YEAR 1418 – EVENTS IN WROCŁAW AS A PRELUDE TO THE OUTBREAK OF THE HUSSITE WARS

WOJCIECH IWAŃCZAK
Jesuit University Ignatianum in Kraków
ORCID: 0000-0002-2095-7497

Abstract: Hussitism was a movement indigenously Czech, with great specificity and political European connections. In the 15th century Silesia was a part of the Bohemian Crown and Wrocław, at the turn of the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period, was regarded as the second political center in the Bohemian state after Prague. The events that took place in 1418 are known to us in general terms and we even have at our disposal many details from which we can conclude that they were undoubtedly a manifestation of social conflicts and clashing interests of various groups of inhabitants, revealed in the internal life of the medieval city.

Keywords: defenestration, patriciate, commoners, craft guilds, social conflict

In the Central European perspective, Wrocław was a rather special case due to its geopolitical location. Situated in Silesia, in the geographical, ethnic, and cultural borderland, it was a “transmission belt” between East and West. The property and occupational structure of Wrocław’s population was, however, quite typical for urban centres of this size. Therefore, the basic groups of the city’s population necessarily entered into various conflicts in addition to cooperation. The bloody events of 1418, which are the main focus here, were exceptional in terms

1 See notes in, among others: Czechy i Polska między Wschodem i Zachodem – średniowiecze i wczesna epoka nowożytna, eds. Tomasz Ciesielski, Wojciech Iwańczak, Warszawa 2016.

2 Lack of a modern and comprehensive study. See Colmar Grünhagen, Zur Geschichte des Breslauer Aufstandes v. 1418, „Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte Schlesiens“, 11 (1871),
of their severity and scale, as can be seen from earlier sources, which also provided evidence of other social unrests.

It is worth mentioning here that more than a century earlier there had also been tensions between the craftsmen and the merchant patricians, probably caused by the great famine of 1314 in Silesia. Its consequences fell on the whole city, but the city council, dominated by the wealthiest patrician families, pursued a financial policy favourable only to them. Its most influential members were exempted from tax burdens. In 1314, in circumstances unknown to us, 6 representatives of craftsmen were added to the council. From now on the council consisted of 12 members, half of them were to be recruited from the craftsmen. The hated patricians, including Jeszek from Zgorzelec and Piotr from Paczków, were removed from the previous composition. After that the financial structure of the city changed immediately, because as a result of those changes the amount of taxes collected from the community was reduced by ¼ and the council stopped buying cloth from the Wrocław merchants. The guilds’ victory was short-lived, however, as already in 1320 the council was reduced from 12 to 8 members, among whom there was no place for craftsmen anymore.

Another clash took place in 1329 when journeymen apprenticing at leather belt manufacturers went on strike, demanding the possibility of receiving training from masters of their choice and also committing themselves to it for only one year. We do not know what the outcome of this dispute was, but probably the masters, having the support of the patricians, did not give in to the journeymen’s demands. The most serious trial of strength took place in 1333 when weavers from the neighboring town of New Town revolted. The end of the reign of Duke

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4 Ibidem, p. 5; Długoborski, Gierowski, Maleczyński, „Dzieje Wrocławia”, p. 150.

Year 1418 – events in Wrocław as a prelude to the outbreak of the Hussite Wars

Henry VI the Good of Wrocław was marked by social unrest in the city, because as early as in 1331 King John of Luxembourg issued a decree in which he empowered councilors to punish ruthlessly anyone who carried a weapon. The outbreak came in 1333, when weavers went to the duke to complain about councilors whose policies were ruining their craft. They tried to win Henry VI over by suggesting that they wanted to take an oath of obedience not to the councillors but to him. They promised the duke a barrel of gold and a barrel of silver, but they also claimed to have on their side 900 men fully armed with helmets and armour, as well as many apprentices and journeymen ready to fight. The dispute was not settled during the first visit to the duke, so they met a second time, but then it turned out that the strikers were by no means a monolith. The talks had no effect, and the representatives of the weavers were very indecisive. The source information is very enigmatic, we do not know if there was street fighting. The rebellion ended with harsh sentences passed on its leaders. Konrad Gleser, the Vogt of New Town Hartmann and Nicolaus Hartung were decapitated. Six people were sentenced to banishment and one rebel was pardoned due to old age. Historians have puzzled over the actual course of events in this conflict, but the paucity of source information makes it impossible to solve the mystery of why an army of 900 men did not help their leaders. In any case, what we have here is a testimony to the divergence of interests not only between the elite and the masses in the city, but also within individual craft sectors. There were 136 weavers working in Wrocław at that time, so these 900 men could not refer only to guild masters, but also to apprentices, journeymen, as well as servants and local peasants.

