

Beata Stuchlik-Surowiak

<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-2851-6119>

University of Silesia in Katowice

beatis@poczta.fm

DOI: 10.35765/pk.2020.2801.13

About Women who “Busied Themselves
with Brigandage”: Katarzyna Włodkowa Skrzyńska
and Barbara Rusinowska, Forgotten Lady Robbers
from the 15th Century

ABSTRACT

Historiographic sources contain the memory of two 15th-century female robbers: Katarzyna Włodkowa Skrzyńska and Barbara Rusinowska. The former was the wife of Włodek from Skrzynów of the Swan coat of arms, who lived in Barwałd Castle in the area of Zator and reigned terror in the whole region. We are concerned here with a peculiar phenomenon, that is, a husband–wife duo of robbers, and the fact that they were both of noble birth only spices up this story. Barbara Rusinowska, who was active in the Świętokrzyskie Mountains, was also from a noble family. She attacked manor houses and merchant wagons, and her characteristic trait was her men’s attire. Both bandits were finally captured and executed. The article introduces the life story of these women and compares various (often contradictory) information about their brigandage that has survived in ancient chronicles. In the nineteenth century, Rusinowska became the heroine of a stage drama written by Aleksander Ładnowski.

KEYWORDS: Barbara Rusinowska, Katarzyna Włodkowa Skrzyńska, robbers, heists, the Middle Ages, chronicles, legends

STRESZCZENIE

O kobietach, które „rozbojem się bawiły”. Katarzyna Włodkowa Skrzyńska i Barbara Rusinowska – zapomniane zbójniczki z XV wieku

W źródłach historiograficznych oraz legendach przechowywana jest pamięć o dwóch XV-wiecznych zbójniczkach – Katarzynie Włodkowej Skrzyńskiej i Barbarze Rusinowskiej. Pierwsza była żoną Włodka ze Skrzynna herbu Łabędź, który mieszkał na zamku Barwałd w ziemi zatorskiej i siał postrach w całej okolicy. Mamy więc do czynienia ze swoistym fenomenem,

Suggested citation: Stuchlik-Surowiak, B. (2020). About Women who “Busied Themselves with Brigandage”: Katarzyna Włodkowa Skrzyńska and Barbara Rusinowska, Forgotten Lady Robbers from the 15th Century. *Perspektywy Kultury*, 28 (1), pp. 167–179.

Submitted: 17.02.2020

Accepted: 15.03.2020

jakim było małżeństwo zbójników, a dodatkowego kolorytu nadaje tej historii fakt, że były to osoby wysoko urodzone. Ze stanu szlacheckiego pochodziła także Barbara Rusinowska, która działała w Górach Świętokrzyskich. Napadała na dwory i wozy kupieckie, a jej cechą charakterystyczną był męski strój. Obie zbójniczki zostały w końcu pojmane i stracone. Artykuł przybliża dzieje życia tych kobiet, a także zestawia różne (często sprzeczne) informacje na temat ich rozbójniczej działalności, które zachowały się w dawnych kronikach. W XIX w. Rusinowska stała się bohaterką dramatu scenicznego autorstwa Aleksandra Ładnowskiego.

SŁOWA KLUCZE: Barbara Rusinowska, Katarzyna Włodkowa Skrzyńska, zbójniczki, napady, średniowiecze, kroniki, legendy

For years, the phenomenon of brigandage has been inspiring poets, writers, painters, sculptors, musicians, filmmakers, theater artists, literary scholars, cultural scholars, and ethnographers, as well as many other representatives of the artistic and scientific communities; the robber has even recently forayed into the world of advertising. However, there is some discordance between the vision of artists and the findings of researchers: the former show a certain tendency to perpetuate the myth of the “noble robber” that is rooted in folk tradition and present in tales and legends, while modern science completely rejects this conceptualization. Admittedly, in older literature on the subject, especially in works from the 1950s, robbery was sometimes viewed as a manifestation of class struggle: the rebellion of the poor and the oppressed against the rich and the satiated (Szczołka, 1952, p. 5; Ochmański, 1950, pp. 193–242). However, a review of the preserved sources, especially the old chronicles, does not substantiate this opinion: all the documented raids on houses, mansions, parsonages, merchant carts, or craftsmen’s workshops had only one purpose: to make the robbers themselves rich, and when it comes to sharing the loot, it was only split between the members of the gang (Kamler, 2009, p. 230; Jazowski, 2007, pp. 53–54; Stuchlik-Surowiak, 2018, pp. 238–240).

