

## European Motifs in the Polish Medieval Chronicles

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The culture of medieval Poland developed since the acceptance of Christianity by Mieszko I (966) in the same way as the culture of Western European countries. We find in the narrative texts, which were written there, the same formal tendencies and the same motifs. The author of the first chronicle written in Poland, an anonymous French monk, known as *Gallus Anonimus*, used the modern form of *Gesta* which was written in beautiful literary style of rhythm-prose.<sup>1</sup> Vincent Kadłubek, who wrote his chronicle a hundred years after Gallus at the beginning of the thirteenth century, knew the intellectual streams, which were alive in France during that period.<sup>2</sup> He included the Polish history into the *historia universalis* and showed the long history of Poland and the Poles. They fought against Alexander the

<sup>1</sup> The best edition is *Anonima tzw. Galla Kronika czyli dzieje książąt i władców polskich*, ed. K. Maleczyński, *Monumenta Poloniae Historica* (henceforward: MPH), nova series (NS), 2. (Kraków, 1952); cf. J. M. Bak, *Medieval Narrative Sources. A Chronological Guide (with a list of major letter collections)*, (New York-London, 1987) (henceforward: Bak, *Med.*), No 406. An overview of the whole Polish medieval literature gave T. Witczak, *Literatura polskiego średniowiecza* [The Literature of the Polish Middle Ages], (Warszawa, 1990); recently T. Michalowska, *Średniowiecze* [Middle Ages], (Warszawa, 1995), *passim*. See also B. Kürbis, 'Dziejopisarstwo polskie do połowy XV wieku. Dążenia poznawcze i poglądy' [Polish Historiography until the mid-fifteenth century. Cognitive Aims and Notions], *Studia i Materiały do dziejów nauki polskiej* [Studies and Materials to the History of Polish Arts and Sciences], series A, fasc. 9, (Warszawa, 1966), p. 107-23, repeated in eadem, *Na progu historii* [On the Thresholds of History], (Poznań, 1994), p. 17-36 with new literature.

<sup>2</sup> Recently see E. Skibiński, 'Źródła erudycji Kadłubka' [The Sources of Kadłubek's Erudition], *Roczniki Historyczne* [RH], 60, (1994), p. 163-72. Basic edition: *Magistri Vincentii Chronicon Polonorum*, ed. A. Bielowski, MPH, 2, (Lwów, 1872), p. 191-453; cf. Bak, *Med.*, No 407. Recently the newest edition was published as *Mistrza Wincentego zwanego Kadłubkiem Kronika polska*, ed. M. Plezia, MPH NS, 11, (Kraków, 1994).

Great and Julius Caesar and beat them.<sup>3</sup> In Kadłubek's story we find the knowledge of the story of Alexander the Great which was very popular at that time in the chivalrous circles of whole Europe.<sup>4</sup> In my paper, however, I would like to concentrate on another popular European motif – the story of Attila.<sup>5</sup> He was mentioned in several European narrative sources. The descriptions of the Hun's leader were done originally by the Greek historian and diplomat Priskos who visited Attila's court in 448 AD.<sup>6</sup> His information was transcribed by Cassiodorus, and Cassiodorus's work was rewritten by Jordanes.<sup>7</sup> His *Gesta* transmitted the picture of Attila to medieval historiography. It was completed by Paulus Diaconus in Carolingian time,<sup>8</sup> and afterwards it was developed by several chroniclers who added the local tradition to the core of historiography.

Amadeé Thierry divided Attila's literary tradition into three groups.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>3</sup> J. Banaszkiewicz, *Kronika Dzierżwy, XIV-wieczne kompendium historii ojczystej* [The Dzierżwa Chronicle. A Compendium of Home History from the Fourteenth Century], (Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków, 1979), p. 33 ff.

<sup>4</sup> The stages of the development of Alexander the Great's literary tradition were recently described by W. Gawłowska, 'Polskie przekłady powieści o Aleksandrze Wielkim w XVI wieku' [The Polish Translations of Alexander the Great's Story in the Sixteenth Century], *Studia Źródłoznawcze* (henceforth: St. Źródł.), 32–3, (1990), p. 143 ff, especially 147 with rich bibliography in the footnotes.

<sup>5</sup> I repeat here the theses of my article 'Attyla a Słowianie. Przyczynek do wyobrażenia o kontaktach huńsko-słowiańskich w średniowiecznych źródłach narracyjnych' [Attila and the Slavs. A Contribution to the Image of Hun-Slavic Contacts in Medieval Narrative Sources], *RH*, 59, (1993), p. 33–42. I did not know yet the studies-collection *Attila. The Man and His Image*, ed. F. H. Bäuml, M. D. Birnbaum, (Budapest, 1993), during the work on my article.

