

Communicating Europe to the Region: Breslau in the Age of the Renaissance

Karen Lambrecht (*Leipzig*)

'Vratislavim, Silesiae metropolim'—these are the proud introductory words of Bartholomäus Stein (around 1477–1520), an early humanist writer of Silesian and Breslau (Wrocław) history, in his *Descriptio Vratislaviae*.¹ Expressly dedicating his work—which had to wait 500 years for publication—to the very subject of his book, he pointed out that Breslau's fortune was waning. According to Stein, it was not Breslau herself, however, who was to blame for this development, but the mischievous neighbouring cities and territories. If Stein was right in calling Breslau a 'metropolis'—and I want to show that he had very good reasons for doing so—it has to be asked how Breslau, and other east central European urban centres, managed to win this status in the face of the economic and political decline these cities had to accept at the beginning of early modern times.

Expanding on Peter Burke's notion of 'cultural metropolises',² I want to consider these cities' communicative capacities as the key aspects of their status as metropolises. Communicating west and central European cultural innovations to both the city and its surrounding region, playing a part in the dynamic network of east central European metropolises, even Breslau as a mere 'sub-centre' within the triangle of the capitals Vienna, Prague and Cracow was able to create a new urban identity and rôle for itself.

Stein's eulogy did indeed not remain a singular event. In periods of transition the demand for a collective identity, formed by a collective memory, is likely to increase, as we know from several studies on historiography. Medieval and early modern cities were spheres in which community was created through common commemoration (Pierre Nora's *Lieux des mémoires*).³ This community manifested itself mainly in a symbolic way, be it as texts establishing a certain tradition, be it in festive culture, literature or in public buildings such

¹ Bartholomaeus Stenus, 'Descriptio Vratislaviae', in *Descriptio totius Silesie et civitatis regie Vratislaviensis per M. Bartholomeum Stenum* [Description by Barthel Stein of Silesia and its Capital Breslau] (Namens des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens, ed. Hermann Markgraf, Breslau, 1902), pp. 31–73; Rościszlaw Żerelik (ed.), *Barłomieja Steina renesansowe opisane Wrocławia* (Wrocław, 1995). See also Ewald Walter, 'Zu Bartel Steins Descriptio Vratislaviae (Beschreibung Breslaus)', *Jahrbuch der Schlesischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität*, 30 (1989), pp. 63–76.

² Peter Burke, *Antwerp, a Metropolis in Comparative Perspective* (Antwerp, 1993), p. 8.

³ Pierre Nora, *Realms of Memory* (New York, 1996/1998).

as the town hall. Breslau developed a strong demand for urban representation in many fields of historical culture, not only in historiographical and literary texts but also in the symbolic field, for instance with regard to coats of arms and public buildings.

This urban self-confidence or self-assertion is frequently expressed by the denotation of the city as a metropolis in the sources. Beginning with Stein and ending exactly a hundred years later with Nikolaus Henel von Hennenfeld (1582–1656),⁴ the term ‘metropolis’ is strikingly often used for Breslau.⁵ The modern concept of the metropolis is linked with the vague idea of a very large city or a prominent function. As an historical paradigm, which alongside its size also takes account of the quality and multi-functionality of the pre-modern large city, the term has come into use only recently.⁶ Its use in the late-medieval and early modern periods was rather rare and usually referred to the function of being an administrative centre of the church, whose archbishop was called a ‘metropolitan’. Here it was certainly not used in its original, ecclesiastical sense, but to convey the idea of a capital and a political centre. This is true for the great quantity of panegyrics in honour of the city, for instance the *laus urbis* (*Stadtlob*, praise of the city) by Tobias Cober of 1593,⁷ and the one by Salomon Frenzel of 1594.⁸ And Georg von Logau, the secretary of Ferdinand I, king of Bohemia, paid his tribute on the occasion of the king’s entry in Breslau 1527 with the words ‘Ad Vratislaviam Silesiae metropolim’.⁹

The term ‘metropolis’¹⁰ in the sense of ‘central point’ was also applied to some of the major western European cities—Venice was described by foreign visitors in 1567 as the ‘metropolis of news’, while Antwerp was, in 1549, seen as the ‘metropolis of the world’. In our own twenty-first century, a period of increasing interconnection in all areas of public life, all central functions formerly concentrated in cities (especially commercial and knowledge functions) are transferred to the new digital media or are shifted to the so-called periphery.

⁴ Nicolaus Henel von Hennenfeld, *Breslographia, hoc est: Vratislaviae Silesiorum metropoleos nobilissimae delineatio brevissima* (Frankfurt, 1613).

⁵ Ten texts are known from the sixteenth century. See Gustav Türk, ‘Lateinische Gedichte zum Lobe Breslaus’, *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte (und Alterthum) Schlesiens*, 36 (1901), pp. 101–20.

⁶ Karen Lambrecht and Evamaria Engel, ‘Hauptstadt—Residenz—Residenzstadt—Metropole—Zentraler Ort. Probleme ihrer Definition und Charakterisierung’, in Evamaria Engel, Karen Lambrecht and Hanna Nogossek (eds.), *Metropolen im Wandel—Zentralität in Ostmitteleuropa an der Wende vom Mittelalter zur Neuzeit* (Berlin, 1995), pp. 11–31.

⁷ Tobias Coberus, *Vratislavia sive Budorgis celebris Elysiorum metropolis* (Leipzig, 1593).

⁸ Bernhard Kytzler, ‘Laudes Silesiae I. Salomon Frenzels “Rede von der dreifachen Heimat” aus dem Jahre 1594’, *Jahrbuch der Schlesischen Friedrichs-Wilhelms-Universität zu Breslau*, 25 (1984), pp. 45–56. Breslau was praised in prose as part of the larger region and land of Silesia: ‘Terra hujus metropolis’.

⁹ Hans Rupprich, *Die deutsche Literatur vom späten Mittelalter bis zum Barock*, Part I: *Das ausgehende Mittelalter, Humanismus und Renaissance, 1370–1520* (Munich, 1970), pp. 618f; Georgius Logus, ‘Ad Vratislaviam Silesiae metropolim’, in his *Hendecasyllabi, Elegiae et Epigrammata* (Vienna, 1529), folio G4v, in Henel von Hennenfeld, *Breslographia*.

¹⁰ Lambrecht and Engel, ‘Hauptstadt—Residenz’.

Concentration upon the 'old' central locations, upon cities, is in no way made obsolete thereby, especially if the communications processes within these centres form the focus of the investigation. Especially for east central Europe,¹¹ analysing them allows one to work out the significance of peripheral developments, the coexistence and correlation of various cultural groups, and the interaction with the remainder of the European continent. The European range of the Renaissance makes it obvious why this approach can be helpful for this era.¹² Furthermore, the concentration of research hitherto on the western centres has shifted to the so-called periphery, which is a description usually also applied to east central Europe. With this shift comes a re-evaluation of the historical function of these 'peripheral areas', whose culture will no longer be perceived as a passive one, as one which tends to lower the cultural level. Instead attention now is being directed towards the re-shapings, adaptations and responses of these historical and cultural regions, which make obvious both the possibilities and the limitations of an increasing interconnection of cultural forms. Almost inevitably one must go back to the models of communications studies in order to understand such processes.¹³ In particular, the increased frequency of interconnections and of cultural transfers make it appear sensible with regard to east central Europe to speak of a 'European region', without thereby implying a political union. Based on their functional variety and structure, cities attained the status of metropolises as places of concentrated communication and the public sphere. In them the public groupings of the court, bourgeoisie, university and clergy overlapped. These groups spawned cultural élites with European interconnections. In addition, with its domestic and foreign impact the communicative function helped to determine a 'symbolic dimension'.