The relationship between historical fact and myth or legend becomes even more complicated when a woman is cast in the role of the robber. An even more striking contradiction than that between the images of a ruthless thug and of the defender of the oppressed comes into play: one between the stereotype of a woman as a delicate, virtuous, modest being who is subordinate to a man, devoted to her family, and tied to the home—which has become perpetuated in tradition—and the bloody profession of a robber who plunders, burns, and murders. The motivation is irrelevant, whether it is chasing after wealth or a sense of justice. When a woman takes up brigandage, it does not matter.

Historiographic sources contain the memory of two 15th-century female robbers: Katarzyna Włodkowa Skrzyńska and Barbara Rusinowska. The former was the wife of Włodek from Skrzynów of the Swan coat of arms, who lived in Barwałd Castle in the area of Zator and enjoyed notoriety as a plunderer terrorizing the area. Katarzyna also actively participated in his raids, so we are dealing here with an unusual situation, that is, a husband–wife duo of robbers, and the fact that they were both of noble birth only spices up this story (*Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, 1997–1998, p. 472).

The few scientific studies which mention Katarzyna provide conflicting information about her ancestry. Contemporary researchers link it with the Słupski family of the Fellowship of Słupia coat of arms (Borgen, 2013, p. 78), or with Hungary (Studnicki, 1994, p. 37; Kiersnowski 1977, p. 44; Putek, 1938, p. 95). Sources regarding the Hungarian background of Włodek Skrzyński’s wife can be found in the medieval *Głogów Chronicle*, which is attributed to the vicar of the collegiate church in Głogów, Kaspar Borgen (Mrozowicz, 2013, p. 10). In this text, a long note, referring to the year 1458, was devoted to Katarzyna, who then as well as

earlier and later ... conducted herself in such a strong and masculine fashion that she stationed her husband as a guard in her castle, and herself with servants accompanying her, she pillaged the inhabitants of other castles. She rode a horse which was armored and equipped with defenses, just like a valiant man. She didn’t spare any opponent. She also plundered the castles and villages of her foes. ... Also, according to the tidings, she robbed merchants and other people on the roads, so that she was feared far and wide There were whispers that there was no bow or crossbow that she could not stretch with her arms without any instruments, which no man could do. (Borgen, 1493/2013, p. 78)

It is difficult to say today to what extent this description corresponds to Skrzyńska’s real life, as it palpably tends toward hyperbole and presents the highwaywoman’s attacks in an almost fairy-tale-like convention. This was likely due to her huge popularity: the author makes it clear that she was the heroine of many stories passed along from person to person. It is no wonder then that she finally morphed into a hero whose strength was no match for any man. It is also worth noting that the traditional model of marriage is completely reversed in the note cited: it is Katarzyna’s husband who acts as a guardian of hearth and home, while she handles the soldiering. In the popular legend, Skrzyńska took on typically masculine traits, because her lifestyle did not fit the canon of behaviors associated with her gender. The only breach in this convention is the passage about the robber’s pregnancy. During that time, “she remained at home until the delivery” (Borgen, 1493/2013, p. 78). Preparing for the role of mother

at home, for some time Katarzyna lived according to the pattern befitting a woman. However, this behavior must have been very unusual for her, since it was remarked on in the *Chronicle*.

