

Neringa Dambrauskaitė

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2760-1928>

Vilnius University

The Cuisine of Sigismund II Augustus: Food and Its Supply in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania According to the Data in the Court Account Books of 1543–1546

Abstract: The objective of the present article is to reveal what food products were used in the cuisine of King Sigismund II Augustus and what were the ways of their supply when the Ruler resided in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania according to the data in the court account books of 1543–1546. The following issues will be addressed in the article: the supply of meat to the court kitchen of Sigismund II Augustus and its use; the consumption and supply of fish; the consumption of dairy products and eggs; bread, cereals, and sweet baked products on the Ruler’s menu; the assortment of vegetables and fruits; a variety of spices and their supply; the consumption of beverages.

Zarys treści: Celem niniejszego artykułu jest analiza danych zawartych w księgach rachunkowych z lat 1543–1546, w celu ukazania, jakich produktów spożywczych używano w kuchni królewskiej podczas pobytów Zygmunta II Augusta w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim oraz sposobów ich pozyskiwania. Prezentowane źródła pozwalają na ustalenie wielkości dostaw i poziomu spożycia mięsa i ryb w kuchni tego władcy, a także oszacowanie wielkości spożycia nabiału, chleba, kasz, słodkich wypieków, warzyw, owoców, przypraw i napojów.

Keywords: Sigismund II Augustus, Grand Duchy of Lithuania, cuisine, food products, account books

Słowa kluczowe: Zygmunt II August, Wielkie Księstwo Litewskie, kuchnia, żywność, księgi rachunkowe

The cuisine of Sigismund II Augustus, King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania, is a significant subject encompassing the aspects of everyday life, economics, and social history. The social aspect of this theme – kitchen service – was studied by Marek Ferenc,¹ some information about food products is provided

¹ M. Ferenc, *Dwór Zygmunta Augusta. Organizacja i ludzie*, Oświęcim, 2014.

in the works by Andrzej Wyczański,² Józef Maroszek, and Jan Leończuk,³ Liudas Glemža,⁴ a brief analysis of the information concerning the cuisine presented in the introductions to the account books of Sigismund II Augustus was carried out by Darius Antanavičius.⁵ Urszula Borkowska devoted attention to the Jagiellonian cuisine.⁶ Anna Pytasz-Kołodziejczyk revealed some information about the species of fish in the Sigismund II Augustus's menu.⁷ Neringa Dambrauskaitė studies the use of meat and fish in the cuisine of Sigismund II Augustus.⁸ Toma Zarankaitė-Margienė brought to light the significance of hunting, hunting products and their prices in the sixteenth century.⁹ Finally, works of archaeologists that provide the analysis of zooarchaeological material discovered in the territory of Vilnius Lower Castle are of great importance to the current investigation¹⁰.

² A. Wyczański, *Studia nad konsumpcją żywności w Polsce w XVI i pierwszej połowie XVII w.*, Warszawa, 1969.

³ J. Maroszek, *Pogranicze Litwy i Korony w planach króla Zygmunta Augusta. Z historii dziejów realizacji myśli monaszej między Niemnem a Narwią*, Białystok, 2000; J. Maroszek, 'Ogrody królewskie w Wilnie i innych rezydencjach Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego w XVI wieku', in *Królewskie ogrody w Polsce*, ed. M. Szafrąńska, Warszawa, 2001, pp. 109–27; J. Maroszek, J. Leończuk, *Wielka Księga Tradycji Kulinarnej Puszczy Knyszyńskiej*, Supraśl, 2011.

⁴ L. Glemža, 'Maistas', in *Lietuvos didžiųjų kunigaikščių rezidencija Vilniuje*, ed. V. Urbanavičius, Vilnius, 2010, pp. 319–27.

⁵ D. Antanavičius, 'Įvadas', in *Lietuvos didžiojo kunigaikščio Žygimanto Augusto dvaro sąskaitos (1543–1548). I knyga: 1544 XI 15 – 1546 XI 15*, ed. D. Antanavičius, transl. S. Narbutas, Vilnius, 2009 (hereinafter: *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2009), pp. iv–xlix; D. Antanavičius, 'Įvadas', in *Lietuvos didžiojo kunigaikščio Žygimanto Augusto dvaro sąskaitos (1543–1548): 1543 VI 21 – 1544 XI 15*, ed. D. Antanavičius, transl. S. Narbutas, Vilnius, 2012 (hereinafter: *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2012), pp. VII–XLIV.

⁶ U. Borkowska, 'Przepisy kulinarne Jagiellonek', in *Aetas media, aetas moderna. Studia ofiarowane profesorowi Henrykowi Samsonowiczowi w siedemdziesiąt rocznicę urodzin*, ed. A. Bartoszewicz, Warszawa, 2000, pp. 632–42; U. Borkowska, *Dynastia Jagiellonów w Polsce*, Warszawa, 2012.

⁷ A. Pytasz-Kołodziejczyk, *Zasoby wodne w dobrach wielkksiążęcych zachodniej Grodzieńszczyzny w XVI wieku. Administracja i eksploatacja*, Olsztyn, 2017.

⁸ N. Dambrauskaitė, 'Mėsos ir žuvies vartojimo reikšmė Lietuvos didžiųjų kunigaikščių virtuvėje XVI–XVII amžiaus pirmos pusės rašytinių šaltinių duomenimis', in P. Blaževičius, N. Dambrauskaitė, H. Luik, G. Piličiauskienė, S. Rumbutis, T. Zarankaitė-Margienė (eds), *Vilniaus pilių fauna: nuo kepsnio iki draugo*, Vilnius, 2018, pp. 215–42; N. Dambrauskaitė, 'Valdovo pasninkas: žuvies vartojimas Lietuvos didžiojo kunigaikščio Žygimanto Augusto virtuvėje (1544–1572 m.)', *Lituanistica*, 64, 2018, no. 3 (113), pp. 169–78.

⁹ T. Zarankaitė-Margienė, 'Laukiniai žvėrys Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės valdovo aplinkoje XIV–XVII amžiuje', in Blaževičius, Dambrauskaitė, Luik, Piličiauskienė, Rumbutis, Zarankaitė-Margienė (eds), *Vilniaus pilių fauna*, pp. 245–73; T. Zarankaitė-Margienė, 'Medžiojamosios faunos ir medžioklės produktų vertė bei kainos LDK valdovo aplinkoje XV a. pabaigoje – XVI a. II pusėje', *Lituanistica*, 64, 2018, no. 2 (112), pp. 81–98.

