CHAPTER 3

Scots in Cracow’s Internal and Foreign Trade

3.1 Introductory Remarks

The oldest piece of information about Scottish merchants in Cracow is an entry in the acts of the local congregation from or before 1567. However, a fuller look into their activity is made possible only with the acts of the city customs house preserved from 1589. These contain records of merchants, including citizens of Cracow as well as incomers from other towns and cities. The duty books not only provide the surnames of the merchants, their place of abode, where they had begun their wanderings as well as their destination, but also the types and quantity of the goods they transported, as well as the amount of duty paid. This data is not always exhaustive and is often difficult to interpret. However, as it is more complete than the entries in other civic registers, it is possible to evaluate how active particular merchants were and to identify, at least to a certain extent, the particular nations involved in such economic activity. The registers of the Small and Great Weigh Houses were also of some use in clarifying the activities of Scottish merchants.

1 As has already been mentioned, in this Nicholas Alandt (Alancz) was listed among the absentes mercatores. Such a year was entered on a separate piece of paper concluding their register. The document with which this register is comprised does not exclude, however, its older records; AmKr, Akta kongregacji kupieckiej, MS 3174, p. 11.

2 On such sources see Małecki and Szlufik, Jewish Trade, 41–47; Małecki, “Krakowskie księgi celne,” 253–73; Malecki, Studia nad rynkiem regionalnym Krakowa w XVI wieku (Warsaw, 1963); H. Obuchowska-Pysiowa, Udział Krakowa w handlu zagranicznym Rzeczypospolitej w pierwszych latach XVII wieku (Wrocław, 1981); J. Wijaczka, Handel zagraniczny Krakowa w połowie XVII wieku (Cracow, 2002). The fundamental worth of these sources has been evaluated by Kazusek, Żydzi w handlu, 17–20; Kazusek, Handel żydowski Krakowa w połowie XVII wieku: Tabele materiałowe i statystyczne (Kielce, 2006), 9–13.

On the basis of duty ledgers, three time periods have been analyzed: the years 1591–95, 1617–18, and 1649. The registers from the first half of the 1590s provide the clearest information with regard to the organization of trade, though on the other hand they rarely contain information about the types of goods transported (see Tables 3.1 and 3.2). The period 1617–18 is taken into consideration as trade in these years has not been researched as extensively as the trade at the turn of the seventeenth century (Tables 3.3 and 3.4). The next register used here (see Tables 3.5 and 3.6) belongs to a group of fairly conscientiously conducted duty records for the years 1641–55, although they also contain many inaccuracies. This documentation provides a more complete picture of Cracow’s trade both prior to and after the Thirty Years’ War (1618–48). The war activity of those decades periodically had a negative effect on the economies of Silesia as well as other southern and western neighbors of the Commonwealth. However, it did not reduce the trade exchange between Cracow and Silesian towns. The year 1649 was also one of the final years of economic prosperity for Cracow.

3.2 Goods, Their Place of Purchase and Sale

In the fourteenth and fifteenth century, Cracow merchants made use of the transit trade between Red Ruthenia and Western Europe as well as trade between Hungary and Pomerania. A change was to occur during the sixteenth century when Cracow’s position was reduced to that of a macro-regional center in the trade exchange between Hungary, the Czech lands, and Poland. Cracow merchants visited Austrian and German cities on a regular basis. The favorable economic conditions that were to last until the end of the 1630s additionally defined the leading role played by Cracow in the trade carried out within western Little Poland.

---

4 Malecki, Studia nad rynkiem, passim; Obuchowska-Pysiowa, Udział, passim; Guldon, Żydzi i Szkoci, passim.
5 Cf. Malecki’s evaluations (“Krakowskie księgi celne,” 262–63) and those of Kazusek (Żydzi w handlu, 19).
6 See further M. Wolański, Związki handlowe Śląska z Rzeczypospolita w XVII wieku ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem Wrocławia (Wrocław, 1961), 296 and passim; I. Boroń, Handel Górnego Śląska z Krakowem w dobie wojny trzydziestoletniej (na podstawie Krakowskich ksiąg celnych) (Gliwice, 1995); J. Maroń, Militarne aspekty wojny trzydziestoletniej na Śląsku (Wrocław, 2000).
7 See further J. Wyrozumski, “Handel Krakowa ze Wschodem w średniowieczu,” in Wyrozumski, Cracovia Mediaevalis (Cracow, 2010), 335–49; F.W. Carter, Trade and Urban Development in Poland: An Economic Geography of Cracow, from Its Origins to 1795 (Cambridge, 1994);