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PREFACE

The present fascicle "Fasciculi Archaeologiae Historicae" is a presentation of the most recent research directions in Polish medieval studies, particularly archaeology. The first three papers are the output of a meeting attended by many Polish scientists specialising in the Middle Ages, held during the Nineteenth General Polish Historians' Convention, which took place in Szczecin in September 2014. They were presented during the medievalists' "Christmas Eve" meeting held the day before the conference was formally opened and devoted to the issue of "Polish Medieval Studies in the Face of Modern Times". Among them, three papers may be considered ripe for publication. The first one, written by Edward Skibiński, presents a new attitude to the issue of medieval editions of Latin written records and focuses on the importance of their publication in the form as close to the original version and its contents as possible. It also deals with some misunderstandings resulting from overinterpretations of sources which have not been carefully published and subsequently translated. Based on the currently being built electronic database and information collected on archaeological sources relevant to Pre-Christian religion of Scandinavia, the second paper (written by Leszek Gardela) discusses a number of issues connected with the digitalization of medieval records. The third article belonging to this group presents a limited but significant ancient Polish Old Norse Studies research output. In Poland, research of this type has become a particularly fast developing branch of medieval studies. For this reason, we are glad to include in our publication the above-mentioned paper by Jakub Morawiec, who has made a valuable and thorough contribution to our knowledge of the indigenous roots of this scientific discipline.

The following papers deal with slightly different topics.

The architecture of the State of the Teutonic Order is usually associated with masonry structures. Dariusz Poliński's paper, however, introduces his readers into a less-known world of Teutonic earthen architecture and timberworks. This is the reason why scholars who do not deal with architecture on a daily basis might also find it interesting.

Similarly, the two following papers contributed by Tomasz Kurasiński, Kalina Skóra and Beata Borowska-Strugińska, discuss the question of child burials discovered in early medieval graveyards. Based on the material collected, the authors draw interesting conclusions regarding the position of children in ancient society.

Jerzy Maik's article deals with woolen textiles made using a satin weave, which are so rare among European archeological material that Dominique Cardon, the author

of a fundamental publication devoted to medieval cloth making, hardly mentions them in her chapter entitled "Nameless Weaves, Unanswered Questions". The author looks for their places of production in Southern Europe with the intention of provoking discussion on their provenance.

The remaining papers of this fascicle deal with studies into medieval arms and armour as well as equestrian equipment. The first one, contributed by Arkadiusz Michalak, shows the way the application of some medieval Central European and Near Eastern stirrups, equipped with many and various rollers and flaps, was determined based on their non-European ethnographic analogies. They were actually stirrup-spur hybrids used for controlling and steering a horse by the rider. The fact that this category of equestrian equipment was not very popular with contemporary riders may be a result of the symbolic meaning of spurs in knightly culture and the entire phenomenon constitutes an interesting contribution to our knowledge of surprising horse riding gear accessories.

The paper by Paweł Gan and Zdzisław Hensel discusses a metallographic analysis of medieval arms and armour finds discovered in the Dziwna River near Wolin. Compared with the results obtained through an analysis of local bog iron, the examination confirmed the casual character of this collection, being a result of its functional and chronological variety.

The last three articles focus on medieval firearms. The source basis of the first one, written by Grzegorz Żabiński, is Teutonic written records. Based on original documents as well as actual firearm finds, the author occupies himself with barrel and metal projectile production technology. The research conducted by the author leads to the conclusion that Teutonic firearms were cast mostly from copper metal alloys and not forged from iron ingots or rings, which suggests great care taken to obtain high-quality barrels, particularly in the case of heavy, large-sized, large-calibre guns.

Piotr Strzyż juxtaposes historical and archaeological data regarding the use of firearms during the sieges of Bolesławiec upon Proсна and Wieluń in the years 1391-1396, Puck (1464), Muszyna (1474), and Szczerba Castle in Gniewoszów (1428). He also points to the great variety of arms and armour used in battle. His study reveals that both the besieged and the attackers had at their disposal all sorts of weapons from small arms to heavy bombards.

The last paper, prepared by three coauthors (Piotr Strzyż, Piotr Czubała and Adam Mackiewicz), presents an exceptional collection of stone and burnt clay cannon balls found during the archeological excavation of the remains of

High Gate in Olsztyn. The interesting thing is that a great number of clay projectiles and town artillery relics were found on the site.

The collection of papers included in the present fascicle is not meant to be a spectrum of all archaeological and historical research directions in Polish medieval studies. The articles are close to the editors, but the choice of material will hopefully be of interest to many readers, particularly from outside of Poland.

Regrettably, Professor Tadeusz Poklewski-Koziół, the editor of fourteen fascicles of the series “Fasciculi Archaeologiae Historicae”, passed away during the preparation of the

twenty-eight volume. He was an outstanding archaeologist and medievalist, a brilliant scholar, as well as an employee of the Institute of Archeology and Ethnology of the Polish Academy of Sciences and the head of its Łódź branch.

The present volume is devoted to the memory of Professor Tadeusz Poklewski-Koziół. In one of the forthcoming fascicles, we shall try and recall his achievements in the field of historical archaeology.

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(translated by Z. Poklewska-Parra)