

Studia z Dziejów Średniowiecza, t. 24, 2020

Beata Możejko  
(University of Gdańsk)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0085-8686>

## Once Again on the Subject of the Great Caravel *Peter von Danzig*<sup>1</sup>

<https://doi.org/10.26881/sds.2020.24.13>

Keywords: Great caravel, Peter von Danzig, Berndt Pawest, Paul Beneke

My monograph on the caravel *Peter von Danzig* was published in 2011<sup>2</sup>. Maritime scholars deemed it “absolutely groundbreaking in research regarding this sailing ship” and a work “of extraordinary quality”. They also added valuable contributions to the discussion on what type of vessel (caravel or carrack) this ship represented, highlighting (as I did in the monograph) that the reconstruction of her appearance produced by Otto Lienau, an earlier researcher into her history, was merely a proposal rather than a cast-iron certainty<sup>3</sup>. Nine years after the publication of my monograph, a review of it by Wiesław Długokęcki appeared in print, in which he concludes that my book cannot be called a scientific study<sup>4</sup>. Given that Długokęcki has for years endeavoured to review in a similar vein everything that I write, his negative opinions come

---

<sup>1</sup> To avoid an excessively lengthy list of footnotes, when giving references in parentheses to remarks made in Długokęcki’s review I use the letter D followed by the relevant page number, whilst references to my monograph are indicated using the letter M followed by the relevant page number.

<sup>2</sup> B. Możejko, „*Peter von Danzig*”. *Dzieje wielkiej karaweli 1462–1475*, Gdańsk 2011 (reprinted 2014).

<sup>3</sup> K. Gerlach, *Studia nad rozwojem okrętów i terminologii na styku średniowiecza i nowożytności*, Oświęcim 2015, p. 62 and n. 243, p. 65.

<sup>4</sup> W. Długokęcki, *Aus der Geschichte der Karavelle „Peter von Danzig”*, „*Quaestiones Medii Aevi Novae*” 2020, vol. 25, pp. 373–409.

as no surprise to me. Years ago, addressing another of Długokęcki's polemics, I remarked that – as also exemplified by his latest critique – “In writing his review, Długokęcki sets out to humiliate his adversary at all costs. To this end he makes numerous loose remarks intended to deprecate, wherever possible, the author whom he criticises”<sup>5</sup>.

Długokęcki has tried to review a book on a subject he knows nothing about, despite attempting to present himself as an authority in the field. He has never had anything to do with maritime matters, and provides multiple examples of this fact. He contends, for example (D, p. 381), that I erroneously write about “stone guns”, explaining that this term really “refers to guns that fire stone balls”. To settle this issue, I suggest that a good starting point would be to read the article *Okrętowe działa kamienne* (Stone guns aboard warships)<sup>6</sup>. Those with a knowledge of maritime history will know what this term refers to without any gratuitous explanations, just as they will know that wooden cannons and leather cannons were also used at sea. The same is true of the term ‘condemnation’ (D, p. 394); Długokęcki does not know how to use this term correctly, and in his ignorance accuses me of not using it, though his criticism is entirely fallacious.

My book deals mainly with events that played out in the waters and ports of Western Europe, but it is obvious that Długokęcki has a poor grasp of wider late medieval history. Whenever he tries to paint a different narrative (e.g. concerning the location where the caravel attacked the Burgundian galleys, or the dismantling of one of these galleys) he falls into a trap laid by his own lack of knowledge of the political backdrop to these events. The core literature on this subject for Długokęcki consists exclusively of German-language works published in the 19th and first half of the 20th century, and he chiefly relies on Lienau's aforementioned book dating from 1943. He claims that my monograph “does not make diligent use of the core literature on the subject. There is no compilation of opinions and discussion of the views they express, either of a detailed or more general nature” (D, p. 408). I review the old literature to which he refers, and examine Lienau's work more

---

<sup>5</sup> B. Możejko, *O początkowych dziejach zamku krzyżackiego w Gdańsku. Odpowiedź Wiesławowi Długokęckiemu*, RG 2011–2012, R. 71–72, p. 167.

<sup>6</sup> K. Gerlach, *Okrętowe działa kamienne*, “Morze, Statki i Okręty” 2011, nr 1.

extensively, in the Introduction to my monograph, believing that it would be pointless to discuss these earlier ideas at every juncture and on every matter, highlighting that in many cases the issues they raise are now perceived quite differently. Such is the usual progression of research. I do, however, point out those instances where older findings remain valid.

My monograph on the caravel was recently translated into English<sup>7</sup>, and Długokęcki (p. 408) believes that the omission of primary source quotations (which were included in the original, Polish, version) is a deliberate ploy to make verification more difficult for the reader. Such a conclusion can only be drawn by someone who has never published a monograph outside Poland and has never, for example, tackled the onerous task of securing the necessary finances to do so.

Let me reiterate that Długokęcki's entire review has only one aim: to discredit me as a historian. He selects certain excerpts from my work, sometimes quoting from it, including examples where he omits by ellipsis the key points that I make, then asserts that I am wrong and, usually without any essential in-depth analysis and in a tone that brooks no argument, proffers his own interpretation as an indisputable truth. This way the reviewer can write whatever he wants and ascribe a raft of alleged errors to his adversary for greater effect. What is more, his critique is peppered with opinions and sentences that he attributes either to me or to other authors who never expressed these statements in the way that Długokęcki cites them. He simply distorts what others have said to make it look as if either I am wrong or his opinions are corroborated by existing research. When summarising my arguments, Długokęcki often does so inaccurately: for example, writing about a notarised deposition of 16 November 1464 (D, p. 389) he orders his text in a way that suggests this incident took place two years later<sup>8</sup>.

Długokęcki is particularly keen to accuse me of misreading or mistranslating sources, wilfully ignoring the fact that when citing any given source I offer my interpretation of it. For example, when discussing the promise made to Gdańsk in 1467 by the chancery

---

<sup>7</sup> B. Możejko, *Peter von Danzig. The Story of a Great Caravel 1462–1475*, Brill 2020 (D. p. 374 with mistake that 2019).

<sup>8</sup> In the preceding paragraph he mentions events that took place in 1466, and then refers to “a notarised deposition of 16 November of that year”.

of Kazimierz Jagiellończyk (Casimir IV Jagiellon) that another letter would be written to Louis XI, I state that the letter was “about the gradually deteriorating caravel” and then in parentheses provide a quotation from the source so that the reader can assess the accuracy of my deduction, and I also cite the relevant source in a footnote (M, p. 103). Długokęcki retorts that “this quote does not, however, refer to the ship, but to the fairway that she was endangering” (D, p. 390). Yet it is obvious that I am drawing a conclusion from the quoted text, because if the caravel had been in good condition she would not have posed a hazard to the fairway. The cited quotation is there for the reader to verify whether my conclusion is correct. When in turn, based on a letter of 26 December 1469, I write that Hamburg and Lübeck received “news of the Gdańsk city council’s plans to move the caravel from her present berth [...] because of her ongoing deterioration and the potential threat she posed to other vessels at the port” (M, p. 108), concluding from this that plans were in place to remove (haul) the caravel either to the Brabank or Lastadia shipyard, Długokęcki (p. 394) contends that I am mistaken, as the letter reports that the ship is almost out of sight, hence it is sinking and “therefore must be removed from the water onto the keel”. Thus, according to Długokęcki whatever I write is wrong. Firing off his many remarks, he often forgets about one basic thing: the critique of sources and the logical consequences of his hypotheses. In this case he fails to see the obvious that the news sent to Hamburg and Lübeck of the ship’s supposedly ruinous, almost totally submerged state is an exaggeration intended to justify the actions concerning the caravel taken by Gdańsk’s authorities without her owners’ knowledge. I wonder how Długokęcki – slavishly adhering to the terms used in the source without interpreting them – envisages this removal of the caravel “from the water onto the keel”? Does he imagine that she was left somewhere beyond the waters of the Motława to stand unaided on her keel and become increasingly dilapidated? And how does this relate to the French property rights to the caravel still recognised by Gdańsk at that time? The editors of this source also thought that this turn of phrase referred to a slipway not a keel. It is Długokęcki’s translation that is incorrect.

Długokęcki holds the view that every fact from a primary source should be treated as a separate entity, and that inferences drawn

from easily interpreted passages cannot then be woven into a coherent narrative, with relevant quotations given where necessary as a means of verifying these inferences. He provides page after page of such observations, repeatedly accusing me of being incapable of reading or translating anything correctly. What he fails to grasp is that we are dealing with late not early medieval sources, which are few and far between and have to be analysed word by word. The relative abundance of late medieval sources requires a different methodological approach characteristic of research into later periods.

Again, all of Długokęcki's accusations on this issue are made to produce a plethora of my alleged mistakes. Sometimes, however, he forgets about his own 'guidelines'. He claims, for example, that "the ship was probably hired by a group of merchants to transport goods to Prussia", and that "merchants who traded in Poland, Ruthenia and elsewhere were aboard the caravel that arrived in Gdańsk" (D, p. 377). Further on he notes that "As mentioned earlier, the caravel was carrying goods owned by numerous merchants", after which he never mentions the merchants again (D, p. 391). Using Długokęcki's approach his statements should be picked apart and charges of mistranslation levelled at him, as it is no longer clear whether the ship carried the merchants and their goods or only their goods. In fact it is evident that when Długokęcki himself presents a narrative he does not repeat word for word from the source, but actually interprets it. I will return to the matter of the merchants later on.

There are two aspects to Długokęcki's remarks: firstly there is a focus on differences in the translation of certain terms and phrases, and secondly attempts are made to negate my efforts at reconstructing the history of the caravel. In the first case there are surprising interpretations with which it is difficult to agree, as well as ones that should be accepted and I would doubtless thank him for if it were not for the tone in which the whole text is written. Above all, though, I would like to answer the question of whether Długokęcki's remarks might convince me that I need to change any part of the reconstructed story of the caravel. My answer is absolutely not.

