

INSTYTUT ARCHEOLOGII I ETNOLOGII
POLSKIEJ AKADEMII NAUK

KWARTALNIK
HISTORII KULTURY
MATERIALNEJ

ROK LXX

WARSZAWA 2022

NR 4

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Adres Redakcji:

„Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej”, 00-140 Warszawa, Al. Solidarności 105, pok. 121

Adres strony internetowej:

<http://journals.iaepan.pl/khkm> e-mail: kwartalnik@iaepan.edu.pl

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KWARTALNIK HISTORII KULTURY MATERIALNEJ 70 (4), 2022
PL ISSN 0023-5881; e-ISSN: 2719-6496
<https://journals.iaepan.pl/khkm>
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Realne i wyobrażone granice i rubieże Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego, red. Dorota Michaluk, Muzeum Rolnictwa im. ks. Krzysztofa Kluka w Ciechanowcu, Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych, Ciechanowiec 2021, ss. 282.

In the past few decades, issues and aspects of territoriality as well as concepts of state borders and boundaries of private land holdings have been quite extensively explored in the European historiography¹. Similarly, the topic has received a fair share of attention in analyses of the history of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (hereinafter — the GDL)², and the ongoing academic discussions show its relevance and progress in research. On 23–24 September 2021, the Krzysztof Kluk Museum of Agriculture in Ciechanowiec hosted an international conference dedicated to the issues of the territorial borders of the GDL and boundaries of land holdings. Researchers from various countries not only presented their research findings but also suggested new ideas and posed questions for discussion. A considerable success by all means was the fact that all of the conference presentations (except two) were converted into academic papers and thanks to editor Professor Dorota Michaluk published as a collection of articles which was reviewed here.

The collection of articles is rather bulky: it consists of almost three hundred pages of text. The book is beautifully published with no obvious technical or proofreading errors. The publication contains the editor/compiler's foreword, sixteen articles, and information about their authors. The texts were reviewed by professors Wiesław Nowosad and Andrzej Zakrzewski. The articles in the book are presented chronologically, which is in line with the structure of the publication.

The texts can also be grouped based on the topics. It is obvious that the issues pertaining to the location and concept of state (polity) borders receive the most attention; in some articles, borders are viewed more like metaphors (the territory that amounts to the border, frontier zone, imaginary borders/boundaries); a separate article is dedicated to the GDL borders as an object of memory in the 19th c. In almost all of the articles, the border (boundary) is viewed as something that protected and still protects a territory. Here a reference to Ivo D. Duchacek's insight³ can be made suggesting that etymologically the Latin concepts *terra* and *territorium* are derived from the verb *terrere*, which means frighten, intimidate or, figuratively speaking — bar, deter. Therefore, borders and boundaries are order-keeping tools, which increase geopolitical effectiveness and promote control at the same time externalizing cooperation.

The reviewed collection of articles opens with Adrian Jusupović's article (*Granica włości Romanowiczów z Litwą w drugiej połowie XIII wieku. Analiza przekazów Kroniki halicko-wołyńskiej*, pp. 11–26) about the 13th c. borders between Lithuania and the Principality of Galicia–Volhynia. The analysis is based on the chronicle and manuscript data; however, as it can be understood from the article, they do not directly define the location and concept of the border. It is the general interpretation of the geopolitical situation of that time that allows a theoretical assumption of the possible location of the border based on the territories that were part of one or the other country. This research, however, sheds more light on the 13th c. wars and conquests of the countries. What we learn from the article is that the eastern border of Lithuania was naturally delineated by massive natural objects, which limited the movement of people and separated the inhabitants of the countries.

¹ For example: Construction de l'espace. 2007; Pouvoir et Territoire. 2007; De l'espace aux territoires. 2010.

² For example: Bucevičiūtė L. 2015.

³ Duchacek I.D. 1986, p. 3.

