

Natione Polonus and the Naród Szlachecki. Two Myths of National Identity and Noble Solidarity

by

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The concept of the “noble nation” is one of the reasons the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth is considered to have been unique in early modern Europe. Unlike other European nobilities, which directed their primary loyalty toward their ruling dynasty, the nobles in Poland supposedly developed a strong sense of unity and common identity among the entire noble estate. They expressed this in the phrase “noble nation” in which the concepts of nation and nobility were merged. The nation was not defined by language, religion, or subservience to the sovereign, but rather, it was defined solely by membership in the sizeable noble estate – an estate in which all members had equal rights under the law. Undoubtedly, other European nobilities also developed a sense of unity and common identity. The Polish concept of the “noble nation,” however, supposes a much stronger and more inclusive sense of corporate solidarity. Rather than pledging allegiance to the Polish King, state, or dynasty, the nobles’ first sense of loyalty allegedly went to the “noble nation.”¹ Many believe that it was this strong sense of brotherhood amongst the nobles – this devotion to “the noble nation” – that was the primary bond holding together the vast lands of the multinational and highly decentralized “Noble Republic.”²

This article, however, challenges the view that the nobles in Poland developed a singular type of noble identity embodied in the concept of the “noble nation” or “*naród szlachecki*.”³ Amongst the strongest evidence

¹ The most persuasive and elegantly argued body of work putting forth this scenario is that of Andrzej Walicki. For an example of his work, see IDEM: *The Political Heritage of the Sixteenth Century and its Influence on the Nation-building Ideologies of the Polish Enlightenment and Romanticism*, in: *The Polish Renaissance in its European Context*, ed. by SAMUEL FISZMAN, Bloomington 1988, pp. 34-44; IDEM: *The Enlightenment and the Birth of Modern Nationhood. Polish Political Thought from Noble Republicanism to Tadeusz Kościuszko*, Notre Dame, Ind., 1989; IDEM: *The Idea of Nation in the Main Currents of Political Thought of the Polish Enlightenment*, in: *Constitution and Reform in Eighteenth-Century Poland. The Constitution of 3 May 1791*, ed. by SAMUEL FISZMAN, Bloomington 1997, pp. 175-203.

² JANUSZ MACISZEWSKI: *Spółeczeństwo [Society]*, in: *Polska XVII wieku. Państwo – Społeczeństwo – Kultura*, ed. by JANUSZ TAZBIR, Warszawa 1969, pp. 120-129.

³ The first work that argued the concept of the “noble nation” was Stanisław Kot’s classic essay on Polish national consciousness. Recently, the most influential work arguing

supporting the concept of horizontal noble solidarity is precisely the contention that the nobles themselves expressed their loyalty to the noble nation.⁴ This is largely based on the existence of two phrases widely believed to be have been employed by the nobles: the “*naród szlachecki*,” or “noble nation,” as noted above, and the Latin “*gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus*.” While “noble nation” encompasses the entire nobility, the phrase “*gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus*” refers to the non-Polish nobles, and it implies that they felt their primary ties were to the Polish “political nation,” while deeming their Lithuanian or Ruthenian heritage of minor importance.⁵ Both terms have enjoyed highly successful careers in recent historical scholarship, and both are employed to show that the concept of the Polish nation was based not on ethnicity, but on citizenship, or rather, membership in the noble estate. The following is a revealing example of how historians employ these two phrases:

The Polish ‘noble nation’ took shape not as an ethno-linguistic nation, but as a political nation par excellence [...] ‘Being a Pole’ denoted not ethnic but political affiliation: eloquent testimony to this is provided by the phrase ‘*gente Ruthenus/vel Lithuanus, natione Polonus*.’⁶

Besides demonstrating that the non-Polish nobles felt themselves to be “political Poles,” and that ethnicity mattered much less than citizenship, these two phrases play another, more important role in the above paradigm. They suggest that the Polish nobility greatly revered the idea of the nation – that it

the concept of the “noble nation” has been that of Janusz Tazbir and Andrzej Walicki. See STANISŁAW KOT: Świadomość narodowa w Polsce w. XV-XVII [National Consciousness in Poland from the 15th through the 18th Century], in: Kwartalnik Historyczny 12 (1938), 1, pp. 15-32; JANUSZ TAZBIR: Recherches sur la conscience nationale en Pologne au XVI^e et XVII^e siècle, in: Acta Poloniae Historica 14 (1966), pp. 5-23; IDEM: Polska świadomość narodowa XVI-XVIII wieku [Polish National Consciousness from the 16th through the 18th Century], in: Studia nad rozwojem narodowym Polaków, Czechów i Słowaków, ed. by ROMAN HECK, Wrocław 1976, pp. 25-47; IDEM: Kultura szlachecka w Polsce. Rozkwit – Upadek – Relikty [The Culture of the Nobility in Poland. Rise – Fall – Remnants], Warszawa 1978, pp. 85-104; and IDEM: W cudzym i własnym zwierciadle [In a Foreign and Our Own Looking Glass], in: IDEM: Szlaki kultury polskiej, Warszawa 1986, pp. 7-40. For Walicki, see footnote 1.

⁴ Other evidence consists of the Sarmatian dual-nation myth, which holds that nobles believed that only they, the nobles, descended from the ancient Sarmatians, while the rest of Poland’s inhabitants descended from the peoples the Sarmatians either conquered or later invited from other lands. For an argument showing the nobles did not include this noble/non-noble duality in their understanding of their Sarmatian heritage, see chapter 1 in DAVID ALTHOEN: That Noble Quest. From True Nobility to Enlightened Society in the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth, 1550-1830, Ph.D. diss, University of Michigan, 2000.

⁵ Most historians translate this phrase to mean “a Ruthenian (Prussian, Lithuanian) by birth, but a Pole by state affiliation and political consciousness.” See for example, MARIA BOGUĆKA: Dzieje kultury polskiej do 1918 roku [The History of Polish Culture until 1918], Wrocław 1991, p. 151.

⁶ See WALICKI: The Enlightenment (cf. footnote 1), p. 6.

was a value they held in highest regard. Although this argument often goes unstated, the reader would infer it for two reasons. First, the self-description "*gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus*" represents a highly sophisticated way of expressing one's national identity. It would seem that the Lithuanian and Ruthenian nobility not only found an elegant way to assert their dual identity, but that they also were able to emphasize that their political identity held precedence over the ethnic one – all in four words. For the nobles to have achieved this degree of subtlety, unmatched in Europe until the late 19th century, one would infer that the concept of the nation must have been quite significant.⁷ Second, both phrases suggest that the nobles held a strong sense of loyalty towards "the noble nation," for it would seem that they were often making such declarations. While this might not sound unusual at first, anyone who has studied national consciousness will admit that such outright assertions of one's own national identity, or any expressed devotion to the "nation" (rather than to the usual "motherland," "country," or "king") were quite rare prior to the 19th century.⁸

But were these terms widely used? And if so, what exactly did they mean? I argue that the nobles did not conceive of themselves in such terms, and did not have a strong concept of the nation that included all of the nobility, and only the nobility.

The Myth of the "Noble Nation"

The term "*naród szlachecki*," or "noble nation," has enjoyed a great career in contemporary scholarship.⁹ The success of the "noble nation" concept is due to the fact that it has served both sides of the long-standing debate over whether to view the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in a positive or negative light. Those critical of the Commonwealth use the term to emphasize that the concept of the "noble nation" was exclusionary, that the Polish nation consisted solely of the nobility and did not include the vast majority of the population, including the Polish-speaking townspeople and peasants. Those who view the Commonwealth more favorably emphasize that the concept of the Polish nation was, for its time, quite inclusive – that the Polish "noble nation" was multinational and included all members of the Ruthenian and

⁷ It was not until Ernest Renan's pathbreaking essay: *Qu'est-ce que une nation?*, first delivered as a lecture at the Sorbonne in 1882, that a serious debate began in France over what exactly constituted a nation. In Poland there was a lively debate over what constituted the motherland (*ojczyzna*) in the early 1840s, but any discussions over the concept of "*naród*" and what constituted it did not come until much later.

⁸ The term "nation," even though often employed from the 16th century onwards, only began to have political significance in Polish writings at the end of the 18th century. It did not begin to carry the same ideological weight as "motherland," "country," or "republic" until the end of the 19th century. See chapter 3 in ALTHOEN (cf. footnote 4).

⁹ Of the many early examples, see ANTONI GÓRSKI: *Cnoty i wady narodu szlacheckiego* [The Virtues and Flaws of the Noble Nation], Warszawa 1935.

Lithuanian nobility, as well as any other members of the nobility with non-Polish roots, including Armenians, Muslim Tatars, and even Jews (after converting to Christianity). In short, historians differ over whether the designation "noble nation" depicts the glass being ten-percent-full or ninety-percent-empty. But on the fact the Poles were indeed a "noble nation," that the idea of the nation excluded 90 percent of the population, or rather, that it included all members of a large, multi-ethnic nobility – all agree.

Indeed, in both the Polish and non-Polish secondary literature one usually finds the term "noble nation" highlighted in a way that implies it was widely used from the 16th through the 18th century.¹⁰ Often, historians simply offer the term itself, "*naród szlachecki*," as proof that the nobility believed itself to be a political nation defined by citizen rights, and a separate nation from the non-nobles.¹¹ This term appears so frequently in the secondary literature that

¹⁰ Of the most influential and recent examples, see WALICKI: *The Enlightenment* (cf. footnote 1), p. 6; IDEM: *Philosophy and Romantic Nationalism. The Case of Poland*, Oxford 1982, p. 68; PETER BROCK: *Nationalism and Populism in Partitioned Poland. Selected Essays*, London 1972, p. 11; TADEUSZ ŁĘPKOWSKI: *Polska – narodziny nowoczesnego narodu, 1764-1870* [Poland – The Birth of a Modern Nation, 1764-1870], Warszawa 1967, pp. 216-217; MARIAN H. SEREJSKI: *Naród a państwo w polskiej myśli historycznej* [Nation and State in Polish Historical Thought], Warszawa 1973, pp. 201, 303-308, also pp. 17, 19, 32, 50, 91, 95, 288, 292; *Spółeczeństwo polskie od X do XX wieku* [Polish Society from the 10th through the 20th Century], ed. by IRENEUSZ IHNATOWICZ, et al., 2nd ed. Warszawa 1988, p. 203; JERZY TOPOLSKI: *Polska w czasach nowożytnych. Od środkowoeuropejskiej potęgi do utraty niepodległości 1501-1795* [Poland in Modern Times. From Central European Power to the Loss of Independence, 1501-1795], Poznań 1994, pp. 541, 765; ROMAN WAPIŃSKI: *Polska i małe ojczyzny Polaków. Z dziejów kształtowania się świadomości narodowej w XIX i XX wieku po wybuchu II wojny światowej* [Poland and the Small Motherlands of the Poles. From the History of Developing National Consciousness in the 19th and 20th Centuries after the Outbreak of World War II], Wrocław 1994, pp. 42, 62-66; EMANUELA SGAMBATI: *Popolo, nazione, patria nel lessico degli scrittori politici polacchi del Cinquecento. Modrzewski – Orzechowski – Skarga*, in: *Cultura e nazione in Italia e Polonia dal Rinascimento all'Illuminismo*, ed. by VITTORE BRANCA and SANTE GRACIOTTI, Firenze 1986, pp. 197-219, see p. 213. HENRYK SAMSONOWICZ: *Historia Polski do roku 1795* [The History of Poland until 1795], Warszawa 1973, p. 178; MARCELI HANDELSMAN: *Rzeczpospolita i świat. Studia z dziejów kultury XVII wieku*, Wrocław 1971, pp. 42-43; IDEM: *Recherches* (cf. footnote 3), pp. 13-15; IDEM: *Polska świadomość narodowa* (cf. footnote 3), pp. 9-31. Other influential examples would include KONSTANTY GRZYBOWSKI: *Ojczyzna – naród – państwo* [The Motherland – Nation – State], Warszawa 1970, especially pp. 66-84; ZDZISŁAW

¹¹ The most influential in this regard have been Janusz Tazbir's studies on the rise of the "noble nation" concept during the 16th century. JANUSZ TAZBIR: *Świadomość narodowa* [National Consciousness], in: IDEM: *Rzeczpospolita i świat. Studia z dziejów kultury XVII wieku*, Wrocław 1971, pp. 42-43; IDEM: *Recherches* (cf. footnote 3), pp. 13-15; IDEM: *Polska świadomość narodowa* (cf. footnote 3), pp. 9-31. Other influential examples would include KONSTANTY GRZYBOWSKI: *Ojczyzna – naród – państwo* [The Motherland – Nation – State], Warszawa 1970, especially pp. 66-84; ZDZISŁAW

it occupies a secure place in the Polish historian's lexicon; no one questions whether this term was really used, or what it really meant. But a study of the etymology of "*naród szlachecki*" reveals that the secondary literature misrepresents both its meaning and degree of usage. Writers did not employ the term often, and when they did, they intended a very different meaning than the one supposed.

Z narodu szlacheckiego (Of Noble Parentage)

Ever since the Poles began writing extensively in Polish the term "*naród*" (nation) has been widely employed. In the 16th century the term "*naród*" was one of the two-hundred most frequently used nouns in Polish writings, and it was employed with about the same frequency as "mother," "brother," and "fire."¹² Even though it was used most often in the sense of "nation" or "people" as it is understood today, it also had other meanings that later dropped out of use. In one of those meanings "*naród*" could signify one's familial origin, estate, or caste at birth.¹³ It was this meaning of familial origin or estate – and not "nation" – to which the term "*naród szlachecki*" always referred.

