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**FROM *IVDAEA CAPTA* TO *LIVON(IA) POLOT(IA)Q(UE) RECEPTA*.
THE RECEPTION OF THE FAMOUS REVERSE
OF VESPASIAN COINS IN RENAISSANCE POLAND**

ABSTRACT: The main goal of the paper is an attempt to find specific models for Stephen Báthory's medals with the reverse *LIVON(ia) POLOT(ia)Q(ue) RECEPTA* and to precise the general opinion, repeated from early 17th century, that the engraver borrowed the appearance of his specimen from a Roman coin of emperors Vespasian and /or Titus. An analysis of the iconography and the inscriptions layout suggests that there were Vespasian's sestertii RIC II² 161–162 with the mirror-reversed picture or figures from Titus' sestertii RIC II² 150–153 which had an impact on the reverse of the Polish king's medal. The paper presents also the medal as a part of propaganda actions of the Polish court after the Truce of Jam Zapolski in 1582, because at the same time panegyrics *Gratulationum triumphalium ex Moscoviticis orationes III* by Andreas Patricius Nidecki and *De bello Moscovitico commentariorum libri sex* by Reinhold Heideinstein were published.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: Stefan Batory, Jan Zamoyski, renesansowe medale, Połock, Inflanty, Wespazjan, Tytus, sesterce, *IVDAEA CAPTA*

KEYWORDS: Stephen Báthory, Jan Zamoyski, Renaissance medals, Polotsk, Livonia, Vespasian, Titus, sestertii, *IVDAEA CAPTA*

As Adam Więcek, author of the monograph *Dzieje sztuki medalierskiej w Polsce*, observes, most medals dedicated to the King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania, Stephen Báthory (1576–1586), were issued in 1582, the year of the Truce of Jam Zapolski that ended the war with the Grand Duchy of Moscow,¹ or shortly thereafter. The war with Muscovy, the last stage of the Livonian War,

¹ See Więcek 1989, p. 34–35.

was Báthory's great triumph. In 1577 Tsar Ivan IV (the Terrible) invaded the Duchy of Livonia, which since the 1561 Treaty of Vilnius had been a Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth vassal territory, and conquered or devastated most of it. In the 1577–1578 campaign, the Polish king, who had been forced to deal in 1577 with the Danzig rebellion, managed only to halt the progress of the Muscovite forces in the Battles of Wenden. But in 1579 he gathered a large army of over 55,000 Polish, Lithuanian, Hungarian, Wallachian, Bohemian and German soldiers and recaptured Polotsk (the city captured in 1563 by Ivan IV, which had earlier belonged to Lithuania) and captured eight Russian castles. In the following year Polish–Lithuanian forces captured Velikiye Luki, Velizh and Nevel and defeated Russian cavalry in the battle of Toropets. In 1581, the Lithuanian cavalry burnt down Staraya Russa and the main forces under Báthory himself and Jan Zamoyski, Grand Crown Hetman, started the siege of Pskov. Though the Polish–Lithuanian army did not capture the city, its blockade was successful and forced the tsar to sign the truce, under the terms of which Muscovy renounced its claims to Livonia and Polotsk.²

Medals were only an element of festive events extolling the king's victories in various (mostly literary) works and commemorating them in the country and in Western Europe. The first Latin panegyrics were already published during the war. The famous Polish classical scholar, humanist and clergyman Andreas Patricius Nidecki delivered three speeches on the occasion of the entries of Báthory into Warsaw in 1580, 1581 and 1582 (*Gratulationum triumphalium ex Moscoviticis orationes III*) after his successful campaigns against Muscovy. Already in the first of his speeches, the clemency of the Polish king is contrasted with the barbarity and cruelty of the Muscovites and the bestiality of Ivan the Terrible.³ In the second of his panegyrics Nidecki suggests that Báthory should be elected chief commander in the “holy war” against the Turks,⁴ because he knows how to fight against cruel, oriental despots. In his last *oratio gratulatoria* delivered in Warsaw cathedral in August 1582, the humanist uses, among others, the figure of personification, arguing that the Polish king liberated “the province of Livonia, which was in mourning under the yoke of Muscovite slavery” (“*sub Moscoviticae illius servitutis iugo gemente Livonia provincia*”⁵). In another panegyric of that time, *Panegyrica apostrophe* by Helias Pilgrimovius published in 1583, the Grand Duchy of Moscow is clearly shown from an “oriental” perspective. There, the Muscovites were equated with the ancient Scythians and “terrible Tartars”, while Christopher Radziwiłł, the Field Lithuanian Hetman, was compared with Greek heroes and famous Roman generals and statesmen: P. Cornelius Scipio and

² About Báthory's military campaigns against Muscovy see more in Kupisz 2003 and 2006–2015.

