MEMOIRS OF FRENCH TRAVELLERS:
A SOURCE OF LITHUANIAN HISTORY
IN THE SECOND HALF
OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

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Introduction

This study aims to discuss French travellers, their stay in the Commonwealth and Lithuania in the second half of the seventeenth century, and their memoirs. We use the word *travellers* in a very broad sense. The phrase *memoirs of French travellers* means memoirs written by any Frenchman¹ who visited the Commonwealth and wrote his impressions in the second half of the seventeenth century. Anonymous works have not been used, except when something can be known about the authors, as in the case of F. de S. and Rousseau de la Valette. As many memoirs as possible which correspond with this condition have been used, regardless of the length of the stay of their authors in the Commonwealth, whether they were politicians visiting Warsaw as ambassadors or occasional voyagers travelling across Poland-Lithuania.

In the second half of the seventeenth century Poland-Lithuania was visited by many foreign travellers. According to the data collected by a Polish historian, Teresa Chynczewska-Hennel, during the seventeenth century this country was visited and described most intensively by Italians (24 travellers) and Frenchmen (23 travellers, plus informants of the *Gazette de France* and the members of the Visitation order of nuns, *Wizytki*, invited from France by Ludwika Maria (1645-1667). Other nationalities

¹ Here Ulrich Werdum who travelled in the Commonwealth in the period of 1670-1672 will not be treated as a Frenchman. He was of German origin (region of Frisia), but some historians (e.g., Daniel Tollet) regarded his memoirs as those of a Frenchman, because during his voyage to the Commonwealth he accompanied a French agent.

include six Germans, five Englishmen, four Russians, three Swedes, two Scots, two Czechs, one Hungarian, an Irishman, one Spaniard and an Arab. According to the author, the second half of the seventeenth century had a small overbalance compared with the first half.² This work discusses only the works of French travellers, the memoirs of the representatives of other nationalities being left for further research.

This subject has not been investigated by Lithuanian historians. Moreover, the most prominent Lithuanian historians to study the seventeenth century Lithuania (Konstantinas Avižonis, Adolfas Šapoka, Bronius Dundulis, Antanas Tyla, Zigmantas Kiaupa, Jūratė Kiaupienė) have not used the memoirs of French travellers who visited the Commonwealth in the second half of the century.

Publication of collections of French travel accounts was carried out only by Poles from the nineteenth century onwards.³ All of the published French memoirs in these collections were translated into Polish, except for one that was in German.⁴

The travellers and their memoirs have been investigated in Polish historiography. The first great work in this field was a book by Stanisław Kot.⁵ He studied the perception and the interpretation of the political structure of the Commonwealth in the literature of Western Europe in the early modern period. From the memoirs of French travellers of the second half of the century he only used those of Jean le Laboureur and Gaspard de Tende extensively. Another Polish historian, J. A. Wilder⁶, unlike Kot, did not focus on political problems. He discussed travel conditions, social structure and economic issues of the Commonwealth as seen by foreign travellers in the Early modern period. Like Kot, he also ignored specific Lithuanian issues and used the same two memoirs of French travellers from the

² T. Chynczewska-Hennel. *Rzeczpospolita XVII wieku w oczach cudzoziemców*. Warszawa, 1994, 18.

³ *Zbiór pamiętników historycznych o dawnej Polsce*. Ed. by J. U. Niemcewicz. Warszawa, 1822-1833, t. 1-6; Lipsk, 1838-1840, t. 1-5. *Cudzoziemcy o Polsce. Relacje i opinie*. Ed. by J. Gintel. Kraków, 1971, t. 1.

⁴ *Die Gelehrte Welt des 17. Jahrhunderts über Polen*. Ed by E. M. Szarota. Wien-München-Zürich, 1972.

⁵ St. Kot. *Rzeczpospolita Polska w literaturze politycznej Zachodu*. Kraków, 1919.

⁶ J. A. Wilder. *Okiem cudzoziemca. Ze wspomnień cudzoziemców o dawnej Polsce*. Warszawa, 1959.

second half of the seventeenth century, J. le Laboureur and G. de Tende.

One of the most recent contributions to the investigation of the topic is a book by Teresa Chynczewska-Hennel.⁷ She discussed foreign travellers who visited the Commonwealth during the seventeenth century. The aspects she covers are travel conditions, geographical descriptions and political issues of the Commonwealth. Chynczewska-Hennel investigated all accessible memoirs of the foreign travellers. This was her great advantage over Wilder and Kot. Unfortunately, like the latter she did not devote special attention to Lithuanian issues, which she mentioned only occasionally, for she regarded Lithuania as a part of Poland.

One should not forget the French historian Daniel Tollet.⁸ His work is especially valuable, because he collected information about all of the memoirs of French travellers who visited the Commonwealth during the seventeenth century. According to him, at that time there were 40 French authors (this number also includes people who had never been in the Commonwealth) who wrote 43 works related to the Commonwealth. 32 of them were printed between 1645 and 1699. D. Tollet counted the number of editions of each of the memoirs, studied the origin of their authors and the purpose of their travelling to the Commonwealth. Although he omitted several travellers (F. de S., Rousseau de la Valette, the Visitation sisters and some others), the data collected by him and some of his general conclusions are very helpful.

Memoirs of the French travellers who visited the Commonwealth in the second half of the seventeenth century were used broadly by Polish historians studying the history of the courts of Ludwika Maria (1645-1667) and Jan Sobieski (1675-1696). Many of the French travellers spent considerable time in these pro-French courts as courtiers or guests (see Appendix).

⁷ T. Chynczewska-Hennel. *Rzeczpospolita XVII wieku w oczach cudzoziemców*. Wrocław, 1993. The second edition appeared in 1994 (Warszawa). The latter is written for the professional historians, whereas, the former one is of a popular manner. Unlike the first edition, the second has a better structure, broader review of the primary and secondary sources and attempts to classify the travellers and their memoirs.

⁸ D. Tollet. *Les comptes rendus de voyages et commentaires des Français, sur la Pologne, au XVII siècle, auteurs et éditions*. *Revue du Nord*. Université de Lille III, avril-juin 1975, no 225, t. LVII, 133-145.

The French travellers in the court of Ludwika Maria have been discussed in the works of Bożena Fabiani⁹ and Karolina Targosz.¹⁰ In the investigations of Zbigniew Wójcik,¹¹ K. Targosz,¹² Michał Komarzyński¹³ and Zofia Libiszowska¹⁴ we find information about French travellers in the court of Jan Sobieski. While investigating the history of these courts, however, historians did not deal with the problems of how French travellers viewed Lithuania. Nevertheless, their works remain valuable sources, because they provide considerable information about the personalities of the travellers and their contacts with Lithuanian magnates who visited the courts.

1. French travellers and their memoirs: facts

The French travellers who visited Poland-Lithuania in the second half of the seventeenth century can be divided into two groups. The first one consists of those who visited the Commonwealth during the time of Ludwika Maria (1645-1667). The second group of travellers are those who travelled there during the rule of Jan Sobieski (1674-1696). The memoirs of G. de Tende and des Noyers can not be regarded as belonging to only one of these groups, because these travellers were related to both courts. Taking into account the fact that they first arrived in Poland during the time of Ludwika Maria and were courtiers of this Queen, they will be discussed as the representatives of the first group.