The origins of the term "*naród szlachecki*" do much to explain its meaning and how it was understood. The first examples of its usage are found in Polish law statutes from the middle of the 16th century.¹⁴ The mid-16th century was

KACZMARCZYK, BOGUSŁAW LEŚNODORSKI: *Historia państwa i prawa Polski*. Vol. II: Od połowy XV w. do r. 1795 [The History of the Polish State and Polish Law. Vol. II: From the Second Half of the 15th Century through the Year 1795], Warszawa 1957, pp. 79-80; and BENEDYKT ZIENTARA: *Kilka uwag o narodzie politycznym w średniowieczu* [A Few Comments on the Political Nation in the Middle Ages], in: *Pojęcie "volk" i "nation" w historii Niemiec*, ed. by ANTONIO CZUBIŃSKI, Poznań 1980, pp. 184.

¹² *Słownik polszczyzny XVI wieku* [The Dictionary of the Polish Language in the 16th Century], ed. by FRANCISZEK PEPEŁOWSKI and MARIA RENATA MAYENOWA, Wrocław 1992, vols. 1, 16, and 21 (opening pages of each volume show word frequency).

¹³ Linguists who studied over 400 16th-century texts found the following five meanings of the term "*naród*": 1) Descendant, progeny (1%); 2) People, human society; person: *gens*, *natio* (vulgar) (5%); 3) Type, sort, *genus* (vulgar) (13%); 4) Family, familial origin, one's estate at birth: *genealogy* (vulgar) (18%); 5) A community of people that is linked by cultural tradition, customs, and language, and that forms a political and economic collectivity: *gens*, *natio* (63%). See *Słownik polszczyzny XVI wieku* (cf. footnote 12), vol. 16, pp. 165-179.

¹⁴ The first example of the term "*naród szlachecki*" is found in King Zygmunt August's privileges, granted in Piotrków in 1550. See: *Przywilej Króla Zygmunta Augusta w Piotrkowie r. 1550* [The Charter of King Zygmunt August in Piotrków in 1550], in: *Volumina legum. Przedruk zbioru praw staraniem XX. Pijarów w Warszawie, od roku 1732 do 1782*, vol. 2, ed. by STANISŁAW KONARSKI, Warszawa 1980 (reprint from the Petersburg edition, 1859), p. 7. None of the three major sources for the history of the Polish language records any earlier usage: *Słownik polszczyzny XVI wieku* (cf. footnote 12), vol. 16, Wrocław 1985, p. 168; *Słownik staropolski* [A Dictionary of Old Polish], ed. by STANISŁAW URBAŃCZYK and ZENON KLEMENSIEWICZ, vol. 5, n. 2 (26),

an important period in the development of Polish as a literary language. Previously, the Poles had employed Latin almost exclusively as the official language of state, and it was the sole language of their law statutes, for which they borrowed heavily from Roman terminology. In 1543, however, King Zygmunt I broke with tradition and ordered the constitutions of the Polish Sejm, the primary source of Polish law, to be written in both Polish and Latin. This created a very difficult problem for the scribes; they had to create a Polish legal language that would match the Latin terminology.¹⁵

One of their tasks was to differentiate in Polish between the Latin terms "*ordo equestris/nobilis*" and "*nobile genus*." The term "*ordo equestris*," which can be strictly translated as "the equestrian order" but meant the noble estate, was the Latin term the nobles most often used to refer to themselves.¹⁶ The equivalent Polish terms, used interchangeably, were "*stan szlachecki*," "*stan rycerski*," and "*szlachta*" (the noble estate, the knightly estate, and the nobility).¹⁷ The term "*nobile genus*," on the other hand, referred to those born into the noble estate (*de nobili genere*). In Polish law this distinction was quite important. One could belong to the noble estate, but not have been born into it, such as those who had been recently ennobled. Many privileges were reserved exclusively for the nobles *de nobili genere* – the nobles born into the noble estate.¹⁸ Legal writers, then, had to find a way in Polish to differentiate between the broader concept of the entire noble estate (*stan szlachecki*),

Wrocław 1966, pp. 91-92; SAMUEL BOGUMIŁ LINDE: Słownik języka polskiego [A Dictionary of the Polish Language], vol. 3, Warszawa 1810, p. 252.

¹⁵ JULIUSZ BARDACH, BOGUSŁAW LEŚNODORSKI, MICHAŁ PIETRZAK: Historia ustroju i prawa polskiego [The History of the Polish Political System and Polish Law], Warszawa 1993, pp. 187-189.

¹⁶ The term "*ordo equestris*" was just one example of how the nobility borrowed from the political terminology of ancient Rome. HENRYK WISNER: Jaśnie Wielmożni, Wielmożni, Miłośniwi Panowie Bracie [The Highest Esquires, Esquires, and Our Gracious Brother Lords], in: IDEM: Najjaśniejsza Rzeczpospolita. Szkice z dziejów Polski szlacheckiej XVI-XVII wieku, Warszawa 1978, pp. 105-131, see p. 107.

¹⁷ Mączyński translates "*equester ordo*" as "nidzecki stan, to jest szlachecki." IOANNIS MACZINSKY [Jan Mączyński]: Lexicon latino-polonicum ex optimis latinae linguae scriptoribus concinnatum, Köln 1973 (photocopy reprint of Königsberg edition, 1564), p. 213.

¹⁸ In the 14th and 15th centuries this distinction was made to prevent "foreigners" (those from outside the specific region) from holding positions of high influence. Later, in the 16th and 17th centuries, the differentiation was made between those born into the Polish noble estate from the Poles recently ennobled. See STANISŁAW GRODZISKI: Obywatelstwo w szlacheckiej Rzeczypospolitej [Citizenship in the Noble Republic], Kraków 1963, pp. 68-72, 82-95. For a contemporary explanation, see MARCIN KROMER: Polska czyli o położeniu, ludności, obyczajach, urządach i sprawach publicznych Królestwa Polskiego. Księgi dwie [Poland, or about the Conditions, Populations, Customs, Offices, and the Public Matters of the Polish Kingdom. Two Volumes], ed. by ROMAN MARCHWIŃSKI, Olsztyn 1977, pp. 70-71, 85-86.

which included the recently ennobled, and the narrower concept that only included nobles with noble parentage.¹⁹

It was to fulfill this need of translating “*de nobili genere*” (of noble parentage) that the Polish term “*naród szlachecki*” was first used. The following statute, from the privileges given by King Zygmunt in 1550, illustrates how the term “*naród szlachecki*” was first employed and its meaning:

So that monastic investiture should be more easily preserved, we declare, in renewing the statute of 1538, that only a man of the Polish noble nation from both the side of the father and mother [*jedno polskiego szlacheckiego, z ojca i z matki, narodu*], and only a worthy man, should be chosen as abbot.²⁰

This statute makes clear that the position of abbot in a monastery was reserved exclusively for the nobles who had been born into the nobility; it could not be held by those recently ennobled. The intention was to prevent the king from placing “new people,” meaning his own people, into influential positions, and the term “*naród szlachecki*” was employed to make this important distinction in noble status.

Significantly, it was in this legal context – as a translation for “*de nobili genere*” – that the term “*naród szlachecki*” was primarily employed.²¹ The term used for the commoners, including those not born into the nobility, was a similar variation of “*naród*” – the “common” or “peasant nation” (*z prostego/chłopskiego narodu*).²² These terms were employed when the legal scribes needed to differentiate between the entire noble estate, including those who were nobles but had been born into the *naród prosty*, and those born into the nobility – those descending from noble parents – as the following example illustrates:

Since the knightly estate [*stan rycerski*] bears large responsibilities regarding the crown, it seems to us correct and honorable that it be privileged with separate privileges. And since it is established in the statutes of our forefathers that people of the common nation [*z narodu prostego*] are not to be given positions in the major churches, and that only people of the Polish noble nation and blood [*ludzie narodu a krwi szlacheckiej polskiej*] should be accepted, we will order the

¹⁹ Antoni Mączak notes that the term “*stan*” did not have a precise legal meaning in Poland and was loosely used. ANTONI MACZAK: *The Structure of Power in the Commonwealth of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, in: *A Republic of Nobles. Studies in Polish History to 1864*, ed. by JAN K. FEDOROWICZ, Cambridge 1982, pp. 109-135, see pp. 113-114.

²⁰ Przywilej Króla Zygmunta Augusta (cf. footnote 14), p. 7.

²¹ For example, Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski, one of the few writers to use the term “*naród szlachecki*” outside of a legal context, was directly translating from the Latin term “*nobile genus*.” *Słownik polszczyzny XVI wieku* (cf. footnote 12), vol. 16, p. 168.

²² Researchers for the dictionary of 16th-century Polish did not find any examples of “*naród mieszczański*.” They did find a total of 24 examples of “*naród prosty*,” “*naród kmiecy*,” and “*naród chłopski*” and a total of 21 examples of “*naród szlachecki*” and “*naród rycerski*.” *Słownik polszczyzny XVI wieku* (cf. footnote 12), vol. 16, p. 168.

chapters of cathedrals and large churches not to accept [anyone from the "common nation"] as members.²³

In this statute two distinctions are made regarding who is eligible to receive the highest and most distinguished ecclesiastical positions. First, one had to be "of the noble nation," meaning born to noble parents. Second, one had to be born to parents belonging to the Polish nobility, which excluded any foreign nobles. The reference to "blood" in this case concerned adoption of men into noble families and their ancestral signs – a common method of strengthening clans and acquiring nobility in the 15th and 16th centuries. Not only did one have to have Polish noble parentage, but that parentage also had to be actual and not acquired.

An examination of the term "*naród szlachecki*" shows that the concepts of "the Poles" and "*naród szlachecki*" were far from synonymous. Those regarded as Poles could both be of noble parentage (*z szlacheckiego narodu*) and of common parentage (*z prostego narodu*), as the following privilege illustrates:

Because we are the Polish King, we do not wish to entrust any fortresses or any of the [King's] lands to anyone, only to land-owning Poles and who are of the noble nation [*jedno Polakom szlacheckiego narodu osiadłym*].²⁴

This statute makes clear that only "Poles" were potential candidates for the highly desired awards of crown estates and the position of castellan. The statute, however, had to be more specific; the only Poles eligible were those who were landowners and those who were born of noble parentage.²⁵

Notably, the term "*naród szlachecki*" was not employed in a way that would justify its translation as "noble nation." In the above three examples I translated "*naród szlachecki*" into "the noble nation" according to general practice.²⁶ But it is this general practice that has led many a researcher astray. In all three cases a more accurate rendition of "*naród szlachecki*" would be "of noble heritage," as shown by the concurrent Latin versions of the same statutes. In the first example, the phrase "[*człowiek*] *jedno polskiego szlacheckiego, z ojca i z matki, narodu*" was simultaneously translated as "*nisi Polonici nobiles ex patre et matre generis*."²⁷ In the second, the somewhat puzzling phrase "*ludzie narodu a krwie szlacheckiej polskiej*," was rendered more precisely in Latin as "*homines ex genere alias ordine Nobilitatis gentis Polonicae*."²⁸ Now, if we were to back translate these phrases from the Latin,

²³ Przywilej Króla Zygmunta Augusta (cf. footnote 14), pp. 8-9.

²⁴ Ibidem, p. 8.

²⁵ Even though the newly ennobled were excluded from many privileges, their descendants were not, and were considered *de nobili genere* – notwithstanding their ethnic, social, or religious background. See GRODZISKI (cf. footnote 18), pp. 68-72, 82-95.

²⁶ Other common translations are "nation of nobles" and "gentry nation."

²⁷ Słownik polszczyzny XVI wieku (cf. footnote 12), vol. 16, pp. 168, 172.

²⁸ Ibidem, p. 176.

we would not end up with either "*naród szlachecki*" in Polish or "noble nation" in English. In the first case, the translation would be "[a man] of Polish noble lineage from both the mother's and father's side," in the second, a literal translation would be: "men of noble heritage and estate, who are of the Polish people." In both cases, it is the word "*naród*" that proves deceptive. In both cases, it did not mean "nation," but "heritage."

Clearly, the phrase "*naród szlachecki*" did not imply the idea of "nation" as understood today. In every instance that I have found the phrase "*naród szlachecki*" used, the word "*naród*" reflects one of these earlier meanings, namely a combination of "lineage," "ancestral origins," and "the estate one belonged to at birth." Even in the few cases in which the term was used in non-legal texts, the meaning of the term "*naród*" would be best translated as "estate" or "heritage."²⁹ In the 16th and 17th centuries, then, usage of the terms "*naród szlachecki*" or "*naród rycerski*" did not signify that only the nobility belonged to the nation. Rather, legal scribes employed the term to differentiate the nobles born into the nobility – those *de nobili genere* – from those nobles who were not.