In early modern east central Europe, Breslau was located in the middle of an urban network delineated by Cracow in Poland, Prague in Bohemia and Vienna in eastern Austria. At the end of the late middle ages and the beginning of early modern times, these three cultural metropolises were characterized by their provision of several functions. They were simultaneously locations of a royal court and residence, an (arch)episcopal see and a university; to a more modest extent they were also centres of commerce. Within the cities the public sectors (the court, the patrician families, the university and the clergy) formed

¹¹ For the definition of east central Europe see Frank Hadler (ed.), *Geschichte und Kultur Ostmitteleuropas in vergleichender Absicht* (Comparativ. Leipziger Beiträge zur Universalgeschichte und vergleichenden Gesellschaftsforschung, vol. 5, Leipzig, 1998).

¹² Peter Burke, *The European Renaissance. Centres and Peripheries* (Oxford, 1998).

¹³ Extensively discussed in Karen Lambrecht, 'Kommunikationsstrukturen und Öffentlichkeiten in ostmitteleuropäischen Zentren um 1500—Forschungsstand und Perspektive', *Jahrbuch für Kommunikationsgeschichte*, 2 (2000), pp. 1–23; also in Karen Lambrecht, 'Analiza porównawcza centrów komunikacji społecznej w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej około 1500 roku', in Leszek Belzyt and Jan Pirożyński (eds.), *Metropolie Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej w XV i XVI wieku* (Prace Komisji Środkowo-Europejskiej, PAU w Krakowie, Zeszyt XXX, Cracow, 2000), pp. 27–39.

contiguous spheres, thus creating cultural élites within a European network and providing the means of communication which at this point in time were still closely linked to personal relations. Compared to the metropolises surrounding Breslau, the city lacked two institutions decisive for intercultural communication: court and university. Against this background political and economic decline should have proved fatal for the city's status. Yet these constraints also came to provide Breslau with the opportunity to play its valuable rôle as a sub-regional centre within the east central European urban triangle.

Breslau's medieval history¹⁴ was marked by the establishment of self-governing rights in 1261, when it adopted the Magdeburg Law, a civic constitution based on German law. The city flourished as an economic centre, which led to the development of a 'new town' east of the old city. This was united with the older city in 1327. With the transfer of Silesia (dominated by the Polish Piast dynasty) to the Bohemian crown in 1335, Breslau's significance sank to that of a political suburb as early as the fourteenth century. The eldest councillor filled the office of *Landeshauptmann* (bailiff), who was the king's representative in the hereditary duchy of Breslau. In this function, the council leader presided over the so-called *Mannrecht*, the highest law court in the duchy of Breslau, in the ducal castle. In the wake of Silesia's incorporation into the Bohemian crown, Breslau's political importance declined continuously. For Breslau's politically autonomous city council, as it had presented itself in the resistance to the Hussite sympathies of the Bohemian king Georg Podiebrad, the more direct rule of Podiebrad's successor, Matthias Corvinus, was a bitter imposition. Matthias used the two decades of his rule over Bohemia to forge the country's first comprehensive constitution and create an effective bureaucracy. Yet Breslau was now being re-organized into a centre of administration, a development significantly promoted by the privileges granted by the Jagiellonian king Vladislav (Władysław) II in 1498. Around the turn of the fifteenth century Breslau had regained a certain, if regional, political centrality. The city council's self-esteem was rising, and even modest central functions in trading and commerce can be observed.¹⁵ But quite significantly the city had to renounce its staple rights after negotiations between emperor Maximilian I, Vladislav II of Bohemia and Sigismund I of Poland in Vienna, in 1515.

Quite unaffected by these events, the church was accumulating power and property around the cathedral island, the *Dominsel*. Major parts of the new

¹⁴ Generally on Breslau's history, see F. G. Adolf Weiß, *Chronik der Stadt Breslau von der ältesten bis zur neuesten Zeit* (Breslau, 1888; reprint, Freiburg, 1998); Waclaw Długoborski, Józef Gierowski and Karol Maleczyński, *Dzieje Wrocławia do roku 1807* (Warsaw, 1958); Hugo Weczerka, 'Breslaus Zentralität im ostmitteleuropäischen Raum um 1500', in Engel, Lambrecht and Nogossek (eds.), *Metropolen im Wandel*, pp. 245–62; Heinz Stöob and Peter Johaneck (eds.), *Schlesisches Städtebuch* (Deutsches Städtebuch, vol. 1, Stuttgart, 1995), pp. 17–48; Jan Harasimowicz (ed.), *Encyklopedia Wrocławia* (Wrocław, 2000); Norman Davies and Roger Moorhouse, *Microcosm. Portrait of a Central European City* (forthcoming in 2002).

¹⁵ Friedrich Wilhelm Henning, 'Die Handelsfunktionen Breslaus in der ersten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts', *Scripta Mercatoriae*, 1–2 (1975), pp. 105–26.

fourteenth-century suburbs belonged to and were under the jurisdiction of the bishop, the cathedral chapter and Breslau's religious institutions. The diocese of Breslau comprised the whole of Silesia within the borders of 1150 and belonged to the Polish archbishopric of Gniezno. In addition to these central functions, the church in Breslau—represented by the bishop—wielded considerable influence in culture and education through commissioning the building of churches and by providing schools (nine alone in the city of Breslau).

The stage was thus set for Breslau to become a sub-centre for communication, with the church and the city council being the main agents within this field. Yet an attempt to set up a university failed in 1505 owing to quarrels between the urban magistrates and the church, and because of intervention by the university of Cracow. Therefore, Silesia developed an educational system of 'itinerant humanists' who received their basic training in a couple of schools at home and then went for their advanced degrees to universities elsewhere. Remarkably again, this restriction turned out to be advantageous to Breslau, because the agents of communication were thus always in touch with the well-springs and mainstreams of the Renaissance and Reformation movements in southern, western and central Europe.

Under the influence of Italian Renaissance and humanism a new type of culture emerged, which has more than once been labelled 'provincial'. It is certainly true that Silesia produced only minor humanists, neo-Latin poets and local reformers, but it was also the first province in east central Europe to develop a humanist historiography of its own.¹⁶ This indicates that Breslau succeeded in adapting cultural innovation to its needs, and, what is even more important, in absorbing and transmitting it to its surrounding region over a long period of time.

Personal contact between certain public sectors was still the main carrier for communication, even though these means of communication were continuously being expanded by the then 'new' media, printing and publishing. It seems therefore justified to illustrate Breslau's communicative capacities by outlining the relational network created by Johann V Thurzó (1464–1520), Breslau's bishop from 1506 to 1520. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Breslau was intrinsically linked to the name of Thurzó.¹⁷ The long-neglected history of the entrepreneurial family of Thurzó demonstrates—during a limited period around 1500—to what extent historically and linguistically based regional borders in east central Europe were overcome, so that one can speak of the unity and homogeneity of these lands in the sense of a European regional culture. The golden age of the Thurzó family coincided with the largest territorial expansion of the Jagiellonian dynasty in east central Europe, when Jagiellonian

¹⁶ Manfred P. Fleischer, 'Silesiographia. Die Geburt einer Landesgeschichtsschreibung', in *Späthumanismus in Schlesien. Ausgewählte Aufsätze*, vol. 32 (Munich, 1984), pp. 49–91.

¹⁷ Karen Lambrecht, 'Aufstiegschancen und Handlungsräume in ostmitteleuropäischen Zentren um 1500. Das Beispiel der Unternehmerfamilie Thurzó', *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung*, 47, 3 (1998), pp. 317–46.

kings occupied the thrones of Poland-Lithuania, Bohemia and Hungary. This period around 1500—paradoxically, it seems—was at the same time a phase of relatively weak kingship, which across east central Europe benefited the emergence of strong nobilities and estates.¹⁸ Through the acquisition of royal lands and offices noble families gained considerably in power, which was only limited from the mid-sixteenth century by the slowly increasing strength of central institutions and rulers.