It is impossible to relate the informants of *Gazette de France* to either of these groups. This French magazine was established in 1631 and its task was to provide the French reader with the information about the political affairs of the European countries. The news from the Commonwealth came through later years. Because the original sources were not available, I have used an

⁹ B. Fabiani. *Warszawski dwór Ludwiki Marii*. Warszawa, 1976.

¹⁰ K. Targosz. *Uczony dwór Ludwiki Marii Gonzagi (1647-1667)*. Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków-Gdańsk, 1975.

¹¹ Z. Wójcik. *Jan Sobieski*. Warszawa, 1994.

¹² K. Targosz. *Jan III Sobieski mecenasem nauk i uczonych*. Warszawa, 1991. K. Targosz. Nieznane 'portrety' Jana III i Marii Kazimiery pióra François Paulin Daleraca oraz ich autor. *Acta universitatis Wratislaviensis*. Wrocław, 1992, no 1418, Historia CII, 111-120.

¹³ M. Komarzyński. Filip Dupont - dworzanin doskonały. *Acta universitatis Wratislaviensis*. Wrocław, 1984, Historia XLVII, 197-209.

¹⁴ Z. Libiszowska. Francuzi w służbie Jana III Sobieskiego. *Acta universitatis Lodziensis*. Łódź, 1986, Folia historica 26, 105-114.

article by the Polish historian Z. Wójcik¹⁵ that discusses how the Polish election of 1673-74 had been seen in the pages of *Gazette de France*. Wójcik makes two conclusions. Firstly, most of the correspondence related to the issues of the Commonwealth before, during and after the election came from Warsaw and Gdańsk. Whereas there was no information at all from Vilnius, or other cities of Lithuania. This means that the informants had not visited this part of the Commonwealth. Secondly, the informants usually were senators, ministers and people related to the chancellery of the crown (Frenchmen also could have been among them). Therefore, the information which they provided about Lithuania (in all cases it was political) was 'first-hand', but, it was also influenced by Polish, rather than Lithuanian stereotypes.

1.2. French travellers during the time of Ludwika Maria (1645-1667)

The French historian Jean Le Labourereur¹⁶ accompanied Ludwika Maria during her voyage to Poland in 1646 and wrote a very detailed chronicle of this journey. The book was written in a very pompous manner, because the sponsor, French King's court, required him to show the Queen's new home country in as good a light as possible. The traveller did not enter Lithuania; in the Commonwealth he travelled only from Gdańsk to Warsaw. In spite of this, the author touched on Lithuanian issues. He frequently mentioned and described the representatives of the Radvilas and the Sapiegas, who being important political figures welcomed the Queen in Poland.

¹⁵ Z. Wójcik. *Bezkrólewie 1673/1674 i elekcja polska 1674 roku w relacjach Gazette de France. Między wielką polityką a szlacheckim partykularzem: Studia z dziejów nowożytnej Polski i Europy*. Ed. by K. Wajda. Toruń, 1993, 233-252.

¹⁶ J. Le Labourereur. *Histoire et relation du voyage de la Royne de Pologne et du retour de Madame le Maréchal de Guébriant, ambassadrice et surintendante de sa conduite...* Paris, 1647 (two editions), 1648 (two editions); edition in English in 1649. Polish translation: *Wypis z podróży Pani de Guebriant, posłowej nadzwyczajnej do Polski za Władysława IV. Nowy Pamiętnik Warszawski*. Warszawa, t. 3, July 1801, 1-38; August 1801, 129-165; September 1801, 257-288. Other sources: D. Tollet. *Les comptes rendus...* *Die Gelehrte Welt...* K. Targosz. *Uczony dwór...* esp. pp. 88-89, 153. B. Fabiani. *Warszawski dwór...* *Cudzoziemcy...* t. 1. *Zbiór pamiętników...* t. 1-6. T. Chynczewska-Hennel. *Rzeczpospolita...* 1993, 223-244.

Basic biographical data about Pierre Chevalier are unknown.¹⁷ It is known only that before coming to the Commonwealth, he served in the French army. In addition to this, it is also known that after his service in the army of the Commonwealth, he wrote memoirs (in 1662-1663) about the wars between the Cossacks and the Poles.¹⁸ The memoirs cover the period 1648-1654. Chevalier participated in this war on the Polish side. According to the Ukrainian historian, A. Z. Baraboj, Chevalier's memoirs are reliable, because most of the facts he discussed were true.¹⁹ The conflict between the Cossacks and the Poles-Lithuanians took place not only in Ukrainian lands of Poland, but also in the southern territories of Lithuania (Polesie and White Ruthenia). As a result, the memoirs of Pierre Chevalier present some interesting information about Lithuanian cultural and political issues.

One of the three orders of nuns which Ludwika Maria invited from France to Poland was that of the Visitation. The nuns made their voyage from their home country to Warsaw in 1654. They described their voyage in a circular letter published in 1655 and which was supposed to be read only by other nuns of the order.²⁰ The letter was written in very naive and devout language. Although the nuns did not visit Lithuania during their journey, they described the Diet of the Commonwealth of 1654, mentioning the Lithuanian Hetman Jonušas Radvila.

¹⁷ P. Chevalier. *Histoire de la guerre des Cosaques contre la Pologne. Avec vn discovrs de levr Origine, Pais, Moeurs, Gouuernement & Religion. Et vn autre des Tartares Précopites*. Paris, 1663, 1668, 1850; London, 1672.

¹⁸ Ukrainian translation of P. Chevalier's memoirs: П'єр Шевальє. *Історія війни козаків проты Польщі з розвідкою про пхнэ походження, країну, звичаї, спосіб правління та релігію і другою розвідкою про перекопських татар*. Transl. by Ю. И. Назаренка, introduction by А. З. Барабой. Київ, 1960. Other sources about P. Chevalier: *Die Gelehrte Welt...* 483-492, 808. D. Töllet. *Les comptes rendus...* T. Chynczewska-Hennel, *Rzeczpospolita...* 1993, 223-244.

¹⁹ Introduction. П'єр Шевальє. *Історія...*

²⁰ *Lettre circulaire aux (sic) Communauté des Religieuses de la Yisitation (sic) Sainte Marie, nouvellement eustablies (sic) par la serenissime Reine de Pologne en la Ville de Varsovie, en forme de Relation de tout ce qui s'est passé, tant dans le Cours de leur voyage, qu'en leur arrivè et establissement, fait le 9. Aoust 1654. A tous les Monasteres de, (sic) Institut*. Paris, 1655. Polish translation: *Portofolio królowej Marii Ludwiki*. Ed. by E. Raczyński. Poznań, 1844, t. 1. More information about the order: T. Chynczewska-Hennel. *Rzeczpospolita...* 1993, 223-244.