"*Naród szlachecki*" – A Phrase Little Used

In addition to possessing a much different meaning than it does today, the term "*naród szlachecki*" was rarely employed. This is shown quite clearly in the monumental "Dictionary of the Polish Language in the 16th Century." The linguists who studied the term "*naród*" in the over 400 texts selected for the dictionary only found rare instances in which the phrase "*naród szlachecki*" was actually used. In those texts, which they believed to be the most important Polish-language texts from the period – texts ranging from poetry, philosophy, and religious writings to political pamphlets, speeches, and legal codes – they found only 21 examples of either "*naród szlachecki*" or "*naród*

²⁹ Let us examine the following example of how "noble nation" is used. In Łukasz Górnicki's "Rozmowa Polaka z Włochem," two speakers debate over whether the death penalty should be applied for murder. The man arguing in favor, claims that the system of paying damages would work fine for peasants, but not for the nobility: "For a man, especially one of the *naród szlachecki*, who is honored and worthy of admiration for his and his ancestors' virtue, who is a worthy and necessary *civis* of the Republic, cannot be compensated for by any amount of gold in the world." (*Ponieważ człowiek, zwłaszcza narodu szlacheckiego, czci jest i poważania godny i dla swej, i dla przodków swych cnoty, ponieważ godny i potrzebny Rzeczypospolitej civis, przeto płacon nie ma być żadnym na świecie złotem.*) We see that by "*naród szlachecki*" he means "noble estate," and by referring to the virtuous ancestors, he means a noble born into the noble estate. ŁUKASZ GÓRNICI: *Rozmowa Polaka z Włochem* [A Discussion Between a Pole and an Italian], in: IDEM: *Pisma*, ed. by ROMAN POLLAK, Warszawa 1961, vol. 2, pp. 394-395.

rycerski.” This minimal number, 21 examples, contrasts sharply with the over 4,000 examples of the term “*naród*” that they found and analyzed.³⁰

According to the standard paradigm, however, the concept of the “noble nation” did not fully crystallize until the last quarter of the 16th century. It is possible, then, that it was in the 17th and 18th centuries that the term became a full expression of the nobles’ national consciousness, one that signified their concept of the Polish nation as a political nation including only the noble citizens, and their sense of mutual noble solidarity. Could the phrase “*naród szlachecki*” have been transformed and used in the way the secondary literature suggests? Because there are no similar studies of language usage in the 17th and 18th centuries, I conducted my own textual analysis.³¹ Since my aim was to find as many examples of this phrase as possible, I chose those texts where it would be most likely employed. These texts included four of the writers that best represent the middle nobility from various periods of the 17th century (Jan Pasek, Wespazjan Kochowski, Wacław Potocki, and Kasper Miaskowski), a collection of the political literature from the Confederacy of Bar (1768-1772), and two volumes of political writings from 1648-1664.³² These texts, both poetry and prose, included political tracts, aimed to influence public opinion; highly patriotic tracts, intended to rally the nobles to defend the Republic; and private works – writings that were intended only for the amusement of close friends and family, and which included epic poems, clever poetry, epigrams, and political satire. All of these works were written by the nobility for the nobility, and are widely considered to best reflect the life of the noble land-owning estate.³³ Most importantly, these were writings

³⁰ In the monumental dictionary of 16th-century Polish language, *Słownik polszczyzny XVI wieku*, we find that the term “*naród szlachecki*” only appears 19 times and “*naród rycerski*” only twice in the 400 major texts studied. Of these 21 appearances, 15 were in legal codes and statutes, which is perhaps why it seemed so pervasive to later scholars. See *Słownik polszczyzny XVI wieku* (cf. footnote 12), vol. 16, p. 168.

³¹ To date, the best study of the Polish language from this period remains that of Samuel Linde’s “Dictionary of the Polish Language” (cf. footnote 14), published in the early 19th century.

³² JAN CHRZOSTOM PASEK: *Pamiętniki* [Memoirs], ed. by WŁADYSŁAW CZAPLIŃSKI, 3rd ed. Wrocław 1955; WESPAZJAN KOCHOWSKI: *Utwory poetyckie. Wybór* [Poetic Works. A Selection], ed. by MARIA EUSTACHIEWICZ, 2nd ed. Wrocław 1991; WACŁAW POTOCKI: *Dzieła* [Writings]. Vol. 1-2, ed. by LESZEK KUKULSKI, Warszawa 1987; IDEM: *Wojna Chocimska. Poemat epiczny w 10 częściach w skróceniu* [The Chocim War. An Epic Poem in 10 Parts], ed. by EDMUND BĄCZAŁSKI, Lwów 1898; KASPER MIASKOWSKI: *Zbiór Rytmów* [A Collection of Rhythms]. Vol. 1-2, Poznań 1855; *Literatura Barska. Antologia* [The Literature of Bar. An Anthology], ed. by JANUSZ MACIEJEWSKI, 2nd ed. Wrocław 1976; *Pisma polityczne z czasów panowania Jana Kazimierza Wazy 1648-1668. Publicystyka, eksorbitancje, projekty, memoriały* [Political Writings from the Time of Jan Kazimierz Waza’s Rule, 1648-1668. Publicist Writings, Exhortations, Projects, Memorials]. Vol. 1-2, ed. by STEFANIA OCHMANN-STANISZEWSKA, Wrocław 1989-1990.

in which I originally expected to find many examples of the phrase "*naród szlachecki*."³⁴

Surprisingly, in the above texts I found that the term "*naród szlachecki*" was only used in two cases—even though I found over 300 instances in which the term "*naród*" or "nation" was employed. Moreover, the term carried an identical meaning to that discussed above; in both cases, which occurred in political documents from the period of the Chmielnicki uprising, the meaning of "*naród szlachecki*" would have been translated as "the noble estate."³⁵ In all of my other readings, conducted less rigorously than those above, the only instances in which I found the term "*naród szlachecki*" employed was in several law statutes, the last dating from 1633.³⁶ After that, Polish legal

³³ ZDZISŁAW LIBERA, JADWIGA PIETRUSIEWICZOWA, JADWIGA RYTEL: *Od średniowiecza do oświecenia* [From the Middle Ages to the Enlightenment], Warszawa 1988, pp. 194–195. See also Barbara Otwinowska's remarks in her introduction to WACŁAW POTOCKI: *Dzieła* (cf. footnote 32), vol. 1, pp. 20–25.

³⁴ Jan Pasek, Wespazjan Kochowski, and Wacław Potocki are considered by literary scholars as the most "Sarmatian" of the 17th- and 18th-century writers, meaning they typified the way of thinking among the middle nobility and supposedly glorified the noble estate. Jan Pasek, considered the prime example of noble "Sarmatianism," is known for his fascinating memoir that represents the type of spoken language employed by the middle nobles. Kochowski's and Potocki's works consist primarily of poetry, but also are considered typical of the nobles' Sarmatian mentality in their glorification of the nobility and Polish megalomania. The fourth writer, Kasper Miaskowski, best represents the patriotic thought among the middle nobility at the beginning of the 17th century. The political brochures from 1648–1664 were written to sway public opinion during the period of the Chmielnicki uprising and the subsequent Swedish invasion referred to as "the deluge." And the literature from the Confederacy of Bar, most of which circulated in manuscript, represents one of the last examples of noble ideology and political thought before the Polish Enlightenment. For an assessment of "Sarmatian writers" see TADEUSZ ULEWICZ: *Zagadnienie sarmatyzmu w kulturze i literaturze polskiej. Problematyka ogólna i zarys historyczny* [The Sarmatian Problem in Polish Literature and Culture. The General Problematic and an Historical Outline], in: *Prace Historycznoliterackie* 5 (1963) (= *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego* 59), pp. 29–93.

³⁵ The two cases were found in: *Votum Sejmikowe o eksorbitancyjach Rzeczypospolitej. A[nno] 1649* [A Sejm Vote on the Unlawful Resolutions of the Commonwealth in the Year 1649], and: *Oświecenie tępych oczu synów koronnych i W. Ks. Litewskiego w ciemnej chmurze rebelii schizmatyckiej będących* [The Enlightenment of the Dim Eyes of the Sons of the Crownland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania Who Are in the Dark Cloud of the Schismatic Rebellion], in: *Pisma polityczne* (cf. footnote 32), vol. 1, pp. 55 and 111.

³⁶ *Konstytucje Seymu Warszawskiego r. 1611* [The Constitutions of the Warsaw Sejm of 1611], in: *Volumina Legum* (cf. footnote 14), vol. 3, p. 26; *Konstytucje Seymu Warszawskiego za Zygmunta III d. 20 lutego r. 1629* [The Constitutions of the Warsaw Sejm Under Zygmunt III, February 20, 1629], *ibidem*, p. 296; *Konstytucje Seymu Koronacyi za Władysława IV r. 1633* [The Constitutions of the Coronation Sejm of Władysław IV, 1633], *ibidem*, p. 374.

writers found other ways to differentiate between those born into the noble estate and the newly ennobled. In 1638, for example, the term "*naród szlachecki*" was replaced in the law statutes by the phrase "a man born into the noble estate" (*człowiek w stanie szlacheckim urodzony*).³⁷ Moreover, the newly ennobled were signified as "the new *szlachta*," or, "the newly created *szlachta*."³⁸ As to the concept of the "*prosty naród*," writers returned to the Latin "*plebei*," as the legal writers joined the 17th-century fashion of liberally inserting Latin terms into Polish texts.³⁹

It seems, then, that the term "*naród szlachecki*" was rarely employed in the 17th century and soon fell into disuse as writers found other ways to differentiate between the newly ennobled and full members of the noble estate. These findings match the results of Samuel Linde's research. In his dictionary, which he meant to be a complete history of the Polish written language, he claimed (in 1810) that both the expression "*naród szlachecki*," and the meaning of "*naród*" as "*stan urodzenia*" (one's estate at birth) had long fallen into disuse. The most recent example he gave of this type of usage, after researching hundreds of texts, was from the early 17th century.⁴⁰

In other words, the term "*naród szlachecki*" was rarely used in the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries, and when it was, it never carried the meaning of "noble nation." By enclosing the term "noble nation" in quotes, historians give the false impression that the nobility had a phrase that readily expressed a strong sense of corporate identity that included all of the nobility, and only the nobility, in their concept of nation. This also gives the false impression that the idea of the nation was an important ideological concept in the nobles' world-view.⁴¹ Clearly, the "noble nation" was not part of the nobility's vocabulary or imagination.

³⁷ For example, *Konstytucje Seymu Warszawskiego za Władysława IV r. 1638* [The Constitutions of the Warsaw Sejm Under Władysław IV in 1638], in: *Volumina Legum* (cf. footnote 14), vol. 3, p. 440.

³⁸ See, for example, *Konstytucje seymu walnego koronnego warszawskiego r. 1601* [The Constitutions of the General Royal Warsaw Sejm in 1601], *ibidem*, vol. 2, p. 390; *Konstytucje seymu walnego koronnego warszawskiego r. 1613* [The Constitutions of the General Royal Sejm in Warsaw in 1613], *ibidem*, vol. 3, p. 80; *Uchwała seymu toruńskiego r. 1626* [The Resolution of the Toruń Sejm of 1626], *ibidem*, vol. 3, p. 256; *Uniwersał poborowy na seymie walnym koronnym warszawskim r. 1629* [The Conscription Proclamation at the General Royal Warsaw Sejm in 1629], *ibidem*, vol. 3, p. 301.

³⁹ For example, see: *Act seymu walnego, elekcyi nowego króla roku 1669* [The Act of the General Sejm, Election of the New King in Year 1669], *ibidem*, vol. 5, p. 16.

⁴⁰ LINDE (cf. footnote 14), vol. 3, p. 252.

⁴¹ See: When Did Nation Become "THE NATION"? The Shifting Significance of the Terms "Nation" and "Motherland," in: ALTHOEN (cf. footnote 4), pp. 152-246.

Gente Ruthenus/Lithuanus, Nazione Polonus

The phrase "*gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus*" is another term that has enjoyed a highly successful career in the secondary literature.⁴² Like "*naród szlachecki*," it is employed to demonstrate that the idea of the Polish nation was based not on ethnicity, but on citizenship, or rather, membership in the noble estate. In this case the phrase refers to the non-Polish members of the nobility and ostensibly conveys their sense of national identity. It implies, according to the standard interpretation, that from the 16th century the non-Polish nobles felt their primary ties were to the Polish "political nation," while deeming their Lithuanian or Ruthenian heritage of minor importance.

Also like the term "*naród szlachecki*," the popularity of the phrase "*gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus*" has been due, in part, to its ability to serve multiple aims. While the implied connotation has remained the same, the arguments the phrase supports have changed over the years. From the late 19th century until 1945, historians used the phrase to demonstrate that the nobles in Eastern Galicia had long supported Poland and considered themselves Poles, and that Galicia had been always been under Polish control.⁴³ After the Second World War, when the subject of Eastern Galicia was no longer open to debate, Marxist historians used the phrase in their critique of the Polish nobility. They argued that this supra-national identity prevented the Poles and the non-Polish nationalities from developing into true "modern nations" that

⁴² Some influential and recent examples: JERZY OCHMAŃSKI: *Historia Litwy* [The History of Lithuania], Wrocław 1990, p. 139; PAUL ROBERT MAGOCSI: *A History of Ukraine*, Seattle 1996, p. 149; KONSTANTIN SYMMONS-SYMONOLEWICZ: *National Consciousness in Poland. Origin and Evolution*, Meadville, Penns., 1983, p. 30; MARIA BOBROW-NICKA: *Relacje język – naród w myśli i praktyce literackiej Słowian zachodnich i południowych* [The Relation between Language and Nation in the Thought and Literary Practice of the Western and Southern Slavs], in: *Kategoria narodu w kulturach słowiańskich*, ed. by TERESA DĄBEK-WIRGOWA and ANDRZEJ Z. MAKOWIECKI, Warszawa 1993, pp. 17-27, see p. 17; JÓZEF CHLEBOWCZYK: *Procesy narodotwórcze we wschodniej Europie środkowej w dobie kapitalizmu. Od schyłku XVIII do początków XX w.* [The Nation-Creating Processes in East-Central Europe in the Period of Capitalism], Warszawa 1975, p. 56; JAREMA MACISZEWSKI: *Szlachta polska i jej państwo* [The Polish Nobility and their State], Warszawa 1986, p. 223; TAZBIR: *Kultura szlachecka* (cf. footnote 3), p. 91; WALICKI: *Philosophy and Romantic Nationalism* (cf. footnote 10), p. 69; IDEM: *Poland Between East and West. The Controversies over Self-Definition and Modernization in Partitioned Poland*, Cambridge, Mass., 1994, p. 10; TOPOLSKI (cf. footnote 10), p. 127; WAPIŃSKI (cf. footnote 10), p. 62. ANTOINE MARTEL: *La langue polonaise dans les pays ruthènes. Ukraine et Russie Blanche 1569-1667*, Lille 1938, p. 295.