We also find mentions of Katarzyna's plundering in Jan Długosz's *Annals*. Compared to the note contained in the *Głogów Chronicle*, Długosz's record is much more substantive, as the author does not deflect into mythologization of the robber's image, although his examples of her actions still place her far from the traditional and customary ideal of womanhood, especially of a married woman and mother. The first mention of Skrzyńska appears in his chronicle under the year 1451 and is related to the criticism of King Kazimierz IV Jagiellończyk's reign. As the author writes,

he is urged to lay siege to the castle of Berwald from which the holder and his wife have been living in brigandage, in defiance of the law and the orders of the king... But the king having other things on his mind remains unmoved by the wrongs of his subjects. (Długosz, 1614/2009, p. 118)

If we are to believe the records of the chronicler, Katarzyna carried out some raids herself, without her husband. Such was the nature of an event from in 1457, when a band of knights who had not been paid outstanding wages for fighting in the Prussian War tried to capture the castle in Oświęcim (Putek, 1938, p. 99; Studnicki, 1994, pp. 39–40). Although the royal troops apprehended eight attackers, they managed to climb the top of the tower in which they had been imprisoned, disarm the guards, and take control of the castle. Because there was a risk that others would join them and the castle could no longer be defended, negotiations began, as a result of which the occupiers were released, their horses and weapons returned, and each received two hundred florins. It was, however, the end of the good run for the unfortunate knights, because Katarzyna stood in their path. As Długosz writes, “[she] sent her people, [and] categorically ordered [them] to murder all eight of them and recapture everything that was given them: the horses, weapons, and gold” (1614/2009, p. 320).

Echoes of these events are also to be found in later, Polish-language sources. In the 16th-century *Poland's Chronicle* by Marcin Bielski, there is a mention that “Katarzyna Włodkowa Skrzyńska, having met them on the road, robbed and beat” the knights returning from the castle in Oświęcim (Bielski, 1597, p. 411). It is worth noting that, unlike in Długosz's record, Skrzyńska is not portrayed here merely as the leader of a band that sends people on attacks: Bielski explicitly refers to her personal involvement. Another difference concerns the fate of the knights, since in the 16th-century chronicle there is no indication of their murder. An even softer version of the incidents that took place in 1457 was recounted by Andrzej

Komoniecki, the author of *Chronography or Żywiec Annals*, written between 1699 and 1728 and covering the period from 1400 to 1728. Interestingly, when compiling the first part of his chronicle (covering up until 1586), Komoniecki abundantly tapped into Marcin Bielski’s book, copying from it numerous and capacious excerpts—often without making any changes (Grodziski, 1987, p. XXVIII). The issue of Katarzyna’s capture of the eight released prisoners is slightly different. Although it bears clear signs of relying on the work of the 16th-century historian, the author from Żywiec changed the original verbs from “robbed” and “beat” to “recaptured” and “stole” (Kominiecki, n.d./1987, p.37). Thus, there is no discussion not only of murder, but even of beating—only of the theft of goods.

This is not the only difference between Bielski’s chronicle and *Chronography*. Under the date 1460, an excerpt with the following text appears in the work of the 16th-century author:

At that time, Bożywoj Skrzyński of the Swan coat of arms from Turzej Góra, north of Dobczyce, wreaked havoc everywhere, against whom Mikołaj Pieniążek from Witowice—the chamberlain and starost of Krakow—set off with Piotr Komorowski and some villagers from Szczyrzyc, to whom the king also sent his courtiers, and drew his munitions, and drove the robber away. (Bielski, 1597, p. 418)

This version corresponds to Długosz’s, which also identified among the villains only Bożywoj Skrzyński by name (1614/2009, pp. 383–384). In Komoniecki, however, the matter becomes much more complicated, because he writes that in 1460 robberies were carried out by “Włodek and Bożywoj Skrzyński of the Swan coat of arms, together with his wife Katarzyna” (n.d./1987, p. 39). This is quite a bizarre phrase, because it suggests that Katarzyna was the wife of both robbers. However, not only the style of this passage from Komoniecki’s *Chronography* raises doubts; a much bigger problem is that he may have confused Włodek Skrzyński, Katarzyna’s husband, with their son, Włodek. It was probably he who took part in the robbery described here, after his father had already died (Studnicki, 1994, p. 40; *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, 1997–1998, p. 472). To corroborate this hypothesis, researchers cite the fact that in 1456 Skrzyńska was released by the king from the duty of military stations and military expeditions, and since the privilege was bestowed on her, and not Włodek, she was probably already a widow (Studnicki, 1994, p. 40).¹ In addition, she was the leader, as we remember, of the raid on the prisoners returning