Gaspard de Tende (1618-1697) wrote very rich memoirs²¹ that were published under the pseudonym of Sieur de Hauteville, however, he also wrote books under the name Sieur de l'Estang. Several Polish historians, especially, K. Targosz and B. Fabiani, thoroughly investigated the personality of this Frenchman.²² De Tende was born in Provence. He came to Poland in the 1650s and worked as a treasurer at the court of Queen Ludwika Maria (1641-1667). His wife also served in the same court. De Tende left Poland in 1667, but returned in 1674 as a secretary of the French ambassador in Warsaw. It is unknown how long he remained in the Commonwealth. From the letters of Maria Kazimiera, Queen of Poland (1674-1696), one discovers that de Tende circulated within the court of Jan Sobieski, but did not have an office there.²³

In his introduction, de Tende wrote that he had lived 'more than 25 years in Poland and communicated with the most important people of the state'.²⁴ He also mentioned that during his stay in Poland-Lithuania he spent considerable time in Lithuania,²⁵ but he did not provide information about the cities or regions he visited. The memoirs of de Tende are divided into 29 separate chapters according to different problems aimed at describing the history of Poland-Lithuania and its political, cultural and social situation in the 1660s and 1670s. This work was extremely popular in Western Europe. The memoirs were printed many times and translated from French into English and German.

²¹ G. de Tende (pseud. Sieur de Hauteville). *Relation historique de la Pologne contenant le pouvoir de ses rois, leur élection et leur couronnement, les privileges de la noblesse, la religion, la justice, les moeurs et les inclinations des Polonois avec pluseurs actions remarquables*. Paris, 1686 (two editions), 1687, 1694, 1697; Amsterdam, 1687; Cologne, 1697, 1705; Frankfurt, 1711; Leipzig, 1711; English edition: London, 1698; German editions: Köln, 1697 (two editions).

²² K. Targosz. *Jan III Sobieski...* 99-100. K. Targosz. *Uczony dwór...* 88-89, 153. B. Fabiani. *Warszawski dwór...* Other secondary sources and translations of the fragments of the memoirs: *Cudzoziemcy...* t. 1, 310-334. *Die Gelehrte Welt...* 132-162, 823-824. D. Tollet. *Le comptes rendus...* T. Chynczewska-Hennel. *Rzeczpospolita...* 1993, 223-244.

²³ K. Targosz. *Jan III Sobieski...* 99.

²⁴ G. de Tende. *Relation...* 2.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 22.

Not much is known about Jean de Payen²⁶ who visited Poland around 1660.²⁷ He was employed in the service of the French King and had good connections in the high strata of French society, because he dedicated his book to the French Minister of the Foreign Affairs. The aim of his journey to the Commonwealth is unknown. From the allusions made in his memoirs, one can suppose that he visited this country either as a spy with a secret mission, or as a traveller (both suggestions do not have strong proofs). De Payen did not visit Lithuania and did not mention his contacts with the court of the King.

Sometime during the reign of Jan Kazimierz (1648-1668), the Commonwealth was visited by Alfred Jouvin de Rochefort.²⁸ It is known that he was a map maker (he also made a map of the Commonwealth) and travelled in many countries of Europe. Although his memoirs contain a short description of Lithuanian cultural issues, it is not known whether he visited that country.

Pierre des Noyers (?-1693) came to Poland in the company of Ludwika Maria in 1646 and served as a courtier in the court of this Queen.²⁹ After the Queen's death he was in the court of Michał Wiśniowiecki and later kept contacts with the court of

²⁶ J. de Payen. *Les voyages de monsieur Payen, lieutenant général de Meaux*. Paris, 1667, 1699.

²⁷ Translations of the fragments of the memoirs and comments were made by Polish and French historians: *Cudzoziemcy...* t. 1, 274-282. *Die Gelehrte Welt...* 91-93, 819. *Przygody Francuza Payena w podróży z Gdańska do Krakowa (1660-go r.)*. Transl. and comments by A. Kraushar. *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*. Seria V, 1891, t. 3, 86-87, 107-108, nr. 58, 59. D. Tollet. *Les comptes rendus...* T. Chynczewska-Hennel. *Rzeczpospolita...* 1993, 223-244.

²⁸ A. J. de Rochefort. *Le voyageur de l'Europe ou sont les voyages de France, d'Italie, et de Malthe, d'Espagne, du Portugal, de Pays Bas, d'Allemagne et de Pologne, d'Angleterre, de Danemarck et de Suède...* Paris, 1672, t. 1-3. Polish translation: (Pamiętnik P. Albert de Rochefort). *O Polsce za Jana Kazimirza*. Transl. and comments by M. Podczaszyński. *Dziennik Warszawski*. 1829, t. XVIII, 74-95, 286-322. Sources about the personality of this traveller: *Die Gelehrte Welt...* 94-107, 761-765, 784-793, 813-814. *Les Atlas Français XVI-XVII s.* Ed. M. Patoureaux. Paris, 1984, 186, 254. *Tooley's Dictionary of Mapmakers*. Comp. by R. V. Tooley. England, 1979. T. Chynczewska-Hennel. *Rzeczpospolita...* 1993, 223-244.

²⁹ Sources about the personality of P. des Noyers and his service in the court of Ludwika Maria and Jan Sobieski: K. Targosz. *Uczony dwór...* B. Fabiani. *Warszawski...* K. Targosz. *Jan III Sobieski...* T. Chynczewska-Hennel. *Rzeczpospolita...* 1993, 223-244.

Jan Sobieski. He was a very intelligent person, communicated with scholars from the Commonwealth and Europe. During his stay in the Commonwealth (with short pauses it lasted up until his death in 1693), P. des Noyers sent many letters to his friends in France informing them about the cultural and political life of the Commonwealth. Only a small part of this correspondence has been published.³⁰ On the basis of the published material, it is impossible to say whether des Noyers visited Lithuania or not. Most of his time in the Commonwealth he spent in Warsaw and Gdańsk. Although he does not provide us with a broad cultural description of Lithuania, he often mentions this country, especially the actions of its most powerful magnate families (the Radvilas, the Pacas and the Sapiegas), when discussing contemporary political issues of the Commonwealth.

The memoirs of an anonymous Frenchman, D. L. V. R., about the King Jan Kazimierz Vasa (1648-1668) first time appeared in 1679 and were very successful in the seventeenth century France.³¹ A. Kersten thinks that the letters D. L. V. R. is a pseudonym of M. Rousseau de la Valette. There is not much biographical data on this Frenchman. According to the same Polish historian, Rousseau was a courtier in the court of Jan Kazimierz. In his memoirs he broadly described intrigues and various love affairs of the court. Greater attention to the style than to the facts is the most important feature of this work. Although he also described political issues of the Commonwealth (especially the war with Sweden and Moscow, and the abdication of the king in 1668 and new election) without ignoring the participation of Lithuania, they were discussed very superficially and the facts he presented are hardly reliable. The author mentioned only one of his voyages to Lithuania. He did not specify the date or the road by which he travelled. Rousseau

³⁰ P. des Noyers. *Lettres de Pierre des Noyers secrétaire de la Reine de Pologne Marie-Louise de Gonzague princesse de Mantoue et de Nevers, pour servir à l'Histoire de Pologne et de Suède de 1655 à 1659*. Berlin, 1859. P. des Noyers. *Listy Piotra des Noyers, sekretarza królowej Maryi Kazimiry, z lat 1680-1683, rzeczy polskich dotyczące*. Ed. by Ludwik Nabelak. Lwów, 1867. *Portofolio królowej Marii Ludwiki*. Ed. by E. Raczyński. Poznań, 1844, t. 1-2.