³ See Awianowicz 2015, p. 207.

⁴ See Nidecki 2016, p. 80: “te unum, si quis ipsis unus communis sacri belli imperator deligendus sit”.

⁵ See Nidecki 2016, p. 96.

Julius Caesar.⁶ Some years later, in 1594, Daniel Hermann praised Jan Zamoyski in a similar way: Lord Grand-Chancellor and since 1581 Grand Crown Hetman is the new Perseus, who defeated barbarians and now cultivates the Muses.⁷ The king and Zamoyski inspired historical books, too. The most important among them was the monograph *De bello Moscovitico commentariorum libri sex* by the Grand Hetman's secretary Reinhold Heideinstein.⁸

However, a historical narrative didn't leave as much room for ancient comparisons and metaphors as panegyrics, poems ... or medals. Specifically, one type of Báthory's medals (in gold — Fig. 1 and silver — Fig. 2), whose obverse depicts a bust of the Polish king in overcoat (Pol. *szuba*) and Hungarian cap, while the reverse features a palm tree, a mourning man (captive?) with long beard and in a Russian hat seated to the left, and a standing woman and a child (boy) tearing his hair to right. The obverse legend is: STEPHANVS D(ei) G(ratia) REX POLONIAE, the reverse legend is: LIVON(ia) — POLOT(ia)Q(ue) RECEP(ta):



Fig. 1. Golden medal for getting Polotsk of 7 ducats weight (23.86 g, diameter: 38 mm).
 Photo: Antykwarjat Michał Niemczyk, Auction 7, lot 32.



Fig. 2. Silver medal for getting Polotsk of Thaler weight (24.52 g, diameter: 40 mm).
 Photo: Warszawskie Centrum Numizmatyczne, Auction 51, lot 38.

⁶ See Awianowicz 2015, p. 210–213. Unlike Pilgrimovius, Jan Kochanowski in his Polish panegyric poem *Jezda do Moskwy* dedicated to the same Radziwiłł's raid into the territory of Moscow in 1581 concentrates himself not on the "orientalisation" of Moscovites but on the topography of their territory — see Kochanowski 2018, p. 25–32 and 255–292.

⁷ See Lawenda 2011, p. 53–54.

⁸ See Lawenda 2011, p. 31–35.

We read about the historical context and goal of this issue already in Alexander Guagnini's *Kronika Sarmacyey Europejskiej*, which was published in 1611 in Kraków. There the Polish historian of Italian descent describes among others the wedding of Jan Zamoyski and a relative of the king, Gryzelda Báthory in June 1583 and reports that the Grand Crown Hetman:

*Inszym potym gościom swym, Panom y Paniom, y posłom pomienionym Portugały złote, na których była twarz królewska z iedne strone, z druga żalosna figura o wzięciu Połocka y ziemie Inflatskiej*⁹. [was giving to his guests, lords and ladies, and to the mentioned deputies golden portugalesers with the king's face on the one side and a mourning figure representing the capture of Polotsk and Livonian area.]

Therefore, we can believe that it was Zamoyski who inspired not only Heideinstein's "diaries", but also the issue of these medals praising King Báthory directly and, indirectly, the Grand Hetman, coauthor of the military and diplomatic success.

Although Guagnini mentions only golden medals, mostly those struck in silver have been preserved to our times. Only silver thalers were known to Johann David Köhlers¹⁰ and Jan Chrzciel Albertrandi¹¹ in the 18th century, and to Edward Raczyński (52) and Emeryk Hutten-Czapski (780) in the 19th century. However, most important to our subject is that both gold and silver specimens were struck from the same dies made by an engraver who knew ancient Roman coin iconography. Already in 1620, Johann Jacob Lucke (Luckius) observed that:

*Nummi posterioris characterem mutuatus videtur Stephanus ex Numismate Vespasiani et Titi Imp(eratorum) Romanorum, qui Judaea, aliisque provinciis in suam redactis potestatem, simili epigraphe sunt usi*¹². [Stephen seems to borrow the appearance of the second coin from a piece of money of Roman emperors Vespasian and Titus who used similar epigraphy after capturing Judea and other provinces].

