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Francis Sanderson and Robert Yard Reports About an Interregnum in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth After the Abdication of Jan Kazimierz Waza

*Relacje Francisa Sandersona i Roberta Yarda o bezkrólewiu w Rzeczypospolitej po abdykacji Jana Kazimierza Wazy**

ABSTRACT

The course and result of the election in 1669 still arouses interest among historians. It should probably be associated with the choice of a rather unexpected candidate for the king – Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki. There is no doubt that every European state was actively participating in the events occuring in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, where the deputies were sent with a task to report on events related to the interregnum. Similarly, the London court obtained information on the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth after the abdication of Jan Kazimierz from Francis Sanderson, a resident in Gdańsk, and Robert Yard, secretary of extraordinary Peter Wyche. The correspondence of Sanderson and Yard is an interesting source of information about the interregnum after the abdication of Jan Kazimierz. Both of them passed numerous, sometimes unprecedented news about the electoral struggle. In their correspondence, they devoted ample amount of space to candidates for the throne as well as a description of the course of regional assemblies, and Sejms from the interregnum period, and the issue of equality of dissidents. The reports of the diplomats were particularly concerned about the Lithuanian Equerry, Bogusław Radziwiłł and the book containing the genealogy of his family. The Sanderson and Yard reports are another interesting addition to our knowledge of the interregnum in 1668–1669.

Key words: diplomacy, election of Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki, relations about Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in XVII century, interregnum

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The course and result of elections of 1669 is still an area of great interest for historians, which is most likely the result of choosing a rather unexpected candidate for a king – Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki[1]. Interregnum in Poland was being observed by many foreign royal courts: Habsburgs, Louis XIV, Frederick William Hohenzollern and Moscow, all of which had a direct interest in making their own contenders to the throne. Other European countries did not remain idle in face of the events in Polish-Lithuanian state, where they sent their envoys with a task of recording events regarding the interregnum. The court of London had also done so, gathering information on Poland after the abdication of Jan Kazimierz from Francis Sanderson, an envoy in Gdańsk, who stayed there mostly to control trade matters. From 1669, secretary Robert Yard also stayed in the Polish-Lithuanian state together with the extraordinary envoy Peter Wyche, who also several times informed the English decision-making centers on the progress of the election. Most of the letters were addressed to Joseph Williamson, the servant of the Secretary of State for the Southern Department Henry Bennet[2].

Letters of the English envoys mentioned above, which were used to write this article, are stored in The National Archives in Kew, located in one of London's boroughs[3]. It needs to be noted here that Sanderson and Yard received messages regarding events in Warsaw from people we do not know, perhaps from envoys in Gdańsk: Adrain Stoderts and Renhold Widers[4], abbot Brunetti or spies such as the French diplomat De Moulin or Franz Paull Lisola, regarded as one of the top intelligence agents[5].

[1] The most notable publications include: A. Olszowski, *Censura candidatorum sceptri polonici. Ocena kandydatów do tronu polskiego*, introduction and study K. Przyboś and A. Perłakowski, Kraków 2014; J. Bartoszewicz, *Elekcja Michała Korybuta*, 'Studia historyczne i literackie' 1881, vol. 2; J. Woliński, *Relacja ambasadora Krzysztofa Leopolda Schaffgotscha o elekcji polskiej 1669*, 'Teki Archiwalne' 1957, 5, pp. 130–172; K. Przyboś, *Kandydatura Piasta w literaturze politycznej w bezkrólewiu po abdykacji Jana Kazimierza*, 'Studia Historyczne' 1971, 14, 4, pp. 493–508; A. Przyboś, *Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki 1640–1673*, Kraków 1984; M. Chmielewska, *Sejm elekcyjny Michała Korybuta Wiśniowieckiego 1669 roku*, Warszawa 2006.

[2] T.S., *Williamson Joseph*, in: *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 62, London 1900, p. 3; G.M. Bell, *A Handlist of British Diplomatic Representatives 1509–1688*, London 1990, p. 216; D. Worthington, *British and Irish Experiences and Impressions of Central Europe 1560–1688*, Farnham 2012, p. 146.

[3] Analysed letters are stored under reference numbers: The National Archives in London [hereinafter: TNA], State Papers Foreign, Poland and Saxony [hereinafter: SP Poland and Saxony], SP 88/11 and SP 88/12.

[4] More information on the relationships of envoys in Gdańsk during interregnum of 1668–1669 can be found in: *Zur Geschichte der polnishen Königswahlvon 1669*. *Danzinger Gesandtschaftsberichte aus den Jahren 1668 und 1699*, study by F. Hirsch, 'Zeitschrift des Westprussisschen Geschichssvereins' 1889, 25.

[5] A.E. Mierzwa, *Polska a Anglia w XVII w.*, Toruń 2003, p. 222.

Furthermore, English envoys maintained contact with the representatives of Polish elites from whom they acquired up-to-date information which is confirmed by the content of letters gathered in The National Archives. The analysis of these letters has not yet been met with a significant interest of historians. The issues involving the 1669 elections are discussed in a study called 'Polska a Anglia w XVII w. (Poland and England in the 17th century)' by Alfred Mierzwa[6], and references to the relations of the English envoys of that period can be found in the studies of Zbigniew Hundert[7] and Mariusz Sawicki[8].