<sup>6</sup> *Excerpta de legationibus*, ed. C. de Boor, (Berolini, 1903); cf. Bak, *Med.*, No 9. Detailed information about the transcripts and manuscripts of this work in *Testimonia najdawniejszych dziejów Słowian, seria grecka* [Testimonies of the Oldest History of the Slavs, Greek Series], fasc. 2, ed. A. Brzostkowska, W. Swoboda, (Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków, 1989), p. 10.

<sup>7</sup> *Jordanes, De origine actibusque Getarum*, ed. T. Mommsen, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* (henceforth: MGH), *Auctores antiquissimi*, (henceforth: AA), 5, 1, (Berlin, 1882); cf. Bak, *Med.*, No 24.

<sup>8</sup> *Eutropi Breviarium ab Urbe condita cum versionibus Graecis et Pauli Landolfique additamentis* (*Pauli Historiae Romanae*), ed. H. Droysen, MGH AA, 2, (1879).

<sup>9</sup> A. Thierry, *Histoire d'Attila et de ses Successeurs*, 6. ed., (Paris, 1884), vol. 2; E. Cordt,

The Church historiography of the Romanesque countries belonged to the first group. It presented Attila as an enemy of Christianity, the cruel fighter, who destroyed and burnt all on his way. He was, however, named also the Scourge of God, the instrument of punishment of people's sins.<sup>10</sup> The Germanic oral stories created the second group of the tradition.<sup>11</sup> They were literary reshaped in several countries during the Middle Ages. Two pictures of Attila are readable from the literary sagas. According to the first, he was a cruel king, who was greedy and revenged the crimes against him. This is a picture of the Icelandic sagas. He lived in Norway or in the Icelandic fjords in the same way as other heroes of Edda. His world was severe, without mercy.<sup>12</sup> The second picture of the king of the Huns was different. He was a great king, great fighter and, in the later stories, a true knight, a leader of the chivalry, the same as king Arthur. Here I would like to recall the *Thiedrekssaga*, and especially the *Nibelungenlied*.<sup>13</sup> This last story was also

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*Attila - Flagellum Dei, Etzel, Atli. Zur Darstellung des Hunnenkönigs in Sage und Chronistik.* (Trieste, 1984), distinguished the three main groups of Attila's literary tradition in another way as Thierry: 1) Gallo-Frankian of the Church and hagiographical character; 2) Italian-secular; 3) German epic.

<sup>10</sup> L. Löfstedt, 'Attila, the Saintmaker in Medieval French Vernacular', in *Attila*, p. 65 ff. This consciousness was formed basing mainly on the eruditional picture transmitted by the written chronicles.

<sup>11</sup> H. Wolfram, 'The Huns and the Germanic Peoples', in *Attila*, p. 22, observed that Attila was the only duke of non-Germanic origin who found his constant place in the Germanic sagas.

<sup>12</sup> Scholars discussed about the localization and the stages of the development of the sagas, cf. the entries of A. Heusler in *Reallexikon der germanischen Altertumskunde*, ed. J. Hoops, vol. 1-2, Straßburg 1911-3, e. g. *Burgundensage*, p. 360-1; H. de Boor, *Das Attilabild in Geschichte, Legende und heroischer Dichtung*, (Bern, 1932); G. Lahuda, *Źródła skandynawskie i anglosaskie do dziejów Słowiańszczyzny*, (Warszawa, 1961), p. 177, who distinguished five circles of the Germanic oral tradition about Attila: 1) The fall of the Burgundian state (*Nibelungenlied*); 2) Dietrich of Bern-cycle (*Thiedrekssaga*); 3) The fall of Atli's sons (*Edda*); 4) Story of Walter of Aquitaine (*Waltharius, Waldere*); 5) The fights between the Goths and Huns (Widsith and the Norwegian story of the conflict between Angantyr and Hlödr). An excellent edition of Widsith (with photocopy of the Exeter Book, text in Anglo-Saxon with modern English and Polish translation), *ibidem*, p. 119-74.

<sup>13</sup> *Die Geschichte Thidreks von Bern*, ed. F. Niedner, (Jena, 1924) (New-German translation); *Das Nibelungenlied*, ed. G. Kramer, (Berlin, 1985) (New-German translation).

known in Hungary.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, another picture of Attila was developed in Hungary which formed the third group of Attila's tradition, according to Thierry. In my opinion, however, we can speak about the synthesis of both, of the first and the second group of descriptions in this case.<sup>15</sup> Attila was a king of the Hungarians in the earlier stage of the development of Hungarian historical consciousness. He occupied the Pannonian territory after the victorious march through whole Europe and created his own state there. Later, he even gave laws to the Hungarians.<sup>16</sup> In further chronicles, he was one of the Hunnic leaders, a victorious king in Pannonia. His state was disintegrated after his death, and the Huns escaped to the East. They returned to Pannonia as Hungarians.<sup>17</sup>

Some Western European sources identified Attila with Totila, the king of the Goths who lived a century later. Their authors thought that Attila-Totila was a king of the Vandals.<sup>18</sup> Since the end of the eighth century the Slavs, and since the end of the tenth century especially the Poles and the Polabian Slavs, were also identified as the Vandals.<sup>19</sup> It was a good reason

