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Stanisław Grzybowski (Poland)

STANISLAW ORZECHOWSKI AND THE BEGINNINGS OF
POLITICAL SCIENCES OF BAROQUE

Stanislaw Orzechowski was born on November 11th, 1513 in the Land of Przemyśl. He came from the land where two nations — Polish and Ruthenian — two cultures — Roman and Greek, two faith — Roman Catholic and Orthodox met; from a borderland living under the constant threat of Tartar and Vlach invasions. In his own words the population of this land “nunquam studia philosophica coluit, mediocri literatura contenta”¹. The writer’s Polish ancestors had settled there during the reign of King Wladyslaw Jagiello who granted them “three villages in good standing in the Land of Przemyśl”. His father married Jadwiga Baraniecka, the daughter of an Orthodox priest. The traditions of both faith, both cultures met in his parents’ house.

“Gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus”² — Orzechowski was quite aware of the fact that his origin and family tradition had left an extraordinarily strong impression on his works. As the first of the great Polish writers he was to bring into Polish literature, and into Polish political life, that certain broad and dramatic breath of freedom derived sometimes from the tendency to sow discord and nostalgia for no one knows what, a breath not yet Ukrainian or Cossack but already a breath of blade, bravado and borderlands.

He was the first not only in Poland. Some scores of years later this trend was to pass through the literature and politics of many a European country. We can feel it in the letters of the provincial from under the peaks of the Pyrenees — Henry IVth — which to a French historian

¹ J. Korzeniowski, ed., *Orichoviana. Opera inedita et epistulae Stanislai Orzechowski 1543—1566*. Cracoviae 1891, p. 587.

² S. Orzechowski, *Wybór pism* (Selected Papers), Publisher Jerzy Starnawski, Wrocław 1972, p. 404 (farther quoted as *Papers*).

“sound like fanfares” (*sonnent ainsi comme des fanfares*)³; in the poetry of the provincial from Devon — Sir Walter Raleigh, and in many other works of the developing Baroque — this most provincial of all the great styles in history of Man.

Orzechowski came earlier. He was born and educated in a different epoch. His provincialism — conscious and cultivated — might have seemed premature during times when everyone followed the dictates of great cultural centres. Above all the ingenuity, often paradoxical and spiteful of his assertions and opinions, was being shaped when the reigning doctrine was the Renaissance belief of order and harmony ruling political and literary concepts.

The fate of forerunners is rarely enviable; poverty, lack of understanding, complexes. Orzechowski never knew poverty, he had felt no lack of understanding, he had no lack of complexes. While accentuating his provincialism, love of freedom and cultural parvenuism, he was at the same time ashamed of them and tried to remove their stigma. Therefrom the attempts to conform to the rigours confining the freedom of expression; therefrom snobbish pretensions of erudition and contacts with the greats of this world; therefrom touchiness and quarrelsomeness. Reconstructing his biography we are often forced to rely on what he had written about himself and therefore often unable to answer the basic question — is it the truth or selfpraise?

He was born in a noble family well off but possessing many children. He had six brothers and five sisters. Even though he was the eldest, division of the estate would not have left Stanisław much. However, when he had begun his studies in Przemysl he must have made good progress, since his father decided to ensure him a more promising clerical career. This not quite twelve year old boy became in 1525 a Przemysl canon. The future seemed now assured.

A year later he began studies at the University of Cracow. He spent there no great length of time, presumably not more than one year which he most probably devoted to study of Greek language and literature. He continued his studies in Vienna, but in 1529 the Turkish army approached the city walls and panic seized the town; crowds began leaving the city. The Viennese merchant in whose care old Orzechowski had left his son also forsook Vienna and young Stanisław ended up with him in Wittenberg, Germany.

Later on Orzechowski boasted this; it was at that time that Luther and Melancton had noticed him and converted to their ideals. This matter is somewhat doubtful; we only know that later on Melancton had written to him some sort of letters, but those are lost today. We are left

³ G. Pages, *La Monarchie d'Ancien Régime en France*, Paris 1928, p. 34.

in no doubt, however, as to the fact that studies in Wittenberg, and specially in nearby Leipzig, had mainly increased filological knowledge of the young canon. Those weren't the years of regular studies anyway, but rather years of travelling, becoming acquainted with the world and with people. During that time Orzechowski was in Switzerland, probably visited Italy for the first time; returned home for a short stay. It was presumably at that time that he became acquainted with the writings of Luther and perhaps of Von Hutten; afterwards they were to influence greatly his style, argumentation, frazeology. It was also during that time — 1529—1531 years crucial to the Swiss and German Reformation — that he was able to personally observe the effects of discussion within the Church, internal conflicts within Reformation, sectarianism. Those observations had most certainly influenced him more than the hypothetical meeting with Luther.

By the time Orzechowski found himself in Italy and began his studies at Padua University, which was in 1531 or the beginning of 1532, theology no longer existed for him. He devoted his attention to languages, literature, ancient philosophies. In Bologne he studied rhetorics; in Venice he became acquainted with the principles of its political and social system; in Rome he discoursed with Cardinal Contarini. In 1537 he again visited shortly his home and returned to Italy to continue his studies until his sick father bid him to return home. Merry and fruitfull youth was coming to an end. In the beginning of 1541 Stanislaw Orzechowski returned home in his twenty eighth year of life as an already mature and deeply educated humanist ⁴.

It was time to think of the future. His thrifty father had already managed to obtain for him a couple of parsonages, while Stanislaw himself arranged in Rome a nomination for the Przemyśl archdeaconship. But he wasn't a priest yet: Holy Orders had to be taken. It was supposed to have happened under dramatic circumstances; after many years Orzechowski stated that although he did not feel the call he surrendered to his father's demands especially since they were supported with threats of disinheritance ⁵. We have basis to doubt those words. Other reasons were to cause his later, temporary divorce from Rome. Many facts indicate that upon his return from universities Orzechowski based his plans for the future and further career on political activity conducted in a frock.

The young erudite full of Renaissance ideals, ideals of classic order and harmony, was too brilliant an observer as not to notice that the

⁴ H. Barycz, *Studia włoskie Stanisława Orzechowskiego* (Stanislaw Orzechowski's Italian Studies) [in:] *Spojrzenia w przeszłość polsko-włoską* (A Look into the Polish-Italian Past), Wrocław 1965, pp. 171—195.

⁵ *Orichoviana*, p. 596—598.

surrounding reality is far removed from those ideals. Escape from the endangered Vienna, the sight of Germany facing civil war had left on him and his political views impression equally decisive as his deep studies of ancient political philosophers such as Aristotle and Plato, Demosthenes and Cicero⁶. The wish to reconcile classic ideals with contemporary reality, buoyant and flyaway, the ideals of order and harmony with intellectual ferment the effects of which he was taught to view with distrust and which at the same time was so close to his borderland nature had caused a deep rift in Orzechowski's personality. It became the source of his political interests and proposed political postulates often conflicting and lacking in consistency but arising from sharp observation of reality.

He picked up his pen for the first time to describe this reality as a seemingly objective observer. Acting on the orders of his protector the Cracow palatine Piotr Kmita he turned his attention to the history of the Lwow rebellion — the so called "Hen War" — to which he most probably was an eyewitness. This booklet, not printed until 1611⁷ contained almost exclusively speeches of the chief orators of nobility, expressed in beautiful humanistic latin, modeled in their style and construction on greatest rhetorics of antiquity. Although they were doubtlessly smoothed out and corrected by Orzechowski in accordance with prevailing rules, they represented basically someone else's thoughts and gave no insight into the author's opinions. However, their order, and especially short introductory and closing comments announced the future author of *Quincunx*. Fascination with political storm, ferment of ideals, conflict of contradictory opinions became fused with worry that out of that storm no new order would be born.