In its urban centres, however, the east central European region offered to low-born individuals possibilities for intercultural contact and social mobility. The Thurzó family's involvement in the early capitalist economy, in politics, patronage, church, charity, the arts and culture turned them into one of the most powerful clans in central Europe, comparable to the Medici in Italy and France and the Fugger family network in the south German region. Johann Thurzó the Elder (1437–1508) granted his sons an education according to their rank in Cracow, which proved a solid basis for their further careers. Maciej z Miechowa (1465–1513), court historiographer and personal physician to king Sigismund I of Poland, found employment as teacher of Thurzó's sons.¹⁹ For many years, a close friendship bound this teacher and his pupils. It was the family's eldest son, born in 1466, of the same name as his father, who, after his long course of education, became bishop of Breslau in 1506. From 1478 he read philosophy in Cracow, and in 1488 he lectured on Aristotle and Ovid. Having continued his studies in Italy after 1490, he received his Master's degree from the university of Cracow upon his return, advancing to the university's rectorate in 1498. From 1492 to 1500 he was also one of the few scholars of non-noble origin at the cathedral school of Gniezno. Before being appointed by bishop Johann IV Roth (bishop 1482–1506) as his coadjutor and successor in 1502—a decision certainly helped by his father's financial support—Johann Thurzó the Younger had already gained a foothold in Breslau as a canon. If Cracow can be regarded as one of the ports of entry for humanism in Silesia—not only because of its royal residence, but also because of its university—bishop Johann Thurzó was certainly the gatekeeper for Silesian Renaissance and humanism, not least because of his connections to Cracovian scholarly circles.

During Johann Thurzó's time in office, Breslau's relationship to the metropolis of Cracow was influential in many ways, but particularly on the university level. The bishop enjoyed the confidence of the Polish king, Jan Olbracht (ruled 1492–1501), who repeatedly employed Thurzó in ambassadorial functions. In his rôle as royal secretary, in 1501, the bishop was sent to Nuremberg for

¹⁸ See Joachim Bahlcke, Hans-Jürgen Bömelburg and Norbert Kersken (eds.), *Ständefreiheit und Staatsgestaltung in Ostmitteleuropa. Übernationale Gemeinsamkeiten in der politischen Kultur vom 16.–18. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig, 1996).

¹⁹ Leszek Hajdukiewicz, *Biblioteka Macieja z Miechowa* (Monografie z dziejów nauki i techniki 16, Wrocław, 1960), pp. 32f.

diplomatic purposes.²⁰ Johann Thurzó acted as a catalyst for the great intellectual movements of his time and turned Breslau into a centre of humanism.²¹ In 1520, towards the end of Thurzó's eighteen-year-span in office, Martin Luther commented that the city of Breslau would not see many future bishops of such calibre in office.²² He established contacts not only to Luther but, with the help of his secretary, Domenicus Schleupner, also to Melanchthon, and supported protagonists of the Reformation in Breslau, such as Ambrosius Moibanus (1494–1554). One of them, Johannes Hess (1490–1547), first introduced Reformation ideas into the city, and maintained close contact to Melanchthon and Luther from 1519.²³ In 1523 the city council appointed Hess pastor at the parish church of St Mary Magdalene by effectively ignoring the episcopal right to appoint parish priests. As there was no efficient Catholic force in Silesia until the last third of the sixteenth century, the Reformation spread rapidly throughout Silesia.

Bishop Thurzó's attitude towards the Reformation was rather ambivalent.²⁴ His patronage of Protestant thinkers did not mean he was not active in the synod. Seven synods held in the diocese of Breslau between 1509 and 1517 had little impact,²⁵ but Thurzó also encouraged the cult of St Anne and, as late as 1520, sought the support of the archbishop of Gniezno against Hussite works flooding into Silesia. These apparent contradictions demonstrate one specific feature, however, which—and this is the core of my thesis—is crucial for an assessment of Johann V Thurzó's rôle and the centrality of Breslau at the beginning of the Reformation movement: Breslau's development as a cultural and scholarly centre was at the root of a modernization process which was consciously intended not even by those actively involved in it. It is this development which enabled Breslau to play a prominent rôle in the process of European cultural transfer. It is less Thurzó's ecclesiastical and religious importance, but Breslau's function as an urban sub- or rather intermediary centre in the east central European metropolitan triangle of Cracow, Prague and Vienna which deserves scrutiny.

Clearly, Breslau was not the only intermediary urban centre in east central

²⁰ Irena Sulkowska-Kurasiowa, *Polska kancelaria królewska w latach 1447–1506* (Wrocław, etc., 1967), p. 159.

²¹ Manfred P. Fleischer, 'Humanism and Reformation in Silesia: Imprints of Italy, Luther and Melanchthon', in Manfred Fleischer (ed.), *The Harvest of Humanism in Central Europe. Essays in Honor of Lewis W. Spitz* (St Louis, 1992), pp. 17–98, here p. 44; Janina Smacka, 'Jan Turzo humanista i mecenas kultury renesansowej', *Roczniki Sztuki Śląskiej*, 2 (1963), pp. 77–91.

²² See Luther's letter to Thurzó, on 30 July 1520, in *Martin Luthers Briefwechsel*, ed. E. L. Enders et al. (Frankfurt/Main and Leipzig, 1884–1932), vol. 4/2, p. 152.

²³ Gustav Bauch, 'Johann Thurzó und Johann Heß mit brieflichen Beilagen', *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte (und Alterthum) Schlesiens*, 36 (1901), pp. 193–224.

²⁴ On the reformation in Silesia in general, Franz Machilek, 'Schlesien', in Anton Schindling and Walter Ziegler (eds.), *Die Territorien des Reiches im Zeitalter der Reformation und Konfessionalisierung. Land und Konfession 1500–1650*, vol. 2: *Der Nordosten* (Katholisches Leben und Kirchenreform im Zeitalter der Glaubensspaltung, vol. 50, 2nd edition, Münster, 1990).

²⁵ Józef Mandziuk, 'Działalność kościelna Jana V. Turzo, Biskupa Wrocławskiego (1506–1520)', *Colloquium Salutis*, 10 (1978), pp. 97–120.

Europe which participated in the absorption and adaptation of Renaissance culture. It is comparable to Olmütz (Olomouc) in Moravia, where Johann's brother, Stanislaus Thurzó,²⁶ acted as bishop from 1497 until 1540. Stanislaus, who took up office nine years after his older brother, followed his example in the Breslau bishopric, especially with regard to the support he gave to education, the arts and culture.²⁷ After Johann's death in 1520 Stanislaus kept alive many contacts which his brother had forged, for example his personal links to Erasmus and the Silesian historiographer Caspar Ursinus Velius (1493–1539).²⁸ During his long term in office, he made Olmütz a religious and cultural centre of Catholicism which gained recognition far beyond Moravia's borders.²⁹ In 1501, Stanislaus tried to boost the level and quality of education by passing statutes for the chapter, modelled on Breslau's example (1411), which made a university degree conditional for membership in the chapter.³⁰ Thus both Johann and Stanislaus Thurzó moulded their respective bishoprics into intellectual centres.³¹ Since they also followed literary activities, they can be truly called humanist bishops, who not only acted as patrons towards humanist writers and poets, but themselves played an active rôle in the literary world.³²

In both bishoprics, city and church were the crucial factors in shaping the contiguous public spheres, which influenced each other in a dynamic fashion. In 1490, after the death of king Matthias Corvinus, Jagiellonian rulers succeeded until 1526, when the young heir to the throne, Ludwig II of Hungary and Bohemia, was killed in action on the battlefield of Mohács, and the hereditary lands of the Bohemian crown fell to the Habsburgs. The conditions surrounding the appointment of Johann Thurzó to the episcopal see in Breslau illuminate the political context of the city's rôle in the east central European

²⁶ Aleš Zelenka, *Die Wappen der böhmischen und mährischen Bischöfe* (Regensburg, 1979), pp. 215ff.

²⁷ For further sources and literature, see *Rukověť humanistického básnictví v Čechách a na Moravě [Enchiridion renatae poesis Latinae in Bohemia et Moravia cultae]*, founded by Antonín Truhář, Karel Hrdina, continued by Josef Hejnic and Jan Martínek, vols. 1–5 (Prague, 1966–82), here vol. 5, pp. 370–2.

²⁸ Peter Wörster, *Humanismus in Olmütz. Landesbeschreibung, Stadtlob und Geschichtsschreibung in der ersten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Kultur- und Geistesgeschichtliche Ostmitteleuropa-Studien, vol. 5, Marburg, 1994), pp. 36 and 52; Karl Wotke, 'Der Olmützer Bischof Stanislaus Thurzó von Béthlenfalva (1497–1550) und dessen Humanistenkreis', *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte Mährens und Schlesiens*, 3 (1899), pp. 337–88, here p. 372.