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<sup>14</sup> The Hungarian Anonymous knew that a new seat of Attila *per linguam Hungaricam dicitur nunc Buduvar et a Teothonicis Ecilburgu vocatur*. *Die "Gesta Hungarorum" des anonymen Notars*, ed. G. Silagi, (Sigmaringen, 1991) (*Ungarns Geschichtsschreiber*, 4), ch. 1, p. 32, v. 24-6; 'Kéza named Attila Etzel: Simonis de Keza Gesta Hungarorum' ed. A. Domanovszky, *Scriptores rerum Hungaricarum* (henceforward: SRH), ch. 10-8, p. 150-61. Dietrich of Bern was one of the heroes of Kéza's story.

<sup>15</sup> We found the connections of the Germanic oral tradition and of the literary tradition as well. Some Hungarian scholars thought that the Hungarian narratives preserved also the traces of some home stories, as, e. g. B. Hóman, *A magyar hún-hagyomány és húnmonda* [The Hungarian Hunnic Tradition and the Hunnic Story], (Budapest, 1925).

<sup>16</sup> As in the Anonymous' *Gesta* and in the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle, ed. B. Karácsonyi, (Szeged, 1969), (*Acta Historica Universitatis Szegedensis*, 26).

<sup>17</sup> In Kéza's work and in the composition of the fourteenth century that has a common basis with Kéza: 'Chronici Hungarici compositio saeculi XIV', ed. A. Domanovszky, SRH, 1, p. 217-505.

<sup>18</sup> E. g., 'Martini Opaviensis Chronicon pontificum et imperatorum', ed. L. Weiland, *MGH Scriptores* (SS), 22, (1872), p. 418: meeting of Totila with a pope Leo; B. Kürbis, *Dziejopisarstwo wielkopolskie XIII i XIV wieku* [The Great Polish Historiography of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century], (Poznań, 1959), p. 208.

<sup>19</sup> A. F. Grabski, *Polska w opinii obcych X-XIII wiek* [Poland in the view of foreigners X-XIII century], (Warszawa, 1964), p. 148 f.; J. Banaszkiewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 38 ff.; J. Strzelczyk, 'Wandalowie' [The Vandals], *Słownik Starożytności Słowiańskich* (hence-

for medieval intellectuals to include Attila-Totila into the history of the Slavic peoples. The Polish chroniclers also created it. Vincent Kadłubek was the first in Poland who wrote about the Vandals as the Poles. When he presented the heroic history of ancient Poles, he mentioned a daughter of the first duke of Cracow, *Gracchus*, called *Vanda* (Polish: Wanda). The main river of her kingdom was called *Vandalus* from her name (this is, of course, *Vistula*), and her people were *Vandali*.<sup>20</sup> The next chronicles from the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth century repeated this story with some additions. The author of the *Chronicon Poloniae Maioris* from the end of the thirteenth century mentioned for the first time that Vanda finished her life in the Vistula river. She jumped into the river and committed suicide, because she did not want to marry a king of *Almanorum*.<sup>21</sup>

A Minoritan author, called Dierzwa, who transmitted Kadłubek's work to more simple and popular Latin, began his story with a genealogical list. He established the origin of the Poles from Yaphet, one of Noe's sons. This tendency was popular in contemporary Europe. Wandalus appeared there as the thirteenth descendant of Noe. He gave name to the Poles and to the

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forth: SSS), 6, (Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1977-80), p. 313; Idem, *Goci – rzeczywistość i legenda* [The Goths – Reality and Legend], (Warszawa, 1984), p. 380 f; Idem, *Wandalowie i ich afrykańskie państwo* [The Vandals and Their African State], (Warszawa, 1992), p. 318-21, where the opinions of the Western European authors about Poland were described. The first who called the Poles *Wandali* was Gerhard, the author of the *Miracula Sancti Oudalrici episcopi*, ed. G. H. Pertz, MGH SS, 4, (1844), ch. 23, p. 423.

<sup>20</sup> Kadłubek, I 7, p. 12-3 (MPH 2, p. 257-8): *Tantus autem amor demortui principis senatum proceres uulgo omne deuinzera ut unam eius uirgunculam cuius nomen Vanda, patris imperio subrogarent. (...) Ab hac Wandalum flumen dicitur nomen sortium quod eius regni centrum extiterit; hinc omnes sunt Wandali dicti; qui eius subfuere imperiis.*

<sup>21</sup> *Kronika Wielkopolska*, ed. B. Kürbis, MPH NS, 8, (Warszawa, 1970), ch. 1, p. 8-9. To the date of origin see B. Kürbis, *Dziejopisarstwo*, passim (end of the thirteenth century); M. Derwich, *Benedyktynski klasztor św. Krzyża na Lysej Górze w średniowieczu* [The Benedictine Monastery at Lysa Góra = Bald Mount during the Middle Ages], (Warszawa-Wrocław, 1992), p. 194 (middle of the fourteenth century); J. Bieniak, 'Fragment 1333-1341 w twórczości dziejopiskarskiej Janka z Czarnkowa, cz. 2' [The Fragment 1333-1341 in Janek's of Czarnków Historiographical Production, part 2], *Zapiski Historyczne*, 49, (1984), p. 28 (Janko wrote the final shape of the former chronicle from the mid-thirteenth century). It is possible that Janko is an author of the *Slavic Interpolation*. Cf. Bak, *Med.*, No 408.

