

STEPHEN CHRISTOPHER ROWELL
Lithuanian Institute of History (Vilnius)
ORCID: 0000-0002-0406-6838

Vindex pacis: Prince John of the Lithuanian Dukes, warrior bishop of Vilnius

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In the Leipzig print shop of Melchior Lotter a new book of hours, *Diurnale horarum* was printed for the cathedral-, and parish clergy of the diocese of Poznań in 1538. This important liturgical volume was intended to be used for many years and its publication was approved by the (late) local ordinary, Bishop John of the Lithuanian Dukes.¹ It was designed to remind local clergy of the bishop and his public image. According to the book's dedicatory verse, Prince John was a warrior shielding his flock from the slings and arrows of Tatars, Muscovites and Germans: „[Just] as this heavily-armed knight spurns weapons from the Scythian quiver, and prepares to win rightful trophies for the Lord from the Goths, so this book, which Sarmatia's glory, the bishop, that glory of Sarmatia offers thee, defeats the malign demon through prayer; and thou, o Reader, shalt wish him long life for he shall be the champion of thy peace”.² In one of the few surviving copies of this book we find on the reverse of the first folio

¹ *Note on names.* The Christian names of heads of Church and State are given in their English forms. Geographic names are given according to their modern usage (Vilnius, not Wilno). Inhabitants of the Grand Duchy recorded in various (Latin, Slavic) languages are given in a modern Lithuanian form. Inconsistency is unavoidable. Bishop John - Joannes (Janussius) ex (or de) ducibus Lithuaniae (Pol. Jan z Książąt Litewskich; Lith. Jonas iš Lietuvos kunigaikščių). For a succinct biography of the bishop, see WADOWISZEWSKI 1968/2017, pp. 186–191, which supersedes SWIEŻAWSKI 1962–1964, pp. 439–441.

Warszawa, Biblioteka Narodowa, SD XVI.O.6189 (defective copy, Biblioteka Kórnicka, Cim.O.463) *Diurnale horarum ecclesiae cathedralis Posnaniensis sub Reverendissimo ac illustrissimo Principe domino et domino Ioanne ex ducibus Lythuaniae Dei gratia Episcopo Posnaniensi etc in communem eius dioceseos sacerdotum usum summa et fide et diligentia editum. Cum gratia et privilegio Illustrissimi ducis Episcopi Posnaniensis.* Excudebat Lipsiae Melchior Lotterus expensis et cura honestissimi viri Georgii Denarii, Germanice Pfennig Anno Domini MDXXXVIII; coat of arms – fo 1v: *Pogoń* [Iytis] quartered with the Columns of Gediminas. Publication was financed by the Poznań bookseller Georg Pfennig, formerly of Leipzig, see WOTSCHKE 1909.

² *Diurnale*, p. Aii: *Ad lectorem pro libro. / Ut spernit scythyce hic cathaphractus tela pharatrae / Deque Getis Domino iusta trophea parat, / Demona sic vastat precibus liber iste malignum, / Quem tibi dat Praesul, gloria Sarmaciae, / Gloria Sarmaciae Praesul, quem vivere, Lector; / Optabis, vindex nam tibi pacis erit.*

John's new coat of arms, namely Pogoń quartered with the columns of Gediminas. The same device was attributed to John by the sixteenth-century antiquarian Tomasz Treter in his edition of *Vitae Episcoporum Posnaniensium*. Behind the shield are a crozier and mitre with a sword and princely cap. John stresses not only his spiritual and secular powers as bishop but also his royal Sarmatian descent. He bears a Lithuanian princely coat of arms, the heavily armed knight or *cataphractus*, and as bishop he is a defender of the Faith. This metaphor of the Christian warrior against evil has a long history and might seem to be of no particular relevance to a modern commentator. The aim of this article is not to re-examine the printed and sigillographic image of this Jagiellonian prelate as the foe of schismatics, heretics and pagans but to evaluate the role of Prince John and other Lithuanian Catholic bishops in the country's military defence during the sixteenth century.³ Special attention will be paid to clerical connections with the provision of troops, money and materiel and the building of fortresses, especially in Volhynia (present-day western Ukraine).

The role of warrior bishops in Medieval Europe has been the subject of much research especially in recent years, as Polish scholars have (re-)examined the part played by clergy in the military affairs of the Kingdom of Poland. In the thirteenth century bishops not only fulfilled requirements to take part in the ruler's campaigns and muster troops but also on occasion had recourse to „personal use of arms for offensive purposes”. It seems that in the fourteenth century bishops mainly provided the ruler with counsel, cash and prayers, and showed less interest in matters military, although occasionally prelates did lead armed campaigns against enemies of the Faith (Hussites).⁴

In the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, as in other European states, the chief prelate (in this case the bishop of Vilnius) and his fellow bishops were leading men of state, the monarch's chief counsellors. It is therefore to be expected that foreign powers would deal directly with the bishop (leading member of the Council of Lords) on diplomatic issues, especially involving border regulation from the fifteenth century onwards.⁵

In 1533 Bishop John sent his representative to northern Lithuania to redraw the boundaries of three important northern parishes, Suviekas, Dusėtos and Zarasai that were closely connected with military defence of the border with Livonia. The parish at Zarasai, a settlement founded originally by the bishops of Vilnius sometime in the late fifteenth century, was served by local boyars and in particular by the boyar village at Avilyš. The bishop's men were active in controlling the border vicinity. In 1561, as preparations were underway for war with Livonia, new cavalry garrisons

³ ROWELL 2020a; ROWELL 2020b.

⁴ KOTECKI, MACIEJEWSKI, OTT 2017; KOTECKI, MACIEJEWSKI 2020, pp. 12, 16, 29–31; KOTECKI 2020; DALIBOR 2016; SZYBKOWSKI 2012; MACIEJEWSKI 2021.

⁵ Berlin, Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Ordensbriefarchiv, 16652, 16692, 16704 – correspondence between Teutonic Order officials and Bishop John of Vilnius, 1477–1478.

were stationed by the grand duke in border parishes – 200 knights at Suviekas and Zarasai and the same number at Drūkšiai. A troop of 300 horsemen was sent to Salakas and 500 to Bratslaŭ.⁶ These garrisons were not ecclesiastical foundations but they were served by recently established parishes which often fostered special devotion to military saints such as the 10,000 Martyred Knights of Ararat.

CLERGY, SOLDIERS AND MONEY

Like other feudal lords a bishop was obliged to maintain a retinue, including a military component to provide security and prestige. In the early thirteenth century Archbishop Henry Kietlicz of Gniezno (1199–1219) was alleged to maintain a retinue comparable with that of a secular duke.⁷ During his formal ingress into Poznań on 14 March 1537 the new bishop, Prince John of the Lithuanian Dukes, was accompanied by a guard of 300 knights resplendent in silver and gold.⁸ These soldiers were not toys and their duty was to fight in war, should necessity arise. The bishops of Vilnius obtained papal permission to use the secular sword, *ius gladii*, for the first time probably in 1501 to combat miscreants and other foes.⁹ This is the sword that stands behind John's shield. Bishops in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania were major landlords and, like any other landowners, they were required to pay the silver due, „serebszczyzna” to finance the grand duke's armed forces, and to equip knights to serve the ruler.¹⁰ In the diocese of Vilnius this function was served by *nobiles vassalli*, mentioned in extant sources from the last quarter of the fifteenth century. In 1497 the bishop's tenant (*dzierżawca*) on his Salakas estate, Paulius Dambrovietis [Paulus de Dambrowno] received the Simonovska estate at Vidzy (now in north-western Belarus) on condition that he and his heirs served the bishop in the unspecified *more aliorum nobilium*.¹¹ Perhaps the longest surviving service contract issued by a bishop of

⁶ LM 564/7. No 66, p. 77.