¹⁰ P. Blaževičius, S. Rumbutis, T. Zarankaitė, 'Medžiokliniai, medžiojamieji ir naminiai paukščiai Vilniaus žemutinėje pilyje XIV–XVI a. naujausių tyrimų duomenimis', in *Chronicorum Palatii Magnorum Ducum Lithuaniae*, ed. G. Striška, vol. 2, Vilnius, 2011, pp. 293–98; A. Kuncevičius, P. Blaževičius, E. Ožalas, 'Vilniaus Žemutinės pilies Valdovų rūmų rytinio korpuso šiaurinio priestato U ir W rūsių tyrimai 2014–2015 m.', *Archeologinių tyrimų ataskaitos*, 69, 2015, pp. 201–07;

The objective of the present article is to reveal what food products were used in the cuisine of Sigismund II Augustus and the ways of their supply during the King's stay in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania based on the data contained in the court account books for the period between 1543 and 1546.¹¹ This topic has not been exhaustively studied thus far; researchers have not given the analysis of the court account books through the prism of cuisine sufficient attention. It is worth emphasising that 1543–1546 account books of the court of Sigismund II Augustus are important sources providing data about the supply of food products, their assortment, quantities and prices. However, it is difficult to apply a statistical method to this analysis because prices are mentioned only in some account books. Others indicate only the quantities of the products, while not all the products and their quantities supplied to the court kitchen could have been entered into account books. Additional sources of information used in the article are as follows: the First Statute of Lithuania,¹² the Lithuanian Metrica,¹³ inventories of the Ruler's manors,¹⁴ narrative sources,¹⁵ and an unpublished list of food products of 1565 for the Ruler's kitchen and the account book compiled by Wolfgang Schaur, the steward of Sigismund II Augustus, in 1566.¹⁶

Seeking to reveal what food products were used in the cuisine of Sigismund II Augustus and in what way they were supplied during the time of Ruler's stay in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, with the help of the data contained in 1543–1546 court account books, the following issues will be addressed in the article: 1) the supply of meat to the court kitchen of Sigismund II Augustus and its use; 2) the significance of fasting, the consumption and supply of fish; 3) the consumption of dairy products and eggs; 4) bread, cereals and sweet baked products on the King's menu; 5) the assortment of vegetables and fruit; 6) a variety of spices and their supply; 7) the consumption of beverages.

G. Piličiauskienė, P. Blaževičius, 'Žinduoliai Vilniaus pilyse', in Blaževičius, Dambrauskaitė, Luik, Piličiauskienė, Rumbutis, Zarankaitė-Margienė, *Vilniaus pilių fauna*, pp. 19–101; S. Rumbutis, P. Blaževičius, G. Piličiauskienė, 'Paukščiai Vilniaus pilyse', in *ibid.*, pp. 103–30; G. Piličiauskienė, P. Blaževičius, 'Žuvys Vilniaus pilyse', in *ibid.*, pp. 133–55.

¹¹ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2009; *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2012.

¹² *Pirmasis Lietuvos Statutas (1529)*, ed. I. Valikonytė, S. Lazutka, E. Gudavičius, Vilnius, 2001.

¹³ *Lietuvos Metrika. Knyga nr. 564 (1553–1564). Viešųjų reikalų knyga 7*, ed. A. Baliulis, Vilnius, 1996.

¹⁴ *Istorijos archyvas*, vol. 1: *XVI amžiaus Lietuvos inventoriai*, ed. K. Jablonskis, Kaunas, 1934.

¹⁵ N. Hussovianus, *Giesmė apie stumbrą*, ed. B. Kazlauskas, Vilnius, 1977; *Relacye nuncyuszów apostołskich i innych osób o Polsce od roku 1548 do 1690*, vol. 1, ed. E. Rykaczewski, Poznań–Berlin, 1864.

¹⁶ '1565 r. Gotowanie potrzeb do kuchni, szpiżarnie, piwnicze i tajnie króla jego miłości', Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych (Central Archives of Historical Records, Warsaw; hereinafter: AGAD), Archiwum Skarbu Koronnego, Rachunki królewskie (Archives of the Crown Treasury, Royal Bills; hereinafter: ASK, RK), no. 383/384; f. 173- 176 '1566 r. Registr Wolfgangk Schaur, Safarz króla jego miłości, poczęto w Wieluniu dnia 2 Maja Roku Bożego 1566', AGAD, ASK, RK, no. 212.

Supply of meat to the court kitchen of Sigismund II Augustus and its consumption

The 1543–1546 account books of Sigismund II Augustus's court provide important data about the supply of food products to the court kitchen during the Ruler's stay in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. At that time, Stanisław Łagowiec, a steward of Sigismund II Augustus, took care of the resources of food products. He personally purchased food products for the King's money given to him by the court treasurer Jan Lutomirski. Also, he kept a weekly account of the money spent on the products delivered to the court kitchen.¹⁷

The analysed court account books contain extensive data about the provision of food, including the supply of animals, poultry, meat products after the King had left for Alytus, where he stayed from 14 November 1543 to 23 March 1544. Most likely, he and his court stayed in that remote place to avoid a plague; its outbreak caused them to leave Kraków for the Grand Duchy of Lithuania on 30 July 1543.¹⁸ During this more than four-month-long stay of Sigismund II Augustus and his court at Alytus, the Ruler went hunting more than once (other account books are testifying the supply of food to the King's kitchen during the hunting season).

According to the account kept by the treasurer Jan Lutomirski and his servant Wawrzyniec Jelitowski, some food products were purchased in Alytus and its environs (between 2 December 1543 and 22 March 1544). Domestic animals and birds, meat products were listed among them: 32 *ordinary* cattle (cows), two bull calves, four castrated animals (wethers), 25 pork hams, 80 roosters, 29 capons and 21 geese (see Table 1). A total of 30 *kopas* (*kopa* being a unit of measurement equal to 60 groschen), 45 groschen, 4 denarii were paid. The cow was the most expensive of them, it cost 17 *kopas* and 33 groschen. Apart from domestic animals and birds, 18 grey and 4 white hares, 548 waxwings, 150 thrushes, 19 night-herons and 3 pheasants were purchased. A total of 33 *kopas*, 13 groschen were paid for the lot. Waxwings were the most expensive ones – 32 *kopas* and 2 groschen were paid for them;¹⁹ almost twice as much money was spent on these wild birds than on the cows. It is mentioned in the accounts that a butcher who arrived from Vilnius purchased various food products from the nobility at Alytus and its environs and took them to Alytus; however, later, he ran away with 1/8/4 *kopas* from the treasury of the Ruler.²⁰

¹⁷ Antanavičius, 'Įvadas', 2009, p. XIX; id., 'Įvadas' 2012, p. XIII.

¹⁸ Antanavičius, 'Įvadas', 2012, p. XVI.

¹⁹ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2012, pp. 176–79.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 178–79.

Table 1. Animals, birds, and meat products purchased in Alytus and its environs between 2 December 1543 and 22 March 1544

Animals, birds, meat products	Quantity	Price		
		<i>Kopa</i> (60 groschen)	Groschen	Denarii
Ordinary cattle (<i>pro peccoribus comunibus</i>)	32	17	33	0
Bull calves (<i>pro vitulis</i>)	2	0	20	0
Wethers (<i>pro mutonibus</i>)	4	0	33	0
Pork hams (<i>perne lardi</i>)	25	9	24	0
Roosters (<i>pro gallis</i>)	80	0	49	4
Capons (<i>pro caponibus</i>)	29	1	27	0
Geese (<i>pro ancis</i>)	21	0	39	0
Grey hares (<i>lepores grisei</i>)	18	0	34	5
White hares (<i>lepores albi</i>)	4	0	5	4
Waxwings (<i>jemiolkow</i>)	548	32	2	0
Thrushes (<i>quiczolow</i>)	150	0	15	6
Night-herons (<i>butoriorum</i>)	19	0	12	5
Pheasants (<i>fasiani</i>)	3	0	3	0
Total	–	63	58	4

Source: *Lietuvos didžiojo kunigaikščio Žygimanto Augusto dvaro sąskaitos (1543–1548): 1543 VI 21 – 1544 XI 15*, ed. D. Antanavičius, transl. S. Narbutas, Vilnius, 2012, pp. 176–79.