³¹ M. Rousseau de la Valette. *Casimir Roy de Pologne*. Paris, 1679 (two editions), 1680; Lyon, 1679; English edition in 1680; German edition in 1680. Polish translation: *Miłoszki królewskie*. Transl. by J. Olkiewicz, ed. and introduced by A. Kersten. Warszawa, 1971. Other source: T. Chynczewska-Hennel. *Rzeczpospolita...* 1993, 223-244.

only mentioned that he travelled to Vilnius in order to meet the Marquise de la Roche, a courtier of Ludwika Maria (at that time the court was resident at Vilnius).³²

Not much is known about Gaspard de Chavagnac (1624-1695).³³ We get information about him only from the text of his memoirs.³⁴ He was brought up in the court of the Calvinist Duke de Châtillon. He began his military career in the service of the Duke's army. Later he served in the armies of the Dukes de Condé and de Candale. After 1654, he abandoned military service. The period after this date is obscure. According to his memoirs, he served the King of Spain. Later, in 1666-1681, he was in the service of the Emperor. After abandoning this service, he returned to France, where he stayed until his death.

In his memoirs, he described not only military issues, but also European political problems. In two volumes of the memoirs he touched on political issues of Spain, France, the Northern Italian states, the Habsburg monarchy and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. He devoted only 40 pages to Poland-Lithuania.³⁵ These deal entirely with the election of the Polish-Lithuanian King after the abdication of Jan Kazimierz Vasa (1668-1669). During the interregnum, de Chavagnac lived in Warsaw as the ambassador of the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. His

³² M. Rousseau de la Valette. *Miłoski królewskie...* 55-56.

³³ Sources about the personality of G. de Chavagnac: Roman d'Amat. Chavagnac. *Dictionnaire de biographie Française*. Eds. Prevost and R. D'Amat. Paris, 1959, t. 8, 934-935. D. Tillet. *Les comptes rendus...* T. Chynczewska-Hennel. *Rzeczpospolita...* 1993, 223-244.

³⁴ G. de Chavagnac. *Memoires de Gaspard Comte de Chavagnac Maréchal de Camp ez Armées du Roy, General de l'Artillerie: Sergent de Bataille de celles de Sa Majesté Catholique, Lieutenant General des Troupes de L'Empereur & son Ambassadeur den Pologne, &c.* Besançon, 1699, 1700, 1702, t. 1-2; Amsterdam, 1700. Fragments translated into Polish and German, see the following footnote.

³⁵ G. de Chavagnac. *Memoires...* Besançon, 1699, t. 2, 1-40; Amsterdam, 1700, 290-232. This fragment related to the issues of the Commonwealth was translated and reprinted in Polish: 1) Elekcja Michała Wiśniowieckiego. Z pamiętników Kacpra Hrabiego Chavagnac. *Athenaeum*. 1841, t. 1, 7-34; 2) Wyjątek z pamiętników hrabiego de Chavagnac, legata do Polski po abdykacji króla Jana Kazimierza i w czasie elekcji króla Michała roku 1668. *Zbiór pamiętników...* 1st ed., t. 4, 288-311; 2nd ed., 1839, t. 4, 115-235. The fragment in German: *Die Gelehrte Welt...* 369-379, 808. Other source: T. Chynczewska-Hennel. *Rzeczpospolita...* 1993, 223-244.

task was to help the Duke of Lorraine become King of Poland-Lithuania. After his arrival in Warsaw, it appeared that de Chavagnac was a relative of Klara-Lascaris, wife of Kristupas Zigmantas Pacas (1657-1684), Chancellor of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. During his visit in Warsaw, de Chavagnac communicated intensively with the Lithuanian Chancellor and his wife. His memoirs provide us with information about the style of living of the Lithuanian magnates, especially the Pacas, in Warsaw during the interregnum and their political struggles with the Poles. He also presented very peculiar facts about the influence of women (also of that of Klara-Lascaris) at the court.

Unlike with the above-discussed travellers, much less is known about Samuel Chap(p)uzeau, Sieur de Saint-Amant Mare Antoine de Gérard and Antoine de Grammont (1604-1678). S. Chap(p)uzeau was a French playwright, a Calvinist related to Geneva. He visited Poland (Gdańsk) for a very short time in 1669. It is also known that he collaborated with a publishing house L'Europe Vivante.³⁶ Sieur de Saint-Amant was a poet, musician and traveller. He stayed in Poland for several months in 1650 and was connected with the court of Ludwika Maria. His impressions about this voyage are expressed in verse.³⁷ A military man and diplomat, de Grammont came to Poland, probably, with a diplomatic mission (F. P. Dalairac mentions him as a person in the military service of the Polish army³⁸). His memoirs were published only in 1922, although written in 1663.³⁹

1.2. French travellers during the rule of Jan Sobieski (1674-1696)
The memoirs of François Paulin Dalairac (Dalerac, Dallerac, Daleyrac, and D'Allayrac) consist of two books and are the largest source, as regards the number of the pages, devoted to the issues

³⁶ F. Meinel. *Samuel Chappuzeau*. Leipzig, 1908. D. Tollet. *Les comptes rendus....* R. D'Amat. Chappuzeau, Samuel. *Dictionnaire de biographie Française*. Ed. by M. Prevost and R. D'Amat. Paris, 1959, t. 8, 442-443. T. Chynczewska-Hennel. *Rzeczpospolita...* 1993.

³⁷ *Oeuvres complètes de Saint Amant*. Ed. by Ch. L. Livet. Paris, 1855, t. 1-2. Other sources: K. Targosz. *Uczony dwór....* T. Chynczewska-Hennel. *Rzeczpospolita...* 1993, 223-244.

³⁸ F. P. Dalairac. *Les anecdotes de Pologne ou memoires secrets du regne de Jean III du nom*. Amsterdam, 1699, t. 2, 360.

³⁹ A. de Grammont. *Relation de mon voyage en Pologne (1663)*. *La Revue de Paris*. 1922, t. XXIX, 698-737. D. Tollet. *Les comptes rendus....* T. Chynczewska-Hennel. *Rzeczpospolita...* 1993.

of the Commonwealth compared with other French memoirs. The first book is written under the pseudonym Chevalier de Beaujeu,⁴⁰ whereas, the second one is under his own name (Dalairac).⁴¹ Today, it is agreed that one man lies behind the names de Beaujeu⁴² and Dalairac.⁴³ The first book covers the period from 1679 to 1683; the second one, from 1683 until 1690. In 1679, after France made peace in Nijmegen, Dalairac came to Poland with a group of soldiers to seek service in the Polish army. In his memoirs, he claimed that he participated in Jan Sobieski's 1683 military campaign against the Ottoman Empire. It is also known that Dalairac was a courtier of the Polish Queen Maria Kazimiera, wife of Jan Sobieski (1674-1696) for approximately 13 years. He transported *Vichy* mineral water from France for the Queen and did other services for the King's family.

