

ARTICLES

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UŁADZIMIR A. PADALINSKI
(*Belarusian State University*)

THE DEPUTIES OF VITEBSK DISTRICT TO THE SEJM OF LUBLIN IN 1569:
THE SOCIAL BIOGRAPHY OF PIOTR KISIEL AND TYMOFIEJ HURKO

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In July 1569, a union between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Polish Crown was concluded at the Sejm in Lublin. The establishment of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth significantly influenced both the geopolitical situation in Central and Eastern Europe and the socio-cultural development of the region. For a long time, the Union of Lublin (1569) was studied by historians mainly in the context of military-political, religious and economic processes on a pan-European or regional scale. In the creation of a new state, attention was also drawn to the role of the monarch, the Polish King and Grand Duke of Lithuania, Sigismund Augustus. In historiography, the attitude of the political elites of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania towards the union was usually identified solely with the position of the most influential figures, such as Mikołaj 'the Black' Radziwiłł, Mikołaj 'the Red' Radziwiłł or Jan Chodkiewicz. However, representatives of the broader circles of the district nobility of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania also played their part in the negotiations on establishing the union. Deputies to the Sejm of Lublin in 1569 from Vitebsk district were among such people: Piotr Tymofiejewicz Kisiel and Tymofiej Ostafiejewicz Hurko.

Although the session of the Sejm of Lublin of 1569, which was the crowning of the negotiations between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Polish Crown in the 1560s, has a very rich historiography, the personal composition of the Lithuanian¹ delegation in Lublin was not sufficiently discussed by historians. Monographs devoted to the most famous participants of the Sejm,

¹ The terms 'Lithuanian' and 'Ruthenian' are used in the historical sense.

such as Mikołaj ‘the Red’ Radziwiłł² or Mikołaj Krzysztof ‘the Orphan’ Radziwiłł³, did not fundamentally change the situation. It should be noted that the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was represented at the Sejm of Lublin (10 January – 12 August 1569) by two delegations. The first delegation, in protest against the unwavering stance of the monarch and representatives of the Crown with regard to the establishment of the state union, left the meeting on the night of 1 March 1569. However, at the beginning of June 1569, under the pressure of various circumstances, especially after the incorporation of some Ukrainian lands and Podlasie to Poland, the representation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, in a significantly changed composition, returned to Lublin. It was this very Lithuanian delegation, including the representatives of Vitebsk district, Piotr Kisiel and Tymofiej Hurko, that signed the *Act of the Union of Lublin* on 1 July 1569⁴, and from 2 July to 12 August worked at the first General Sejm of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. In some publications I tried to create a collective portrait of the senators and landed deputies of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania who participated in the sessions of the Sejm in the summer of 1569⁵. Nevertheless, a thorough examination of the life and activities of the ‘ordinary’ members of the Union Sejm is, in my opinion, still an ongoing task, because the interests and ideas, mentality and values, and, last but not least, personal experiences of these people directly affected their social and political position, and thus, to some extent, the life of the entire state. Furthermore, biographical research is an excellent opportunity to look at the social situation through the fate of a particular individual⁶.

² Marek FERENC, *Mikołaj Radziwiłł „Rudy” (ok. 1515–1584). Działalność polityczna i woj-skowa*, Kraków 2008; Raimonda RAGAUSKIENĖ, *Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės kancleris Mikalojus Radvila Rudasis (Apie 1515–1584 m.)*, Vilnius 2002.

³ Tomasz КЕМПА, *Mikołaj Krzysztof Radziwiłł „Sierotka” (1549–1616) – wojewoda wileński*, Warszawa 2000. See also translation into Belarusian: Томаш Кэмпa, *Мікалаі Крыштаф Радзівіл Сіротка (1549–1616). Віленскі ваявода*, навук. рэд. Аляксей Шаланда, пер. Сяргей Петрыкевіч, Мiр 2016 [Tomash КЕМПА, *Mikalay Krysh taf Radzivil Sirotk a (1549–1616). Vilyenski vayavoda*, ed. Alyaksey SHALANDA, trans. Syarhuy PУЕТРUKYEVICH, Mиr 2016].

⁴ *Akta unii Polski z Litwą 1385–1791*, ed. Stanisław KUTRZEWA, Władysław SEMKOWICZ, Kraków 1932, pp. 348–362.

⁵ Уладзімір Падалінскі, *Прадстаўніцтва Вялікага Княства Літоўскага на Люблінскім сойме 1569 года. Удзел у працы першага вальнага сойма Рэчы Паспалітай*, рэд. Андрэй Радаман, Мінск 2017 [Uładzimir PADALINSKI, *Pradstawnitstva Vyalikaha Knyastva Litovskaha na Lyublińskim soymie 1569 hoda. Udziel u pratsy pyershaha val'naha soyma Rechy Paspalıtay*, ed. Andrey RADAMAN, Minsk 2017]. See also: Uładzimir PADALINSKI, *The Representation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the Final Stage of the Sejm of Lublin (June – August 1569)*, *Zapiski Historyczne*, vol. 79: 2014, no. 4, pp. 27–51.

⁶ Among the abundant literature on biographical research see, for example: Алан Вильсон, *Биография как история*, Москва 1970 [Alan VIL'SON, *Biografiya kak istoriya*, Moskva 1970], pp. 2–11; Эрих Ю. Соловьев, *Биографический анализ как вид историко-философского*

It was no coincidence that Piotr Kisiel and Tymofiej Hurko were chosen for the study. On the one hand, they were typical representatives of the ordinary, untitled nobility of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. They belonged to the same generation (both were probably born in the 1520s), which makes it easier to point out to some common social features of the district nobility. They both had a certain authority among the local nobility, but they did not build a great political career and cannot be counted among the outstanding representatives of their time. However, the historical circumstances and probably some personal skills contributed to the fact that they represented Vitebsk district at the famous Sejm of Lublin in 1569. Moreover, the activities of Piotr Kisiel and Tymofiej Hurko were connected with Vitebsk land, which was particularly characterised by rich tradition of social and political life⁷. Thus, the aim of the article is to show the characteristic features of the public activity of petty and middle nobility of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the era of the Sejm of Lublin, using the example of the life and activity of Piotr Kisiel and Tymofiej Hurko.

So far, no separate attention has been paid to the figures of Piotr Kisiel or Tymofiej Hurko. The most important information about their lives, which, however, is not always true, is contained in genealogical works of Polish historians from the 18th to early 20th centuries: Kasper Niesiecki, Adam Boniecki, and Teodor Żychliński⁸. The latest genealogy of the Hurko family was published in the late 20th century by the Russian researcher Andrey Narbut⁹. On the other hand, at the beginning of the 21st century, a collection of materials devoted to the well-known dignitary of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the voivode of Kiev (1649–1653) Adam Kisiel, was published. This collection also

исследования [Erikh Yu. SOLOV'YEV, *Biograficheskiy analiz kak vid istoriko-filosofskogo issledovaniya*], [in:] idem, *Прошлое толкует нас. (Очерки по истории философии и культуры)*, Москва 1991 [*Proshloye tolkuyet nas. (Ocherki po istorii filosofii i kul'tury)*], Moskva 1991], p. 46; Robert MILLER, *Biographical Method*, [in:] *The A-Z of Social Research: A Dictionary of Key Social Science Research Concepts*, ed. Robert L. MILLER, John D. BREWER, London 2003, pp. 15–17; *Noble Society: Five Lives from Twelfth-Century Germany*, trans. and ed. Jonathan R. LYON, Manchester 2017, pp. 1–20; Brian ROBERTS, *Biographical Research*, Buckingham 2002, pp. 2–3, 5, 13.

⁷ See for example: Максим Макараў, *Ад пасада да магдэбургіі. Прававое становішча насельніцтва местаў Беларускага Падзвіння ў XIV – першай палове XVII ст.*, Мінск 2008 [Maksim MAKARAU, *Ad pasada da mahdeburhii. Pravavoye stanovishcha nasyel'nitstva myestaw Byelaruskaha Padzvinnya w XIV – pyershay Palovyexvii st.*, Minsk 2008], pp. 50–59.