²⁹ Jaroslav Pánek, 'Olmütz als Bischofs- und Landesmetropole an der Schwelle der Neuzeit', in Engel, Lambrecht and Nogosseck (eds.), *Metropolen im Wandel*, pp. 232–43.

³⁰ Wörster, *Humanismus*, p. 33; Wotke, 'Bischof Stanislaus Thurzó', p. 342.

³¹ Comparing the two cities, Peter Wörster, 'Breslau und Olmütz als humanistische Zentren vor der Reformation', in Winfried Eberhard and Alfred A. Strnad (eds.), *Humanismus und Renaissance in Ostmitteleuropa vor der Reformation* (Cologne, Weimar and Vienna, 1996), pp. 215–28; Karen Lambrecht, 'Die Funktionen der bischöflichen Zentren Breslau und Olmütz im Zeitalter des Humanismus', in Klaus Garber (ed.), *Kulturgeschichte Schlesiens in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Tübingen, forthcoming 2001).

³² Verses by Johann in Hermann Luchs, *Schlesische Fürstenbilder des Mittelalters* (Breslau, 1872), fos. 5, 10. The concept of 'humanist bishop' is defined in Alois Schmid, 'Humanistenbischöfe. Untersuchungen zum vortridentinischen Episkopat in Deutschland', *Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und Kirchengeschichte*, 87 (1992), pp. 159–92.

political landscape. Immediately after Thurzó's accession in 1502 became common knowledge, the Silesian princes lodged their protest against this election of a foreigner. Owing to repeated conflicts between the clergy of the cathedral, the chapter, the Silesian princes and the city of Breslau, king Vladislav II put in place a court of arbitration under the presidency of the Bohemian chancellor Albrecht von Kolowrat. The result was the so-called Kolowrat Treaty of 4 February 1504, which, in its first article, prohibited the election of a bishop who was not born in the Bohemian lands.³³ Johann Thurzó was to be the last non-native admitted to the episcopal office in Breslau. Further articles forced the church to agree to several concessions in compensation for Thurzó's appointment. Despite their cancellation by pope Leo X in 1516, they remained in effect for many decades.³⁴ The treaty of 1504 did not end the conflict between the ecclesiastical and the political in Silesia, but it led to an accommodation in the power relationship between city and church.

The period around Thurzó's appointment in Breslau also saw the attempt to found a university in the city (1505)³⁵ according to the plans of the Breslau humanist Lorenz Rabe, whose latinized name was Laurentius Corvinus (c. 1465–1527). The city council and the cathedral chapter first combined their forces to support this project. The magistrates, however, demanded extensive rights of co-operation, with the result that the church resigned from the project, although Vladislav II had already produced the foundation charter. Moreover, the pope rejected the necessary foundation privilege owing to a protest by the university of Cracow, which feared Breslau's competition. After the university project had failed, the city council nevertheless continued to extend its rights over parish churches and monastic institutions.

How did Johann Thurzó shape Breslau's rise into a centre of communication? The epitaph on Johann's tombstone, funded by his younger brothers Stanislaus and Johann the Younger, proclaims once more the bishop's convictions and principles: 'To the unique protector of the sciences, in which he too excelled, and the patron of the scholars, for whom he cared with great generosity.'³⁶ To

³³ Werner Laug, 'Der Kolowratische Vertrag von 1504, sein Wortlaut und seine Auswirkung', *Jahrbuch für Schlesische Kirchengeschichte*, 56 (1977), pp. 37–55, here p. 37.

³⁴ Most recently see Joachim Köhler, 'Reformationsgeschichte—eine Herausforderung an den Kirchenhistoriker? Überlegungen anhand schlesischer Fakten', in Matthias Weber and Carsten Rabe (eds.), *Silesiographia. Stand und Perspektiven der historischen Schlesienforschung. Festschrift für Norbert Conrads* (Wissenschaftliche Schriften des Vereins für Geschichte Schlesiens, vol. 4, Würzburg, 1998), pp. 211–31, here pp. 219ff.

³⁵ Sönke Lorenz, 'Fehlgeschlagen, gescheitert, erfolglos. Vergebliche Versuche von Universitätsgründungen in Regensburg, Lüneburg, Breslau und Pforzheim', in Sönke Lorenz (with the Institut für Geschichtliche Landeskunde und Historische Hilfswissenschaften) (ed.), *Attempto—oder wie stiftet man eine Universität? Die Universitätsgründungen der sogenannten zweiten Gründungswelle im Vergleich* (Eberhard Karls-Universität. Contubernium. Tübinger Beiträge zur Universitäts- und Wissenschaftsgeschichte, vol. 50, Stuttgart, 1999), pp. 7–18, here pp. 14–16.

³⁶ 'JOANNI TURSONI WRAT: EPISCOPO PROVINCIAE SILESIAE ALIQUAMDIU PRAEFECTO PRINC: OPT: RELIGIONE & PIETATE IN DEUM IN IUSTITIA IN OMNES SINGULARI DOCTRINAE IPSI EXQUISITAE & DOCTORUM QVOS MAGNA GRATIA & LIBERALITATE PROSEQVEBATUR UNICO PATRONO STANIS: TURSO OLOM: EPUS & IOANN: TURSO PLESNAE DOM FRATRES FRATRI CHARISS: EX TES

take a closer look at his patronage of the sciences and scholarly communication, I would like to analyse several areas in which Johann Thurzó was involved, and which were crucial to the construction of scholarly communication lines. Among the first was the fostering of contacts with international intellectual élites and the financial support of young students and men of letters. Through the extension of the education system, the dissemination of printing presses, and not least through the creation of his own, rich humanist library³⁷ he created parts of an infrastructure of communication.³⁸ It is perhaps significant that these areas cannot readily be divided into one or other public sphere of city and church, but rather that they mixed and combined in a productive way through Johann Thurzó's activities.

It must be stressed that conditions were already in the bishop's favour: from 1411 members of Breslau's cathedral chapter had been urged to spend at least three years at a university. This had caused a tangible improvement of scholarly standards. From among 215 canons in the fifteenth century, 175 had spent some time at a university, most of them in Vienna (fifty-three), Leipzig (fifty-two) and Cracow (forty-five).³⁹ The situation of the Breslau chapter was exceptional also in comparison with other chapters in the diocese of Gniezno, for in Breslau the economically powerful Silesian urban patriciate of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries had occupied at least half of all posts in the cathedral chapter.⁴⁰ In most other chapters, commoners had been excluded by law. Even here the urban and ecclesiastical spheres touched each other.

Thurzó's predecessor in the bishopric, Johann Roth, had emphasized similar priorities as his successor, and had created a fertile ground for later developments; but he had lacked the Thurzó family's financial fortune. Nevertheless Roth had achieved similar prominence for Breslau's scholarly and political reputation and its perception in the region and beyond. Breslau owes the publication of its cityscape in the famous *World Chronicle* by Hartmann Schedel in 1493 probably to the good relations which bishop Roth maintained with the scholarly world. Schedel described the city in the following terms: 'Breslau, a city in the Silesian lands, noble and famous among the German and the

MOES: P:OBHT NISSAE MDXX II. AUG: AETAT LVI HOC SACELLUM CONDIDIT.' Luchs, *Schlesische Fürstenbilder*, table 5.

³⁷ Hans Heckel, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur in Schlesien*, vol. 1: *Von den Anfängen bis zum Ausgange des Barock* (Breslau, 1929), p. 96.

³⁸ See works by Tibor Klaniczay, 'Nouvelles recherches sur l'infrastructure sociologique de la Renaissance: cours, académies, universités, etc.', *Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum*, 33, 1 (1987), pp. 35–44; Klaniczay, 'Die soziale und institutionelle Infrastruktur der ungarischen Renaissance', in Georg Kauffmann (ed.), *Die Renaissance im Blick der Nationen Europas* (Wolfenbütteler Abhandlungen zur Renaissanceforschung, vol. 9, Wiesbaden, 1991), pp. 319–37.