This information was repeated throughout the following centuries by Köhlers (who quotes Lucke), Raczyński (who mentions as his source Albertrandi and adds that the Roman coins bear the legend "Judaea capta"),¹³ Więcek and many

⁹ See Gwagnin 1611, p. 222.

¹⁰ See Köhlers 1750, p. 417–418.

¹¹ See Albertrandi ca 1790, p. XXX.

¹² Luckius 1620, p. 274.

¹³ See Raczyński 1838, p. 208.

others,¹⁴ but nobody tried to indicate the exact type of Vespasian or Titus coins which inspired an anonymous engraver, probably of Vilnius.¹⁵

First of all we should ask which Flavian coins with the reverse legend IVDAEA CAPTA in whole or abbreviated form showing the mourning Province seated amid arms beneath a palm tree were known in the 16th century. If not in Poland or Lithuania, then at least in Italy, where Zamoyski studied and even obtained his doctor's degree from Padua (1564) and King Báthory attended some lectures at the same Padua University (around 1549–1550), as well as many of secretaries and courtiers in the service of Polish kings in the second half of the 16th century. We can therefore assume that the engraver knew, for example, the iconography of Flavian coins from Enea Vico's engravings published by Antonio Zantani as *Le imagini con tutti riversi trovati et le vite de gli imperatori tratte dalle medaglie et dalle historie de gli antichi*,¹⁶ whose Latin version entitled *Omnium caesarum verissimae imagines ex antiquis numismatis desumptae* is still in the Vilnius University Library.¹⁷

We can identify here two main types of Vespasian sestertii, all minted in Rome in 71 CE, which seem to be similar to Báthory's medal:

- RIC II² 159–162: Rev. IVDAEA (or IVDEA) — CAPTA; S C in exergue; Judaea seated right on cuirass under palm tree in attitude of mourning with head in hands; behind the palm tree, a Jewish captive standing right, hands tied behind his back, in left field shields;¹⁸
- RIC II² 167–168: Rev. IVDAEA — CAPTA; S C in exergue; Judaea seated right on cuirass under palm tree in attitude of mourning; behind the palm tree, Emperor standing right with left foot on helmet, holding spear and parazonium.¹⁹

And one as of the same emperor from the same mint and year:

- RIC II² 303–304: Rev. IVDAEA — CAPTA; S C in exergue; Judaea seated right on cuirass under palm tree in attitude of mourning with head in hands, surrounded by shields or shields and other arms.²⁰

¹⁴ Recently Czarski 2014, p. 16.

¹⁵ So Więcek 1989, p. 52. However, we can't exclude that the medal was issued outside the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, e.g. in an important German centre of medallic production (Augsburg or Nürnberg).

¹⁶ See Vico 1548.

¹⁷ But of the latter, French provenance (stamps of “Biblioteka Szkoły Nar. Polskiej w Bati-gnolles”). See Vico 1554 (VUB sing. Lelev. 3659).

¹⁸ Type III.2 according to Ostrowski 1999, p. 157.

¹⁹ Type II.2 according to Ostrowski 1999, p. 156.

²⁰ Type I.2 according to Ostrowski 1999, p. 155.

The closest analogy, however, seems to be engraved by Vico Titus' sestertius RIC II² 150–153 minted in Rome in 80 or 81 with the Rev. IVD — CAP, S — C in exergue; Judaea seated left on cuirass under palm tree in attitude of mourning; before shield, behind palm tree, Jewish captive standing right with hands tied behind his back with arms on ground before him (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3. AE Sestertius (34 mm, 21.50 g), Rome mint. Struck AD 80–81. RIC II² 152²¹.
 Obv. IMP T CAES VESP AVG P M TR P P P COS VIII, laureate head of Titus right;
 Rev. IVD — CAP across field, palm tree; to left, Judaea seated left in attitude
 of mourning on pile of arms; to right, bound captive Jew standing right,
 with arms on ground before him; S C in exergue.

Photo: Classical Numismatic Group, Inc., Electronic Auction 372, lot 418.