While applying Renaissance premisses Orzechowski did not conceal the fact that he could see their basic conflict with reality and although he did not yet express his views he grieved over the existing state of things and blamed for it both the King and the gentry. Nevertheless, long before the victory of Baroque in literature he saw and exquisitely, in a manner already announcing the phraseology of the style, painted this reality built of conflicting elements. He differed, however from the later masters of Baroque in that he did not approve of those conflicts; just the opposite — he considered them unnatural. And that was the way he was to remain for the rest of his life, this "new prophet from Ruthenia"⁸ as he called himself, uninitiated prophet of Baroque dialectics, entangled in the snares of Renaissance logic.

⁶ T. Sinko *Erudycja klasyczna Orzechowskiego* (The Classical Erudition of Orzechowski), Kraków 1939.

⁷ Together with *Stanisłai Orichovii Annales Polonici ab excessu Divi Sigismundi Primi*, Publisher J. S. Herburt, Dobromil 1611.

⁸ *Papers*, p. 611.

He was soon to reveal his name in print. It happened in 1543; a year which was critical to the Polish literature. Considering the year of birth of new literature, it was also the year of demise of old. That year Mikołaj Kopernik died, the Renaissance investigator of the harmony of the Universe; that same year Klemens Janicius died — humanistic glorifier of ancient ethics; burgher — Kopernik and peasant Janicius; scientist and poet. Three noble masters were beginning to bare their literary steel: Rej, Modrzewski, Orzechowski. And although the first of them began — by writing verse in his parent language, and the other two in Latin prose, all three wrote about the same thing: redress of the Polish Commonwealth and society of gentry. The year 1543 closed the era of Renaissance universalism and opened the era of the estate patriotism.

By his debut in print — in spite of dedication of the work to Kmita — Orzechowski was at the same time changing his magnate sponsor. Hetman (= Lord High Constable) Jan Tarnowski, political opponent of Kmita, was a supporter of alliance with the Habsburgs and war with Turkey. Whether the Hetman's stand was dictated by the emperor's money or appreciation of actual dangers to the Polish Commonwealth we do not know. The dispute over this matter has now been going on for nearly four and a half centuries. Orzechowski also had ulterior motives when he propagated with his pen Hetman's policies. However, his choice and approach of the subject stemmed at the same time from his own convictions and experiences.

For decades the problem of Turkish danger had been on the lips of humanists. Right in front of their eyes, and in large measure thanks to their own activity medieval universal christianism was going to pieces; by fighting for order and harmony they were undermining the foundation of the existing order. To save the European unity new basis had to be found. Fear of Moslem invasion, real and reasonable, unity in the face of Islam might have been instrumental, joined the interests of then forming national states with the interests of European culture treated as an indivisible unity. Therefrom the falling back on the prose of Demosthenes; important not only for the formal value of numerous anti-Turkish speeches; the comparison of disunified Greece and of Europe form with dissention in the face of danger of invasion by foreign, seemingly barbarie might was quite striking⁹.

Orzechowski must have remembered it, must have remembered panicstricken Vienna of fourteen years before, and probably the anti-Turkish speeches¹ of Luther since he was in Wittenberg at the time, when

⁹ J. Czerniatowicz, *Z dziejów grezystyki w Polsce w dobie Odrodzenia* (The History of Greek Studies in Poland during the Renaissance Period), Wrocław 1965, pp. 85—115.

in 1543 he published his speech warning nobility to a war against Turkey, called First Turcica¹⁰. The time of this first public expression was well chosen. The Parliament of 1543 was continuing under the stigma of strife between adherents of anti-Turkish and pro-Habsburg policies directed by Hetman Tarnowski and imperial diplomats and voters of the anti-Habsburg fraction backed by Queen Bona, and led by Piotr Kmita and Archbishop Gamrat¹¹. Advocating war with Turkey, calling the gentry to arms Orzechowski by the same token entered the ranks of adherents of the pro-Habsburg faction. At the same time, however, by calling the gentry to forsake their agricultural interests, leave them to peasants and devote solely to the defence of the country he unintentionally exposed the unsubstantiality of his policy and his lack of understanding of an already irrevocable evolution from medieval knighthood to contemporary landed gentry which had occurred in Poland during the past generation. What's more in the same year 1543 he wrote, although he did not publish it, a speech in which he defended peasants against excessive taxation from the egoism of clergy and gentry¹².

The First "Turcic" had no effect whatsoever. Although it had four printings in its first year and won him recognition in literary circles, it did not convince the nobility and evoke a war with Turkey. Therefore the next year Orzechowski published his Second "Turcica", this time addressed to the King¹³. Still advocating war the author attempts, as Jerzy Sarnawski rightly noticed, "to rehabilitate the King" who "since the "Hen War" was steadily losing his authority with the populace"¹⁴.

Advancing projects and ideas unpopular with the gentry masses, attempting to play a political rather than a literary role, speaking to political as well as literary élite, Orzechowski published rather little during the first period of his activity. Therefore, his greatest at the time, work addressed to the young King Sigismundus Augustus — crowned while his father Sigismundus the Old was still alive — the treaty *Fidelis subditus*, the first Polish speculum principis was available only in transcripts. The treaty had survived in two redactions — the first of 1543 and the second enlarged of 1548¹⁵. It was first printed only as late as 1584.

¹⁰ *De belle adversas Thurcas suscipiendo... ad equites Polonos Oriatio*, Cracoviae 1543.

¹¹ A. Dembińska, *Zygmunt I. Zarys dziejów wewnątrzno-politycznych w latach 1540—1548* (Sigismundus the First. The Outline of the History of Internal Policies between 1540—1548), Poznań 1948, pp. 194, 226.

¹² *Orichoviana*, pp. 14—17.

¹³ *Ad Sigismundum Poloniae Regem Turcica secunda*, Cracoviae 1544.

¹⁴ J. Sarnawski, introduction to *Selected Papers* by Orzechowski, p. IX.

¹⁵ *Fidelis subditus*, first edition from 1543. Publisher Teodor Wierzbowski, Warszawa 1900; also second edition from 1548. Publisher G. Saengner i T. Wierzbowski, Warszawa 1908.

It is quite a banal admonition to the young King on royal duties, warning against internal dissension complaint against the cupidity of gentry and clergy, the oppression of villeins. Reminding of the fall of Hungary, Orzechowski takes up the theme of Turcicas and stresses the importance of defence of the country. He proposes to consign it to the care of three palatinates every year. He thus reverts to projects proposed a quarter of a century before and judged at the time as impractical¹⁶. The treaty is criticizing; admonishing the King through the mouth of a bishop, attacking especially Queen Bona and her followers Orzechowski sees Polish reality in dark colours and presents first tentative proposals of repairing the Commonwealth, which he was to develop near the end of his life.

However, when Sigismundus the Old died Orzechowski again took up his pen to paint a picture, which was completely different. Not only the dead King had become the personification of all valours, but also magnates and gentry, senators and the Queen came to receive numerous praises. *Funebris Oratio* printed in 1548 was to become famous — and rightly so — as an example of brilliant humanistic expression; was to carry the author's fame over the whole of contemporary Europe¹⁷. But to the Orzechowski's biographers it was primarily to be the proof of his changeability of views and this opinion was to be borne out by following works of this "prophet from Ruthenia" devoted to the new Queen, Barbara Radziwill.