Due to the policy of maintaining the balance of power in Europe, which was developed after the Thirty Years' War, English diplomacy observed i.a. the events in Poland and it seems that they were particularly interested in unusual activities, such as *rokoszes*, wars or the period of interregnum, and the election of a new monarch. Having a certain candidate elected could have been decisive in the fight for supremacy in Europe between the Habsburgs and Louis XIV[9]. This high interest in the elections for a new ruler is also confirmed by the fact that most likely between 1641 and 1698 there were no permanent envoys-residents but in February 1669 the aforementioned Peter Wyche was delegated there from Russia for a period of several months[10]. English relationships can also be interesting for another reason. England was not involved directly in the interregnum and its envoys were merely the observers of the events, not even witnessing them personally. Their intelligence was based on direct and indirect messages, which should be treated with caution when researched. Therefore, their comments can be more objective, though it may be possible that Sanderson or Yard were not as knowledgeable about the internal politics of Poland as diplomats of other courts, such as Johann von Hoverbeck from Brandenburg, Pierre de Bonzy from France or Christoph Leopold Schaffgotsch from the Empire.

The analysis of these issues should cover the period since the abdication of Jan Kazimierz Waza from the Polish throne, which occurred during Sejm of 16 September 1668[11]. Envoy Sanderson in Gdańsk informed

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[6] He devoted, however, merely several pages to the issues we seek: *ibidem*, pp. 382–384.

[7] Z. Hundert, *Między buławą a tronem. Wojsko koronne w walce stronnictwa malkontentów z ugrupowaniem dworskim w latach 1669–1673*, Oświęcim 2014.

[8] M. Sawicki, *Dom sapieżyński 1666–1685. Droga do hegemonii w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim*, Opole 2016.

[9] For more information on the balance of power see: M.J. Sheehan, *Balance of Power. History and Theory*, London–New York 1996; R. Little, *The Balance of Power in International Relations: Metaphors, Myths and Model*, Cambridge 2007.

[10] G.M. Bell, *op. cit.*, pp. 213–216; A.E. Mierzwa, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

[11] T. Wasilewski, *Ostatni Waza na polskim tronie*, Katowice 1984, pp. 268–269; M. Chmielewska, *Sejm elekcyjny Michała*, Warszawa 2006, p. 13. Ceremonies associated

several times about the plans for resignation of the monarch, at the same time referring to the future election schemes and the internal situation of Poland. In one of the letters we can find information that even pope Clement IX encouraged Jan Kazimierz to remain on the throne of the Polish-Lithuanian state[12].

Sanderson informed London on the abdication and the ceremonies in a letter of 22 September (the message he received on this topic from Warsaw was dated 16 September). According to his account, the ceremony began at about 13, and Jan Kazimierz made 'a very pathetick oration', which brought the audience to tears[13]. It should be noted that the English envoy pointed out the moods among the members of parliament and senators gathered at the abdication Sejm. The cries of the audience were mentioned i.a. in an account of a French envoy, Pierre de Bonzy[14]. Sanderson also brought up in his letter the main points of the farewell speech of the king, who regretted that he had to rule in such tough and miserable times. He also wished the future monarch that his rule may be more fortunate. A speech full of compliments towards Jan Kazimierz was given by the Archbishop of Gniezno, Mikołaj Prażmowski. After all celebrations and destruction of the election diploma, the former king did not allow the people present to escort him to his carriage, saying that at

with Jan Kazimierz abdication were described in detail by Witold Klaczewski: *Abdykacja Jana Kazimierza*, Lublin 1993, pp. 225–232.

[12] Including: F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 23 VI 1668, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/11, folio 136; F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 7 VII 1668, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/11, folio 144; F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 28 VII 1668, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, folio 145–145v; F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 11 VIII 1668, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/11, folio 146.

[13] F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 22 IX 1668, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/11, folio 164. The farewell oration of Jan Kazimierz Waza was sent by Sanderson to London most likely on 29 September 1668. Its copy in Latin is currently stored in The National Archives: *Oratio Serenissimo Poloniae Regis Joannis Casimiro Die 16 Sept. Regno esse solenniter abdicantis ad Senatum Gabita atg ex Poloniae in Latinum translate Ao. 1668*, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/11, folio 179–180. The letter in which the envoy residing in Gdańsk informs about sending the speech of Jan Kazimierz Waza: F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 29 IX 1668, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/11, folio 166. Polish copy of the abdication speech of Jan Kazimierz is stored in many Polish and foreign archives: Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych [hereinafter: AGAD], Archiwum Radziwiłłów [hereinafter: AR] section II, book 22, sheet 356–357; Biblioteka im. Książąt Czartoryskich [hereinafter: BCzart.], ms 2115/IV, sheet 257; Biblioteka Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego [hereinafter: BUW], ms 54, sheet 100v–101; Lietuvos nacionalé Martyno Mažvydo biblioteka [hereinafter: LNB], PR 486, sheet 210–211. The great significance of the king's speech and the statements it contained were highlighted by Witold Kłaczewski: *op. cit.*, p. 230.