1 Stanisław A. Sroka, however, suspects that Skrzyński did not die until 1458. See *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, p. 472.

from the castle in Oświęcim. At the same time, one cannot forget that the portrait of Katarzyna in the legend and recorded in the pages of the *Głogów Chronicle* depicts her as an independent woman, not reliant on her husband and acting on her own. Nevertheless, Włodek's absence from the source accounts does not necessarily constitute evidence of his death. What remains unclear is the question of Skrzyńska's participation in the aforementioned robbery of 1460. Neither Długosz nor Bielski make note of the name of a robber; only the Żywiec chronicler does so. Her royal privileges, suggesting that she remained on good terms with the ruler, speak against her plundering campaigns at that time. Her attack on the rebels returning from Oświęcim, i.e., on the king's enemies, further confirms this (Studnicki, 1994, p. 40; Putek, 1938, p. 100). It is therefore appropriate to agree with Józef Putek's statement that robbers could easily be forgiven if "their rogue weapons were used for the advantage and benefit of those who won the robbers over to be their friends and helpers" (1938, p. 100).

Incidentally, it must be added that Komoniecki is particularly concerned with brigandage, because this practice had been a real plague in Żywiec and the surrounding area for many centuries (Stuchlik-Surowiak, 2018, pp. 235–246). Hence, he dedicated a lot of space to this issue in *Chronography*, and perceived it as a socially important and pressing problem. This probably explains why, when describing the Skrzyńskis' plunders, the author does not stop at copying available sources, but tries to supplement the information left by earlier chroniclers—even if this sometimes leads him astray. Clear evidence of the historian's considerable interest in the bandit profession is the fact that the only record under the date 1460 is a reference to the robbery near Dobczyce. Komoniecki wholly omitted other accounts of events occurring that year (Komoniecki, n.d./1987).

The alleged favor of the king, even if it was a fact and not an invention of historians, did not save Skrzyńska from a tragic death. It is not known, however, exactly when she was executed, as sources remain silent on the subject. In Komoniecki's chronicle, there is only a very imprecise mention of Barwałd Castle under the date 1462, in which "Katarzyna Włodkowa, like her husband Włodek before, made a reputation for herself with robbery, for which she was burnt alive by royal order" (Komoniecki, n.d./1987, p. 41). Skrzyńska appears for the last time in the pages of *Chronography* in the entry for the year 1474, but it is equally vague. Remembering Barwałd once again, the Żywiec chronicler adds only that it was "a very powerful castle standing on a high mountain ..., which Włodek Skrzyński and his wife, who once busied themselves with murder ... held" (Komoniecki, n.d./1987, p. 45).

Another point which raises doubt for researchers is the mention of the robber being burned at the stake, because she was a noblewoman

(Studnicki, 1994, p. 40), although this information is also found in the *Głogów Chronicle* with an additional explanation that the direct reason for Skrzyńska's capture and death was her counterfeiting of coins at the castle in Barwałd (Borgeni, 1493/2013, p. 78; Mońko, 2009, p. 77). According to this record, she was not killed for brigandage, but for a completely different crime. This could explain her losing the king's favor, shown by turning a blind eye to the raids she organized, and perhaps even reaping benefits from them himself. In addition to fraud and forgery, the literature also suggests a third possibility, albeit unconfirmed, for inflicting the death penalty on Katarzyna: the Hussite heresy (Putek, 1938, pp. 105–107).

