

Afterword to the English Edition

The present book was written in 2003, so it takes into account the literature on the subject published up to 2002. Later studies are used in exceptional cases. Eleven years have passed since the publication. Since then new editions of sources which I refer to in the book have been published, as have many works dealing with the issues discussed in it. It is impossible for me to express my opinion on them in the present edition. This would mean writing the book anew. In any case, I do not think that the more recent research has been modified by views on the essential matters. On the other hand, I would like to point to some important critical opinions concerning the Polish edition of my book.

Gerard Labuda (1916–2010) commented on the book in some detail.¹ This outstanding historian was the greatest expert on issues relating to the Gniezno Summit. He had some reservations about some of my theses. Let me respond to the most important of them. Labuda did not agree with my suggestion that the donation to St. Peter known from a document called *Dagome iudex* could have been made to clear the way for the founding of a Polish church province. The scholar's arguments are as follows: firstly, the document in question suggests that the objective of the donation was to ensure inheritance for Mieszko I's sons from his second marriage; secondly, around 990, when the document was issued, the prince had problems with filling the post of the head of the only Polish bishopric existing at the time. Could he have been thinking about creating a province in such circumstances then?² My response would be as follows. It is highly likely that the ruler wanted to safeguard his younger sons' inheritance, but this does not mean that he did not have other considerations in mind when making the donation. Secondly, Mieszko I was a ruler with broad horizons. He managed to obtain for his country a bishop not subordinated to a foreign metropolitan. He must have realized that lasting independence could be ensured for the Polish Church only by a Polish province and he must have sought to establish it. What I do not hide in the Polish edition of the book and what I would like to stress once again is the fact that the thesis concerning the existence of a link between the donation and Mieszko's ecclesiastical plans is for me only a conjecture, difficult to prove unequivocally, but the argument

1 Gerard Labuda, "Zjazd i synod gnieźnieński roku 1000 w nowym oświeceniu historiograficznym," in *Cognitioni gestorum. Studia z dziejów średniowiecza dedykowane Profesorowi Jerzemu Strzelczykowi*, ed. Dariusz Andrzej Sikorski and Andrzej Marek Wyrwa (Poznań and Warsaw: Wydawnictwo DiG, 2006), 163–184.

2 *Ibid.*, 166–167.

from the *Life of Methodius* I have quoted is—though not decisive—significant. However, the Poznań historian did not comment on that argument.

In his article G. Labuda devotes much attention to a reconstruction of events associated with the founding of the Archbishopric of Gniezno. The difference of opinion in this respect between the eminent scholar and myself is slight. Labuda used *Annales Hildesheimenses minores* and Comas' *Chronicle* as his source base to a greater extent than I did.³ Indeed, referring to Cosmas, for example, it is very easy to demonstrate that Gaudentius was already nominated Archbishop of Gniezno in 999, that is, before the Summit of Gniezno. Were I to accept the information provided by the Bohemian historiographer as reliable, I would not need all that complex analysis of the title *achiepiscopus sancti Adalbert* to prove the same thesis. However, the problem is that I am not entirely sure how well-informed Comas was. He probably used an earlier source—and here I would agree with Labuda—but the question is whether he did or did not amplify that source. In addition, I would be more careful in using *Annales Hildesheimenses minores*. Can an annalist who writes that the archbishopric was established in Prague—while we know it was established in Gniezno—be regarded as reliable? Although Labuda believes that we can separate true information from false information in the source in question, I think we are treading on uncertain ground here.

Continuing with my analysis of the Gniezno Summit, G. Labuda disagrees with my interpretation of the Meissen document of 995 according to which Otto III claimed the right to define the boundaries of dioceses in Poland. Labuda points out that the expansion of the territory of the Bishopric of Meissen to include Silesia was at the expense of the Diocese of Prague, that is, a Bohemian diocese, and Bohemia, unlike Poland, was dependent on Germany.⁴ I do not find his argumentation entirely convincing. On the one hand, at that time Silesia was within the borders of Poland, but on the other, Poland's ruler was a tributary of the emperor.

G. Labuda disagrees with me when I say that the Archbishop of Magdeburg Gisiler was against the founding of the Archbishopric of Gniezno.⁵ I have to admit the author's argument⁶ is not clear to me. It is focused on the Magdeburg concept (*Papsturkunden* †412), while my reconstruction of Gisiler's attitude is based on the forgery *Papsturkunden* †191.

3 Ibid., 167–180.

4 Ibid., 174–175.

5 Ibid., 178.

6 Ibid., 175–179.