

A detailed medieval painting of a coastal city. In the foreground, a man in a dark cap and red cloak sits next to a woman in a black and white headdress. Behind them, a red wall separates them from a courtyard where a large wooden cart is being pulled. In the background, a castle with several towers and a ship are visible on the water. The sky is a pale blue.

GENTES DE MAR EN LA CIUDAD ATLÁNTICA MEDIEVAL

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Michel Bochaca y Amélia Aguiar Andrade

The changes of the navigation and the maritime trade in the Baltic Sea in the late medieval period

Roman Czaja

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The history of the Baltic states in the late Middle Ages is connected with the influence, or sometimes even with the economic and political dominance of the Hansa. It would be impossible to understand the history of the region without taking into account the organization of merchants from Northern Germany called “Deutsche Hanse”, the economic influence of which between the 13th and 16th centuries spread to England to the West, Novgorod to the East and from the Norwegian coast in the North to Lvov and Cracow in South-East Europe¹.

1. General characteristics of the Hanseatic trade SAMSONOWICZ, H. S. “Changes in the Baltic Zone in the XIII-XVI centuries”, *The Journal of European Economic History* 5, 1975: 655-672; STOOB, H. *Die Hanse*. Graz 1995: 102-157; HAMMEL-KIESOW, R., PUHLE, M.; WITTENBURG S. *Die Hanse*. Darmstadt, 2009: 110-115 HAMMEL-KIESOW, R. “Lübeck and the Baltic Trade in Bulk Goods for the North Sea Region 1150-1400”; BERGGREN, L.; HYBEL, N.; LANDEN, A., (Eds.), *Cogs, Cargoes and Commerce: Maritime Bulk Trade in Northern Europe 1150-1400*. Toronto 2002: 53-91; JAHNKE, C. “Handelsstrukturen im Ostseeraum im 12. und beginnenden 13. Jahrhundert. Ansätze einer Neubewertung”, *Hansische Geschichtsblätter*, 126, 2008: 145-186.

Nevertheless, it is doubtful if the Baltic zone was subordinated to the Hansa as the recent research has questioned the existence of the uniform Hanseatic economic interest and the concept of the centralized association, the centre of which was Lübeck, with the separate regions being treated as parts of the organization. The Hansa worked and was able to function only to the extent which overlapped with the interests of individual towns and regions². Modern researchers underline that the interests of individual regions and towns were superior to the Hanseatic interests, and the local and regional identity determined the identity of the Baltic towns to a greater extent than the Hanseatic community³. Looking for characteristic features of the maritime trade and navigation in the late Middle Ages attention should be paid to the diversity of economic interests and relations determined by the regional and local conditions. In this paper I would like to present a brief description of navigation taking into account sea routes, the technical infrastructure (harbours, ships), changes in the structure of goods and territories of the Hanseatic trade and legal framework between the 13th and the 16th centuries.

The increasing significance of the Baltic zone in European economy from the 13th century had three reasons. Firstly, the rapid demographic and economic development of Western and Central Europe led to the greater demand for food, fur, raw materials, mainly forest products (wood, wax, tar, pine tar, ash). Another factor which determined the development of the Hanseatic trade in the mid- and late Middle Ages was the urbanization of the Baltic countries. It was connected with the German settlement in the Baltic zone and the town model based on town privileges. Towns established in the 13th and 14th centuries were not only centres of trade and craft production, but they also managed to get their own autonomous political systems and independence of the territorial au-

2. HAMMEL-KIESOW, R. *Die Hanse*. München, 2008: 15 f., 46; HENN, V. "Was war die Hanse", BRACKER J. (Ed.) *Die Hanse, Lebenswirklichkeit und Mythos*. Hamburg, 1989: 15-21; VON BRANDT, A. "Die Hanse als mittelalterliche Wirtschaftsorganisation – Entstehung, Daseinformen, Aufgaben"; VON BRANDT, A. et al. (Eds.) *Die Deutsche Hanse als Mittler zwischen Ost und West*. Opladen, 1963: 9-37.

3. BEHRMANN, Th. "Hansekaufmann", "Hansestadt", "Deutsche Hanse" Über hansische Terminologie und hansisches Selbstverständnis im späten Mittelalter"; SCHARFF, Th.; BEHRMANN, Th. (Eds.) *Bene vivere in communitate. Beiträge zum italienischen und deutschen Mittelalter*. Münster – New York, 1997: 167-171; CZAJA, R. "Die Identität des Patriziats der preußischen Großstädte im Mittelalter", KWIATKOWSKI, S.; MALLEK, J. (Eds.) *Ständische und religiöse Identitäten in Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit*. Toruń 1998: 9-19; HENN, V. "Städtebünde und regionale Identitäten im hansischen Raum"; MORAW: (Ed.), *Regionale Identität und soziale Gruppen im deutschen Mittelalter*. Berlin, 1992: 41-64.

thority. In the 13th century the political, social and cultural development of the Baltic countries took place, which resulted in the increasing demand for goods imported from the West, mainly luxury products⁴.