The uprising of the weavers did not bring any concrete results, but rather led to the strengthening of the patricians’ position in the city. Against this background, the events of 1418 will be discussed. Relatively little attention was paid to them by medieval Silesian sources. A chronicler from Wrocław Zygmunt Rosicz mentioned the murder of six councillors and one burgher of Wrocław (Johannes Sachs, Henricus Secundus, Nicolaus Freiberg, Nicolaus Feistling, Johannes Stille, Nicolaus Neumargk ponadto Johannes Megerlin) on the feast day of St. Arnulf, that is, 18th July 1418. To give the date and general mention of the riots are limited records.

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7 [Sigismundi Rosiczii], *Gesta diversa transactis temporibus facta in Silesia et alibi*, [in:] *Geschichtsschreiber Schlesiens des XV. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Franz Wachter, Breslau 1883 (Scriptores Rerum Silesiacarum, 12), p. 44. Probably in connection with this yearbook remains the information
in several further Silesian annals. A more extensive description was provided by a Polish chronicler Jan Długosz, who recorded: “On the 19th of July (1418) a group of Wrocław burghers, who had long been bitterly angry with the city councillors, burst into the City Hall and, after breaking down the gate without, beheaded, without any court procedure, six of the councillors, namely: Jan Sachsen, Henrik Schmieden, Freiberger, Nikolai Faustling, Jan Stille and Nikolai Neumarkt, and one of the burghers Jan Mergelin, whom they knew to be conspiring with the councillors, was thrown on his head from the tower of the City Hall. The burghers treated the city councillors with such cruelty that, having stripped them of all their clothing, they decided to lead them naked to execution for the greater disgrace, forbidding them any conversation with their wives and relatives, which they wished so much.Apparently, they were angry with the city councillors for oppressing them in various ways with constant tributes and payments, without providing any accounts for them.”

The most extensive situation report was provided more than 100 years later by a German historian Nicolaus Pol, who must have some detailed descriptions of events at his disposal. First of all, he showed the circumstances of the conspiracy and its preparation: “On Sunday, 17th July, in New Town, in the church of St. Clement, during the sermon at the mass, the common people gathered quietly, as they were all waiting after the service. Here those gathered made a mutual resolution, went to confession before a different priest, who also gave them absolution, then took communion and decided that they would attack the council the next day. All this was to be hidden from the council and, of course, as if involuntary. But the simple, frenzied commoners provoked the following rebellion and riot presumably for these reasons: for the common good and benefit, for deep and serious reasons, the council instituted new levies, or taxes, to be collected on the very day. The common people were the most vocal against this, and in their anger and fierceness

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they neither wanted to resign nor pay. So they held meetings in secret, at which they pledged among themselves that they would not pay these charges at all, and that they would firmly keep together\textsuperscript{10}. Words after words, the conspirators decided to commence their act the next day. And lo and behold: “On the 18\textsuperscript{th} of July, the day of St. Arnulf, the Monday after the Sending of the Twelve Apostles, or the consecration of the church of St. Elizabeth, early in the morning after 12 o’clock, when the shepherd called with his horn to drive out the cattle (this was the sign and signal of the rebels), the commoners gathered again in New Town in the church of St. Clement. The butchers gathered there, who were the impune instigators and criminal perpetrators of this rebellion, together with the weavers and their other relatives, after a meeting, when the sound of the shepherd’s horn rang out, ran to the City Hall and attacked the council in session, not expecting such a riot and tumult.