Vistula (*fluvius Wanda*).<sup>22</sup> Dierzwa repeated, however, Kadłubek's story of Wanda. There we found the same words as in the *Chronicon Poloniae Maioris*.<sup>23</sup> It is a discussion in the Polish source-critics, what the source of this story was. Perhaps both authors used the lost version of the *Annales Poloniae Minoris*, or one text was the basis for the second.<sup>24</sup>

The story of the Vandals was also known in Silesia. The local description brought, however, a new, important addition. The so-called Polish-Silesian Chronicle, written at the end of the thirteenth century, probably in the Benedictine monastery in Lubiąż, repeated Kadłubek's story about the Polish-Vandalian identity: ... *Vanda ... a qua fluvius regni centro preterfluens Vandalus dictus, qui nunc Wizla vocatur, et populus Vandali nuncupantur, quo discisso pars eius Huni dicti sunt, quorum rex fuit primus Atyla, rex Wandalorum ...*<sup>25</sup> The chronicler included for the first time At-

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<sup>22</sup> Mierzwę Kronika, ed. A. Bielowski, MPH, 2, (Lwów, 1872), ch. 1, p. 163: *Sciendum est autem ante omnia, quod Poloni ex stirpe sunt Iaphet, qui filius Noe fuit, cui cum pater benediceret, hoc spiritu Dei instigante intonuit: dilatet Deus Iaphet. Hic Iaphet inter multos filios quos genuit, unum habuit, cuius nomen erat Iavan, quem Poloni vocant Iwan. Iavan autem genuit Philiram; Philira autem genuit Alan; Alan autem genuit Anchisen; Anchises autem genuit Aeneam; Aeneas autem genuit Ascanium; Ascanius autem genuit Pamphilium; Pamphilus autem genuit Reasilvam; Reasilva autem genuit Alanum; Alanus autem, qui primus Europam intravit, genuit Negnonem; Negno autem quatuor filios genuit, cuius primogenitus Wandalus a quo Wandalitae, qui Poloni nunc dicuntur, orti sunt. Hic ex nomine suo fluvium, qui nunc Wysla vulgariter nuncupatur, Wandalum censuit appellari, nam et mons de quo oritur dictus fluvius Wanda ab eiusdem nomine vocitatur. Fuit autem secundum computationem verisimilem circa tempora sancti Ioseph filii Iacob patriarchae. Ioseph enim a computatione Noe fuit in tertia decima generatione sic et Wandalus per aliam lineam descendendo. J. Banaszkiewicz, op. cit., p. 32–51 gave the most detailed analysis of this genealogy.*

<sup>23</sup> The words of the German king who could not marry Wanda: "*Woda mari Woda terre Woda aeri imperet, diisque immortalibus pro suis victimet et ego pro vobis omnibus, o proceres, sollempnem hostiam inferis devoceo, ut tam vestra quam vestrorum successorum perpetuitas sub femineo senescat imperio*", *Chron. Pol. Mai.*, ch. 1, p. 9.

<sup>24</sup> B. Kürbis, *Dziejopisarstwo*, p. 126–31 (common source: one of the redactions of the *Annales Poloniae Minoris*); J. Banaszkiewicz, op. cit., p. 87–107 (Dierzwa was a source for the *Chron. Pol. Mai.*).

<sup>25</sup> *Kronika polska*, ed. L. Ćwikliński, MPH 3, (Lwów, 1878), p. 608–9 (cf. Bak, *Med.*, No 409). About the date of its origin see E. Wilamowska, 'Kronika polsko-śląską. Zabytek pochodzenia lubiąskiego' [The Polish-Silesian Chronicle. A relic of Lubiąż origin], *St.*

tila into Polish history. He knew, however, that Attila was a king of the Huns; he created, therefore, the thesis that the Vandals were divided, and a part of them accepted the name of the Huns. Their king was Attila, king of the Vandals. This hypothesis was repeated without changes by Piotr of Byczyna, the author of the *Chronica principum Poloniae* (1382–6).<sup>26</sup> The tendency to include Attila into the home history was typical for the Silesian historiography. The Polish-Silesian Chronicle was also known in Pomerania. We found the traces of it in the *Protocollum* of the Augustinian-Hermit of Stargard. Researchers knew him as *Angelus*. We know now, after extensive studies of Ryszard Walczak, that he was called *Augustinus* and lived in the middle of the fourteenth century.<sup>27</sup> His treatise was devoted to the thesis that Pomerania was an independent state, not a part of Poland. He argued on the basis of Polish historiography that the Pomeranians and the Poles had common roots. They were called *Wandali* from their queen *Wandala*. After her death they divided. ... *principalior ac potior pars regni Lechitarum Pomeranici nomen regni obtinuit, quodam Attila nuncupato in regem Wandalorum promotu, Polonia vero nomen ducatus ... obtinuit*. In this way Attila was described as *primus rex Pomeranorum*.<sup>28</sup>