Dalairac described mainly military issues: the armies of the Poles and Lithuanians and their enemies, military campaigns, political issues, and other problems related to war. In addition to these issues he also broadly described the cultural, political and social life in the Commonwealth, provided descriptions of various regions, cities and villages. Compared with other French memoirs, these contain the broadest and richest descriptions of Lithuanian cultural, political, military and geographical issues. In his memoirs, he mentioned only one voyage to Lithuania, when, in 1688, he accompanied the King visiting the Lithuanian cities of Grodno and Vilnius. The Polish historian, K. Targosz

⁴⁰ F. P. Dalairac (pseud. Chevalier de Beaujeu). *Memoires du chevalier de Beaujeu contenant ses divers voyages tant en Pologne, en Allemagne, en Hongrie depuis l'année 1679*. Paris, 1698; Amsterdam, 1700. Polish translation: *Pamiętnik kawalera de Beaujeu*. Transl. by Alexander Kraushar. *Pamiętniki do czasów Jana III*. Ed. by W. Markowski. Ser. I, t. I, Kraków, 1883.

⁴¹ F. P. Dalairac. *Les anecdotes de Pologne ou memoires secrets du regne de Jean III du nom*. Amsterdam, 1699; Paris, 1700; English edition: London, 1700; Dutch edition: Gravenhage, 1700.

⁴² De Beaujeu (1656-1730) was a real person who came to Poland with F. P. Dalairac in 1679. The latter used his name as a pseudonym for the first book of his memoirs: K. Targosz. *Nieznane portrety...*

⁴³ Sources about the personality of F. P. Dalairac and translations of some fragments of his memoirs: *Cudzoziemcy...* *Die Gelehrte Welt ...* 184-196, 658-669, 811. W. Ziembicki. *Sobieszciana. Przyczynki do pracy Jan Sobieski jako myśliwy*. Lwów, 1933, 27-34. K. Targosz. *Jan III Sobieski...* 102-109. K. Targosz. *Nieznane portrety...* 111-120. D. Tollet. *Les comptes rendus...* T. Chynczewska-Hennel. *Rzeczpospolita...* 1993, 223-244.

states that it is not possible to tell for sure whether Dalairac really accompanied the King during his voyage to Lithuania, or just described this country on the material which he had heard.⁴⁴ Another Polish historian, W. Ziembicki, is of a similar opinion. He states that Dalairac repeated everything that he heard, even without any critical approach to the source.⁴⁵

Philippe Dupont (ca. 1650-post 1726) was a salaried military officer (chief artillery engineer) in the Polish army under Jan Sobieski.⁴⁶ He participated in most of the King's campaigns. Ph. Dupont stayed in Poland in the period 1671-1684 and wrote memoirs which were published only in 1885.⁴⁷ Dupont strongly criticized Dalairac's memoirs claiming that they did not authentically describe the political and cultural life of the Commonwealth and, especially, the actions of Jan Sobieski. According to him, F. P. Dalairac described things that he had never seen. Being a strong admirer of the talent of Jan Sobieski he could not agree with Dalairac, who wrote that the army of the Commonwealth was disorganized and degraded. In order to display how it really was, he made his own review of almost all military, some political, and even cultural issues that had been discussed by Dalairac. It is not known whether he visited Lithuania, but very detailed descriptions of its cities, Vilnius and Grodno,⁴⁸ make us think that he at least for a short time travelled to these places.

The next French traveller in our survey is Jean François Regnard (1655-1709). At the end of the seventeenth century and beyond, Regnard was considered to be a famous French writer of prose and poetry. After the death of his father, who was a rich businessman and left his son a large sum of money, Regnard departed on numerous voyages. He travelled especially intensively in the period between 1681 and 1683 visiting Poland, Flanders, Holland, Denmark, the Ottoman Empire, Germany,

⁴⁴ K. Targosz. *Jan III Sobieski...* 107.

⁴⁵ W. Ziembicki. *Sobieszciana...* 28.

⁴⁶ Sources about the personality of Ph. Dupont: W. Ziembicki. *Sobieszciana...* 50-56. K. Targosz. *Jan III Sobieski...* 109-113. D. Tollet. *Les comptes rendus...* T. Chynczewska-Hennel. *Rzeczpospolita...* 1993, 223-244.

⁴⁷ Ph. Dupont. *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de la vie et des actions de Jean Sobieski III du nom roi de Pologne par Philippe Dupont attaché à ce prince en qualité d'ingénieur en chef de l'artillerie*. Printed according to the manuscript by J. Janicki. Varsovie, 1885.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 229-230.

Lapland and Hungary.⁴⁹ On the basis of his travels, he published memoirs,⁵⁰ from which we can conclude that he stayed in Poland for several months at the end of 1683 and did not visit Lithuania at all.

The French Jesuit Philippe Avril (1654-1698),⁵¹ like J. F. Regnard, during his stay in the Commonwealth in 1687-1689, was invited as a guest to the court of Jan Sobieski. Poland-Lithuania for him was only a country which he had to cross in search of a new route to China. Lithuania was a country through which Avril made a return trip from Poland to the Grand Duchy of Moscow. In Lithuania, he communicated with Lithuanian Jesuits (especially with those from the University of Vilnius) who had to accompany him during his voyage to the East. It is interesting that although this traveller stayed about two years in the Commonwealth, the broadest descriptions from this country he made not about the Polish issues as usually French travellers did, but about Lithuanian bears and bees.

Guillaume Amfrye de Chaulieu (1639-1720) accompanied his friend the French ambassador de Béthune to the Commonwealth during his voyage to Poland in 1675. He spent eight months in the court of Jan Sobieski and did not visit Lithuania. A very short description of impressions about the life in Poland can be found in his letters to Madame de Chaulieu (his brother's wife).⁵²

The court of Jan Sobieski was also visited by the anonymous Frenchman, l'abbé F. de S., in 1688-1689.⁵³ The aim of the visit and the name of the traveller remain unknown. Almost all the

⁴⁹ Regnard (Jean François) (1655-1709). *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique Quillet*. 1981, 5753.

⁵⁰ J. F. Regnard. *Les oeuvres de M. Regnard*. Paris, 1731, 1742, 1789; Amsterdam, 1771. T. 1, contenant ses voyages de Flandre, de Hollande, Suede, Dannemarc, la Laponie, la Pologne et d'Allemagne.

⁵¹ Ph. Avril. *Voyage en divers états d'Europe et d'Asie, enterpris pour découvrir un nouveau chemin à la Chine etc.* Paris, 1692, 1693. Polish translation: *Podróż do różnych krajów Europy i Azji przez misjonarzy S. J. w roku 1690 odprawiona końcem odkrycia nowej drogi do Chin*. Transl. by X. R. Ładowski. Warszawa, 1791. Articles of Polish and French historians about this Frenchman and his voyage to Lithuania: X. Liske. Filip Avril i jego pobyt w Polsce (1687-1689). *Niwa*, 1877, XI, 405-421. W. Ziembicki. *Sobieszciana...* 34-37. D. Tollet. *Les comptes rendus...* T. Chynczewska-Hennel. *Rzeczpospolita...* 1993, 223-244.