[14] Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich [hereinafter: Oss.], ms 2988/II (Teki Lucasa), vol. XVI, sheet 135.

that moment he is only a private person and he left alone to his private residence ('to a garding'). Sanderson most likely meant the private palace of Jan Kazimierz at Krakowskie Przedmieście[15].

The Gdańsk envoy also informed that during the session of the abdication Sejm, an assurance for Jan Kazimierz was established, which amounted to 150,000 złoty in total (100,000 złoty from the Crown and 50,000 from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania). However, the issue caused some confusion among those present who did not have guidelines on that topic in their instructions. Finally, Sanderson informed in his letter that the day of the next convocation Sejm will be determined by a Primate[16].

Sanderson's next message, on 29 September, informed already about the designated date for pre-convocation Sejmiks and the convocation itself, which would be started on 15 October and 5 November, respectively[17]. He also sent intelligence regarding the several candidates to the crown, however, he stated 'but they are all nothing', and that the whole situation should become clear in the next two months[18].

During the interregnum, after the abdication of Jan Kazimierz, there were several major contenders to the throne of Poland, however, as accurately noted by Francis Sanderson, in the beginning none of the candidates had a decisive advantage over others[19]. The public opinion regarded the following ones as the most important players: princes d'Enghien (Louis or his son Henri), prince of Neuburg Philip William Wittelsbach, elector of Brandenburg, Frederick William Hohenzollern, prince of Lorraine Charles, tsar of Moscow, Aleksey Mikhailovich Romanov or his sons – Aleksey and Fyodor. After the abdication of Jan Kazimierz, an idea of electing a 'Piast' king was reborn; just as several decades before, the description could not be specified by the public and for the time being

[15] F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 22 IX 1668, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/11, folio 164; W. Kłaczewski, *op. cit*., p. 232; T. Wasilewski, *op. cit.*, p. 269.

[16] F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 22 IX 1668, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/11, folio 164; T. Wasilewski, *Ostatni Waza*, p. 268. Jan Kazimierz asked his supporters several times, including a deputy chancellor and a Lithuanian field hetman Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł, to oversee the execution of matters which involved his provision: Jan Kazimierz Waza to M.K. Radziwiłł, Popow [?] 17 XI 1668, BCzart., ms 163/IV, sheet 783–784; Jan Kazimierz Waza to M.K. Radziwiłł, Warszawa 12 XII 1668, BCzart., ms 163/IV, sheet 841.

[17] F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 29 IX 1668, TNA, SP 88/11, folio 166; *Diariusz sejmu abdykacyjnego Jana Kazimierza 1668 r*., ed. M. Matwijów, 'Ze skarbca kultury' 1989, 48, p. 47; M. Chmielewska, *Sejm elekcyjny Michała*, p. 18.

[18] F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 29 IX 1668, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/11, folio 166.

[19] F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 29 IX 1668, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/11, folio 166.

it remained as a part of ideology involving the notion of the king – the compatriot. This category was said to be represented by Jan Sobieski, Dmitri and Michał Wiśniowiecki, Alexander Zasławski-Ostrogski and a famous soldier, Alexander Polanowski. Among the less popular foreign candidates included were: the prince of Florence, Ferdinand II Medici or his son Cosimo III, Leopold Wilhelm of Baden or margrave of Baden in Durles, Frederick VI, Ranuzio III Farnese of Parmenia, Swedish queen Christina and James, the duke of York. Among the more exotic contenders were Khan of Crimea, Adil Giray and an Italian Barnabite monk[20].

In the analysed correspondence the questions regarding convocation and election Sejms were frequently raised. On 24 November 1668, Sanderson informed that parliamentary hearings were held at the time. In his relation he brought attention to one of many problems which were discussed during Sejm discussions. Certain groups demanded that only the members of parliament and senators not affiliated with other parties and not taking bribes from any of the candidates can participate in the discussions of the election Sejm. They were to serve the best interest of Poland. Another issue brought up by Sanderson, which was passionately discussed during hearings, involved the participation of France and its exclusion from the elections. The motion was supported by many of the participants, but it was also met with disapproval and could result in breaking the Sejm[21]. In his letter Sanderson most likely mentioned the situation of 20 November, when Marcin Michał Dębicki demanded the exclusion of Condé and Neuburg. Other members of parliament echoed him, including the Starost of Oświęcim, Jan Odrowąż Pieniążek.