Thereby Otto Bruner's insight is worth mentioning that in the Middle Ages, woodland and water bodies, which stretched along the border, not only isolated enclosed enclaves of settlements but also protected local communities from one another, thus helping to strengthen statehood.⁴

A more survey-like article by Oleg Łatyszonek (*O „Czarnej Rusi” raz jeszcze*, pp. 27–37) dwells on the so-called Black Rus' that was part of the GDL and its definition that (similarly to White and Red Rus') was documented in narrative and cartographic sources. However, in this case an attempt was made to bring up to date the historiographical issue by describing its current interpretation in historiography. The author maintains that the definition of Black Rus' is a distinctive creation of contemporaries, whose territorial embodiment and confinement with borders is rather abstract (similar to a theoretical construct). In the long-term perspective, the concept of the territory of Black Rus' was subject to change, as documented in written sources, where various intellectuals would offer their own interpretations. For example, in 1794 Aleksiej Musin-Puszkina in his interpretation expanded the territory of Black Rus' to include not only Grodno but also Vilnius. Regrettably, O. Łatyszonek offers few explanations as to why these changes occurred and what were the reasons behind them. It should also be mentioned that the author does not survey the much wider historiography of the topic in various languages, which offers broader considerations rather than plain statements.

In the history of European countries linear borders is a relatively new phenomenon as they date back to the late Middle Ages when territorial states began to form. Before that the subordination of a territory to the ruler was understood in terms of dependence according to the feudal law — subordination as Marc Bloch would put it — in feudalism where everything was based on personal connections. The evolution of this kind of concept of the border can be groped in Przemysław Sianko's article (*Od pogranicza mazowiecko-litewskiego do powstania granicy liniowej*, pp. 39–50) on the nature of the GDL and the Duchy of Mazovia borders — from the initial territorial stretch to the phenomenon of linear borders. The author writes about the frontier zones, which in the 14th c. did not always have specific affiliation. However, it should be noted that the monarch of one state had his personal projection that the “empty” zones belonged to him, whereas the ruler of the neighbouring country had quite the opposite opinion. The author aims more at describing the process of colonization by Mazovia's population rather than analysing the borders as a phenomenon. In other words, he dwells more on the colonization and expansion of the frontier zone.

Besides, P. Sianko is too confident in his assumption that the spread of internal colonization towards the border areas was under the greatest influence from the top-level — the monarchs' — policy; thus for the most part neglecting the fact that the internal colonization was a result of mundane processes (inertia). In the absolute majority of cases, the colonists would naturally take the lands where it was possible often without the monarch even knowing what was going on.

In the article, the author makes an erroneous statement that the questioned “old people”, mentioned in the falsification of the delimitation agreement between Lithuania and Mazovia of 1358, are reliable proof that no previous demarcation procedure had been performed between the countries (“people's testimonies were relied upon only in cases where no written evidence could be used”, p. 47). In the old law, whose customs were also applied in interstate delimitations, such witnesses — “old people” — were invited to the update of the borders in the 16th c. when commissioners would check the borders against their descriptions, as it was customary⁵. Back then, “old people” were the guardians of the customary law and even its “protectors”. Besides, it is unclear why the author is selective in his choice of historiography that his article relies on. For example, he makes no mention of Grzegorz Myśliwski⁶ and authors from other countries whose statements and interpretations may vary.

⁴ Brunner O. 1992, pp. 154–158.

⁵ Dzárnovič A. 2005; Čelkis T. 2014b, pp. 195, 207.

⁶ Myśliwski G. 1994; an interesting discussion regarding the falsification of the delimitation agreement of 1358: Rutkowski H. 2020.

The publication also includes Janusz Grabowski's article (*Konflikty graniczne między Wielkim Księstwem Litewskim i Mazowszem w XIII–XIV wieku a relacje między dynastiami obu państw. Wybrane problemy*, pp. 51–63) on the border conflicts between the GDL and Mazovia in the 13th–14th c. The focus of this article lies on dynastic connections and the politics of marriage, the normalization of which means secure borders. The author's deep knowledge of the historiography of the leaves a good impression. However, the "net" problem of borders between neighbouring countries is analysed somewhat conditionally.