\*

Długokęcki believes that the structure of my work is primarily chronological and lacks a thematic approach, arguing that

my attempt at writing “a collective biography of shipowners, captains and seamen, and thus presenting a social history of the caravel, cannot succeed” (p. 375). It is difficult to respond to this in any other way than to say that he has not fully familiarised himself with my text, and in addition demonstrates his lack of understanding of the realities of the era. Even a quick look at the contents page of my monograph reveals that my approach is not dictated by chronology alone, and where possible I also examine specific issues. I state in my Introduction, and repeat in the Conclusion that the social dimension of the caravel’s history is presented through the prism of Berndt Pawest’s letters and the actions of Paul Beneke. Długokęcki avers that “The failure to include a comparative perspective, which cannot be omitted in a study whose aims are as stated, is incomprehensible”. If he was expecting me to compare the history of the caravel, her owners, commanders and crew with those of one of her contemporaries, then he clearly has little idea of what he is writing about. To which vessels, or even single vessel, operating in the Baltic or North Sea at that time am I supposed to compare the caravel? Surely not to those from southern seas or from the Atlantic, where there was an entirely different maritime culture, and where there are numerous extant logbooks, insurance certificates, etc. The caravel is unique among ships that plied their trade in northern waters due to the fact that such a large number of documents relating to her have survived<sup>9</sup>. In other cases, we have at best a handful of mentions in sources of a general nature, most of which were recorded because a skipper lost his ship (to a storm or piracy) and took steps to seek redress. What is more, the caravel was a prototypical vessel, the largest ever seen at that time either in the Baltic or the North Sea. The problems faced in running this ship (including the costs involved) were not encountered elsewhere.

It must also be remembered that a caravel of this immense size was an exception among vessels engaged in privateering. Privateer ships were small for obvious reasons (e.g. repair requirements or fear of bankruptcy in the event of losing a ship maintained at great expense). Their intention was not to sink their target

---

<sup>9</sup> For a recent work touching on the caravel’s unique status in this respect (cited in the English edition of my monograph), see R. Paulsen, *Schifffahrt, Hanse und Europa im Mittelalter. Schiffe am Beispiel Hamburgs, europäische Entwicklungslinien und die Forschung in Deutschland*, Köln 2016, index. Długokęcki does not know this monograph.

but to loot it, and they opened fired mainly in order to overpower and incapacitate the crew, damage the enemy ship's sails and bring her to a halt. An extremely important turning point in the development of ships came in the late 15th/early 16th century. It stemmed from the cumulative effect of groundbreaking technological changes and the construction of entirely different vessels (including typical warships)<sup>10</sup>. Comparative analysis can be carried out when there are similar things to assess, and where it is possible to do so. I allude to this in my book, for example, when discussing matters concerning crews (captain and mariners) (M, pp. 52–53 and footnotes), goods (M, pp. 59, 63), monetary issues (M, p. 61), the victualling of ships (M, p. 119, n. 34) and the remuneration of crews. In the last case I even state outright that “For comparison we can look at the findings of...” (M, p. 118, n. 28). Of course, Długokęcki overlooks this, and not only misinforms the reader, but also makes erroneous claims, because the situation regarding comparative analysis is the exact opposite of what he thinks it to be. It is the study of the Gdańsk caravel's history that is currently a point of reference for those researching other vessels, as illustrated by investigations into the wreck of the Swedish, carvel-built warship *Grifun/Gribshund*, which was in service from 1486 to 1495<sup>11</sup>.

\*

Assessing the sources on which I based my study, Długokęcki concludes (p. 375) that “Notable among the sources made use of in this work is a group of documents from series 300 D/17B, held at the Gdańsk State Archive, partly published in the *Hansisches Urkundenbuch* (vol. 9) and collated in Table 2, as well as the letters of Berndt Pawest [...] published in the *Hanserecesse* and by Hirsch and Vossberg as an appendix to the chronicle of Caspar Weinreich (see Tab. 3)”. He then points out that there is no mention in Table 2 of a document from the *Hansisches Urkundenbuch* (HU) published in full by Lienau, and that a letter of

---

<sup>10</sup> Useful additions to the titles on this subject already cited in my monograph include: I. Friel, *Ships, Shipbuilding and Technology in England 1200–1520*, London 1995, and the most recent work by Susan Rose, *Medieval Navy 1066–1509. Ships, Men and Warfare*, Seaforth Publishing 2013.

<sup>11</sup> J. Rönby, *Grifun/Gribshund (1495): Marinarkeologiska undersökningar*, Stockholm 2021, pp. 28, 89.

8 March 1472, also published by Lienau, is not listed in Table 3. These remarks are entirely unwarranted, as I clearly state (M, p. 31) that the letters in question housed in the Gdańsk State Archive have been published multiple times, be it in full, partial or calendar form. I also make it equally clear that Table 2 lists the current archive reference numbers, the former (now outdated) reference numbers (which were used by the editors of the HU and by earlier researchers), as well as giving the relevant citations in the HU and noting in what form the letters were published. In Table 3 I provide the same information regarding the letters of Berndt Pawest catalogued under 300 D/75, alongside correlations with the *Hanserecesse* and the appendix to Caspar Weinreich's chronicle. Thus, I clearly explain the correlation of former and current reference numbers in archive collections and omit nothing. As for the documents published by Lienau, I refer to them much earlier when discussing his contribution to the reconstruction of the caravel's history (M, p. 11).

\*

The owner of the caravel that set sail for Gdańsk, and who was also owner of some of the goods she carried, was Pierre Beuf. I established that a share of the goods belonged to someone aboard the ship whose name was Danlon, who I remarked may have been a merchant, and probably also to the Breton Pierre de Nantes. The ship was commanded by the shipowner's nephew, Marcus Beuf, who was also a merchant (M, pp. 48–49). Długokęcki's attempt to demonstrate that Danlon was probably "only the captain's second in command" (D, p. 376) changes none of this. After all, all those on board, even the ordinary seamen, were entitled to bring goods for sale with them, though the lower down the hierarchy they were the smaller the quantity. Długokęcki tries to prove that "the ship was probably hired by a group of merchants in order to transport goods to Prussia" (p. 377) and, as I noted earlier, at one point he claims that these merchants were aboard the caravel, while at another he asserts that only their goods were present. So he regards them as different individuals to the ones mentioned above. He bases his supposition on statements made by representatives of Gdańsk at an assembly in Lübeck in April 1469. The Gdańsk delegates claimed that merchants trading in Poland, Ruthenia and elsewhere had arrived in Gdańsk



aboard the caravel, but after she was damaged they were unable to repair her. It is easy to spot that these statements were made seven years after the event had taken place, and what is more at a time when the city council of Gdańsk was trying to remove the caravel from the Motława without the consent of her French owners. As there is not a shred of evidence of anyone approaching Gdańsk's city authorities or pestering either Marcus Beuf or Pierre de Nantes (who remained in Gdańsk after Beuf's departure) about their lost goods, the conclusion is obvious: seven years after the event, when mentioning the merchants who had arrived aboard the caravel, the Gdańsk delegates could only have been referring to those whom I listed as owners of the goods, and not anyone else. The fact that trade in Prussia, Lithuania, etc., suffered losses is simply a stereotypical statement.

\*

According to Długokęcki (p. 377) "Lienau's claim that Cosinoti was also the ship's operator, which the [reviewed] author does not reject, is not borne out by source evidence". What I actually wrote was: "According to established historiographical findings (which are not entirely accurate in terms of chronology), the ship's operator was Peter Cosinoti [footnote referencing Lienau]. I will return to the subject of Cosinoti further on; however, current research indicates that he cannot be linked to the caravel until 1464" (M, p. 49). When discussing the events of 1464 I described in detail Cosinoti's involvement in matters concerning the caravel, but as an envoy sent to Gdańsk to represent King Louis XI of France, nowhere even suggesting that he was the caravel's operator (M, pp. 75–79, 89–97). Clearly then, based on my analysis of available sources I do not ascribe to Cosinoti the role that Lienau does. Nevertheless, I believe that until we learn more about this individual, some caution should be exercised regarding his earlier (pre-1464) connections with issues related to the caravel. Długokęcki also deems (p. 4) that I am mistaken in supposing that Johann Molle was a co-owner of the caravel. In reality I wrote: "Johann Molle is also mentioned in the historiography as the operator, though nothing further is known of this individual" other than that he set sail back to France with Marcus Beuf and was mentioned in the context of the caravel in a document of 1464 (M, p. 49). It was Otto Held who thought that Molle may have

been a co-owner, as I clearly indicated in a footnote. Once again, Długokęcki distorts my statements.

\*

There is some debate about exactly when in 1462 the caravel first entered the waters of Gdańsk. Available sources suggest that this might have happened in June or the very beginning of July. In my monograph I cautiously gave credence to the latter date, but, on further reflection, subsequently settled on late spring/June<sup>12</sup>. Długokęcki, opting for June, is convinced that he has solved this conundrum. According to Caspar Weinreich's chronicle the caravel appeared in Gdańsk after the feast of Pentecost in 1462 (which fell on 6 June) and was damaged by a lightning strike off the port of Gdańsk. Długokęcki accuses me of overlooking Johann Lindau's account, which also mentions that the caravel arrived and was damaged "at the same time that Teutonic mercenaries were camped at Święty Wojciech outside Gdańsk, hence between 16 and 22 July" (D, p. 376). He then takes the stance that it is unlikely that "the term after Pentecost could refer to a period of a month or a month-and-a-half later". He subscribes to the view that the caravel arrived in Gdańsk around mid-June, and met with disaster between 19 and 20 July, concluding that "after this incident the caravel was towed to the port on the Motława". This argument is not convincing. According to Długokęcki's assertions the caravel would have had to be waiting in the roads of Gdańsk (an area stretching up to present-day Gdynia) for over a month: from mid-June (which he takes to be the date of her arrival) to sometime after 19–20 July. What, after a voyage of around two months, could have been the reason for the ship to spend another five weeks or so not in the port but in its roads?