³⁹ Kazimierz Dola, *Wrocławska kapituła katedralna w XV wieku. Ustrój—skład osobowy—działalność* (Lublin, 1983), pp. 140–5.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 128 ff. Andrzej Radziwiński, 'Die Identifizierung der Stiftsgeistlichkeit nach Ständen und Gruppen in Polen im Spätmittelalter', in Stefan Kwiatkowski and Janusz Malłek (eds.), *Ständische und religiöse Identitäten in Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit* (Toruń, 1998), pp. 99–107, here p. 102. For example, 90% of the cathedral chapter in Cracow in 1438 were nobles. Johann Thurzó tried to increase further the proportion of noblemen.

Sarmatian [Polish] nations . . . But Johann Roth, bishop at the time and a doctor of law and highly experienced in written scholarship and known for his wisdom, has expanded this bishopric's fame and importance to a great degree.⁴¹ Between 1882 and 1906, for example, Gustav Bauch contributed eight pieces under the title *Beiträge zur Literaturgeschichte des schlesischen Humanismus*,⁴² which introduce and discuss the work and lives of several Silesian canons and thirty humanists. From this we learn that Thurzó was able to rely on a considerably developed intellectual scene, which can also be traced in Melanchthon's correspondence in the year 1520 with numerous scholars and burghers in Breslau.⁴³ The latter may furthermore serve as an example of the reputation of the city's intellectual élites. His correspondents were in particular the Reformers Johannes Hess, Ambrosius Moibanus and the humanist Laurentius Corvinus.

Thurzó's achievements were obviously founded on his ability to recognize talent and to take gifted scholars into his services. He mostly sent them to the university of Cracow for their education, and also to the university of Wittenberg, which then possessed a progressive reputation. With the help of such patronage, his pupils usually entered church or educational service in the surrounding regions. Thurzó was thus able to take serious steps towards reforming the ecclesiastical school system, as expressed at the synod of 1511. He suggested that only those should be accepted as teachers of the cathedral, chapter and parish schools who could provide reports from their former rectors and priests about their appropriate conduct and who, above all, were renowned scholars likely to pursue their studies once established in their new posts. Consequently, Ambrosius Moibanus, who had studied in Cracow and Vienna, was appointed to the cathedral school in 1517, where he was the first to teach Greek and Hebrew in Breslau. Further, he edited a collection of letters by Erasmus and wrote a grammar in Latin. Thurzó's efforts were not limited to the city of Breslau. He also saw to appointments in the episcopal territory of Neisse (Nysa), such as of the later Schwenkfeldian Valentin Krautwald (1490–1545)⁴⁴ to Liegnitz (Legnica), where an academy for young noblemen was established in 1526, and to Goldberg (Złotoryja), where the school was entitled

⁴¹ 'Breßlaw schlesier lands ein edle vnd bey dem teutschen und sarmatischen volck ein fast namhafftige statt . . . Aber Johann rot dieser zeit bischoff daselbst ein doctor des rechtens vnd in allerlay schriftlicher lere vnnd weißheit ein hoherfarnier man hat diss bistthumb an ere und weyte gar hoh geausset': Hartmann Schedel, *Liber Chronicarum/Das Buch der Chroniken und Geschichten* (Nuremberg, 1493, fo. ccxxxiii).

⁴² See contributions in the *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens*, 26 (1892), pp. 213–48; 30 (1896), pp. 127–64; 31 (1897), pp. 123–64; 32 (1898), pp. 49–104; 34 (1900), pp. 371–85; 37 (1903), pp. 120–68; 38 (1904), pp. 292–342; 39 (1905), pp. 156–98; 40 (1906), pp. 140–84.

⁴³ Heinz Scheible, 'Melanchthons Beziehungen zu Stadt und Bistum Breslau', *Archiv für schlesische Kirchengeschichte*, 58 (2000), pp. 143–84.

⁴⁴ Krautwald, who was born in Neisse, was appointed rector in his home town in 1509, and in 1514 entered service in the episcopal chancellery; see Günter Dippold, 'Der Humanismus im städtischen Schulwesen Schlesiens', in Eberhard and Strnad (eds.), *Humanismus und Renaissance*, pp. 229–44, here p. 237.

to a benefice.⁴⁵ Hieronymus Gürtler von Wildenberg (called Cingularius, born in 1465), humanist and founder of the Goldberg school which was renowned for its modern and humanist approach, dedicated his Latin grammar to his patron Thurzó in 1511.⁴⁶ Urban humanism, one of whose main representatives was Laurentius Corvinus, focused on education, as did ecclesiastical humanism; both had their bases in their respective chancelleries. In the activities of Corvinus the cross-fertilization of these two areas is obvious. From 1497 Corvinus was rector of the Elisabethschule, and, in 1503, became Breslau's third city scribe, next to the humanist Gregor Morenberg (who edited the famous legend of St Hedwig in 1504) and Master Bernhardin Schellenschmidt (from 1496). Together with bishop Roth and canon Sigismund Gossinger (called Fusilius, died in 1504) these scholars formed an influential humanist circle.⁴⁷ Corvinus published school textbooks and was the first teacher to stage, in co-operation with his pupils, classical plays. There is evidence that performances were given in the Breslau city hall from 1500.⁴⁸ To put the situation in Breslau's schools into a wider perspective, however, it is necessary to remember that the Swiss humanist Thomas Platter (1499–1582), who came to the city in 1515 as a fourteen-year-old youth, paints a rather darker picture of the state of its schools in his well-known autobiography. Platter reports that at the Elisabethschule, where Corvinus had taught, no Greek lessons were offered, and no printed books existed: 'summa do was narung genug, aber man studiert nit viel [to sum up, there was enough food, but one did not learn much]'.⁴⁹

Another source for tracing cultural networking is dedicatory introductions. They allow us to grasp the nature of patronage, expressed as gratitude after publication and as praise in advance of future financial support. Stephan Taurinus (Stieröxel) from Olmütz dedicated his five books *Servilis belli Pannonice (Stauromachia)* to Johann Thurzó. Dealing with the Hungarian peasants' revolt of 1514, this study had explicitly been requested by Thurzó, since his family's estates had suffered considerable war damage.⁵⁰ He also asked Taurinus to edit posthumously the correspondence of Augustinus Moravus (1467–1513), but

⁴⁵ Gustav Bauch, *Drei Denkmäler zur älteren schlesischen Schulgeschichte* (Breslau, 1901), pp. 11–15.

⁴⁶ Gürtler joined the school in Goldberg in 1504 and published a series of books. The Latin grammar, dedicated to Thurzó, was first published in 1511 in Leipzig, and more editions followed; for example, Hieronymus Gürtler von Wildenberg, *Hieronymi Cingularii Aurimontani Artis grammaticae observationes: ad divum Ioannem Turzo Vratislavianorum Presulem . . . contenta in hoc libro De facili partiumorationis cognitione opusculum unu, De etymologia dictionum libellus unus . . .* (Leipzig, 1515). See also Gustav Bauch, 'Hieronymus Gürtler von Wildenberg. Der Begründer der Goldberger Particularschule. Ein Beitrag zur Schulgeschichte des deutschen Ostens im XVI. Jahrhundert', *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte Schlesiens*, 29 (1895), pp. 159–96.

⁴⁷ Weiß, *Chronik der Stadt Breslau*, p. 756.

⁴⁸ Alfred Sabisch (ed.), *Acta Capituli Wratislaviensis 1500–1562*, Part 1: 1500–1513 (Cologne and Vienna, 1972), p. 10.

⁴⁹ Thomas Platter, *Hirtenknabe, Handwerker und Humanist. Die Selbstbiographie 1499–1582*, ed. Heinrich Boos (Nördlingen, 1989), on Breslau pp. 22–5, here p. 24.

⁵⁰ Wotke, 'Der Olmützer Bischof Stanislaus Thurzó', p. 351.