The marriage of the young King to the member of the strongest family in Lithuania raised general indignation. It was feared that the Radziwills would concentrate in their hands government of the whole kingdom. It was thought that the duty of the ruler lay in forsaking personal happiness and looking in a marriage — a profitable dynastic marriage — only for political advantages. In the second part of the *Faithful Subject*, as well as in two speeches addressed to gentry¹⁸ Orzechowski vehemently attacks Barbara, her family, whole Lithuania, even the King himself, only to give her several years later, after the untimely death of the young Queen, great praise.

The lack of consistency was striking — but only apparent. Orzechowski often changed his tactics, friends and enemies, but certain elements of his beliefs, to him the most essential, remained unchanged. In his most mature and artistically best work of that period — the funerary speech in honour of Sigismundus I — he gave a full of humanistic elegance and

¹⁶ J. Szujski, *Dzieje Polski* (The History of Poland), Lwów 1862 v. II p. 196.

¹⁷ Separate edition among others Cracoviae 1548, Venetiae 1548; later published in numerous collections of the most famous Latin speeches of XVI and XVII c.

¹⁸ *Orichoviana*, p. 131—177.

Renaissance restraint picture of an ideal ruler and political order — more a picture of his yearning for order rather than of reality. In his ugly in fact and libelous attacks on Barbara made in the Faithful Subject he painted a picture of reality entirely different. Desperately searching for ideal order he wanted to see its embodiment in the person and institution of the ruler. When the ruler did not fulfill his expectations and the behaviour of Sigismundus Augustus seemed to this publicist to be in conflict with the duties of a good ruler Orzechowski attacked the royal person in defense of royal authority.

He could not understand that the era of Renaissance ideals was irrevocably past. He saw them personified in the old king who spread oil on the turbulent waters of political life and would not allow internal conflicts growing within the society to emerge. In the person of Sigismundus Augustus a politician of new generation, of new era ascended to the throne. Not a monumental but a live human being, a man full of skillfully hidden passions whose true aims and thoughts we are often unable to fathom. We can say about him only that not through repression and control of his subjects' passions but through their manipulation was the new monarch to prove his greatness.

Orzechowski himself completely unintentionally was to help him in firing those passions by starting a new crusade — this time against the princelings of the Catholic Church, for the authority of the Church.

Even in the Faithful Subject it was still the bishop who was admonishing the King. The authority of clergy was to guard political authority, discharge the highest care over it; not to rule the King but to defend him — against himself, against human weaknesses of the monarch. However, could the Roman catholic church torn with internal strife, dissention and full of corruption do it? The answer seemed to be negative. The Church itself seemed to Orzechowski eaten with human weaknesses. This quick tempered thirty year old wasn't free of them himself. With apparent humility but actually with male boastfulness he later spoke of multitudes of concubines with whom he lived "turpissime flagitiosissimeque"¹⁹. In truth that multitude consisted of one Anuchna (Anna) from Brzozów. Anyway, he could see the same thing among other parsons, canons, even the bishop himself and for which he never missed an opportunity to brand them²⁰. The theme of the priest's housekeeper and the priest's prostitute crops up almost obsessively throughout his works.

This grandson of an Orthodox priest knew the conditions existing in the other church. He was not interested in dogmatic differences between

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 598.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 341.

the Greek and Roman faith. Full of contempt for theological subtleties he considered them immaterial. Being conservative in his beliefs he instinctively felt that the Eastern church was less susceptible to change, guarded closer threatened tradition. Yearning for political order first of all, he was quite aware of the fact that Orthodox clergy better filled the bill as the support of that order, that it was more stabile and at the same time more tractable; and the problem of morality of the clergy does not exist in the Orthodox faith — the marriage of priests forestalls scandals.

In 1544 Orzechowski published a paper on the Christening of Ruthenians²¹ in which he presented the idea of unification of Catholics, the Orthodoxes and Armenians at the same time defending the importance of the Eastern rite. He remained basically faithful to this stand until the end of his life. Although he often had to moderate his appearances, retract some of his views on the Orthodox rite, renounce them formally, either for tactical reasons or for his own safety he stubbornly returned to this subject — the friend of both the Ruthenian faith and union of the church²². The question of celibacy became connected with this conception in the closest manner.

As an opponent of celibacy Orzechowski already presented himself in 1547 in the pamphlet *De Lege Coelibatus*. Welcomed with acclaim by Protestants because it called on the Holy Scriptures without intermediation of the Popes, it operated, however, with arguments of purely practical nature: lack of morality among priests undermined the authority of the church. This pamphlet was followed by other papers, each more bold and aggressive, more and more often operating with arguments *ad personam*.

A big role was played here by the personal temper of the writer; of no small importance was also the unexpected successive death of his brothers. The Canon of Przemysl became the last of his family and faced the duty of continuing the line. The sense of conflict of two contradicting moral norms as well as a conflict between social norm and the right to personal happiness announced already a mentality of Baroque. Renaissance with its brutal realism bent toward acceptance of facts, toward accepting it as material element of the existing order. In this order the Roman prostitute and the priest's housekeeper both had their place. The mentality of Baroque noticed these contradictions and accepted them; what is more it delighted in them²³. Brought up in the spirit of Renais-

²¹ *Orichoviana* 36—47.

²² B. Kosmanowa, *Stanisław Orzechowski (1513—1566) jako polemista religijny* (Stanisław Orzechowski (1513—1566) as religious polemist). „Euhemer” (The Religious Digest), 1975 no 4, pp. 22—24.

²³ S. Grzybowski, *W kręgu Kopernika i Szekspira* (Within the Circle of Copernicus and Shakespeare). *Zapiski Historyczne*, XXXIX, 1974, no 4, pp. 88, 90.

sance and gifted with Baroque imagination, Orzechowski was at his cross-roads. However, quick to act, impetuous, self-centred he made his choice. He decided to bend the existing order to his own conception; to take a wife and force Rome to accept the fact.

This conception only appeared to be foolish and purely personal. We must remember that Orzechowski was an adherent of the pro-Habsburg faction. We must remember that in 1548 in the Augsburg Interim the Emperor temporarily permitted, until the council made its final decision, marriage of priests and Holy Communion under two forms. Orzechowski wanted Rome to accept not his own but the Emperor's decision.

Anyway, he proceeded with great caution. He first announced in public his intention to wed a wife. He explained his motives. He returned all his benefices and resigned all his church positions; he had inherited all of his father's fortune and his welfare was assured. He then convinced two other priests to marry first. Finally he took the marriage vows himself.

He didn't expect the storm that his marriage brought about. The Church aroused itself to energetic action — however not to reform but to damn the insolent. Excommunicated, faced with banishment and confiscation of property Orzechowski avoided the danger only thanks to the protection of both the pro-Habsburg and Protestant orientation and demagogic appeals to the gentry and its increasing animosity towards clerical jurisdiction. He was unable to force the church of which he still considered himself a member to reform. Indeed he himself was forced into an alliance with Protestants since they were the only ones able to protect him and in fact already considered him one of them.