⁸ Kasper NIESIECKI, *Herbarz Polski*, vol. 4–5, ed. Jan BOBROWICZ, Lipsk 1839–1840; *Poczet rodów w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim w XV i XVI wieku*, ed. Adam BONIECKI, Warszawa 1887; Teodor ŻYCHLIŃSKI, *Złota księga szlachty polskiej*, vol. 3, Poznań 1881.

⁹ Андрей Н. Нарбут, *Гурко-Ромейки. Родословные росписи*, вып. 10, Москва 1998 [Andrey N. NARBUT, *Gurko-Romeyki. Rodoslovnyye rospisi*, vol. 10, Moskva 1998].

includes the genealogy of the Kiesel family¹⁰. Teresa Zielińska demonstrated the importance of public offices (senatorial and district offices) in the development of the society of noblemen in the 16th–18th centuries in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, using the analysis of the social position of several generations of the Hurko family in Vitebsk district as an example¹¹.

The article is based on various historical documents, mainly published in source editions. Let us emphasize that no personal primary sources connected with the life of Piotr Kiesel and Tymofiej Hurko (e.g. letters, diaries, wills, etc.) have been preserved to this day. Therefore, reconstructing their inner, psychological world is an impossible task. However, one may attempt to create a social (or socio-historical) biography¹² of Piotr Kiesel and Tymofiej Hurko and to show the role of these 'unremarkable' individuals in the important historical events of the second half of the 16th century, and, through their personal lives and the lives of their closest descendants, reflect the characteristic features of the public life of the society of noblemen of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

The Hurko family, whose earliest mentions date back to the 15th century, descended from the local Vitebsk boyars¹³. In the 1550s, Tymofiej's father, Ostafiej Hurko, held the office of a standard-bearer of Vitebsk land¹⁴, which played a significant role in public life at the local level. Tymofiej was married to a noblewoman from Polotsk land, Hanna Hlebowna, from whom he received estates also in that voivodeship¹⁵. On the other hand, the Kiesel family belonged to the boyars of Volhynia region, and, according to the family genealogical

¹⁰ Адам Григорьевич Кисель. Сборник материалов, сост. Владимир Н. Киселев, Владимир О. Свистун, Минск 2012 [*Adam Grigor'evich Kisel'. Sbornik materialov*, ed. Vladimir N. KISELEV, Vladimir O. SVISTUN, Minsk 2012], pp. 11–17, 124–131.

¹¹ Teresa ZIELIŃSKA, *Rody urzędami zaszczycone. Próba sondażu*, [in:] *Spółeczeństwo staropolskie. Studia i szkice*, vol. 2, ed. Andrzej WYCZAŃSKI, Warszawa 1979, pp. 193–227.

¹² Лорина П. Репина, *Историческая наука на рубеже XX–XXI вв. Социальные теории и историографическая практика*, Москва 2011 [Lorina P. REPINA, *Istoricheskaya nauka na rubezhe XX–XXI vv. Sotsial'nyye teorii i istoriograficheskaya praktika*, Moskva 2011], pp. 287–324.

¹³ *Историко-юридические материалы, извлеченные из актовых книг губерний Витебской и Могилевской* [*Istoriko-yuridicheskiye materialy, izvlechennyye iz aktovykh knig guberniy Vitebskoy i Mogilevskoy*] (hereinafter cit. ИЮМ), вып. 28, ч. 2: *Оршанский гербовник*, ред. Дмитрий И. Довгялло, Витебск 1900 [vol. 28, part 2: *Orshanskiy gerbovnik*, ed. Dmitriy I. DOVGIALLO, Vitebsk 1900], p. 56; А. Н. Нарбут, *op.cit.*, pp. 4–5; see also: K. NIESIECKI, *op.cit.*, vol. 4, pp. 396–397; *Poczet rodów w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim w XV i XVI wieku*, p. 95.

¹⁴ А. Н. Нарбут, *op.cit.*, p. 5; *Popisy wojskowe pospolitego ruszenia Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego (1524–1566)*, intro. and prep. Gediminas LESMAITIS, trans. Beata PIASECKA, ed. Karol ŁORATECKI, Białystok 2016, p. 105.

¹⁵ А. Н. Нарбут, *op.cit.*, p. 5; *Рэвізія Полацкага ваяводства 1552 года*, укладу Васіль Варонін, Мінск 2011 [*Reviziya Polatskaha vavavodstva 1552 hoda*, ed. Vasil' VARONIN, Minsk 2011], pp. 129–130.

legend, were descended from Sviatold, the Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Prince of Kiev, Vladimir I 'the Great'¹⁶. In accordance with the name of one of the estates (ancestral properties) – Dorohinicze in Volhynia – the representatives of the family used the name Kisiel of Dorohinicze. Piotr's father, Tymofiej (Tychno) Kisiel could be the first landowner in Vitebsk district, sometime in mid-16th century¹⁷. Piotr Kisiel married Marina of the Sów family¹⁸ and gradually became established among the citizens of Vitebsk district, becoming the founder of the Vitebsk branch of the family. Fragmentary data on the land ownership of Piotr Kisiel and Tymofiej Hurko allow us to refer them to the category of petty nobility of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania¹⁹.

The beginning of the second half of the 16th century was a turning point in the history of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. First of all, in 1558 the country entered the Livonian War. In the years 1562–1564, the eastern territories of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, in particular the Belarusian basin of the Daugava, became the most important arena for armed clashes with the army of the Muscovite State. In May 1562, Vitebsk withstood the siege of Muscovite troops, but in November 1564 the Muscovites captured the castle of Ozieryszcze, which was an important strategic location in the north of Vitebsk district²⁰. The loss of Polotsk in February 1563 and the occupation of a large part of Polotsk land led to Vitebsk district being surrounded by the enemy from the north and east.

The war with Moscow directly affected the life of Tymofiej Hurko and Piotr Kisiel. As early as in the winter of 1561/1562, Tymofiej Hurko reportedly delivered letters of the Grand Duke of Lithuania to the *Vogt* and the Vitebsk townsfolk on collecting tolls, which were approved at the Lithuanian Grand Duchy Sejm in November 1561²¹. Piotr Kisiel, who had the function of a Vitebsk headman (*horodniczy*) at least from September 1565, played an important role

¹⁶ K. NIESIECKI, op.cit., vol. 5, pp. 95–98; *Poczet rodów w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim w XV i XVI wieku*, pp. 124–125; T. ŻUCHLIŃSKI, op.cit., pp. 109–114; *Адам Григорьевич Кисель*, pp. 11–15, 124–125.

¹⁷ Around 1586, the sons of P. Kisiel sold their Mokraje-Pole estate located in Vitebsk district; ИЮМ, вып. 21, ред. Михаил Веревкин, Витебск 1891 [vol. 21, ed. Mikhail VEREVKIN, Vitebsk 1891], p. 470. This estate may have belonged to their grandfather, Tymofiej Kisiel.

¹⁸ *Адам Григорьевич Кисель*, p. 129.

¹⁹ У. Падалінскі, op.cit., pp. 150–153, 185, 187.

²⁰ Андрей Янушкевич, *Вялікае Княства Літоўскае і Інфлянцкая вайна 1558–1570 гг.*, Мінск 2007 [Andrzej JANUSZKIEWICZ, *Vyalikaye Knyastva Litovskaye i Infljantskaya vajuна 1558–1570 hh.*, Minsk 2007], pp. 53–95.

²¹ Матвей К. Любавский, *Литовско-русский сейм. Опыт по истории учреждения в связи с внутренним строем и внешнею жизнью государства*, Москва 1900 [Matvey K. LYUBAVSKIY, *Litovsko-russkiy seym. Opyt po istorii uchrezhdeniya v svyazi s vnutrennimstroem i vneshneyu zhiznyu gosudarstva*, Moskva 1900], pp. 625–628, annex, p. 103.

in defending Vitebsk district²². He was responsible for the construction and repair of a fortification in Vitebsk, the supply of food and weapons to Vitebsk castles, and in certain cases he could even lead their defence. Although there is no direct evidence of this in the primary sources I am familiar with, I believe that both Piotr Kisiel and Tymofiej Hurko personally took part in the military action against the Muscovite army. In addition, both had negative experiences of this war. Piotr Kisiel's land estate was destroyed as a result of the attack of Muscovite troops on Vitebsk district²³, most probably during the campaign in 1562. Tymofiej Hurko's property, on the other hand, which was located in Polotsk land (parts of which were in Vietryno and Nacza), was entirely under Muscovite occupation²⁴.