Thurzó's death put a sudden end to this project. In his 'Bibliography of the Silesian Renaissance'.⁵¹ Gustav Bauch counts Johann Thurzó's name as a dedicatee in seven printings (numbers 35, 62, 63, 71, 103, 123, 143), as a patron in one (no. 150), and he is once mentioned in an elegy (no. 147). His brother Stanislaus in Olmütz received even more dedications, for example by Erasmus.

The institutionalization of a centre of letters around 1500 depended on the use of the new media of communication, that is printing and publishing. The innovation of printing had reached east central Europe very early on in the history of printing, but the volume of production was modest. The first book printer in Silesia was Kaspar Elyan (c. 1435–86) from Glogau (Głogów), who had studied in Leipzig, Cracow and Erfurt.⁵² Supported by the cathedral chapter of Breslau, amongst whom were the rector of the university of Cracow, Nikolaus Tempelfeld (died in 1474), and Silesia's greatest book collector, Nikolaus Merboth (died in 1501), Elyan started a printing press in the city early on, responding to the needs of the clergy, first in 1475, when he printed the *Officium* of the synod, then finally in 1482, in the service of bishop Johann Roth, when he produced the *Facetiae* of Poggio Bracciolini, before being promoted to canonical office and leaving the printing business. In 1505, on Thurzó's recommendation, the *Missale* of Breslau were published by Johann Haller (1464–1525) in Cracow. The orientation towards Cracow is new and significant, for liturgical texts were formerly printed in Strasbourg, Speyer and Nuremberg. It was Konrad Baumgarten, who had previously worked in Dresden, who promoted humanist printing in Breslau. Having stayed in Olmütz from 1500 to 1502, he was attracted to the city by rumours of the foundation of a university in Breslau, probably through Johann Thurzó and his brother Stanislaus. When the university was finally set up in Frankfurt an der Oder, he moved there and printed approximately twenty works for resident scholars.⁵³ During his short printing career in Breslau Baumgarten produced ten books in total, among them several books by Laurentius Corvinus, a school book by the Breslau humanist teacher in Goldberg, Andreas Hundern (*Latinum ydioma*), Cicero's letters edited by Hieronymus Gürtler, the legend of St Hedwig (1504) and the Treaty of Kolowrat. The first book printed in Breslau by Baumgarten, namely the *Extemporalitates* of 1503, was dedicated by its author Sigismund Buchwald (called *Fagilucus*, 1483–1508) to his patron, the episcopal coadjutor Johann Thurzó. Even after Baumgarten had left for Frankfurt, Thurzó still maintained contact with him, entrusting him with the printing of a tome with

⁵¹ Gustav Bauch, 'Bibliographie zur schlesischen Renaissance (1475 bis 1521)', *Silesiaca. Festschrift des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens zum siebenzigsten Geburtstage seines Präses Colmar Grünhagen* (Breslau, 1898).

⁵² Karl Dziatzko, 'Caspar Elyan, Breslaus erster Drucker', *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte Schlesiens*, 15 (1880), pp. 1–32; 16 (1882), pp. 291–7; 19 (1885), pp. 386–94; Alfred Świerk, 'Anfänge des Buchdrucks in Breslau', *Jahrbuch der Schlesischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität*, 23 (1982), pp. 171–7; *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, 6, pp. 237f; *Słownik pracowników książki Polskiej* (Warsaw and Łódź, 1972), pp. 203f.

⁵³ *Słownik pracowników*, pp. 45f.

the title of *Rubricella* in 1509,⁵⁴ which displayed the Thurzó coat of arms. A later printer in Breslau was Adam Dyon (or Dion, around 1490–1534) from Nuremberg, who moved to the city only in 1518 and, in 1519, printed six Latin works which related to a disputation held in Leipzig.⁵⁵

These international contacts facilitated Breslau's intermediary functions within a triangle of metropolises, consisting of Cracow, Prague and Vienna. In Cracow, bishop Thurzó attended the wedding of Sigismund I and Bona Sforza in 1518 and presented to the bridal couple a poem by his protégé, the humanist Caspar Ursinus Velius.⁵⁶ This burgher from the Silesian town of Schweidnitz (Świdnica) had been Thurzó's secretary and supported by him since his youth: the bishop probably paid for Velius's studies in Cracow. Velius was later employed as court historiographer in Vienna and was to become poet laureate. The regional subcentre, the city of Breslau itself, was represented by the humanist town notary Laurentius Corvinus.⁵⁷ One famous event at this wedding was a literary competition, in which Corvinus was also able to display his abilities. On occasions like these long-lasting contacts could be established, which sometimes led to careers in other public sectors.

That Thurzó's relational network included political as well as cultural contacts is also illustrated by Velius's rôle in Vienna. Although Thurzó did not quite approve of his protégé's new rôle, he was well able to gain advantage from it for Breslau. Velius reported to him on the diet of princes in Pressburg (Bratislava) in 1515, and on Vienna's scholarly world. Even more important, he used his direct access to the emperor to promote the right to mint coins by the bishopric of Breslau. He was able to gain this right in 1515.⁵⁸

Contact with the intellectual élites, expansion of the education system and support for the arts and sciences by the bishop and ecclesiastical institutions

⁵⁴ Bibl. Uniw. Wr. sygn. 2 W19, 445 quoted in Marta Burbianka, 'Adam Dyon i Kaspar Lybisch—wrocławscy drukarze reformacyjni', *Roczniki Biblioteczne*, 5 (1961), pp. 65–113, here p. 87.

⁵⁵ Hans Volz, 'Die Breslauer Luther- und Reformationsdrucker Adam Dyon und Kaspar Libisch', *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch*, [42] (1967), pp. 104–17; Helmut Claus, 'New Light on the Presses of Adam Dyon and Kaspar Libisch in Breslau (1518–1540)', in John L. Flood and William A. Kelly (eds.), *The German Book 1450–1750. Studies Presented to David L. Paisey on his Retirement* (London, 1995), pp. 61–80.

⁵⁶ Gustav Bauch, *Caspar Ursinus Velius. Der Hofhistoriograph Ferdinands I. und Erzieher Maximilians II* (Budapest, 1886), p. 8.

⁵⁷ *Epithalamium Laurentii Corvini in nuptis Sacrae Regiae Maiestatis Poloniae etc. Impressum Cracoviae, per Hieronymum Vietorem* (1518); Jerzy Krókowski, 'Laurentius Corvinus und seine Beziehungen zu Polen', in Johannes Irmscher (ed.), *Renaissance und Humanismus in Mittel- und Osteuropa. Eine Sammlung von Materialien* (Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin. Schriften der Sektion für Altertumswissenschaften, vol. 32/2, Berlin, 1962), pp. 153–72; Jaqueline Glomski, 'Poetry to Teach the Writing of Poetry: Laurentius Corvinus's *Carminum structura* (1496)', in Yasmin Haskell and Philip Hardie (eds.), *Poets and Teachers: Latin Didactic Poetry and the Didactic Authority of the Latin Poet from the Renaissance to the Present*. (Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Symposium of the Cambridge Society for Neo-Latin Studies, Clare College, Cambridge, 9–11 September 1996; Kleos, 4) (Bari, 1999), pp. 155–66.

⁵⁸ Bauch, *Caspar Ursinus Velius*, p. 26.

could not fail to have an impact on the city of Breslau. Here it becomes visible to what extent the initiation and the fostering of communication channels encouraged the creation of new cultural forms. Evidence for this development can be gathered from the external and internal representation of the city, which displayed elements of humanism with particular pride. An external sign of the self-representation of the city of Breslau was the architecture of its town hall,⁵⁹ which in the years 1471–1504 was enlarged in Renaissance style, and which repeatedly served as a place where the Silesian princes held assemblies. They shunned the imperial castle, which became a building for administrative functions.