A cooper, Jakub Kreuzberg, chopped down the entrance to the City Hall tower, and a brewer, Mateusz Hengesweib, struck the City Hall’s bell. The following council members were beheaded in the market square under the pillory: the Burgomaster Nikolai Freiberger, three councillors: Hans Sachsen, Henrik Schmieden, Jan Stille and furthermore Nikolai Fäustling and Nikolai Neumarkt from the commune. A shoemaker, George Rathburg pulled his fellow John Megerlin, who had ducked there and hid in a corner under a roof to save his life, out of the City Hall’s tower without any mercy. He then threw him into the fish market, directly onto the javelins of a rebellious commoners, standing here in full armor, and the commoners then threw him from the javelins into the garden of the fish market, where he ended his life in enormous suffering. What else evil they did besides this is clearly expressed in the following sentence: The broken gate to the council with marks of blows still hangs in the chapel of St. Materno in the cemetery of St. Elizabeth Church”\textsuperscript{11}. Moreover, several councilors were wounded or ran away. The attackers have chopped down the chests stored in the City Hall, destroyed the documents containing the old town privileges, and robbed the money kept in the chests. The weapons stored in the town hall arsenal were also seized. The city jail also fell to their prey, from where they freed all the convicts, among whom were common robbers, criminals of all kinds and prisoners for debt. Interestingly, the robbers occupied the City Hall for 5 days, but the flame of the rebellion did not spread throughout the city, and the private houses and property of the martyred and injured

\textsuperscript{10} Pol., Jahrbücher, I, p. 158.  
\textsuperscript{11} Ibidem, p. 159.
councillors remained untouched, and there are no traces of robbery of private property. This development of events indicates a certain specificity of the Wrocław incidents in comparison to similar rebellions known from cities in various European countries. From a spontaneous rebellion the movement – as some suppose – was subordinated to the patrician families of the Domnigs and Neissers, who used it for their own purposes. Besides, in the description of the later chronicler we find elements of certain stereotypes, characteristic of accounts of this type. First of all, the destruction of documents was a regular practice during popular rebellions; after all, the “papers” contained the debts and dues of the subjects, so it was believed that destroying the documents eliminated the problem of obligations. Release of prisoners, regardless of their offences, was also a kind of demonstration of opposition to the policies of the rulers.

The account draws attention to the key role of weavers and butchers during the revolt. The power and importance of the weavers’ guild was already evident during the events of 1333. Butchers must also have belonged to a distinguished professional group. As Wrocław was the second most important city in the Bohemian state after Prague, it is worth mentioning by way of example that butchers also played a significant role in Prague. Before the Hussite revolution, more than 200 butcher’s stalls were counted there, while in Brno there were more than 50, in Litoměřice more than 40, and in the small Bohemian Brody at the beginning of the 15th century about 20. Despite the large number of people involved in this profession, they formed a fairly closed community with a clear hierarchy, for example, between 1324 and 1393, only three butchers in Prague were granted town privileges, so those who had them defended access to this privilege for others. This shows the scale of internal tensions in this community, which to some extent in Wrocław must have translated into an outbreak of emotions in 1418.

After the events of July 1418, Wrocław remained without any authorities for two weeks. The councillors who survived feared for their own skins, while the craftsmen also did not feel strong enough to appoint a new council. Finally, on 10th August, by the decision of King Wenceslas IV, a new city council and a new board were established. New people, who had not been members of these bodies before,

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were introduced. There were enough room for two craftsmen in each of the two institutions, and a few moderate patricians were also co-opted, which can be considered a compromise. Wenceslas IV called three members of the council and three representatives of the guilds to Prague in order to clarify the actual course of events in Wroclaw. At the same time, the newly appointed council received the king’s consent to introduce a new tax on all the citizens of the city in order to pay Wroclaw’s debts. Wenceslas IV’s attitude has to be assessed as very moderate; in his letter of 25th February 1419 he reprimanded the incidents of July 1418 as a violation of the law, but promised not to draw any consequences provided the city remained peaceful\textsuperscript{14}. This is hardly surprising when we remember that the atmosphere in Prague and in the Bohemian lands was already explosive and led to the Prague defenestration on 30th July, which actually and symbolically started the Hussite revolution.