As we can see from the table below, large quantities of animals, birds and meat products were delivered to Alytus from Vilnius. Between 3 December 1543 and 29 February 1544, the King's steward Stanisław Łagowiec purchased 192 cows, 79 skinned bull calves, a skinned wether and 72 pork hams in Vilnius and sent all that to Alytus. Also, the following domestic birds were purchased: 3715 roosters, 82 capons and 302 geese. A total of 210 *kopas*, 51.5 groschen, one denarius were paid for the lot, including 119 *kopas* and 48.5 groschen for the cows. Although a vast number of roosters was purchased, only 47 *kopas*, 39 groschen and two denarii were paid for them, because the price of a rooster was between 6 and 11 denarii. The data mentioned above reveal that bull calves and wether were transported to Alytus as carcass, as it is mentioned that these animals were skinned. However, a large cattle herd was driven; further, the source described how much 23 drivers who drove the animals from Vilnius to Alytus were paid.²¹

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 50–55.

In this way, the meat served to the Ruler would always be fresh. Eating fresh meat was a privilege of the European elite.²²

A total of 367 grey and 812 white hares, as well as different wild birds, were purchased in Vilnius, too: as many as 569 black grouses (these birds were highly valued for their delicious meat²³), 435 thrushes, 267 partridges, 200 waxwings, 56 night-herons, 8 pheasants and one skewer of small birds. The amount paid for the lot totalled 51 *kopas*, 16 groschen, 6 denarii; the largest amount was paid for the hares.²⁴

Table 2. Animals, birds, meat products delivered to Alytus from Vilnius during the period between 3 December 1543 and 29 February 1544

Animals, birds, meat products	Quantity	Price		
		<i>Kopa</i> (60 groschen)	Groschen	Denarii
Cows (<i>vacce</i>)	192	119	48.5	0
Bull calves (<i>vituli</i>)	79	13	55	0
Wether (<i>pro mutone</i>)	1	0	8	0
Pork hams (<i>perne lardi</i>)	72	17	25	0
Ordinary roosters (<i>pro gallis comonibus</i>)	3715	47	39	2
Capons (<i>pro caponibus</i>)	82	3	23	0
Geese (<i>pro ancis</i>)	302	8	32	9
Grey hares (<i>leporis grisei</i>)	367	11	55	9
White hares (<i>leporis albi</i>)	812	16	54	6
Black grouses (<i>pro czieczerycze</i>)	569	8	58	2
Thrushes (<i>quiczolow</i>)	435	1	27	0
Partridges (<i>pro perdibus</i>)	267	10	56	9
Waxwings (<i>jemyolkow</i>)	200	0	14	0
Night-herons (<i>pro butoriis</i>)	56	0	33	0
Pheasants (<i>fasianos</i>)	8	0	16	0
Small birds (<i>aviculorum parvorum</i>)	1 skewer	0	1	0
Total	–	262	7.5	7

Source: *Lietuvos didžiojo kunigaikščio Žygimanto Augusto dvaro sąskaitos (1543–1548): 1543 VI 21 – 1544 XI 15*, ed. D. Antanavičius, transl. S. Narbutas, Vilnius, 2012, pp. 50–55.

²² R. Sarti, *Europe at Home: Family and Material Culture, 1500–1800*, London, 2002, p. 169.

²³ A. Samsonowicz, *Łowiectwo w Polsce Piastów i Jagiellonów*, Warszawa, 2011, p. 154.

²⁴ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2012, pp. 52–53.

A large part of the animals, pork hams, hares, domestic and wild birds were delivered to the King's kitchen at Alytus by the elders of the holdings of Sigismund II Augustus, who either purchased them for the Ruler's money or took them from royal peasants as a praedial tithe, or collected them from the farms under their administration. They were not only royal elders of nearby holdings, such as Alytus and Punia, Daugai and Perloja, Merkinė, Simnas, Rumšiškės, Kaunas, but also of more remote estates: Anykščiai, Samogitia – Samogitia's Elder Jurgis Bilevičius sent 20 oxen to the King in Alytus as a present; so did the Elders of Lida and Belica, Markova, Knyszyn, Tykocin, and Szereszow. In addition, as many as 28 fattened oxen were driven to Alytus from Kremenets (the distance is about 598 km). They were sent by Bishop of Łuck Georgius Chwalczewski.²⁵

Driving of animals from the distant holdings was not always smooth. The record of 110 cows purchased on the royal order by Leon Roski, the Elder of Markoviensi, shows that at first the animals were sent to the Land Treasurer of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania Ivan Hornostaj in Bershty to be fattened, and then to the King's court kitchen at Alytus. However, the animals were half-dead at Bershty, so only a hundred of them were sent to Alytus – one animal perished on the way, and nine starved to death at Bershty.²⁶

The accounts of all foodstuffs, which Stanisław Bzowski, a servant of the royal steward Stanisław Łagowiec, received in Alytus between 2 December 1543 and 23 March 1544, are of great importance. The following animals and birds, as well as meat products, are listed: 68 fattened oxen, as many as 623 cows, 82 bull calves, 84 wethers, 10 lambs, 15 pigs, 4 piglets and 169.5 pork hams; as many as 5950 roosters, 253 capons and 1003 geese, 699 grey hares, 816 white hares, 2212 waxwings, 1125 thrushes, 569 black grouses, 342 partridges, 176 pheasants and wild cocks (most likely they were wood-grouses because another account mentions that 616 pheasants, wood-grouses and black-grouses were consumed in Alytus), 130 night-herons and one skewer of small birds.²⁷ We see that cows constituted the largest number among the domestic animals supplied, and roosters prevailed among the domestic birds. The number of hares and wild birds among which waxwings prevailed was very significant. Some of the products were removed from the larder after the Ruler had gone hunting near the Šešupė River and Bershty.

The sources disclose the quantities of meat supplied and consumed near the Šešupė River during the hunting season, which lasted 13 days, from 12 January to 24 January 1544. Between the 4 and 22 January, a total of 3 oxen (2 of them were consumed), 115 cows (114 consumed), 15 bull calves (13 consumed), 15 wethers (13 consumed), 40 pork hams (31 consumed), 4 pigs alive (all of which were

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 186–87, 200–07.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 198–99.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 208–11.

consumed), 1121 roosters (833 consumed), 49 capons (all consumed), 86 geese (all consumed), 191 hares (187 consumed), 200 waxwings (all consumed), 113 pheasants (96 consumed), 73 partridges (all consumed), 4 night-herons (all consumed) were sent by the steward from Alytus and the Ruler's neighbouring estates to be eaten during that hunting. The accounts show that a sufficient quantity of meat products was supplied because some remained unconsumed and was taken back to Alytus on 3 February 1544.²⁸

It is unknown how many people to whom such a quantity of meat was sent went hunting. However, it is known that 175 horses of the Ruler, about 40 recipients of free fodder for horses and 13 courtiers reached the hunting site. Undoubtedly, some dozens of service staff had to travel together. Therefore, it can be assumed that a significant number of guests took part in the hunting.²⁹ However, it is impossible to establish how much meat a person was given a day because the exact number of the participants in the hunting is unknown and not all the food products consumed were entered into the accounts, that is, the game and wild birds hunted were unlisted.

Other accounts show the number of meat products needed for a one-day stay. For example, when the Ruler was travelling to Kraków, the following was purchased for a one-night stay in Vasilishki on 12 May 1545: one ox, 15 cows, one bull calf, 6 rams, 8 pork hams, 6 capons, 114 roosters, 45 chickens, 26 geese, and one hare.³⁰ However, again, the number of the people in the King's escort is unknown. Andrzej Wyczański, in discussing quantities of food products intended for Sigismund II Augustus's stays in the Polish Crown, in Kamieńsk and Brzeźnica (during the same trip to Kraków in 1545), indicates that 0.815 kg of meat (including animal and bird meat) and 0.028 kg of fitch were planned per person per day. During the Ruler's stay in Piotrków and Lubocheń, the amount was 0.725 kg of meat and 0.033 kg of fitch per head. Nevertheless, according to the author himself, these data are hypothetical because the number of people in the escort is unknown.³¹

There is not much information about the provision of meat when Sigismund II Augustus stayed at his residence in Vilnius. However, it may be noted that 10 cows, 40 lambs, 14 wild geese, 40 capons, 120 roosters, and 60 hazel-grouses were delivered to the Ruler's kitchen for the Easter Holiday in Vilnius between 24 and 30 April 1546.³² We notice that, unlike the cases mentioned above, lots of lamb meat, lots of hazel-grouses, as well as wild geese were supplied.