[20] Speculum in electionem Regni Polonie expositum pro casu abdicationeis in quo Polonia expedit prendire has necessitates candidatos comitantes, ASV, Segreteria di Stato, Polonia 81, sheet 370–371; Respons jm. p. kasztelana liwskiego, in: *Pisma polityczne z czasów panowania Jana Kazimierza Wazy 1648–1668. Publicystyka, eksorbitanskie, projekty, memoriały*, vol. III, *1665–1668*, collected and compiled by S. Ochmann-Staniszewska, Wrocław–Warszawa 1991, p. 273; J. Gacki, *Obraz elekcyi króla Michała (ks. Korybuta Wiśniowieckiego)*, 'Biblioteka Warszawska' 1846, 4, pp. 301–302; T. Korzon, *Dola i niedola Jana Sobieskiego*, vol. 2, Kraków 1898, p. 154; Z. Wójcik, *Jan Sobieski,* Warszawa 1983, p. 152; A. Przyboś, *op. cit.*, p. 38; M. Chmielewska, *Sejm elekcyjny Michała* pp. 63–83; eadem, *Początki interregnum po abdykacji Jana Kazimierza. Pretendenci do tronu polskiego*, in: *Studia i materiały z dziejów nowożytnych*, eds. K. Matwijowski and S. Ochman-Staniszewska, Wrocław 1995, pp. 87–107; A. Kamieński, *Kandydatura Hohenzollernów brandenburskich do tronu polskiego od XVI do końca XVIII wieku. Realny cel czy też gra polityczna?*, in: *Między Zachodem a Wschodem. Etniczne, kulturowe i religijne pogranicza Rzeczypospolitej w XVI–XVIII wieku*, eds. K. Mikulski and A. Zielińska-Nowicka, Toruń 2006, pp. 31–33; J. Matyasik, *Obóz polityczny króla Michała Korybuta Wiśniowieckiego*, Warszawa 2011, p. 23; Z. Hundert, *op. cit.*, pp. 105–106.

[21] F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 24 XI 1668, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/11, folio 171.

Jan Zenowicz, the Marshal of Oszmiana, proposed the exclusion from the elections of the prince of Lorraine and the candidate of Moscow because the former was promoted by the emperor, and the tsar was seen by the society as an aggressor. It was quite an accurate observation of Sanderson that although the proposed project aroused both positive and negative emotions, it was mostly accused of infringing the freedoms of the nobility regarding *viritim* elections. Ultimately, in the general confederation certain solutions were employed in order to avoid illegal practices, including accepting bribery and the creation of factions[22].

The problem regarding the contents included in the general confederation was present for the entire Sejm hearings, returning with varying intensity. Its content was finally established on 26 November 1668[23]. Francis Sanderson informed about the issue in a letter of 1 December – in the beginning he mentioned, however, that the convocation was extended to 26 November. He believed that particularly 'great dissentions' among the discussing participants were caused by the aforementioned general confederation. Finally, it was settled that nobility shall not promote anyone with whom them had any 'illegitimate' dealings. It was advocated that they shall not accept bribes from any candidate and that they choose a king that will best serve to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The oath was meant to involve all noblemen, even those not present at the convocation Sejm. According to Sanderson, the general confederation was directed primarily at the candidate supported by France, but it was also disadvantageous to Philip William. At that moment the English envoy thought that Charles of Lorraine was the most likely to win[24].

In another letter written a week later Sanderson informed that the convocation Sejm had not yet been finished and that he expected it to take about 2-3 days more. During the hearings, however, the start of the elections was designated for 2 May 1669. Odds in favour of the prince of Lorraine grew considerably as well[25].

Problems of religious nature were often mentioned during the hearings of the convocation Sejm. The issues were discussed after the open act of

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[22] J.A. Chrapowicki, *Diariusz, część druga: lata 1665–1669*, study and introduction A. Rachuba and T. Wasilewski, Warszawa 1998, p. 457; M. Chmielewska, *Sejm elekcyjny Michała*, p. 36; M. Sokalski, *Między królewskim majestatem a szlachecką wolnością. Postawy polityczne szlachty małopolskiej w czasach Michała Korybuta Wiśniowieckiego*, Kraków 2002, p. 66.

[23] M. Chmielewska, *Sejm elekcyjny Michała*, p. 37.

[24] F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 1 XII 1668, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/11, folio 173.

[25] F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 8 XII 1668, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/11, folio 176.

Mazovia deputies against the Bogusław Radziwiłł, Equerry of Lithuania, and a delegate of Bielsko. His choice at the Sejmik did cause plenty of controversy. According to Sanderson, among other things, it was requested that other religious denominations should be excluded from Sejm hearings and deprived of their current rights, and that such a drastic measure was protested even by bishops. Quarrels supposedly lasted until 21:00 and the Protestants were supported by the Lithuanian Equerry. The session was almost terminated due to numerous misunderstanding. On the next day, thanks to the support of the Archbishop and other senators, the previous attempt in depriving the aforementioned religious groups of their privileges was prevented[26].

The English envoy, most likely, had in mind the events of 28 November. It also seems that the sentiments against other religious denominations were stoked mostly by the Pac family (Krzysztof Zygmunt, the Grand Chancellor of Lithuania and Michał Kazimierz, the Grand Hetman of Lithuania), and their intention was to exclude their greatest political opponent in the Grand Duchy – Bogusław Radziwiłł[27].

In mid-December 1668, a message was sent to London about the conclusion of the convocation Sejm in Warsaw. As mentioned above, the elections were to begin on 2 May, though some senators and members of parliament wanted the hearings to start sooner. According to Sanderson, the nobility and representatives of Lithuania and Podlasie objected to that, saying that they need more time to prepare for another journey to Warsaw[28].