⁷ KOTECKI, MACIEJEWSKI 2020, p. 13.

⁸ *Akta kapitul*, p. 34: *sue reverendissime paternitati in trecentis equitibus illius aulicorum auro et argento insigniter ornatorum proficiscenti* (1537 03 14); this same source makes no mention of a similar retinue accompanying John's successor, Bp Stanisław Oleśnicki in March 1539 (*ibid.*, pp. 45–46).

⁹ KDKDW, No 466, pp. 547–548 [5 Oct. 1499], No 498, pp. 600–602. It is very possible that the earlier document, dated 1499, is a forgery, as W. Semkowicz argued convincingly – *ibid.*, p. 547. It survives in only one manuscript copy (in Vilnius). By contrast, the 23 June 1501 bull of Alexander VI survives in the original parchment (Vilnius) and two Vatican copies.

¹⁰ GUDAVIČIUS 1992, pp. 98, 103–104.

¹¹ KDKDW, No. 447, pp. 520–522, 2 Nov. 1497, Dąbrowno. Cf. Kórnik, Biblioteka Kórnicka, Dypl. 150, 14 March 1535, Vilnius, Dubrowno charter for boyar Jurgis Šungailovičius: *considerantes fidelia servitia et digna benemerita Georgii Szungailowicz, nobilis vassalli nostri de bonis episcopatus nostri Dubrowno ... duas terras desertas, unam Dolwyszowczyna, alteram Rudaschowczyna in eadem Dubrowno ... nobis servire equo bono valoris quattuor sexagenarum cum servitore vestito colore tunice iuxta mandatum nostrum, hoc est ad quamlibet Convencionem generalem etiam quociens ingruerit*

Vilnius also involves service boyars from the Vidzy district. It comes undated from the time of Bishop Albert Tabor (1492–1506) and was confirmed by subsequent Vilnius ordinaries until 1570, when Bishop Protasewicz took the estate of Voineikishki (perhaps modern Vainikishki, Bratslau rayon) away from the nephews and nieces of the last incumbent, Jonas Lukaševičius Pruskovskis, and transferred it to the man's widow and her new husband, a bishop's courtier named Kasparas Bržeskiš, who lived at Antakalnis. According to the protest noted in the Chapter record, Bishop Tabor granted the Voineikishki estate to Lukas Pruskovskis *pro servitiis honestis in servitio bellico ... et per alios dominos episcopos post mortem prefati reverendissimi domini Thabor in robore conservata*. After Lukas' son Jonas died without heirs of his body *aliquot annis* before 17 February 1570 several Vidzy boyars, the offspring or spouses of the daughters of Jonas' sisters Magdalena and Ona, laid claim to the estate which Bp Protasewicz had awarded to Jonas Lukaševičius' widow Helena Stanislawowna Stulbyanka, now wife of Kasparas Bržeskiš. The nephews claimed to have Tabor's original charter bearing the Chapter seal and confirmations by three successive bishops, Albert Radvila, John of the Lithuanian Dukes and Paul Holszański; Bržeska claimed to have Radvila's charter for Lukas Pruskovskis as confirmed by Holszański. In May 1570 the Chapter found in Bržeska's favour. Why this decision was taken remains unclear. Perhaps it seemed wiser to favour a single adult claimant with local roots rather than divide Voineikishki (and its military service requirement) among several relatively juvenile candidates. Forty years later on 15 June 1611 Bishop Benedict Vaina [Woyna] confirmed the earlier donation of Levonishki manor in the Vidzy District by one Helena Stanislawowna Kasprowa Bržeska, „ziemianka vidzka”, to her nephew Martynas Stulba.¹²

According to J. Ochmański's calculations, in 1539 there were upwards of 118 vassal boyars on the lands of the bishop of Vilnius.¹³ It is possible to assess this service in more detail from Bishop John's charters granting land to his service boyars. Several of these survive from 1535–1536 when the Grand Duchy was at war with Muscovy and the Tatars. We also have similar documents, confirmations of such grants from the 1540s and 1550s when Paul Holszański [Alšėniškis] (1536–1555) and Valerian Protasewicz Szuszkowski [Protasevičius Šuškovskis] (1556–1579) served as bishop.

When granting boyars landed estates John required, as was foreseen in the First Lithuanian Statute (1529), that the recipient provide him, when required, such

necessitas ad expeditionem bellicam tenebitur expedire unum equitem armatum lorica cum hasta, clipeo et framea ...

¹² Vilnius, Lietuvos mokslų akademijos biblioteka, Rankraščių skyrius [=LMAVBRS] F43-212 (ACV IV), fos 242–243r, 243v–244, 252–253v, 254, 260. For the 1611 Vidzy confirmation, see LMAVBRS F6-283. JASAS 1980, No 810.

¹³ OCHMAŃSKI 1961, pp. 68–70. The first mention of *vassalli ecclesie* in the see of Vilnius seems to come from 4 May 1422, KDKDW No 79 e, p. 110. Episcopal vassals were common throughout Europe; for Bohemia, see DALIBOR 2016, pp. 260–271.

as when the bishop travelled to a parliamentary session (*sejm*) or a military expedition, with one well-armed man with a good horse worth four or five *sexagenae* (240-300 groats) and, on occasion, a well-equipped serving man; estate owners were obliged to maintain another man at arms – with a helmet, sword, shield and armour for campaigns against enemies of the Faith, as we can see from charters issued in 1535 and 1536.¹⁴ It is worth noting that these documents are of a similar size and format (14-18 lines) and contain the formula *Jo:[annes] ep[iscop]us Vilnen[sis] subscripsit*. In 1535 Bishop John gave Jonas Motiejus Laszko two uninhabited plots of land (*terras desertas*) in recognition of good service on Kuktiškės manor. The grant was to be reviewed, if Laszko should fail to provide the required military service. The document was confirmed by Bishop Paul Holszański in 1537.¹⁵ In November 1543 Holszański granted Laszko and his heirs the office of wójt [Lith. *vaitas*; Latin, *advocatus*, headman] of Molėtai as reward for military service rendered. This charter was confirmed further on 23 March 1568 by Bishop Protasewicz.¹⁶ On 10 July 1548 Holszański gave the wójt of Molėtai, Motiejus Bartoševičius (Laszko) a further four uninhabited pieces of land (*Janiszki, Adamiszki, Pietrykiški, Monczaniszki*), which he added to the property Laszko had obtained from Bishop John with military service obligations (including provision of a horse worth 5 *sexagenae*). However, despite Motiejus' reputed good service, when he died his estates as wójt of Molėtai were seized by force by Bishop Protasewicz and not returned to Laszko's legitimate heirs.

¹⁴ LMAVBRS, F6-152: 02 Feb. 1535, Vilnius, Bishop John grants the Myelenkowo boyar Thomas Koczan 3 *terras desertas, Arbaczowscizna, Makarowczina, Zyezulowczyna*, and one man, named Stashuk Arbaczowycz. *Ad relacionem Alberti Kuklynowski tenutarii in Melenkowo*; F6-153: 02 Feb. 1535, Vilnius, Bishop grants the Pierssaye boyars Andreas, Albertus, Stasz Raczewiczzi Nauczowczina in Losokini. *Ad relacionem Alberti Kuklinowski tenutarii in Pierssaye* (cf. F6-154, below n. 66); F6-156: 06 Feb. 1535, Vilnius, Bishop grants the Molėtai boyar Stanislaus Syemkonis Lawrinowczina in Molėtai: *ipse Stanislaus et eius successores ad conventionem generalem optime ac honorifice pro nostro decore in uno equo valoris quattuor sexagenarum et in colore alias w barwyte ut in mandatis habuerit se expedire debbit et tenebitur secundario ad expeditionem bellicam ut pro tunc necessitas expostulaverit contra hostem fidei catholice in colore similiter et armatim, videlicet cum clipeo, gladio seu framea, cuspide, galea, lorica expedire et statuere in loco campestri tenebitur, ut melius et ornacius ... videbitur. Ad relacionem Mathie Iwanowsky tenutarii in Malati*. Cf. the service requirement set down by Statute – PLS, p. 91, II.1: *equitem in bono equo, qui non valeret ad minus quattuor sexagenas grossorum lorica et galea, cum cultro, scuto et hasta cum vexilliolo*.