Another famous 16th-century author, Guillaume du Choul attributes a coin with a very similar iconography which we just identified as Titus' sestertii RIC II² 150–153 to Vespasian.²² Such a variant of reverse legend is, however, unattested under Vespasian what shows that the French author was wrong — the engraving can only represent this coin of Titus that we have just mentioned. But Vespasian's sestertii RIC II² 165–166 (with an unabbreviated legend in border and S — C in exergue) can't be excluded as possible sources of the Vilnius engraver, even if the captive Jew is standing left (165) or, standing right looking back (166). Titus' coin seems to be the closest one to the reverse of Báthory's medal in terms of figural composition, but the layout of legends is the same as in the earlier Vespasian coins: LIVON(ia) corresponds to IVDAEA, POLOT(ia)Q(ue) to CAPTA, and RECEP(ta) in exergue to S(enatus) C(onsulto). If we assume that the anonymous engraver copied the composition of Roman sestertius already in the concave stamp, in the final product (a medal) the seated and standing figures will be reversed and consequently, Vespasian's sestertii RIC II² 159–162, especially 161–162 (Fig. 4 and 5), will remain still a very important inspiration for the early modern medalist.

²¹ Ostrowski's type III.2.

²² See du Choul 1581, p. 12.



Fig. 4. AE Sestertius (35 mm, 24.74 g), Rome mint. AD 71. RIC II² 161
 Obv. IMP CAES VESPASIAN AVG PM TR P P P COS III, laureate head of Vespasian to right;
 Rev. IVDEA CAPTA; palm tree, male captive on left, stands facing right, on right mourning
 Judea (or Jewess) sits to r. on cuirass, arms around both figures, S C in exergue.
 Photo: H. D. Rauch GmbH, Auction 105, lot 271.



Fig. 5. A mirror-reversed picture of the Vespasian's sestertius II² 161 reverse.

Furthermore, the anonymous engraver changed the sex of both the seated mourning figure on the left and that standing on the right side of the composition, and added a boy tearing his hair to right. We can associate this not only with his invention but also with the larger diameter of Báthory's medals — 38–40 mm compared to 34–35 mm of Vespasian's and Titus' sestertii. However, the most important difference lies in the interpretation of the palm and the scene. Although some Polish–Lithuanian authors involved in wars against Muscovy in the 16th century and the first two decades of the 17th depicted the enemies of Western, Latin civilisation as “oriental others”,²³ it is hard to believe that a palm tree could symbolise the Grand Duchy of Moscow. In early modern Europe it was, rather, a universal symbol of stability and victory.²⁴ The mourning figures on the reverse of Báthory's medal are not personifications of the recaptured province and its citizens, but of the tsar and his subjects who had lost important territories.

²³ See Awianowicz 2015, *passim*.

²⁴ See e.g. Alciatus' *Emblema XXXVI: Obdurandum adversus urgentia*.

To conclude, the comparison between Báthory's medal and Flavian bronze denominations allows us to state that the early modern engraver was inspired by Flavian sestertii either directly, or through Vico's or du Choul's engravings, and he picked up inscriptions layout from Vespasian's sestertius RIC II² 161–162 and figures from Titus' RIC II² 150–153 or carved an inverted relief composition of the Vespasian's coin. Furthermore, the issuer of the medal: Polish king or Jan Zamoyski intentionally changed the significance of the reverse scene by showing not the recaptured (not captured!) province but its enemies: humiliated Muscovites who mourn the loss of the rich territories.

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OD *IVDAEA CAPTA* DO *LIVON(IA) POLOT(IA)Q(UE) RECEP(TA)*.
RECEPCJA SŁYNNEGO REWERSU MONET WESPAZJANA
W RENESANSOWEJ POLSCE

(Streszczenie)

Większość medali poświęconych królowi Stefanowi Batoremu datuje się na rok 1582, gdy korzystny dla Rzeczypospolitej rozejm w Jamie Zapolskim zakończył ostatnią fazę wojen o Inflanty, tj. wojnę z Iwanem IV Groźnym w latach 1577–1582. Po odzyskaniu Połocka w 1581 r., zniszczeniu Starej Russy przez kawalerię litewską w 1581 r. i skutecznej blokadzie Pskowa car na początku 1582 r. musiał zrzec się swych roszczeń do Inflant, w tym Liwonii oraz do Połocka. Do tego wydarzenia wyraźnie nawiązują opisywane w artykule medale w złocie (Fig. 1) i srebrze (Fig. 2), które z kolei wpisują się w szerszy kontekst twórczości artystycznej, głównie literackiej związanej z pochwałą Stefana Batorego jako głównodowodzącego w kampaniach moskiewskich lat 1579–1582 oraz jego bliskiego współpracownika, kanclerza, a od 1581 r. hetmana wielkiego koronnego, Jana Zamoyskiego. Polskiego króla wychwalał w swych *Gratulationum triumphalium ex Moscoviticis orationes III* wygłaszanych w 1580, 1581 i 1582 r. wybitny humanista i wpływowy kanonik Andrzej Nidecki, szczególnie akcentując wyrwanie pogrążonej w rozpacz Liwonii z niewoli moskiewskiej („*sub Moscoviticae illius servitutis iugo gemente Livonia provincia*”). W podobny sposób przeciwstawiał barbarzyństwo cara i Moskwinów kontynuującemu najlepsze grecko-rzymskie tradycje wojsku polsko-litewskiemu Eliaż Pielgrzymowski (Pilgrimovius) w swej wydanej w 1583 r. *Panegyrica apostrophe* na cześć Krzysztofa Radziwiła, hetmana polnego litewskiego i dowódcy zagonu jazdy w głąb terytorium moskiewskiego w 1580 r. Największe znaczenie dla międzynarodowej promocji zwieńczonych sukcesem kampanii moskiewskich wśród dzieł literackich miały *De bello Moscovitico commentarium libri* Reinholda Heideinsteina, sekretarza Zamoyskiego.