It could not, for example, have been because of the great caravel's sizeable draught, as she later left the port as an armed warship (thus with an even greater draught). The fundamental job of a port has always been to load and unload ships as quickly as possible. Any delays generated unforeseen costs for all concerned (including the ship operator who had to pay for the upkeep of the crew, providing food, potable water, etc.). One of the ways in which this process was hastened was by loading and unloading in the roads, though as a rule this was only done with goods which, unlike

---

<sup>12</sup> B. Możejko, *Peter von Danzig. The Story of a Great Caravel...*, p. 45.

the caravel's cargo of salt, could not be damaged by water. Thus, it is highly unlikely that she spent five weeks being unloaded in the roads. The explanation may lie in the imprecise dates given by the sources. Johann Lindau provides numerous pieces of information without adhering to a strict chronology (as pointed out in an annotation by the publishers of his work). He may have amalgamated several events from around the same time without listing them in their correct order. In addition, we do not know to which event Lindau's account actually refers: the caravel's accident or her being towed to port after makeshift repairs. Johann Lindau's account was also disregarded by Otto Lienau, possibly because he shared my doubts. In the case of Caspar Weinreich, some of the dates he gives also require additional hypotheses to reconcile them with information from other sources (see M, p. 160, n. 340: in the cited instance the difference in dates amounted to 11 days). Perhaps then, contrary to Długokęcki's observations, the caravel arrived in the roads of Gdańsk some considerable time (several weeks) after Pentecost, hence in late June – early July. Clearly, the assertions made with such certainty by Długokęcki do not resolve or explain the issue.

\*

The damaged caravel required repairs and the wherewithal to pay for them. Therefore, after her captain Marcus Beuf had left Gdańsk, in May 1464 her stand-in commander Pierre de Nantes took out a loan, secured against the caravel and her equipment, from Gdańsk citizens Rudolf Feldstete and Caspar Lange. It was worth a total of 1000 marks; however, this amount was the sum of the actual loan of 385 marks given to de Nantes plus the interest accrued on it. Based on the contents of the hypothecation bond, and after analysing other sources relating to the loan and the bond, I presented the following findings (M, p. 68 and n. 123). The loan granted to Pierre de Nantes was of a type known as a bottomry loan, in this particular case with monthly and probably capitalised interest. Thus, in May 1464 Pierre de Nantes borrowed 385 marks from the aforementioned Gdańsk citizens, which at a monthly interest rate of around 27% and with monthly capitalisation of interest meant that by September 1464 he would have had to pay back 1000 marks. So the loan was granted for a period of four months. The results I present were based on the

following calculations: 1st month –  $385 \text{ marks} \times 27\% + 385 = 488.95$ ; 2nd month –  $488.95 \text{ marks} \times 27\% + 488.95 = 620.9665$ ; 3rd month –  $620.9665 \text{ marks} \times 27\% + 620.9665 = 788.62745$ ; 4th month –  $788.62745 \text{ marks} \times 27\% + 788.62745 = 1001.55686$ .

Długokęcki (p. 379), however, claims that “the loan agreement refers to 1000 small marks, i.e. 500 ‘good’ marks”. Though he does not deny the existence of the bottomry loan itself, he believes that my deductions about the high level of interest charged on it are wrong. He cites Ernst Daenell’s work of 1906 (which I also reference) in support of his claim that the stated rates of interest (20, 25, 33, 33%) were annual not monthly<sup>13</sup>. Finally, he maintains that the agreement specifies two dates for the repayment of the loan: September and November, which means that two sums should feature in this document. Refuting my findings on interest rates, capitalisation, etc., he does not, however, put forward his own ideas about how to explain the discrepancy between the sum of 1000 marks stipulated in the hypothecation bond and the sum of 385 marks which the French were willing to repay, as bottomry loans were not recognised in French law (Pierre de Nantes was sent to prison for taking out this loan).

These contentions made by Długokęcki should be rejected as entirely erroneous. According to research by Henryk Samsonowicz, the Prussian mark predominates in Gdańsk’s historic records of the 15th/16th century, and “although it appears in at least three variants: the mark (*Mark*), the small mark (*geringe Geld Mark*) and the good mark (*gute Mark*), everything indicates that the term ‘mark’ referred to the small mark (*geringe Geld Mark*)”<sup>14</sup>. For Długokęcki failed to notice that according to the sources, the sum of 385 marks which Pierre de Nantes received from his Gdańsk creditors was in inferior (lesser, small) marks. This is best evidenced by a letter of 17 September 1464 from the city council of Gdańsk to Louis XI of France, which contains two clear references to this subject: *385 marcas nostre levis Prutenicalis monete*<sup>15</sup>. Another letter (which I used and cited) of 23 April 1466 from Gdańsk’s city council to Louis XI also mentions the loan amount

<sup>13</sup> E. Daenell, *Die Blütezeit der deutsche Hanse*, Bd. II, Berlin 1906, p. 352.

<sup>14</sup> H. Samsonowicz, *Stosunki monetarne w Gdańsku na przełomie XV/XVI wieku* [in:] *Nummus et Historia. Pieniądz Europy średniowiecznej*, Warszawa 1985, p. 297.

<sup>15</sup> HU, Bd. 9, no. 127; see also reference to this source (M, p. 93).

granted to Pierre de Nantes, specifying it as 385 inferior (lesser) marks<sup>16</sup>.

Thus, the error is not in my own reasoning but in Długokęcki's: in a document of 1464 mention is made of 1000 inferior marks, and the later settled debt of 385 marks also referred to inferior marks. In consequence my premise was and is correct: interest was calculated on the amount originally lent – 385 (inferior) marks, and the repayment of the loan plus accrued interest came to 1000 (inferior) marks. The whole dispute between Gdańsk and France centred on these amounts: Pierre de Nantes borrowed 385 (inferior) marks (the amount he actually received) and he was meant to repay this sum together with interest; the final amount (with accrued interest) was estimated in May 1464 at 1000 (inferior) marks. The final repayment was due in September, hence four months later. The November date should be understood as that of a final summons to settle the debt; after this date the caravel would become the property of the Gdańsk creditors.

The older literature on this subject, which Długokęcki constantly refers to, did not include any comprehensive study of bottomry loans in the Middle Ages. The aforementioned work by Daenell is one of a few that barely touches on this issue. Daenell, who knew of only a few mentions of such loans, deduced from them that they were charged at high rates of interest (20, 25, 33.33%) because of the high level of risk involved in lending. However, he did not, as Długokęcki claims, say anything about whether this interest was calculated per annum or per month. This is an example of Długokęcki reading something in the work of another author which that author never wrote. It is difficult to gain any sort of clear picture about bottomry interest rates based on Daenell's work. Długokęcki's citing of Walther Vogel's research, published in 1915, as an argument is equally futile. Vogel stated only that interest was paid, citing similar sources to those referenced by Daenell, but also without specifying whether it was paid annually or monthly. Długokęcki is totally unaware of the fact that interest on bottomry loans had been charged on a monthly basis since antiquity. Historians writing over a century ago may not have known this, but it is strange that Długokęcki, who chooses

---

<sup>16</sup> Archiwum Państwowe w Gdańsku (hereinafter: APG), *Missivia*, 300/27, no. 6, pp. 575–579, HU, Bd. 9, no. 262; see reference to this source (M, p. 97).

to debate the issue, does not. All the more so given that in addition to the many foreign language publications inaccessible to him, a work on this subject has also recently been published in Polish<sup>17</sup>. In consequence, Długokęcki's entire reasoning on this point is a misunderstanding on his part.

\*

Długokęcki amends my description of the document in which Pierre de Nantes pledged the caravel as security for the loan from Rudolf Feldstete and Caspar Lange (M, pp. 67–68) by adding that it was a chirograph (D, p. 379). I went on to write that when Marcus Beuf returned to Gdańsk with Pierre Cosinoti they refused to acknowledge the validity of this document because “there was no seal attached to it” (M, p. 77). Długokęcki contends that my assertion about the seal is invalid, as this document took the form of a chirograph, which we must take to mean that, according to him, chirographs were not sealed. He backs up his theory by citing a paragraph from Philippe Dollinger's work on the role of the chirograph in the socio-economic life of the medieval Hanseatic world, although Dollinger makes no mention of whether or not seals were used<sup>18</sup>. Długokęcki's logic is flawed: it was the French, who were not part of the Hanseatic community, who had reservations about the absence of a seal. In France (particularly in the north) chirographs were authenticated with seals up until the late 15th/early 16th century<sup>19</sup>. My assertion is valid: the Frenchmen attempting to reclaim possession of the caravel knew what they were talking about, which cannot be said of Długokęcki.

\*

---

<sup>17</sup> G. Blicharz, *Rzymska pożyczka morska a swoboda inwestowania w ryzykowne przedsięwzięcia*, “Krakowskie Studia z Historii Państwa i Prawa” 2014, t. 7, z. 1, pp. 11–27.

<sup>18</sup> P. Dollinger, *Dzieje Hanzy XII–XVII w.*, Warszawa 1997, p. 146 (I refer to a different edition than Długokęcki).

<sup>19</sup> All Długokęcki would have to do is see the entry for ‘chirograph’ on the French Wikipedia website, or look up Dr Charlotte Crouch on Twitter: “*Look what I just found.how satisfying is that?! Never seen a complete chirograph before... #phdlife* (Arch. dept. du Nord B.1412, 1.377+8) <https://t.co/if8LKYjf7h>” / Twitter (access: 10.12.2020). A quick search in Google brings up a whole host of photographs of both French and English sealed chirographs, and even a video of academic seminars on their subject.

In discussing my attempt to compile a table, based on a primary source, that lists all of the caravel's equipment (fittings and armaments) (M, pp. 69–72), Długokęcki states that “The [reviewed] author is convinced that this is the first time this document has been analysed”. He follows this up by avowing that Lienau already attempted something similar, and adds that “The [reviewed] author was aware of this”. Again, Długokęcki contradicts himself: I am apparently convinced that my analysis is the first – but Lienau's came earlier – of which I was aware. In fact, when discussing this issue I include a footnote referencing both the primary source (the ship's hypothecation bond) as well as Lienau's study (M, p. 68, n. 120, citing pp. 45–46 of Lienau's work). I also include a reference to Lienau's work in the footnote below the table (M, p. 69, n. 126), having already noted in the Introduction that in this case he did not use the original text but a document that had been translated at his request into modern German (M, p. 11, referring to the translation on pp. 6–7 of Lienau's work). Długokęcki indicates that he is familiar with my explanations, including those in the Introduction, but was unable to draw the correct conclusions from them.

The key columns in my table are those headed: ‘Item – contemporary term’ and ‘Explanatory remarks’, in which I attempt to determine what each item aboard the caravel was used for in its day. I repeat that this means the specific time of the caravel, not centuries later. Długokęcki objects that “although an attempt has been made to provide Polish equivalents in the column ‘Item – contemporary term’, no Polish dictionary of maritime terminology was used” (D, p. 380). The only dictionary which he himself refers to is the *Register*, in other words an appendix comprising a glossary of terms mentioned in a source about 17th-century shipbuilding. The publishers of the *Register* made use of Johann Heinrich Röding's highly acclaimed, late 18th-century dictionary of maritime terminology (as indeed did I), with supplementary references to German and English dictionaries. Which other “Polish dictionary of maritime terminology” does Długokęcki have in mind when raising his objection?