¹⁵ See Appendix, pp. 359–361.

¹⁶ ACV IV, fo 163, 23 March 1568 Laszko 1543 confirmation of Molėtai charter: *duas terras desertas adpellatas unam Voldzionyszka et alteram Mythkyelyska ad eandem advocatiam pertinentes antiquitus atque tabernam cum omnibus eius proprietatibus ... servitium servire in uno equo bono, res secum armatis, vestitu lunensi concolorato panno cum hasta, scuto et, ut erit dignum instructus ad manadatum nostrum et successorum nostrorum vel Conventionem generalem vel interucium ante bellica necessitate Actum et datum Vilne feria quarta post festum Sancti Martini episcopi et confessoris proxima anno Domini millesimo quingestesimo quadragesimo tercio*. Cf. OCHMAŃSKI 1961, pp. 67–68.

This we know from a protestation preserved in the Chapter records. On 17 May 1575 Jurgis Rimavičius, a service boyar from the bishop's Tauragnai estate, and husband of Laszko's daughter Sofija asked the canons to intercede with Protasewicz on behalf of his and Sofija's children, viz. Jonas, Motiejus, Lukas, Morkus, Valentinas and Petras, and Elžbieta and Ona for the return of their property *vi recepte et occupate*.¹⁷ Thus, we see how estate service and respective military obligations continued over several generations (of bishops and boyars). In 1586 when Martynas Mackevičius asked Bishop George Radziwiłł [Radvila] to confirm the charter issued to his ancestor, the Vidzy boyar Abromas Mackevičius, by Bishop John, the ordinary commanded this be done *dla sluzby woienny przeciw nieprzyacieli Rzeczypospolitej*.¹⁸ Thus, the object to be defended changed formally from *Fides Christiana* to *Res Publica*. That it was possible to renegotiate the conditions of such charters is clear from a case involving a Bugenėnai burgher, Jurgis Surkus (Georgius Surk) who found himself unable to meet the costs of providing a horse for military expeditions and asked for this duty to be transmuted into an annual monetary payment of 60 groats. The bishop agreed.¹⁹ There are also instances where John granted land to a faithful servant expressly *without* military obligations, as in the case of the Vilnius boyar Jonas Grabinskis who received a manor on the banks of the River Nemunas one Lithuanian mile (7 km) from Kaunas.²⁰

In comparison with secular landowners, the bishop of Vilnius could muster a considerable number of troops from diocesan estates. When the see was occupied by a nobleman this number increased, as it would be joined by servicemen from his private estates. According to data from the 1528 Lithuanian Muster Lists, that year the bishops of Vilnius, Lutsk and Medininkai mustered 437 soldiers in all: John summoned 236 men-at-arms, Holszański – 122, and Nicholas Radziwiłł, 79 (from all their estates). On 21 June 1534 the monarch's secretary Nicholas Nipszyc informed Duke Albert Hohenzollern of Prussia that Duke Konstantin Ostrogski had 350 knights and the second largest commander, the bishop of Vilnius, mustered a much smaller number.²¹ In preparation for battle against the Muscovites conscript troops were gathered

¹⁷ For the supplementary grant of 1548, see Kraków, Biblioteka XX. Czartoryskich, Pergamin 1223, 52 x 35,5 cm, in Ruthenian; the 1575 disseisin of Laszko's heirs, presumably minors, given the protest made on their behalf by their father, see ACV V, fos 177r–178r.

¹⁸ ACV VII, fo 21v–22.

¹⁹ Warszawa, Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych, AR xviii dz. 153, pub.: ROWELL 2019, p. 184, n. 43.

²⁰ Kraków, Bibl. Czart., Perg. 811 (2 May 1534; sold for 100 *sexagenae* to the Ciwun of Jurbarkas Ivan Kuntsevich, *ibid.*, Perg 827, 19 Sept. 1536). Grabinskis sold his town house in Vilnius to Bishop John also on 2 May 1534 – LMAVBRS F6-148. For a later example, we note that on 8 May 1542 the bishop granted land at Antakalnis and Sudervė to Archdeacon Józef Jasiński free from obligations, including military expeditions and subjects them to ecclesiastical immunity, JASAS 1980, No 446 (LMAVBRS F1-133).

²¹ LM 523 1, pp. 22, 168. Nipszyc to Hohenzollern, 21 June 1534: AT 16 pt. 2, No 343, pp. 631–635, here p. 634: „Dan er [hertzog Iljann] hat die hubsten III½ hundert pferde, so wol gerust und geputzt

after 23 May 1536: the palatine of Vilnius provided 233 war horses; the duke of Slutsk – 250. Meanwhile the bishop-elect of Vilnius, Holszański, held 61 knights and the bishop-elect of Poznań – John of the Lithuanian Dukes, gathered 88 knights from his secular estates („z‘ svetskich‘ imenei”), while Jonas Jonaitis Zaberezinskis [Jan Janowicz Zabrzeziński], palatine of Trakai mustered 100.²²

Ca 1539 Paul Holszański noted that in wartime diocesan revenue from boyars and their subjects rose as a result of payment of silver tax to finance military campaigns, *expeditio bellica*. On 20 May 1535 during the Starodub War against Muscovy the treasury received 26,345 *sexagenae* and 40 groats from secular lords and the clergy combined.²³ Registering income from his Igumen (now Cherven’) estate in 1539, the bishop explains that when he travelled to a Sejm (parliamentary session) or military expedition, this manor was obliged to pay for his maintenance in or around Minsk.²⁴ Of course, the First Lithuanian Statute’s stipulation that bishops should be involved personally in military expeditions does not mean that clergy themselves fought on the battlefield.²⁵

Bearing in mind the bishop of Vilnius’ preparations for war, we should not be surprised that on 16 November 1534 the royal secretary, Bernard Wapowski wrote to the Crown Chancellor, Bishop Jan Chojeński of Przemyśl about Tatars ravaging Podole and Volhynia with the hope that the monarch would consult the bishop of Vilnius (and the military commander, Ostafi Dashkovich) for advice.²⁶

nach der hinigen monier, als kein herren inn Litthauen, allein ausgenohmen den Bischoff von der Wilt, doch einer henigern entzal und gar nicht tzuovor, allein niher silbers”.

²² LM 7/7 No 373, pp. 608–610, here 608–609. Various figures are cited in KOLANKOWSKI 1913, pp. 110, 150 writing about the war with Muscovy: 1536 (?): 466, 500, 122, 166 (ratus 176? – all figures doubled), 200.

²³ 1539 diocesan income record, LMAVBR, F43-430, *Proventus episcopatus Vlnensis*, fo 19r: *Summa nobilium et subditorum eorum est aucta istis annis tribus propter expeditionem bellicam in Episcopatu*. 1535: LM 15/15, No 199, pp. 258–259. No 219, pp. 284–286 (before 28 March 1529) military service for gentry, taxation and equipment, „zemskaia oborona. U sukni tsvetnoi, ne v sermiage ...”.