In the 1540s and 1550s, part of the middle and petty nobility tried to increase their role in the political life of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania²⁵. However, it was not until the 1560s that these endeavours began to bear fruit. The predicament of the Livonian War and the lack of male descendants pushed Sigismund Augustus to tighten the union ties between the Polish Crown and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. On the other hand, in order to conclude a new union, it was necessary to bring the political systems of both countries closer together. As a result of the reforms of 1564–1566, especially the establishment of land courts and local sejmiks (district noble conventions), the possibilities of the ordinary nobility to participate in political life and influence the decision-making process both at the local and state level were significantly expanded²⁶. For the nobility in the eastern territories of the Grand Duchy, including Vitebsk nobility, direct (negative) experiences of war and state reforms were important factors in stimulating public activity.

²² *Документы Московского архива Министерства юстиции*, т. 1 [*Dokumenty Moskowskogo arkhiva Ministerstva yustitsii*, vol. 1] (hereinafter cit. ДМАМЮ), Москва [Moskva] 1897, p. 192.

²³ Нацыянальны гістарычны архіў Беларусі ў Мінску [Natsyyanal'ny histarychny arkhiv Byelarusi in Minsk] (hereinafter cit. НГАБ), КМФ-18, воп. 1, сгр. 268, арк. 467 адв. See also: ИЮМ, вып. 21, p. 259.

²⁴ А. Н. Нарбут, op.cit., p. 5; *Метрыка Вялікага княства Літоўскага* [*Myetryka Vyalykaha knyastva Litovskaha*], vol. 44: (1559–1566), падрыхт. Аляксандр І. Груша, Мінск 2001 [ed. Alyksandr I. HRUSHA, Minsk 2001], p. 98.

²⁵ See for example: М. К. Любавский, op.cit., pp. 509–609; Andrzej RACHUBA, *Wielkie Księstwo Litewskie w systemie parlamentarnym Rzeczypospolitej w latach 1569–1763*, Warszawa 2002, pp. 37–39.

²⁶ See for example: Павел А. Лойка, *Шляхта беларускіх зямель у грамадска-палітычным жыцці Рэчы Паспалітай другой паловы XVI – першай трэці XVII ст.*, Мінск 2002 [Pawel A. LOYKA, *Shlyakhta byelaruskikh zyamyl' u hramadaska-palitychnym zhytstsi Rechy Paspalitatay druhoj palovy XVI – pyershay treti XVII st.*, Minsk 2002], pp. 27, 30–34; A. RACHUBA, op.cit., pp. 39–41, 45–63.

At the end of summer and the beginning of autumn 1565, a delegation of the nobility of Vitebsk land came to Sigismund Augustus to Grodno to present the monarchs with a number of requests related to military issues²⁷. The delegation also included Piotr Kisiel, the headman. Through their representatives, the citizens of Vitebsk asked the Grand Duke of Lithuania to send military troops to effectively protect their land from a possible attack by the Muscovite State. They also postulated that the castles in Vitebsk and Surazh should be repaired, and supplied with weapons, food and soldiers. In order to better organize the defence, the Vitebsk delegation suggested that the local cavalry masters (*rotmistrz*) should regularly present their cavalry units (*rota*) to the voivode, “ижъбы уставичне врадъ его королевское милости замковый ведалъ о готовности людей, яко на замку украинномъ” [“so that the office of His Majesty’s castle would know about the readiness of the people, as in a borderline castle”]. In order for the defence of the capital of the district to be more effective, the nobility of Vitebsk also proposed the closure of all inns in Vitebsk, as well as the production of vodka to be banned and even the Lower Town to be demolished. There were also many complaints about soldiers and cavalry masters. Generally speaking, these requests testify to the uttermost severity of the situation in which Vitebsk land found itself under conditions of constant warfare. After Ozieryszcze had been captured, the northern part of Vitebsk district was under the control of the enemy. On the other hand, in the areas not occupied by Moscow, Lithuanian soldiers forced the local population to sell food at a lower price, and sometimes simply robbed them of it: “земля Витебская есть отъ неприятелей, также и отъ людей нашихъ служебныхъ знищена [...], зачимъ подданные з места и зъ сель розышлися, а иные ся разыходять” [“the land of Vitebsk has been destroyed, both by our enemies, and our people ... and this is why the subjects from the city and from the country have scattered and others are scattering”]²⁸.

On the one hand, the election of Piotr Kisiel to the delegation in 1565 testifies to the authority that he enjoyed among the nobility of Vitebsk land. On the other hand, the orders that the headman of Vitebsk received from Sigismund Augustus in response to the requests of the people of Vitebsk demonstrate that he also had confidence of the royal court. Thus, according to the will of Grand Duke of Lithuania, Kisiel was to go to Vilnius to the local headman to deliver gunpowder, bullets and nitre to the castles in Vitebsk and Surazh. In addition, the headman of Vitebsk was appointed as the person responsible for supplying food to Vitebsk: “зъ замку Борисовского пятьсотъ бочокъ жита и къ тому сто быдла” [“five hundred barrels of rye and one hundred head of cattle from

²⁷ ДМАМЮ, pp. 192–196; М. К. Любавский, op.cit., pp. 683–684.

²⁸ ДМАМЮ, p. 194.

Borisov's castle"]²⁹. Let us also look at the whole composition of the Vitebsk delegation. It consisted of the local cavalry master, Prince (*Knyaz*) Paweł Drucki-Sokoliński, the headman of Vitebsk, Piotr Kisiel, and the *Vogt* of Vitebsk, Stiepan Łuskina. The answer of the Grand Duke was given to the Pantry of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, acting as the voivode of Vitebsk, Stanisław Pac, and “княземъ, паномъ, бояромъ, шляхте и всимъ мещаномъ витебскимъ” [“to dukes, masters, boyars, noblemen and all burghers of Vitebsk”]³⁰. The above-mentioned delegation was sent to Sigismund Augustus from the ‘particular Sejm’ of Vitebsk land, an institution which for a long time had been one of the most important factors in maintaining the political and legal fragmentation within the Grand Duchy of Lithuania³¹. And when Prince Paweł Drucki-Sokoliński was a representative of the local titled nobility (princes and ‘masters’), and Stiepan Łuskina – the townsfolk of Vitebsk, Piotr Kisiel represented a wide circle of ordinary district nobility.

The ‘Sejm’, which took place in the summer of 1565, was probably the last such convention in Vitebsk. The Lithuanian Sejm of 1565–1566 introduced Pre-Sejm sejmiks in the districts of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and the *Statute* of 1566 granted all the settled nobility the exclusive right to participate in their work³². It is very likely that Vitebsk nobility quickly accepted these innovations. As early as at the General Sejm of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in 1566, Vitebsk district was represented only by two noblemen: a judge of the local Land Court Ivan Bohuszewicz and the headman, Piotr Kisiel³³. The fact that Kisiel was re-elected by the nobility of Vitebsk, this time to the Lithuanian Sejm, should be seen as another testimony to Kisiel’s growing position among the Vitebsk nobility.

This time also, some of the sejmiks’ requests concerned military issues. The nobility asked Sigismund Augustus to exempt them from paying poll tax, to defend them against being abused by soldiers, to organize repairs of and supplies to the castles in Vitebsk and Suraz, and to bestow on the Vitebsk district a special cavalry unit³⁴. At the end of August 1566, at the request of Vitebsk

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 193–195.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 192.

³¹ See for example: Мітрафан В. Доўнар-Запольскі, *Дзяржаўная гаспадарка Вялікага княства Літоўскага пры Ягелонах*, падрыхт. да друку Аляксандр І. Груша, Рагнеда А. Аляхновіч, Мінск 2009 [Mitrafan V. DOWNAR-ZAPOL'SKI, *Dzyarzhawная haspadarka Vyalikaha knyastva Litowskaha pry Yahyelonakh*, ed. Alyaksandr I. HRUSHA, Rahnyeda A. ALYAKHNOVICH, Minsk 2009], pp. 93–95.

