



*Ceremonial  
maces  
in Poland  
from the 16<sup>th</sup>  
to the 18<sup>th</sup>  
century*

*Jacek  
Gutowski*

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Museum of King John III's Palace in Wilanów  
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# *Preface*

The Museum of King John III's Palace at Wilanów is proud to present what is probably the first-ever monograph on modern-era Polish ceremonial maces. This is a milestone, considering the profound symbolic meaning that the insignia of military power had in Poland, as well as the unique character of these objects and their association with our national heroes. I would like to express my deepest appreciation to its author Mr Jacek Gutowski for the research effort he has undertaken and for his fresh approach to the issue. He applied a novel typology of objects and made many discoveries regarding their producers, owners and production techniques used in their making. He also re-attributed many of the historically and stylistically inhomogeneous objects, compiled by collectors and buyers from elements of other pieces, often accompanied by fabricated tales about their first owners and burdened with erroneous attributions made by earlier scholars. This is extremely important, since the mythopoetic quality and the impressive appearance of this insigne made it prone to imitation, resulting in many misleading lines of research. The monograph embraces some 150 objects associated with the history of the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania. In addition, the author mentions many analogous objects; his findings shall certainly inspire further research. I would like to encourage our Readers to inspect the works of Armenian goldsmiths settled in Lvov, the products of Hungarian workshops, or inspirational patterns originating from the goldsmith manufactories of Istanbul.

The initiative to publish this book sprang from the exhibition – again, most probably the first at this scale – which Mr Jacek Gutowski organised in cooperation with the Wilanów Museum in the late 2006. Over 60 of the nearly 300 pieces held in various collections worldwide were brought together; this made it possible to conduct detailed comparative research that prompted further investigations and ultimately led to the publication of the current monograph.

Hoping to initiate a scholarly debate and counting on new discoveries that will expand the catalogue of known buława and buzdygan maces and other products of the same workshops, we publish this book in two language versions. If this goal is reached, I encourage the Readers to contact our Museum ([pjaskanis@muzeum-wilanow.pl](mailto:pjaskanis@muzeum-wilanow.pl)).

Paweł Jaskanis

Director of the Museum of King John III's Palace at Wilanów



## Ceremonial maces from European production centres

Ceremonial maces which appeared in the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania in the late 15<sup>th</sup> or early 16<sup>th</sup> century belonged to the distinctly European variations. Their earliest depictions are found in the iconographic sources dating from the turn of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, such as the already mentioned *Te Deum laudamus* miniature from the Pontifical of Erazm Ciołek (Fig. 2) and the painting *The Battle of Orsza* in the National Museum in Warsaw<sup>71</sup> (Fig. 16), as well as on the tombs of Piotr Dunin in the church of St. Adalbert in Ujazd and of the alleged Prince Ladislaus of Cracow in the Franciscan church in Cracow. They represent the post-Gothic knight's maces common in the entire Europe but, being schematically rendered, they cannot be classified with more precision.

Iconographic materials dating from after the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century are more precise and more numerous. As a rule, they represent various types of knight's maces, including those used in Hungary and in the southern German countries. These maces are relatively often found in funerary sculptures from the latter half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Knight's maces with heads composed of densely arranged triangular flanges are seen, for instance, in the relief portraits of Andrzej Górka (ca. 1574) in the chapel of the Holy Cross in the Poznań cathedral (Fig. 17), Stanisław Maleszewski (ca. 1555) in the Dominican monastery in Cracow (Fig. 18), Sebastian Lubomirski (1558) in the church of St. Michael in Sanok, Stanisław Kobylnicki in the Kobyl-nice parish church, Jan Kamieniecki (1560) in the Franciscan church in Krosno, Wawrzyniec Spytko Jordan (1603) in the church of St. Catherine in Cracow, and Arnulf and Stanisław Uchański (ca. 1590) in the Uchanie parish church. These maces represent the same type as the ones documented by Sigmund Elsässer in the *Wedding Festival Book of Archduke Ferdinand II*. The one on page 39 (Fol. 21r) of the *Book* has already been reproduced here (Fig. 12);<sup>72</sup> but it is not the only type of knight's mace found in the *Book*. Another type is the slightly similar mace with the head composed of flanges arranged equally densely, but semicircular instead of triangular. Such a mace is seen, for instance, on page 45 of the *Book* (Fig. 13).<sup>73</sup> Objects of this type appear, quite often in fact, in Polish iconography, e.g. in the tombs of the Niedźwiedzki family (1581) in the St. Florian church in Koprzywnica, Andrzej Firlej in the Janowiec parish church, Andrzej Kośła (1589) in the parish church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in Kraśnik, or the later relief sculpture showing Bernard Wierusz in the



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p.76



17  
p.77



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p.77

71 Inv. no. MP 2475.

72 Identical knight's maces are seen also elsewhere in the *Wedding Festival Book of Archduke Ferdinand II*: p. 55 (29r), p. 54 (28v), p. 53 (28r), p. 51 (27r), p. 50 (26v), p. 49 (26r), p. 48 (25v), p. 47 (25r), p. 46 (24r), p. 44 (23v), 43 (23r), p. 42 (22v), p. 40 (21v), inv. no. KK 5270.