²⁴ Cherven’, Minsk District, 65 km east of Minsk, was expected to finance the bishop’s stay in Minsk: F43-430, fo 14v: *Tenetur dare stacionem Reverendissimi quando reverendissimus esset in aliqua parte in convencione vel expedicione bellica penes Minsk tamdiu quamdiu maneret pro voluntate Sue Regie Maiestate*. KOLANKOWSKI 1913, p. 111 notes how soldiers are mustered at Minsk. Starodub example: AT 16 pt. 2, No 532, pp. 277–280, 12 Oct. 1534, Bona’s physician, the Vilnius canon and dean Jonas Andriejus de Valentis wrote to Duke Federico Gonzaga of Mantua about the Starodub campaign, here p. 278: „congregata tutta la cavalleria in un oppido di confine chiamato Minsko ... tutti cavalli Lithwani, Rutheni, Tartari et Volinensi”.

²⁵ PLS, pp. 93, 95, II.2, II.4

²⁶ Wapowski to Chojeński 16 Nov. 1534 11: AT 16, pt. 1, No 578, pp. 366–369, here p. 368: *Russia nostra cum Podolia ab adventu tartarorum, qui Volliniam depraedati sunt, magnis terroribus agitata est Utinam reverendissimi domini episcopi Vlnensis ac Domini Ostaphii divinis consiliis obtemperemus Boristenemque annem ac deserta Podoliae opportunis castellis freneremus contra hostes tam*

Although the charter which Jogaila issued to Vilnius Cathedral on 22 February 1387 freed the clergy of certain taxes and impositions, including the „serebszczyzna”, presumably as clerical landed wealth increased such exemptions became untenable. Like other landowners, clergy were obliged to offer „voluntary” contributions to military expenses based on the value of their landholdings. In 1555 during the Vilnius diocesan synod the cathedral canons discussed the need or otherwise to pay contributions to fund the war against Muscovy. The royal secretary Canon Albert Leonardi Narbutas linked the issue with attempts by temporal lords to exploit the clergy. Narbutas claims the lords temporal said the clergy obtained land from them and so should join them in financing the war effort lest they all be oppressed by the enemy. Narbutas rejoindered that their land paid for them to offer spiritual services. A seemingly incomplete record of the 1553 Vilnius diocesan „serebszczyzna” collection survives in a seventeenth-century manuscript. It is worth bearing in mind that a resolution to pay such contributions does not imply a swift implementation of the policy.²⁷

CLERGY AND CASTLES

During the first half of the sixteenth century a chain of fortresses formed the main line of defence of the south-western reaches of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (in the north-western part of what is now Ukraine) against attack from Tatar, Muscovite and Wallachian forces. Clerical landlords as well as secular noblemen had a duty to defend the realm from invasion. The Vilnius Cathedral Chapter which held property at Kamieniec (now the settlement of Slovechne in the Zhytomyr District) was obliged to build a defensive fort against the Tatars in this place. Construction work took several decades and was interrupted by delayed funding and opposition from local people loath to labouring on the project.²⁸ On 7 November 1561, faced

efferatos, bellicosos ac multa celeritate pollentes post tot incendia, rapinas, caedes et florentium aliquando terrarum miserabilem vastationem ac solitudinem.

²⁷ For a very brief introduction to this tax or ‘contribution’ (Pol. *serebszczyzna*; Lith. *sidabrinė*, see LESMAITIS 2010, pp. 143–145; Jogaila’s charter is published in KDKDW No 6, pp. 11–15 – *contributionibus vulgariter srzebrzczyzna* (p. 14); for 1555 disputes, see ACV III [LMAVBRS F43-211] fo 88v–89, 6 Feb. 1555: *et quod nobiles allegant, quia bona non ab aliis nisi ab ipsis solis spirituales habeant, ut etiam contribu|tiones cum illis solvant ne omnes ab hoste opprimantur; ad hoc insuper allegavit per nobiles spiritualibus in talibus pares esse non possunt ex eo, quia spirituales de bonis quae habent ab ipsis sua onera exercent, videlicet divina officia peragunt, verbum Dei illis serviunt, baptisant, confessiones audiunt et alia obsequia in honorem Dei Omnipotentis faciunt et nobiles, quando ad bella non vadunt, [n]ullum onus serviunt, quare se aliter fieri non poterit ...*. For Narbutas’ career see LKD No 99. The 1553 parish tax collection record is published in *Acta primae visitationis*, pp. 163–172.

²⁸ ACV 1, §418, p. 226: Chapter Session, 30 Sept. 1527; on 2 Oct. 1536 canons declared they would build a castle on a site well-endowed by Nature in Kamieniec under provision of Jerzy Chwalczewski, Jan Kunicki – ACV II, fo 45r–46r; even so, in 1538 the local populace rose up against demands to take part in building work on the fort and were threatened with two months in gaol or fines of 30

with growing threats from Muscovy, the chapter decided to provide guns (*tormenta seu bumbarde*) for their less well-armed fortress at Streshyn and to raise a levy of 10 groats per team of oxen to provide for the defence of Kamieniec. On 5 February 1562 money was handed over for the cannons.²⁹

The bishop himself cherished (unspecified) broader plans for the defence of Volhynia. In 1529 Sigismund the Old created his bastard son duke of Janushpol and tenant (Pol. „dzierzawca”) of Kremenets. In the summer of 1530 or thereabouts Bishop John informed the Crown deputy chancellor, Piotr Tomicki, of his intentions to repair royal border forts, especially in Volhynia.³⁰ John was a man of his word. According to information from the first volume of Acts of the sessions of the Vilnius Chapter, in August 1531 the bishop was in residence, temporary or otherwise in Kremenets Castle. That spring the bishop was in personal communication with the great Ruthenian warlord Ostafi Dashkovich who was involved heavily in military action against the Tatars.³¹ It is probably to this period or a little later that we should date Łukasz Górnicki’s anecdote about a Tatar embassy to John, which took place in an unnamed Volhynian hovel. During this encounter the bishop received two arrows and a kerchief as a gift from the Tatar khan. The prelate reciprocated with an iron cannon ball.³²

John of the Lithuanian Dukes was not a typical bishop. As duke of Janushpol he was responsible in part for the defence of the realm in the south-western Ruthenian lands of the Grand Duchy, using his income from land, and tax farming to build, repair and equip fortresses. Here we shall examine the prelate’s activities in three castles: Zhytomyr, Kremenets and his eponymous castle of Janushpol. A considerable amount of information about John’s activities can be garnered from three roughly contemporary mid-sixteenth-century sources, viz. the 1545 Ruthenian Castle Inspection (Book 561 of the Lithuanian Metrica), the 1548 Inventory of Kremenets, and Siemashko’s 1552 Inspection of Kremenets Castle.³³

rubles (*cicli*) – ACV II, fo 97r; on 6 Jan. 1539 nobles from Ovruch handed over 91 *sexagenae* to the canons for building work on the castle at Kamieniec, ACV II, fo 110; ACV III, fo 159v: 10 Feb. 1557 decision to build Kamieniec Castle.

²⁹ ACV IV, fos 42, 46v.

³⁰ AT 12, No 294, pp. 269–270, 20 Sept. 1530 Tomicki’s answer to John reminds the bishop that he (John) *se in restaurandis Maiestatis regiae castris in finibus hostium positis collocasse ... ad praesidia attinet, quibus firmari fines regni et terras Volhinenses deberent.*

³¹ ACV I § 528, p. 277, 23 Aug. 1531, Canon Jerzy Chwalczewski planned to travel to Kremenets on the bishop’s business and inform him of the Chapter’s problems. For Dashkovich see Sokolnicki’s diary, Kraków, Biblioteka Jagiellońska, cim. 5514.

³² GÓRNICKI 1954, pp. 211–212.

³³ LM 561; ATAMANENKO 2007; AluZR 7, pp. 23–35. These sources have been in scholarly circulation for 150–200 years and interest in Kremenets Castle has flourished since the early nineteenth century at least. See the survey of literature provided in SOBCHUK 2014, pp. 72–79.