In her article, Professor Lidia Korczak („*Prostowanie granic*" jako powracający motyw w litewsko-krzyżackich negocjacjach po pokoju brzeskim w 1435 roku, pp. 65–72) investigated the negotiations between the GDL and the Teutonic Order regarding the "straightening" of borders and population of the frontier zones in the period from the Peace of Brześć Kujawski (1435) to the outbreak of the Thirteen Years' War (1454). The author tends to associate the reasons of border adjustment with conflicts in the frontier zones for the most part involving merchants and, of course, inhabitants of the areas. On the one hand, I cannot help but agree that it might have been and probably was one of the reasons of border revision but, on the other, it seems that it was not the most important one. Indeed, the "pushing" of borders in this century was for the most part the result of colonists reaching certain sections of the border; another very important reason was the ambitions of the GDL political elite to push the border further into the territory of the neighbouring country. This phenomenon was less pronounced on the border with Prussia, but along the GDL-Livonia border it was obvious⁷. However, the perspective of border dynamics touched upon by the L. Korczak opens up a viable topic exhibiting not only the border issues but also the work of diplomats and complementing the existing research.

In a sense, the above discussed article is akin to historian Adam Szweda's research in which he also gropes the relationship between the GDL and the merchants of the Teutonic Order in the second half of the 15th c.; in other words, analyses the complaints of the Order's merchants regarding the injustices that they suffered in the territory of the GDL and Prussia [*Litwini i sprawy litewskie w recesach pruskich stanów (1436–1492)*, pp. 73–85]. Conflicts would spark over new and additional taxes and custom duties imposed on the merchants as well as the compulsory reloading when the merchants were forced to sell their goods in bulk to the local brokers rather than selling them directly to consumers. The author states that the trade relations between the countries were governed by bilateral agreements concluded on the highest level starting from the Grand Duke Vytautas' rule, which regulated bilateral trade and the status of merchants in a foreign country. This was one of the subjects in the negotiations between the countries, yet, according to the author, beside the trade matters, in the meeting of the sovereign of the GDL and Poland and the Grand Master of the Order Heinrich Reuss von Plauen, which took place in Malbork in 1468, the last mentioned raised the need for the inspection of state borders between Prussia and Poland as well as Samogitia and the GDL. Indeed, this message is significant from the point of view that the delimitation processes in the GDL in the second half of the 15th c. are not very extensively covered in historiography. It also suggests that at that time the GDL was involved in border adjustment processes not only with Livonia (of which we have most information) but also with Prussia; it is assumable that it was influenced by the spread of internal colonization in the frontier zones.

The research of historian Laima Bucevičiūtė (*Podlaska domena wielkiego księcia litewskiego w XVI wieku*, pp. 87–102) focuses mainly on the 16th c. domain of the Grand Duke of Lithuania in Podlachia. In other words, it is an investigation of the sovereign's income from the estates in the region and other financial factors, including pledges of the assets. The research revealed that Podlachia was one of the most intensively colonized, economically active territories where the royal family operated.

⁷ Čelkis T. 2014a.

In the context of the GDL border delimitation, especially in the 16th c. and later, the most active processes of border updating and adjustment took place between the GDL and Livonia. However, the situation in the 18th c. is not so extensively covered in historiography. Almut Bues' article (*Pogranicze. Doświadczenia, spotkania, przekazy w przestrzeni kurlandzko-żmudzkiej*, pp. 103–117) broadens the horizon. The paper analyses the Courland-Samogitia border demarcation procedure carried out in the second half of the 18th c., which was necessitated by multifaceted and not always friendly relations between the inhabitants of the frontier zones. The author noted that in the 18th c. the most disputed were those sections of the border that did not coincide with rivers and other large natural objects, which could not be moved in the course of the frontier colonization. A. Bues extensively dwells on the practical side of border marking as performed by state officials and offers some illustrations in the form of border maps found in the Latvian State Historical Archive. It can only be added that the same archives store draft maps of the GDL-Courland border section from Skuodas to Palanga of 1766 (f. 554, inv. 1, fo. 2661) and draft border descriptions, which might be of interest to the author in the future. Besides, analogous map of the GDL-Courland border dating back to 1768 is stored at the Manuscript Division of Vilnius University Library (F23–9.), as it most probably was handed over to the GDL side. This helps us to better understand the work of border officials and drafting of delimitation documents.