³² *Статут Вялікага княства Літоўскага 1566 года*, рэд. Таісія І. Доўнар [et al.], Мінск 2003 [*Statut Vyalikaha knyastva Litowskaha 1566 hoda*, ed. Taisiya I. DOUNAR [et al.], Minsk 2003], pp. 79–80; А. РАСНУВА, op.cit., pp. 47–48.

³³ М. К. Любавский, op.cit., p. 754.

³⁴ ДМАМЮ, pp. 203–204.

deputies, the monarch issued a special letter to the Lithuanian Land Treasurer Mikołaj Naruszewicz. In the letter, the Grand Duke ordered that, in accordance with the decision of the court composed of Stanisław Pac, the voivode of Vitebsk, and the Grand Duke's envoy Andrej Charytonowicz-Obrynski, the citizens of Vitebsk were to be compensated for all the damage caused to them by the local cavalry masters and their subordinates from the land's treasury³⁵.

The instructions given to the Vitebsk deputies to the Lithuanian Sejm also included sections concerning political issues, particularly the Polish-Lithuanian Union. This was related to the fact that one of the main tasks of the General Sejm of 1566 in Brest, together with ensuring the defence of the state and improving the *Second Statute*³⁶, was to discuss the conditions of the union between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Crown of Poland. In the Grand Duke's Sejm letters to district sejmiks, which were convened on 10 April 1566, it was explicitly stated that the council members and land deputies of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania would travel from Brest towards the border with Poland, where a Sejm with the senators and deputies of the Polish Crown would take place: “для постановеня skutочного въ справахъ, унеи сполной, братской, одностайной милости, згоде належачихъ” [“to make effective provisions in the matters of the Union, in respect of fraternity, love and reconciliation”]³⁷. Although in 1566 such a Sejm did not finally take place³⁸, the Vitebsk nobility reminded in their requests to the Grand Duke that they had sent Piotr Kisiel and Ivan Bohuszewicz to the Sejm also for “намовы около унеи” [“the discussion of the union”]³⁹. It is obvious that as early as 1566 the citizens of Vitebsk were ready for a new union⁴⁰. Living on the border with the Muscovite State and personally experiencing all the burdens of war, they saw rescue in a close alliance with Poland, hoping for a change of fortune in the war in favour of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. And one of the representatives, to whom the nobility of Vitebsk district was ready to entrust direct participation in the final negotiations concerning the union in 1566, was again Piotr Kisiel. It is true that the available primary sources do not provide the answer

³⁵ *Lietuvos Metrika* (hereinafter cit. *Lietuvos Metrika*), vol. 47: 1565–1567, ed. Eglė DEVIČKUTĖ, Gedeminas LESMAITIS, Vilnius 2018, pp. 67–68.

³⁶ М. К. Любавский, op.cit., pp. 738–752.

³⁷ Ibid., annex, pp. 164–167.

³⁸ Андрэй Янушкевіч, *Унія з Каронай ва ўнутранай палітыцы ВКЛ перад Люблінскім соймам 1569 г.* [Andrey YANUSHKEVICH, *Uniya z Karonay va wnutranay palitytsy VKL puerad Lyublinskim soytam 1569 h.*], Беларускі Гістарычны Агляд, т. 10: 2003, сш. 1–2 (18–19) [Byelaruski Historychny Ahlyad, vol. 10: 2003, no. 1–2 (18–19)], pp. 46–47.

³⁹ ДМАМЮ, р. 202.

⁴⁰ Мітрафан В. Доўнар-Запольскі, *Выбранае*, рэд., прадмова Валянціны Лебедзевай, Мінск 2017 [Mitrafan V. DOWNAR-ZAPOL'SKI, *Vybranaye*, ed. and intro. Valyantsin LEBEDZEVA, Minsk 2017], p. 377.

to the basic question: under what conditions the nobility of Vitebsk agreed to conclude a new union in the late 1560s. In September 1568, the Muscovite army of 6,000 soldiers approached Vitebsk again. Fortunately, on the third day of the siege, due to the active resistance of the defenders, the enemy was forced to retreat⁴¹. Regardless of this, the siege had to strengthen the pro-union sentiments among the local nobility.

Let us emphasize that the establishment of Land Courts in the districts of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, announced by the privilege issued in Bielsk on 1 July 1564⁴², revealed people who enjoyed authority among the district nobility. At the General Sejm in Brest (April – August 1566), the deputies of Vitebsk district thanked Sigismund Augustus that “врадниковъ земскихъ в поветехъ причинити рачиль” [“he established land officials in the district”], mainly the officials of the district court. They also asked the Grand Duke of Lithuania to appoint one of the four candidates elected by the nobility as the scribe of the Land Court in Vitebsk. The monarch granted this request and appointed Vasyl Bohdanowicz “на тотъ урядъ писарский” [“to take the post of a scribe”]⁴³. In all likelihood, the candidates for the post of the scribe were elected at the Pre-Sejm sejmik in Vitebsk on 10 April 1566⁴⁴. This corresponded to the standards of the new *Statute* of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, which came into force on 1 March 1566 and introduced election sejmiks for the election of local court officials in the districts⁴⁵. On the other hand, the judge of the Land Court and the deputy judge were apparently elected in Vitebsk district before the spring of 1566. At the Brest Sejm, the judge of the Land Court in Vitebsk, Ivan Bohuszewicz, was one of the Vitebsk deputies⁴⁶. Since at the Sejm of 1566, the deputies from Vitebsk district raised the issue of the appointment of the Vitebsk scribe only, it can be assumed that the office of Vitebsk deputy judge was already occupied at that time. According to Alaksei Szalanda, the election of district court officials could take place before the *Statute* of 1566 was implemented, either in the Camp Sejm (i.e. the Sejm was held in a military camp) near Minsk in November – December 1564, or in the General Sejm in November 1565 – January 1566 in Vilnius⁴⁷. In my opinion, however, before

⁴¹ А. Янушкевич, *Вялікае Княства Літоўскае*, р. 109.

⁴² Darius VILIMAS, *Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės žemės teismo sistemas formavimasis (1564–1588)*, Vilnius 2006, pp. 59–63.

⁴³ ДМАМЮ, р. 203.

⁴⁴ М. К. Любавский, *op.cit.*, annex, р. 167; А. РАСНУВА, *op.cit.*, р. 55.

⁴⁵ *Статут Вялікага княства Літоўскага 1566 года*, pp. 96–98.

⁴⁶ ДМАМЮ, р. 202.

⁴⁷ Аляксей Шаланда, *Гродскі суд Гарадзенскага павета ВКЛ у другой палове XVI–XVII ст., частка 1: Перадумовы, ход і вынікі рэформы гарадзенскага замкавага суда (1562–1572 гг.)* [Alyaksyeu SHALANDA, *Hrodski sud Haradzyenskaha pavyeta VKL u druhoj palovye XVI–XVII st., part 1: Pyeradumovy, khod i vyniki reformy haradzyenskaha zamkavaha suda*

autumn of 1565, Vitebsk region preserved the principles of organising political life characteristic of the previous historical period. Therefore, the election and nomination of Vitebsk land officials, judge and deputy judge, could have taken place at the Vilnius Sejm in 1565–1566.

Tymofiej Hurko was elected the first deputy judge of Vitebsk in history⁴⁸. Of course, this fact testifies to the authority that he enjoyed among the local nobility. Let us emphasize that Vitebsk nobility completed the formation of the local Land Court relatively quickly. This should not come as a surprise, as the idea of reforming the judicial system at the local level was quite popular here. As early as at the General Sejm of 1558, the representatives of Vitebsk nobility asked Sigismund Augustus to appoint a judge and a scribe necessary for the realization of “борзейшее справедливости” [“faster proceedings”]⁴⁹. This undoubtedly is a testimony to the political culture of the highest level among the most active part of the local noble community.