The so-called *Slavic Interpolation* of the *Chronicon Poloniae Maioris* could have been written at the same time as Augustin's treatise.<sup>29</sup> Its author tried to explain the origin of the Hungarians who, in his opinion, were Slavs. According to him, the *Vcrani* tribe (Polish: *Wkranie*), who lived in Pomerania, near the river *Wkra* (German: *Ucker*) escaped from their homeland, because they were afraid of the Goths' invasion. They were elected

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*Źródł.* 25, (1980), p. 81 (ca. 1285–90); G. Labuda, 'Nowe spojrzenie na śląską "Kronikę polską"' [A New View on the Silesian "Polish Chronicle"], in *Ojczyzna bliższa i dalsza*, (Kraków, 1993), p. 25–40 (1285–7).

<sup>26</sup> *Kronika książąt polskich*, ed. Z. Węclewski, MPH 3, ch 3, p. 431. Cf. Bak, *Med.*, No 883 with false date.

<sup>27</sup> R. Walczak, "*Protocollum*" augustianina-eremity zwanego Angelusem ze Stargardu. *O polsko-pomorskich związkach historiograficznych w średniowieczu* [The "Protocollum" of the Augustinian-Hermit Called Angelus of Stargard. About the Polish-Pomeranian Historiographical Connections in the Middle Ages], (Poznań, 1991).

<sup>28</sup> 'Notula satis notabilis de Pomeranorum, Stetinensium ac Rugiae principatu', ed. I. G. L. Kosegarten, *Baltische Studien*, 17, (1858), p. 124; J. Banaszkiewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. note 21.

by God to punish other peoples' sins. They went through *Theutonia*, *Burgundia* and *per Lombardiam usque ad terras Slawonie ... Quorum rex Tyla nomine qui in scripturis Atyla nominatur veniens Pannoniam sibi perpetuam in ea constituit mansionem et quia multe nationes Slavorum ad ipsos confluerunt unde tunc non Wtrane sed Vandali sunt appellati*. They mixed with Huns, who came in *Pannonia* from *Sicilia* afterwards, and changed their name to *Hungari*.<sup>30</sup> We find here the connection of the Pomeranian descriptions (Attila as a ruler of a Pomeranian tribe) with the older stage of the Hungarian tradition. It was transferred to Poland by the so-called Hungarian-Polish Chronicle. I think that this Chronicle originated in the court of the duke of Slavonija, Coloman, in the twenties or in the beginning of thirties of the thirteenth century, perhaps in the circle of chancellor Kalán.<sup>31</sup> It was preserved, however, only in Poland, so it belongs both to Hungarian and to Polish history. We read there<sup>32</sup> that Attila was a great king of Eastern Hungary. He went to conquer the rest of the world to be more powerful. He went through Lithuania, Scotland (it means Ireland<sup>33</sup>), Dacia (it means Denmark<sup>34</sup>), Cologne, Austria, Apulia, Lombardy, Croatia and Slavonia. He created his own state in the northern part of Slavonia and established laws and institutions to it. He named it *Ungaria* to memorize his old homeland. He and his soldiers married the Slavs from *Chroatia* and *Slavonia*. We observe here the Slavic point of view of this narration,

<sup>30</sup> *Chron. Pol. Mai.*, ed. cit., *Prologus*, p. 7.

<sup>31</sup> I mention that in some yet unpublished articles.

<sup>32</sup> Ed. Karácsonyi, ch. 1–3, p. 10–21.

<sup>33</sup> This identification was general in the Middle Ages, cf., e. g., *Żegluga świętego Brendana opata (Navigatio sancti Brendani abhatis)*, ed. I. Lewandowski, J. Strzelczyk, (Poznań, 1992), p. 93, footnote 10 to page 22; B. Kürbis, 'Szkola i katecheza według rękopisu z Wessobrunn (München, CLM 22053, ok. 800 r.)' [School and Catechesis According to the Manuscript of Wessobrunn c. 800], *St. Żródł.*, 35, (1994), p. 5, n. 20: *Hybernia scottonolant*. The tradition of Attila's wandering through Ireland was also alive in the Alps in the mid-fourteenth century: *Athila der Chunig von Ungern do ertwang hispanien und schottenland...* (words of mss. from Tyrol from the second half of the fourteenth century; I quote them from E. Cordt, *Attila – Flagellum Dei*, p. 48).