The violent rebellion in Wroclaw in July 1418 was the apogee of the outbreak of social discontent in the city in the Middle Ages. With all its peculiarities – to which we have already tried to draw attention – it was a rebellion to some extent typical of the late medieval period. Throughout Europe, cities and towns – especially the largest ones – were the scene of various types of strife and rebellion. In 1405 in Bautzen, the poor, led by craftsmen, chased away the town council and attacked the castle where the royal vogt resided. A few years later similar riots were observed in Kłodzko, and in 1416 Żytawa became the scene of a dispute between the town council and the commune. Social struggles at the turn of the 14th and 15th centuries swept across the continent, with struggles in Florence, Lübeck, Paris, Cologne, and Greater Novgorod. Comparable events to those that took place in 1418 in Wroclaw can be compared to those that occurred in Lübeck. The chronicler Detmar of Lübeck gives us an account of what happened in this city which headed the North German Hanseatic League in 1384: “The leaders of the guilds (butchers, bakers, furriers) planned the following: on St. Lambert’s Day, in the morning, when the clock strikes 9 o’clock and the whole council is present, 40 armed men will gather in the inn at Oldevere, they will go to the City Hall, slaughter the council and all its people... at the same time the house... on Klingenberg should be set on fire, so that people would gather there and the conspirators could murder the council without any problems...”. When the authorities learned of this, “the council and merchants armed themselves, put on their armour and guarded their

\textsuperscript{14} Heck, \textit{Walki społeczne}, p. 75 ff.
city, and some of them stayed home in their armour." The end was tragic, the leader of the movement suffocated in prison and his corpse was dismembered, and two other leaders who fled the city did not escape similar punishment.

In Poland, a whole series of active protests by commoners against the patriciate took place in Krakow (1375, 1392, 1396, 1397, 1406, 1418), and in 1399 miners in Bochnia set fire to a mine. These social, professional, and corporate divisions were not always clearly identifiable. In Płock in the 14th century, the dividing line was between the town council and the guilds of shoemakers and salt seller on the one side, and the remaining corporations on the other. In Gdańsk in the late Middle Ages, the discontented were led by leaders of butchers, brewers, shoemakers, and coopers, and in a social conflict in that city in 1416, the economic context was combined with the ongoing Polish-Teutonic war. Similar disputes in Lublin, Łęczyca, and Warsaw were resolved by representatives of professional or social corporations. The role of guilds was ambiguous, they usually constituted a bridge between the authorities and the society, but the policy of the authorities towards these organizations was rarely consistent. For example in Kraków, as early as the 1360s Casimir the Great decided that half of the Kraków council was to be made up of craftsmen. Disputes and disagreements did not cease, however, and after further turbulence in 1418 the king’s commissioners appointed a new body of the common people, a 16-person committee elected by the whole commune and composed of half of merchants and half of craftsmen. The new body was a part of the council and had the power of control over the adoption of taxes and the content of new Willkürs. The new members blended into the council and from the 1530s to the beginning of the next century the power in Kraków was stable and dominated by several patrician families and the guild elite. When speaking about the inconsistent policy of the authorities towards guilds, it is worth mentioning the case of Charles IV of Luxemburg. In 1350 he carried out a restructuring of the city council in Prague. It was a kind of revolution, because the ruler removed the traditional patrician families and replaced them with craftsmen, and it was the first case in the history of Prague when the latter filled most of the

17 Michał Patkaniowski, Krakowska rada miejska w wiekach średnich, Kraków 1934, p. 78.
seats in the city council. We find there a sheepskin maker, butcher, goldsmith, knife maker, shoemaker, clothier, tailor and baker. It would seem that the monarch’s goal was to strengthen the city’s middle class, i.e., the wealthier artisans and middle-wealthy merchants. However, this was not the case. Already two years later a decree appeared prohibiting guilds from operating in Hradec Králové, which confirms the thesis of the lack of a long-term and consistent municipal policy of Charles IV and its dependence on many different – often immediate – circumstances. The document from Hradec Králové reads: “Also to the sons of your burghers or your city that no one should forbid them to work at the cloth craft, but that each of them, though young, should be permitted without hindrance from masters or others to practice and carry on this craft, so that they may thus adequately feed themselves. Monopolies and secret meetings of the craftsmen and any confidential meetings to conclude agreements among themselves are forbidden. We forbid the existence of any organizations in this area that are directed against the free exercise of crafts and we order that all crafts of your city and each particular craft, together with the craftsmen, be subordinated to the city council and be obedient to it just like the other inhabitants of the city. It is also necessary to establish penalties for all those who disobey these regulations in general and each individual”\(^\text{19}\). The ban on all guild regulations suggests that these institutions were to transform into voluntary religious and charitable societies. However, Charles IV of Luxembourg was far from introducing economic liberalism in the lands of the Bohemian Crown (including Wrocław, which is of particular interest here), and guilds continued to function in the cities and towns, for better or worse.