These were the "uneasy years", as Hanna Swiderska²⁴ accurately called the decade 1550—1559, in Orzechowski's life; a period filled with passionate pamphlets full of venomous invectives addressed to the writer's persecutors — bishops and popes, a period of battling against the secular power of clergy, the political influence of papacy. Many a time Orzechowski seemed to approach Protestant positions. He balanced dangerously close to the line from behind which he wouldn't have been able to return to the church in any other way than as a contrite sinner renouncing all his views. However, he never crossed that border line. Just the opposite, even though he stressed the fact that he believed in the Holy Communion under two forms and the marriage of priests, he expounded that it was connected with his search for the "Great Church" and rejection of Protestant sectionism; that by condemning the popes he is

²⁴ H. Swiderska, *Stanisław Orzechowski: The Uneasy Years 1550—1559*. "The Polish Review" Vol. VII no 3, New York 1863.

condemning individuals, that he is condemning the aspirations of a religious institution to despotic secular rule over the society but not the institution itself ²⁵.

In the meantime he found it in himself to write a new exceptional work ²⁶ — the chronicles of the first four years of King Sigismundus Augustus' rule; years of unrest filled with battle for the royal marriage and royal power, for the reformation of the State and Church. In masterly strokes Orzechowski was able to picture the historic storms — he was unable to evaluate their vivifying importance.

It wasn't an objective work, just the opposite. Orzechowski pledged his loyalty to Hetman Jan Tarnowski, presented his services to the faction which not only saw the greatest advantage for the Polish Commonwealth in alliance with the Habsburgs, but first and most saw in them the mainstay of the disappearing Christian universalism. It was a matter of something more than just war with Turkey — it was a question of the then conservative conception of unity of the Christian culture which elsewhere turned such honourable men as Sir Thomas More into Habsburg agents. At that time the defence of the married priest was by the same token the defence of the imperial conception of Reformation of the Church and thereby the means of preserving its universalism. Tarnowski was fighting so that — as Orzechowski later wrote in the biography of his benefactor — “faith should not be changed, but its wrong application should be put to right” ²⁷. And the control over it he wanted to take out of the clergy's hands and give it to secular elements especially the King. The Habsburg's example was to serve the Jagiellons.

There is in Orzechowski's works a significant, often quoted passage about Tarnowski “who when he started to press the bishops with all his might was asked in an argument by Jędrzej Zebrzydowski, the Cracow bishop, 'And whom shall I therefore in Poland be, Mr. Tarnowski, if faced with heresy and being a bishop I am not to take steps to correct it? An usher or a bishop?' and whom Tarnowski answered: 'It would probably be more fitting for your Right Reverend to be an usher than for me to be a slave’” ²⁸. The metaphore was accurate. The church was to be left, like an usher, with the right to annouce verdicts. Someone else would do the passing of those verdicts and their execution.

Orzechowski was never able to force the church to approve his marriage. Blackmail and promisses, venomous pamphlets and libelous

²⁵ *Orichoviana*, pp. 368, 370, 373, 502.

²⁶ *Annales Polonici ab excesau Divi Sigismundi Primi*, Dobromil 1611.

²⁷ *Papers*, p. 263.

²⁸ *Papers*, p. 178.

insults of clerical opponents, no amount of humility or threats were of any help. Neither the Pope nor the bishops admitted his moral right; in the end they simply left him in peace. He won, however, one important thing for himself and although in spite of the church, in fact, basically for the church. By undermining clerical jurisdiction over secular society he removed one of the most important reasons for Polish Reformation, and thus in his own way prepared the basis for the changes which were soon to bear a new, triumphant counter-reformatory Church of Poland.

In 1559 the storm around Orzechowski's marriage finally died down and accusations of heresy were over. Thereby ended the years of degradation, of begging for royal favour, protection of the Emperor and magnates, of kissing hands and knees of Protestant leaders, of venomous and full of gross insults polemics with his enemies. He finally felt secure and could take up arms against the reformation.

Orzechowski's activities during that period arouse justified animosity and even disgust. His attacks on former friends Protestants who defended him against the Church's repressions, gross in words and arguments, call for persecution and wiping out of the heretic plague. It shows here how superficial was the Renaissance polish of this provincial parvenue when his temper, passionate and uncontrolled, gained the upper hand. The standarts of humanistic elegance so beautifully taken up in his biography of Sigismundus the Old give way to the low standarts of religious polemics. In his fight against followers of Luther Orzechowski imitated the most offensive and filthy writings of Luther himself. However, one must admit that those papers have had the strength, dark appeal, and linguistic precision in no way lesser than the works of the reformer from Wittemberg, whom the prophet from Ruthenia seemed consciously to imitate.

Following the example of Luther he did not confine himself to the more monumental works. Aggressive occasional pamphlet of small circulation — often so small that today we only know its title and cannot tell whether it had been actually published — venomous letter circulated in numerous transcripts become his favorite weapons. This method had proven itself in previous years when it was necessary to dodge between the warring factions. These works, in manuscripts or in small printing reached only a restricted circle of elite and did not give the author a definite stamp, thereby allowing him to reverse his positions which often were the result of not only desperate tactical maneuvers but also of fluid convictions and not fully jelled conceptions. Orzechowski belonged to this group of writers who create on the spur of the moment under the influence of their feelings. His doctrine was to mature to consistency only as the result of its increasing internal contradictions.

The justified animosity toward Orzechowski's views and his way of expressing them had caused that many researches overlooked the hard gained consistency of his doctrine. They had also overlooked his other, less despicable traits of character. Some of the fault lies with the author himself. He never resorted to guile like, for example Frycz-Modrzewski who, although managing to gather through his activities a small fortune, pretended to be a selfless Cato. Orzechowski took money whenever it was given and didn't hide the fact. He did relinquish, however, without being asked to his church benefices when he considered further benefits as contrary to his conscience, and did not increase his inheritance. What is more, by breaking off with his Protestant protectors he lost much more than he gained²⁹.

It is also impossible to deny him courage and certain polemic honesty. He attacked the Pope and bishops the strongest in his letters to the Pope and bishops; the Protestants in his letters to them. These last he reproached at every occasion and with great consistency for the fact that their activity led to dissension within the church and their inability to preserve unity even within their own faith³⁰. The dissension within the Calvinist church in Poland and the withdrawal of anti-Trinitarians he considered as ample proof of his thesis that Protestants represented a desintegrating and, at the same time dangerous to the existing political order, force. That is why he attacked with exceptional force and bitterness one of the creators of anti-Trinitarianism — Stankar.

He expressed his most strongly in his letter to Stankar's sponsor Mikołaj Stadnicki. Exposing conflicts within the Protestant church, declaring himself a "true papist" he, however, abandoned sectarian arguments. He was interested in a more important issue of social order and authority. When the clerical power of parson and bishop fell so would the secular power of the king and subprefect; the whole country would fall³¹. This is the first in Poland, and indeed one of the first in Europe, look at political consequences of Reformation as straightforward as this. Almost half a century before King James I Orzechowski formulates that famous expression: "No bishop — no King" in only slightly different words.

Simultaneously with his letter to Stadnicki he wrote, and published

²⁹ *Papers*, p. 500—501; L. Kubala, *Stanisław Orzechowski i wpływ jego na rozwój i upadek reformacji w Polsce* (Stanisław Orzechowski and his Influence on the Development and Decline of the Reformation in Poland), Lwów 1906, p. 82.

³⁰ *Orichoviana*, pp. 378—379; *Papers*, pp. 187—198; *Stanisław Orzechowski to Mikołaj Sienicki 1555*, manuscript of the Documentation Dept of the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Science in Kraków, Correspondance of Polish and Foreign Protestants, case no 13.