In the *Register* Długokęcki finds the word ‘Buline(e)’ Polonised to ‘buliny’ (bowlines)<sup>20</sup>. These ropes, used to hold the edge of a sail into the wind, were a 15th-century invention, but like all running

---

<sup>20</sup> *Nomenclatura navalis. Dwa gdańskie rękopisy z XVII wieku o budownictwie statków*, opr. Z. Binerowski, B. Janik, Gdańsk 1976.

rigging evolved greatly over the centuries. Hence, for the sake of caution, I classified them under the general category of cordage. Where I have entered the term “Talje” (with question mark), after Rödning, under item 15 of the table, Długokęcki points out that the publishers of the *Hansische Urkundenbuch* expand on this term by adding: “Leine m. Schlitzen”. However, he does not explain what this means, though it appears to refer to the term *Talje* (long tackle). He takes a similar approach when, in compiling a list of my alleged errors, he meticulously notes all of those entries in the table for which I was unable to find any equivalents appropriate to the Middle Ages and so left blank spaces. However, once again, he himself does not offer any explanations. Research into the caravel is not the exclusive domain of historians, but also requires experts in shipbuilding technology. It is difficult to make a definitive judgement on certain topics without mutual cooperation. Even when a historian does not know what a specific term from a specific period means, there is no reason to hide this fact. On the contrary, it is worth highlighting such doubts within the framework of interdisciplinary collaboration. However, they can only be discussed with specialists capable of making a valid contribution to the debate. The multiple and rapid developments in shipbuilding technology from the mid-15th century onwards (of which the caravel is a prime example) means that we still have a long way to go in order to establish exactly what appeared when, what it was used for at the time and how it evolved in later years.

\*

Długokęcki draws further misconceived conclusions from his analysis of Pierre de Nantes’ expenditure account of 11 September 1464 (D, pp. 387–388). Questioning what these accounts reveal, he begins by recalling my assertion that in early 1464 repairs to the caravel were so far advanced that Pierre de Nantes seriously thought he would soon be able to set out to sea again (M, p. 74). Długokęcki then rejects this claim, arguing that, on the contrary, only modest sums were spent on repairs to cover the costs of carpentry work, the purchase of caulking materials, hauling the ship ashore, and caulking and tarring her. The assertion of mine quoted by Długokęcki was not, however, made solely on the strength of this single itemised account. It summed up all of the steps I had



earlier outlined that were involved in overhauling the ship (beginning with the first measures taken by Marcus Beuf), whilst the expenses that Pierre de Nantes had to account for were only a part of these (M, pp. 57–58). I did not comment on whether these sums were large or small, and this has nothing to do with the question of whether or not de Nantes was about to go to sea. As for the recorded sums relating to the ship's repairs, I emphasised that "it is difficult to evaluate this information because no research has been done into the cost of building and repairing ships in late medieval Gdańsk" (M, p. 58, n. 60). The whole paragraph that Długokęcki devotes to this issue, once again, results from his misunderstanding of what I have written. On the other hand, the aforementioned lack of comparative data makes it difficult to say whether these really were small sums for this type of work. As the repairs were discontinued in September, we do not know how much more the rest of the work would have cost.

Summarising his several-page analysis of Pierre de Nantes' statement of expenditure, Długokęcki (p. 388) concludes that "in the first place [he] questioned the testimony given to the council by Arndt Backer on the previous Friday [...] that he had repaid the loan using money from the sale of the masts, and not the money borrowed from Feldstede and Lange", after which he states that "It is therefore not true, as claimed by Mozejko (p. 78)" – and here follows a quote from my monograph – "that the money which de Nantes had repaid him had come [...] from funds set aside for the masts". As this is only a snippet from my far more detailed description of the settlement of accounts between a much larger group of individuals: Marcus Beuf (Frenchman), Arndt Backer (of Gdańsk), Pierre de Nantes (Breton), Hans Olden and Symon Lubbelow (of Gdańsk) and Rudolf Feldstete and Caspar Lange (of Gdańsk), I will quote the entire sentence which I wrote: "Part of the Breton's testimony was contested by councillor Arndt Backer, who alleged that the money which Pierre de Nantes had repaid him had not come from the sum loaned by Rudolf Feldstete and Caspar Lange, but from funds set aside for the masts". This quote shows that Długokęcki has, once again, twisted the seemingly obvious meaning of what I have written.

Writing about the transactions of Marcus Beuf, who placed an order for masts spending just over 300 marks on the timber alone (M, p. 58), I mentioned the loans that he had secured from

Gdańsk councilman Arndt Backer. To fully understand the situation, it is important to note several key points that I make about the money that Marcus Beuf left both Pierre Bizart and Pierre de Nantes (a sum of 510.5 marks in total), and about the allocation of money for purchases and services (including masts and their transport) and for repairs to the ship (M, pp. 60–64). In my discussion of de Nantes' actions I observed that "Afterwards there were accusations that Pierre de Nantes had sold the masts or pledged them as collateral [the latter is my inference – BM] to pay off other debts". I also noted that "Whatever the truth of the matter, Pierre de Nantes did indeed settle existing debts by running up new ones" (M, p. 64). Aware of the fact that it is not easy to make sense of the complexities of this long sequence of transactions, at the end of my analysis of the issue I explained (M, p. 89) that, put simply, Pierre de Nantes' actions created a loan pyramid: to pay off Arndt Backer and still have money for other expenses he took out a short-term, high-interest loan from Hans Olden and Symon Lubbelow, then to pay off these new creditors, he took out another loan (the bottomry loan) from Caspar Lange and Rudolf Feldstete. Ultimately, the accusation levelled at de Nantes by Marcus Beuf concerned the bottomry loan.

Długokęcki also claims that I did not evaluate Pierre de Nantes account of expenditure and that I also supposedly failed to notice that the French had deemed Pierre de Nantes a swindler (p. 387). Again, this is not entirely true. I did, after all, write that Pierre de Nantes had paid off Arndt Backer with money from the sale of the masts and not from the money borrowed from Rudolf Feldstete and Caspar Lange, adding Backer's comment that "the repayment had come from funds raised by selling the masts and not from the money de Nantes had received from his Gdańsk creditors" (M, pp. 64, 80 and n. V). I also clearly stated that Pierre de Nantes rejected Backer's claims (M, p. 79), but – and I mentioned this on several occasions in my monograph – the Frenchmen Marcus Beuf and Pierre Cosinoti did not believe him. Everything that Długokęcki accuses me of omitting is there in my monograph; I simply lack his 'skill' of being able to look at an account and sum up the man who compiled it in one word: swindler. Perhaps he was simply a man caught up in a situation that overwhelmed him?

I wrote at length about the negotiations between Gdańsk and France concerning the detention (by Gdańsk) and attempted recovery (by the French) of the caravel, which included an episode in 1464 involving Marcus Beuf and Pierre Cosinoti. The reason I gave for their departure from Gdańsk during the course of these talks was that the plague was rife in the city at that time. Długokęcki adds to this that “the fear of being forced to accept an unfavourable settlement in the case of the caravel or of being rearrested may also have played a part” (D, p.389). First of all, he is completely mistaken in writing about any fear of being “rearrested”. Marcus Beuf and Pierre Cosinoti had never previously been arrested in Gdańsk; the only person to be arrested was Pierre de Nantes, and that was for entirely different reasons (which I wrote about in detail). Indeed, the whole of Długokęcki’s conjecture makes little sense. Both Frenchmen had a mandate from King Louis XI of France, with whom Gdańsk was eager to maintain good relations for the sake its interests, and who was not unwilling to help Gdańsk’s merchants (e.g. intervening with his own subjects over the detention of Gdańsk ships). It is highly unlikely that the royal representatives would have been forced into anything or been imprisoned, as this would have left Gdańsk facing inevitable repercussions. Długokęcki also clearly underestimates how greatly medieval communities feared the plague. The outbreak in 1464 claimed around 5800 lives in Gdańsk, hence 19% of the city’s population. Therefore, I am not so much “probably right” in stating that the Frenchmen left Gdańsk to escape the plague (M, p. 91), as definitely right, and there is no evidence to support Długokęcki’s futile musings about other possible reasons for their departure.

\*

According to Długokęcki (p. 394), when discussing the issue of Gdańsk taking possession of the caravel I confined myself to “relating the contents of the notarial instrument issued in Gdańsk on 16 February 1470”. He adds that “Meanwhile, it is also important to determine on what basis the city took over the caravel” and continues by saying that Otto Lienau had already drawn attention to the fact that the ship had been condemned by the city council. He goes on to explain that “In maritime law, condemnation is the declaration by authorised persons that a vessel is unfit for service

or repair". The term referred to by Długokęcki was used at earliest from the late 16th century up to the 19th century, but it referred to the confiscation of a ship, or seizure of prize, which is considered a form of privateering<sup>21</sup>. In Lienau's day condemnation meant exactly what he wrote that it meant, but in citing him Długokęcki (writing in the present tense) does not realise that this term has not been in use for over a quarter of a century (it is shipowners who decide the fate of their vessels). I consider it inadvisable to use a term which is ahistorical in relation to the 15th century and also now obsolete.

It is widely known that under Kazimierz Jagiellończyk, state maritime affairs were entrusted to the city council of Gdańsk, and the fact that the council was responsible for legal investigations and decision making is obvious. This has been repeatedly brought up in both specialist literature on the subject and in publications addressed to a wider readership<sup>22</sup>. In the first chapter of my monograph I pointed out that in dealing with the case of the caravel the council negotiated with the French, appointed representatives, corresponded with the respective kings of Poland and France, and set up an inspection committee to determine whether or not the ship could be repaired. I later stated plainly that the city council of Gdańsk took charge of the deteriorating caravel because "municipal laws stipulated that the council was responsible for maritime affairs in Gdańsk, and so also for ships" (M, p. 103). Thus, Długokęcki's remarks on this matter are based on yet another misunderstanding.