The extension of the town hall followed the *memoria* theme of the Renaissance. It also comprised literary-humanist ideas as parts of a historical culture of identity, combining non-scholarly and fictitious elements. The function of this culture of memory⁶⁰ was aimed at the future. The genre of historical, national and geographical descriptions (*descriptio gentium*, *descriptio terrarum*, chorography) provided a place for collective and public memory, comprising an urban, humanist description of cities (poliography), as well as the above-mentioned *laus urbis*. In Silesia, the description of the province called *Silesiographia*⁶¹ reached its apogee in the sixteenth century: poetry praising Breslau was not only integrated in the generally eulogy of Silesia, but formed its focus. The city's artistic and aesthetic appearance, and not its functional urbanism, was emphasized in these eulogies.⁶² Commissioned mostly by the city council, a growing number of works on Breslau's history appeared, such as the very early chronicle by Peter Eschenloer (1420–81) in 1472.⁶³ After Laurentius

⁵⁹ Arnold Bartetzky, 'Die Beziehungen zwischen Stadt und Krone im Spiegel von Rathausdekorationen des Spätmittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit (Prag, Breslau, Krakau, Posen)', in Marina Dmitrieva and Karen Lambrecht (eds.), *Krakau, Prag und Wien. Funktionen von Metropolen im frühmodernen Staat* (Stuttgart, 2000), pp. 45–58; Bartetzky, 'Stadt und Königtum. Frühneuzeitliche Rathausdekorationen in Polen als politische Zeugnisse', in Dietmar Popp (ed.), *Bedeutung der Jagiellonen für Kunst und Kultur Mitteleuropas* (forthcoming).

⁶⁰ Peter Burke, 'Geschichtsschreibung als gesellschaftliches Gedächtnis', in his *Eleganz und Haltung* (Berlin, 1998), pp. 63–84; Jörg Jochen Berns and Wolfgang Neuber (eds.), *Ars memorativa. Zur kulturgeschichtlichen Bedeutung der Gedächtniskunst 1400–1750* (Tübingen, 1993); Aleida Assmann, *Erinnerungsräume. Formen und Wandlungen des kulturellen Gedächtnisses* (Munich, 1999); Karen Lambrecht, 'Stadt und Geschichtskultur. Breslau und Krakau im 16. Jahrhundert', in Joachim Bahlecke and Arno Strohmeier (eds.), *Die Konstruktion der Vergangenheit. Geschichtsdenken, Traditionsbildung und Selbstdarstellung in den ostmitteleuropäischen Ständegesellschaften (1500–1800)* (Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung, Berlin, 2002, forthcoming).

⁶¹ Hans-Bernd Harder, 'Die Landesbeschreibung in der Literatur des schlesischen Frühhumanismus', in Hans-Bernd Harder (ed.), *Landesbeschreibungen Mitteleuropas vom 15. bis 17. Jahrhundert* (Vorträge der 2. internationalen Tagung des Slawenkomitees, vol. 2, Cologne and Vienna, 1983), pp. 29–48.

⁶² Gerhard Theuerkauf, "'Accipe Germanam pingentia carmina terram.'" Stadt- und Landesbeschreibungen des Mittelalters und der Renaissance als Quellen der Sozialgeschichte', *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte*, 65 (1983), pp. 89–116, here p. 113.

⁶³ Peter Eschenloer, in *Historia Wratislaviensis 1440–1472*, ed. Hermann Markgraf (Breslau, 1872); Eschenloer, *Geschichten der Stadt Breslau oder Denkwürdigkeiten seiner Zeit von 1440–1479*, ed. Johann Theophil Kunisch (2 vols., Breslau, 1827–8).

Corvinus's Ode of 1496.⁶⁴ Bartholomäus Stein wrote his extensive *Descriptio Vratislaviae* of 1512 when Breslau was in danger of losing its staple rights. A year later the magistrates ordered that a collection be made of brief factual accounts from books about the city and other archival sources, which survived under the name of *Annales magistratus Vratislaviensis*.⁶⁵ Even Eschenloer, whose German version of his urban history indicates that he did not only write in response to the needs of the members of the city council, looked beyond the immediate urban territories, including provincial politics and dynastic history.⁶⁶ With his lively and imaginative narrative he consciously addressed a new urban readership. Drawing historical parallels, he gave moral instruction and defended the controversial policy of the city council against dissatisfied burghers, guilds and especially against the clergy. Beyond displaying the first signs of a search for a local identity, there are elements which betray the chronicler's attempt to serve the legitimization and stability of the urban political élites in times of political unrest. Reflecting the parallel dominance of city and church, another branch of historiographical production in the fifteenth century is represented by ecclesiastical work,⁶⁷ by authors such as Jodokus von Ziegenhals, Benedikt Johnsdorf, Sigismund Rosicz and Nikolaus von Liebental, who all lived and worked between 1406 and 1516. In the urban patriotism of humanist historiography and urban eulogies—predominantly aimed at forging historical and political identity—myths of origin and the foundation of the city were of crucial importance.⁶⁸ In his *Panegyricus Silesiacus*⁶⁹ Pancratius Vulturinus (Geier, after 1480) evoked the spirit of the mythical *Vratislavia*, so named by her founder, the 'sceptre-bearing' Vratislav of Bohemia (894–921), father of St Venceslas. The opinion that he was the founder of Breslau is based on the *History of Bohemia* by Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini (later pope Pius II), which Peter Eschenloer was commissioned by the city council to translate into German in 1464, and which inspired him to continue his own historical work. Only at the end of the seventeenth century did the council recognize this myth-

⁶⁴ *Silesiae descriptio compendiosa* (1496) focused on Breslau.

⁶⁵ Heinrich Zeissberg, *Die polnische Geschichtsschreibung des Mittelalters* (Leipzig, 1873), pp. 132–6.

⁶⁶ Christoph Heiduk, 'Die Diskussion über das Strafrecht in Schlesien und der Lausitz', in Christoph Heiduk, Almut Höfert and Cord Ulrichs (eds.), *Krieg und Verbrechen nach mittelalterlichen Chroniken* (Kollektive Einstellungen und sozialer Wandel im Mittelalter, n.s., vol. 4, Cologne, Weimar and Vienna, 1997), pp. 9–109, here p. 18.

⁶⁷ Zeissberg, *Polnische Geschichtsschreibung*. See also Westyna Gladkiewicz, 'Dziejopisarstwo śląskie okresu odrodzenia i wczesnego baroku', in Krystyna Gajda (ed.), *Dawna historia i geografja śląska. Materiały sesji naukowej odbytej w Brzegu w dniach 26–27 listopada 1977 r.* (Opole, 1980), pp. 116–34, here pp. 120f.

⁶⁸ Herfried Münkler (ed.), 'Nationenbildung.' *Die Nationalisierung Europas im Diskurs humanistischer Intellektueller. Italien und Deutschland* (Berlin, 1997), p. 80.

⁶⁹ This work was written in 1506 in Padua and printed in 1521 in Neisse. Paul Drechsler, 'Pancratius Vulturini Panegyricus Silesiacus, die älteste Landeskunde Schlesiens. Besprochen und nach dem ersten Druck neu herausgegeben', *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens*, 35 (1901), pp. 35–67; Heinrich Meuss, 'Des Vulturinus Lobgedicht auf Schlesien von 1506', *Mitteilungen der Schlesischen Gesellschaft für Volkskunde*, 28 (1927), pp. 38–81.

inspired theory as false. Between 1529 and 1530 the Latin form *Vratislavia* was made official, when Breslau received a new crest from emperor Charles V. Yet set against this officially accepted historical version there was another mythical account of Breslau's origin from the ancient city of Budorgis, which had been mentioned by the geographer Ptolemy (AD 83–161) and which finds its first reference in the 1503 eulogy by Sigismund Fagilucus,⁷⁰ effectively disseminated during the whole of the sixteenth century.