What the historical source did not convey, legend added. One of the stories circulating among the populace about Skrzyńska's death was recorded by a nineteenth-century archaeologist and historian, Józef Łepkowski. The robber is represented here as a bloodthirsty criminal who, like “the eagle seeking out its prey from the towers of Berwald Castle, and sent its mercenary servants to a looting raid” (Łepkowski, 1850, p. 109). In this account, King Kazimierz was painted as an opponent of Katarzyna: no longer wishing to tolerate her actions, he “instructed the superior of Lanckoron Castle, who had a good relationship with the Włodków lady, to take her to the court in chains” (Łepkowski, 1850, p. 109). However, the cunning robber realized the intentions of the king and resorted to trickery. She invited the prefect of Lanckoron to a feast and “with flattering words on her lips and a kind smile in her eyes, she welcomed her invited guests” (Łepkowski, 1850, pp. 109–110). In fact, she decided get them drunk and later to kill them. But not everything went her way. “When the feast had already lasted a long time, and neither the flattery nor the constantly replenished drink were able to intoxicate the prefect's mind, she saw her chance and, without dallying, plunged a dagger into her victim's chest” (Łepkowski, 1850, p. 110). The murderous intent, however, failed, as the dagger slipped over the armor hidden under his outer garment. At the prefect's signal, his armed servants started marching towards the castle, “and soon Katarzyna and her gang were lying tied up on carts being pulled towards Krakow, where the murderer died soon after, burned alive on a stake erected in the city's market square” (Łepkowski, 1850, p. 110). The legend, therefore, reiterates manner of death described in the *Głogów Chronicle* and in *Chronography*. Perhaps Katarzyna did indeed die this way (*Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, 1997–1998, p. 472).

The cause and form of Katarzyna's death are not the only controversies surrounding her; the actual nature of the robber's occupation also remains problematic. In some studies, there is a tendency to justify Skrzyńska's actions with economic reasons. In his book titled *On Robbers' Castles, Heretical Churches and Oświęcim Jerusalem: Sketches from the History of the*

Silesian–Polish Borderland, Józef Putek argues that there is no reason to view her and her husband as common robbers; being leaseholders of castles, they did what vassals like them did in all of the countries of contemporary Europe. They resembled medieval German adventurer-knights, known as “*raubritters*.” The researcher also draws attention to the fact that the couple had to maintain Barwald Castle, and the surrounding villages provided them with only a small income. No wonder that “they succored themselves by what was customary practice in Silesia, by taxing merchant transports and by practices ... which blurred the distinction between a law-abiding and precautionary administrator of the castle and a mere robber” (Putek, 1938, p. 96). He also characterizes the activities of Katarzyna and Włodek Gustaw Studnicki as customary practice, noting that “even magnates with famous names resorted to violence and rape” (Studnicki, 1994, p. 37). Ryszard Kiersnowski elevates the activities of “robbers” to even higher social circles, writing that “even some small Silesian princes could plunder some wealthier merchants on the road. Similar things also happened in other countries” (Kiersnowski, 1977, p. 43). We must agree with the researchers: The robber knights were indeed a phenomenon characteristic of the late Middle Ages and identifiable throughout Europe at the time (Mońko, 2009, pp. 5, 99). However, we should not forget that these “knights,” “magnates,” and “princes” were not women. Therefore, Katarzyna’s case is difficult to consider in the context of accepted norms, because her actions, regardless of whether they were dictated by the necessity of maintaining a castle or an usual desire to gain wealth, completely violated these norms.

Historical information about the other robber—Barbara Rusinowska—is much more scarce. In Bielski’s *Chronicle of Poland*, in a note referring to the year 1505, there is a comment in the margin, “Rusinowska was hanged”, and a brief explanation follows: “In the ... Sejm, some nobles were executed for robbery, Osuchowski and Mysowski were beheaded, and Rusinowska in leather boots with spurs, with a sword, in man’s attire, as she was captured, was hanged” (Bielski, 1597, p. 498).

This information, in a somewhat abbreviated form, was also provided by Komoniecki. Under the entry for 1505, we can read, “That year at the Radom Sejm some noblemen were executed for robbery, and Rusinowska, a lady who broke with them, in boots with spurs, with a sword, in man’s attire captured, so she was hanged” (Komoniecki, n.d./1987, p. 56).