\*

I fully agree with Długokęcki that "the description of the circumstances of Pawest's visit to Bruges represent another misapprehension" (p. 395), though it is he who is mistaken in his reasoning. He claims that I wrote (based on one of Pawest's letters of 20 October 1471) that "between 16 and 20 October 1471, Gdańsk privateer

---

<sup>21</sup> Among the relevant literature unknown to Długokęcki I recommend looking at the entry on p. 193 in *The Oxford Companion to Ships and the Sea* (ed. P. Kemp, Oxford 1988) as a good starting point.

<sup>22</sup> There is even an entry on this subject on a popular-scientific website: A. Machnikowska, *Sądownictwo w Gdańsku*, [https://www.gedanopedia.pl/gdansk/?title=S%C4%84DOWNICTWO\\_W\\_GDA%C5%83SKU](https://www.gedanopedia.pl/gdansk/?title=S%C4%84DOWNICTWO_W_GDA%C5%83SKU) (access: 10.12.2020).

Eler Bokelman, arriving from Bruges, paid Pawest a visit [...] and handed over from the aldermen of the Bruges *Kontor* [...] a copy of [...] a safe-conduct for Hanseatics [...] from the duke of Burgundy”, which “permitted [...] Hanseatic ships to stop and replenish supplies” at the duke’s ports. Countering this Długokęcki argues that “Meanwhile, it is clearly obvious from the letter of 20 October that it was Pawest who sent Bokelman to Bruges with a letter of recommendation, greetings and a request for a ducal safe-conduct”. This, however, is only “clearly obvious” to Długokęcki. What I actually wrote (the bits Długokęcki omitted are highlighted in bold) is that Eler Bokelman, arriving from Bruges, paid Berndt Pawest a visit aboard the caravel and “handed over from the aldermen of the Bruges *Kontor* a copy of the previously mentioned safe-conduct granted to Hanseatics by Charles the Bold, duke of Burgundy, on 12 July 1471” (M, p. 126), after which I referenced the previous chapter (1) of my monograph (M, p. 126, n. 75), where I discuss the circumstances in which this safe-conduct was issued. Therein (M, pp. 113–115) I describe how, in planning for naval warfare, in early 1471 Gdańsk had asked the aldermen of the Bruges *Kontor* for help in trying to obtain a letter of safe conduct from Charles the Bold for their seamen, in particular those sailing aboard the caravel, and that ultimately on 12 July 1471 the duke issued this safe-conduct. I cited both the source and a work by Nils Jörn, who also mentions this fact<sup>23</sup>. Długokęcki ignored all of this, and in order to state his erroneous conclusion had to edit my next sentence (M, p. 126). It read (again I have marked his omissions in bold): “Let us recall that it permitted Hanseatic ships, including the caravel, to stop and replenish supplies at ports subject to the duke’s authority”. Finally, Długokęcki also missed out what I wrote next: “For his part, Pawest gave Bokelman some letters of recommendation issued by the city council of Gdańsk, tasking him with delivering them to the aldermen of the Hanseatic *Kontor* in Bruges”. Thus, the key issue here is what Długokęcki has omitted from my text, namely the phrase “the previously mentioned safe-conduct”, as this document had, after all, already been issued as a result of

---

<sup>23</sup> Hanserecesse, hrsg. G. von der Ropp (hereinafter: HR), Leipzig 1890, Bd. II/6, no. 444; N. Jörn, *With Money and blood. Das Londoner Stalhof im Spannungsfeld der englisch-hansischen Beziehungen im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert* (Quellen und Darstellung zur Hansische Geschichte, Neue Folge), Köln 2000, p. 55.

Gdańsk's earlier efforts. So it was not the case, as Długokęcki suggests, that it was only after his arrival in Bershuck that Berndt Pawest made a start on trying to obtain a letter of safe conduct. All in all, the only thing that can be regarded as correct is my assertion that Eler Bokelman, whilst visiting Pawest, brought him the safe-conduct that Gdańsk had already previously taken steps to secure. Długokęcki's claim (that it was the other way around and that Pawest asked Bokelaman to procure this document) is another mistake on his part.

\*

Długokęcki devotes several pages of his comments to the table in which I summarise the information discussed in my text about the various expenses incurred by the French for repairs to the caravel in Gdańsk (M, p. 89 ff.). Długokęcki approaches this table almost as if it was an edited source, either unwilling or unable to see that it simply provides an overview of issues already examined in detail. For example, to the entry in the table "2 marks for work on caulking the ship" (M, p. 88), Długokęcki (p. 386) adds a quote from the source, summing it up as follows: "However, this is a reference to hauling the ship ashore". In reality, based on the same source that Długokęcki cites, I had already described the whole situation earlier: "The ship was hauled ashore for "kalfartoren" ("kielholen"), hence for re-caulking and tarring of her hull", adding an extensive footnote relating what the literature tells us about the term "kielholen", what it says about the details of this procedure (how long it took and what materials were used) and where it was carried out in Gdańsk (M, p. 74, n. 135). I believed – and remain convinced – that a reader who carefully follows my narrative will, unlike Długokęcki, have no problem in making sense of the summary table.

\*

Moving on to the role played by the caravel's second commander, Paul Beneke, Długokęcki begins his argument by once again taking my words out of context and attributing statements to me that I never made. Thus 'prepared' he launches another attack. He professes that I supposedly misinterpreted Theodor Hirsch's findings that in 1475 Paul Beneke's wife was "Pathe der Ortke (Dorothea) Herzberg, later wife of Christoph Beyer", because – as

Długokęcki adds – “Pathe is not a name, but the word for god-mother (now *Patin*)”. I insist that he provides a specific and unambiguous quote in which I claim that Pathe is a name. I wrote that “according to the editors of Caspar Weinreich’s chronicle [i.e. Hirsch and Vossberg] Paul’s wife in 1475 was ‘Pathe der Orthe (Dorothea) Herzberg’, later wife of Christoph Beyer” and added that Joachim Zdrenka believed that Paul Beneke’s wife was the godmother of Małgorzata Herzberg, who later married councilman Krzysztof Beyer (M, p. 166, n. 1). I do not know how someone can conclude from this that I took “Pathe” to be a name.

\*

On the subject of Paul Beneke taking over command of the caravel, I wrote that her first captain, Berndt Pawest, had made every effort to gain permission from Gdańsk’s municipal authorities to step down from his post, and that in looking for someone to replace him he had sought the opinions of other skippers, who recommended Paul Beneke, whose candidature was also endorsed by the Bruges *Kontor*. In a footnote I cited the relevant source<sup>24</sup>, adding that “letter no. 554 of 2728 June 1472 also mentions that the aldermen of the Bruges *Kontor* were consulted about the idea of employing Paul Beneke”. After this passage I go on to discuss the situation up to and including 14 June, hence Pawest’s attempts to agree terms of service with Beneke, and then turn to the letter of 20 June, in which I believe Pawest tried to bring the city council of Gdańsk round to the idea of Beneke taking over command of the caravel.

Długokęcki, believes that the beginning of one of the letters which I cite<sup>25</sup> is particularly significant, and quotes this opening extract: “Upp dat so wetet leven heren, dat se [aldermen of the Bruges *Kontor*] mii alle geraden hebben mit langghem vortrecken, dat ick...”. Based on this he contends that “it appears then that Beneke’s champions for some considerable time had been the merchants of the Bruges *Kontor*”. Yet again, Długokęcki is imprecise in his assertions, this time ascribing the leading role in deciding

---

<sup>24</sup> HR II/6, no. 550.

<sup>25</sup> Długokęcki does not specify which of the two letters he means. This is the beginning of a sentence from the excerpt that I cited of a letter of 20 June 1472 (Mozejko, „*Peter von Danzig*”. *Dzieje...*, p. 156).

who would replace Pawest to the “merchants of the Bruges *Kontor*”. Does he imagine that the municipal authorities of Gdańsk, the city at the forefront of the war with England, would have had less say in making this decision than some random merchants from the Bruges *Kontor*, nominating and insisting on Beneke as a replacement? Only the opinion of the aldermen of the *Kontor*, in other words the narrow elite, would have mattered, but it is this elite (not merchants in general) that I clearly wrote about. What Długokęcki presents as a new finding on his part and a mistake on mine – namely the stance of the *Kontor’s* alderman on Paul Beneke – is noted in my text as follows: “On 5 September 1472 the aldermen of the Bruges *Kontor* informed the city council of Gdańsk that it was they who had convinced the caravel’s current captain (i.e. Berndt Pawest) to hire the services of skipper Paul Beneke, who was well-known in the North Sea” (M, p. 161, n. 350). I stated this in a footnote, as I consider the message conveyed in this source to be subjective. After all, we also know that in looking for a successor Berndt Pawest consulted other skippers about Beneke. We can suspect that if these skippers, like the alderman of the Bruges *Kontor*, had sent a letter to Gdańsk, they too would have claimed to be Beneke’s advocates. It must be borne in mind that when Pawest wrote to Gdańsk’s city council, having agreed who should replace him, he deliberately gave prominence to the views of the alderman of the Bruges *Kontor* solely in his own interest, using the weight of their opinion to back his efforts to return to Gdańsk. Długokęcki proclaims his certainties not seeing that the situation was far more complicated. It is also strange that the reviewer has, once again, read the reviewed work so carelessly that he presents the facts set out in it as his own supposedly novel observations.

\*

Paul Beneke took command of the caravel on different terms than Berndt Pawest. I wrote about this, stating that these terms involved a one-sixteenth share in the ownership of the caravel (M, p. 162, 169, 170). Długokęcki comments on this as follows: “The letter explicitly mentions  $\frac{1}{6}$  (*sestendeel*)”. As he does not specify which letter he means, I assume that he refers to the same one that I cited, namely that written by the aldermen of the Bruges *Kontor* to the city council of Gdańsk. I drew not only on the calendared version of



this source<sup>26</sup>, but primarily on the extant original<sup>27</sup>. The statement made by Długokęcki is another major blunder, for which there are two possible explanations. The first is that he might lack the palaeographic knowledge to read this text correctly. The letter twice mentions a one-sixteenth share: *sesteyndedeel*, as I related. Długokęcki mistakenly reads this as *sestendeel*, which does indeed mean one sixth. The error in Długokęcki's reading of this word would stem from his overlooking the letters 'y' and 'de': *sesteyndedeel*, resulting in his seeing the word *sestendeel*, despite what is clearly recorded in the source. The editors of the *Hanserecesse* had already correctly read the relevant phrase as one sixteenth before I did.