73 Other identical maces are seen in pages 41 (22r) and 52 (27v), inv. no. KK 5270.





**The Battle of Orsza (*detail*)**  
1524–1530, National Museum in Warsaw, inv. no. MP 2475

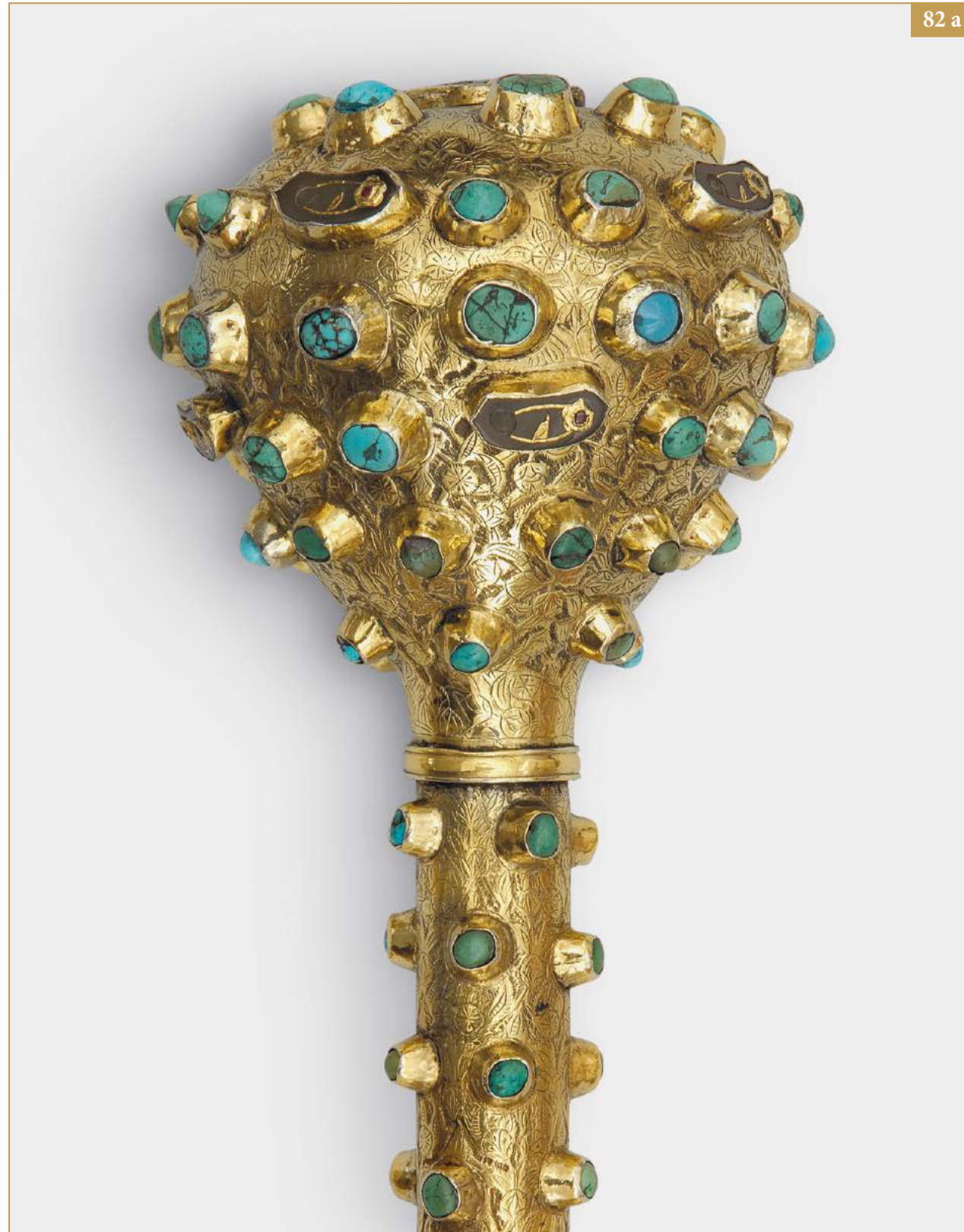


**Tombstone of Andrzej Górka**  
the voivode of Poznań, Hieronim Canvesi, ca. 1574, Poznań Cathedral



**Tombstone of Stanisław Maleszewski**  
the workshop of Santi Gucci, after 1555, Dominican monastery in Cracow





*Buława, Turkey, second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> c.*

Museum of King John III's Palace in Wilanów, inv. no. Wil.507



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*Buława, Poland, Lvov?, early 18<sup>th</sup> c.*  
Museum of King John III's Palace in Wilanów, inv. no. Wil.508/1