On 18 October 1525 with the agreement of the Lithuanian Council of Lords Sigismund the Old granted John of the Lithuanian Dukes the castle and estates of Zhytomyr and their population and income therefrom for life. John enjoyed the right to rebuild and expand the castle as he saw fit. In 1532–1533 his lieutenant in Zhytomyr was Feliks (Shchastny) Gercike who later would be active at Kremenets Castle.³⁴ According to the inventory of Zhytomyr Castle carried out on 2 September 1545 by the grand-ducal scribe Lev Patej, in John's day it had been difficult to move around the castle on foot because it stood on top of the brow of the hill „dlia pristupu niepriiateljskogo”, but after the work the bishop ordered to be carried out it was now possible to ride around the fortress in a carriage. By the castle walls stood six or seven defensive-storage premises or, *gorodni*, maintained by the inhabitants of the surrounding villages.³⁵ There was no bridge but perhaps in John's day there was one because Semen Babinski changed the site of the gate tower which stood in the bishop's day in order to widen the entrance to the castle and he raised the ground level. Another of the castle's problems concerned a shortage of water. As in the case of Kremenets, it was difficult to bring water into Zhytomyr fort. The river Kam'ianka flowed at the foot of the castle hill but it was hard to access this water source because the hill was too high and it was impossible to protect the river from enemy attack. Therefore, the bishop laid pipes from another river, the Rudavka, which flowed outside the town and it was not far from the town to the castle.³⁶

The bishop also took care to build mills; one stood on the Teterev River and another on the Kam'ianitsa. Both mills served the castle and construction work on them was funded by the bishop and Prince Pronskii. The millers and the local burghers were obliged to ensure that the mills worked and they were instructed to bring timber for construction work. The castle was well equipped with weaponry – 59 cannons, but John is not recorded as a possible arms supplier.³⁷ In sum, John is connected directly with the walls, water supply, storage premises and mills at Zhytomyr. Wider involvement on the bishop's part with military defences can be seen in his main Volhynian castle, Kremenets. As the Ukrainian historian Volodymyr Sobchuk notes, it was under the administration of Bishop John and later Queen Bona in the 1520s-1550s that the castle entered its third construction phase and the town's income rose to 550 *sexagenae* per annum.³⁸

On 21 November 1529 Sigismund the Old granted his son and John's rightful heirs the Volhynian castle of Kremenets as the main base of his duchy of Janushpol, part of which would be inherited eventually by the bishop's half-sister Beata

³⁴ The royal charter for John – LM 12/12, p. 416, No 530, 18 Oct. 1525. Gercike: LM 17/17 No 167 (1 Jan. 1532), LM 15/15 No 129 (2 Dec. 1533). Gercike later served Queen Bona – LEONAVIČIŪTĖ 2018.

³⁵ LM 561, pp. 239–255, here p. 245.

³⁶ LM 561, p. 248.

³⁷ LM 561, pp. 249, 251.

³⁸ SOBCHUK, 2014, p. 41.

Kościelecka-Ostrogka.³⁹ On 31 Oct. 1533 at the bishop's express request Sigismund confirmed the city's possession of Magdeburg Law with conditions similar to those enjoyed by Kraków and Vilnius.⁴⁰ The castle inventory carried out on 21 July 1545 clearly illustrates John's contribution to the defence of the castle (and the surrounding area). The *starosta*, Feliks Gercike (the same who had been Bp John's lieutenant at Zhytomyr a decade earlier) presented the local boyars to the inspector.⁴¹ The area was home to communities of various religions and ethnicities: Ruthenians, Lithuanians, Poles, Bohemians, Germans and Jews.⁴² In 1545 a small storehouse, which the bishop had ordered built, already stood on a site where a bridge had not stood previously. When John levelled the hill to make a bulwark he ordered „gorodni” to be built near Seniutich's storehouse, and in the autumn of 1545 work on this was still incomplete.⁴³

The bishop built an unintentionally crooked bridge by the entrance to the castle. There was a shortage of timber in the immediate environs of the castle and so John ordered building material to be brought from a source six to eight Lithuanian miles (42-56 km) away. The tower built behind the bridge by the entrance to the castle stood a large „gorodnia”, where „drabi” (paid infantry troops) were stationed in John's day and where Mass was held, perhaps for the garrison's benefit (an Orthodox Church of St Michael Archangel stood inside the castle).⁴⁴ This construction was built by the

³⁹ Kraków, Bibl. Czart. Perg. 786, Losyce, 21 11 1529: *In nomine Domini, amen. Ad perpetuam rei memoriam, divina dispositione nemo ignorat ab eterno esse preordinatum et virtuosa hominum preceritum insignium facinora laudabilesque actiones atque merita a prefectis et principibus (quibus magna a Deo tributa est potestas in terris), liberaliter compensantur, munerentur et beneficiis efferantur, unde presentibus et posteris detur incentivum aviditasque crescat virtutes amplectendi ac antecessorum benefacta pro possibilitate invitandi et augendi. Proinde nos Sigismundus Dei gratia Rex Polonie ... significamus, Quia nos habentes comendata fidelia, assidua et utilia merita Reverendi domini Joannis Episcopi Vilmensis sincere nobis dilecti, quibus se ille nobis studuit et studere non cessat indefesse reddere gratum et acceptum, volentesque nostre erga eum gratie clara testimonia apud posteros suos relinquere et ipsum ad similia nobis obsequia diligenter exhibendum promptiorem et obligatiorem in posterum reddere, eidem bona nostra Crziemieniecz de consilio senatorum Magni Ducatus nostri Litvaniae ac de mera liberalitate, sciencia et gratia nostra dedimus, donavimus et contulimus prout damus, donamus et conferimus per ipsum dominum Joannem episcopum eiusque liberos, heredes et legitimos successores supradicta bona Crziemieniecz cum omnibus boiaris et servis alias putnymy ab antiquo ad eadem bona spectantibus et pertinentibus necnon cum omnibus opidanis, villis, villanis et earum advocacys ac jurepatronatus ecclesiarum ibidem erectarum vel in posterum erigendarum ...* . For a full published text, see ROWELL 2023, pp. 110–111, n. 5.

⁴⁰ The 1533 charter confirming Magdeburg Law for Kremenets, first issued by Duke Švitrigaila, is held at Warsaw, AGAD, Zb. Dok. Perg. 4797.

⁴¹ LM 561, pp. 193–209.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 206.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 195, 196.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 197. „Drab”, according to CHERKAS 2006, p. 79 – a new form of infantryman who fought solely for money. For details of the Lithuanian mercenary army, see LESMAITIS 2010, *passim*.

bishop from his own funds. Previously Gnevosh Elovitski of Kamienitsa worked on this project. Above the gates John built the Great Tower in stone, where he fitted out reception chambers and storage rooms. In 1552 100 stones stood here and a further 200 awaited transportation.⁴⁵

In John's day a wooden house was built „na podkletkh” by the tower on the lefthand side as one enters the castle. Later Stanisław Chwalczewski furnished it off with a roof. Next to the house steps led to another tower. Next to the house stood another tower called Cherlenaya; this was provided with a shingle roof financed by income from the Kuzminski District by St. Chwalczewski. The bishop built a tower above storage buildings and on the tower roof stood six cannons for the castle's defence. *Gorodni* were protected by the wall.⁴⁶

Further along stood a large house which the bishop had begun to construct in a new site where previously there was only the castle wall without a tower. In the cellar there were two small and two large storage facilities and a third, smaller one; these were used to store gunpowder (saletry). Above the cellars St. Chwalczewski built a small wooden house.⁴⁷ On the roof of this building stood a cannon. It is known that the bishop intended to build himself a stone residence for the construction of which 300 stones still lay about 2 km from the castle in 1548.⁴⁸ The bishop also built nine wooden grain stores by the castle walls at his own expense to provide the castle with relief supplies and cannons were stationed beneath the eaves of these buildings. Later pipes were installed on the roof to collect rainwater.⁴⁹ The water-supply problem was as severe in Kremenets as at Zhytomyr. John began to build a well, commanding his men to dig down 80 metres (40 „latry”). In 1545 financial support was still expected from Bishop Jerzy Chwalczewski of Lutsk, the executor of John's will. John also dug out a defensive ditch and used the excavated soil and rocks to level out the castle territory.⁵⁰

It was noted also that in John's day the castle keeper („horodniczy”) was obliged to reside in the castle permanently and, when he was absent, the townsfolk were required to provide guards to defend the castle. The bishop determined which burghers and villages were to carry out this service.⁵¹ John also took care to arm the castle. In 1545 the castle was equipped with at least 100 firearms of various sizes

⁴⁵ AluZR 7, No viii, p. 25.