There is, however, an alternative explanation for Długokęcki's error. Although his text implies that he has seen the letter in question, there is a suspicion that he may not have, and instead relied on an erroneous reading by earlier scholars. I say this, as he supports his assertion by citing an older work by Goswin von der Ropp which features the same incorrect reading. I do not know which of these explanations is worse for Długokęcki. He continues to repeat his mistake about Paul Beneke's supposed one-sixth share elsewhere in his review.

\*

The criticism that Długokęcki aims at my observations regarding the date when Paul Beneke took over command of the caravel is similarly ill conceived. I wrote (M, pp. 160–161) that by 2 July 1472, according to the sources, the caravel was ready to set out to sea, but this never came about. Berndt Pawest received news of the defeat on 19 July of a Hanseatic fleet in a skirmish with an English fleet. Expecting the caravel to be called into action, he gave orders to unload the cloth that had already been brought aboard. At that time, Beneke was also operating in the waters where this conflict had taken place, captaining a small vessel (M, p. 160, n. 344)<sup>28</sup>, the loss of which resulted in the Gdańsk privateer making an appearance aboard the great caravel. I went on to write about the joint

---

<sup>26</sup> HR, II/6, no. 528

<sup>27</sup> APG, 300 D/21, no. 102.

<sup>28</sup> HR, II/6, letter of 10 August 1472 from Berndt Pawest to Gdańsk; on this same topic, see also O. Held, *Die Hanse und Frankreich von der Mitte des 15. Jahrhunderts bis zum Regierungsantritt Karls VIII.*, "Hansische Geschichtsblätter" (hereinafter: HGB) 1912, Bd. 18, p. 225.

efforts made by Paul Beneke and Berndt Pawest, pointing out that on 10 August Pawest was still dealing with issues concerning the caravel (M, p. 161 and n. 350, p. 351)<sup>29</sup>. On 10 August it was decided that the caravel would set out to sea heading for Travemünde, from where Pawest wanted to return to Gdańsk. I remarked that in view of this, Beneke took over command of the caravel, but also noted (M, p. 161, n. 354) the fact that on 24 August the aldermen of the Bruges *Kontor*, writing in a letter to Gdańsk, referred to Berndt Pawest as captain (commander) of the caravel, though they were referring to a period when he had been granted a loan (i.e. up July 1472)<sup>30</sup>. Finally, I wrote that the convoy (comprising the caravel and accompanying vessels) set sail around 5 September 1472 (M, p. 162 and n. 356 and 357)<sup>31</sup>. Thus, Paul Beneke took command sometime between 10 August and 5 September.

Długokęcki's comments regarding this section of text are simply bizarre. He starts by making the mistake of claiming (D, p. 398) that I asserted that the caravel had put out to sea in early July 1472. He even gives a reference to page 160 of my monograph, where, of course, I say nothing of the sort, but where there is a summary of the events outlined above. He continues his muddled train of thought by stating that (p.400) "However, the cited letter from Pawest to the city council of Gdańsk shows that Pawest had promised Beneke a share in the ship between 14 and 20 June 1472, which he believes is by its will. Was this tantamount to him taking command of the caravel? This was how Hirsch and Vossberg, von der Ropp, and Lienau understood it. However, the [reviewed] author does not discuss this view". In the accompanying footnote (D, no. 74) Długokęcki only provides a reference to Lienau's work, omitting the other literature he mentions in his text. Looking at the cited study by Lienau is, however, enough to see that the matter is not as straightforward as Długokęcki would like it to be. Lienau was referring, of course, to the negotiations of 16 and 20 June regarding the issue of Beneke taking over command of the ship, but on the referenced page 31 of his work he does not

<sup>29</sup> HR, II/6, no. 559: letter of 10 August 1472 from Berndt Pawest to Gdańsk.

<sup>30</sup> The letter in question is HR, II/6, no. 559; see Możejko, „*Peter von Danzig*”. *Dzieje...*, p. 159, n. 333; see also APG, 300 D/21, no. 101. The fact that I analysed this letter is attested by the bibliography entry on p. 263 of my monograph.

<sup>31</sup> I cited Caspar Weinreich and his account of how the caravel set sail in a convoy in the autumn of 1472, and letter APG, 300 D/21, no. 102.

make the claim, ascribed to him by Długokęcki, that he took this to mean that Beneke assumed command in June. He simply states in the following sentence that Paul Beneke took over the command, and then goes on to the subject of the caravel's ownership being taken over by three citizens of Gdańsk. Similarly, Hirsch and Vossberg wrote only that in June and July 1472 the Lübeck fleet was engaged in operations. Further on, but without specifying a date, they state that Paul Beneke took the caravel to the Elbe, later adding that he managed to do this in the autumn of 1472<sup>32</sup>. Perhaps Długokęcki could indicate where it is that van der Ropp discusses Paul Beneke's taking over the command of the caravel in June 1472. Giving a brief description of Beneke's action of April 1473, van der Ropp touched on the terms of his service aboard the caravel, but did not write anything about any negotiations in June 1472, let alone about Beneke supposedly taking command of the caravel in June<sup>33</sup>. The way in which Długokęcki tries to use the authority of earlier scholars to support his theories, is surprising. He attributes statements to them that they never made, and in using the same approach to my writing, a clear pattern to his working methods emerges. In short: he misunderstands what he reads and then bases his further arguments on the resultant, entirely fabricated 'facts'. And how am I meant to respond to the accusation that I do not discuss the supposedly different views of several historians, who never actually held such views?

Nevertheless, this is not so important in this particular case. On the one hand, Długokęcki wonders whether the promise of shares in the caravel, made by Pawest to Beneke between 14 and 20 June was tantamount to Beneke's taking command of the ship, while on the other he does not deny that during the Hanseatic fleet's operations in the war against England, hence in July, Beneke commanded a small ship which he later lost. Since he was in command of this small vessel in July, meaning that he was at sea, why wonder whether he could have already taken command of the caravel in June? If Długokęcki wants to maintain his position,

---

<sup>32</sup> Beilage I [in:] *Caspar Weinreich's Danziger Chronik. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte Danzigs, der Lande Preussen und Polen des Hansabundes und der Nordischen Reiche*, ed. T. Hirsch and A.F. Vossberg, Berlin 1855 (facsimile), p. 95.

<sup>33</sup> G. van der Ropp, *Zur Geschichte des Alunhandel im 15. Jahrhundert*, HGB 1900, Bd. 28, pp. 130–131.

he should first prove that Paul Beneke lost his small ship during the first weeks of June.

\*

I wrote that the small vessel commanded by Beneke had been lost in the Zwin (Swen) channel as a result of helmsman's error and was abandoned on a beach near Sluis (M, pp. 160–161). Długokęcki cites Caspar Weinreich's chronicle, from which "it is clear that the ship ran aground outside Sluiz", The important commercial centre of Sluis was connected with other waterways by a narrow channel<sup>34</sup>. It is logical then that the authorities of Sluis must have taken great care to keep this narrow channel navigable. It is logical that they would not have allowed any obstacle to navigation to be left in the middle of it. It is highly illogical to think that such an obstacle would have appeared suddenly and that only Beneke's ship would have fallen victim to it. Where then could this obstacle have been? It is logical that it would have been on the shore, and the shoreline of a body of water is otherwise known as a beach. It is logical that a beach is an obstacle on which a ship can run aground<sup>35</sup>.

\*

After arriving in Hamburg aboard the caravel, now commanded by Paul Beneke, Berndt Pawest made his way back to Gdańsk. Długokęcki rightly points out (p. 401) that this happened on 3 and not as I stated 13 October. Later events can be reconstructed based on the correspondence between Gdańsk's authorities and Paul Beneke in early (January–February) 1473. The city council informed Beneke about the sale of the caravel into private hands and called on him to present an account relating to the expenses

---

<sup>34</sup> Particular attention was paid to the dangers involved in sailing to Sluis; see *Najstarszy tekst prawa morskiego w Gdańsku*, oprac. B. Janik, Gdańsk 1961, p. 92, par. 4.

<sup>35</sup> Among the very numerous and widely accessible depictions of such situations, can find examples at <https://www.szukajwarchiwach.gov.pl/jednostka/-/jednostka/5905212/obiekty/350469> (Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe), explicitly captioned: "A Dutch ship... stranded on the beach"; examples in foreign archives include *Barque bretonne échouée les voiles au sec* / Ozanne, Pierre Gallica (bnf.fr), and *Een schip, door een storm op strand gesmeeten* / Navis, procellis in littus ejecta et arenis immersa (Navire échoué sur le rivage et immergé dans le sable) / SV Meulen Gallica (bnf.fr) (access: 10.12.2020),

he had incurred for the ship's upkeep. On 14 February Beneke replied that he knew about the sale, reminded the council about an earlier account that had been settled when Berndt Pawest had "left the ship", and sent a statement of expenses for the period from 3 October 1472 to 14 February 1473. I can see two accounts here. The first was presented by Paul Beneke for services rendered on the passage between the Zwin and Hamburg, when Pawest had ceded command of the caravel (i.e. "left the ship") to Beneke, and Pawest took this account with him to Gdańsk. The second concerns the period after Pawest's departure, from 3 October 1472 to 14 February 1473. In contrast, Długokęcki sees only one account, covering the period from 3 October 1472 to 14 February 1473, because he understands "leaving the ship" as the simple physical act of Berndt Pawest disembarking the caravel at Hamburg. Długokęcki, however, offers no explanation of one vital issue: What was the earlier settlement of accounts which Beneke referred to when writing to Gdańsk's city council before sending a new account opened on 3 October 1472? In mentioning the purchase of the caravel by private owners, Długokęcki (p. 401) continues to repeat his mistaken assertion that Paul Beneke had a one-sixth (rather than one-sixteenth) share in the caravel.