⁴³ STANISŁAW ZAKRZEWSKI: *Polacy i Rusini na ziemi czerwieńskiej w przeszłości* [Poles and Ruthenians in the Czerwieńska Region in the Past], in: IDEM: *Zagadnienia historyczne*, vol. 1, Lwów 1936, p. 264; and his article: *Gente Ruthenus natione Polonus. W rocznicę Orzechowskiego* [Gente Ruthenus natione Polonus. The Anniversary of Orzechowski], in: *Dziennik Polski*, November 11, 1913.

included all classes, thus prolonging the exploitation of the peasants.⁴⁴ Recently, with Poland's current celebration of its democratic and multicultural heritage, many historians now argue that the Poles were one of the first to form an inclusive and tolerant "Western European" idea of nation. The phrase is now used to demonstrate that the nobles were citizens and patriots first; for them, the ethnic or religious background of their fellow citizens mattered little in their concept of the "Polish nation."⁴⁵

Historians find the phrase "*gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus*" appealing because it serves as an elegant explanation, while at the same time providing irrefutable evidence to the argument it anchors. How can one question, for example, whether the Polish nation was based on citizenship if the Ruthenian and Lithuanian nobles really identified themselves in such a refined manner? How can one argue that the nobles did not feel a strong sense of mutual solidarity if they made a point of emphasizing that they were all "political Poles," all part of the "noble nation"? Notably, one group of scholars has experienced precisely this type of problem. In studying the Ukrainian/Ruthenian nobility, noted historians such as Frank Sysyn, David Frick, and Teresa Chynczewska-Hennel have offered compelling arguments that there was a strong and growing sense of community among the Ruthenian nobles in the first half of the 17th century.⁴⁶ This group has mounted a significant challenge to the traditional view, in both Polish and Ukrainian historiography, that the Ruthenian nobles had fully assimilated into the Polish nobility by the end of the 16th century.⁴⁷ As part of their argument they have questioned the understanding of the phrase "*gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus*." Instead of the traditional view, which asserts that the Ruthenian part of the moniker held little importance, both Chynczewska-Hennel and Frick claim that the Ruthenians considered the first part of the phrase, "*gente Ruthenus*," to be equally if not more important than the second, "*natione*

⁴⁴ For how the phrase was used in the period following World War II, see KACZMARCZYK, LEŚNODORSKI (cf. footnote 10), p. 80.

⁴⁵ See especially works from Walicki and Tazbir, cited above.

⁴⁶ DAVID A. FRICK: *Meletij Smotryc'kyj*, Cambridge 1995, pp. 229-245; TERESA CHYNCZEWSKA-HENNEL: *Świadomość narodowa szlachty ukraińskiej i kozaczyzny od schyłku XVI do połowy XVII w.* [The National Consciousness of the Ukrainian Nobility and the Cossacks from the Late 16th Century to the Middle 17th Century], Warszawa 1985, pp. 133-137; FRANK SYSYN: The Problem of Nobilities in the Ukrainian Past. The Polish Period 1569-1648, in: *Rethinking Ukrainian History*, ed. by IVAN RUDNYTSKY, Edmonton 1981, pp. 29-102; IDEM: Ukrainian-Polish Relations in the Seventeenth Century. The Role of National Consciousness and National Conflict in the Khmelnytsky Movement, in: *Poland and Ukraine. Past and Present*, ed. by PETER J. POTICHNYI, Edmonton 1980, pp. 58-82; IDEM: *Between Poland and the Ukraine. The Dilemma of Adam Kysil 1600-1653*, Cambridge 1985.

⁴⁷ See, for example, HENRYK LITWIN: Catholicization among the Ruthenian Nobility and Assimilation Processes in the Ukraine during the Years 1569-1648, in: *Acta Poloniae Historica* 55 (1987), pp. 57-83.

Polonus.” Yet, even though they disagree over the traditional meaning of “*gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus*,” they still accept the phrase itself as an expression of the Ruthenian nobles’ national consciousness. They still accept the notion that the Ruthenian nobles felt a strong sense of brotherhood with the larger “noble nation.” But if the phrase did not exist, or if its meaning was entirely different from that supposed, it would then be possible to imagine the Ruthenian nobles with a significantly different sense of national community – one that did not preclude a strong sense of patriotism to the Republic, but one in which the strongest bonds were the vertical links of patronage and their ties to their own local noble communities.

So what, then, did the phrase mean exactly? Unlike the phrase “*naród szlachecki*,” it is extremely difficult to locate any instances in which the phrase “*gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus*” was actually used prior to the 19th century. Few historians make any references when using the phrase. Those who do all refer to the same source, the writings of Stanisław Orzechowski.⁴⁸ Even the most recent works that explore Ruthenian national consciousness in the late 16th and 17th centuries mention no one besides Orzechowski who used this phrase.⁴⁹ Moreover, those who study the Lithuanian nobility claim that the nobles in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania never used it prior to the 19th century.⁵⁰ So the question becomes intriguing: Did the non-Polish nobles use this phrase, or a variant of it, to describe themselves? And if so, what did they mean by it?

The case that the phrase was used and can be considered representative of the nobility would go as follows. First, historians consider it common knowledge that Stanisław Orzechowski used this phrase to describe himself. Second, Orzechowski’s words and opinions were highly influential; he was the best-selling writer in 16th-century Poland and was very popular amongst the nobility. Third, there is evidence that the phrase was widely used by the

⁴⁸ KOT: *Świadomość narodowa* (cf. footnote 3), p. 27; TAZBIR: *Recherches* (cf. footnote 3), p. 16; STANISŁAW LUBIENIECKI: *History of the Polish Reformation and Nine Related Documents*, ed. and transl. by GEORGE HUNTSTON WILLIAMS, Minneapolis 1995, pp. 456, 812.

⁴⁹ CHYNCZEWSKA-HENNEL (cf. footnote 46), p. 133; FRICK (cf. footnote 46), p. 229; SYSYN: *Between Poland and the Ukraine* (cf. footnote 46); IDEM: *Ukrainian-Polish Relations* (cf. footnote 46), pp. 58-82; MIROSLAW CZECH: *Świadomość historyczna Ukraińców pierwszej połowy XVII w. w świetle ówczesnej literatury polemicznej* [The Historical Consciousness of Ukrainians in the First Half of the 17th Century in Light of Contemporary Polemical Literature], in: *Slavia Orientalis* 38 (1989), 3/4, pp. 563-584. David Frick also notes that Orzechowski is the only one historians refer to when claiming this phrase exemplified the national consciousness of the Ruthenian nobility. Neither Sysyn nor Czech even mention the phrase in their work.

⁵⁰ JULIUSZ BARDACH: *O świadomości narodowej Polaków na Litwie i Białorusi w XIX-XX wieku* [On the National Consciousness of the Poles in Lithuania and Belorus in the 19th and 20th Centuries], in: IDEM: *O dawnej i niedawnej Litwie*, Poznań 1988, pp. 191-247, see p. 201.

Polish nobles and the intelligentsia in the late 19th century.⁵¹ Hence the conclusion: Since Orzechowski's writings were highly influential and widely read, the nobility must have widely adopted the phrase as its own and kept it in circulation until the 19th century, when there are records of it being used. The strongest argument that supports this scenario is the monumental effort required to challenge it; one would have to comb through all the writings and private correspondence of the Ruthenian and Lithuanian nobles in order to discover how (and if) it was actually employed.

There are, however, three weak links in the argument: first, that Orzechowski consistently used the phrase; second, that its meaning in the late 19th century accurately reflects how people would have understood it from the 16th to the 18th century; and third, the fact that the phrase was employed during the 19th century reflects its longtime use. Since Orzechowski is the only link to the phrase, I will analyze how and where he used the phrase, what he meant by it, and whether it was possible that others might have picked it up from his writings. I will also examine how the reader in the 16th and 17th centuries would have understood the terms "*gente*" (*gens*) and "*natione*" (*natio*).

Stanisław Orzechowski – *gente* Scythia, *natione* Ruthena

Stanisław Orzechowski was one of the more colorful characters in 16th-century Poland. He was born in 1513 to a well-situated and ambitious noble family of mixed Polish-Ruthenian parentage near Przemyśl, when Przemyśl was still considered part of Rus. Seeing that young Stanisław excelled at school, his father sent him off to study in Vienna, hoping that upon his return his gifted son would attain a high post in the Roman church and raise other family members (six brothers, five sisters) to positions of prominence.⁵² Sixteen years later Stanisław returned as one of the most educated men in

⁵¹ For example, Tadeusz Korzon used this epithet to describe himself to his students in study groups in the 1890s. One former student remembered that Korzon proudly proclaimed that he was *gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus*, "which made a great impression on us Varsovians and Crownlanders." STANISŁAW ZAKRZEWSKI: Tadeusz Korzon. Wspomnienie pośmiertne [Tadeusz Korzon. Posthumous Recollections], in: IDEM: Zagadnienia historyczne (cf. footnote 43), vol. 1, pp. 247-248.

⁵² The best, most complete biography on Orzechowski remains Józef Ossoliński's literary history, of which he dedicated the entire third volume to Orzechowski and his writings. See JÓZEF M. OSSOLIŃSKI: Wiadomości historyczno-krytyczne do dziejów literatury polskiej, o pisarzach polskich, także postronnych, którzy w Polskę albo o Polskę pisali oraz o ich dziełach, z roztrząśnieniem wzrostu i różney kolei ogólnego oświecenia, jako też szczególnych nauk w Narodzie Polskim [Historical and Critical Information on the History of Polish Literature, about Polish Writers, even Foreigners, who Wrote in Poland or about Poland, and also about their Works, with a Discussion on the Growth and Various Vicissitudes of General Enlightenment and also Specific Branches of Learning in the Polish Nation], vol. 3, Kraków 1822, pt. 1-2.

Poland.⁵³ Although Orzechowski began a brilliant literary career and quickly moved up the Church hierarchy, he was not a model priest. Always against the Church's requirement of celibacy, Orzechowski openly challenged it, both by word and by deed. Although Orzechowski had many "places to lie down," openly visited them, and refused to say mass, he did not get into difficulties until he decided to cease his immoral life and take a wife. This the Church could not tolerate. Even though Orzechowski renounced his priestly vows, the Church excommunicated him, annulled his marriage, and ordered the seizure of his property. Orzechowski soon became a *cause celebre* among the Polish nobility and his case was even brought up in the Polish *Sejm*. The nobility defended Orzechowski's rights as a noble and prevented the Church from seizing his land. Orzechowski furthered his cause by writing many caustic pamphlets against the Church. Upon recognizing his power with the pen, Church authorities decided to call back Orzechowski to the fold so as to have his pointed quill aimed at the Church's enemies. Orzechowski was reinstated in his former position of canon of Przemyśl, but the Church never acknowledged his marriage.

But more than his personal life, it was Orzechowski's writings that made him well known, both at home and abroad. Even though he has not attracted much interest of late, Orzechowski's contemporaries considered him Poland's top writer and orator – "*il primo letterato*" of Poland.⁵⁴ In his most popular political pamphlet he bluntly told the King that it was his job to serve the kingdom, and not the other way around. He also shrewdly criticized the magnates' abuse of power. Many historians argue that Orzechowski had more influence over the nobility's way of thinking than did anyone else during the 16th century.⁵⁵ He certainly was Poland's most published and widely read author during his lifetime and for a good time afterward.⁵⁶ Also a charismatic

⁵³ TADEUSZ SINKO: *Erudycja klasyczna Orzechowskiego* [The Classical Erudition of Orzechowski], Kraków 1939, pp. 2-4, 101.

⁵⁴ This is how the papal envoy to Poland, Bernardo Bongiovanni, described Orzechowski in a letter (Cracow, 20 April 1561), in: *Elementa ad fontium editiones*, vol. 58, ed. by CAROLINA LANCKORAŃSKA, Romae 1984, p. 6.

⁵⁵ Orzechowski's degree of influence is often lamented today by Polish historians. Many feel that Orzechowski's writings played a large part in Poland's turn away from European humanism into its self-absorbed Sarmatism, and some go as far as to claim that his writings led to the downfall of Poland. See, for example, ANDRZEJ WYCZAŃSKI: *Polska Rzecz Pospolita szlachecką* [Poland, the Noble Republic], 2nd ed. Warszawa 1991, p. 275; MACISZEWSKI (cf. footnote 42), pp. 131-133; GRZYBOWSKI (cf. footnote 11), p. 69. For a different interpretation of Orzechowski's writings, see ALTHOEN (cf. footnote 4), pp. 248-261, 594-604.

⁵⁶ Jan Kochanowski's number of publications did not surpass Orzechowski until the early 17th century. Other writers who today attract more scholarly interest, such as Górnicki, Rej, and Frycz-Modrzewski, did not come close to the number of works published (and subsequent editions) of Orzechowski. *Bibliografia literatury polskiej*. Nowy Korbut. *Piśmiennictwo staropolskie* [The Bibliography of Polish Literature. The New Korbut.

speaker, Orzechowski had the type of rambunctious personality that made him a popular figure among the nobility. In other words, if Orzechowski did use the phrase "*gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus*" often, consistently, and imparted the meaning we suppose, perhaps we could accept that this type of national identification was representative of the nobility – even if we (eventually) find only a few cases of it actually being used in the three-hundred year period following his death.