Unfortunately, we do not have much information regarding the progress of the election Sejm hearings transferred by Sanderson or Yard because – as noted by the former – the messages on that topic were transferred by Brunetti (first name unknown) – most likely it was Cosimo Brunetti, who later became the confessor of Jan III Sobieski[29]. On 18 May 1669, Francis Sanderson informed about the selection of a marshal of the election Sejm, the Crown Steward Feliks Kazimierz 'Szczęsny' Potocki. The English envoy also received a message to be completely loyal to the candidacy of the prince of Neuburg– 'I shall only tell you, it's here believed that the nobleman whom they have chosen for their marshall is wholly for the Duke of Neuburgh', and as a result he would want to force it through, 'so that he's like to carry it from the Loteringer'. According to the correspondents

[26] *Ibidem.*

[27] M. Chmielewska, *Sejm elekcyjny Michała*, p. 48.

[28] F. Sanderson do J. Williamsona, Gdańsk 15 XII 1668, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/11, folio 177.

[29] F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 25 V 1669, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/12, folio 29.

from Warsaw, at the time prince Charles was the opponent who could defeat Philip William in running for the Polish throne[30].

Selection of Potocki as the marshal of the chamber during the hearings of the election Sejm was an undeniable victory of Radziwiłł's supporters. His contender for the function was Jan Odrowąż Pieniążek, the Starost of Oświęcim, who represented the Pac family. According to accurate data, Potocki supposedly received 926 votes, while his opponent – 627[31].

Of course, one of the most crucial issues discussed during interregnum was the potential future ruler. As it was already mentioned, candidates for the throne were many but only a few of them had any real chance of achieving expected results. Sanderson informed about the political moods in Poland regarding the future king immediately after the abdication of Jan Kazimierz. According to the information acquired by him at that time, some expected the candidate represented by France – the famous princes of Condé, Henri or his father Louis – to win. As said by Sanderson, many of the top officials supported that political option – he called them 'frenchified'[32].

In the analysed correspondence, we find much information on the candidacy of the tsar or his sons – Alexey and Fyodor. In the letter of 23 March 1669, Francis Sanderson mentions the appearance of a Moscow's envoy in Warsaw who presented the propositions of Romanov and sought the crown for his oldest son. He promised that Alexey would convert to Catholicism – 'there upon turn catolique', as well as fulfil certain other 'great matters' for Poland[33].

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[30] F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 18 V 1669, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony SP 88/12, folio 28.

[31] A. Przyboś, *op. cit.*, p. 53; K. Matwijowski, *Bogusław Radziwiłł w okresie elekcji i w pierwszych miesiącach rządów Michała Korybuta Wiśniowieckiego*, in: *Między Wschodem a Zachodem. Rzeczpospolita XVI–XVIII w. Studia ofiarowane Zbigniewowi Wójcikowi w siedemdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin*, eds. T. Chynczewska-Hennel et al., Warszawa 1993, p. 154; idem, *Jeszcze o roli Bogusława Radziwiłła w trakcie elekcji Michała Korybuta Wiśniowieckiego*, in: *Między wielką polityką a szlacheckich partykularzem. Studia z dziejów nowożytnej Polski i Europy ku czci Profesora Jacka Staszewskiego*, ed. K. Wajda et al., Toruń 1993, p. 228; J. Stolicki, *O wyborze marszałka poselskiego podczas sejmu elekcyjnego 1669 roku*, in: *Poprzez stulecia. Księga pamiątkowa ofiarowana Profesorowi Antoniemu Podrazie w 80. rocznicę urodzin*, ed. D. Czerska, Kraków 2000, pp. 85–92; Z. Hundert, *op. cit.*, p. 105; M. Sawicki, *op. cit.*, p. 51; K. Bobiatyński, *W walce o hegemonię. Rywalizacja polityczna w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim w latach 1667–1674*, Warszawa 2017, p. 52.

[32] F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 22 IX 1668, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/11, folio 164; M. Chmielewska, *Sejm elekcyjny Michała*, pp. 60–61; A. Kamieński, *Kandydatura Hohenzollernów brandenburskich*, pp. 31–33; J. Matyasik, *Obóz polityczny*, p. 23; Z. Hundert, *op. cit.*, pp. 105–106.

[33] F. Sanderson to N.N. [most likely J. Williamson], Gdańsk 23 III 1669, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/12, folio 9.

Rumours on the topic of any of the sons of the tsar converting were spread in the Polish-Lithuanian state for the entire period of interregnum. Information on that can be found in many accounts of both the foreign envoys and inhabitants of Commonwealth[34]. Most, including the Holy See, did not believe in those promises. The tsar had practically to promise the conversion of his sons to Catholicism because otherwise he would not even be able to participate in running for the throne, as it was forbidden by law. The subject of the advantages of electing the son of the tsar as a king was also raised. Some thought that it would guarantee peace with the eastern neighbour and that the tsar would return lands conquered during the previous war. It of particular importance to *exsulans* who desired to return to their lost estates[35].