Three major facts draw our attention: that Rusinowska was a noblewoman, that she was hanged, and that she was captured and executed in men’s clothing. The first fact brings some associations with the story of Katarzyna Skrzyńska; the second fact is quite surprising—the death penalty by hanging was considered shameful and, according to

centuries-old tradition, women were not sentenced with it, especially those of noble birth (Mikołajczyk, 1998, pp. 195–196); the third fact arouses curiosity, as a woman in men’s clothing was truly sensational in those days.

The exception, regarding the manner of execution, which was made for Rusinowska is even more remarkable because, according to Bielski, the other robbers—the men—were beheaded. Therefore, they were not treated as common thieves, which was certainly because they belonged to the nobility. In the case of Barbara, the goal was to make an example of and humiliate a woman who did not want to be a woman. At the same time, both chronicles imply that the robber’s male clothing and sword were perceived as even more outrageous than the acts of robbery, since both authors strongly emphasize this fact.

While Rusinowska’s death was recorded in historical sources, little is known about her life. The shortage of facts is compensated by the folk tradition, however, because the nonconforming robber became the heroine of several legends, told especially in the vicinity of the Świętokrzyskie Mountains, where she was rumored to have prowled with her band (Stankiewicz, 1988, p. 101).

Over the years, Rusinowska’s legend grew in scope and produced many offshoots. Some tales made her into a greedy woman, who was a bandit for the sole purpose of expanding her wealth and set out on a road with a band of rogues to rob merchants. According to other accounts, her initial motivation was the death of her father, Maciej, who was murdered because he interceded on behalf of a peasant being beaten. Rusinowska was also sometimes portrayed as a horse thief, which diminished her robber’s fame (Stankiewicz, 1988, pp. 101–102).

The highwaywoman was also reported to be have initiated a thwarted attack on Słupia. Somehow warned, the city’s residents organized their defenses and the robbers were forced to retreat. Two of them, however, were captured and taken to jail, from where they managed to escape. Stories were told that after some time one of the inhabitants of Słupia recognized one of these robbers among the faithful attending the church fair in Świętokrzyskie. Somebody also spotted Barbara Rusinowska herself praying in front of the altar, inside the temple, dressed in men’s attire. She could not be apprehended, however, because she escaped, having been warned by one of her companions (Stankiewicz, 1988, p. 102). Certain motifs found in the legend of Barbara overlap with folk tales of Katarzyna Włodkowa: both robbers were said to imprison enemies in the cellars of their castles (Stankiewicz, 1988, p. 102).

In the nineteenth century, the legend about Rusinowska was adapted to the stage thanks to the playwright, actor, and theater director Aleksander Ładnowski. In 1862, he wrote a play entitled *Barbara Rusinowska* or

The Robbers of the Świętokrzyskie Mountains: A Historical Drama in 5 Acts (1862). According to the stage directions, “this story is set at the beginning of the 16th century in the Świętokrzyskie Mountains, partly at Rusinowska’s castle, partly at a forest tavern (Ładnowski, 1862, p. 4). This drama portrays Barbara as a cunning woman who does not hesitate to commit crimes and fraud, unscrupulously achieving her ends by any means possible. In the words of one of the characters, she is:

... a woman monster
in want of dignity and humanity
...
One should have no regard
For the gender she has stained
And plunge vindictive iron
into the robber’s chest. (Ładnowski, 1862, pp. 61–62)

Barbara, however, is not completely devoid of feelings, because she falls in love with a man who loves someone else. Rusinowska’s confession shows her not as a robber, but as a woman—a romantic mistress capable of the highest ecstasy and every sacrifice. She addresses her beau as follows:

The third month has passed
Since that unfortunate moment,
At which hour I did see you in Krakow
For the first time at the banquet
At the house of Chancellor Łaski;
Your character and endowments—
Humble manner—intellect
Have enslaved mine own heart;
From then on, I was no longer a mistress
of my dreams—or my waking hours;
You were present to me everywhere;
Your image forever chained
To my whole being,
You didn’t allow any other thought
Above this—to live by your side,
Your eyes with a stolen gleam
To shine—like stars have shone for ages
With light borrowed from the sun! (Ładnowski, 1862, pp. 68)

However, when talking to her rival, she reveals a completely different side of her personality. Again she is a bandit who will not shy away from any crime; she is even capable of killing her beloved:

Remember my words
That I have uttered:
“I am a woman, who on my way
Will not stand any rival,
Being in a vicious fight
My beloved one shall die!”
Maria, do you understand now?!
Jerzy will die by my hand,
Should he dare to spurn me,
Or if you dare to love that gent! (Ładnowski, 1862, pp. 59)

Further events make Rusinowska a tragic heroine, because it transpires that the man she fell in love with is her son, abandoned as a child. Barbara’s husband, whom she had banished years before to indulge in robbery and debauchery, also joins the stage. The man reveals all of the crimes and iniquities of his wife, and then pierces her with a dagger.

Ładnowski’s drama is unquestionably closer to the spirit of the epoch in which it was written than to historical fact. Rusinowska is represented as a romantic heroine, whose rogue nature took the form of a morbid, destructive feeling. However, nothing certain can be said about her real emotional life or about her life in general. The latter of these women left much a more indelible mark on history, although it is also difficult to judge where the facts end and the legends begin. The latter type proliferates, especially in the nineteenth century, an era fascinated by medieval sources. Regardless of the story’s transformations, piling up in the course of history, it is worth attempting to investigate the story of the two robbers, Katarzyna Włodkowa Skrzyńska and Barbara Rusinowska, whose lives and exploits do not properly fit within any epoch.

REFERENCES

- Bielski, M. (1597). *Kronika polska Marcina Bielskiego. Nowo przez Joach. Bielskiego syna jego wydana* [Marcin Bielski’s chronicle of Poland, published by his son, Joachim]. Krakow. Bibl. Jagiell., cim. 8176.
- Borgeni, K. (2013). *Rocznik glogowski do roku 1493* [The Głogów Chronicle] (W. Mrozowicz, Polish Trans. and Ed.). Głogów: TZG. (Original work published 1493).
- Długosz, J. (2009). *Roczniki czyli kroniki sławnego Królestwa Polskiego, 1445–1461* [Annals or chronicles of the famous Kingdom of Poland, 1445–1461] (J. Mrukówna, Trans.) (Vol. 12). Warsaw: PWN. (Original work published 1614).

- Grodziski, S. (1987). Introduction. In A. Komonieccki, *Chronografia albo Dziejopis żywiecki* [*Chronography or The Zywiec annals*] (S. Grodziski & I. Dwornicka, Eds.). Żywiec: TMZŻ.
- Jazowski, A. (2007). Zbójnictwo w świetle dotychczasowych badań i opinii [Robbery according to previous studies and opinions]. In M. Madejowa, A. Mlekodaj, & M. Rak (Eds.), *Mity i rzeczywistość zbójnictwa na pograniczu polsko-słowackim w historii, literaturze i kulturze* [*Myths and reality of robbery on the Polish–Slovak border in history, literature and culture*]. Nowy Targ: PPWSZ.
- Kamler, M. (2009). Zbójnictwo i rozbój w Beskidach od drugiej połowy XVI do pierwszej połowy XVII wieku [Brigandage and robbery in the Beskid mountains from the second half of the 16th to the first half of the 17th century]. In A. Karpiński & I. Dacka-Górzyńska (Eds.), *Spółczesność staropolskie* [*Old-Polish Society*]: Vol. 2. Społeczność a przestępczość [Society and crime]. Warsaw: PAN.
- Kiersnowski, R. (1977). *Życie codzienne na Śląsku w wiekach średnich* [*Everyday life in Silesia in the Middle Ages*]. Warsaw: PIW.
- Komonieccki, A. (1987). *Chronografia albo Dziejopis żywiecki* [*Chronography or The Zywiec annals*], (S. Grodziski & I. Dwornicka, Eds.). Żywiec: TMZŻ. (Original work published in the 17th–18th century).
- Ładnowski, A. (1862). *Barbara Rusinowska czyli zbójcy Gór Świętokrzyskich. Dramat historyczny w 5 aktach* [*Barbara Rusinowska or The robbers of the Swietokrzyskie Mountains: A historical drama in 5 acts*] Bochnia.
- Łepkowski, J. (1850). *Kalwaria Zebrzydowska i jej okolice pod względem dziejowym i archeologicznym* [*Kalwaria Zebrzydowska and its surroundings: History and Archeology*]. Krakow: Wydawnictwo Dziel Katolickich.
- Mikołajczyk, M. (1998). *Przestępstwo i kara w prawie miast Polski południowej XVI–XVIII wieku* [*Crime and punishment in the law of southern Poland in the 16th–18th centuries*]. Katowice: University of Silesia Publishing House.
- Mońko, K. (2009). *Rycerze rabusie w XIV i XV wieku* [*Knights-robbers in the 14th and 15th centuries*]. Krakow: Petrus.
- Mrozowicz, W. (2013). Introduction. In K. Borgen, *Rocznik głogowski do roku 1493* [*The Głogów Chronicle*] (W. Mrozowicz, Polish Trans. and Ed.). Głogów: TZG.
- Ochmański, W. (1950). *Zbójnictwo góralskie. Z dziejów walki klasowej na wsi góralskiej* [*Highland brigandage: From the history of class struggle in highlander villages*]. Warsaw: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza.
- Polski Słownik Biograficzny* [*Polish Biographical Dictionary*] (Vol. 38). (1997–1998). Warsaw–Krakow: PAN.
- Putek, J. (1938). *O zbójnickich zamkach, heretyckich zborach i oświęcimskiej Jerozolimie. Szkice z dziejów pogranicza śląsko-polskiego* [*On robber castles, heretical churches and Oświęcim Jerusalem: Sketches from the history of the Silesian–Polish borderland*]. Krakow: Biblioteka Kresow Slaskich.