He did not, however, use the phrase often or consistently. Of those who attribute the expression "*gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus*" to Orzechowski, no one actually mentions where in his writings the phrase can be found.⁵⁷ In those of Orzechowski's texts available to me – I have looked through nearly everything that has been published over the last 200 years – I have yet to locate it.⁵⁸ There were, however, many other ways in which Orzechowski

Old Polish Writings], ed. by ROMAN POLLAK, Warszawa 1964, vol. 2, pp. 161-164, 217-230; vol. 3, pp. 48-53, 157-161, 334-345.

⁵⁷ Symmons-Symonolewicz is the exception. Even though he attributes the phrase to Orzechowski, he notes that he himself also could not find it. See IDEM (cf. footnote 42), p. 39.

⁵⁸ The works (and editions) I have examined include the following: STANISŁAW ORZECZOWSKI: Wybór pism [A Selection of Writings], ed. by JERZY STARNAWSKI, Wrocław 1972; IDEM: Orichoviana. Opera inedita et epistulae Stanislai Orzechowski. 1543-1566, ed. by JÓZEF KORZENIOWSKI, Kraków 1891, vol. 1; IDEM: Policyja Królestwa Polskiego [The Government of the Polish Kingdom], ed. by JERZY STARNAWSKI, Przemysł 1984; Książki Stanisława Orzechowskiego o ruszeniu ziemie polskiej przeciw Turkowi z łacińskiego języka na polski wyłożone każdemu rycerskiemu człowiekowi pożyteczne (1543) [The Books of Stanisław Orzechowski on the Levy of the Polish Lands Against the Turks, Translated from the Latin into Polish, Useful for Every Noble Man], in: Proza polska wczesnego Renesansu (1510-1550), ed. by JULIAN KRZYŻANOWSKI, Warszawa 1954, pp. 407-426 – and the introduction by the anonymous Polish translator, in: WITOLD TASZYCKI: Obrońcy języka polskiego. Wiek XV-XVIII [The Defenders of the Polish Language, 15th-18th Century], Wrocław 1953, pp. 88-89; STANISŁAW ORZECZOWSKI: Turcyka druga do króla Polski, Zygmunta (1544) [A Second Turkish Tale to Zygmunt, King of Poland] (translated by Jan Januszowski, 1590), in: Wybór mów staropolskich, ed. by BRONISŁAW NADOLSKI, Wrocław 1961, pp. 52-82; IDEM: Fidelis subditi de institutione regia ad Sigismundum Augustum Poloniae regem, ed. by GRZEGORZ SAENGER and TEODOR WIERZBOWSKI, Warszawa 1908; IDEM: Fidelis subditus albo o stanie Królewskim [Fidelis subditus or About The Royal Estate], (translated by Jan Januszowski, 1606), in: Sześć broszur politycznych z XVI i początku XVII stulecia, ed. by BOLESŁAW ULANOWSKI, Kraków 1921, pp. 1-38; IDEM: Dyalog albo rozmowa około exekucyj polskiej korony [A Discussion or a Dialog About the Execution of the Polish Crown], Kraków 1858, ed. by KAZIMIERZ J. TUROWSKI, Kraków 1858; Mowa na Sejmiku wisznińskim 13 marca 1566 r. [A Speech at the Wiszniewski Sejm on March 13, 1566], in: Wybór mów (cf. this footnote), pp. 158-169; excerpts of the following: IDEM: Stanislav Orichovii Rutheni ornata et copiosa oratio habita in funere Sigismundi Jagellonis Poloniae Regis, Cracoviae 1548, in: Humanizm i Reformacja w Polsce. Wybór źródeł dla ćwiczeń uniwersyteckich, ed. by STANISŁAW KOT and IGNACY CHRZANOWSKI, Lwów 1927, pp. 183-186; IDEM: Stanislav Orichovii Rutheni ad Iulium Tertium... Supplicatio de approbando matrimonio (Basil 1551),

described his national affiliation. Since many argue that the manner in which Orzechowski expressed his national identity heavily influenced the non-Polish nobles, it would be worth examining the terms he actually used.

While I have not yet found the exact phrase, I have found interesting variations. One example is the case in which Orzechowski described himself as *gente Scythia, natione Ruthena*. In his famous letter to the Pope, in which Orzechowski argued against the Church's rule of celibacy for priests (just after his marriage and subsequent excommunication), Orzechowski gave the following autobiographical details:

I am of the Scythian people and of the Ruthenian nation [*gente Scythia, natione Ruthena*]. But in a certain way I am of the Sarmatian [nation], for Rus, which is my *patria*, is located in European Sarmatia. To the right [of Rus] there is Dacia, and to the left is Poland. Before [Rus] is Hungary, and indeed behind it is Scythia that turns towards the rising sun. This *natio* [the Ruthenians] follows the religion of the Greek rite and has believed in Christ for more than six hundred years.⁵⁹

Orzechowski also used an interesting variation of our phrase in describing the Poles, claiming the Poles in general are *natione Slavos, gente vero Graecos* (literally: "Slavs by *natio*, but also Greeks by *gens*").⁶⁰ He also described himself thus: "I am a Roxolanian noble under the rule of the Polish king, born and acknowledged by a Greek mother and Latin father."⁶¹ And similarly: "I was born in Rus – a Roxolanian on the part of my mother, but a Latin regarding the faith practiced by my father."⁶² Other self descriptions include "I am an Oriental, a Greek born of Greeks," and a referral to himself

ibidem, pp. 325-333; and in full: IDEM: In leges et statuta regni Poloniae ab Jacobo Prilusia digesta ad equites Polonus... oratio (Kraków 1553), ibidem, pp. 452-459, and: IDEM: Explicatio iuramenti quod episcopi Regni Poloniae papae praestare solent (Pinczów 1558), ibidem, pp. 394-399; IDEM: Do Jakuba Uchańskiego [To Jakub Uchański] (letter dated 13.VIII.1559), printed in: STANISŁAW KOT: Opposition to the Pope by the Polish Bishops, 1557-1560. Three Unique Polish Reformation Pamphlets, in: Oxford Slavonic Papers 4 (1953), pp. 66-69; IDEM: Stanisłai Górski Conciones in maximo totius regni Poloniae conventu apud Leopolum de republica habitatae anno Domini 1537, in: Scriptores Rerum Polonicarum 4 (1878).

⁵⁹ *Sum gente Scythia, natione Ruthena utroque autem modo Sarmata, quod ea Rusia, quae mihi patria est, in Sarmatia Europae sit posita dextra habens Daciam, sinistra Poloniam, ante illam est Ungaria, post vero Scythia vergit ad orientem solem.* Stanisław Orichovii Rutheni ad Iulium Tertium... (cf. footnote 58), p. 329.

⁶⁰ The phrase was "*Polonus esse natione Slavos, gente vero Graecos.*" See STANISŁAW ORZECZOWSKI: Annales, Poznań 1854, p. 9. Also see SINKO (cf. footnote 53), p. 102; and TADEUSZ ULEWICZ: Sarmacja. Studium z problematyki słowiańskiej XV i XVI w. [Sarmatia. A Study on the Slavic Problematic in the 16th and 17th Centuries], Kraków 1950, p. 175.

⁶¹ *Principio docerem me esse Roxolanum equitem, in ditone Poloni Regis, matre Graeca, patre Latino in lucem editum et susceptum.* Stanislaus Orzechowski to Alexandro Farnese S. R. E. Cardinal, Przemyśl, 1566, in: ORZECZOWSKI: Orichoviana (cf. footnote 58), p. 613.

⁶² Stanisław Orzechowski to Marcin Cromer, Przemyśl, 1556, ibidem, pp. 440-441.

as “a Barbarian, a Sarmatian, and a Ruthenian.”⁶³ Among these many ways of describing himself, there was one that came very close to “*gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus*.” In the titles of two of his lesser theological tracts Orzechowski did add appellation “*gente Roxolanus, natione vero Polonus*” after his name.⁶⁴ Orzechowski often used the terms “Roxolanian” and “Ruthenian” interchangeably, believing the Ruthenians to be direct descendants of the Roxolanians. It is highly likely, then, that these two references are the source that inspired later historians to attach the moniker of “*gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus*” to Orzechowski.⁶⁵

In other words, it is very likely that Orzechowski never used the phrase “*gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus*.” And if Orzechowski did use the phrase, it certainly was not in any writings that reached a wide audience.⁶⁶ He did twice use the moniker “*gente Roxolanus, natione vero Polonus*,” but this occurred in titles of obscure religious tracts, and it certainly was not representative of the ways in which he described his national identity. Further examination of the terms Orzechowski used and their meanings will further clarify the latter point.

Orzechowski – a Polonized Ukrainian or a Ukrainianized Pole?

The fact that Orzechowski described himself as *gente Scythia, natione Ruthena*, and then “*gente Roxolanus, natione Polonus*” did not mean he didn’t know who he was. This seemingly bizarre national identity was due to Orzechowski’s fascination with ethnogenises – quite common among intellectuals

⁶³ Stanisław Orzechowski to Ioanni Zaleski, Żurawica, 1547, *ibidem*, p. 59. Notably, Orzechowski here states that it is largely because he is a Greek (of the Orthodox faith) that he disagrees with the rule of celibacy: “I answered him, in fact, that I am an Oriental, a Greek born of Greeks, and I do not feel restricted by this corruptible norm of the Occidentals, thanks to which the Roman Church has achieved for itself an appalling reputation.” The second is from Stanisław Orichovii ad Nicolaum Brudzovium Palatinum Lanciensem, *ibidem*, p. 204.

⁶⁴ One brochure was entitled “Pro dignitate sacerdotali oratio Stanislai Orichovii gente Roxolani, natione vero Poloni.” This was published twice, once in Poland and once abroad: Cracow, 1561 and Cologne, 1563. Also, there was a very similar brochure published the same year: Eodem anno Orichovius orationem, quam in Varsaviensi synodo 1561 Mart. 13 habuit, typis edidit, s.t. Stanislai Orichovii gente Roxolani, natione vero Poloni in Varsaviensi Synodo Provinciae Poloniae pro dignitate sacerdotali oratio (Cracow, 1561). See *ibidem*, pp. 515, 521.

⁶⁵ Tadeusz Sinko also suggests that this was indeed the source of Orzechowski’s famous self-description. SINKO (cf. footnote 53), p. 102.

⁶⁶ In spite of his popularity in the 16th century, only two of his works were read during the 17th and first half of the 18th century: “Fidelis Subditus” and “Annales Polonici.” See BOGUMIŁA KOSMANOWA: Popularność Stanisława Orzechowskiego w Rzeczypospolitej szlacheckiej [The Popularity of Stanisław Orzechowski in the Noble Republic], in: *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* 22 (1977), pp. 75-91; Bibliografia literatury polskiej (cf. footnote 56), pp. 48-52.

in the 16th century – and reflected his changing ideas regarding the origins of the Poles and Ruthenians.⁶⁷ In most cases Orzechowski described himself simply as a Ruthenian. Usually he signed his name as “*Stanislaus Orichovius Rutenus*,” or “*Roxolanus*” and often referred to himself as such – both in the titles of his published works and in the actual text. In the beginning of one of his most popular political tracts, he claimed: “*Ruthenum me esse et gloriior et libenter profiteor*” (I am proud to be Ruthenian and willingly proclaim it).⁶⁸ Orzechowski also claimed Rus as his *patria*, and willingly spoke of his attachment to Rus in his correspondence with foreigners.⁶⁹

In addition to often underlining his Ruthenian identity, Orzechowski also referred to himself as a Pole, and spoke of his love for Poland: “Poland, my sweetest *patria*.”⁷⁰ Although the instances he openly declared himself a Pole are rare, unlike his frequent referral to his Ruthenian origins, there is much evidence in his writings that he also considered himself a Pole and part of the *naród polski*.⁷¹ In the introduction to one of his political tracts, for example, he stated that he, a Pole, wrote it in Polish for Poles, “*Polak Polakiem pisat*,” so that foreigners such as the Germans or Italians would not read it.⁷² There were two common situations in which Orzechowski underlined his Polishness: when he was abroad (very little was known of Rus), and when he was trying to defend the interests of the Ruthenian landowners.⁷³ In one interest-

⁶⁷ BARBARA OTWINOWSKA: Język – Naród – Kultura. Antecedencje i motywy renesansowej myśli o języku [Language – Nation – Culture. Antecedents and Motives in Renaissance Thought about Language], in: *Studia Staropolskie* 44 (1974), pp. 142-161; ULEWICZ: *Sarmacja* (cf. footnote 61).

⁶⁸ ORZECOWSKI: *Fidelis subditi* (cf. footnote 58), p. 3. Also in a letter to Jan Zaleski, October 28, 1543, in: ORZECOWSKI: *Orichoviana* (cf. footnote 58), pp. 30-31.

⁶⁹ IDEM: *Wybór pism* (cf. footnote 58), pp. 89, 620. For Orzechowski's strong attachment to Rus, see D.S. NALIVAJKO: *Stanisław Orikhovs'kyi iak ukrains'kyi latynomovnyi pys'mennyk vidrozhennia* [Stanisław Orikhovs'kyi as a Ukrainian Latin-speaking Writer of the Renaissance], in: *Ukrains'ka literatura XVI-XVIII st.ta inshi slov'ians'kyi literatury*, ed. by V.O. MYSHANYCH, Kyiv 1984, pp. 161-185.