Further messages regarding Moscow's candidacy were sent on 31 March 1669 by Robert Yard, who informed that it was supported by the entire Grand Duchy, while Poles were afraid it would be the beginning of tyranny[36]. This report was not untrue, because a certain part of Lithuanian nobility did support the efforts of the tsar in the electoral rivalry. The greatest supporters of Romanov, at least in 1667 and the first half of 1668, were the Pac family. Most researchers claim that their support for Moscow's candidacy was only a political game[37], and Zbigniew Wójcik

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[34] Respons jm. p. kasztelana liwskiego p. Łusczewskiemu, in: *Pisma polityczne z czasów*, p. 273; Copia listu p. Dąbskiego chorążego zatorskiego do p. Brzychwy chorążego krakowskiego de data 10 Julii 1668 z Rapki, in: *ibidem*, pp. 280–281; Zwierciadło na elekcję króla polskiego wystawione in casu abdicationis anno 1668, w którym w Polszcze trzeba has necessitates candidatos comitantes upatrować, in: *ibidem*, p. 315; M. Chmielewska, *Sejm elekcyjny Michała*, p. 65.

[35] Z. Wójcik, *Między traktatem andruszowskim a wojną turecką. Stosunki polsko-rosyjskie 1667–1672*, Warszawa 1968, pp. 126–127; M. Chmielewska, *Sejm elekcyjny Michała*, p. 63, 65; K. Bobiatyński, *Michał Kazimierz Pac. Wojewoda wileński, hetman wielki litewski*, Warszawa 2008, p. 199.

[36] R. Yard to N.N., Gdańsk 31 III 1668, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/12, folio 17–17v.

[37] Z. Wójcik, *Pacowie wobec kandydatury rosyjskiej na tron polski w latach 1668–1669 (misja Połkowa na Litwie, 1668)*, 'Przegląd Historyczny' 1969, 60, 1, pp. 144–145; K. Bobiatyński, *Kandydatura Romanowów na tron Rzeczypospolitej podczas elekcji 1669 i 1674 roku. Realna koncepcja, czy też gra polityczna?*, in: *Праблемы інтэграцыі і інкарпарацыі ў развіцці Цэнтральнай і Усходняй Еўропы ў перыяд ранняга Новага часу*, eds. С.Ф. Сокал, А.М. Янушкевіч, Мінск 2010, p. 349–351. The Pac family was mentioned alongside the supporters of Moscow also by the author of a document prepared for Swedish queen Christina. See W. Uruszczak, *Fakcje senatorskie w sierpniu 1668 roku*, in: *Parlament, prawo, ludzie. Studia ofiarowane Profesorowi Juliuszowi Bardachowi w sześćdziesięciolecie pracy twórczej*, eds. K. Iwanicka, M. Skowronek and K. Stembrowicz, Warszawa 1996. One of its copies is stored in Archivio Segreto Vaticano: *Statto delle fattioni nel fine del mese d'Augusto 1668 seconodo de relationi e notitie che possono haversene*, Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Segreteria di Stato, Polonia 81, sheet 385.

openly stated the following about these efforts: 'Some Polish lords, Lithuanians in particular, supported those aspirations of Moscow, some of them were insincere about it, in fact being crypto-Condeists or crypto-Lorrainians'[38].

In the following letter, written on the following day, Wyche's secretary stated that the tsar of Moscow has stationed a strong army of thirty thousand people 'besides whole Lithuania' commanded by one of his sons[39]. Rumours regarding an enormous army of Moscow just outside the Grand Duchy were quite common, and the information about it had spread both via letters and other means. It was most likely meant to affect the attitudes of Lithuanian nobility, who feared tsar's troops entering the territories of Poland. In April 1669, 'Gazette de France' even informed that Romanov's army broke into the Grand Duchy and set up a camp[40].

Of course, English envoys informed London about other contenders to the throne as well. According to Sanderson, in December 1668 the emperor officially supported the candidate of Neuburg. However, the English diplomat consulted that matter with people possessing very detailed information regarding the elections ('of those who pretend to know much') and ultimately stated that the Habsburg indeed supported the actions of the young prince of Lorraine 'who begins to be famous amongst the Poles'. Additionally, numerous private letters which are presented as evidence behind the aforementioned candidate[41] were in circulation.

Undoubtedly, Sanderson was right to state that the emperor did not support Philip William and in reality he wanted the prince of Lorraine to become the Polish-Lithuanian monarch. Such plots seem to be a common practice in the described period because the king of France acted in a similar way when he officially supported the Neuburg can-

[38] Z. Wójcik, *Jan Sobieski*, p. 152.

[39] R. Yard to N.N., Gdańsk 1[?] IV 1669, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/12, folio 21–21v.

[40] M. Chmielewska, *Sejm elekcyjny Michała*, pp. 66–67.

[41] F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 24 XI 1668, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/11, folio 171. Many propaganda materials were distributed during interregnum. Their multiple copies are stored in collections of the Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych w Warszawie: AGAD, Nabytki department I, ms 1244. Probably the most well known propaganda letter among historians was the letter of Andrzej Olszowski, crown deputy chancellor, which was studied by Kazimierz Przyboś and Adam Perłakowski: A. Olszowski, *Censura candidatorum*, pp. 1-2 Also worth noting is the work of Gottfried Willhelm Leibniz, in which the well-known philosopher supported Philip William's claim to the throne: G.W. Leibniz, *Wzorzec dowodów politycznych*, transl. by T. Bieńkowski, introduction by S. Majdański, Bydgoszcz 1998. Several propaganda letters of 1668 studied by Stefania Ochman-Staniszewska: *Pisma polityczne z czasów*, pp. 271–316.

didate while actually working for the benefit of Condé candidate[42].