³¹ *Papers*, p. 191.

two years later in 1562, the Latin *Chimera* — a polemic treaty aimed against Stankar. There again the writer's temper got the better of him. Here again he resorts to primitive and gross invectives, often replacing logical arguments, to calling for the King to persecute heresy and drive the heretics out, which only serves to illustrate his extreme intolerance and harmful prejudice. Nevertheless, Orzechowski consistently follows his main thesis: heresies undermine national unity, only Catholicism with its clerical hierarchy may provide substantial support for the royal authority and existing order. Religious dispute was transferred to a political level³². Orzechowski became the chief defender of the Old Church and the first ideologist of counterreformation.

Of course this had to lead to final break between Orzechowski and his former friends who went further in their demands of reformation. The reflection of this break may be seen in the famous dispute between Orzechowski and Andrzej Frycz-Modrzewski³³. Frycz, the same as Orzechowski during the years of battle for his marriage, did not openly break with the Church; fighting against the power of bishops he at the same time benefitted from the protection of two successive Kujawy bishops — Drohojowski and Uchański. It was at Uchański's court that in 1561 that the famous dispute between the two publicists occurred. It started with a discussion, a comparatively friendly one considering the differences of opinion separating them, Frycz-Modrzewski was decidedly the superior intellect and at a certain moment made it painfully obvious to his conceited adversary. Orzechowski, as we know, was quarrelsome, touchy and full of complexes. He replied with a provocation, brutal and going against all good manners, which was to expose Frycz as a Protestant and an enemy of the Catholic church. At the same time he did not hide the fact that he was concerned with the gratuities received by Modrzewski from, among others, a bishop, that he was jealous of that money, and that he considered subsidization of an enemy of the Church by a prince of the Church highly improper. Modrzewski did know in fact how to take care of his own interests, how to obtain affluent protectors and their purses; but then he deserved it.

The denunciation, because that is how Orzechowski's exposure should be considered, did have a certain effect. Mr Uchański had to withdraw his protection of Modrzewski, the obvious one anyway, and to have him removed from diocesan property. However, at the same time it showed, in a manner murderous to Orzechowski's reputation, the contrast between them. On the one hand we have Modrzewski,

³² Compare accurate remarks by Kubala, p. 35.

³³ S. Kot, *Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski*, Kraków 1919, pp. 197—211; Andreae Fricii Modrevii *Opera Omnia*, Vol. IV, Varsoviae 1958, pp. 242—337.

a deep thinker, innovative and noble, simultaneously elegant, moderate, and well mannered; to be just, we have to add that he was well mannered and reverent in his letters to popes although he had no love for papacy. On the other hand we have Orzechowski — defender of the old order, passionate, arrogant, and gross, denouncer and envious, who, not satisfied with merits of the disputes showered Frycz with insults, invectives, and actually disgusting calumnies.

Frycz replied with perfect manners. He did not enter into the merits of the dispute, exposed the naive lies of his opponent, showed his method in their proper perspective, and added politely that on his own part he is not reproaching Orzechowski for his lunacy, drinking etc. Modrzewski was a cool, sophisticated and extremely dangerous adversary. He knew how to dress up even the worst, most personal insult into the innocent form of friendly chidding, a hundred times more cutting than the primitive lies of the man from Przemyśl. He played the injured innocence to perfection and left Orzechowski sitting in the dirt with which he himself was to be covered.

The prophet from Ruthenia, having enough of religious polemics, changed to political journalism.

The year 1561 had also brought into the life of Orzechowski one more important change. Hetman Jan Tarnowski, his sponsor and protector, died that year. "He was one of the greatest men in Poland" wrote the anonymous author of parliamentary diary, "in all matters knowledgeable, who could have all those brawl starting in Poland easily quelled if he had wanted to"³⁴. Orzechowski was thereby losing a sponsor who had until then discreetly but consistently directed all his actions. The Hetman's son, Jan Krzysztof, although continuing to pay monthly gratuity, possessed a personality too weak to direct the actions of this energetic *protégé*. In the face of parliamentary "brawl" arising in Poland Orzechowski was left to his own devices.

His own judgement matured to the new role rather slowly. His political doctrine was cristalizing. Until then he was doubly hampered: first of all, by the will of his powerfull sponsor who was a moderate conservative with a tendency toward reformism and opposed to drastic changes, but at the same time reluctant to enter into heated disputes with his adversaries, and then by the aesthetics of Renaissance. We must stress here the fact that it was aesthetics and not ideology. He was taught in Italy to favour formal values, consistent with ancient canons of beauty above those of material nature³⁵. Therefrom we often find

³⁴ Manuscript from the Czartoryski Library in Kraków, no 1604 p. 6.

³⁵ H. Barycz, *op. cit.* p. 186—187 and *passim*.

in his earlier works so much care given aesthetic valours of compositions. This great care is characteristic of the epoche in which even the great astronomer assigns so important a role in his theory to its aesthetic values³⁶. Let us add — also of an epoche in which the state, as Burckhardt pointedly expresses, was considered a work of art.

Realization of those canons in the sphere of theory, creation of a doctrine internally consistent and fulfilling assumptions of Renaissance aesthetics was possible for the creator of contemporary political sciences. Only thanks to that Machiavelli did not have to evaluate the facts on which he had built his doctrine. Reformation — and counterreformation which not always represented its anti-thesis — precluded objective approach to facts; introduced the element of their evaluation both moral and religious. From that moment on creation of political theory consistent with Renaissance aesthetics had become impossible. The programme of the artist would have had to be in conflict with the acuteness of the observer. There were two solutions to this dilemma. The first called for basing the theory on postulates and ignoring facts, which was completely impractical — Utopia, in fact. This method was chosen by Modrzewski. The other way was to expose these contradictions and to search, often desperately and blindly, for means of resolving them. This method was soon to be chosen by Orzechowski.

The new stage in Orzechowski's writing was to be opened by a work traditional still. The *Life and Death of Jan Tarnowski* constitutes his last fully Renaissance work. At the same time it is a new speculum, this time an image of a perfect senator, ideal — so ideal as to be unrealistic statesman. It is both a farewell to his old sponsor and an opening of new roads of research on political reality: after the picture of the ideal ruler — a picture of the ideal magnate. Symbolic seems to be the fact that it is Orzechowski's first greater work written in Polish. Nevertheless, political conceptions contained there were to pass to west European doctrines through Wawrzyniec Goslicki's famous work *De Optimo Senatore* and especially its English translation, which were to influence the development of English parliamentary doctrines of the seventeenth century.

Having paid his last respects to the shadows of his sponsor Orzechowski could then independently enter the political dog-fight.

A parliamentary storm was brewing. For a long time the faction which had majority among the gentlemen demanded execution of laws, existing but not enforced, execution of royal estates given away against

³⁶ W. Tatarkiewicz, *Mikołaj Kopernik a symetria świata* (Nicolas Copernicus and the Symmetry of the World), [In:] *Pisma Zebrane* (Collected Works), Vol. II, *Droga przez estetykę* (The Road through Esthetics), Warszawa 1972, pp. 329—345.

all laws, Union with Lithuania, reformation of the Church Sigismundus August backed by the Senate stalled for a long time. However, in August 1562, gentry without summons converted in Sandomierz, arbitrarily distributed letters to senators and summoned the parliament to Piotrkow³⁷. The King had to submit. He approved the summons and promised the execution of estates.

Then Orzechowski appeared. He basically approved of the Union and execution of laws, but he was against the reformation of the Church and execution of estates in the form proposed by the majority faction. Above all, however, he was aghast at the decline of royal authority. He had felt that such would be the results of Reformation. "And thus it is, as if though in Poland there was no King, the way conventicula and blatant conspiring go on" he had written two years earlier to Stadnicki³⁸. He now appeared publicly against the programme of execution. In the short time between the convention in Sandomierz and the parliament in Piotrkow he wrote and a year later published his *Conversation Or Otherwise. Dialogue on the Execution of Polish Crown*³⁹.