In order to complete the picture of urban dependencies and conflicts at different levels of the political, social, and professional hierarchies, one must not forget about the antagonisms that consumed guilds from within. We know numerous examples of conflicts between master craftsmen and owners of workshops versus journeymen who represented professionals in a given domain but lacked basic rights. In the statutes of Toruń, chronologically at the same time as the Wrocław incidents we are discussing, in 1420, it is ordered: “no journeyman should make meetings or gatherings against our lord, against the country, against the city, or against his guild masters… No journeyman shall make a holiday on Monday or any other working day, or walk about freely, or do any new jobs or contracts that

\(^{19}\) *Codex Iuris Municipalis regni Bohemiae*, ed. Jaromír Čelakovský, Praha 1895, p. 473 ff.
may cause him to leave his master’s employ or receive a dismissal. Whoever breaks this resolution shall be beheaded; if anyone breaks it unknowingly, he shall not know his punishment… All servants, whatever they may be, whether they work for wages or for whatever, because they renounce all meetings, are forbidden for a year to buy any beverage to drink at meetings…whoever allows such meetings to be held in his house shall be beheaded”20.

But let us return to the situation in Wrocław. The outbreak of the Hussite revolution on 30th July 1419 and the subsequent death of Wenceslas IV had a devastating effect on the inhabitants of Wrocław. His successor and younger brother Sigismund of Luxemburg was a completely different personality21. As far as his attitude towards cities and towns is concerned, it seems that here he followed in the footsteps of his great father Charles IV, who believed that cities and towns should be subordinated to the will of the monarch, and that a change of power in a city could only take place with the consent and under the control of the ruler. In early 1420, Sigismund arrived in Wrocław and accepted tribute from the citizens, and the city became the focus of attention as the Diet of the Reich was convened here. Unexpectedly, the question of the repercussions of the revolt of July 1418 returned. Sigismund, who was competing for the crown of Bohemia, in the atmosphere of Hussitism spreading in the Bohemian lands, initiated by the Prague defenestration, decided to send a clear signal that he did not consider any compromise with the leaders of the revolution. The “Wrocław case” was a perfect fit for that. Therefore, an investigation into the events of 1418 was initiated and a court was set up, composed of Wrocław councillors and jurors, as well as representatives of nine Silesian towns directly subordinated to the Crown of Bohemia: Świdnica, Strzegom, Jawor, Lwówek, Bolesławiec, Dzierżoniów, Jelenia Góra, Namysłów


and Środa. On behalf of the king the accusation was presented by: the Highest Bailiff of the Bohemian Kingdom Albrecht Koldic, the Starost of Wrocław Henry of Lazan and several other royal dignitaries. Some historians point to certain pre-dilections of Sigismund of Luxembourg, evident on this occasion, who was an accomplished diplomat, cunning and cynical, but also a man who loved public spectacles. Nothing could have suited such a show better than a spectacular trial ending in severe punishment. At the same time, the didactic aspect was not to be underestimated, mainly by showing the Prague citizens and their allies in the Bohemian lands that the monarch would not compromise with the disrupters of order and with heretics.