Za element zwycięskiej propagandy należy też uznać medale z popiersiem Batorego w szubie i czapce węgierskiej oraz towarzyszącą mu legendą otokową *STEPHANVS D(ei) G(ratia) REX POLONIAE* na awersie. Na rewersie stojąca pośrodku palma flankowana jest siedzącym, zmartwionym brodatym mężczyzną (jeńcem?) z długą brodą i w rosyjskiej czapie z lewej, oraz kobietą i chłopcem wyrrywającym włosy z prawej; legenda rewersu brzmi: *LIVON(ia) — POLOT(ia)Q(ue) RECEP(ta)*. Kontekst historyczny wydania tych medali po raz pierwszy przybliży Alessandro Guagnini w swej wydanej w 1611 r. w Krakowie *Kronice Sarmacyey Europejskiej*, który w opisie wesela Jana Zamoyskiego z królewską bratanicą, Gryzeldą Batorówną z 1583 r. wspomina, że hetman wielki koronny: „Inszym potym gościom swym, Panom y Paniom, y posłom pomienionym Portugały złote, na których była twarz królewska z iedne strone, z druga żalosa figura o wzięciu Połocka y ziemie Inflatskiej”. Kronikarz wspomina tu jedynie o medalach w złocie, podczas gdy późniejsi autorzy: Johann David Köhlers, Jan Chrzciciel Albertrandi, Edward Raczyński i Emeryk Hutten-Czapski znali jedynie medale srebrne o wadze talara. Natomiast już Johann Jacob Lucke zwrócił w 1620 r. uwagę na monety Wespazjana i Tytusa jako źródło inspiracji wileńskiego zapewne autora medali typu *LIVON(ia) — POLOT(ia)Q(ue) RECEP(ta)*. Informację o tej inspiracji podawali również późniejsi badacze, nie precyzując jednak, jakie konkretnie typy monet Flawiuszy mogłyby tu bezpośrednio oddziaływać

na kompozycję rewersu medalu. Dlatego zasadne było prześledzenie, które ze znanych obecnie rewersów dużych nominałów brązowych (głównie sesterców) były znane w XVI w. Analiza ikonografii i układu legendy typów uwzględnionych w książkach Enei Vico i Antonia Zantaniego (*Le imagini con tutti riversi trovati et le vite de gli imperatori tratte dalle medaglie et dalle historie de gli antichi*) oraz Guillaume'a du Choula (*Discours de la Religion des Anciens Romains, de la Castrametation et discipline militaire d'iceux, des Bains et Antiques exercitations Grecques et Romaines*) wykazuje, że inspiracją anonimowego rytownika była najprawdopodobniej legenda rewersu sesterców Wespazjana RIC II² 161–162 wraz z odwróconą lustrzanie wyobrażoną na nim sceną z siedzącą, pogrążoną w smutku personifikacją Judei (lub po prostu Żydówką) i stojącym jeńcem lub ewentualnie sestercie Tytusa RIC II² 150–153, gdzie układ postaci jest analogiczny jak na medalu polskiego króla, lecz legenda biegnie poziomo w linii.

Na koniec należy zaznaczyć, że rytownik działający z inspiracji króla Batorego lub Jana Zamoyskiego zmienił przekaz propagandowy ikonografii rewersu, zastępując jeńca i podbitą prowincję wizerunkiem upokorzonych wrogów, którzy utracili ważne i bogate terytoria: Liwonię i Połock.

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