In August 1566, Sigismund Augustus, in his reply to the citizens of Vitebsk district, asked them to elect such representatives for the future joint Sejm with Poland who, during the union negotiations “з утстивостью и пожиткомъ земскимъ поступовати умели” [“would act honestly and for the benefit of the state”]⁵⁰. In the spring of 1569, on the eve of the land Sejmiks in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the monarch asked the nobility to elect reasonable, worthy, and efficient persons as a new delegation to the Sejm of Lublin, with limited authorisation in the matters of establishing the union and the organization of common defence of the state⁵¹. At the same time, in both cases, Sigismund Augustus promised to maintain equality between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Polish Crown in the new alliance. As a result, it was Piotr Kiesel and Tymofiej Hurko who were elected to the Sejm of Lublin at the sejmik in Vitebsk, which was convened by the Grand Duke of Lithuania

(1562–1572 hh.)), [in:] *Гарадзенскі палімпсест. 2010. Дзяржаўныя і сацыяльныя структуры. XVI–XX ст., рэд. Аляксандр Ф. Смаленчук, Наталлія У. Сліж, Мінск 2011* [*Haradzyenski palimpsyest. 2010. Dzyarzhawnyya isatsyyal'nyya struktury. XVI–XX st., ed. Alyaksandra F. SMALYENCHUKA, Natallia U. SLIZH, Minsk 2011*], pp. 22, 24–26.

⁴⁸ D. VILIMAS, op.cit., p. 149; Андрэй Радаман, Віталь Галубовіч, Дарыюс Вілімас, *Земскія ўраднікі Віцебскага ваяводства (другая палова XVI – першая палова XVII стст.)* [Andrey RADAMAN, Vital' HALUBOVICH, Daryyus VILIMAS, *Zyemskiya wradniki Vitsyebkaha vayavodstva (druhaya palova XVI – pyershaya palova XVII stst.)*], *Commentarii Polocenses Historici*, vol. 2: 2005, pp. 52–53.

⁴⁹ However, they requested that the collection of various court payments was left in accordance with local liberties; *Русская историческая библиотека* [*Russkaya istoricheskaya biblioteka*] (hereinafter cit. РИБ), т. 30: *Литовская Метрика. Отдел первый-второй, ч. 3: Книги публичных дел*, ред. Иван И. Лаппо, Юрьев 1914 [vol. 30: *Litovskayametrika. Otdel pervyy-vtoroy, part 3: Knigipublichnykh del*, ed. Ivan I. LAPPO, Yur'yev 1914], col. 293–294.

⁵⁰ ДМАМЮ, pp. 202–203.

⁵¹ М. К. Любавский, op.cit., annex, pp. 219, 224.

on 10 May 1569⁵². This was another confirmation of their position among the local nobility.

Tymofiej Hurko and Piotr Kisiel enjoyed full confidence of the monarch. In November 1568, before the key union Sejm in Lublin, Tymofiej Hurko was appointed a deputy of Grand Duke of Lithuania to the sejmik of Vitebsk district. On behalf of Sigismund Augustus, he was also a king's deputy to the sejmik in Vitebsk, convened in May 1569⁵³, and it was at this sejmik that he was elected to the Sejm of Lublin. It should be noted that Tymofiej Hurko began his political career as a royal courtier⁵⁴. Holding the headman's office was also considered to be a service to the Grand Duke, i.e. carrying out direct orders from the monarch. For example, in the summer of 1570, Piotr Kisiel travelled from Lutsk to Vitebsk “для службы господарьское” [“to fulfill his service to the Grand Duke”]⁵⁵. One should remember about a great responsibility that was imposed on the headman's office during the war, especially when this office was held in the border district. It can be assumed that both the headman and deputy judge of Vitebsk could count on the monarch's favour in their activities, which further strengthened their popularity among the local nobility. By the way, there is no information about the client relationship between Piotr Kisiel or Tymofiej Hurko with some Lithuanian magnate family. In my opinion, this was an important reason why they were elected to be deputies for the decisive phase of the union Sejm in Lublin. The analysis of the land representation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the Sejm of 1569 carried out earlier, shows that more than half of the Lithuanian deputies had close ties with the royal court, and therefore the monarch had a significant influence on the activities of the representatives of the districts in the Sejm in Lublin⁵⁶. In any case, enjoying the confidence of both the monarch and the local noble community, the

⁵² Unfortunately, we are not in possession of data as to who could represent Vitebsk district at the Sejm of Lublin in January and February 1569.

⁵³ М. К. Любавский, *op.cit.*, annex, pp. 207, 222.

⁵⁴ “Тимофей Гурковичъ”, as a courtier of the Grand Duke appeared in February 1559; *Тастаменты шляхты і мяшчан Беларусі другой паловы XVI ст. (з актавых книг Нацыянальнага гістарычнага архіва Беларусі)*, склад. Альбіна Ф. Аляксандрава, Вольга У. Бабкова, Ірына М. Бобер, Мінск 2012 [*Tastamyenty shlyakhty i myashchan Byelarusi druhoj Palovuxvi st. (z aktavykh knih Natsyuanal'haha histarychnaha Arkhivabyelarusi)*], ed. Al'bina F. ALYAKSANDRAVA, Vol'ha U. BAVKOVA, Iryna M. BOBYER, Minsk 2012], p. 185.

⁵⁵ *Архив Юго-Западной России, издаваемый временной комиссией для разбора древних актов [Arkhiv Yugo-Zapadnoy Rossii, izdavayemyu vremennoykomissiyey dlya razbora drevnikh aktov]* (hereinafter cit. АЮЗР), ч. 8, т. 6: *Акты о землевладении в Юго-Западной России XV–XVIII вв.*, Киев 1911 [part 8, vol. 6: *Akty o zemlevladienii v Yugo-Zapadnoy Rossii XV–XVIII vv.*, Kiyev 1911], p. 297.

⁵⁶ У. Падалінскі, *op.cit.*, pp. 172–177.

deputies were able to participate more actively and independently in the social life of the district, region and state.

The composition of the land representation at the Sejm of Lublin in the summer of 1569 reflected the social, ownership, ethnic and religious structure of the nobility of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania quite well. A vast majority of deputies from the voivodeships and districts of the Grand Duchy, and the absolute majority from the eastern districts of Vitebsk, Orsha, Minsk, Rechytsa and Mstislavl, belonged to petty, untitled nobility of local origin⁵⁷. The representatives of Vitebsk district also belonged to this category. One can be tempted to state that, contrary to court officials or the highest land officials, representatives of the ordinary district nobility who were not wealthy did not have any other way of real participation in the political life of the state, but serve as a deputy to the Sejm. Like almost all deputies from the eastern districts of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Tymofiej Hurko and Piotr Kisiel were of Ruthenian (Belarusian and Ukrainian) ethnic origin. We can certainly speak of the Orthodox persuasion of both deputies from Vitebsk district⁵⁸, which in turn proves that Orthodox nobility still held firm positions among the local political elites of the eastern regions of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the third quarter of the 16th century.

As I have already pointed out, Piotr Kisiel and Tymofiej Hurko were district officials, like the majority of the deputies of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania at the Sejm of Lublin. I will also note that, among the local officials present at the Sejm, a significant part of them were linked to the judicial system, in particular to the functioning of the Land Courts. This may indicate a relatively high level of legal knowledge and legal culture of the land representation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the Sejm of 1569⁵⁹, including the members of Vitebsk district. After all, Tymofiej Hurko was a Vitebsk land deputy judge, and Piotr Kisiel was famous for his ability to use his knowledge of law in practice. In September 1566, he won a case against a Volhynian nobleman Ivan Borzobohaty in the Royal Court with regard to the lease of the Orthodox church property of Pięcikora⁶⁰. In October 1569, the Land Court of Vladimir district (Volhynian voivodeship) was settling a conflict between Prince Dmitryi Kozięka and brothers Piotr and Andrzej Kisiel. Dmitryi Kozięka filed a complaint claiming

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 183–193.

⁵⁸ ИЮМ, вып. 24, ред. Михаила Веревкина, Витебск 1893 [vol. 24, ed. Mikhaila VEREVKINA, Vitebsk 1893], pp. 225–234; Henryk LITWIN, *Równi do równych. Kijowska reprezentacja sejmowa 1569–1648*, Warszawa 2009, pp. 115–117.

⁵⁹ У. Падалінскі, op.cit., pp. 166–169.