⁵² De Chaulieu. *Lettres inédites de l'abbé de Chaulieu, précédées d'une notice par M. Le Marquis de Berenger*. Paris, 1850.

period of his stay in Poland, F. de S. spent in the court of Jan Sobieski. The most original part of his memoirs, which were printed only in 1858, is his descriptions of the royal family. The issues related to the cultural and political life of the Commonwealth and Lithuania in most of the cases are copied from other contemporary French travellers, especially G. de Tende.

The last memoirs are written by Monsieur de Mongrillon⁵⁴, who was a secretary of the French Embassy in Warsaw in the period 1694-98. He worked there as a courier and a man for special duties. It seems that de Mongrillon came to Poland in July 1693 and stayed with short breaks until the end of 1697. According to the text of his memoirs, he was a nobleman from Normandy. However, his nobility is problematic because his name does not appear in the French heraldry books. The original of his memoirs is in handwriting in the Ossolinski archive in Poland.⁵⁵

As it can be seen from the text of the memoirs, de Mongrillon was very well acquainted with the King and the politicians of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth; their inclinations, habits and political actions. Also, he was not ignorant about the struggles between Polish and Lithuanian parties during the Diets. There is, however, also the other side of the coin. From the text of the memoirs, it can be concluded that de Mongrillon was very spontaneous and impatient. He wrote down everything that seemed to him interesting or exotic in a chaotic

⁵³ F. de S. *Relation d'un voyage de Pologne, fait dans les années 1688 et 1689*. Paris, 1858. Polish translations of the memoirs and comments on this personality: J. Bartoszewicz. *Podróż bezimiennego księdza francuzkiego do Polski za króla Jana Sobieskiego*. Biblioteka Warszawska. Warszawa, 1859, t. 4, 1-31. X. Liske. *Z podróży Francuza po Polsce*. *Wiek*, 1876, nr. 235-242. W. Ziembicki. *Sobieszciana...* 38-39. T. Chynczewska-Hennel. *Rzeczpospolita...* 1993, 223-244.

⁵⁴ M. de Mongrillon. *Pamiętnik sekretarza ambasady francuzkiej w Polsce pod koniec panowania Jana III oraz w okresie bezkrólewia i wolnej elekcji po jego zgonie (1694-1698)*. Trans. and intr. by Ł. Częścik. Ossolineum, 1982. Other source: T. Chynczewska-Hennel. *Rzeczpospolita...* 1993, 223-244.

⁵⁵ The original title of the memoirs is: *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de Pologne, Hanovre, Brandebourg etc. Tirés des voyages manuscrits de M[onsieu]r de Mongrillon, gentilhomme de la ville de Séz de la suite de M. Labbé de Polignac, ambassadeur en Pologne depuis 1694 jusqu'à l'année 1698 après le couronnement du roi Auguste*. Rkps. Oss. 5862/II.

way and packed his memoirs with notices that usually do not have any thematic relations with each other. Moreover, de Mongrillon's memoirs are very superficial and one-sided. He often retells anecdotes, opinions of other people and rumours, presenting them as true facts.⁵⁶ It is important to mention that a Polish historian, Łucja Cześcik, thinks that the memoirs were written in Poland, right after the events discussed in the memoirs.⁵⁷ This fact makes them more reliable. From the text of his memoirs, it is impossible to say whether he visited Lithuania or not.

Less information is available about du Beauvieu and Claude Jordan de Colombier. About du Beauvieu is only known that in 1700 he issued his memoirs describing his journey to the Commonwealth.⁵⁸ Another traveller, C. Jordan wrote multi-volume memoirs about numerous voyages through the countries of Europe. These were reprinted many times.⁵⁹

2. French travellers and their memoirs: analysis

During the second half of the seventeenth century Poland-Lithuania was visited by 21 travellers (nuns from the Visitation order (see Appendix). This number does not include the informants of *Gazette de France* and the authors of anonymous accounts.

Among the travellers, the most numerous were representatives of nobility, clergy and bourgeoisie. The largest part of the group (seven persons) consists of the representatives of petty and middle nobility. An exception is de Grammont who, according to D. Tollet,⁶⁰ can be regarded as a representative of aristocracy. The noblemen most usually came to the Commonwealth with diplomatic missions or to serve for a salary in the Polish army. The other numerous representatives (five gentlemen and the nuns) are from the clergy. They used to travel to the Commonwealth for various reasons, from simple voyage to the accompanying of Queen Maria Ludwika during her voyage from France to Poland in 1646. There is only one representative of bourgeoisie (J. F. Regnard) who made the voyage for his own pleasure.

⁵⁶ M. de Mongrillon. *Pamiętnik...* 20-21.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 20.

⁵⁸ Du Beauvieu. *Mémoires (Voyages en Pologne)*. Amsterdam, 1700.

⁵⁹ Cl. Jordan. *Voyages historiens de l'Europe....* Some information about the personality of Cl. Jordan: D. Tollet. *Les comptes rendus....*

⁶⁰ D. Tollet. *Les comptes rendus....*

Most of the travellers were representatives of one of four professional groups: military men, diplomats, artists and scholars.

From the ten travellers who visited Poland during the reign of Ludwika Maria, six were in contact for a shorter or longer period with this court. They could meet each other (except Sieur de Saint-Amant, the Visitation sisters and Le Laboureur) because all of them were in the court at the same time at least for a short period. There is a possibility that the other four also were in contact with the court, because being a strong centre of French culture in Poland, it attracted many travelling Frenchmen.

Similar picture was in the court of Jan Sobieski. From ten persons who lived in the Commonwealth at that period eight had contacts with the court. Three of them were courtiers and stayed at the court for almost the entire time of the rule of the King. There is no doubt that they communicated with each other. The others visited the court for short periods and sometimes communicated with the French courtiers. For example, Dalairac was a courtier of Jan Sobieski's wife, and it was through this relationship that he met Regnard while he was a guest in the court of Jan Sobieski.⁶¹

Intensive relations with the royal courts strongly influenced the interpretation of the political and cultural issues of the Commonwealth. Poland and especially the court of the King in the French memoirs were regarded as the centre of all political and cultural life. Therefore, Lithuania in most of the cases was treated as an inferior or marginal issue. The political actions of the Lithuanian magnates which did not agree with those of the King usually were regarded as separatist and destructive. From a cultural point of view, Lithuania was also regarded as on the margins of the influence of Polish culture.

On the other hand, because of the relations with the royal court, travellers could easily communicate with or at least observe from a distance the ruling families of Lithuania, who visited Diets and participated in other important political events. This resulted in the broad descriptions of the Radvilas, the Pacas and the Sapiegas. Descriptions of the ruling magnate families were much more numerous than the number of voyages made by the travellers to Lithuania. Furthermore, being in the centre of the Commonwealth's political life, French travellers saw the actual political status of Lithuania. Different from theoretical knowledge brought from France and Polish stereotypes, Lithuania appeared for them as an almost independent state.

⁶¹ J. F. Regnard. *Les oeuvres...* t. 1, 187.