The collection of articles under review contains historian Jacek Wijaczka's article (*Opis granicy prusko-litewskiej z 1561 roku*, pp. 119–129) on the delimitation of the GDL-Prussia border in 1561 and a publication of the source. In this case, the reviewer disagrees with the statement that the border between the GDL and Prussia was established only in 1492 and its location confirmed not earlier than in June of 1529 after the restoration of peace between the GDL and Prussia (p. 120). Here the author cites an outdated text by Władysław Pociecha, whose statements have already been rectified in historiography as the sources suggest that the border was agreed upon much earlier. The section of the border described in the abovementioned document was a description of an eldership outside Jurbarkas. It is known that the delimitation material of 12 October 1561 was quite a long time ago published by archaeographer Konstantinas Jablonskis⁸. For his part, J. Wijaczka argues that he is republishing the document for its better dissemination, with a view to ensuring better access to this description of the border. The idea is praiseworthy. However, if we compare this source edition with K. Jablonskis' publication, it becomes obvious that the new one falls short of quality. Firstly, it is not specified what rules were applied when transcribing the source — this is usually clarified in the description of the source. Secondly, close comparison of the two publications reveals some differences. For example, in K. Jablonskis' publication, certain abbreviations of the source words were not expanded whereas in the new publication it was done in some cases but not in all (the motives behind the selection are unclear); dates in the source are written in words whereas in the new publication they are for some reason presented in numbers, etc. After all, such faults should have been avoided in the new publication.

Researcher Ihor Kondratiew (*Wyznaczenie granic międzypaństwowych i administracyjnych na ziemi czernihowsko-siewierskiej w XVI–XVII wieku*, pp. 131–150) offers an article about the demarcation of borders in Chernihiv-Seversk land in the 16th–18th c. where he discusses the location of the GDL-Moscow border in the region, touching upon the demarcation process. The article also includes an overview of life in the frontier zone — recurrent border crossings, land seizures, looting of neighbouring villages, which were a common thing at that time. It is interesting to note that, according to the author, certain sections of the old border were adapted and continued to function in the 19th c.

The analysis of the history of the GDL-Moscow border is continued by Adrian Selin (*Schemat zawłaszczania pogranicza litewsko-moskiewskiego w XV–XVII wieku*, pp. 151–158), who explores an interesting topic pertaining to the specifics of the annexation of the GDL-Moscow

⁸ Istorijos Archyvas. 1934, no. 156, pp. 565–667.

frontier regions in the 15th–17th c. With wars raging between the countries and truces periodically concluded, it was inevitable to agree upon new or at least adapt some long-standing borders to separate the people of the two countries, thus helping to avoid conflict escalation. In his article, A. Selin discusses a few interesting examples when the inhabitants of the Grand Duchy of Moscow frontier zone could themselves decide which side to choose and, for instance, obey the GDL administration. According to the author, there were cases when peasants were lured by giving them promises and even money.

Continuing the topic of the peculiarities of the frontier zone, Maksim Makaraŭ in his article (*Ulla w latach 1568–1648: funkcjonowanie miasta przy granicy z Wielkim Księstwem Moskiewskim i po zmianie jej przebiegu*, pp. 159–172) dwells on the functioning of the city of Ula at the GDL–Grand Duchy of Moscow border in 1568–1648. The article for the most part is dedicated to the overview of the Ula fortress, its architecture, and the history of the town (settlement). Although, the author aimed at presenting the specifics of the town due to its proximity to the border, the intended picture, however, did not fully unfold before the eyes of the reader. This could have been done by singling out certain criteria that would be atypical for other GDL cities with fortresses.

