social and economic. Moreover, Jewish communities increased the population in boroughs, brought in profits, were, when needed, obliging creditors who gave loans and credits.

Why, then, did Opaliński, against the almost universal attitude of his own class, take up a hostile position towards the Jews ? Interestingly, the *Dyskurs* from which the Poznań voivode drew plentifully for his satire on towns, contains nothing about the Jewish question ; thus, this part of his satire is his original work or has been elaborated on the basis of some other writings. Where should one look for them ? Perhaps, in forming his negative opinion about the role of Jews in towns Opaliński took into account those views expressed by the Great Poland gentry at regional assemblies, which were unfavourable to the Israelites. Besides the demands for forbidding the Jews to collect customs, known from other Polish provinces, there were also voices pointing to Jews as the cause of the decline of towns.⁴⁷ Opaliński may also have made use of the anti-Semitic literature fairly plentiful in the first half of the 17th century,⁴⁸ especially the standard work

⁴⁵ Quoted after M. Horn, *Żydzi na Rusi Czerwonej*, p. 47.

⁴⁶ Quoted after I. Schiper, *Dzieje handlu żydowskiego na ziemiach polskich [History of Jewish Trade in Poland]*, Warszawa 1937, pp. 269 - 270.

⁴⁷ E.g. in the demands formulated in the Poznań and Kalisz voivodships and handed to the king in October 1596 ; *Akta sejmikowe województw poznańskiego i kaliskiego*, vol. I, part 1, No. 66, p. 193. *Ibidem* vol. I, part 2, No. 212, p. 72, item 12, year 1618, also *Akta sejmikowe województwa krakowskiego*, vol. III, No. 170, p. 404, item 28, year 1672.

⁴⁸ K. Bartoszewicz, *Antysemityzm w literaturze polskiej XV - XVII w. [Anti-Semitism in Polish Literature, 15th - 17th Centuries]*, Kraków 1914.

Zwierciadło Korony polskiej [*Mirror of the Polish Crown*] by Sebastian Miczyński.⁴⁹ Perhaps it is no accident that one of the editions of that work was dedicated to Jan Ostroróg, Opaliński's predecessor in the office of Poznań voivode. In 1648, Szymon Starowolski wrote the *Robak sumienia złego* [*Worm of Bad Conscience*], containing an extensive exposition about the Jews as the cause of the decline of towns.⁵⁰ Next year, the full version of another book by Starowolski was published entitled *Prywat Polską kieruje. Po nim stateczny sługa Rzeczypospolitej następuje* [*Private Interests Rule Poland. Then Come the Wise Servants of the Commonwealth*] (first published in 1624), also containing anti-Jewish statements.⁵¹ The anonymous author of the *Pieśń nowa o zbrodniach i okrucieństwie żydowskim* [*New Song about the Jewish Crimes and Cruelties*] (c. 1636) charged Jews with controlling the whole economy in the Commonwealth including artisanry: "A Jew [...] is a cobbler, a tailor, a furrier".⁵² But there is no clear dependence of the part about the Jews in Opaliński's satire on any of those anti-Semitic writings. Perhaps Opaliński considered himself obliged to share the opinions of the Great Poland gentry with whom he wanted to be on good terms for political reasons.

⁴⁹ S. Miczyński, *Zwierciadło Korony polskiej urazy ciężkie i utrapienia wielkie, które ponosi od Żydów, wyrażające synom koronnym na sejm walny w Roku Pańskim 1618 przez... wystawione... w Krakowie w drukarniej Macieja Jędrzejowczyka* [*Mirror of the Polish Crown's Heavy Worries and Great Wrongs Suffered from Jews, Expressed to Sons of the Crown at the Sejm in Anno Domini 1618 by... done in Cracow in the Printing House of Maciej Jędrzejowczyk*], no publishing date. There were at least three editions of that work (see four copies in the Department of Old Prints in Warsaw University Library: 4, 15.7.29; 4, 15.7.50; 4, 15.7.52; 4, 15.7.29; the first has a preface dedicated to Jan Ostroróg, Poznań voivode, dated 19 May 1618, it was probably published in that year; there is no reason to assume the existence of earlier editions; on the other hand, the last copy bears the date 1648 on the title page).

⁵⁰ S. Starowolski, *Roba sumienia złego człowieka niebogobojnego i o zbawienie swoje niedbałego* [*Worm of Bad Conscience of an Impious Man Careless of His Salvation*], no place or year of publication, pp. 39 - 44. See Nowy Korbut, vol. III, 1965, p. 283.

⁵¹ S. Starowolski, *Prywat Polską kieruje. Po nim stateczny sługa Rzeczypospolitej następuje* [*Private Interests Rule Poland. Then Come the Wise Servants of the Commonwealth*], no place of publication, 1649. See H. Barycz, op. cit., pp. 739 - 740.

⁵² J. Nowak-Dłużejowski, *Okolicznościowa poezja polityczna w Polsce. Dwaj młodszy Wazowie* [*Incidental Political Poetry in Poland. The Two Younger Vasas*], Warszawa 1972, pp. 85 - 86.

Altogether, despite the fact that the satire *O sposobie* repeated the arguments of the anonymous *Dyszkurs* and was partly based on borrowings from Botero's treatise, and thus was neither original nor stemmed from direct observation of real life around the author, the conclusion must be that it was entirely in concert with that reality and criticised it very modestly, proposing very timid reforms. If we limited ourselves to the analysis of that particular work of the Poznań voivode, we could not call him a reformer. Sajkowski is right in saying that the fabric of Opaliński's writings is absolutely Polish, in large measure Great Polish, that he drew the subjects for his satires from events and everyday happenings known to himself, and that even when he turned to literature for help, he selected examples which best fitted the Polish relations.⁵⁸ Thus the satire *O sposobie* can be considered the expression of the views of that magnate and his milieu on urban affairs in Poland in the first half of the 17th century.

(Translated by Krystyna Kępcicz)

⁵⁸ A. Sajkowski, *op. cit.*, p. 153.