\*

Długokęcki takes a rather strange approach (pp. 401–402) to another important problem, namely the site of the caravel's attack on the Burgundian galleys. Based on the words of Paul Beneke, who led this raid, the existing literature expressed the view that this event had played out in English waters, placing it in the Thames estuary. In my monograph, however, I pointed out that it had actually taken place not far from the Flemish port of Gravelines near Dunkirk, which was neutral in this particular conflict. Długokęcki, applying the same principles as he did to the "stone guns", declares that these were Burgundian waters, as if he is the only person unaware of the obvious fact that the coast stretching from western Friesland up to (but not including) Calais belonged at that time to the duchy of Burgundy, as I frequently mention and, indeed, plainly state in my monograph, but which Długokęcki, once again, fails to spot (M, p. 209). In determining the site of this incident I drew on a description of it by Giralomo Strozzi of Pisa that had not previously been used in the literature. Długokęcki assesses this new

information as follows: “It cannot be ruled out, however, that it [i.e. the information – B.M.] was biased”. In fact, this information comes from a journal kept by an eyewitness to the raid who was aboard one of the galleys and who wrote his diary entry no more than two days after the event. To accuse a source of bias one should at least (if not analysing it in person) know and refer to the relevant literature on the subject. I am sure that Długokęcki has not seen this source and is totally unaware that the English-language literature considers it extremely credible.

In support of his allegation that Giralomo Strozzi’s account may have been biased, Długokęcki refers to the aforementioned testimony of Paul Beneke about the raid having occurred in English waters. However, the waters to which England laid claim at that time were not limited to those surrounding the British Isles. Gravelines, by today’s roads, lies barely 23 km from Calais, which we all know was in English hands at the time, and whose surrounding waters the English also considered to be their own. As is often the case with battles at sea, it is impossible to establish exactly where all the action took place, in this specific instance, in which waters it began and in which waters it ended<sup>36</sup>. This is also my response to Długokęcki’s criticism (pp. 404–405) that in a complaint lodged by the Burgundians the key statement was that the galley had been captured in Burgundian waters, whereas I focused solely on the issue of the coat of arms. I maintain that this is obvious: both sides were undoubtedly aware of the weaknesses of claims about the site of the skirmish, and used them only as a subsidiary argument, whilst the question of the coat of arms was critical.

\*

Długokęcki also makes polemical remarks about the fate of the galley which Beneke captured and whose story I relate. He appraises my analysis of a letter of 22 June 1473 written by Gdańsk delegates attending an assembly in Utrecht (M, pp. 196–198) as follows: “The [reviewed] author believes that it was intended to take the galley to the port of Lübeck to be dismantled and sold. This

---

<sup>36</sup> The distance between Gravelines and Calais is comparable to the distance between Gdańsk and Gdynia. The 1627 Battle of Oliwa takes its name from the present-day district of Gdańsk, though historians believe that it most probably played out off the coast of Gdynia-Oksywie.

intention was swiftly realised [...], and it was expected that the sale of materials from this dismantling would fetch a total of 4385 marks, which would go towards the prize money...". He added that "This analysis cannot be accepted" (pp. 402–403), noting elsewhere that "There is no mention in the cited letter of the galley being dismantled in Lübeck" (p. 403).

Again, Długokęcki tries to imply something that I have not actually written, as nowhere do I say that the letter of 22 June 1473 mentions the galley being dismantled. What is more, it is plain to see that when citing the letter of 22 June 1473 I expressly state that "there is nothing in it about plans to dismantle the galley in Lübeck", before going on to say in the same sentence that news of the dismantling "comes to light when Berndt Pawest speaks at the assembly in Utrecht in March 1474, disclosing that the galley was not brought to Gdańsk but to Lübeck" (M, p. 196 and extensive n. 172). I also wrote that the plan to break up the vessel "was swiftly implemented, as the sources are silent about the galley after this point, and complaints from the injured parties no longer mention her return but only payment of compensation for her" (M, p. 196). Similarly, in the Epilogue I state that in the following years attempts were made to obtain compensation for the galley, but never to secure her return. Długokęcki, meanwhile, claims that "a letter of 9 October 1473 from Berndt Pawest to Gdańsk contains the information that the French had seized the galley, und dyt is de galeyde, de Pawel, untseggelde ("and that is the galley that Paul (Beneke) captured"). This information had already been brought to the attention by O. Lienau". Thus, according to Długokęcki, following the opinion of Lienau, the galley was not broken up in Lübeck but apparently had a further turbulent history: after her capture by Paul Beneke, she was supposed to have returned to service at sea, this time being captured by the French. None of this, however, holds up to scrutiny.

I discuss extensively the issue of the galley and the French who captured her earlier on in my monograph, using a much wider range of literature on the subject than just the work of Otto Lienau (M, pp. 174–177). Before Lienau, this topic had been tackled by Theodor Hirsch and Friedrich August Vossberg<sup>37</sup>, but in a quite different context. These two scholars, writing about the very beginnings of the galley's career, believed that she

---

<sup>37</sup> Beilage I [in:] *Caspar Weinreich's Danziger Chronik...*, p. 96.

had been built in England and was English-owned. They made reference to the same letter of Berndt Pawest (from 9 October 1473)<sup>38</sup> that Długokęcki draws on, which recounts how the galley was seized by French privateers and then bought back for 10–12,000 crowns by her former English owner. However, in their narrative, all of this concerned the earlier fortunes of the galley, long before her capture by Paul Beneke. Euegen Remus presented a similar version of events<sup>39</sup>. Discussing this problem I pointed out that later researchers did not corroborate Hirsch and Vossberg's theory that the galley had been built in England (M, pp. 175–176), because the fact that she was captured by the French together with some English ships does not reveal where she was built. Following the literature, I indicated that the galley (along with two others) had been built in Pisa on the orders of Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy, and was put into service in 1466. Commenting on the French seizure of the galley reported in Pawest's letter, I stated that "This information seems to have concerned an attack by French vessels (details unknown) which resulted in the capture of a Burgundian galley and accompanying English ships operating off the English coast. There is nothing about who the French sold the galley to, though the context of events suggests that she was sold back to her original owners" (M, p. 175, n. 62). I also drew attention (M, p. 176, n. 45) to a dissertation by Jacques Paviot, who cited fresh sources relating to the construction of these Burgundian galleys and also highlighted the maritime operations of Charles the Bold (successor of Philip the Good) during 1470–1471 against a fleet commanded by the earl of Warwick, who brought about the dethronement of Edward IV and the restoration of Henry VI to the throne of England (with the backing of King Louis XI of France). I concluded that, although this subject needs further investigation, we cannot rule out that it was then that one of the galleys fell into the hands of Warwick, an ally of the French. I also wrote (in the context of Gdańsk/Hanseatic talks with the French in August 1473) that it was in Utrecht that Berndt Pawest would have first learned about this part of the galley's earlier history (M, p. 207, n. 240).

---

<sup>38</sup> Beilage II [in:] *Caspar Weinreich's Danziger Chronik...*, no. 27.

<sup>39</sup> E. Remus, *Die Hanse und das Kantor zu Brügge am Ende des XV. Jahrhunderts*, ZWG 1892, H. 30, p. 4.



Maybe Długokęcki fails to notice my explanations, and he is free to repeat the views of Lienau, which are unique in the relevant historiography, ignoring the opinions of other historians, but he must know that his point of view (and that of Lienau before him) is untenable. His mistake lies in completely ignoring both chronological considerations and the events taking place at the time in Europe – an interested party in this affair. Let us recall that the caravel and the galley captured on 27 April did not reach Hamburg till sometime before 30 May 1473 (M, p. 192), and that plans concerning her were discussed in Hamburg on 22–23 June (M, p. 197). The caravel herself, having undergone essential, albeit possibly makeshift repairs to remedy the damage she had suffered, did not set sail for the port of Stade before 10 July. On 13 July Anglo-Hanseatic peace talks began in Utrecht, whilst by at least early August Hanseatic envoys (including ones from Gdańsk) were holding talks in Saint Michael, France, with King Louis XI to try and seal a peace for 8–10 years, which Louis agreed to on 26 August<sup>40</sup>. Let us try to square this with Długokęcki's (and Lienau's) version of the fortunes of the galley captured by Paul Beneke. Given that for some time (required for the circulation of information) before 9 October (i.e. in the latter half of September) it was apparently already known what had (supposedly) happened to the galley, this leaves, at an optimistic estimate, an inordinately short space of time for a series of absolutely essential activities to have taken place. Firstly, the galley would have to have been readied for her next voyage, which according to Lienau she would have undertaken as a privateer warship<sup>41</sup>. Hence, a commission would have had to assess the vessel's condition to decide whether there was any point in repairing (doubtless just provisionally so that she could reach Hamburg) the damage inflicted by Beneke's raid. Carrying out repairs (such as assessing the condition of the hull below the waterline without hauling the ship ashore or careening her) would have been a time-consuming task, even assuming that a space would have been available at one of the local repair yards. Next: a new crew of oarsmen and numerous armed seamen (given that

---

<sup>40</sup> *Letters de Louis XI*, vol. V: 1472–1475, par J. Vaesen, Paris 1895, no. 748; J. Favier, *Louis XI*, p. 619.

<sup>41</sup> In the interests of accuracy, it should be noted that Długokęcki says nothing about the galley having been a privateer warship, but in citing Lienau's hypothesis, neither does he dispute this.

the vessel was to be a warship) would have had to be mustered. Next: the ship would have to have been furnished with supplies and made the voyage from Hamburg to the English Channel, which, like the earlier crossing in the opposite direction, would have taken around four weeks. Next: the galley would have had to be seized by the French and sold on to an unspecified buyer, who it surely would have taken some time to find. Since the purchase price was a huge 10–12,000 crowns, hence – significantly – payment was required in expensive, gold coinage, the buyer would have needed some time to raise this sum. And how was this all supposed to have happened within such a limited window of time? The simple timeline outlined above shows that all of this would have had to take place in August. And what about the matter of the French attacking not only the galley but other English ships (or ones bound for England) at the very time that advanced peace talks were taking place? It is possible that individual aberrations such as Beneke's assault on the galley may have taken place during these negotiations, but a large-scale action by a French fleet against English vessels (given that other ships were supposed to have been captured alongside the galley) is highly improbable. Nothing is noted in the extensive recent literature on the subject, be it French or English, of any French attacks on the English in August. It is striking that there is not even the briefest mention in historical records about the activities of the captured galley after 9 October 1473, whilst we know that the second, smaller vessel, the one that got away from Beneke, safely reached the port of Pisa on 27 October 1473, and that her career came to an end in 1474<sup>42</sup>. Długokęcki gives not even the shadow of a thought to these basic facts, and is unable to make the entirely erroneous conjecture he borrowed from Lienau fit either the relevant timeframe or the political events of the day.