Sanderson informed about the electoral campaign once more in April 1669. He claimed that Philip William, the prince of Neuburg, is highly likely to claim the crown of Poland – 'I shall only tell you it is not doubted here: the Duke of Neuburg will carrie the crown of Poland, if the French really intend what they seems to pretend'[43]. Robert Yard added that the actions of Wittelsbach were supported by Frederick William, the elector of Brandenburg, who particularly wanted him to be elected[44]. Interestingly enough, Sanderson mentioned also the elector's aversion towards the Moscow's candidacy. To avoid any violence from the tsar, the Brandenburger was to keep at least 10 thousand men at the ready in case of a need to help Commonwealth. On the other hand, the Neuburger supposedly promised to Moscow that in the event of his election to the throne of Polish-Lithuanian state, his son would marry the daughter of the tsar[45].

However, the situation changed in the middle of June 1669. Sanderson, based on the words of a man in Commonwealth's parliament stated that it is most likely that the Lorraine candidate claims the crown. His greatest opponent was still the prince of Neuburg[46]. Meanwhile (20 April 1669), Sanderson reported to Joseph Williamson – 'that the Poles have some thoughts of choosing the younger Prince Wiesnewitzsky for their King'. The envoy staying in Poland did not treat the option as real or possible to happen. The sent letters suggest, however, that the possibility of choosing Michał Korybut as the king was being taken into account even before hearings of the election Sejm began[47].

The English envoys mentioned numerous bribes prepared by the contenders for the purpose of taking the crown: 'The election of the King of Poland makes all the discourse in these parts most of the candidates have remitted vast sums to this place to have their bribes near their partisans'[48]. During the period of the convocation Sejm Sanderson claimed

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[42] A. Przyboś, *op. cit.*, pp. 38–39; A. Kamieński, *Polska a Brandenburgia-Prusy w drugiej połowie XVII wieku. Dzieje p*olityczne, Poznań 2002, p. 76; idem, *Działania dyplomacji brandenburskiej w Polsce podczas elekcji 1674 roku*, 'Wieki Stare i Nowe' 2015, 8, pp. 30–31.

[43] F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 6 IV 1669, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/12, folio 16.

[44] R. Yard to N.N., Gdańsk 9 IV 1669, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/12, folio 23.

[45] *Ibidem*.

[46] F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 15 VI 1669, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/12, folio 34.

[47] F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 20 IV 1669, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/12, folio 25.

[48] R. Yard to N.N., Gdańsk 31 III 1668, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/12, folio 17–17v.

that the French prepared about 800 thousand 'dollers', as he described the currency, for the purpose of convincing people for their cause. They were looking forward to a success, however, according to the English envoy, 'performance may not answer their expectations'[49]. The problem of accepting material benefits was especially prevalent during interregnum after the abdication of Jan Kazimierz, and the elites of Poland took money from many European powers even during the reign of the last Vasa. Mostly because of the fact that the aforementioned general confederation was assembled in order to prevent such actions from happening. It did not prove successful and large sums of money were present in the electoral environment, and some participants took bribes from several opposing political factions[50].

Particularly interesting to the English correspondents was a Lithuanian Equerry, Bogusław Radziwiłł. The notes regarding his person are the ones most frequently found in the letters we have analysed. Interest in Radziwiłł of the English was most likely associated with his religion – Calvinism – and he was usually mentioned in relation to that issue. After all, the prince of Birże was one of the most important and influential representatives or Protestantism in Lithuania, if not in the entire Commonwealth. In December 1668, Sanderson informed London that the Pope's party intends to eliminate protestants from the election campaign and participation in Sejms of interregnum and that intention was directed primarily against Bogusław Radziwiłł, who was also accused of being dependent on Frederick William, the elector of Brandenburg. Sanderson also pointed out in his letters that people of other faiths in Poland were 'called here dissidentes'. What drew the attention of the English correspondent was the personality of Bogusław Radziwiłł, and his political talents were described in his letter: 'he was so well seconded by some of his persuasion, that they could not accomplish their designs'[51].

In April 1669 Sanderson informed Williamson that he came into possession of a book containing a century of Polish-Lithuanian state history, which was written in German. 'I have procured a book here of

[49] F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 24 XI 1668, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/11, folio 171.

[50] A. Rachuba, *Sapieha Aleksander Kazimierz*, in: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, vol. 34, no. 4, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1992–1993, p. 561; I. Kaniewski, *Finansowe kulisy walki o polską koronę po abdykacji Jana Kazimierza a przed elekcją Michała Korybuta Wiśniowieckiego w świetle raportów dyplomatów elektora brandenburskiego (1668–1669)*, 'Przegląd Nauk Historycznych' 2005, 4, 2, pp. 5–38; K. Bobiatyński, *Michał Kazimierz Pac*, p. 227; idem, *W walce o hegemonię*, p. 50; M. Sawicki, *op. cit.*, pp. 51–52.