⁴⁶ LM 561 p. 198.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 199.

⁴⁸ Ibid.; ATAMANENKO 2007, p. 26.

⁴⁹ LM 561, p. 200.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 201.

⁵¹ Ibid. Cf. 28 Nov. 1533 Sigismund the Old confirms Bishop John's command to the Kremenets *voiskovy* Boguvitin Petrovich to take up permanent residence in the Castle: LM 17/17 No 413. On 15 July 1528 the king had appointed Petrovich „horodniczy” and „voiskovy” of Kremenets – LM 224/4, No 287, p. 244.

and calibres with their requisite ammunition.⁵² These were stationed in various places around the castle to defend the bridge, the gates, the castle ridge and so on. The 1552 Inventory provides a different description of the castle's weaponry, mentioning 14 bronze cannons measuring 13.5 feet in length which were made in 1530 and bore the Lithuanian coat of arms. It is not clear whether this heraldic device was a simple *Pogoń/Vytis* (used by the Lithuanian State and also by the bishop himself). The date of founding coincides with John's time as bishop of Vilnius (1519–1536). In 1536 cannons of this size (13.5 feet, 4.5 cubits) were transported to Lithuania from Prussia via Kaunas and Vilnius and cost 200 florins each.⁵³ John's old friend, Canon Erazm Eustachii Szulc was involved in such trade. The Tatars also had a decent firearms arsenal – in the early sixteenth century Tatar armies had around 50 handheld cannons, while the castle in Kiev had 30 such weapons.⁵⁴

A considerable part of John's contribution to the defences of Kremenets Castle came from his villages which spread out at a distance of 7.9–15 km around the fort. Villagers were required to provide services and foodstuffs to the garrison. In total 18 villages served the castle, of which 11 belonged to the bishop (Zholoby, Kolosovo, Velia, Velia dvorets, Dvorets, Dunajev, Rudka, Tsetsenevtsy, Demkovtsy, Kukurevo, Dribovo). Most of these were acquired by the bishop from local landowners.⁵⁵

If we can say that Zhytomyr was an area dominated by the Ostrogski family, then the district around Kremenets was mostly in the hands of the duke of Janushpol: On 7 March 1531 Sigismund the Old confirmed the donation by the childless Volhynian boyar Mikhail Deniskovich and his wife of one third of his Verboe manor that served the castle of Kremenets and mortgaged the other two parts of his patrimony to John for 550 *sexagenae*. Two years later on 20 May 1533 the same Mikhail Senkovich Deniskovich donated a third part of his Pankovtsy manor, which stretched towards Rudka and Tikhomi; the latter two manors belonged to the Seniutich family⁵⁶. On 20 May 1533 in Kremenets Ivashka Senkovich Deniskovich and his sons Soltan and Petr sold John the village of Demkovtsy and the manor

⁵² LM 561, pp. 202–203: cannons, mortars, falcons (104 mm), falconets (72 mm) and handguns such as larger and smaller arquebuses. On firearms in the Grand Duchy in the sixteenth century, see GUDAVIČIUS 1992, pp. 106–108, and LESMAITIS 2010, pp. 109–110. OCHMAŃSKI 1960, pp. 374–376 discusses firearms held in southern Ruthenian castles. The weapons at Kremenets in 1545 he attributes solely to Queen Bona, following the interpretation made by Kazimierz Pułaski in 1887.

⁵³ ELEMENTA 35, No 471, p. 135 (30 Mar. 1536): „serpentinae”, 4,5 „ulnae”, balls weigh 1 funt, sent from Königsberg via Kaunas, Vilnius, cost 200 florins a piece. Wolski bought such for his Podolian castle, Podhaicze, *ibid.*, No 500, pp. 158–159.

⁵⁴ CHERKAS 2006, p. 195.

⁵⁵ LM 561, pp. 203–205.

⁵⁶ LM 17/17, No 81, pp.125–126; Pankovtsy: (LM 17/17, No 390, pp. 373–375, ALS 3, No 475, p. 455; Seniutich property rights were confirmed on 10 Jan. 1534 – LM 17/17, Nos 426, 427, pp. 408–410). In 1537 Tatar forces attacked Pankovtsy, see CHERKAS 2006, p. 223.

of Verkh Veli for 230 *sexagenae*. As one reason for the sale, the sellers cited their helplessness in the face of the threat posed by the Tatars.⁵⁷ It appears that that same day in Kremenets Olekhna Ivanovich Dedko along with his sons Andrei and Mark acknowledged John's possession of the third mortgaged part of the manors of Viazovets and Diadkovets which John had purchased from Senka Denishkovich and other boyars for 50 *sexagenae*, and John purchased the remaining two parts of the manors for 150 *sexagenae* for the same reason, namely that the owners felt themselves incapable of defending their patrimony against the Tatars.⁵⁸ Sigismund the Old confirmed both agreements in Vilnius on 8 October 1533. Two days later the monarch confirmed yet another of John's Volhynian purchases, namely the manor of Isaevoe with the estates of Khotenovo, Lovcha and Grimicha for 60 *sexagenae*. In Lutsk on 8 April 1532 Tikhno Illechno Grinkovich Kozinski sold John Isaevoe.⁵⁹ On 31 October 1533 in Vilnius John asked his father to confirm Magdeburg Law for Kremenets and on 28 November the monarch confirmed John's instruction to Bogovitin Petrovich, the horodniczy of Kremenets to reside in the castle.⁶⁰ John's policy of property consolidation is visible clearly from his purchases and land administration.

On 9 September 1533 the monarch permitted the childless landowner Ivan Khrebtovich to sell his Dribovo (Hrybowo) village to John for an unspecified price. That autumn between September and December the local boyar Semen Babinski sold the bishop his estates of Diniatno and Kokorevo along with Dni-skotinevo and Podvyskoe for 1,000 *sexagenae*; part of this property John later sold to the Kremenets horodniczy Bogovitin Petrovich Shumbarski for 500 *sexagenae* and 40 zloties.⁶¹

On 16 December 1533 John began to buy out the Tsetsenovtsy estates, when Mikhail Moisevich Tsetsenovski sold him his patrimony. Three months later on 20 March in Vilnius Andrey Mikhailovich Sangushkovich Kozhersky sold his Tsetsenovtsy lands to the bishop for 830 *sexagenae*, a sale that was confirmed six months later by the monarch.⁶²

On 22 March 1534 Mikalojus and Jonas Radvila sold John Dunajevo, Kulikovo, and Rudka for 500 *sexagenae* and the deal was confirmed by Sigismund the Old on 10 November 1534. In 1536 John would hand these estates over to Queen Bona.⁶³

⁵⁷ AVV, No 11, pp. 72–74. ML 3 A28, fo 238.

⁵⁸ LM 17, No 391, pp. 375–376, ALS 3, No 474, p. 455.

⁵⁹ LM 17 392, pp. 376–377, AVV, No 10, pp. 71–72.

⁶⁰ Magdeburg Law – AVV, No 13, pp. 81–84; „horodniczy” – LM 17/17, No 413, p. 400.