<sup>34</sup> This identification was also popular in the Middle Ages, cf. *Herbord, Dialog o zyciu św. Ottona biskupa hamburskiego*, ed. J. Wikarjak, K. Liman, MPH NS, 7, 3, (Warszawa, 1974), (cf. Bak, *Med.*, No 593), II 21, p. 60: *Itaque Pomerania post se in oceano Daciam habet et Rugiam ...* and the commentary, ib., n. 21.



that way readable in the later *Slavic Interpolation* as well.<sup>35</sup> I think, therefore, that this Chronicle was known to the interpolator. We know that the Chronicle was popular in the middle of the fourteenth century, when its oldest manuscript, *Zamoyski-Codex*, was written.<sup>36</sup> We found the marginal notes in the manuscripts of the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle which testified that the readers were interested in Attila's history.<sup>37</sup> We found, however, the lack of knowledge of this Hungarian-Polish Chronicle's motif, except the *Slavic Interpolation*.

The story of Attila in the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle again leads us to a European motif which is unknown to the other Polish chronicles; we did not find its traces in the Polish *Annales* neither. It is the story of the martyrdom of Saint Ursula and her Eleven Thousand companions.<sup>38</sup> It is an example of a hagiographical connection which was animated by the needs of early medieval people.<sup>39</sup>

This cult had been developed from a local cult and based on the information of the real martyrdom of eleven *virgines*, which could have taken place during the Roman rule in the Rhineland. One considers that its first sign was an inscription which has been preserved on the wall of the organ-loft of St. Ursula-Church in Cologne and which commemorated the rebuilding of this church by Clematius.<sup>40</sup> It is generally dated to the turn from the

<sup>35</sup> I think, however, that the author of the chronicle was a Hungarian because of the Hungarian point of view of Hungarian history.

<sup>36</sup> J. Wiesiołowski, *Kolekcje rękopismienne w Polsce średniowiecznej XIV-XV wieku* [The Manuscript-Collections in Medieval Poland of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries], (Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków, 1967), p.33.

<sup>37</sup> E.g., we found in the Codex of Sędziwój of Czecheł (mid-fifteenth century) a gloss: *Aquila rex primus Hungarie* (p. 349 v. 13-5, right column).

<sup>38</sup> The article of M. G. Borkowska OSU, 'Kult liturgiczny św. Urszuli od [recte: do] XVI wieku' [The Liturgical Cult of St. Ursula until the Sixteenth Century], *Roczniki Humanistyczne*, 14, 2, (1966), p. 109-98 offered the most detailed analysis of the cult of the 11000 Virgins in Poland.

<sup>39</sup> I have devoted an article to this problem, which will be published in English in the *Yearbook of the Medieval Department of Central European University* in Budapest.

<sup>40</sup> The text of the inscription was published by W. Levison, 'Das Werden der Ursula-Legende', *Bonner Jahrbücher*, 132, (1927), p. 4 (reproduction p. 1); M. G. Borkowska, *op. cit.*, p. 127-8 with Polish translation; N. Gauthier, 'Origine et Premiers Développements de la Légende de Sainte Ursule à Cologne', *Comptes Rendus de*

fourth to the fifth century. This inscription mentioned the *virgines*, who shed their blood in the name of Christ, although without specifying their number and their names. This cult did not go beyond the Cologne frontiers during whole the early Middle Ages, because it was not known by Gregory of Tours and by the unknown author of the *Martirologium Romanum* dated to the seventh century. The liturgical sources of the ninth century mentioned the *virgines* first, offering at the same time the first attempt to give them names. Amidst the continuous changes of the canon, the name of Ursula appeared, which could have been taken from the early Christian inscription. It mentioned a girl of the same name, who died, when she was 8 years, 2 months and 4 days old.<sup>41</sup> She was promoted by the medieval legend to the leader of the group. The number of *virgines* was increased during the ninth century. It came to the unreal number of 11000 of martyrs. The question of the origin of the Saints from Britain also was determined at that time. It reflected the vivid contacts between the Rhineland and England.<sup>42</sup>

The ripe form of the tradition of the 11000 Virgins found its expression in two legends. The *Passio I, incipit Fuit tempore pervetusto*, which was written in the second half of the tenth century, was one of them.<sup>43</sup> In account of its subtle form it did not find many recipients. Its contents were popularized by the *Passio II, incipit Regnante Domino* which was written about hundred years later.<sup>44</sup> Its popularity is testified by the fact that we

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*l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, 1973, p. 109 with reproduction and French translation.

<sup>41</sup> This inscription was published by W. Levison, *op. cit.*, p. 36; M. G. Borkowska, *op. cit.*, p. 130; N. Gauthier, *op. cit.*, p. 116 with reproduction.