This dialogue takes place on Orzechowski's estate near Przemysl on his birthday November 11th, 1562. Three persons participate in it: the Host, the Papist — a wise and experienced debater, and the Evangelist — an uneducated, simple country squire from the province. Thereby Orzechowski departs from the classical pattern which assumes intellectual equality of the participants. Arguments of the poor Evangelist are fought off with childish ease and completely convinced by his adversaries in the end becomes sworn enemy of execution and reformation. This "lack of loyalty on the part of the writer to the participants of the dialogue"⁴⁰ constitutes in fact departure from formalistic conventions of Renaissance; not the form and literary principles, but the journalistic functions of the dialogue govern the internal rules of its construction.

Orzechowski gives up trying to reach educated and aware of their aims leaders of the execution faction. Instead he appeals to the supporting masses of lesser nobility. He plays skillfully on those primitive provincials' feelings: he threatens with the fall of the nation, utilizes the habitual respect for royal authority, takes recourse to group ambitions and patriotism. It is a non too choosy demagogy but in the most

³⁷ A. Dembińska, *Polityczna walka o egzekucję dóbr królewskich w latach 1559—1564* (Political Conflict around the Execution of Royal Estates during the Period 1559 to 1564), Warszawa 1935, pp. 51—52.

³⁸ *Papers*, p. 195.

³⁹ *Rozmowa albo dialog około egzekucyjnej Polskiej Korony* (Conversation or Dialogue on the Executional Polish Crown), Kraków 1563. I further quote after the Selected Papers, pp. 304—457.

⁴⁰ J. Starnawski, *op. cit.*, p. LV, compare p. LI.

excellent application; appealing to the heart and not the reason it remarkably well dons the mask of cool rational, and thoroughly thought out argumentation. Taking into account the fact that it has to do with uneducated audience, although it introduces more complicated expressions and quotes in the original, it at once explains them in a simple and communicative language. All this is combined with excellent appreciation of dramatic qualities of the chosen form of dialogue, gradation of suspense, involving the interested reader in the text, and use of witty and often surprising punch line.

All for nothing. The parliament began execution. The King appeared to be working hand in glove with delegates. Orzechowski sounded the alarm by publishing *Quincunx*⁴¹ — a new political dialogue. There again as the Host he lets his guests, the Papist and the Evangelist, this latter so called out of habit since at the end of the previous dialogues he had completely renounce his heresies, speak. The queer title denotes a complicated geometric figure which Orzechowski uses as a symbol of the Polish political and social structure. It is a tall isocese triangle based on a square, which as the lecture progresses changes its shape and becomes a three-dimensional pyramid based on a cube, acquires decorations drawings and symbols. This drive towards applying geometry to political thesis, which is so characteristic of Orzechowski's mentality, may be found throughout the work. It is hard, even just by remembering Maravall's observations, not to notice in it the mentality of Baroque, the spatial imagination also characteristic to the Baroque political philosophy⁴².

Quincunx defines, elaborates, and illustrates with concrete examples the problems taken up in the previous work. The tonation of the current work is changed; it dramatizes, draws prophetic pictures of doom and fall of the Polish Commonwealth. It still appeals to the masses of gentry, speaks its language, chooses heart catching arguments. But that was not enough for Orzechowski. He had greater ambitions, and therefore — a new work.

The *Police of the Polish Kingdom*⁴³ was to be the synthesis of the author's philosophic, legislative, and constitutional convictions. However, the work progressed much slower than on the dialogues, written

⁴¹ *Quincunx* or the Model of the Polish Crown..., Kraków 1564. Further according to the Selected Papers, pp. 458—619.

⁴² J. A. Maravall, *La philosophie politique espagnole au XVII^e siècle dans ses rapports avec l'esprit de la Contreréforme*, Paris 1955, p. 45 and following — also illustrations.

⁴³ *Policja Królestwa Polskiego...* (The Police of the Polish Kingdom in the Form of Aristotle's Policies written and for the Common Good in Three Volumes Published), Publisher T. Działyński, Poznań 1859.

quickly and without preponderance. The first volume was finished and a large part of the second was ready when doubts overcame Orzechowski. He prepared the manuscript for printing and attached a preface addressed to the King, Sigismundus Augustus.

"Having reached, however, the mid-roads of these volumes", he wrote, "in which everything is in readiness, I had to stay my hand and could not continue without the express command of His Majesty the King, having the which it shall with God's help in these following volumes be clearly shown how this change of the Polish Kingdom was brought about. And thereby, on Your Majesty's command third volumes must come to exist"⁴⁴.

Orzechowski did not live to receive the royal command. He died sometime near the end of 1566 or the beginning of 1567. To posterity he remained one of the most controversial writers of his time. What's more, it would appear that the vehemence and passion of his utterances, appeals to feelings instead of reason, had left their impression on researchers of later era, who judged Orzechowski's works in much the same way; an unintentional tribute paid by his adversaries to the artistic valours of works written by the "prophet from Ruthenia". As the result the value of his political views had also remained unappreciated⁴⁵.

To judge them correctly we must remember that Orzechowski was a member of the gentry. He lived in the times when political activity of gentry in all of Europe found expression mainly in fighting for laws and privileges of their class against monarchs attempting to gain absolute power. Gentry took up this fight in estate conventions and on the religious level. Both those planes of conflict were mutually interspaced in estates and diets; parliaments, as a rule, represented the battleground for religious reformation. It was not only a question of faith. It was the problem of whether the monarchy wins and becomes absolute, or the estates gain the upper hand and modern parliamentarism devolves⁴⁶. And that is the light in which Orzechowski's political doctrine should be examined.

As his starting point he chose Aristotle's doctrine of the three basic types of political and social order, and the one judged as best: the mixed type. Although dependant on Aristotle, whom he consciously imitated and in some cases almost slavishly copied, in this instance he had

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁴⁵ The only exception is the outdated and controversial but interesting paper: J. Lichtensztul, *Poglądy filozoficzno-prawne Stanisława Orzechowskiego* (The Philosophic and Legal Concepts of Stanisław Orzechowski), Warszawa 1930.

⁴⁶ Cf. St. Grzybowski, *Edykty tolerancyjne w Europie Zachodniej* (The Tolerance Edicts in Western Europe), „Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce”, vol. XIX, 1974, p. 49.

another master, another example: Cardinal Contarini and the example of Venice.

Contemporary theorists of the Venetian system, out of which Contarini not only because of his contacts with young Orzechowski deserves special attention, considered this system the ideal blend of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy; the best system of all, the equal of which might just possibly be found in the antiquity praised by humanists. This great popularity of the Venetian system was to come after the death of Orzechowski who was one of the first admirers of the St. Mark's Republic outside its borders. This system often played the role, as in England for example, of a republican blueprint, but not only that. Everywhere, where there was a struggle between the monarch and the opposition of the estates, the loosing side, or even the side momentarily weaker, and fighting to keep the status quo and the balance of power, invoked the example of Venice. For example King Henry III de Valois, in his youth opposed to the Venetian matrix, later on near the end of his reign became its staunch supporter. Even more, the Venetian standard or, which is the same thing, the standard of the mixed system, was attacked by some advocators of absolutism like Bodin for example, while serving others to augment proabsolutistic thesis. Cardinal Bellarmin presented his scheme of an ideal, and in practice absolute, monarchy formally, although contradictory to actual intentions, as a form of the mixed system. Therefore, under Polish conditions, when the Chamber of Deputies was on the offensive, the Venetian standard could serve first of all save the position of the monarch⁴⁷.