⁶¹ Hrybowo – (ALS 3, No 458, p. 435); Babinski land – AVV, No 21, pp. 100–102.

⁶² ALS 3, No 470, p. 452; Sangushko – AVV, No 14, pp. 84–86, ALS 3, No 480, pp. 458–459; AVV, No 15, pp. 86–89, ALS 3, No 494, pp. 474–475: 22 Sept. 1534, Vilnius.

⁶³ AVV, No 16, pp. 89–92; ML III A28, fo 238v; Bona – (ML III A28, fo 239–240v).

Finally on 31 January 1535 Hrichko and Roman Jeskovichi Seniutichi sold Tikhoml to John for 150 *sexagenae* on the condition that he build a castle there. Tikhoml was renamed Janushpol to become the centre of John's duchy in Volhynia.⁶⁴

After John was translated officially from Vilnius in 1536 and moved to his new diocese of Poznań in Spring 1537 the bishop exchanged several Kremenets properties (Isaevoe, Onikovski, Dunaev, Kulikovo, Rudka, Tsetsinev, Demkovtsy, Verkh Veli) with Queen Bona in return for the right to collect customs duties in Volhynia. Even so, John did not surrender all of his Volhynian property to her and he remained duke of Janushpol. After the bishop's death it appears these holdings were inherited by his half-sister, Beata Ostrogska, who purchased the strategically important village of Lepesovka close by the town and castle of Janushpol from Queen Bona in 1548.⁶⁵ John did not lose his rather predatory eye for acquiring Ruthenian estates. On 4 June 1537 the owner of Shpikolosy, one Jatsek Zhabokritsky, complained to Queen Bona that he feared attempts by the bishop of Poznań to force him to sell or otherwise hand over his property and on 9 October that year Queen Bona asked her Kremenets starosta to investigate the actions of John's agent, Bishop Jerzy Chwalczewski of Lutsk, towards Zhabokritsky who had indeed sold John his estate at Dvoretz.⁶⁶

John spent a huge sum of money – several thousand *sexagenae* to repair the castle at Kremenets and provide it with weaponry. John bought or otherwise acquired as gifts 11 of the 18 villages serving Kremenets Castle from local boyars. 89 of 275 villagers were his personal subjects.

Bishop John's legacy in Lithuanian Rus' was continued by certain of his servants. In Lutsk we have the case of the Chwalczewski brothers who served first Bishop John and then Queen Bona.⁶⁷ On 13 July 1529 Bishop John wrote a letter of recommendation to Jan Dantyszek, the king's ambassador to the court of Emperor Charles V, where he mentions the success of a young gentleman from Great Poland, Stanisław Chwalczewski in imperial military service and asks Dantyszek to favour the young man further.⁶⁸ At Candlemass 1535 Stanisław Chwalczewski and Jerzy Lenkowski witnessed a land charter issued by the bishop to his service boyars in Pieršajus, Choczko and Misko Kupicz.⁶⁹ Stanisław's brother Jerzy served as notary

⁶⁴ ALS 4, No 21, p. 20; BALIŃSKI-LIPIŃSKI 1845, p. 932; *Rus'ka (volins'ka) metrika*, Kniga VII, Nos 112, 133, 142, pp. 369–370, 372–375 – (Janushpol, Pankovtsy). Janushpol – castle, *ibid.*, No 133, p. 373.

⁶⁵ LM 32, Nos 40, 41, pp. 49–51 (29 Dec. 1548). Bona had purchased the village from Fedor Andreevich Sangushko in 1536 – AVV, No 19, pp. 96–98 (12 Oct. 1536).

⁶⁶ LM 12/12 Nos 59–61; LM 561, p. 204.

⁶⁷ KOSMAN 1992.

⁶⁸ AT 11, No 279, p. 216. KOSMAN 1992, p. 187 suggests that the letter was provoked by the influence of Stanisław's brother Jerzy with Bishop John. In 1536 Stanisław was appointed „starosta” of Kremenets.

⁶⁹ LMAVBRS F6-154, 2 Feb. 1535, Vilnius: ... *subditorum nostrorum in Perssaye videlicet Choczkonis et Misko Kupiczi fratrum germanorum... terras duas desertas dictas Miazowczinam et*

in the court of Bishop John as early as 1522 and held the wealthy and strategic parish of Zarasai, which lay in the gift of the ordinary. In 1528 he was a canon of Vilnius and five years later held the office of precentor of Vilnius Cathedral. Jerzy Chwalczewski was a close collaborator of Bishop John and served as the executor of his will. In 1536 he succeeded Paul Holszański as bishop of Lutsk. He built and equipped the fortress of Torczyn in Lutsk territory and entrusted control of it to his brother Frantiszek.⁷⁰ Jerzy sponsored the construction of a stone cathedral in Lutsk and resided in the city rather than in Janów Podlaski, reorganizing the cathedral chapter on the model of Johannine Vilnius. He assisted the foundation of the Catholic Church in Kremenets in 1538 by Queen Bona.

CONCLUSIONS

According to his self-advertisement media, viz. his seal, coat of arms, and sponsored ephemeral and practical publications, Bishop John identified himself closely with the Lithuanian symbol, the armed knight, known as Pogoń or Vytis. Indeed, even though bishops in the Grand Duchy were not actual warriors nor, as far as can be determined, did they lead troops into battle like Pope Julius II, they were expected to attend military expeditions and their manorial tenants were required to provide men at arms against enemies of the Faith and the Motherland. According to extant sources dating from the sixteenth century, it would seem that this duty became clearer when members of the aristocracy governed Lithuanian dioceses.⁷¹ Most data about bishops of Vilnius and war survive from the time of Prince John of the Lithuanian Dukes. In 1524 it was noted without further commentary that the monarch's weapons were stored in the bishop's palace.⁷² As bishop, John granted his deserving gentry subjects plots of land on condition that they perform military service and furnish a man at arms. Surviving documentary evidence coincides mostly with the Starodub War against Muscovy and conflict with the Tatars in the 1530s. These charters were confirmed by at least three

Kyezelowczinam ... ipsi Choczko et Misko successoresque eorum equo uno valoris quattuor sexagenarum grossorum in colore sive w barwy ut in mandatis habuerint servire nobis ac expedire. Hoc est ad Convencionem generalem optime ac honorifice pro decore nostro tenebuntur. Secundario vero ad expeditionem bellicam, ubi protunc necessitas expostulaverit contra hostem Catholice Fidei in colore similiter et armatim in lorica, galea et cum clipeo, gladio seu framea cuspede se expedire et statuere in loco campestri Presentibus nobilebus Stanislaw Chwalczewski, Georgio Lenkowski et aliis testibus circa premissa.

⁷⁰ KOSMAN 1992, p. 188.

⁷¹ For details of sejm decisions from 1528–1529 and the king's summons to arms in 1534 see KOLANKOWSKI 1913, pp. 108–111. Although there is no evidence of military operations involving bishops of Vilnius in the fifteenth century (apart from laconic reference to *vassalli nobiles*), such prelates did take part in border negotiations with the Teutonic Order in Prussia and Livonia.

⁷² AT 7 No 51, p. 52, 10 Aug. 1524: *tormenta sive machine bellice Maiestatis vestre Vilne in curia domini episcopi Vilnensis fuerunt.*

of John's successors, Holszański, Protasewicz and Radziwiłł. These men were land-owners in their own right (less so in the case of Protasewicz). As duke of Janushpol John held considerable parcels of land and towns in southwestern Lithuania (in Rus', modern northwest Ukraine) in his own right. He improved defences at Zhytomyr and Kremenets. He repaired and rebuilt walls, towers, „gorodni”, and ensured adequate water supplies via wells and pipes. He (or his officials) resolved various logistical problems (transportation of timber, stone) and levelled ground inside castles. He systematically bought up land around Kremenets castle to serve the fort and the security of his new castle of Janushpol. According to Ludwik Kolankowski, it was Queen Bona who turned Kremenets into a special fortress but without previous work by John the queen would have needed to expend much more time and effort to achieve her aims.⁷³ Even though the bishop did not build a church at Kremenets (the Catholic church there was founded by Bona in 1538), an Orthodox church did stand inside the castle walls and Mass was held for Catholic soldiers in the wooden house that John built. Bona was served by men who previously had served the bishop, such as Stanisław Chwalczewski and his brother, Bishop Jerzy Chwalczewski of Lutsk, Semen Babinski, and Feliks Gercike. John's political and property heiress in Volhynia was his half-sister, Beata Kościelecka-Ostrogska⁷⁴.