⁶⁰ The amount of the lease that I. Borzobohaty had to pay to P. Kisiel was 6,000 Lithuanian *grosz*, and the estate of Pięcikora consisted of 10 rural 'granges'; АЮЗР, ч. 8, т. 6, pp. 283–285, 295–298; *Lietuvos Metrika*, vol. 47, pp. 90–91.

that the Kisiel brothers illegally kept and cultivated part of his ancestral property of Kołona. However, the defendants, using earlier court judgements and relevant articles of the *Statute* of 1566, proved before the court that the land of Kołona was an integral part of their Dorohinicze estate as early as the time of their grandfather and father⁶¹. Moreover, court materials show that both Kisiel brothers were represented in court by Piotr. Last but not least, in February 1572 Piotr Kisiel won a case against the falconers of the Vitebsk castle Bohdan Ivanovich and Stiepan Martinovich on the estate of the village of Hlinczynicze⁶². In all of these cases, Kisiel demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the ‘common law and the *Statute*’. Indirectly, the level of legal education of Piotr Kisiel may also be proved by the office that he held, as the headman of Vitebsk traditionally took part in the meetings of the Castle Court in Vitebsk under the leadership of the local voivode⁶³.

On 1 July 1569 in Lublin, both representatives of Vitebsk district signed and sealed the *Act of the Union* between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Polish Crown⁶⁴. Information on further actions of Piotr Kisiel and Tymofiej Hurko at the first General Sejm of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (2 July – 12 August 1569) are rather scarce. It is known, however, that in Lublin they defended the rights of the nobility of Vitebsk district. At the request of their voters, the deputies filed a complaint to Sigismund Augustus about the lawlessness of the voivode of Vitebsk Stanislaw Pac. They claimed that the voivode and his servants used threats and physical force against the nobility. They also claimed, that Pac, in violation of the law, brought the nobility to the jurisdiction of the Magistrate’s Court, and even “по змерлыхъ маетности на себе от жонъ и детей забирати мель” [“took the property of dead noblemen from their wives and children”]. As a result of this complaint, the monarch called on the voivode of Vitebsk to comply with the law and promised to send special commissioners to Vitebsk district to investigate all the accusations⁶⁵. Therefore, in the conflict between the district nobility and the state administration, Piotr Kisiel and Tymofiej Hurko acted as representatives of the local noblemen, and thus enjoyed authority among them. This case shows that the General Sejm was a place where the district nobility could turn to the land

⁶¹ АЮЗР, ч. 8, т. 6, pp. 257–262.

⁶² НГАБ, КМФ-18, воп. 1, спр. 268, арк. 466 адв.–468.

⁶³ *Судебная книга витебского воеводы, господарского маршалка, волковыского и оболецкого державцы М. В. Клочко. 1533–1540*, ред. Анна Л. Хорошкевич, Георгий Я. Голенченко, Москва 2008 [*Sudebnaya kniga vitebskogo voyevody, gospodarskogomارشalka, volkovy-skogo i oboletskego derzhavtsy M. V. Klochko. 1533–1540*, ed. Anna L. KHOROSHKEVICH, Georgiy Ya. GOLENCHEKHO, Moskva 2008], pp. 68, 76, 82, 84, 87.

⁶⁴ *Akta unii Polski z Litwą 1385–1791*, pp. 351, 354, 356.

⁶⁵ ДМАМЮ, р. 502; РИБ, т. 30, col. 530–531.

deputies, and to the monarch through them, for protection against the abuses of public officials and the lawlessness of the political elite of the country. In this context, it was important that at the Sejm in Lublin, the deputies of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania had the opportunity to learn about the vast experience of political struggle of their peers in the Crown, and thus to accept the ideas of 'noble democracy' that were important to them.

I should also add that by the decisions of the Sejm of 1569, the law on taxes for the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was passed, and one of the deputies from Vitebsk was appointed a collector directly during the sittings in Lublin⁶⁶. I believe that the activities of Piotr Kiesel and Tymofiej Hurko in Lublin were positively assessed by the nobility of Vitebsk district. This is evidenced by the fact that for the next General Sejm of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which took place in Warsaw in May – July 1570, the nobility of Vitebsk re-elected Tymofiej Hurko as its representative⁶⁷.

Participation in the works of the Sejm of Lublin in 1569 and signing the *Act of the Union* was the pinnacle of Piotr Kiesel's and Tymofiej Hurko's political activity. Around the beginning of 1574 Tymofiej Hurko died, and the office of the land deputy judge of Vitebsk was taken by Vasyl Hurko, a representative of another branch of the family⁶⁸. Piotr Kiesel died probably in the summer of 1583⁶⁹. During their lifetime, they managed to gain an important position among the local political elite of Vitebsk district and provide their descendants with a basis for a future career.

The financial status was an important factor of social activity. Piotr Kiesel also built a sustainable economic basis for the Vitebsk branch of the family. The estate of Mokraje-Pole was probably the first property he owned in Vitebsk district⁷⁰. As a compensation for the property destroyed by the Muscovite army, Kiesel received seven rural 'granges' from Sigismund Augustus in the villages of: Sowiejkowicze, Ciahniłowo, Łatyhola, and Łuzesno. Moreover, he purchased three more 'granges' in the Wymno estate for his own money. In November 1567, Sigismund Augustus gave these ten 'granges' to Kiesel as hereditament. In addition, the monarch gave the headman of Vitebsk "ловы звериные и гоны бобъровые, которые тамъ в тыхъ же кгрунтехъ на насъ г[оспо]д[а]ря належали, а третью часть озера Вымна" ["hunting grounds

⁶⁶ У. Падалінскі, *op.cit.*, pp. 91–93.

⁶⁷ Ludwik KOLANKOWSKI, *Posłowie sejmów koronnych Zygmunta Augusta*, Reformacja w Polsce, vol. 5: 1928, no. 17–18, p. 135.

⁶⁸ А. Радаман, В. Галубовіч, Д. Вілімас, *op.cit.*, p. 53; D. VILIMAS, *op.cit.*, pp. 149–150.

⁶⁹ *Метрыка Вялікага княства Літоўскага [Метрыка Вялікага княства Літоўскага]*, vol. 70: (1582–1585), падрыхт. Андрэй А. Мяцельскі, Мінск 2008 [ed. Andrey A. MYATSHEL'SKI, Minsk 2008], p. 64.

⁷⁰ ИЮМ, вып. 21, p. 470.

and beaver dwellings which belonged to the Duke of Lithuania, as well as the third part of Wymno lake”⁷¹. Piotr Kisiel also bought the estates of Żońnierowo and Aleksandrowo, from Stiepan Łuskina, located near his estates of Wymno and Łatyhole⁷². Thus, Kisiel created a compact, though not very large, complex of landed estates northeast of Vitebsk. The data on Tymofiej Hurko’s land property is very scarce. It is known, however, that in the district of Vitebsk he purchased the estates of Krotowsza and Krynki⁷³. Besides, in August 1563, in place of the estates occupied by Muscovite troops in Polotsk province, he received from Sigismund Augustus in the district of Vitebsk “дворец у Великомъ Селе [...] з людми и со вѣсими пожитъки того двора” [“a mansion in Wielkie Siolo, along with the staff and all revenues from the mansion”]⁷⁴.

Apart from land ownership, Piotr Kisiel and Tymofiej Hurko left their descendants a different, yet very important foundation for building a career in the public field – the authority among the local noble community. The preserved primary sources about the life of Vitebsk nobility at the end of the 16th – beginning of the 17th century show that they remembered about the protagonists of the article. The authority of Tymofiej Hurko passed on to his son Andrzej (born ca. 1560). Significantly, in the eyes of the local nobility, Andrzej Hurko often figured as “подъсудьковичъ земский витебъский” [“the deputy judge of Vitebsk”], i.e. the son of the former deputy judge of Vitebsk⁷⁵. Andrzej Tymofiejewicz Hurko did not hold any district offices, but it seems that his father imparted some legal knowledge to him. Thus, in 1589, the nobility of Vitebsk district elected him one of the deputies to the highest court institution of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania – the General Tribunal⁷⁶. Let us also stress that Andrzej Hurko was repeatedly invited by the local nobility as a witness to approve various documents, mainly property documents⁷⁷. He belonged to the category of ‘noble people’ who enjoyed the respect and trust of the local noble community. His sons Mikołaj and Andrzej Kazimierz, the grandchildren of Tymofiej, pursued significant careers at the district level. The basis for their careers was the local Land Court, the members of which were generally elected “шляхътичовъ людей добрыхъ, побожныхъ цнотливыхъ, годныхъ, в праве умеетьныхъ” [“from among the nobility, good, pious, virtous and dignified people

⁷¹ НГАБ, КМФ-18, воп. 1, спр. 268, арк. 467 адв.; ИЮМ, вып. 21, pp. 258–261.