⁷⁰ Stanisław Orzechowski to Stanisław Czarnocki, Przemyśl, 1563, in: ORZECOWSKI: *Orichoviana* (cf. footnote 58), p. 530.

⁷¹ See ORZECOWSKI: *Policyja Królestwa Polskiego* (cf. footnote 58), p. 78.

⁷² ORZECOWSKI: *Quincunx*, in: IDEM: *Wybór pism* (cf. footnote 58), pp. 458-620, p. 458. This phrase “*Polak Polakiem pisat*” was quite common. See ŁUKASZ GÓRNICKI: *Droga do zupełnej wolności* [The Road to Complete Freedom], in: IDEM: *Pisma* (cf. footnote 29), vol. 2, p. 480; and SZYMON STAROWOLSKI: *Wybór z pism* [A Collection of Writings], Wrocław 1991, p. lxxviii.

⁷³ On political issues, see JAN ŚLASKI: *Polskie dialogi polityczne Stanisława Orzechowskiego na tle Sejmów egzekucyjnych* [The Polish Political Dialogs of Stanisław Orzechowski Against the Background of the Executive Sejms], in: *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* 12 (1967), pp. 47-84. While in Rome as a young man, Orzechowski stated that he was of the Polish nation when asked what *gens* he was from. He also claimed that in Padova the Ruthenian students were considered “Poles” because Rus was under the rule of Poland. ORZECOWSKI: *Orichoviana* (cf. footnote 58), p. 594; IDEM: *Wybór pism* (cf. footnote 58), pp. 94, 418, 630. BARBARA OTWINOWSKA: *Język jako wyraz*

ing case, however, Orzechowski did state he was a Pole while defending the honor of the Polish nobility.⁷⁴ Clearly, Orzechowski did feel himself to be both a Pole and a Ruthenian.

One cannot assume, however, that Orzechowski's expressions of Polishness signified an identity as a "political Pole," or a strong sense of unity with the "noble nation." Orzechowski's special links to Poland, his feelings of being a Polish noble, stemmed primarily from the origins of Oksza, his ancestral emblem. In his autobiography he proudly spoke of his ancestors, Polish knights of the Oksza clan, who came to Rus in the early 15th century and settled in the village Orzechowce.⁷⁵ Orzechowski claims these knights married Ruthenian women, and it was the Ruthenian knights who named his family "Orzechowski." Thereafter, this new Orzechowski clan quickly integrated in the Ruthenian community. Orzechowski's own mother came from the Ruthenian nobility and her father was an Orthodox priest.⁷⁶ Therefore, as Orzechowski himself often pointed out, almost all of Orzechowski's ancestors, those who made up the Orzechowski clan, were Ruthenians. But, the Orzechowski clan was also strongly linked to the Polish nobility. The Orzechowskis, even though they had their origins in Rus and were part of the Ruthenian nobility, were also one of the families linked to the Oksza emblem, and thus part of a larger Polish clan.

It is in this light that Orzechowski's most revealing statement regarding his origins can be analyzed. In "Chimera," one of his religious tracts attacking the Protestants, he claimed "*me Polonia genuit [...] Russia dulcis aluit*" (Poland gave birth to me [...] Rus sweetly nourished/raised me.).⁷⁷ In this statement Orzechowski was not referring to himself, but to the Orzechowski *ród*. As to the first part, he was claiming that Poland gave birth to his family's noble heritage. His ancestral crest, he claimed, "was born in true Polish

kształtowania się świadomości narodowej [Language as an Expression of Forming National Consciousness], in: *Problemy literatury staropolskiej* 1 (1972), pp. 155-223, p. 176. See also ALBERTO TENENTI: *Polonia ed Europa nella visione geografica italiana fra Cinque e Seicento*, in: *La nascita dell'Europa per una storia delle idee fra Italia e Polonia*, ed. by SANTE GRACIOTTI, Firenze 1995, pp. 3-19.

⁷⁴ In this public reply Orzechowski is responding to Radziwiłł's assertion that the lineage of the Lithuanian's upper nobility was far superior to that of the "equal" Polish nobility, in which anyone of low rank could become a great magnate: "[Is it possible] that a Lithuanian, a Radziwiłł, was allowed to place Lithuania above Poland to the great shame of our nation? And I, a native and free Pole with a noble lineage, brought up in freedom and educated in all sciences, am not allowed to place the Polish Kingdom above the Lithuanian Duchy – freedom above slavery?" ORZECZOWSKI: *Apologia Quincunxa*, as quoted by Jerzy Starnawski in his introduction to ORZECZOWSKI: *Wybór pism* (cf. footnote 58), p. lxiv.

⁷⁵ ORZECZOWSKI: *Wybór pism* (cf. footnote 58), pp. 620-641, esp. 621-623.

⁷⁶ Most of these details have, in fact, been confirmed. Orzechowski's Polish ancestors, it seems, originally came to the village between 1387-1401.

⁷⁷ ORZECZOWSKI: *Wybór pism* (cf. footnote 58), p. 292; and, for the Latin version, see OTWINOWSKA: *Język – Naród – Kultura* (cf. footnote 67), p. 152.

blood," and his ancestors who earned the crest were common people, "as all true Polish nobles once were," and had proved their nobility through "their love for the Polish people."⁷⁸ As to the second part, "Rus sweetly nourished me," Orzechowski was referring to the fact that the Orzechowski clan, even though its founders were Poles, had developed and flourished entirely in Rus, intermarrying primarily with Ruthenian families. Orzechowski could, then, and did consider himself a Pole (*rodem z Polski*) when speaking of the larger clan associated with Oksza, his ancestral emblem, and a Ruthenian (*rodem z Rusi*), when speaking of the Orzechowski clan.⁷⁹

The genuinely interesting question concerning Orzechowski is not that of his national identity, but rather, why he underlined it so often. Orzechowski was unusual in the 16th century precisely because he often did stress his national identity. If scholars look to him for examples of national consciousness, it is only because few others felt the need to state who they were in such detail. There are two theories concerning Orzechowski's motives behind his national declarations. According to some, it was Orzechowski's strong Ruthenian patriotism that triggered his many declarations of Ruthenian identity.⁸⁰ Others, who claim him as a Pole, say that he was trying to accustom both the Polish and Ruthenian nobles to the idea that they all belonged to one Polish nation.⁸¹ I would argue that these were questions that concerned him little.⁸² The issue that concerned him most, a matter upon which all scholars agree, was the Church's prohibition of marriage for priests. The question of

⁷⁸ STANISŁAW ORZECZOWSKI: *Żywot i śmierć Jana Tarnowskiego* [The Life and Death of Jan Tarnowski], in: *Żywoty sławnych mężów*, ed. by FRANCISZEK S. DMOCHOWSKI, Warszawa 1830, vol. 1, pp. 205-206.

⁷⁹ Linde's dictionary shows that the origins of one's clan, or *ród*, was one of the ways national affiliation was determined. For "Pole" he had two definitions: one born in Poland (*urodzony w Polsce*), and one whose clan originated in Poland (*rodem z Polski*). As to what "Poland" was, Linde emphasized the core territories of the Poles (Wielko- and Małopolska). He also defined "Lithuanian" as one whose clan originates in Lithuania (*rodem z Litwy*). See LINDE (cf. footnote 14), vol. 2, p. 1086 ("Korończyk"), p. 1281 ("Litwa/Litwin"); vol. 4, p. 869 ("Polak"), p. 886 ("Polska").

⁸⁰ For recent work stressing Orzechowski's Ukrainian ties, see NALIVAJKO (cf. footnote 69), and P.M. SAS: *Problema liudyny v tvorchosti ukraïns'koho pys'mennyka XVI st. St. Orikhovs'koho* [The Problem of Humanity in the Works of the 16th-Century Ukrainian Writer Stanislav Orikhovs'kyi], in: *Ukraïna i Pol'shcha v period feodalizmu*, ed. by V.A. SMOLIJ, Kyïv 1991, pp. 34-47.

⁸¹ LUDWIK KUBALA: *Stanisław Orzechowski i wpływ jego na rozwój i upadek Reformacji w Polsce* [Stanisław Orzechowski and His Influence on the Development and Fall of the Reformation in Poland], Lwów 1906, pp. 51, 96.

⁸² Orzechowski's feeling of patriotism did not extend to all of Rus. He was loyal, first of all, to his own Przemyśl region (he called it his *patria*), and then to the part of Rus annexed to Poland in the 14th century, now referred to as Ukrainian Galicia. In this Orzechowski was typical of the Ruthenian nobles in the mid-16th century who felt strong ties to their own regions, but did not have a strong sense of belonging to a larger Rus collective. See SYSYN: *Ukrainian-Polish relations* (cf. footnote 46), p. 67.

celibacy, and its direct relation to the fate of his children and descendants, is the key to understanding Orzechowski's many declarations of national identity.

As noted above, Orzechowski had long opposed the Roman Church's requirement of celibacy for priests. On this issue Orzechowski claimed to agree fully with Martin Luther. Orzechowski, in fact, knew Luther's arguments well; he had studied under Luther and had temporarily left the Catholic Church. But amongst the Catholic hierarchy he found it wise to not employ the arguments associated with Luther. Instead, he argued against celibacy by pointing out the examples of the Orthodox and Armenian priests, examples he knew extremely well.⁸³ His native Rus was populated primarily by people of the Orthodox faith, and it also had a significant Armenian minority in its towns. Moreover, his own maternal grandfather was an Orthodox priest. After returning to Poland, Orzechowski continued to argue against celibacy and continued to invoke the examples of the Orthodox priests.

After Orzechowski married, the issue of celibacy became for him much more than a favorite cause. The question of celibacy gravely overshadowed his familial standing and the future of his descendants.⁸⁴ Even though the Church did revoke his excommunication and allowed him to return to his former position of canon, it never acknowledged his marriage. This was quite a serious matter. An unacknowledged marriage meant that Orzechowski's five children were born out of wedlock and therefore were not considered part of the noble estate and had no rights of inheritance.⁸⁵ Of course, powerful protectors could have prevented Orzechowski and his descendants from being challenged on this issue, but he always had reason to worry. In his last years he made great efforts to persuade the Church to acknowledge the marriage. His strategy was clear. He used every occasion to remind all within the Catholic Church that he was a Ruthenian, from a people who were Christian, Greek Christian, but whose priests were allowed to marry.⁸⁶ Thus, in reminding all that he was a Ruthenian, Orzechowski was also making his case amongst the nobility that his children were the children of a valid marriage, and thus should be considered members of the noble estate. Although the Church never formally acknowledged the marriage, it seems that "Orzechow-

⁸³ ORZECZOWSKI: *List do F. Comendoniego*, in: IDEM: *Wybór pism* (cf. footnote 58), p. 632.

⁸⁴ Orzechowski's letters on this matter are translated into Polish in OSSOLIŃSKI (cf. footnote 52), vol. 3, pt. 1, pp. 60-110, especially 74-75.

⁸⁵ On this issue the Polish nobles were strict. Even if a man married his concubine and acknowledged the children they had together, the children born before the marriage would not be considered nobles and would not be able to obtain inheritance. HENRYK WISNER: *Wywód szlachectwa* [The Geneology of Nobility], in: IDEM: *Najjaśniejsza Rzeczpospolita* (cf. footnote 16), pp. 131-143, p. 141.

⁸⁶ See Orzechowski's "autobiography," which was actually a letter of supplication to Cardinal Commendon, the papal envoy to Poland. ORZECZOWSKI: *Wybór pism* (cf. footnote 58), pp. 620-641, especially 621-623.

ski Ruthenus" was ultimately successful in convincing the nobles of the validity of his marriage and that his children and descendants should receive the privileges of nobility.⁸⁷ His many reminders of his Ruthenian heritage served his prodigy well.

Stanisław Orzechowski, then, claimed to be both a Ruthenian and a Pole, although his assertions of Ruthenian identity were much more numerous. This type of dual identity was nothing unusual, due to the very fluid meanings that the terms "Ruthenian" and "Pole" encompassed at the time. In Orzechowski's case, however, his dual identity can be traced to the origins of his two clans – the clan of his family name, whose origins were in Rus, and the larger clan of his heraldic emblem, whose origins were in Poland. In this sense he was both "*rodem z Rusi*" and "*rodem z Polski*," and he claimed both Rus and Poland as his country of ancestral origin. His many assertions of national identity, however, do not mean that the concept of nation carried great significance. Orzechowski employed his Ruthenian heritage first as an inoffensive argument against celibacy. Once he was personally affected, and the fate of his family rested in the balance, Orzechowski made every attempt to emphasize his Ruthenian background, both before the ecclesiastical authorities and his fellow nobles, who were well aware that there was nothing unusual about Ruthenian priests who married. Even though I argue that Orzechowski's many declarations of national identity were primarily motivated by his fervor in the debate over celibacy for Catholic priests, I do not claim this to be his sole motivation. Certainly, Orzechowski was also a patriot, and in his writings he expressed strong feelings of attachment to both his native Rus and the Polish Kingdom. My point, and it is a fine one, is that the concept of "nation" for Orzechowski held little significance (unlike the concepts of "*patria*," "*Res-publica*," "Poland," and "Rus"). For Orzechowski, the *ród*, or clan, held much greater importance than the *naród*, or nation.