John of the Lithuanian Dukes performed several roles which determined his connection with military activity. He was a royal servant – the „dziejawca” of Šiauliai, and as a secular landlord he founded the church at Joniškis (in the see of Medininkai) on the road to Livonia and modified the military terms of the enfeoffment of Jurgis Surkus at Bugenėnai near Šiauliai. John was also owned large estates personally in what is now north-western Ukraine. As duke of Janushpol and governor of the important fortress towns of Zhytomyr and Kremenets he built important fortifications. In the 1545 castle inventories he is remembered as the bishop of Poznań. However, it was in his capacity as bishop of Vilnius that John was responsible for mustering troops from diocesan estates and collecting the „serebszczyzna” tax. He also consolidated parishes in the Livonian borderlands, where members of the service gentry were stationed (the village of Avilys whose gentlemen paid tithes to Zarasai parish).

APPENDIX

1535 11 29 (?), Vilnius

Charter of Prince John of the Lithuanian Dukes, bishop of Vilnius for his subject boyar, Maciej Laszko, for service rendered at Kuktiškės Manor, granting him two deserted plots of land, Džiugiečiškės, Varniškės, with peasants on condition that

⁷³ KOLANKOWSKI 1913, p. 191.

⁷⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 227–230.

in the future Laszko will provide the bishop with one good warhorse and a well-armed soldier.

A: Vilnius, Lietuvos mokslų akademijos Vrublevskių bibliotekos Rankraščių skyriaus, F6 -155, 32,4 x 23,4 cm parchment with 4 cm diameter red wax seal in a broken ruddy 6,5 cm diameter wax mass.

Reg. JASAS 1980, No. 390. P. 154–155, with erroneous dating (1535 04 08). On 20 Sept. 1536 at Vilnius, Bishop Paul Holszański confirmed this charter (in Ruthenian) – LMAVBRs, F6-158; JASAS 1980, No. 404, p. 160. On Laszko's further career, see pp. 347–348.

In nomine Domini, amen. Ad perpetuam rei memoriam Nos Johannes ex Ducibus Lithuanie Dei gratia episcopus Vilnensis etc. Significamus tenore presencium quibus expedit tam presentibus quam futuris harum noticiam habituris, Quod attendentes fidelia servitia nobilis Mathie Laszko, subditi nostri spectantis ad curiam nostram dictam Kukuczisky,⁷⁵ cupientesque eum ad quevis servitia nostra et successorum nostrorum reddere proniorem, addimus ei ad patrimonium et successorum suorum duas terras desertas dictas Dziugieczisky et Vornysky cum hominibus nomine Andrelo cum fratribus, et altero Vylk appellato cum eorum successoribus et alys omnibus pertinencys ita late longeque, prout antiquo circumquaque limite rendendum, possidendum et quosvis suos usus convertendum, de quibus quidem et bonis paternis suis ipse nobilis prefatus et successores eius tenebitur nobis servire equo bono valoris quattuor sexagenarum, vestibus colore tunice lunensis ad mandatum nostrum, hoc est ad quamlibet Conventionem generalem et eciam, quociens ingruerit necessitas, ad expeditionem bellicam tenebitur expedire unum equitem armatum lorica, galea, cum hasta, clipeo et framea, vel prout mandatum nostrum et successorum nostrorum fuerit. Si autem non erit idoneus nec ad expeditionem bellicam bene armatus, hec donacio erit in arbitrio nostro et successorum nostrorum.⁷⁶ Ut autem hec donacio et concessio nostra firma permaneat, litteras presentes sigillo nostro appenso iussimus communiri.

Presentibus ibidem reverendis et generoso Joanne de Domanow,⁷⁷ preposito ecclesie cathedralis Vilnensis, cancellario nostro, Georgio Chwalczewsky⁷⁸ cantore et canonico Vilnensi, thesaurario nostro, Joanne Zielenski⁷⁹ curie nostre marschalco, et aliorum quamplurimorum fidedignorum aulicorum⁸⁰ nostrorum.

⁷⁵ Kuktiškės (Kukutiškės), Utenos raj. town, 1387–1841 belonged to the bishops of Vilnius, now part of the Molėtai Deanery of the Diocese of Kaišadorys.

⁷⁶ Cf. the case of Bugenėnai – ROWELL 2019, pp. 183–184.

⁷⁷ Vilnius provost, Jonas Domanovskis, fl. 1524–1563, LKD No. 830, pp. 142–145.

⁷⁸ Jerzy Chwalczewski, fl. 1522–1549, Vilnius precentor, Bishop John's treasurer and later executor of his will, bishop of Lutsk, LKD No. 1053, pp. 187–189.

⁷⁹ Jonas Zielenski, marshal of Bishop John's courts in Vilnius and Poznań, 1535–1537.

⁸⁰ In other documents of this kind and date we find reference to *testes* (witnesses), *servitores* (servants). *Aulicus* is specifically the courtier of a prince.

Actum et datum Vilne, feria secunda in vigilia Sancti Appostoli,⁸¹ anno Domini millesimo quingentesimo vtrigesimo [sic] quinto.

Jo: episcopus Vilnensis subscripsit. Ad relacionem Mathie Iwanowsky,⁸² tenutarii ibidem.

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⁸¹ In 1535 the only apostle's feast to fall on a Tuesday was St Andrew's Day. The date of 8 April proposed by Jasas does not coincide with the day before any apostle's feast and was a Thursday. It seems the scribe was beginning to write *vicesimus* rather than the correct *tricesimus*, cf the scribal error on John's foundation charter for Joniškis which is dated incorrectly 23 Feb. 1526, rather than 23 Feb. 1536. The witness list is almost identical and the charter closes with the bishop's signature – CM, No 133, p. 208.

⁸² Motiejus Ivanauskas [Mathias Iwanowski], Bishop John's administrator in Molėtai (and Kuktiškės), cf. LMAVBR F6-156; JASAS 1980, No. 387, pp. 153–154: 1535 Feb. 06, Vilnius.

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Vindex pacis: Prince John of the Lithuanian Dukes, warrior bishop of Vilnius

This article deals with the dual role of Bishop John of the Lithuanian Dukes as both a bishop and a temporal lord within the general context of the Church's responsibility for the military defence of Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the first half of the sixteenth century. As bishop of Vilnius John oversaw the collection of „serebszczyzna” to pay for the upkeep of the grand-ducal army by clergy who held landed property. The bishop also endowed servitor boyars with land in return for an obligation to equip themselves and another man at arms for war, as laid down in the First Lithuanian Statute (1529). Documents for such endowments survive from 1535–1536 as do later confirmations by John's successor bishops. John consolidated the network of parishes in northern Lithuania along the border with Livonia in the 1520s and 1530s. Bishop John was also a secular landlord in his own right – as tenant of the royal estate of Šiauliai (Žemaitija), proprietor of Zhytomyr and Kremenets and duke of Janushpol (Volhynia), where he contributed to construction work and military equipment at the castles of Zhytomyr and Kremenets. The article concludes with an edition of one of Bishop John's 1535 muniments requiring military service from the recipient of his largesse.