⁷² ИЮМ, вып. 20, ред. Михаил Веревкин, Витебск 1890 [vol. 20, ed. Mikhail VEREVKIN, Vitebsk 1890], p. 490.

⁷³ А. Н. Нарбут, *op.cit.*, p. 5; T. ZIELIŃSKA, *op.cit.*, p. 222.

⁷⁴ *Метрыка Вялікага княства Літоўскага*, vol. 44, p. 98.

⁷⁵ ИЮМ, вып. 31, ред. Дмитрий И. Довгялло, Витебск 1903 [vol. 31, ed. Dmitriy I. DOVGIALLO, Vitebsk 1903], pp. 5, 30.

⁷⁶ *Deputaci Trybunału Głównego Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego (1582–1696). Spis*, ed. Andrzej RACHUWA, Warszawa 2007, p. 78.

⁷⁷ ИЮМ, вып. 20, pp. 376–382, 424–427; вып. 31, p. 56.

who were well versed in law”⁷⁸. Mikołaj Hurko began his career as a castle judge in Vitebsk, probably in 1626⁷⁹. Later he held other positions in the noble Land Court of Vitebsk district: he was a scribe (1636–1640), a deputy judge (1640–1653), and a judge (from 1653)⁸⁰. His brother Andrzej Kazimierz Hurko, on the other hand, in the years 1637–1653 was a Deputy Master of the Pantry of Vitebsk, and from 1653 onwards – a land scribe of Vitebsk⁸¹.

The sons of Piotr Kisiel, Jan and Wasyl, also held a significant position in the public life of Vitebsk district (both were born in the late 1550s or early 1560s). In 1596, the office of the headman of Vitebsk returned to the hands of the Kisiel family: Jan Piotrowicz Kisiel took over this position after the death of the former headman, Bohdan Januszkowski⁸². In 1599, the voivode of Vitebsk Mikołaj Sapieha appointed Jan Kisiel as his governor⁸³. Wasyl Piotrowicz Kisiel, probably the younger brother, did not occupy any district offices, but also enjoyed the respect of the local nobility. Wasyl, like his brother Jan, was recorded as a witness in various documents of Vitebsk nobility and belonged to the category of ‘noble people’⁸⁴. Both brothers represented the district of Vitebsk in the Lithuanian Tribunal (Jan in 1594, Wasyl in 1605⁸⁵), which proved their high level of legal knowledge. However, it was Piotr Kisiel’s grandson, Mikołaj Wasylewicz, who had the most staggering career. In 1640, he was appointed

⁷⁸ *Статут Вялікага княства Літоўскага 1566 года*, р. 96; *Статут Вялікага княства Літоўскага 1588. Тэксты. Давед. Камент.*, рэд. Іван П. Шамякін [et al.], Мінск 1989 [*Statut Wyalikaha knyastwa Litowskaha 1588. Teksty. Davyed. Kamyent.*, ed. Ivan P. SHAMYAKIN [et al.], Minsk 1989], р. 139.

⁷⁹ See for example: ИЮМ, вып. 21, р. 461; вып. 25, ред. Михаил Веревкин, Витебск 1894 [vol. 25, ed. Mikhail VEREVKIN, Vitebsk 1894], р. 158.

⁸⁰ А. Н. Нарбут, *op.cit.*, р. 6; А. Радаман, В. Галубовіч, Д. Вілімас, *op.cit.*, pp. 52–54; Т. ZIELIŃSKA, *op.cit.*, р. 222.

⁸¹ А. Радаман, В. Галубовіч, Д. Вілімас, *op.cit.*, pp. 54–55; Т. ZIELIŃSKA, *op.cit.*, р. 222. His wife was Fedora (Theodora) Podbereska – a representative of a noble family which was influential in the eastern areas of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania; ИЮМ, вып. 25, р. 338; А. Н. Нарбут, *op.cit.*, р. 6.

⁸² *Тастаменты шляхты і мяшчан Беларусі другой паловы XVI ст.*, pp. 234–244.

⁸³ ИЮМ, вып. 27, ред. Дмитрий И. Довгялло, Витебск 1899 [vol. 27, ed. Dmitriy I. DOVGIALLO, Vitebsk 1899], р. 248; вып. 31, pp. 44, 46–48, 55–56, 61, 65; Уладзімір Падалінскі, “За залецаньнемъ ихъ милости панов врадниковъ земъскихъ и шляхты повету витебъского учиниломъ...”. *Палітычныя адносіны шляхты Віцебскага павета з ваяводам Мікалаем Паўлавічам Сяпегам (1588–1599 гг.)* [Uladzimir PADALINSKI, “За залецаньнемъ ихъ милости панов врадниковъ земъскихъ и шляхты повету витебъского учиниломъ...”. *Politychnyya adnosiny shlyakhty Vitsyebaskaia praveta z vavavodam Mikalayem Pawlavicham Sapuyeham (1588–1599 hh.)*], [in:] *Sanegi. Asoby, karyery, mayontki*, уклад. Анастасія Скепян, Мінск 2018 [*Saryehi. Asoby, karyery, mayontki*, ed. Anastasiya SKYEPYAN, Minsk 2018], р. 53.

⁸⁴ ИЮМ, вып. 20, pp. 419–424; *Тастаменты шляхты і мяшчан Беларусі другой паловы XVI ст.*, pp. 238, 243. W. Kisiel’s wife was Barbara Starosielska; *Адам Григорьевич Кисель*, р. 129.

⁸⁵ *Deputaci Trybunału Głównego Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego*, pp. 93, 126.

a scribe of Vitebsk, and in 1653 – a deputy judge of Vitebsk⁸⁶. Mikołaj Kisiel's career was also associated with Livonia – in 1654 he was the chamberlain of Dorpat⁸⁷. It should be emphasized once again that the career of the descendants of Piotr Kisiel and Tymofiej Hurko was associated with the Land Court, to which the nobility appointed their representatives by election, which clearly shows the authority and popularity that these families enjoyed among the noble community of Vitebsk district in the 17th century.

Let us also note the very close professional and social contacts among the political elite of Vitebsk district. For example, the grandchildren of Piotr Kisiel and Tymofiej Hurko worked together in the Land Court of Vitebsk for a long time. From 1640 to 1653 Mikołaj Kisiel was a scribe, and Mikołaj Hurko was a deputy judge (just like his grandfather). But by 1653 all the positions of the Land Court of Vitebsk district had been taken by the representatives of these two lines of Kisiel and Hurko families. Namely, in 1653 Andrzej Kazimierz Hurko became a land scribe of Vitebsk, Mikołaj Kisiel became a land deputy judge, and Mikołaj Hurko – a land judge. All of them were taken captive in November 1654 and then died, after Vitebsk had been captured by Muscovite troops⁸⁸. Nevertheless, their descendants still held a significant position in the political elite of Vitebsk district until it was annexed to Russia in 1772⁸⁹. It should also be added that in the 1620s the branches of the Hurko and Kisiel families studied here were linked through the marriage of the grandson of Piotr Kisiel, Jan Janowicz, and Tomiła Andrejewna, the granddaughter of Tymofiej Hurko⁹⁰.

The turbulent military and political events in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the third quarter of the 16th century undoubtedly influenced the political activity of Piotr Kisiel and Tymofiej Hurko. The personal experiences of the 1560s had to directly determine their position on the conclusion of a union between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Polish Crown. Fundamental historical changes of the 1560s – state reforms in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the creation of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth – opened up new opportunities for the wide circles of district nobility to participate in public life. It was no coincidence at that time that the level of public activity of Piotr

⁸⁶ А. Радаман, В. Галубовіч, Д. Вілімас, *op.cit.*, p. 54.

⁸⁷ *Адам Григорьевич Кисель*, p. 129.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 129–130; А. Н. Нарбут, *op.cit.*, p. 6.