Ten travellers stayed in the Commonwealth for a short period (up to two years). It is a huge number compared with the total number of twenty-one. Two years at that epoch was a minimum period of time (we have to get into the consideration bad quality of the roads, low speed of the means of transport and similar problems) to get acquainted with such a vast state as the Commonwealth. Only six of the travellers lived there from four years to two or three decades. We do not have data about the remaining five travellers.

Lithuania was visited by French travellers very rarely and only for very short periods. The exception is G. de Tende, who claimed spending 'many years' in Lithuania. There are only known five persons, Ph. Avril, Ph. Dupont, F. P. Dalairac, Rousseau de la Valette and G. de Tende, who seem to have visited Lithuania. There are no strong objections or attempts to deny that Ph. Avril visited Lithuania. The cases of the other four travellers are weaker. It is very difficult to find other sources than their own memoirs for or against the fact of their voyages to Lithuania. We know for sure that the other eight travellers did not visit Lithuania at all, and we do not have any information about the remaining eight.

French travellers did not intensively visit Lithuania because of several reasons. Firstly, many of them were related to the royal courts that very rarely visited Lithuania. Secondly, there was a large number of French travellers who served in the Polish army, which was forbidden entry into Lithuania. Thirdly, the most intensive political and cultural life happened in Polish lands and for the travellers who came to the Commonwealth with political missions or just to get a general view of the way of life of its inhabitants, there was no point to visit Lithuania.

We do not know much about the reasons why the French travellers visited Lithuania at all. We just know that F. P. Dalairac visited Lithuania (if he did that at all) accompanying Jan Sobieski, who travelled there for political reasons. Ph. Avril visited Lithuania trying to reach Moscow during his mission to China. Rousseau de la Valette voyaged there in order to meet a courtier of Ludwika Maria. This is all that we can tell about the French voyageurs' reasons for travelling to Lithuania.

The fact that French travellers rarely visited Lithuania was not extraordinary when we compare them with foreign visitors who travelled in the Commonwealth during the seventeenth century. Foreign travellers usually entered the Commonwealth from its Western frontier that was between German countries

and Poland. They preferred visiting Gdańsk, cities and places in Little and Great Poland, Red Ruthenia (there were the palaces of Jan Sobieski) and even Ukraine rather than travelling to Lithuania. Because of the political and cultural importance, these regions of the Commonwealth were much better known in Europe and more attractive for foreign voyageurs than Lithuania.

In the second half of the seventeenth century, French travellers acted in the same manner. Most of them travelled mainly in Poland. When travelling in Lithuania the Frenchmen visited only the most important Lithuanian cities (from a political point of view): Grodno and Vilnius, or travelled on the most important route across the country from West to East (Warsaw, Grodno, Vilnius, Minsk, Smolensk, Moscow). This conclusion is based only on the data from the memoirs of F. P. Dalairac, P. Dupont, Rousseau de la Valette and P. Avril. Other travellers do not talk in more details about their visited places or roads in Lithuania. The above-listed places were the most often described and discussed. Other regions or cities that had not been near these places usually were not discussed so broadly. This is true even if we look at descriptions of Lithuania of those persons who had never been in this country.

The fact that, on the one hand, most of the travellers knew each other through contacts at the royal courts and, on the other, only a few of them visited Lithuania, resulted in similar descriptions of this country. It is important to mention that only five travellers visited Lithuania (we have to stress that this number could be even lower), while there are eleven memoirs containing descriptions of this country. Therefore, it is not surprising that most of the descriptions of cultural and political issues of Lithuania are similar in all these memoirs.

Lithuanian cultural and political issues were interesting for travellers only in so far as they differed from the Polish ones. Juridical, political and cultural issues of Lithuania were discussed by comparing them with Poland. Therefore, the picture of Lithuania which we get from the memoirs is in most cases a description of unique political and cultural features that distinguished it from Poland.

There are five groups of memoirs regarding the organization of the material. The first category consists of historical memoirs. This type is characterized by a mixture of historical facts with the impressions acquired during the travels. The memoirs of G. de Tende and J. Le Laboureur are typical of this group. The second group is the simple type of memoirs. In

this case, the authors only write about their impressions of the journeys. This group is the most numerous: their authors are Ph. Avril, P. Chevalier, F. P. Dalairac, G. de Chavagnac, Ph. Dupont, F. de S., Jouvin de Rochefort, de Mongrillon, J. F. Regnard, Rousseau de la Valette and the Visitation nuns. The third group contains accounts or guides, whose aim was to provide future travellers with information. The memoirs of Jouvin de Rochefort and G. de Tende can best fit these requirements. The fourth group is poetic texts. We have only one representative - Sieur de Saint-Amant. Correspondence presents the fifth group: the memoirs of P. des Noyers and de Chaulieu.

There are no memoirs that would contain daily notes made during the journey.⁶² From the memoirs of non-French travellers who visited the Commonwealth during the second half of the seventeenth century those of U. Werdum are written in such a manner. This is connected with one fundamental problem concerning the printing of memoirs. According to the Polish historian, Antoni Mączak, who is one of the most prominent investigators of travel memoirs, the initial ideas of travellers and printed texts could differ very substantially. Mączak remarks that it is very difficult to discover 'what role [a traveller's] daily notes played in the text of published books'.⁶³ In many cases, memoirs were written and published many years after the return from these journeys. Because of this, and because of the editors, they were filled with many popular stereotypes and commentaries made by publishers and travellers themselves that strongly reshaped the fresh impressions acquired during the voyages.⁶⁴

Not all of the memoirs had the same affect on French society. The memoirs of de Mongrillon, A. de Grammont, P. Dupont, F. de S. and Sieur de Saint-Amant, the correspondence of des Noyers and de Chaulieu, the account of Visitation nuns were not published or presented to a public audience in either the seventeenth or the eighteenth centuries. Moreover, a large part of the correspondence of des Noyers remains in the archives even today.

⁶² Although this type of literature is usually called *diary*, I treat it as *memoirs*, as do D. Tollet and T. Chynczewska-Hennel.

⁶³ A. Mączak. Zu einigen vernachlässigten Fragen der Geschichtsschreibung über das Reisen in der frühen Neuzeit. *Reiseberichte als Quellen europäischen Kulturgeschichte*. Ed. by A. Mączak and H. J. Teuteberg. Wolfenbüttel, 1982.

⁶⁴ This idea of Mączak is supported in: Madeleine van Strien-Chardonneau. *Le Voyage de Hollande: récits de voyageurs français dans les Provinces-Unies, 1748-1795*. Oxford, 1994, 190.

During the seventeenth century, Le Laboureur, G. de Tende and Rousseau de la Valette enjoyed considerable success. Le Laboureur's work was published for the first time in 1647, reprinted four times and translated into English before 1649. Twelve new editions appeared before 1711 of de Tende's memoirs - not only in French, but also in English and German. Five new editions were made of the work of Rousseau de la Valette, among them two translations into English and German. Two new editions and a translation into English were made of P. Chevalier's memoirs. One new edition was made of the memoirs of Avril and de Payen. The memoirs of Jouvin de Rochefort were not reprinted.