- Stankiewicz, J. (Ed.). (1988). *Legendy świętokrzyskie* [Legends from the Świętokrzyskie region]. Krakow: KAW.
- Stuchlik-Surowiak, B. (2018). „Wio Bury do góry”. Tajniki zbójckiego rzemiosła w „Chronografii albo Dziejopisie żywieckim” Andrzeja Komonieckiego [“Wio Bury do góry”: Secrets of the robber’s profession in Andrzej Komoniecki’s Chronography or The Żywiec Annals]. In T. Banaś-Korniak, B. Stuchlik-Surowiak, D. Rott, & J. Kwosek (Eds.) *Staropolskie teksty i konteksty* [Old-Polish texts and contexts] Vol. 8: *Tom jubileuszowy, poświęcony pracy twórczej i organizacyjnej Profesora Jana Malickiego w siedemdziesiątą rocznicę Jego urodzin* [Jubilee volume, dedicated to the creative and organizational work of Professor Jan Malicki on the seventieth anniversary of his birth]. Katowice: University of Silesia Publishing House.
- Studnicki, G. (1994). *Barwałd. Zarys dziejów* [Barwałd: Outline of history]. Wadowice: Grafikon.
- Szczotka, S. (1952). *Materiały do dziejów zbójnictwa góralskiego z lat 1589-1782* [Materials for the history of highland brigandage, 1589–1782]. Lublin: Polskie Towarzystwo Ludoznawcze.

Beata Stuchlik-Surowiak—Dr. hab., Professor at the University of Silesia in Katowice; author of several books—*Obraz małżeństwa w “antyfeministycznych” utworach Bartosza Paprockiego na tle obyczajowych, religijnych oraz literackich zjawisk XVI i pierwszej połowy XVII wieku* [The Image of Marriage in the “Anti-Feminist” Works of Bartosz Paprocki against the background of Moral, Religious and Literary Phenomena of the 16th and the first half of the 17th Centuries] (2016), *Od Długosza do Internetu. Rzecz o królowej Jadwidze* [From Długosz to the Internet: About Queen Jadwiga] (2013), and *Barokowe epitalamium śląskie. kobieta, małżeństwo, rodzina* [Baroque Silesian Epitalamium: Woman, Marriage, Family] (2007)—and author of numerous articles published in collections of essays and journals. Her scientific interests focus on Old Polish literature and culture, ancient customs, and issues related to the role of women in the culture of past eras.