⁸⁹ *Адам Григорьевич Кисель*, p. 130; T. ZIELIŃSKA, *op.cit.*, pp. 200–201, 206, 209.

⁹⁰ ИЮМ, вып. 22, ред. Михаил Веревкин, Витебск 1891 [vol. 22, ed. Mikhail VEREVKIN, Vitebsk 1891], pp. 258–264, 458; вып. 24, p. 512. A. Boniecki considered Jan to be the son of Jan Andrejewicz Kisiel (see for example: *Адам Григорьевич Кисель*, p. 129), however, the data on the land ownership of Jan Janowicz and his wife Tomiła, given in the studied documents, lead us to conclude that Jan was the son of Jan Piotrowicz Kisiel, i.e. the grandson of Piotr Kisiel.

Kisiel and Tymofiej Hurko was at its highest. As a result, the Kisiel and Hurko families earned a permanent position among the political elite of the Vitebsk district for a long time to come.

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Dr Uladzimir A. Padalinski
Faculty of History
Belarusian State University
e-mail: ulpadalinski1978@gmail.com
ORCID: 0000-0002-6204-2033

THE DEPUTIES OF VITEBSK DISTRICT TO THE SEJM OF LUBLIN IN 1569:
THE SOCIAL BIOGRAPHY OF PIOTR KISIEL AND TYMOFIEJ HURKO

Abstract

Key words: Union of Lublin; biography; nobles; social activity; Grand Duchy of Lithuania; Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth; Vitebsk district; Sejm

The aim of the article is to examine the most important forms of social activity of the petty and middle nobility of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the second half of the 16th century on the example of the unique life stories of two Vitebsk noblemen. The article discusses biographies of Piotr Kisiel and Tymofiej Hurka, who represented the Vitebsk district at the Sejm in 1569 and directly participated in the conclusion of the Union of Lublin. For a long time, the historiography discussed only the most influential participants of the sessions of this Sejm. However, 'ordinary' representatives of the wide group of nobles from the districts of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania also played their part in negotiations regarding the conclusion of the union.

The aims, ideas, worldview, and values along with the personal experiences of those people directly affected their social and political position, and thus, to some extent, shaped the entire state. The author shows the influence of military and political events of the 1560s on the political activities of Piotr Kisiel and Tymofiej Hurka. The experience gained from the Livonian War influenced their attitude towards the union between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Polish Crown in 1569. The investigations presented by the author show that significant transformations of the 1560s (reforms of the political system of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the creation of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth) gave the Kisiel and Hurka families the opportunity to actively participate in public life and allowed them to occupy a permanent

place among the political elites of the Vitebsk district. The research results are based on various types of documentary sources, both published ones and manuscripts. The methodological basis of the analysis is the biographical method. The article emphasizes that detailed investigations of the biographies of 'ordinary' nobles opened new research perspectives in regard to the history of the noblemen of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the entire Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

ABGEORDNETE AUS DEM KREIS WIZEBSKAJA
AUF DEM SEJM VON LUBLIN 1569
SOZIALE BIOGRAFIE VON PIOTR KISIEL UND TYMOFIEJ HURKA

Abstract

Schlüsselwörter: Lubliner Union; Biografie; Adel; soziale Aktivität; Großherzogtum Litauen; Königliche Republik; Kreis Wizebskaja; der polnisch-litauische Reichstag

Der Beitrag zielt darauf ab, die wichtigsten Formen der sozialen Aktivität des Klein- und Mitteladels des Großherzogtums Litauen in der zweiten Hälfte des 16. Jh. am Beispiel einzigartiger Schicksale zweier Adliger aus dem Kreis Wizebskaja zu schildern. Der Artikel behandelt die Biografien von Piotr Kisiel und Tymofiej Hurka, die auf der Sejm-Tagung 1569 den Kreis Wizebskaja vertraten und sich direkt an dem Abschluss der Union von Lublin beteiligten. Lange Zeit konzentrierte sich die Geschichtsschreibung nur auf die einflussreichsten Teilnehmer der Tagungen jenes Sejms. Dabei spielten auch die „durchschnittlichen“ Vertreter breiter adeliger Kreise des Großherzogtums Litauen bei den Verhandlungen für die Union eine Rolle. Ihre Ziele und ihre Ideen, ihr Bewusstsein sowie ihr Wertesystem und schließlich auch ihre persönlichen Erfahrungen beeinflussten unmittelbar ihre soziale und politische Position, d. h. in gewissem Maße auch den ganzen Staat. Der Autor schildert den Einfluss militärischer und politischer Ereignisse der 60er Jahre des 16. Jh. auf das politische Engagement von Piotr Kisiel und Tymofiej Hurka. Die Erfahrungen des Livländischen Krieges beeinflussten natürlich ihre Einstellung zur Union zwischen dem Großherzogtum Litauen und der polnischen Krone im Jahre 1569. Aus den Überlegungen des Autors geht hervor, dass die bedeutenden Veränderungen der 60er Jahre des 16. Jh. (Staatsreformen im Großherzogtum Litauen, Gründung der Republik Polen) den Familien Kisiel und Hurka die Möglichkeit gaben, sich am öffentlichen Leben aktiv zu beteiligen und einen festen Platz in der politischen Elite des Kreises Wizebskaja einzunehmen. Die Forschungsergebnisse basieren auf verschiedenen Dokumentenquellen, sowohl veröffentlichten als auch in Form von Manuskripten. Die methodische Grundlage der Analysen bildet die biografische Methode. Der Artikel betont, dass detaillierte Untersuchungen der Biografien „gewöhnlicher“ Adliger neue Forschungsperspektiven in Bezug auf die Geschichte des Adelsstandes im Großherzogtum Litauen und in der ganzen Königlichen Republik eröffnen.

POSŁOWIE Z POWIATU WITEBSKIEGO NA SEJM LUBELSKI 1569 ROKU

BIOGRAFIA SPOŁECZNA PIOTRA KISIELA I TYMOFIEJA HURKI

Abstrakt

Słowa kluczowe: unia lubelska; biografia; szlachta; aktywność społeczna; Wielkie Księstwo Litewskie; Rzeczpospolita; powiat witebski; sejm walny

Celem artykułu jest zbadanie najważniejszych form aktywności społecznej szlachty drobnej i średniej Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego w drugiej połowie XVI w. na przykładzie wyjątkowych losów dwóch szlachciców witebskich. Artykuł omawia biografie Piotra Kisiela i Tymofieja Hurki, którzy reprezentowali powiat witebski na sejmie w 1569 r. i bezpośrednio uczestniczyli w zawarciu unii lubelskiej. Przez długi czas w historiografii zwracano uwagę wyłącznie na najbardziej wpływowe postaci biorące udział w obradach tego sejmu. Jednak „niewyróżniający się” przedstawiciele szerokich kręgów szlachty powiatowej Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego również odegrali swoją rolę w negocjacjach dotyczących zawarcia unii. Cele i idee, świadomość i wyznawane wartości, a wreszcie osobiste doświadczenia tych osób bezpośrednio wpływały na ich pozycję społeczną i polityczną, czyli w pewnym stopniu na całe państwo. Autor ukazuje wpływ wydarzeń militarnych oraz politycznych lat sześćdziesiątych XVI w. na działalność polityczną Piotra Kisiela i Tymofieja Hurki. Doświadczenia wyniesione z wojny inflanckiej oczywiście wpłynęły na ich stosunek do zawarcia unii między Wielkim Księstwem Litewskim a Koroną Polską w 1569 r. Z przedstawionych przez autora rozważań wynika, że istotne przemiany lat sześćdziesiątych XVI w. (reformy państwowe w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim, utworzenie Rzeczypospolitej) dały rodom Kisielów i Hurków możliwość aktywnego uczestnictwa w życiu publicznym i pozwoliły im zająć trwale miejsce wśród elity politycznej powiatu witebskiego. Wyniki badań opierają się na różnego rodzaju źródłach dokumentowych, zarówno opublikowanych, jak i rękopiśmiennych. Podstawę metodologiczną analiz stanowi metoda biograficzna. W artykule podkreślono, że szczegółowe badania nad biografiami „zwykłych” szlachciców otwierają nowe perspektywy badawcze w odniesieniu do historii stanu szlacheckiego Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego i całej Rzeczypospolitej.

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