Seven charges were formulated against those accused of causing the Wrocław revolt:

1. That they overthrew the council, which is a crime against the King, because the councillors were “sworn to the king”;
2. That together with their helpers, they had armed their way into the royal City Hall and had forcibly broken down the door to the City Hall’s tower;
3. That they broke the royal chests in the tower and tore up the city privileges;
4. That they forcibly and cruelly murdered the councilors and jurors, threw them off the tower and, in some cases, ordered them to be executed;
5. That they got by force into the City Hall’s closets, broke closets and chests and took the King’s money from them, and arbitrarily seized belonged to the councilors;
6. That they robbed the King because they took from the City Hall armour and shields, which had been purchased by Emperor Charles himself, and using these armour and these shields they carried out some of their violence and murders;
7. That they broke into the jail and released people who were great detractors to the city, as well as people who owed the merchants a lot of money and were imprisoned for their debts.

The trial was concluded on 19th February 1420, and provided for the death penalty for the direct perpetrators of the rebellion in 1418, while the others who had fostered the revolt were placed at the disposal of Sigismund of Luxembourg. The monarch was also to determine the list of defendants included in the first and second

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22 See e.g. Kavka, *Posledni Lucemburk*, p. 44.
groups, and to hand down the sentences due by name. Already 4 days after the end of the trial the monarch decided it was time to create a new order in the city and appointed a new council composed of patricians only. The number of councillors was reduced to 8, as it had been 10 or 11 since 1390. He also restored the councillors from 1417 to 1418, who had been deprived of power as a result of the events of 1418.

The climax of Sigismund of Luxembourg’s repressions towards the perpetrators of these events occurred on 4th March 1420. The exact numbers of the victims is difficult to assess. Over 100 people were found guilty, 23 were beheaded in the market square, 64 received the death penalty, but many escaped beforehand, and the rest were sentenced to banishment. The property of the fugitives passed to the monarch’s treasury. Among the 83 people identified by name who were subject to repressions, we find a wide range of various crafts. Most of them were butchers, which confirms the thesis of their considerable activity. Other professions were represented by single people, most of them were knife makers (4), then weavers, shoemakers and bricklayers (3 each). The following professions were represented by one person each: needle-makers, nail-makers, carters, pillow-case makers, bathhouse workers, shield-makers, venison dealers, fishermen, maltsters, wheelwrights, gloves, furriers, coopers. Surprisingly, there were no people from the “bottom of the society”, who should have been numerous represented in the street riots; among those punished, there were only two journeymen and one apprentice. This leads us to conclude that Sigismund of Luxembourg’s action was both political and didactic, aimed at pacifying all guilds by punishing their elites.

On 13th March, the monarch issued another ordinance aimed at removing the causes of possible unrest in the city. All guild gatherings and agreements were banned, popular religious and journeyman brotherhoods were dissolved, the council was also to take over the patronage of foundations and altarias from the guild oath-keepers, all craftsmen were forbidden to carry or keep weapons in their homes. Particularly active butchers were punished separately; they had to reside henceforth in peripheral areas between the inner and outer city walls. Reprisals were also said to affect St. Clement’s Church; according to later tradition, the church authorities planned to close it forever. The last action taken by Sigismund to “put in order” the situation in Wrocław was the issuance of statutes for 28 guilds in the city on 23rd March. They practically abolished the former self-government of the crafts

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and placed them under the strict control of the council, at the same time liquidating the freedoms and possibilities of activity granted earlier by Wenceslas IV’s statutes of 1390.26