However, when attacking parliaments Orzechowski opposed them not so much the King as something above both the King and Parliament — the Law. Apologia of Law, in which Pierre Mesnard rightly saw the basic characteristic of the Polish XVIth century political doctrines⁴⁸, is in Orzechowski's doctrine an expression of specific evolvement of the Polish political system, and at the same time an echo of Aristotle's words: "there is no system where the laws do not govern"; system and therefore "police"⁴⁹.

"Police" in Orzechowski's understanding seems to have two meanings. The first is the mixed system. Following Venetian theorists, similarly to some of his English contemporaries⁵⁰, he considered the system per-

⁴⁷ To substantiate those theses I am preparing a separate work on Venice as a political model.

⁴⁸ P. Mesnard, *L'Essor de la Philosophie politique au XVI^e siècle*. Paris 1952, p. 426.

⁴⁹ *The Policy*, vol. IV ch. 4 sec. 7.

⁵⁰ Ch. Hill, *Intellectual Background of the English Revolution*, Oxford 1965 p. 276.

fect, and therefrom the Polish system also. "This our Polish police", he wrote, "is perfect in all aspects, so no one can add anything to it or subtract from it"⁵¹. This of course relates to the theoretic assumptions and not practice. The second, wider meaning of the word "police" relates to a system internally consistent, in which the law is the sovereign, and not the King, aristocracy, and general populace, who are all equally subjugated to it. In practice, this type of "police" may be realized only in the mixed system and therefore both meanings are equivocal.

Thus understood "police" constitutes therefore one of the constraints of the royal power, and a guarantee that the monarch will respect the law. "Quin vero ea Lege quam vos cum Senatu atque Rege tuleritis", Orzechowski wrote in his speech to nobility in which he advocates collection of the Przyłuski Statutes, "Regem quoque ipsum una cum senatu vobiscum includi vultis, adversus quem Regem sunt suae Leges vobis, sunt Iudicis, est quoque parendi illi modus certus, atque praescriptus"⁵².

Popular, and, at the time, wide spread theory of constraints of the royal power — it finds its expression in Przyłuski's *Statutes* also — speaks, as we know, of three constraints; religion, justice, and police. However, in Orzechowski's opinion, in Poland both the justice and police are perfect only in theory. Some laws are outdated, some conflicting and ambiguous; the law should be concise, definite, and understandable to all. Bad laws facilitate conflicting or even unjust verdicts. This in turn makes possible the activity of court defenders, despised by Orzechowski paid paltry lawyers, on whom he put the heaviest blame for the decline of the Polish judiciary system.

He doesn't blame the King but the Society. With the decline of old customs a multitude of cases previously rare or completely unknown occurred. The King, being formally the highest judge, "means well, but he cannot do enough of verdicts"⁵³. Contradictory to the general opinion of the gentry, which thinks that the King should not shirk his judiciary duties, Orzechowski believes that he should only keep his rights as the ultimate judge, and that he should be able to delegate most cases to special tribunals.

This is connected with clerical jurisdiction. Orzechowski, at one time its greatest enemy, only apparently had changed his mind. He admits the right of clerical courts to judge cases of heresy; but then, he never considered the problem of his marriage as heresy, similarly to other civil matters. He even condemned considering as heretics, and revoking their

⁵¹ *The Police* p. 68.

⁵² J. Priluscus, *Leges seu Statuta ac Privilegia Regni Poloniae omnia*, Cracoviae 1553, fol. C 2 v.

⁵³ *Papers* p. 445.

clerical benefices, priests who openly married or became Protestants. He considered as heresy rebellion against religious authority of bishops and not their secular authority; and he considered as secular also such matters as those dealing with the organization of the church and its rites. Here we reach the problem least understood in Orzechowski's doctrine: the role of the church ⁵⁴.

There is no doubt whatsoever, that to Orzechowski the Church is the guarantor of the existing order. Only the church possesses sufficient moral authority for its "admonition", unbacked by any real force, to call the law breaking King to order. Therefore, only the archbishop has the right to depose the king who had become a tyrant, who had broken the law. However, this is happening during times when the right to depose a tyrant is generally accepted and in order to do that an archbishop is not required. Reformation gives this right to all "magistrates": assemblies of estates, tribunals, town magistrates and princes of blood. Practice goes even further; this is the century of great rebellions "under the cloak of religion" ⁵⁵, and often without any appearances at all. Several years after Orzechowski's death this right shall become part of the King Henry Articles, and the Articles won't even define who is to decide whether the king is really a tyrant, or not. The basic element, of what is considered the foundations of Orzechowski's "theocratic" idea, is to serve the King and not the Church.

More precisely — to serve the monarchy: because there always exists the danger that individualism of the monarch may threaten the authority of the monarchy, that the interests of the individual and the institution represented by him may at some time come into conflict. This is exactly what the moral authority of the church is to prevent. Even though not fully elaborated, the theory of the three constraints of the royal power triumphs in Orzechowski's political conception; these constraints, however, exist in the interests of the monarchy.

But this, again, is theory. Actually, in his opinion, the church and religion do not fulfill their role in Poland. Therefore the question arises, why this is so; what can be done about it?

Orzechowski had already tried earlier to answer "what": through union with the Orthodox church, by allowing moderate reforms, Communion under two forms and marriage of priests, by swaying the undecided and declaring war against Protestant radicals. Then the Church will regain its authority. It turned out to be unrealistic. Deeper reasons for the existing situation had to be found.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 410.

⁵⁵ Jean de Merges, *Mémoires*, Collection Petitot, Vol. XXXIV, Paris 1823, p. 76.

The highest authority was to be, according to Orzechowski, the Primate. He placed this authority even above the King's, but only in matters of faith. It is pointless to discuss here in detail philosophic arguments, interesting though they may be, justifying this view⁵⁶. It is enough to say that it leads to those philosophers of Baroque, who consistently propagated the idea of superiority of the inner experience, religious included, over the outer world. The important, to us, fact is that Orzechowski was of the opinion that the highest authority of the Primate was at the same time the highest responsibility towards monarchy. The Primate was to "owe his allegiance to the Crown, and not the King"⁵⁷. The old primates could fulfill their duties, preserve their authority, only if they were "chosen by the clergy, accepted by the people, and sanctified by the Metropolitane"⁵⁸. What was the reality like? And at this point Orzechowski stopped writing. In this place he broke off the *Police*. It was at this moment that he decided he required the King's permission for continuation of the work. He did not live to receive it.

All questions concerning what he hadn't said in his work would be empty. He stated one thing clearly. The Primate, and the Church, should serve with its authority the institution and not the person, the monarchy and not the monarch. However, he wanted the ruler's approval of such a statement.

Because in all matters of secular nature the King represents the highest authority, even over the Church. "Where it concerns service to the Holy Altar, this estate is not subjugated to the King, but where it concerns the lands of the Kingdom, this estate is subjugated to the Polish King"⁵⁹. The priest constitutes the source of the royal rule the source of all power; however, he delegates part of it to the king — "the sceptre and the sword, that is the right to judge and defend"⁶⁰ — leaving for himself only...sacrifice. Orzechowski is against all further attempts at limiting the royal power: "the King owes us nothing above what he had sworn"⁶¹. The limits are, however, his royal duties. He writes: "The whole royal institution ad publicam extenditur, non autem ad privata,"⁶² and adds: "either we have no need for kings, or the royal power is King's own, to be used to confine ugly willfulness of people in his kingdom"⁶³.