[51] F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 1 XII 1668, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/11, folio 173.

the war et state affaires in Poland for the last 100 years, where Prince Radzivills geneologie is discribed et other great families in Poland'[52]. The English envoy wanted to send the book by ship since it was too large for a messenger to take it to London: 'shall send you per first ship from hence, being too great to be sent p. post'. Sanderson noted that it was a worthwhile read: 'It's in the dutch language et well worth the reading for those that understand it'. In addition, Sanderson put a postscript under the letter that informed that he had already read the article (regarding Radziwiłł?), but did not find the time to translate it[53]. The aforementioned book was also listed by Robert Yard in a letter of 31 March 1669, but only in context of the genealogy of Bogusław Radziwiłł[54].

Francis Sanderson informed London about the election of Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki as king on 26 June 1669. He provided brief information about the new king. According to him, he was 28 and was a noble from a large and wealthy family. Regarding the newly elected king, 'a great promoter of him (Andrzej Olszowski?) said: "inter angustias mutate fortunae exercitus"'. The envoy also described to London the Wiśniowiecki's father Jeremi, who had died over 10 years earlier during wars waged against Cossacks. Supposedly he owned vast and very wealthy estates in Ukraine, though destroyed by Cossacks. At the time a part of them was owned by the tsar of Moscow. The correspondent also briefly mentioned the mother of the new king, Gryzelda née Zamoyski. Sanderson received similar information regarding the result of the elections from Królewiec; a local informant also added that Charles of Lorraine received the majority of votes, while Philip William – 50 votes less. In a decisive moment, a candidacy of Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki was proposed – 'who was then amongst them', who was met with a general applause and the few people who opposed the candidacy were slain. In the same letter Sanderson informed that prince Bogusław Radziwiłł was proposed as a candidate and received 18 votes; he was also required that in order to claim the crown he had to convert to Catholicism – 'Prince Radzivill was also in nomination et had the votos of 18 counties to be king. Upon condition he would turn Romana Catholika'[55]. The same number of voivodeships which supported the candidacy of the Lithuanian Equerry was provided

[52] F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 6 IV 1669, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/12, folio 16.

[53] *Ibidem*.

[54] R. Yard to N.N., Gdańsk 31 III 1668, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/12, folio 17–17v.

[55] F. Sanderson to J. Williamson, Gdańsk 26 VI 1669, TNA, SP Poland and Saxony, SP 88/12, folio 37.

in 'Theatrum Europeanum'[56]. Similar turn of events regarding the election of Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki was described in all sorts of reports from the election Sejm in which we can also find information on proposing the candidacy of Equerry Bogusław Radziwiłł[57].

Correspondence of Sanderson and Yard constitute interesting sources of information on interregnum after the abdication of Jan Kazimierz. Both provided London with the most crucial and interesting, absent elsewhere, information on the election campaign. It should be noted that the messages in their reports were consistent with historical truth. It is confirmed by the good discernment of the residents and English envoys of the complexities of Polish politics and, on the other hand, it proves that they had reliable information sources and competent associates. The reports of Sanderson and Yard provide interesting material for analysis of interregnum in years 1668–1669, and the information communicated in letters is quite comprehensive and provide details on the Polish-Lithuanian country. In a considerable number of reports, though limited when the turbulent times during which they were written are taken into account, we find particularly meticulous description of certain events and political moods in Poland, which is undoubtedly a proof of their usability in historical research.

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[56] *Theatrum Europeanum*, Bd. 10, Frankfurt am Mein 1677, vol. X, p. 47.

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STRESZCZENIE

Przebieg i wynik elekcji w 1669 r. do dziś wzbudza wśród historyków bardzo duże zainteresowanie, co zapewne należy wiązać z wyborem dość nieoczekiwanego kandydata na króla – Michała Korybuta Wiśniowieckiego. Chyba żadne państwo europejskie nie pozostawało bierne wobec wydarzeń w państwie polsko-litewskim, do którego wysyłano swoich posłów, którzy mieli relacjonować wydarzenia z przebiegu interregnum. Podobnie uczynił dwór w Londynie, który uzyskiwał informacje na temat sytuacji państwa polsko-litewskiego po abdykacji Jana Kazimierza od Francisa Sandersona, rezydenta w Gdańsku, oraz Roberta Yarda, sekretarza ekstraordynaryjnego posła Peter'a Wyche. Korespondencja

Sandersona i Yarda stanowi interesujące źródło informacji na temat bezkrólewia po abdykacji Jana Kazimierza, a obaj przekazywali liczne, czasem niespotykane nigdzie indziej wiadomości dotyczące walki elekcyjnej. W swojej korespondencji wiele miejsca poświęcali oni kandydatom do tronu, opisowi przebiegu sejmików i sejmów okresu interregnum, a także sprawą równouprawnienia dysydentów. Szczególnie dużo informacji w raportach dyplomatów dotyczyło koniuszego litewskiego Bogusława Radziwiłła oraz księdze dotyczącej genealogii jego rodziny. Relacje Sandersona i Yarda stanowią kolejne interesujące uzupełnienie naszej wiedzy na temat bezkrólewia w latach 1668–1669.

Słowa kluczowe: dyplomacja, elekcja Michała Korybuta Wiśniowieckiego, relacje o XVII-wiecznej Rzeczypospolitej, bezkrólewie

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