All the data mentioned above and all others regarding the cuisine of Sigismund II Augustus reveal the assortment of meat being consumed. Among the meat

²⁸ Ibid., pp. 238–41, 250–51.

²⁹ Antanavičius, 'Įvadas', 2012, p. XVIII.

³⁰ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2009, pp. 202–05.

³¹ Wyczański, *Studia nad konsumpcją*, pp. 49, 51.

³² *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2009, pp. 56–57.

of domestic animals, the priority was given to beef in the Ruler's cuisine, followed by pork hams and smaller amounts of mutton. Pigs and piglets delivered alive constituted a comparatively small part. Attention should be paid to the fact that Sigismund II Augustus's account books make no mention of goat's meat, though, for example, the court account books of 1566 show that it was on the menu of that Ruler.³³ The following products were sometimes mentioned in the account books: offal, the beef tongue, and legs.³⁴ Zooarchaeological material from the middle of the sixteenth–seventeenth century found out in the territory of Vilnius Lower Castle confirms that beef prevailed over other kinds of meat, and large quantities of it were consumed. Bones of bovine animals discovered accounted for 69.9 per cent of all the bones of the domestic animals found. The number of pig bones discovered was smaller (13,4 per cent), and the number of sheep and goat bones unearthed was the smallest (put together, they accounted for 8.8 per cent).³⁵ Sheep and goats were probably valued primarily for wool and milk.³⁶

In the line of domestic birds, roosters abounded in number. Capons – castrated roosters, which grew to be big and fat, were delivered in smaller quantities. Their breeding was widespread in Western Europe as far back as the Middle Ages.³⁷ Often, though in smaller numbers than roosters, geese were supplied. Attention is drawn to the fact that ducks are not mentioned in these sources. Hens and geese alone are listed in the inventory of the Nemenčinė estate of Sigismund II Augustus in 1554.³⁸ Also, the 1561 act established the number of hens and geese to be sent to the Ruler's court kitchen from his estates in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.³⁹ The account books of 1566 kept while the Ruler resided in the Kingdom of Poland testify that ducks were on the menu of Sigismund II Augustus; however, much rarer and in smaller quantities per day than the poultry mentioned above.⁴⁰ These data coincide with the zooarchaeological material from the mid-sixteenth–seventeenth centuries discovered in the territory of Vilnius Lower Castle. Bones of hens (61.2 per cent) and geese (26.5 per cent) prevailed among the bones of the domestic birds discovered; there were found bones of only four ducks.⁴¹

It should be noted that the account books of 1543–1546 make no mention of the peacocks that were the symbol of a high-quality cuisine at that time. However,

³³ AGAD, ASK, RK, no. 212, f. 4v, 6, 6v, ect.

³⁴ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2009, pp. 218–19.

³⁵ Piličiauskienė, Blaževičius, 'Žinduoliai Vilniaus pilyse', pp. 38–39.

³⁶ M. Dembińska, *Food and Drink in Medieval Poland. Rediscovering a Cuisine of the Past*, translated by M. Thomas, revised and adapted by W. Woys Weaver, Philadelphia, 1999.

³⁷ C.M. Woolgar, 'Feasting and fasting. Food and Taste in Europe in the Middle Ages', in *Food. The History of Taste*, ed. P. Freedman, California, 2007, p. 171.

³⁸ *Istorijos archyvas*, p. 78.

³⁹ *Lietuvos Metrika ... Viešųjų reikalų knyga 7*, no. 53, p. 70.

⁴⁰ Dambrauskaitė, 'Mėsos ir žuvies', p. 225.

⁴¹ Rumbutis, Blaževičius, Piličiauskienė, 'Paukščiai Vilniaus pilyse', pp. 105–06.

these birds are mentioned in the First Lithuanian Statute, according to which the price of a single bird amounted to as many as three threescores of groschen, which is 30 times higher than the price of a capon which cost 6 groschen.⁴² Bones of peacocks were discovered in the site of Vilnius Lower Castle, actually, in the layer of an earlier period – between the fourteenth and the early sixteenth centuries.⁴³ We know that in 1564, these birds were kept at Knyszyn grange (all in all, 15 birds).⁴⁴ Other sources indicate that peacock meat was served rarely during the Ruler's residence in the Kingdom of Poland, most probably on exceptional occasions only.⁴⁵

There is no doubt that the menu of Sigismund II Augustus included wild game meat. The problem is that it is hardly reflected in the account books. They mention only hares and various wild birds; also, it is mentioned in passing that six barrels of wild game meat were delivered to the court kitchen in Grodno on 7–13 December 1543.⁴⁶ Zooarchaeological material allows us to make some assumptions about game. The remains of the wild animals discovered in Vilnius Lower Castle accounted for 11 per cent of all animal bones. The largest number discovered were bones of the moose (31.7 per cent of all the bones of the wild animals discovered), the number of deer bones found out was somewhat smaller (23.3 per cent), the number of bones of the European bison (wisent) was almost the same. In contrast, considerably fewer bones of wild boars (8.4 per cent), roe-deer (6.5 per cent), and even fewer bones of hares (5.4 per cent) were discovered.⁴⁷ Though a small number of hare bones was discovered, the account books mentioned above show that they were often supplied to the Ruler's court kitchen.

According to the account books, black grouse, waxwings, thrushes, partridges, pheasants, wood-grouse, hazel-grouse, night-herons, unidentified small birds, and rarer mentioned pigeons, wild geese, and quails were among the wild birds served. A description of the black-grouse provided by Nicolaus Hussovianus in the sixteenth century testifies that black-grouse were favourite birds at that time: 'They are large, sometimes they are heavier than the fat goose / And their delicious meat attracts us by its smell'.⁴⁸ Such birds as pheasants, wood-grouse, hazel-grouse or thrushes mentioned were a sign of high-quality cuisine.⁴⁹ Bones of various wild birds were discovered in the layer of the mid-sixteenth–seventeenth centuries in Vilnius Lower Castle, including the bones of six black-grouse,

⁴² *Pirmasis Lietuvos Statutas*, p. 247.

⁴³ Rumbutis, Blaževičius, Piličiauskienė, 'Paukščiai Vilniaus pilyse', p. 105.

⁴⁴ Maroszek, Leończuk, *Wielka Księga*, p. 50.

⁴⁵ Dambrauskaitė, 'Mėsos ir žuvis', p. 225.

⁴⁶ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2012, pp. 30–31.

⁴⁷ Piličiauskienė, Blaževičius, 'Žinduoliai Vilniaus pilyse', p. 42.

⁴⁸ Hussovianus, *Giesmė*, p. 45.