"Peoples and Nations"

The Difference Between *Gens* and *Natio*

I argued above that Orzechowski did not use the phrase "*gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus*" often or consistently, and that if he did use it, it certainly was not in his writings that reached a wide audience. But in the event someone eventually discovers that "*gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus*" was indeed employed, the meaning of the phrase itself should be scrutinized. By examining the meanings of the terms "*gens*" and "*natio*" in the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries, I determine how the phrase might have been interpreted, and how it certainly would not have.

⁸⁷ Orzechowski's son Jędrzej was a *rotmistrz* (cavalry captain) in the military, enjoyed a brilliant career at the court of Jan Tarnowski, and then received a *starostwo*. OSSOLIŃSKI (cf. footnote 52), vol. 3, pt. 1, p. 159.

The current understanding of the expression "*gente Ruthenus*" is still largely based on Stanisław Kot's analysis of the difference between the terms "*gens*" and "*natio*." Kot defined "*gens*" as a group bonded by a shared ancestry and language, but one whose members are largely unaware of the group's existence.⁸⁸ As to "*natio*," Kot claimed it to be a "higher" form of national identity than "*gens*," one that could include the inhabitants of one state whose primary bonds were a common national consciousness, a common national heritage, and common national goals – but not necessarily a common language or ethnic lineage.⁸⁹ In other words, Kot claimed that "*gens*" referred to the ethnic group, and "*natio*" referred to the political nation. Based on this explanation, most scholars emphasize that "*natio Polonus*" is the more important part of the phrase – the "higher" form of group identity.⁹⁰ The Ukrainian camp notwithstanding, scholars see this phrase as evidence that the Ruthenian and Lithuanian nobles believed themselves to be Poles of Ruthenian or Lithuanian heritage, but Poles first and foremost. The translation of "*gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus*" is often presented in this way: "a Ruthenian (Prussian, Lithuanian) by birth, but a Pole by state affiliation and political consciousness."⁹¹

In the Latin lexicon, however, this difference between the terms "*natio*" and "*gens*" did not exist.⁹² Ever since the two terms began to take on the general meaning of "nation" during Romans times, they have been almost identical in meaning. The origins of the terms help clarify the early subtle difference in their meanings. The term "*gens*," for example, originally meant "clan," but soon expanded to include such meanings as "family," "descendants," and also "race," "nation," and "people." During the height of the Roman empire, the term "*gens*" was mainly used in the plural in its meaning of "nations" or "peoples" and primarily signified any foreign peoples – in opposition to the *populus Romanus*.⁹³ The term "*natio*" had similar origins. In

⁸⁸ See, for example, Jerzy Starnawski's introduction to ORZECZOWSKI: Wybór pism (cf. footnote 58), p. iii, and SGAMBATI (cf. footnote 10), p. 210.

⁸⁹ KOT: Świadomość narodowa w Polsce (cf. footnote 3), p. 20.

⁹⁰ TOPOLSKI (cf. footnote 10), p. 127; BARDACH: O świadomości narodowej (cf. footnote 50), p. 201.

⁹¹ BOGUCKA (cf. footnote 5), p. 151. Other examples of translations: "Of the Ruthenian tribe, of Polish nationality" (*plemienia ruskiego, narodowości polskiej*); "Polish citizens of the Ruthenian race"; "Ruthenians by birth, but Poles by nationality" (*z urodzeni Rusini, z narodowości Polacy*). See Starnawski's introduction, in: ORZECZOWSKI: Wybór pism (cf. footnote 58), p. iii; MARTEL (cf. footnote 42), p. 295; WAPIŃSKI (cf. footnote 10), p. 63.

⁹² The two words were not synonyms in all their meanings. I am only referring to the most widely understood meaning of both words, i.e. "ethnic group, nation, people."

⁹³ Then, with the expansion of Christianity, the term "*gens*" became employed in the official language of the Roman Church. There it was often employed as the correspondent of the Greek "*païens*" and signified the peoples who were not Jews or

the very early Roman period it meant "birth," and in the common language it came to mean "litter" when referring to a brood of animals born to the same mother. It was in this sense that it expanded to its meaning close to "nation," signifying those individuals born in the same place with a common ancestor. By the 1st century AD the meaning of "*natio*" had become very similar to that of "*gens*." In the language of the Roman Church the term "*nationes*" served, as did "*gentes*," to translate "the pagan nations," in opposition to the "people of God."⁹⁴ In other words, even in the Late Roman period there was no strong pronounced difference between "*natio*" and "*gens*." By the 8th century Isidor of Seville's influential "Etymologie" was claiming that "*natio*" and "*gens*" were synonyms.⁹⁵ This merging of meaning continued well into the early modern period; the dictionaries from the 16th century underlined little difference between the two terms.⁹⁶

"*Natio*," then, did not carry the "higher" meaning of "political nation," or "community of citizens." In fact, an examination of the subtle differences between "*gens*" and "*natio*" shows that "*natio*" carried the more narrow, restrictive meaning – closer to the meaning of "tribe." "*Natio*" referred to a nation or people who traced their descent to one ancestor, and who lived on the land where their mythological origins began, while "*gens*" referred to the larger sense of "people" or "nation" – independent of homeland or common ancestor.⁹⁷ Tacitus and Cicero, two of Poland's most widely read writers, made this subtle differentiation. As Benedykt Zientara points out, Tacitus spoke of all of the Germans as one *gens*, and then broke them up into their various *nationes*, and Cicero chose the term "*natio*" when emphasizing common descent.⁹⁸ As one medieval Latin grammar explained, in noting the terms' subtle differences, "the *natio* descends from one father, the *gens*

Christians. ALFRED ERNOUT and ANTOINE MEILLET: Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine. Histoire des mots, 4th ed. Paris 1985, p. 271.

⁹⁴ Ibidem, pp. 429-430.

⁹⁵ BENEDYKT ZIENTARA: *Populus – gens – natio. Z zagadnień wczesnośredniowiecznej terminologii etnicznej* [Populus – gens – natio. From the Problems of Ethnic Terminology in the Early Middle Ages], in: *Cultus et cognitio. Studia z dziejów średniowiecznej kultury*, Warszawa 1976, pp. 673-682.

⁹⁶ John Rider's "Bibliotheca Scholastica" from 1589, for example, claimed both terms, "*natio*" and "*gens*," could serve as the translation for the English "nation." JOHN RIDER: *Bibliotheca Scholastica*, Menston 1970 (facsimile reprint from 1589), p. 984. Moreover, both terms could serve as the translation for the English term "people." THOMAS COOPER: *Thesaurus Linguae Romanae et Britannicae*, Menston 1969 (facsimile reprint from 1565), under listing for "*natio*."

⁹⁷ A subtle difference between the two terms is found in Thomas Cooper's "Thesaurus Linguae Romanae et Britannicae" from 1565. Cooper defines "*natio*" as "a nation: a people having their beginning in the country where they dwell." He defines "*gens*" as "a nation: a people: sometimes a kindred." COOPER (cf. footnote 96) – under listings for "*natio*" and "*gens*."

⁹⁸ ZIENTARA: *Populus – gens – natio* (cf. footnote 95), pp. 673-682.

describes a large grouping.”⁹⁹ In other words, the *natio* could form part of the *gens*, which signified a whole people – a people with a common language or geographical base.¹⁰⁰ Indeed, it was the term “*gens*” that usually referred to “nations” in the larger political sense. The expression “the law of nations,” for example, was universally known as “*ius gentium*,” and not “*ius nationum*.”

By no means, however, did all writers understand such a difference or consistently maintain clarity in their terminology. The linguists who have studied the two terms claim that the main difference between the two was that most writers simply preferred “*gens*” to “*natio*.”¹⁰¹ Language, for example, was the most important distinguishing factor between both terms; according to general usage it was primarily language that differentiated one *natio* from another *natio*, and one *gens* from another *gens*.¹⁰² Moreover, there was no hierarchy understood when the terms “*natio*” and “*gens*” were used together; rather, the terms were usually used together for the rhetorical effect.¹⁰³ The loose emblematic phrase “peoples and nations,” often used in 19th-century political oratory – “the many peoples and nations of the world” – most likely stems from the popular Latin phrase, “*gentes atque nationes*,” which was just as redundant in Latin as it is in English.¹⁰⁴

In sum, when “*gens*” and “*natio*” were employed together the term “*natio*” did not signify an elevated form of identity with the state or political nation. From the middle ages through the 18th century the two terms were largely synonymous; both could serve equally well as translations for “people” and “nation,” and for both terms language was the most significant distinguishing factor. If there was a subtle difference intended, it would have been the term “*natio*” that was more restrictive: in these cases “*gens*” referred to a larger

⁹⁹ See the grand historical dictionary of Latin: *Thesaurus linguae Latinae*. Editus auctoritate et consilio academiarum quinque Germanicarum: Berolinensis, Gottingensis, Lipsiensis, Monacensis, Vindobonensis, Lipsiae 1925-1934, vol. 6, p. 1848, lines 55-56.

¹⁰⁰ This is the analysis given *ibidem*, vol. 6 (letter “G”), p. 1848.

¹⁰¹ In the language of the Roman Church and in poetry writers often found it easier to fit “*gens*” into the meter. *Ibidem*, p. 1843 (lines 55-65).

¹⁰² One dictionary from the middle ages claimed that the difference between “*natio*” and “*patria*” was that one’s *natio* was determined by language and familial origins (*genus*), while one’s *patria* was determined by one’s place of origin. *Novum glossarium mediae Latinitatis ab anno DCCC usque ad annum MCC*, ed. by FRANZ BLATT, Hafniae 1957-1998, vol. 8, 1969, pp. 1081-1082. See also ZIENTARA: *Populus – gens – natio* (cf. footnote 95), pp. 678-680.

¹⁰³ Emanuela Sgambati, for example, argues that because Orzechowski often juxtaposed the two terms in phrases such as “*gentes and nationes*” (peoples and nations), he clearly intended different meanings for them. SGAMBATI (cf. footnote 10), p. 100. But linguists ALFRED ERNOUT and ANTOINE MEILLET (cf. footnote 93) disagree, p. 430.

¹⁰⁴ The “*Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*” (cf. footnote 99) claims that no difference in meaning was intended when the two terms were used together. Writers did this because it sounded good. Vol. 6, p. 1848.

grouping, based on a common language or shared territory, and "*natio*" referred to a smaller group within the "*gens*," which traced its descent to a common ancestor.

A Ruthenian by Nationality, but also a Pole by Descent

So what did Orzechowski mean, when he added the appellation "*gente Roxolanus, natione vero Polonus*" after his name? Although he only used it in the titles of two religious tracts meant for a narrow audience, Orzechowski was conveying information about himself that he thought important. An examination of Orzechowski's writings shows that the discussion above also applied to his usage of "*gens*" and "*natio*," the only significant difference between the two terms was that he clearly preferred "*gens*."¹⁰⁵ The term "*natio*" certainly did not carry the meaning of "political nation" in his writings; Orzechowski described the Poles, for example, as *natione Slavi, gente vero Graeci*.¹⁰⁶ And Orzechowski was not the only Polish writer to employ the terms "*natio*" and "*gens*" interchangeably; other Polish writers also used them as synonyms.¹⁰⁷

But clearly, Orzechowski meant something by the phrase "*gente Roxolanus, natione vero Polonus*." The meaning of the first part, "*gente Roxolanus*," is clear. Orzechowski used the terms "*Roxolanus*" and "*Ruthenus*" often and interchangeably; in both the titles of his works and when signing letters he most often referred to himself as "*Stanislaus Orichovius Ruthenus*" or "*Stanislaus Orichovius Roxolanus*." Moreover, he often expressed his strong ties to Rus and his Ruthenian identity: "I am proud to be Ruthenian and willingly proclaim it." It is the second part of the phrase, "*natione vero Polonus*," upon which the whole argument that Orzechowski classified himself as "a political Pole" hinges. As noted above, the term "*natio*" could carry a subtle sense of place and descent that "*gens*" did not have. In medieval Poland, the term "*natio*" in the genitive, as Orzechowski

¹⁰⁵ See ALTHOEN (cf. footnote 4), pp. 141-145.

¹⁰⁶ STANISŁAW ORZECZOWSKI: *Annales... cum vita Petri Kmitae*, ed. by ADAM TYTUS DZIAŁYŃSKI, Pośnaniae 1854, p. 9. Orzechowski believed that the Slavs originated from the Greeks. See ORZECZOWSKI: *Wybór pism* (cf. footnote 58), pp. 299, 550; and SINKO (cf. footnote 53), pp. 101-104.