During the eighteenth century, Jordan had the largest success with four new editions of his memoirs. F. Regnard enjoyed similar popularity. His memoirs were printed for the first time only in 1731, but there were three new editions during the same century. The memoirs of G. de Chavagnac were reprinted three times. F. P. Dalairac's *Mémoires* ran to a second edition. The same author's other work, *Anecdotes de Pologne*, was also reprinted. In addition, there were its two translations into English and Dutch. There were no new editions of the du Beauvieu memoirs.

Because of the lack of the literature and other kinds of information about the Commonwealth, these memoirs played a very important role in forming foreign perceptions of this state. According to the Polish historian Janusz Tazbir, many of the stereotypes formed by the French travellers during the seventeenth century strongly influenced French society during almost the whole eighteenth century.⁶⁵

Conclusions

During the second half of the seventeenth century, the Commonwealth was visited and described by a score or French travellers and members of the French Visitation order of nuns. Most of these travellers were representative of middle and petty nobility. During their stay in the Commonwealth, they very often visited as guests, or served as courtiers in the pro-French courts of Ludwika Maria (1645-1667) and Jan Sobieski (1674-1696). Being in close contacts with the Polish royal courts, French travellers were in the centre of the Commonwealth's political life. This resulted in numerous descriptions of Lithuanian statesmen and especially ruling magnate families.

⁶⁵ J. Tazbir. W oczach obcych. *Rzeczpospolita i świat. Studia z dziejów kultury XVII wieku*. Warszawa, 1971, 170-196.

Compared with other regions of the Commonwealth, Lithuania was rarely visited by French travellers and usually for very short periods. In spite of rare visits, many writers even those who had never visited Lithuania, described its cultural and political issues. The direct consequence of this was the proliferation of short and repetitive descriptions of this country, especially its cultural issues. When travelling in Lithuania, they most often visited the most important cities of Lithuania, politically speaking, Vilnius and Grodno.

As regards the organization of the material, memoirs where authors wrote their impressions acquired during the voyages were most common. It is interesting that there were no memoirs at all that contained daily notes made during the travels.

Usually the French travellers' descriptions of Lithuanian issues were based on very superficial contemporary western European knowledge about Poland-Lithuania and on Polish stereotypes. In spite of that, these memoirs remain an interesting source of Lithuanian cultural and political issues, and their perception in France. Their memoirs were original because of the travellers' interpretations of the existing cultural and political reality, and because of addition of unique information derived from their private contacts with Lithuanian magnates, journeys to Lithuania, and finally, simple fantasy.

Appendix

French travellers and their voyages to the Commonwealth and Lithuania in the second half of the seventeenth century (1645-1698)

Explanations:

+	yes;
-	did not visit/describe;
?	too little information to make a conclusion;
other:	other kinds of contacts (neither a courtier, nor a guest);
*	memoirs have not been available;
D. o. L.:	descriptions of Lithuania;
E, G, Pol:	English, German, Polish (edition);
eds:	editions.

The first date of edition of memoirs is written in bold; the list of the dates of second and following editions does not include translations of memoirs made by Polish historians in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Travellers				Travelling in the Commonwealth			Travelling in Lithuania and descriptions of Lithuania and its magnates			Editors
Names	Life period	Social position	Occupation	Purpose, period	Contacts with Ludwika Maria 1645-1667	Contacts with Jan Sobieski 1675-1696	Period, visited places	D. o. L.	Descr. of Lith. magnates	of the memoirs
1) Avril, Ph.	1654-1698	clergyman	university	voyage, 1687-1689	-	guest	1688-1689, Grodno, Vilnius, Smurgoniai, Minsk, Kadyń, (Smolensk)	+	-	[*] 1692, 1693
2) Chappuzeau, S.*	1625-1701	clergyman	dramatist	?, 1669	-	-	-	?	?	?
3) Chevalier, P.	?	?	military man	military service, 1640s-beginning of 1650s	?	-	?	+	Radvilas, Sapiegas	1663, 1668, 1850, 1672 E
4) Dalairac, F. P. (de Beaujeu)	?	nobleman	military man	military service, 1679-1691 (during this period several voyages to France)	-	courtier	1688 (?), Grodno (?), Vilnius (?)	+	Radvilas, Pacas, Sapiegas	Mémoires: 1698, 1700; Anecdotes: 1699, 1700, 1700 E, 1700 Dutch
5) De Chaulieu	1639-1720	clergyman	poet	voyage (?), 1675	-	guest	-	-	-	1850
6) De Chavagnac, G.	1624-1695	nobleman	diplomat, military man	diplomatic mission, 1668-1669	-	-	-	-	Pacas	1699, 1700 2 eds, 1702
7) De Grammont, A.*	1604-1678	nobleman	diplomat, military man	diplomatic mission (?), military service (?), 1663 (?)	?	-	?	?	?	1922
8) De Mongrillon, M.	?	nobleman	diplomat	diplomatic mission, 1694-1698	-	other	?	+	Sapiegas	1993 Pol
9) De Payen, J.	?	nobleman	service in a royal court	spying (?), around 1660	?	-	-	-	-	1667, 1699
10) Des Noyers, P.	?-1693	?	astronomer, astrologer, mathematician, bibliophile	accompanied Ludwika Maria, 1646-1693 (during this period several voyages to France)	courtier	other	?	+	Radvilas, Pacas, Sapiegas	1859 and 1867 Pol, large part still remains in the archives
11) De Tende, G. (Sieur de Hauteville)	1618-1697	nobleman	?	accompanied Ludwika Maria, 1650s-1669, 1674-beginning of 1680s	courtier	other	according to him, he spent 'many years' in Lithuania, ?	+	Pacas	1686 2 eds, 1687 2 eds, 1694, 1697 2 eds, 1705, 1711 2 eds, 1698 E, 1697 G, 2 eds
12) Du Beauvieu*	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	1700
13) Dupont, Ph.	around 1650- after 1726	?	military man	military service, 1671-after 1694	-	courtier	?, Grodno (?), Vilnius (?)	+	Pacas	1885 Pol
14) F. de S.	?	clergyman	?	?, 1688-1689	-	guest	-	+	-	1858
15) Jordan de Colombier, Cl.*	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	1692-1697, 1694-1696, 1698-1709, 1704, 1712-1718
16) Jovin de Rochefort, A.	?	?	cartographer, voyageur	voyage (?), sometime in the period 1650s-1667	?	-	?	+	-	1672
17) Le Laboureur, J. (Sieur de Bleranval)	1623-1675	nobleman clergyman	historian	accompanied Ludwika Maria, 1646	other	-	-	-	Radvilas, Sapiegas	1647 2 eds, 1648 2 eds, 1649 E
18) Regnard, J. F.	1655-1709	bourgeois	writer of prose and poetry	voyage, 1683 (October- end of the year)	-	guest	-	+	Sapiegas	1731, 1742, 1771, 1789
19) Rousseau de la Valette, M. (D.L.V.R.)	?	?	?	?, ?	courtier	-	?, Vilnius	+	Radvilas, Pacas, Sapiegas	1679 3 eds, 1680, 1680 E, 1680 G
20) Sieur de Saint-Amant*	?	?	poet, musician	voyage, 1650	other	-	?	?	?	1855
21) Wizytka	-	nuns	nuns	establishment of a monastery, 1654	guest	-	-	-	Sapiegas	(1655)