⁴⁹ M. Ferenc, 'Stół', in *Obyczaje w Polsce. Od średniowiecza do czasów współczesnych*, ed. A. Chwalba, Warszawa, 2006, p. 152.

four wood-grouses, two partridges, one hazel-grouse, one thrush, as well as a common crane, two whooper swans and other birds.⁵⁰

We see that large quantities of various kinds of meat were consumed in the court of the King. It might be that it was due to high consumption of meat and, on the whole, due to the abundant and fat cuisine that Sigismund II Augustus suffered from gout in his later years.⁵¹

The importance of fasting, consumption and supply of fish

On account of fasting, fish was an essential part of the diet throughout all Christian Europe. According to Fernand Braudel, people in Europe kept a 166-day-long fast a year right until the reign of Louis XIV.⁵² There indeed existed differences in the habits of the populations of European countries, which depended on personal piety, too.⁵³ The accounts of the court of Sigismund II Augustus testify that the King usually fasted two days a week – every Friday and Saturday, and also during religious holidays or on their eve.⁵⁴

Account books containing information about the provision of the Ruler and his court with food products during his residence at Alytus offer important data about the supply of fish. Pikes, European whitefish and *ordinary fish* were purchased in Alytus and its neighbourhood between 2 December 1543 and 22 March 1544.⁵⁵ From 2 December 1543 to 13 March 1544, the Elder of Punia and Alytus Sebastian Jundziło (*Sebastiano Jundzilo*) delivered two barrels of herring to Alytus,⁵⁶ and between 4 December 1543 and 13 March 1544, another 36 barrels of herring were sent there by the Elder of Kaunas Jonas Volminskis (*Ionne Volmyski*). The source indicates that later eight putrid barrels were found among them; hence, 28 barrels remained.⁵⁷ The Elder of Krasnystaw Mikołaj Bogusz delivered 14 barrels with salted pikes to Alytus; another four barrels were sent there by the Elder of Ratno Stanisław Rajski, three barrels were delivered by the Elder of Chełm Abraham Drohiczański.⁵⁸ Furthermore, between 3 December 1543

⁵⁰ Rumbutis, Blaževičius, Piličiauskienė, 'Paukščiai Vilniaus pilyse', pp. 105–06.

⁵¹ A. Januszek-Sieradzka, 'Zdrowie i choroba w korespondencji Zygmunta Augusta i jego siostr z drugiej połowy XVI wieku', *Roczniki Humanistyczne*, LVII, 2009, no. 2, p. 42.

⁵² F. Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th–18th Century*, vol. 1: *The Structure of Everyday Life. The Limits of the Possible*, translation from French by S. Reynolds, Berkeley, 2009, p. 214.

⁵³ Woolgar, 'Feasting and fasting', p. 166.

⁵⁴ Dambrauskaitė, 'Valdovo pasninkas', p. 173.

⁵⁵ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2012, pp. 176–77.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 200–01.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 202–03.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 208–09.

and 29 February 1544, the King's steward purchased two barrels of salted fish for 6 *kopas* in Vilnius and sent them to the court kitchen at Alytus.⁵⁹ Hence, elders of various royal estates supplied fish – ordinary herring and pikes – when the King resided in Alytus. Other fish, such as pikes and European whitefish, were purchased in Alytus and its vicinity. Salted fish procured in Vilnius and delivered to Alytus supplemented these fish stocks. Herring was usually meant for the service staff of the court.

Between 3 December 1543 and 29 February 1544, the fish were also purchased in Vilnius, and were sent to Eišišškės and Geranainiai: two barrels of salted fish that cost 5 *kopas*, 12 barrels of herring which cost 28 *kopas*, and fresh fish: 9 threescores of perch bought for 7 *kopas*, 7 *groschen*, two pikes for one *kopa*, 10 *groschen*, and not indicated quantity of perch for 50 *groschen*.⁶⁰

Important data are found in the account of 1546 where food products meant for one-night lodging of the Ruler and his escort in Eišišškės on 4 September on their way to hunting in Bershty are listed. It was a day of fasting; therefore, it was ensured in advance that there should be enough fish. A barrel of ordinary salted fish was purchased in Vilnius and sent to Eišišškės, eight threescores of fat breams were purchased in Kaunas, and 179 pikes of different size and 79 trouts were delivered from a pond in the Eišišškės estate. Hence, a total of 738 items and a barrel of different types of fish were delivered for a one-night stay. The amount of money paid for that fish was not large: 3 *kopas* and 7 *groschen*, because a large part of fish was delivered from a pond in the royal estate. We have to note that apart from these fish, the accounts mention separately fish that are not identified and were intended for the service staff of 148 people and which cost one *kopa*, 58 *groschen*, 4 *denarii*.⁶¹

Essential data are available about the provision of fish during the Ruler's residence in Vilnius Lower Castle or his visit to the Viršupis estate located in the vicinity. From the accounts covering the period between 6 March and 7 May 1546, we learn that pikes for the Ash Wednesday Party held in the second week of March in Viršupis were brought from the ponds that were in Viršupis estate. In contrast, other types of fish, including gudgeons, were purchased additionally for 4 *kopas*.⁶² In 1545, there were about 20 ponds in the Viršupis estate located near Vilnius, where pikes were bred. The accounts mention that, on the Ruler's order, four old ponds were renewed that year, and 16 new ones were dug.⁶³

Pikes from those ponds were regularly delivered to Vilnius Lower Castle. Sources show that in 1546, every week, 70 pikes alive, excluding the dead ones for the service staff, were delivered. The consumption of this fish can be regarded

⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 58–59.

⁶⁰ Ibid., pp. 60–61.

⁶¹ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2009, pp. 212–15.

⁶² Ibid., pp. 52–53.

⁶³ Ibid., pp. 442–45.

as a sign of the Ruler's high-quality cuisine because it was supplied to the King not only on an ordinary fasting day but during the feasts, too. For example, in the first week of May 1546, on Tuesday, 19 pikes were delivered to the party in which the Duke of Prussia and all his councillors, religious and secular officials took part. The source mentions that jellied pikes ('pro galaredi [galareti?] lucei 19') were served at the party.⁶⁴ The data from other account books suggest that the pike could have been a favourite fish of Sigismund II Augustus.⁶⁵ Additionally, during fasting, different types of fish such as salted bream, perch, roach and sheatfish were brought from other holdings of the King to Vilnius Lower Castle. Osteological investigations of the fishbones discovered in the territory of Vilnius Lower Castle also testify to the fact that pikes, breams, perches, and also sturgeons, as well as pikeperches, were served in that residence.⁶⁶ However, the latter are not mentioned in the analysed accounts.

Apart from the types of fish we mentioned, the burbot purchased for two groschen during the Ruler's stay in Grodno in 1543 are mentioned in the account books.⁶⁷ Crayfish were also eaten.⁶⁸ However, attention should be drawn to the fact that expensive fish such as eels and salmons, attributed to a high-quality cuisine, are not mentioned in the accounts of 1543–1546. Carps, crucians, and tenches bred at Knyszyn are not mentioned, either.⁶⁹ No mention is made of bleaks and graylings indicated in the list of food products of 1565,⁷⁰ or of cods, listed in Sigismund II Augustus's account book of 1566.⁷¹

The sources reveal that fish were eaten fresh, salted, smoked, dried and jellied. As testified to by the following entry, fresh fish were prepared with butter: 'for a cup of butter to cook fish for his Royal Highness'.⁷²

The presented data show that, like in Western Europe,⁷³ a diversity of fish species supplied was characteristic of the high cuisine of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and freshwater fishes were particularly valued. Quantities of fish delivered to the Ruler's kitchen were large. We can agree with Jerzy Topolski's opinion that dishes of a high-quality cuisine eaten during fasting were as luxurious, various and abundant as on any other day.⁷⁴

⁶⁴ Ibid., pp. 52–59.

⁶⁵ Pytasz-Kołodziejczyk, *Zasoby wodne*, p. 61.