⁵⁶ It was done by J. Lichtensztul, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

⁵⁷ *The Police* p. 96.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

⁵⁹ *Papers*, pp. 454—455

⁶⁰ *The Police* p. 47.

⁶¹ *Papers*, p. 337.

⁶² *Papers*, p. 445.

⁶³ *Papers*, p. 307.

The royal power is limited by "religion, justice, and police", by the royal oath, the rights of his subjects, and by his own duties. His power seems to be small. "In bindings our Polish Eagle sits, so as not to soar all over Poland wherever his fancy takes him." He, however, holds indivisible power of "the sceptre and the sword"⁶⁴. Let us ask here not what Orzechowski theoretically delegates to the king, but what actual executive powers does he give him, on what social force he expects him to base his rule, and, no less important, on what economic force.

The problem of execution is of key importance here. Orzechowski is not unconditionally opposed to execution of royalties. He opposes execution in the diet through confiscation. He agrees to confiscation on the basis of a court verdict⁶⁵. This limits the area of estates subject to execution, but preserves the legality and the principle of sovereignty of laws. What the King had given away as rewards for valour should remain untouched; the authority of the King's word must not be undermined by parliament. The royal prerogative to give away his estates cannot be limited; parliament should serve only in an advisory capacity. Orzechowski is a realist and knows perfectly well that not many people are willing to serve for God Bless only.⁶⁶ "Closing the King's hand only means the destruction of royal fortunes, which survive only thanks to the dignity of brave people"⁶⁷. An opinion consistent with practices of the era; XVIth century kings everywhere strengthened their power by distributing land grants, depleting the treasury, enriching favorites, creating a new ruling class dependant on the royal favour and loyal only to the king.

Who is, therefore, to bear the expense of wars, judiciary, administration. Not the King; not out of his income from royalties. Neither, formally the gentleman; he owes only "chimney tax and war, and the title on the writ"⁶⁸. "The priest should pay war tax according to evaluation, the same as the merchant"⁶⁹. This solution was at the time widely used; in France among others, it was the clergy, and partially towns that bore the cost of upkeeping the Valois monarchy.

And the gentry? It was of course obliged to serve in the general mobilization; it is, however, "the last hope" and "dire need"⁷⁰. Orzechowski speaks of it critically and without enthusiasm. He proposes in its place "standing defense". The Crown should be sectioned into six

⁶⁴ *Papers*, p. 384.

⁶⁵ *Papers*, p. 440.

⁶⁶ *Papers*, p. 406.

⁶⁷ *Papers*, p. 433.

⁶⁸ *Papers*, p. 384.

⁶⁹ *Papers*, p. 455—456.

⁷⁰ *Papers*, p. 453.

parts, and every six years each part would supply soldiers for border defense. Let sons of the gentry go through obligatory military service, let them, following the example of Venice, be obliged to constant readiness, and yearly revue ⁷¹.

A programme that seems naive, as naive as Orzechowski's retort made to Venetian professor, "that Poland wants its King to be rich through his people, and not through money" ⁷², who serve him during the war out of loyalty and not for money. It should be remembered, however, that none other than Machiavelli criticized the Venetian custom of leaving the defense of the Republic's territory to mercenaries, and advocated that the country should be defended by its citizens. The XVIth century was the age of mercenary armies, but at the same time it was an age of fighting against mercenarism and proving that it was unreliable, expensive, and demoralizing.

Military service is therefore the duty of gentry, but then, who is a gentleman? Not the one who had "his coat of arms impressed in Noremberg", but the one who was wise and brave ⁷³, soldier and orator ⁷⁴. When Orzechowski excludes from civil rights peasants, merchants and craftsmen, in which he is slavishly following Aristotle, and at the same time often defending peasants against excessive exploitation, he excludes them because of their social function and not their birth. "The Commonwealth pays small, or no, attention to anyone's birth or stature, but treats as noble the one who gives it his best and multiplies it glory and wealth" ⁷⁵. Kromer and Hosius, although sons of commoners, "prove their nobility by their actions" ⁷⁶, better than those who "parade not their own, but their fathers' valours" ⁷⁷.

This gentry is equal in the eyes of the law. The Senate, in Orzechowski's earlier works still superior to the Chamber of Deputies, in the end becomes part of the parliament, that being subjugated to the King, "because by being the head, top, and mouth of this circle, he himself orders according to its advice, and no one over him" ⁷⁸. Tarnowski is the perfect senator, because knowing that "lack of equality is the poison of freedom" took care "that the popular law served all in Poland Equally" ⁷⁹.

⁷¹ *Papers*, p. 457.

⁷² *Papers*, p. 398.

⁷³ *Papers*, p. 420.

⁷⁴ *Papers*, p. 423.

⁷⁵ *Papers*, p. 415.

⁷⁶ *Papers*, p. 420.

⁷⁷ *Papers*, p. 418.

⁷⁸ *The Police*, p. 33.

⁷⁹ *Papers*, pp. 224, 229.

Everyone being equal before the law, it was valours which caused that "before wise kings" some people became better than others ⁸⁰.

It is a very strange programme, strange wish to introduce order in a kingdom where troubles and rebellions multiplied, insubordination grew, where "anxiety and dissension" ⁸¹. Strange, because Orzechowski participated in increasing those troubles, had precipitated a storm with his marriage. And at a certain moment, it seems as though he became afraid of what he had done. Concerned with repair, with introduction of order, this keen observer of reality tried to turn clock back. He turned to Medieval political doctrines, to Fathers of the Church, to classic masters, creating an eclectic but original doctrine "sitting Jesus Christ on Aristotle like on a donkey's back" ⁸². He became not so much ideologist of gentry, since he wasn't too popular with them and none too well known, as the first Royalist, attempting, similarly to other members of this faction, "to restore in Poland such a system as it had possessed at the end of the Medieval era" ⁸³.

Full of passion and rages Orzechowski evoked passion and rage in his contemporary protagonists and adversaries alike. Among posterity these last constituted majority. The life and work of the prophet from Ruthenia met with sharp criticism and general condemnation; and rightly so in most cases. We can only dispute details to which, as they are doubtful we have given here greater attention. The overall evaluation must necessarily also be disputable; Orzechowski was unable to bring neither order, nor harmony both into his life and into his work, although he consistently and at the same time awkwardly endeavored after this goal. And when he proposed something which considered as order, it was hard to feel any sympathy for him, since what he proposed was the order of Holy Inquisition.

Let us, however, look at him in a somewhat different light: as at a man interesting because of his faults, a writer interesting due to the inconsistency and fluidity of his views; as at the representation of a new, only just emerging awareness rather than a political doctrine, a torn awareness and personality reflecting conflicts of the times in which Orzechowski had to live and create. We shall then see in him a keen observer and an excellent stylist, who many a time was able to forereach his era; he was unable, however, to appreciate both, in himself and his era, the things that were truly new and interesting.

⁸⁰ *Papers*, p. 418.

⁸¹ *Papers*, pp. 195, 307.

⁸² *The Police*, p. 105.

⁸³ S. Estreicher, *Kultura prawnicza w Polsce XVI wieku*. (The Legislative Culture in Poland in XVI c.), Kraków 1931, pp. 56—57.

Orzechowski's posthumous defeat is none the less as instructive, as the posthumous victory of his antagonist. But is it really a defeat for a writer not to receive his small chapel in a respectable museum of national mementoes, but to remain for four centuries a live and evoking live passions stimulator of our thought?