<sup>42</sup> W. Levison, *op. cit.*, p. 26-42 wrote a detailed overview of this problem. M. Thiébaux, '“Damoisele” Ursula: Traditions of Hagiography and History in the South English Legendary and Lazamon's Brut', in *The South English Legendary. A Critical Assessment*, ed. K. P. Jankofsky, (Tübingen, 1992), p. 45, insisted on the role of the monastery St. Bertin in Saint-Omer in Lorraine for the development of this story.

<sup>43</sup> BHL 8427. It was published by W. Levison, *op. cit.*, p. 142-57.

<sup>44</sup> It was published by the Bollandists, *Acta Sanctorum*, 9, October 21 (on the basis of the *Codex Bruzellensis* MS 7984), and by J. Klinkenberg, 'Studien zur Geschichte der Kölner Märterinnen', 2, *Jahrbücher des Vereins von Alterthumsfreunden im Rheinlande*, 93, (1892), p. 154-63 (based on *Bayerische Staatsbibliothek*, ms. 18897). English translation: *The Passion of Saint Ursula (Regnante Domino)*, ed. P. Scheingorn, M. Thiébaux, 2. ed., (Toronto, 1991).

know more than hundred manuscripts of this legend, while Passion I has preserved only in six manuscripts.<sup>45</sup> Both Passions showed the history of a daughter of a Christian king of Britain who started a sea trip with 11000 Virgins to preserve her virginity. After three years of God's dispensation they came to the harbour of Thiele, which was located at the mouth of the Rhine. Next they sailed to Cologne, where Ursula had a vision of their future fate. The Virgins sailed further to Basel, where they left their ships. Consecutively they went to Rome. During their return they stopped at Cologne to buy food. The town was besieged by the barbarious Huns who attacked the landing ships and killed the Virgins. At the end Ursula's ship came to the harbour. The pagans' tyrant, who was characterized by the Passio II as a victor over whole Europe, seeing her beauty, fell in love with her. When she refused his request to marry him, she was transfixed with an arrow. Both Passions mentioned at the end a vision of Helmdrude, a nun from the Saxon monastery of Heerse. She described a history of Cordula's fates relating to this vision.

Since the time of origin of both Passions the martyrdom of the 11000 Virgins has been identified with Attila in common consciousness, despite further developments of the Cologne tradition.<sup>46</sup> The Hungarian-Polish Chronicle reflected such early stage of the tradition.<sup>47</sup> The catalogue of the companions of St. Ursula was extended. The virgins got husbands, and even children in the further stage of the growing of the hagiographical tradition! The second chapter of its longer version is entitled *De occisione XI milium virginum*. We read in it that soon after the occupation of Cologne by Aquila's troops a group of Eleven Thousand Virgins, who were coming back from a pilgrimage to Rome, approached the town. When the Hungarian guards saw them, they informed the king. From his order whole the troops struck the coming saints and began to kill them. When almost all Virgins were killed, Aquila came near to St. Ursula and shocked by her beauty he understood his mistake. He spoke to her explaining his tragical mistake, and as a recompensate he proposed her marriage and common rule

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<sup>45</sup> W. Levison, *op. cit.*, p. 91-6.

<sup>46</sup> E. g., *Sigeberti Gemblacensis Chronographia*, ed. L. C. Bethmann, MGH SS, 6, (1844), p. 310.

<sup>47</sup> Just Geoffrey of Monmouth changed the end of this story, *Geoffrey of Monmouth, Historia Regum Britanniae. A Variant Version*, ed. J. Hammer, (Cambridge (Mass.), 1951), p. 99.

over all kingdoms of the world. But Ursula gave a scornful answer, which enraged the king so much that he ordered to decapitate her and all her surviving companions. Only Cordula survived of all the Virgins. She saw at midnight that Jesus Christ descended with singing angels in the bright light and took the souls of the martyred Virgins to Heaven. St. Cordula cried bitter tears because she had left her companions. Next day she stood up and began to walk up and down, until she was seen by a pagan, who decapitated her.<sup>48</sup>

The detailed comparison of the sources confirms that the text of our chronicle should be the transformation of the narration of both Passions, especially of the Passion *Regnante Domino* which is self-dependent in great part.

I have mentioned earlier that this chronicle originated from Hungary, and that Polish narratives did not know the whole Cologne history. We, therefore, have to put the question whether we find such a motif in other Hungarian sources. The other Hungarian chroniclers from the thirteenth and fourteenth century, based on the missing Hun Chronicle, also knew about the acts of the Huns' leader in Cologne. Simon of Kéza wrote: *Taliterque Francia et Flandria demolita Renum Coloniae pertransivit, ubi Sanctam Ursulam, Brittanorum regis filiam cum XI millibus virginum Hunorum feritas iugulavit.*<sup>49</sup> The convergence of these words with the *Passio II Sanctae Ursulae* is visible. It is known that in Hungary, as well as in the rest of Latin Europe, the cult of the 11000 Virgins developed, and the Hungarians went on pilgrimages to Cologne, where they could learn the local hagiographical tradition. The appearance of this theme in historiography became a premise of the conclusion that the most popular Passion of St. Ursula arrived at the lands of St. Stephen's Crown where these manuscripts were unknown.<sup>50</sup> It is an example of the utilization of a hagio-

<sup>48</sup> *Chron.*, ch. 2, p. 12-4.