¹⁰⁷ This is seen quite clearly in Maciej Kazimierz Sarbiewski's "Descriptio gentium" in which the *gentes* he describes are the Spaniards, French, Poles, Italians, and Germans. Yet, in a similar text Sarbiewski refers these same peoples as *nationes*. STANISŁAW KOT: *Descriptio gentium di poeti polacchi del secolo XVII*, in: *Ricerche Slavistiche* 6 (1958), pp. 154-159 and 164. Moreover, linguists who studied the medieval Latin texts written in Poland claim both terms carried the meaning of "people" (*lud*) and "nation" (*naród*). *Słownik łaciny średniowiecznej w Polsce* [The Dictionary of Latin in Poland in the Middle Ages], ed. by MARIAN PLEZIA, Wrocław 1953-present, vol. 4, pp. 516-517, and vol. 6, p. 604.

employed it, could mean “*rodem z*” (“by birth” or “by descent”).¹⁰⁸ Consequently, “*natione Polonus*” could have meant “*rodem z Polski*,” or “a Pole by birth or descent.” And Orzechowski, as he clearly stated numerous times, did consider himself a Pole by descent – due to his ancestral crest, Oksza. Therefore, Orzechowski’s moniker, “*gente Roxolanus, natione vero Polonus*,” could very well be translated as follows: “Stanisław Orzechowski, a Ruthenian by nationality, but also a Pole by descent.”¹⁰⁹

Gente Ruthenus/Lithuanus, Natione Polonus – a 19th-Century Phrase

I have argued above that the exact phrase “*gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus*” was most likely never used prior to the 19th century. I also argued that even if someone discovers a similar type of phrase in use prior to the 19th century, it would not necessarily imply that the non-Polish nobles held a strong political sense of the nation, while deeming their ethnic heritage of minor importance. Yet, one question remains. From where did the phrase originate, if not from Orzechowski? How did it become a widely accepted expression of national identity in the late 19th century if it had not been passed down from generation to generation. After all, many late 19th-century historians, including Mykhailo Hrushevs’kyi, were convinced that this phrase had typified Ruthenian and Lithuanian noble consciousness for centuries.¹¹⁰

Interest in Orzechowski began in the late 18th century, when Polish writers looked to Orzechowski’s Polish writings as a model for political discourse and polemics.¹¹¹ The Galician nobles became especially interested in Orzechowski following Józef Ossoliński’s publication in 1822 of a two-volume book on Orzechowski that included a great deal of his writings and letters. The Galicians found this book fascinating because it was one of the first that offered an extensive look into the history of the Galician Ruthenian nobility and Galicia itself.¹¹² In this work Ossoliński included many of Orzechowski’s own expressions of national identity, including his statement that he was a Ruthenian and a Polish *szlachcic*: “Do you know who I am? I am Orzechowski, an honest Ruthenian, a *Przemyślanin*, a Polish noble of the

¹⁰⁸ Słownik łaciny średniowiecznej (cf. footnote 107), vol. 6, p. 604.

¹⁰⁹ Or, perhaps a better, less literal translation: “Stanisław Orzechowski, of the Ruthenian people, but also of Polish descent.”

¹¹⁰ MYKHAILO HRUSHEVSK’YI: *Istoriia Ukraïny-Rusy* [The History of Ukraine-Rus], New York 1958 (reprint of the Kiev edition, 1905-1936), vol. 9, pt. 1, p. 509.

¹¹¹ See appendix C in ALTHOEN (cf. footnote 4), pp. 611-612.

¹¹² This work remains the most extensive account on Orzechowski’s life and writings. On Orzechowski’s popularity, see BOGUMIŁA KOSMANOWA: *Recepcja twórczości Stanisława Orzechowskiego od połowy XVIII do połowy XIX wieku* [The Reception of the Works of Stanisław Orzechowski from the Mid-18th Century to the Mid-19th Century], in: *Pamiętnik Biblioteki Kórnickiej* 13 (1977), pp. 76-77.

ancestral crest Oksza.”¹¹³ Ossoliński also listed the two titles of Orzechowski's religious tracts in which he added the appellation “*gente Roxolani, natione vero Poloni*” after his name.¹¹⁴

Most likely it was from this book that the nobles first borrowed and adapted the phrase to describe their national identity. This type of identification would have been popular among the nobles who became interested in their Ruthenian roots and Ruthenian folklore in the 1830s.¹¹⁵ Then, when the Ukrainian question became politicized in 1848, the expression proved very useful. At that time the Austrian Government attempted to split Galicia into two, by setting up a Ruthenian council in Eastern Galicia to counter the influence of the Polish nobility. The Polish landowners of Eastern Galicia then set up a competing *Ruski Sobor* for which Ruthenian descent was a prerequisite – all nobles claimed to be Ruthenians in their attempt to win the Ruthenians over their side for the idea of a unified Galicia, and of the Polish *ojczyzna*.¹¹⁶ Some of the aristocrats did in fact use the phrase “*gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus*” at this meeting, when claiming their Ruthenian descent.¹¹⁷

With 1848 marking the beginning of a strong Ruthenian, and then Ukrainian movement, the phrase “*gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus*” quickly took a life of its own. By the late 19th century the nobles of both Ruthenian and Lithuanian descent found this phrase a useful way to state their attachment to their ethnic heritage along with their support of Polish culture and a Polish state that would encompass all of its former territories.¹¹⁸ Therefore,

¹¹³ Citation from Ossoliński's translation of “Chimera,” see IDEM (cf. footnote 52), vol. 3, pt. 1, p. 392.

¹¹⁴ Ibidem, vol. 3, pt. 2, pp. 219-220.

¹¹⁵ Henryk Wereszycki claims that during the Polish Uprising in 1830-31, the young Polish participants from Eastern Galicia called themselves *gente Rutheni natione Poloni*. Unfortunately, Wereszycki does not offer any citations. HENRYK WERESZYCKI: Pod berłem Habsburgów. Zagadnienia narodowościowe [Under the Rule of the Habsburgs. Problems of Nationality], Kraków 1986, p. 53.

¹¹⁶ N.M. PASHAEVA: Otrazhenie natsional'nykh i sotsial'nykh protivorechij v vostochnoj Galichine v 1848 g. v listovkakh Russkovo Sobora [A Reflection of the National and Social Contradictions in Eastern Galicia in 1848 in the Leaflets of the Ruthenian Sobor], in: Slavianskoe vrozozhdenie. Sbornik statej i materialov, Moskva 1966, pp. 48-62.

¹¹⁷ Maciej Kozłowski states that many of the aristocrats, such as Prince Sapieha, Count Dzieduszycki, and Prince Puzyna, described themselves as *gente Rutheni natione Poloni* when they joined the *Ruski Sobor* in 1848. MACIEJ KOZŁOWSKI: Między Sanem a Zbruczem. Walki o Lwów i Galicję Wschodnią [Between the San and the Zbrucz. Battles over Lwów and Eastern Galicia], Kraków 1990, p. 41.

¹¹⁸ One of the earliest examples showing the significance of the phrase in the national discourse comes from Ludwíg Kubala's popular book on Orzechowski, first published in 1870: “[Orzechowski] was the first that placed the relationship of both nationalities in such an appropriate manner, well fitted to his doctrine and convictions. He was the first to sign his works ‘Orzechowski Rusin’ and left his appellation *gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus* to tradition. He gave the wisest council to the Church regarding its

the phrase "*gente Ruthenus/Lithuanus, natione Polonus*" reflects how some Ruthenian and Lithuanian nobles viewed their national identity in the second half of the 19th century – when national identity became politicized – and not before.

Conclusion

The concept of the "noble nation" is largely based on the existence and widespread use of two expressions – the "*naród szlachecki*" itself and the Latin phrase "*gente Ruthenus/Lithuanus, natione Polonus*." I argue, in short, that neither of these was employed in the way scholars suggest; neither supports the idea that the nobles maintained a political concept of the nation, one that included all members of the noble estate, and only the noble estate. The phrase "*naród szlachecki*" never meant "noble nation" in the 16th and 17th centuries. Rather, it should be translated as "of noble parentage" when used in the singular genitive, as it usually was, and as "noble estate" when employed otherwise. Moreover, the phrase "*naród szlachecki*" was rarely used from the mid-16th century through the mid-17th century, after which it fell into disuse. As to the phrase "*gente Ruthenus*," it does not represent any form of self-identity that existed prior to the second half of the 19th century. Traced back to Stanisław Orzechowski, one can find something equivalent to this phrase in two of his more obscure publications. This phrase was not, however, representative of how he described himself, nor did he use this phrase in any of his writings that were meant for the noble readership. Moreover, the standard interpretation of the phrase is based on a false understanding of the meanings of "*gens*" and "*natio*." Both terms were largely synonyms, and were usually used interchangeably. In the case of Orzechowski's twice-used moniker "*gente Roxolanus, natione vero Polonus*," I argued that it should be translated as "a Ruthenian by nationality, but also a Pole by descent."

Acceptance of the above arguments does not mean that the characterization of the Commonwealth as a largely tolerant polity must also be discarded. We can look to the period preceding the 19th century to demonstrate that Polish identity was not always tightly constricted and ethnically exclusive. Poland does have a heritage of being open and inclusive, and during the period of the Commonwealth it seems clear that nationality and ethnicity carried little political significance – especially in comparison to the virulent Polish nationalism of the early 20th century. If this is the point scholars wish to make, it is not difficult to find convincing evidence elsewhere.¹¹⁹

treatment of the [Orthodox], and inside the Republic he attempted to abolish the unjust prejudices, suspicions and mutual dislike [between the Ruthenians and Poles]. He was rightly convinced that mutual recognition and brotherly agreement would bring both sides to unity." Kubala went on to praise Orzechowski for his definition of the "nation," which was inclusive of the Ruthenians. KUBALA (cf. footnote 81), pp. 55, 91.

¹¹⁹ See, for example, ALTHOEN (cf. footnote 4), chapter 3.

The implications of this article, as I see it, are two fold. First, it helps show that the idea of the nation did not have much political significance in the 16th and 17th centuries. The nobles did not use such terms as “noble nation” and did not profess loyalty to the idea of the nation.¹²⁰ Stanisław Orzechowski’s many declarations of his national identity do not signify that the concept of the nation held for him great significance. Many of his declarations of identity were motivated by his apprehension regarding the legality of his marriage and the subsequent problem of ensuring that his children’s and descendants’ nobility would be uncontested following his death. Or, in other words, it was his *ród* that held his primary concern, not his *naród*. Orzechowski is interesting precisely because his writings can be used to demonstrate that the ideas of the nation were quite fluid in the 16th century, and that one could have multiple identities. Orzechowski, however, cannot be used to demonstrate the existence of the “political Pole,” as his ties to Poland and the Polish nation were more than just political; more importantly, they extended through his ancestral crest and the original founders of the Orzechowski clan. As to the usage of the term “political Pole,” I would argue that it should be only employed to emphasize common loyalty to the *patria*, the Republic, or Poland in general – not to any form of “nation.”

Second, my arguments in this essay suggest that the sense of unity among the noble estate was not as strong as most scholars suggest. The fact that the nobles did not use such phrases as “*naród szlachecki*” and “*gente Ruthenus*” may allow scholars to envision Polish political culture in a slightly different light. My argument does not go so far as to say there was no sense of community among the nobles. In this regard I agree with Frank Sysyn, who, while challenging many of the orthodoxies regarding the Poland-Lithuania Commonwealth, concedes that there was indeed something that united the nobility of the Commonwealth: a sense of obligation to defend the motherland, a desire to defend noble privileges, a sense of belonging to the same republic, and, for many, a desire to defend the Catholic faith.¹²¹ My argument, however, is that these types of bonds were very different from the concept of the “noble nation,” in which the nobles felt a strong sense of brotherhood amongst the entire noble estate, and that their first obligation went to defending the “noble nation.” What my research suggests is the possibility that the ties uniting the nobility were hierarchical, more vertical than horizontal, and were based on networks of patronage, creating what Antoni Mączak calls “a federation of great country houses.” The horizontal ties could also have been strong, but would have been more local in nature – those of the local communities of the landed nobility. In this sense, then, my work suggests that even though the structure of the Polish-Lithuanian state was quite singular in

¹²⁰ I continue this argument *ibidem*.

¹²¹ SYSYN: *Ukrainian-Polish Relations* (cf. footnote 46), pp. 58-82.

Europe, one may find more similarities than differences between the Polish nobility and the service nobilities of its Northern-European neighbors.

Zusammenfassung

Natione Polonus und *naród szlachecki*.

Zwei Mythen von nationaler Identität und adeliger Solidarität

In diesem Beitrag wird der Auffassung widersprochen, daß die polnischen Adeligen eine einzigartige nationale Identität und adelige Solidarität entwickelten, die mit dem Konzept der „Adelsnation“ verbunden gewesen seien. Analysiert werden zwei häufig gebrauchte Ausdrücke, die angeblich das nationale Bewußtsein des Adels erkennen lassen: zum einen der Begriff „Adelsnation“ (*naród szlachecki*) selbst, zum anderen „*gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus*“. Dabei stellte sich heraus, daß diese Begriffe im 16. und 17. Jh. nur selten gebraucht wurden, und wenn, dann mit einer völlig anderen Bedeutung als in der Forschung gewöhnlich angenommen. So wurde „*naród szlachecki*“ ursprünglich als rechtlicher Begriff geprägt, um zwischen Angehörigen des Geburtsadels und den Nobilitierten zu unterscheiden. Um die Mitte des 17. Jh.s war der Begriff nicht mehr gebräuchlich.

Schwieriger gestaltete sich die Analyse der Wendung „*gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus*“. Stanisław Orzechowski, der bislang als die einzige verbürgte Quelle galt, hat diese Bezeichnung niemals für sich selbst gewählt und lediglich zwei Mal eine ähnliche Benennung gebraucht: „*gente Roxolanus, natione vero Polonus*“. Orzechowski beanspruchte, sowohl Ruthene als auch Pole zu sein. Seine doppelte Identität ergab sich jedoch nicht aus einem Selbstverständnis als „politischer Pole“, vielmehr kann sie auf die Herkunft seiner beiden Familien zurückgeführt werden: Diejenige, der er den Familiennamen verdankte, stammte aus der Rus', der größere Clan, der Wappenverband, war in Polen beheimatet. In diesem Sinne war er zugleich „*rodem z Rusi*“ (aus der Rus' gebürtig) und „*rodem z Polski*“ (aus Polen gebürtig). Mit anderen Worten, Orzechowskis polnische Identität rührte nicht allein von seiner Staatszugehörigkeit her, und mit Sicherheit war seine ruthenische Identität für ihn nicht zweitrangig. Folglich spiegeln Begriffe wie „Adelsnation“ oder „*gente Ruthenus*“ nicht die nationale Identität der Adeligen wider.