All over the Holy Roman Empire chancelleries emerged as centres of urban culture and historiography.⁷¹ Just like Eschenloer, Corvinus and later Henel von Hennenfeld, Franz von Köckritz, called Faber (1497–1565),⁷² a pupil of Corvinus, became city scribe and hence a representative of the official historical narrative. The author of the humanist work *Sabothus sive Silesia* ('The Zobten Mountains or Silesia'), Faber also produced the chronicle *Origines Vratislaviensis*. The city council of Breslau had commissioned him with a compilation of the city's most important privileges (*Liber privilegiorum*), a task which he completed in 1555 and which showed his keen talent as an archivist.⁷³ This work served as a pattern for the *Origines Vratislaviensis*, which remained unpublished. Faber's work—in addition to the popular Silesian chronicle (the *Gentis Silesiae Annales* of 1571 of Joachim Cureus (1532–73)—was used as the main source for the *Jahrbücher* of Nikolaus Pol (1564–1632), Protestant dean at the church of St Magdalene in Breslau.⁷⁴ In his *Sabothus* Faber applied his historical knowledge to mount a passionate defence of Silesian autonomous rights and immunities.⁷⁵ This line of Breslau historiography, which strongly stressed historical and legal privileges and rights, shows that east central European metropolises played a vital rôle in communication processes based on juridical expertise and legal argument.⁷⁶

Although most urban chronicles in the Holy Roman Empire were increas-

⁷⁰ *Budorgis, que iam vratislavia* [sic], printed in Breslau. See Gustav Bauch, 'Bibliographie zur schlesischen Renaissance (1475 bis 1521)', *Silesiaca. Festschrift des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens zum siebzigsten Geburtstage seines Präses Colmar Grünhagen* (Breslau, 1898), pp. 145–86, here p. 155.

⁷¹ Volker Honemann, 'Die Stadtschreiber und die deutsche Literatur im Spätmittelalter und der frühen Neuzeit', in Walter Haug, Timothy R. Jackson and Johannes Janota (eds.), *Zur deutschen Literatur und Sprache des 14. Jahrhunderts. Dubliner Colloquium 1981* (Heidelberg, 1983), pp. 320–53, here pp. 340–53, with a list of all city scribes active in the Holy Roman Empire in the middle ages and the early modern period.

⁷² Westyna Gładkiewicz, 'Kronikarz Wrocławski: Franciszek Faber. Szkic informacyjny', *Acta Universitatis Vratislaviensis*, 126, 19 (1970), pp. 113–19.

⁷³ Hermann Markgraf, 'Geschichte des städtischen Urkundenarchivs zu Breslau', *Archivalische Zeitschrift*, 3 (1878), pp. 123–7.

⁷⁴ Nicolaus Pol, *Hemerologion Silesiacum Vratislaviense/Tagebuch allerley fürnemer namhaftiger, gedencwürdiger Historien so fürnemlich in Breßlau . . . auch sonst . . . im Fürstenthumb Schlesien sich begeben/in Druck verfertigt durch Nicolaum Polium* (Leipzig, 1612).

⁷⁵ Fleischer, 'Silesiographia', p. 76.

⁷⁶ Heinrich Schmidt, *Die deutschen Städtechroniken als Spiegel des bürgerlichen Selbstverständnisses im Spätmittelalter* (Schriftenreihe der Historischen Kommission bei der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, vol. 3, Göttingen, 1958), p. 22.

ingly written in German,⁷⁷ the Breslau chronicles, with the exception of early German versions of Eschenloer's chronicle and the *Goldschmiede-Chronik*,⁷⁸ were published in Latin and therefore targeted a limited audience among the urban élites. Hence it is evident that Breslau's representation of itself and its affirmation of its own character to the world in the age of the Renaissance was marked by its dominant urban public sphere and an extraordinarily strong need to display its historical values and political demands. The impact this representation achieved, however, was modest, so that its main function was mainly internal and aimed at its own élites, as an enhancement of its own identity and strength in times of political and social disturbances, for the defence of its traditional privileges. This consciousness also reflects the need of a city to assert its relatively autonomous status against its territorial ruler—a status strengthened not least through the impact of Johann Thurzó's activities.

By participating in scholarly communication networks within the east central European triangle of metropolises Breslau was thus able to compensate partly for its losses in the political and economic field around 1500. The cultural transfer from Cracow is especially remarkable in this respect and can certainly be explained by Thurzó's educational background. But other relations existed as well, mainly to Vienna, Olmütz and also to Prague. Many of Thurzó's protégés were employed at the court of Buda, owing to his Hungarian origins. With Thurzó always keeping in touch with his pupils, receiving information from them and passing it on, he considerably increased Breslau's ability to connect with the world. By lastingly improving the school system, he laid the foundations for the high standards of Silesian education in general, which was to find its later expression in Baroque literature, to name but one example. Breslau simultaneously was a point of attraction and transmission for Silesia, a place where new cultural movements such as humanism, the Renaissance and the Reformation could gain ground successfully, quickly and lastingly. With his various forms of patronage Johann Thurzó amplified communication within the city, thus indirectly acting as a mediator between the two public institutions, church and patriciate. Printers such as Elyan and Baumgarten worked under the direction of church and city. The conversion of cathedral canons like Hess and Moibanus into Protestant preachers employed by the city enlarged the sphere of exchange and transfer in a dynamic process. The absence of a court and a university certainly limited Breslau's further metropolitan evolution. But, remarkably enough, the city provided more than just the stage for an ambitious Renaissance bishop. Topography and urban praise—*laus urbis*—

⁷⁷ This is the conclusion drawn by Rolf Sprandel, *Chronisten als Zeitzeugen. Forschungen zur spätmittelalterlichen Geschichtsschreibung in Deutschland* (Kollektive Einstellungen und sozialer Wandel im Mittelalter, n.s., vol. 3, Cologne, etc., 1994), p. 17, who analysed 250 chronicles.

⁷⁸ *Die Goldschmiede-Chronik [1480–1586]. Die Erlebnisse der ehrbaren Goldschmiede-Ältesten Martin und Wolfgang, auch Mag. Peters Vincentz für Liebhaber merkwürdiger und lehrhafter Begebenheiten diesmal aufs neue zugerichtet von Curt Rudolf Vincentz* (Hanover, 1918).

are expressions of a well-developed form of communication with scholarly Europe. They also imply that the transfer of cultural concepts could be employed to build a re-defined urban identity in a period of transition. By communicating recent European innovations to the city and the province of Silesia, Breslau received a long-lasting modernizing momentum in the age of the Renaissance and the early Reformation.

Piety and Patronage: The Empresses-Consort of the High Baroque

Charles W. Ingrao (*Purdue University*) and
Andrew L. Thomas (*University of Arizona*)

We know a great deal about the fifteen Habsburg Holy Roman emperors who reigned in almost uninterrupted succession from Frederick III (1440–93) to Francis II (1792–1806). At last count, they have been the subject of nearly a hundred biographies, many in multiple volumes. We are, however, much less well informed about the twenty empresses-consort who reigned beside them. The great exception is that *grande dame* of Austrian history, Maria Theresa, the one woman who stands out in the dynasty's political history, public monuments and popular lore. But the 'great empress' was not only the consort of Francis Stephen of Lorraine (1742–65) but, for four eventful decades, the sovereign, hereditary ruler of the Habsburg lands as reigning queen of Bohemia, Hungary and a host of other dominions.

To a certain extent the neglect of the previous and subsequent empresses-consort reflects their regimented and subsidiary rôle at the Habsburg courts, where they were subject to emotional neglect and even humiliation. That does not, however, mean that they were historically insignificant. At the very least, they represented a highly visible source for understanding court culture and values; moreover, they did play an important rôle at the centre of the Habsburg realm, both culturally and, on occasion, politically. As this study will make clear, these women were hardly passive participants in late baroque Austrian court life. Rather, their history confirms the observations made by the founder of gender history in Germany, Heide Wunder, that the cosmological position of women during the early modern period must be understood within the *mentalité* of the period: 'Women and men attained their self reference and sense of self-worth not "from themselves", but from their integration into household, generational unit, work and profession, from their shared orientation toward secular "honour and piety" and a life after death.'¹

This was certainly the case with the three empresses-consort of the High Baroque: Eleonore of Pfalz-Neuburg (1655–1720), who was the third and last wife of emperor Leopold I (1658–1705), and their two sons' consorts,

¹ Heide Wunder, *He is the Sun, She is the Moon: Women in Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 207. Translated from the German edition by Thomas Dunlap: 'Er ist die Sonn', sie ist der Mond': *Frauen in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Munich, 1992).