<sup>49</sup> Kéza, ch. 13, p. 155 v. 18-21. The chroniclers of the fourteenth century described this episode in the same way: *Taliterque tota Francia et Flandria demolita pervenit Coloniā, ubi Sanctam Ursulam, Bractanorum regis filiam cum undecim milibus virginum Hunorum feritas crudeliter iugulavit. Chronici Hungarici*, ch. 13, p. 267 v. 20-1.

<sup>50</sup> The Hungarian-Cologne relationships have not been searched yet. G. Klaniczay, 'Le Culte des Saints dans la Hongrie Médiévale (Problèmes de Recherche)', *Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, 29, 1983, p. 72 and n. 73, did not examine them in detail. Neither E. Thoemmes, *Die Wallfahrten der Ungarn am Rhein*, (Aachen, 1937),

graphical motif in the secular epic poetry and historiography as well. After the detailed text comparison I believe that this version of the Cologne story was independent from the narration of the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle. It is not so detailed. The story of this last Chronicle seems to be created to vindicate Attila's behaviour. I have not observed such interpretations in the later chronicles. Also the information of Kéza that Ursula was a daughter of a king of the Britts (the chronicles from the fourteenth century changed this name into *rex Bractanorum*) shows that both sources used the Passions independently.

To conclude:

- 1) The Polish medieval historiography knew several narrative motifs which were alive in the whole circle of Western civilization. In my presentation I concentrated only on the stories of Attila. I tried to show the roots of appearance of this person as a hero of Polish history and to present the stages of its development. I think that including Attila in the course of Polish history testified the old splendor of the Poles. We observe the same process in Hungary.
- 2) The identification of Attila as a home hero had a place in thirteenth and fourteenth century in Silesia and Pomerania, the most Western parts of Poland. It was connected with a popular Polish-Vandalian identification. Only in the middle of the fourteenth century the Great Polish and Cracow tradition connected these historiographical motifs with the Hungarian version of Attila's legend. It came to Poland within the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle.
- 3) From the medieval narratives, which were preserved in the Polish libraries, only the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle contained the legend of the 11000 Virgins. This legend was very popular in the West. I think that this motif was also known in Hungary, where it was used independently by other narratives too.

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nor E. Csukovits, '“Cum capsă ... cum bacillo”. Középkori magyar zarándokok' [The Medieval Hungarian Pilgrims], *Aetas*, 1, (1994), p. 5–27, mentioned this problem. M. G. Borkowska, *op. cit.*, p. 136, wrote, however, that the Virgins were the saint patrons of the Hungarian Kingdom.

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HERAUSGEGEBEN VON GERHARD JARITZ

GEDRUCKT MIT UNTERSTÜTZUNG DER KULTURABTEILUNG  
DES AMTES DER NIEDERÖSTERREICHISCHEN LANDESREGIERUNG

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## Vorwort

Durch den tragischen Tod von Harry Kühnel im August dieses Jahres hat nicht nur *Medium Aevum Quotidianum* seinen Präsidenten verloren, sondern auch die Erforschung von Alltag und materieller Kultur des Mittelalters einen ihren herausragendsten Vertreter. Harry Kühnel hat in seinen wissenschaftlichen Arbeiten sowohl in methodologischer als auch in inhaltlicher Hinsicht Bedeutendes geleistet und als Direktor des *Instituts für Realienkunde des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit* der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften vieles zur Intensivierung der Erforschung mittelalterlichen Alltagslebens beigetragen. Wir werden ihm ein ehrendes Andenken bewahren.

Das vorliegende Heft von *Medium Aevum Quotidianum* bietet unterschiedliche Beiträge aus unserem Forschungsbereich, die von Mitgliedern und Freunden der Gesellschaft angeboten wurden. Das nächste Heft wird als Sonderband IV im März erscheinen und unter dem Titel "Quotidianum Estonicum" unter der Herausgeberschaft von Jüri Kivimäe und Juhan Krem (Tallinn) Beiträge aus der Estnischen Alltagsgeschichtsforschung des Mittelalters beinhalten. Ein zweiter Sonderband des Jahres 1996 wird sich unter der Herausgeberschaft von Dorothe Rippmann (Basel) Schwerpunkten Schweizer Forschung widmen. Zwei weitere Hefte werden unterschiedliche Beiträge unserer Mitglieder und Freunde beinhalten, mit manchen Schwerpunkten auf alltagshistorisch relevanten Papieren, die bei den Mittelalterkonferenzen von Kalamazoo und Leeds 1996 vorgelegt werden.

Wir wünschen Ihnen ein privat und wissenschaftlich erfolgreiches Jahr 1996!

Gerhard Jaritz, Herausgeber