⁶⁶ Kuncevičius, Blaževičius, Ožalas, 'Vilniaus Žemutinės pilies', pp. 203–19.

⁶⁷ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2012, pp. 30–31.

⁶⁸ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2009, pp. 186–87.

⁶⁹ Maroszek, Leończuk, *Wielka Księga*, pp. 46–47.

⁷⁰ AGAD, ASK, RK, no. 383/384, f. 174v, 176.

⁷¹ AGAD, ASK, RK, no. 212, f. 2v, 55v, etc.

⁷² *Et pro vasculo butiri pro maiestate regia ad elixandum pisces: Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2009, pp. 212–13.

⁷³ Woolgar, 'Feasting and fasting', pp. 166, 171.

⁷⁴ J. Topolski, 'Posty w Polsce w końcu średniowiecza i w czasach nowożytnych i ich rola kulturowa', in *Między polityką a kulturą*, ed. C. Kukło, Warszawa, 1999, p. 299.

Dairy products and eggs

Butter, cheese, milk and eggs were often delivered to the court kitchen of Sigismund II Augustus on both meat and fasting days. Accounts distinguish fresh cheese, small cheese, square cheese,⁷⁵ as well as ‘Samogitian’ cheese. The 45 pieces of the latter type of cheese were sent to the Ruler when he went hunting near the Šešupė River in 1544.⁷⁶ Unfortunately, we do not know in what that Samogitian cheese differed from other types. In some places, it is indicated that part of the cheese was intended for workers; however, in other places, it is clearly stated that cheese was for the King. For example, the account of 1545 says that nine pieces of cheese that cost 2 groschen were purchased for the ‘table of his Royal Highness’ when he was hunting in Varėna between 17 and 24 September.⁷⁷ It should be added that Sigismund II Augustus also ate parmesan cheese from Italy while staying in Vilnius.⁷⁸

Fresh butter and cheese were used to bake cakes, as evidenced in the accounts: ‘for fresh butter and cheeses to make a cake to his Royal Highness; for fresh butter and cheeses for cakes’⁷⁹ (these cake ingredients were to be used when he stopped at Łagów and Trzebieszów).

The accounts of all the products delivered to Alytus in four months reveal the quantities of dairy products and eggs consumed. The accounts mention that 206 pots of butter, 570 pieces of cheese, milk for 23 groschen and 5 denarii, and 489/50 threescores, that is, 29390 eggs, were delivered. During hunting near the Šešupė River, two pots and ten dishes of butter, 5.5 threescores, 330 pieces of cheese, and 27/50 threescores, that is, 1670 eggs, were consumed in nearly two weeks.⁸⁰

Bread, cereals, sweet baked products

Bread was the daily food of the majority of residents of the royal court. The account books of 1543–1546 mention rye and wheat bread. The Ruler was served a higher quality wheat bread because according to ‘the hierarchy of bread’ established in Europe at that time, white bread baked using pure wheat flour was the sign of the cuisine of the rich.⁸¹ Entries in the account books testify to that: ‘wheat bread for six groschen a loaf for his Royal Highness’ table; wheat flour

⁷⁵ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2012, pp. 30–31, 52–53, 204–05; *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2009, pp. 186–87.

⁷⁶ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2012, pp. 232–33.

⁷⁷ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2009, pp. 194–95.

⁷⁸ Glemža, ‘Maistas’, p. 326.

⁷⁹ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2012, pp. 14–15.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 210–11; 240–41.

⁸¹ Woolgar, ‘Feasting and fasting’, p. 172.

for four groschen for the Royal Highness' bread; wheat flour for the King and the kitchen'.⁸² Interestingly, sweetened bread ('pro pane dulciario'), for 8 boards ('tabulis') for which 40 groschen were paid, was also purchased during the King's stay at Bershty in 1546.⁸³

Rye bread was usually meant for the service staff. The accounts mention that the cheapest bread was bought to feed the dogs. Within four months, 452/22 three-scores of rye bread for two denarii each, 90/1 threescores of rye bread for one denarius each, and 310/34 threescores of wheat bread were delivered to Alytus. While the King was hunting near the Šešupė River, the following was consumed within nearly two weeks: 83/40 threescores of expensive bread, 28/50 threescores of bread made of sifted flour; 42/59 threescores of wheat bread, and 84 loaves of unfanned grain bread.⁸⁴

Cereals also were on the Ruler's menu. The accounts of 1543–1546 mention barley grains or flour next to the food products used in the King's cuisine. For example, 4.5 barrels of barley flour for 25 groschen for the 'kitchen' were purchased for hunting in Varėna.⁸⁵ The account books rarely mention small amounts of millet. The analysed sources also reveal that expensive imported rice was served to the Ruler; it is mentioned in separate accounts of spices. At that time, rice porridge, seasoned with saffron, was a luxury dish. The King ate rice during his huntings in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, for example, in Valkininkai in 1544. The accounts mention that when they ran out of rice, one stone was purchased from a Jew Michael in Trakai.⁸⁶

Sweet baked products were also served. For example, though in small quantities, honey cakes were purchased: in 1543, a honey cake, which cost 14 groschen, was bought in Grodno; between 3 December 1543 and 29 February 1544, eight honey cakes for 8 groschen each were purchased in Vilnius and sent to Alytus.⁸⁷ These baked products were made with honey, saffron, pepper, and other spices.⁸⁸

The account book of 1546 lists the following spices bought on 1 and 20 April to bake cakes for the Easter holidays: saffron, cloves, small and large raisins.⁸⁹ As mentioned above, the accounts reveal that cakes were made using fresh butter and cheeses. It can be added that the account books of 1566 mention apples or jam used for cakes.⁹⁰

⁸² *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2009, pp. 196–97; *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2012, pp. 30–31.

⁸³ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2009, pp. 218–19.

⁸⁴ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2012, pp. 208–09, 242–43.

⁸⁵ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2009, pp. 196–97.

⁸⁶ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2012, pp. 256–57.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 18–19, 54–55.

⁸⁸ Borkowska, *Dynastia Jagiellonów*, p. 278.

⁸⁹ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2009, pp. 104–05.

⁹⁰ AGAD, ASK, RK, no. 212, f. 77, 93v.

Vegetables and fruit

A common dish on the Ruler's menu was vegetables. Usually, the food products list mentions the same vegetables – fresh, salted cabbage or sauerkraut, peas, onions, turnips, cow parsnips. Fresh or salted cucumbers, parsnips, garden radish, beans, and lentils are mentioned much rarer.

We know that during the hunting near the Šešupė River that lasted nearly two weeks between 12 and 24 January 1544, as many as 16 barrels of peas, 8 barrels of turnips (there is a note that 9 barrels of turnips froze and rotted), 2.5 barrels of salted cabbage and 3 strings of onions were consumed.⁹¹ The accounts mention white, cleaned and not cleaned peas. That of 1546 states that three barrels of cleaned peas for 'the table of his Royal Highness' for 25 groschen each, and six barrels of peas mixed with uncleaned ones for 20 groschen were purchased for hunting in Bershty.⁹² The interesting thing is that these sources mention ash for peas given out to cooks: 'for ashes for peas; for ashes to the cooks to go with peas'.⁹³

Though turnips were often served to the service staff, it can be assumed that they were also on the Ruler's menu. For example, the 1543 invoice for the food products received during the King's stay at Łagów contains the following entry: 'for the turnips for the bowl of his Royal Highness', while the 1545 account of the food products for the hunting in Varėna mentions 15 barrels of turnips, specifying that they were intended for 'the cuisine of His Royal Highness'.⁹⁴

The cow parsnips mentioned above were wild plants (*Heracleum sphondylium*). Fresh young or pickled leaves of the cow parsnip were used to make soup.⁹⁵ During his residence in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in 1543–1546, the Ruler's menu was supplemented with mushrooms; the purchase of both fresh and dried mushrooms is mentioned.