In his lengthy article, Dominik Szulc (*Co i w jakim celu umieszczano w kopcach granicznych czyli jak odróżnić je od kurhanów grzebalnych?*, pp. 173–206) analyses what share of the border marking signs, the so-called *kapčiai* (mounds), were artificially made in the process of demarcation and what share was natural tumuli or remains of hill-forts that were adapted for border-marking purposes. My first remark is regarding the title of the article as it fails to indicate the border markings of which country are analysed — what is the actual object of the research. In the reviewer's opinion, the indication of the specific border section was necessary as in different regions of the GDL the formation of the ranges (cultures) of hill-forts or tumuli differed, as differed the reasons for their construction. Most of them were of Baltic origin; but some were made later, for example, first mentioned in the GDL–Poland border delimitation of 1546 in the territory of present-day Ukraine. The author's decision to mix data from sources pertaining to different historical periods — the 15th, 16th, and even 18th c. — also seems unusual. It is obvious that different types of *kapčiai* were characteristic of different periods. In the 18th c., the GDL's *kapčiai* were already loaded with internal content, for example, a cross made of stones or even totems⁹.

Historian Ramunė Šmigelskytė-Stukienė offers an article (*Regulacja i praktyka wydawania paszportów w Rzeczypospolitej w okresie od Sejmu Wielkiego do powstania kościuszkowskiego*, pp. 207–229) about passports introduced in the second half of the 18th c. which restricted the movement of the citizens of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth both within the country and across the border. In Western Europe, a similar passport system had been in place for some time then. It can be assumed that the introduction of passports had a greater impact on foreign nationals arriving in the country. The system of passports can be associated with the stricter border control that was introduced around the same time with a number of border guard and customs checkpoints erected along the border.

Historian Tomasz Kempa analysed borders and frontiers from yet another perspective. His article [*Granice kulturowe i osadnicze między ludnością chrześcijańską a żydowską w miastach Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego w XVI–XVII wieku (wybrane aspekty)*, pp. 231–260] dwells on the cultural and settlement boundaries between Christians and Jews in the GDL cities of the 16th–17th c. In other words, it is a search for the metaphoric frontier in the relations between Christians and Jews that lived alongside each other in the GDL cities. The author for the most part relies on the traditional factors, such as religious and economic issues, that created social barriers and separated the communities. He extensively dwells on the boundaries of city possessions, which, according to T. Kempa, were strictly defined in the GDL. The article offers nu-

⁹ Čelkis T. 2018, p. 14.

merous examples when “crossing the line” resulted in hostility. Unfortunately, the author does not include clear-cut conclusions, which would have highlighted the key points.

The collection of articles concludes with Norbert Dariusz Tomaszewski’s text („*Granica państwa*” *Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego w Ciechanowcu na początku XIX wieku*, pp. 261–273) about the GDL “state border” at the city of Ciechanowiec at the beginning of the 19th c. It would not be erroneous to say that the author, from the point of view of heritage preservation, speaks about the memory of the old borders in the times of Napoleon Bonaparte when the Duchy of Warsaw was being formed. The point is that the old GDL border wended through the city of Ciechanowiec. Indeed, the article very vividly reveals what it meant for a city to become a “border city” as the locals immediately experienced the functionality of the borders.

The reviewed book leaves a good impression and for those whose interests lie in historical geography or the history of the GDL borders it is a real intellectual treat. The fact that some of the texts pose questions or open spaces for discussions suggests that the book induces reflections. At the same time, it is a great read for history aficionados and students, featuring a chorus of historians who at first glance are talking about one and the same thing — borders and frontiers — but each of them does it in his or her own way and poses different questions.

Tomas Čelkis
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