Let us now try to address the title thesis of this text in the final part of our deliberations. We can see the connection between the events in Wrocław of 1418 and the situation in the Bohemian Crown and the Prague defenestration of 1419 through a number of various situations. Sigismund of Luxemburg, surprised by such an exuberant development of the Hussite revolution, tried to oppose it by force. On 10th February 1420, he sent a circular to all the lands of the Bohemian Crown, addressed to prelates, lords, knights, subjects, burgomasters, town councils and castle burgraves, in which he announces that he is assuming power in his hereditary Kingdom of Bohemia, which is experiencing religious upheaval, something that was not seen in the reign of his father Charles, nor in the whole of Christendom. With the counsel and assistance of secular and clerical dukes, he writes, it is his royal duty to renew order and obedience to the Roman Church, as it was during the reign of the Emperor Charles. He therefore orders that the Wiclefists are to be avoided, that no aid or alliance is to be given to them, that no new faith is to be adopted, that they are to follow the precepts of the Church and that all disturbances and riots are to be avoided. Anyone who opposed it would be severely punished, up to and including loss of life and property.27 The spectacular manifestation of these general disciplinary decrees was the Wrocław reprisals of March 1420, as retaliation for the events of 1418. On 15th March 1420 Sigismund of Luxemburg organized a great public spectacle that, as we would say today, was meant to “entertain and educate”. Namely, he had ordered to arrest a townsman from the New Town in Prague, Jan Krása, who had come to Wrocław for the occasional fair and accused him of Hussite sympathies. The chronicler of the revolution, Vavřinec of Březová recorded: “In the same year on 15th March (1420) with the consent of the Hungarian king Sigismund... Jan of Prague, called Krása, a great lover of the truth, was condemned in the city of Wrocław, by the papal legate Ferdinand, certain bishops, doctors and masters, and other prelates and monks, to a cruel death in an impious, unjust, and ignoble manner for refusing to keep, believe, confirm, prove, and acknowledge the following articles: firstly, that the Council of Constance was

26 Ibidem, No. 18.
properly assembled under the protection of the Holy Spirit. Further, that whatever the aforesaid Council decided, agreed, and decreed is just, holy, and is to be under penalty of mortal sin kept by all faithful Christians, and whatever it forbade and destroyed it did justly, holy, and rightly. Further, that the aforesaid Council of Constance, having condemned the masters John Hus and Jerome of Prague to a cruel death, acted in a just and holy manner. Further, that in forbidding communion under both kinds it acted in a generally Christian and holy manner. For these articles are false, lying, erroneous, heretical, and blasphemous, contrary to the law of God and the truth of the Gospel. As the above mentioned Krása did not want to acknowledge these articles, he was sentenced by hostile and impious monks and Pharisees, i.e. bishops, doctors, masters and monks, to the most shameful death by torturers and tormentors who dragged him around the city behind horses, showered with numerous insults and curses and burned in flames of fire.28 Two days after the burning of Krasa, the papal nuncio Ferdinand solemnly announced in Wroclaw a crusade against the Hussite heretics promising great privileges for those who would take part in it.29

The repression in Wroclaw certainly reverberated throughout Bohemia, and some scholars believe that the Prague defenestration was certainly an imitation of the July 1418 events.30 In the subsequent complaints of the Hussites against Sigismund of Luxemburg of 20th April 1420 we can read that he exterminated the famous city of the Bohemian Crown Wroclaw by beheading many people and appropriating their property to the detriment of the state.31 In Prague the immediate reaction to the events in Wroclaw in 1420 was an exodus of wealthy German and Catholic burghers, who with the consent of the city councillors moved with their families and most valuable belongings to both Prague tiny castles and some of the safer castles in the area. The departure of Sigismund of Luxemburg from the mild decrees of Wenceslas IV in Wroclaw was a signal to Prague that there would be no mercy. The fear of Sigismund’s army entering the capital of Bohemia must have been great.


after the spectacle in Wrocław. According to Josef Pekař\textsuperscript{32}, the carnage in Wrocław was to be an indirect indication of how the recalcitrant citizens of Prague should be punished. Some scholars believe that Sigismund’s harsh treatment of Wrocław was a mistake, as it thwarted a compromise with Prague which had high potential\textsuperscript{33}. However, it happened otherwise, and all in all, the title statement of this sketch, that the events of 1418 in Wrocław were a prelude to the outbreak of the Hussite Wars, seems to be largely justified.

STRESZCZENIE


Sprawcy rebelii zostali okrutnie ukarani, a ocena wydarzeń nie jest prosta. Podobne wybuchy obserwujemy w wielu ośrodkach miejskich Europy owego czasu. Ich przyczyną były narastające napięcia społeczno-ekonomiczne pomiędzy patrycjatem i pospólstwem, które z kolei próbowała wykorzystywać władza monarsza. Skutkiem „powstania” była praktyczna likwidacja samorządu rzemieślników i ograniczenie swobód obywatelskich. Wypadki wrocławskie odbiły się szerokim echem i miały chyba wpływ na wybuch w Czechach rewolucji husyckiej w 1419 r.

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