Mainly local fruit – apples and pears – were delivered to the King's kitchen. The interesting thing is that the accounts of 1545 contain the entry that one kopa of apples and pears was delivered on 'the birthday of his Royal Highness'.⁹⁶ The fruit were served as a dessert, as testified to by the entry that on 4 January 1546, three pounds of white sugar were purchased 'to sprinkle on and sweeten fruit'.⁹⁷ As mentioned above, the fruit was used to make cakes, and together with berries, were used to make jams, as mentioned in the accounts more than once. The fruit

⁹¹ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2012, pp. 240–43.

⁹² *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2009, p. 216–17.

⁹³ *Pro cinere ad pisa; pro cineribus coccis ad pisa: Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2012, pp. 32–33, 178–79.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 12–13; *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2009, pp. 194–95.

⁹⁵ A. Januszek-Sieradzka, 'Dwór królowej od kuchni, czyli o zaopatrzeniu stołu Barbary Radziwiłłówny (1548–1551)', in *Jagiellonowie i ich świat. Dynastia królewska w drugiej połowie XV i w XVI wieku*, Kraków, 2015, p. 81.

⁹⁶ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2009, pp. 194–195.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 124–25.

was also used to prepare meat dishes; for example, geese were served stuffed with fried apples or pears.⁹⁸ Interestingly, the King's court kitchen was often supplied with black nightshades (*marelle*). For example, three barrels of black nightshades were sent to the hunting near the Šešupė River, and one of them was consumed because the remaining two froze and rotted.⁹⁹ Arum (*arunie*) is mentioned only once in the accounts.¹⁰⁰

While the Ruler resided in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, imported lemons were also purchased for cuisine. During the period under discussion, this fruit was often used to prepare dishes in a high-quality cuisine. We know that in September 1543, a total of 200 lemons purchased for 6 groschen was sent to the Ruler in Grodno; another 15 lemons were bought in Grodno in October; 2600 lemons were purchased in Vilnius in 1545, and on 15 March 1546, a total of 68 quarts of this exotic fruit were delivered to the court kitchen.¹⁰¹ Though known in Sigismund II Augustus's cuisine, oranges were not supplied during his stay in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania between 1543 and 1546.

Spices

The most important spice used not only to season dishes but also to preserve meat, fish or vegetables was salt mentioned in the Ruler's accounts. Expensive imported spices were also used to season dishes that were served to Sigismund II Augustus. Separate accounts of spices mention expenses on saffron, sugar, pepper, cinnamon, cloves, ginger, nutmeg leaves and blossoms, caraway, anise, caper, also almonds, small and large raisins, Hungarian plums, figs, olives, which were also used to season the dishes of the King's cuisine.

Interestingly, plums were considered to improve health as one stone of Hungarian plums was given on 17 August 1546 'for the ailment of young girls and ladies'.¹⁰² Meanwhile, cinnamon was used not only to flavour dishes but also to distil water.

Spices were supplied to the Ruler's kitchen even when he went hunting. For example, in 1545, on Sigismund II Augustus's departure to hunting in Rudniki, the following spices were delivered to the court kitchen: pepper, saffron, cinnamon, cloves, ginger, nutmeg leaves, almonds, sugar, large and small raisins, and rice.¹⁰³

⁹⁸ K. Sypek, 'Pobyt w Polsce dam dworu Katarzyny Habsburg, trzeciej żony Zygmunta Augusta, w świetle Rachunków poselstw z 1553 roku', *Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej*, 57, 2009, no. 2, p. 176.

⁹⁹ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2012, pp. 240–41.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 210–11.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 32–33, 284–85, *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2009, pp. 94–95.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, pp. 32–33, 284–85, *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2009, pp. 116–17.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, pp. 96–99.

Larger amounts of spices were needed when feasts were held. In 1545, more spices were given out to prepare dishes for Christmas parties. On 25 February of the same year, as the Ruler gave a party to the Council of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania on Shrove Sunday, the Master of the Kitchen used up more spices: pepper, saffron, ginger, almonds, sugar, large raisins and rice. A larger amount of spices was also used on 15 March for a party Sigismund II Augustus threw for the Duke of Prussia and during other holidays and receptions.¹⁰⁴

The accounts covering the period from 15 November 1544 to 15 November 1546 register the spices purchased from the Jews in Trakai, a Jew from Tykocin, a Jew from Brest, also from the townspeople of Vilnius, in the markets of Vilnius, from the townspeople of Kaunas, and a merchant from Königsberg ('Regiomonte'). Olive oil was once purchased from Kaspar Libner, while Hungarian plums were bought from a carrier in Kraków ('vectorem Cracoviensem') Stanisław Vieczitek; the superior of the salt mines, sent Hungarian plums and olive oil. In 1546, saffron, pepper and sugar were purchased for the Ruler's cuisine at Jan Pigulka's pharmacy in Vilnius.¹⁰⁵

Expensive imported spices prevailed in the cuisine of Sigismund II Augustus, although local parsley, for example, was also often used. Sometimes, horseradish is mentioned in the accounts. Local honey was also used to season dishes, baked products, and to produce mead. Considering widespread bee-keeping traditions, which are testified to by the provisions of the Statutes of Lithuania devoted to protecting beehives in the hollows of a tree,¹⁰⁶ there was no shortage of this product.

Beer, mead or wine vinegar, hemp oil or expensive imported olive oil were also used to produce food. The analysed accounts also mention purchased poppyseeds and hemp seeds from which oil could have been pressed.

Beverages

Beer, mead and wine are mentioned in the account books of 1543–1546. Beer was supplied most often and in the largest quantities as it was the main everyday beverage of the Ruler's courtiers and servants. Mead was supplied rarer and in smaller quantities. It is known that, for example, 21 barrels of mead were delivered to the hunting near the Šešupė River and 17 or 18 of them were consumed, and all 188 barrels of beer delivered were drunk dry.¹⁰⁷ Also, when on 12 May 1545, Sigismund II Augustus stayed for a night at Vasilishki, two barrels of mead for 2 *kopas*, and 20/19 barrels of beer for 7 *kopas*, 5 groschen were purchased.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., pp. 122–25, 102–03, 106–07.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., pp. 80–95, 134–35.

¹⁰⁶ *Pirmasis Lietuvos Statutas*, chap. 9, art. 6, 13, 14, pp. 224, 227, 228.

¹⁰⁷ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2012, pp. 242–43.

In 1546, between 6 and 20 September, when the King went to Bershty to hunt, 5 barrels of mead that cost 5 *kopas* and 215 barrels of beer were delivered to the 'kitchen of his Royal Highness'. A total of 73 *kopas*, 22.5 groschen were spent on it, and a separate mention is made of the beer supplied for everyday beer rations to the servants of the stables and carriers for which 8 *kopas*, 24 groschen was paid.¹⁰⁸ Hence, again we see that the quantities of beer supplied were much larger than those of mead.