\*

Długokęcki tries to undermine (p. 404) my clarifications regarding the list of losses presented by Cristofano Spini at the negotiations in Utrecht. I stated that Spini had probably prepared his list based on bills of lading (M, p. 200). According to Długokęcki I am mistaken because the list itself mentions that it was compiled “in good

---

<sup>42</sup> I mention this fact in my monograph (B. Możejko, „*Peter von Danzig*”, *Dzieje...* p. 188, n. 117).

faith”, which was done “in the absence of his [Spini’s] account books, which he did not have in Utrecht, as has already been pointed out”. In a footnote he cites a work by von der Ropp written in 1900, in which the author does indeed state that Spini did not have his books with him, but makes no mention of bills of lading. Długokęcki also references a 1906 work by Otto Meltzing, citing page 132, where nothing is said on the subject. However, the more recent historiography explains that although bills of lading (goods lists) were used aboard ships from the 11th century (Italy) or the 13th century (France)<sup>43</sup>, up until the 16th century they did not have the legal and evidentiary value that was later bestowed on them<sup>44</sup>. In other words, it was not until the 16th century that bills of lading were officially recognised as evidence in court; before this time they were presented before the court “in good faith”. Thus, this did not mean, as Długokęcki believes, that the estimated losses were listed from memory, and – even more surprisingly – in accurate detail (as revealed by later sources), but that the document put before the court was of lesser evidentiary value.

\*

Długokęcki also accuses me of not recognising what is “clearly a very important socio-legal aspect of the caravel’s activities, even though this matter was raised by both T. Hirsch and F. A Vossberg, as well as O. Lienau. The issue in question is the legal or illegal, in the light of the law of that time, nature of the attack on the galley” (D. p. 405, sentence with footnote 86). Hirsch and Vossberg barely touched on this problem, stating only that Paul Beneke, according to the law of the time, was entitled to attack ships hostile to the Hanse, including neutral ones. In the case of Lienau, there are no relevant comments on this subject on the pages indicated (pp. 22–23). Since Długokęcki writes about “the law of that time”, and since it is apparent from the context that he means this in the sense that one law applied to all, this shows that, once again, he has no idea what he is writing about. The problem of distinguishing between legality and illegality in maritime matters of the Middle

---

<sup>43</sup> A. Mitchelhill, *Evolution of the bill of lading* [in:] *Bills of Lading*. Springer, Boston, MA. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4899-7236-1\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4899-7236-1_1) (access: 10.12.2020).

<sup>44</sup> D.E. Murray, *History and Development of the Bill of Lading*, “University of Miami Law Review” 1983, vol. 9(1), p. 690.

Ages is one that a host of European researchers have been tackling for many years, but have still not arrived at a satisfactory answer<sup>45</sup>. This includes the issue of ordinary merchants seizing ships that were not their own to compensate for previous losses, which was also frequently sanctioned by the relevant authorities.

As usual, Długokęcki does not notice that I addressed this problem to the extent permitted by current knowledge, avoiding unequivocal verdicts, as this would be a mistake. I wrote that Paul Beneke took advantage of the situation and, hiding behind his letter of marque, attacked the galleys heading for England laden with English goods, which “from the perspective of Hanseatic interests [...] was supposed to be reason enough for launching an attack” (M, pp. 187–188, 197). Examining the question of neutrality (of the galleys and the goods aboard them), the aforementioned early 20th-century researchers assessed it from the perspective of their own era; in earlier periods the issue of neutrality was also one which was not clear-cut. All this is widely known, but evidently Długokęcki requires the obvious to be explained to him in greater detail: privateers regularly went beyond their remit (their aim, after all, was to gain a profit), and those who sent them out to sea usually defended them staunchly, but treated captured privateers sanctioned by their enemies as bandits. I also argued that the defeat at sea suffered on 19 July 1472 prompted the Hanse to enter into peace talks, which Paul Beneke’s raid on the galleys subsequently left a question mark over (M, p. 174). Despite this, Gdańsk stood firm behind its privateer, and even years later showed its bias in asserting his rights to the captured galley (e.g. M, p. 232). Thus the judgement which Długokęcki demands that I make also encompasses the question of whether Gdańsk’s authorities acted legally or illegally.

The later, long-running disputes and demands from aggrieved parties seeking compensation for the galley and lost goods have no bearing on assessing the legality of the raid. There was nothing

---

<sup>45</sup> Referring only to the latest literature (presenting the current state of research) see, for example, T. Heebóll-Holm, *Ports, Piracy and Maritime War. Piracy in the English Channel and the Atlantic, c. 1280 – c. 1330 (Medieval Law and its Practice, 15)*, Leiden: Brill 2013, and the collection of articles entitled *Merchants, Pirates, and Smugglers. Criminalization, Economics, and the Transformation of the Maritime World (1200–1600)*, eds. T. Heebóll-Holm, Ph. Höhn, G. Rohmann, Frankfurt–New York 2019.

exceptional about this; cases that dragged on for years were commonplace. Every seizure of a ship and her goods always triggered efforts to secure their return (or gain redress for them), and the outcome most often depended primarily on the balance of political powers. Legal arguments were only one aspect of such disputes. All of this is discussed in my monograph (M, pp. 190–217 and Epilogue). If, however, Długokęcki has something specific to say about some supposed all-encompassing law of the day that explicitly regulated the issues in question, let him join the debate among historians from various European institutions and present his ideas on the matter.

\*

Długokęcki also criticises me (p. 30) for not drawing on the opinions of earlier scholars in my assessment of Berndt Pawest and Paul Beneke (M, pp. 259 and 260) as commanders of the caravel. However, I did not write a biography of either Pawest or Beneke, but of the caravel, giving a brief, general appraisal of both men during their respective tenures in command of the ship. In contrast to the earlier German-language literature, I do not think it possible to evaluate their activities as a whole and conclude, for example, that Pawest was either incompetent or cowardly based on this single episode in his life. Such judgements cannot be made without examining what these men did earlier and later in their very active lives, which was not my aim. I explained (M, pp. 220, 226) – referencing the work of Peter Oliver Loew – that in levelling accusations at Pawest, German historians writing about him in the 19th century did so through the prism of the Prussian-military model of education and from the position of “expansive German nationalism of the Wilhelmian era”, whilst the lionisation of Paul Beneke in the following century was an expression of hope for the emergence of a new “führer capable of galvanizing the populace into action”<sup>46</sup>. Lienau’s input was significant in this. Thus, these authors contributed to an outdated, albeit intriguing historiography, and I reiterate that the judgements they pronounced were based on only one chapter

---

<sup>46</sup> P.O. Loew, *Trzy mityczne nazwiska. Paul Beneke – powstanie, blask i nagły upadek gdańskiego kapra* [in:] *idem, Gdańsk między mitami*, Olsztyn 2006, pp. 75 and 70.

in the life of each commander. They also made other mistakes: it was Lienau who, in order to beat the nationalist drum, introduced a wider audience to the purported speech that Paul Beneke made to his crew before the attack on the galley – a speech that was first reported in the mid-16th century chronicle of Reimar Kock (reminiscent of the way in which Wincenty Kadłubek put words in the mouths of his heroes)<sup>47</sup>. This was one particular opinion that I had to refute, whereas with the others I simply limited myself to saying what I could objectively conclude about Pawest and Beneke based on the small part of their life stories that I analysed.

\*

Another failure by Długokęcki to understand what I wrote, leading him to distort my words, is demonstrated when, based on my assertions, he examines the debate at an assembly in Lübeck on 25 April 1474 about who should have shouldered responsibility for the seizure of the galley (D, p.407). According to Długokęcki “The [reviewed] author states that in a letter sent to the assembly, Gdańsk argued that the whole of the Hanse was responsible for the seizure of the galley” and cites my reasoning that “this argument was based on the fact that the spoils from the galley had been divided among the cities”. He then makes the following comment: “Yet such an argument does not feature in this letter, and this fact simply did not exist”. However, nowhere did I write that this source contains the statements which Długokęcki imputes to me. It mentions that Gdańsk believed that the issue of the galley and goods concerned the whole Hanseatic League, and in particular Lübeck. The rest of what I say is simply my interpretation of what can easily be deduced not only from this letter but also from the similar steps that Gdańsk had already taken in this case (M, pp. 211, 214). Długokęcki may disagree with my conclusions, but he should do so through rational discussion. Instead he chooses, once more, to twist the meaning of what I have written.

---

<sup>47</sup> Długokęcki writes: “Several decades after his death, Beneke even became the hero of Reimar Kock’s chronicle, but the [reviewed] author denies this source any credibility”. I do not know whether this is merely a statement of fact or another criticism and evidence of Długokęcki’s faith in Kock’s fictitious narrative.

\*

Długokęcki sums up the last part of my monograph as follows: “The further course of Portinari’s efforts [...] is presented in the chapter headed Epilogue. This issue had already earlier been discussed by O. Meltzing” (p. 407). This sentence suggests that Długokęcki is convinced that after Meltzing’s work was published in 1906 and before I wrote my monograph on the caravel, nobody else examined Portinari’s activities. In fact a lot has been written on this subject, and I refer to the relevant titles – also taking into account any still pertinent remarks made by Meltzing – in the Epilogue.

### Summary

As can be seen from the comments herein, every time that Długokęcki tries to add something new to the main themes I deal with in writing the history of the caravel, he makes error after error. It applies to both the marine layer of monograph and understanding of the European context. His interpretation of the sources and the theories he builds on this basis in order to create an alternative picture are unsuccessful. All in all, though it is evident that he has tried very hard, Długokęcki is unable to change any of the findings regarding the major themes addressed in my monograph.

### Streszczenie

Jeszcze raz na temat wielkiej karaweli *Peter von Danzig*

Artykuł jest polemiką z artykułem recenzyjnym Wiesława Długokęckiego, który próbował podważyć moje ustalenia zawarte w monografii „*Peter von Danzig*”. *Dzieje wielkiej karaweli 1462–1475*, Gdańsk 2011. W obszernym wywodzie wykazuje, że Długokęcki nie był przygotowany do podjęcia się oceny wyżej wymienionej pracy, zarówno w aspekcie wątków problematyki morskiej, jak i europejskiej. Przeinaczał moje stwierdzenia, błędnie interpretował źródłowe fakty; nie znalazł najnowszej literatury w językach obcych.