Certainly, imported wine was also served to the Ruler. The accounts mention Rhine and Hungarian wines. For example, 3.5 buckets and 18 *stoff* of Rhine wine were purchased in Riga in 1544. As many as 40 marks (one mark was equal to 7 groschen and two dinarii, hence 4 *kopas*, 48 groschen was spent) was paid for it. One part of this wine was sent to Alytus and the other to Vilnius. That year Rhine wine was also purchased from the tavern-keeper Walter, as well as from Vilnius goldsmith and Burgomaster Erazm Bretner.¹⁰⁹

The account of 21 August 1546 reveals that the King's courtier Stanisław Pieniązek (Pieniążek) purchased wine for the King in Hungary. The expenses on wine and its transportation totalled 3075 florins, 19 groschen, 9 denarii. On 24 February 1546, Pieniązek sent 101 semi-barrels of wine purchased in Hungary to Vilnius. It was stored in the wine cellar of the shelter of the Holy Spirit under the supervision of Paweł Borzinski.¹¹⁰ In 1568, Giulio Ruggieri, nuncio of Pope Pius V, wrote that the King drank Hungarian wine but never drank beer.¹¹¹

Wine was being served during the feasts and other occasions as guests were treated to it. For example, on the last day of July of 1546, two semi-barrels of wine were delivered to the palace for the party to be held on 1 August to celebrate the King's birthday.¹¹²

Conclusions

According to the data provided in the account books of 1543–1546, plenty of different kinds of meat – of both domestic and wild animals and birds – were delivered to the court kitchen of Sigismund II Augustus when he resided in the territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. As regards domestic animals, priority was given to beef, large quantities of which were consumed, followed by a large number of pork hams and smaller amounts of mutton. Of domestic birds first came roosters followed by geese. Wild game meat was also on the Ruler's menu;

¹⁰⁸ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2009, pp. 204–05, 218–19.

¹⁰⁹ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2012, pp. 192–93, 290–95.

¹¹⁰ *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2009, p. 274–79.

¹¹¹ *Relacye nuncyuszów apostolskich*, p. 181.

¹¹² *Lietuvos didžiojo*, 2009, pp. 278–79.

however, the accounts list only hares and different wild birds. Large quantities of waxwings, thrushes, black grouse, as well as partridges, pheasants, wood-grouse, hazel-grouse, night-herons, were served. Other wild birds were served less frequently. When the Ruler resided in Vilnius Lower Castle during fasting, pikes from about twenty ponds constructed in Viršupis estate were supplied. Additionally, Elders of the Ruler's holdings sent different types of fish. Butter, cheeses, milk and large quantities of eggs were often supplied to the court kitchen of Sigismund II Augustus on both meat and fasting days.

There were also wheat bread, luxurious rice porridge and sweet baked products on the Ruler's menu. Vegetables were a common dish in the King's cuisine: fresh, salted cabbage and sauerkraut, peas, onions, turnips, and cow parsnips. The account books mention fresh or salted cucumbers, parsnips, radish, beans and lentils much rarer. The primary fruit on the royal menu was local apples and pears. As regards exotic fruit, lemons were purchased for the Ruler's cuisine.

The Ruler's dishes were profusely seasoned with different spices. Apart from salt, separate accounts of spices mention expenses on expensive imported seasoning: saffron, sugar, pepper, cinnamon, cloves, ginger, nutmeg leaves and blossoms, caraway, anis, caper, also almonds, small and large raisins, Hungarian plums, figs, olives, which were also used to improve the taste of the Ruler's dishes. There was a greater need for more of these spices when feasts were held. Local parsley was also used in the dishes.

According to the data found in the account books of 1543–1546, beer was the beverage that was most often delivered to the Ruler's court as it was the main everyday drink of his courtiers and servants. Mead was supplied less often and in smaller quantities. The King drank wine – the accounts mention Rhine and Hungarian wines.

The account books of 1543–1546 show that most food products were local and were supplied from the estates of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. However, luxurious imported spices, lemons, rice and wine were often used in the royal cuisine. All that testifies to the ample and luxurious Sigismundus II Augustus's cuisine.

Kuchnia Zygmunta II Augusta: żywność i jej dostawy w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim na podstawie danych z ksiąg rachunkowych z lat 1543–1546

Streszczenie

Celem artykułu jest ukazanie produktów spożywczych używanych w kuchni królewskiej za czasów Zygmunta II Augusta oraz sposobów ich dostarczania w okresie pobytu władcy w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim według danych z ksiąg rachunkowych z lat 1543–1546. Problem ten nie został dotychczas szczegółowo zbadany, a analiza wspomnianych ksiąg w kontekście kuchni nie wzbudziła dotychczas zainteresowania badaczy. Kwerenda źródłowa ukazała, że do królewskiej kuchni dostarczano w omawianym okresie mnóstwo różnego rodzaju mięs – zarówno domowych, jak i dzikich zwierząt

oraz ptaków. Jeśli władca przebywał w Wilnie podczas postu, przekazywano tam szczupaki z około 20 stawów założonych w majątku Wirszupie (Viršupis). Ponadto starostowie – dzierżawcy z posiadłości władcy wysyłali różne rodzaje ryb. W królewskiej kuchni ostatniego Jagiellona spożywano również nabiał, chleb, kasze, słodkie wypieki, lokalne warzywa i owoce, a także importowane cytryny, ryż i różne przyprawy. Na dwór władcy dostarczano piwo, miód pitny i wino – w księgach rachunkowych wspomina się reńskie i węgierskie. Księgi rachunkowe z lat 1543–1546 są bardzo ważnym źródłem ukazującym asortyment wykorzystywanych produktów spożywczych i ich podaż.

The Cuisine of Sigismund II Augustus: Food and Its Supply in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania According to the Data in the Court Account Books of 1543–1546

Summary

The article's objective is to reveal what food products were used in the cuisine of Sigismund II Augustus and in what ways they were supplied when the Ruler resided in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, according to the data of the court account books of 1543–1546. The topic has not been exhaustively studied thus far. Researchers have not given the analysis of these court account books through the prism of cuisine sufficient attention. The analysis shows that plenty of different kinds of meat – of domestic and wild animals and birds – were delivered to the court kitchen of the Ruler. When the Ruler resided in Vilnius Lower Castle during fasting, pikes from about 20 ponds constructed in Viršupis estate were supplied. Additionally, Elders of the Ruler's estates sent different types of fish. Also, dairy products were consumed, such as eggs, bread, cereals and sweet baked products, local vegetables and fruit as well as imported lemons, rice and a variety of spices. Beer, mead and wine – the accounts mention Rhine and Hungarian ones – were supplied to the Ruler's court. The court account books of 1543–1546 are the vital source that reveals the assortment of food products and their supply.

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Neringa Dambrauskaitė – PhD, assistant in the Vilnius University, Faculty of History. Scientific interest: Society and daily life in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth centuries. Author of the book: *Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės bajorų namai XVI a. – XVII a. pirmoje pusėje* (Vilnius, 2019); co-author, with P. Blaževičius, H. Luik, G. Piličiauskienė, S. Rumbutis, and T. Zarankaitė-Margienė, of the book: *Vilniaus pilių fauna: nuo kepsnio iki draugo* (Vilnius, 2018). E-mail: dambrauskaite.neringa@gmail.com

Neringa Dambrauskaitė – dr, asystentka na Wydziale Historii Uniwersytetu Wileńskiego. Zainteresowania badawcze: społeczeństwo i życie codzienne w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim w XVI i pierwszej połowie XVII w. Autorka książki *Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės bajorų namai XVI a. – XVII a. pirmoje pusėje*, Vilnius 2019, współautorka pracy *Vilniaus pilių fauna: nuo kepsnio iki draugo*, Vilnius 2018 (z P. Blaževičiusem, H. Luik, G. Piličiauskienė, S. Rumbutisem, T. Zarankaitė-Margienė). E-mail: dambrauskaite.neringa@gmail.com