From the mid-12th century German merchants using the port in Lübeck started to engage in the Baltic trade, where the most important part hitherto had played Scandinavian merchants from Gotland and Denmark, Slavic merchants and the Frisians. The first stage of the expansion of German merchants in the Baltic Sea was connected with getting influence in the main trade trail which went along the north-western coast to Gotland to Visby, next to the coast of Livonia, to the mouth of the Dvina or to the Gulf of Finland, from where merchants reached Novgorod using river and overland routes⁵. In the first half of the 13th century the navigation along the southern coast of the Baltic Sea became more and more important. Its development was connected with the settlement expansion of German burghers and the establishment of new towns, which were usually created near older Slavic settlements⁶. The harbours in Stettin, Danzig and Elbing, located near the mouths of the great rivers – the Oder and the Vistula and enabling the communication with the economic base, were essential for the functioning of that trail. In the long-distance communication the Vistula trail played a major role, joining the Baltic zone through Polish lands and Rus (Ruthenia) with the zone of the Black Sea and copper mines in Upper Hungary (at present Slovakia)⁷. The phenomenon of joining sea routes with the communication system of river and overland routes appeared also in the northern

4. MAĆZAK, A.; SAMSONOWICZ, H. "La zone baltique: l'un des éléments du marché européen", *Acta Poloniae Historica*, 11, 1965: 71-99; RÖRIG, F. "Die Entstehung der Hanse und der Ostseeraum"; *idem*, *Wirtschaftskräfte im Mittelalter. Abhandlungen zur Stadt- und Hansegeschichte*. Köln-Graz 1959: 542-603.

5. HOFFMANN, E. "Lübeck im Hoch- und Spätmittelalter: Die große Zeit Lübecks"; GRABMANN, A., (Ed.) *Lübeckische Geschichte*. Lübeck 2008: 135-147; KATTINGER, D. *Die Gotländische Genossenschaft. Der frühbansisch-gotländische Handel in Nord- und Westeuropa*. Köln-Weimar-Wien, 1999: 138-155.

6. JAHNKE, C. "Der Aufstieg Lübecks und die Neuordnung des südlichen Ostseeraumes im 13. Jahrhundert"; CZAJA, R.; JAHNKE, C. (Eds.) *Städtelandschaften im Ostseeraum im Mittelalter und in der Frühen Neuzeit*. Toruń 2009: 29-72; FRITZE, K. "Zur Entwicklung des Städtewesens im Ostseeraum vom 12. bis zum 15. Jahrhundert"; FRITZE, K.; MÜLLER-MERTENS, E.; SCHILDHAUER, J. (Eds.) *Der Ost- und Nordseeraum. Politik – Ideologie – Kultur vom 12. bis zum 17. Jahrhundert (Hansische Studien 7)*. Weimar, 1986: 9-18.

7. KEHN, W. *Der Handel im Oderraum im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert*. Köln-Graz, 1968: 199-211; SAMSONOWICZ, H. "Die Handelsstraße Ostsee-Schwarzes Meer im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert"; JENKS, S.; NORTH, M. (Eds.) *Der Hansische Sonderweg? Beiträge zur Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte der Hanse*. Köln-Weimar-Wien, 1993: 23-30; HALAGA, O. "Verbindungen ostslowakischer Städte mit dem europäischen Markt über Polen und die Ostsee und die "Pacta mutua" Krakau-Kaschau", ENGEL, E.; FRITZE, K.; SCHILDHAUER, J. (Eds.) *Hansische Stadtgeschichte – Brandenburgische Landesgeschichte*. Weimar 1989: 133 f.

coast of the Baltic Sea. The development of iron and copper mines in Central Sweden entailed the increasing significance of the sea route to Stockholm⁸. From the mid- 13th century a key part in the Baltic trade was played by Scania, whose coast abounded in big shoals of herring, and in the first half of the 13th century fairs in Falsterbo and Skanör belonged to the biggest centres of international trade in Northern Europe, where merchants from England and the Netherlands met merchants from the Baltic towns⁹. Fairs in Scania led to the increasing significance of the route from the North Sea to the Baltic Sea around the Jutland Peninsula and through the Sound Strait, thanks to which it was possible to avoid the mediation of Lübeck in the trade between the Baltic region and Western Europe. From the end of the 13th century mainly Dutch and English ships used this route, and from the second half of the 14th century more and more ships from Prussian towns navigated through the Sund Strait¹⁰. Apart from transit navigational trails connected with long-distance trade between the West and the East of Europe, navigational trails of local and regional character were quite significant. The importance of individual sea routes varied over the period between the 13th and 16th centuries, and it was determined by both economic and political factors. The participation of the Baltic towns in the navigation on individual sea routes varied as well. The prosperity of Lübeck depended to a great extent on the navigation to Livonia and the Hanseatic agency in Veliky Novgorod¹¹. The trail constituted the main axis of the Hanseatic trade on the Baltic Sea until the beginning of the 15th century. From the end of the 14th century as a result of the increasing demand for corn in the Netherlands there was

8. KOPPE, W. *Lübeck-Stockholmer Handelsgeschichte im 14. Jahrhundert*. Neumünster 1933, passim.

9. JAHNKE, C. *Das Silber des Meeres. Fang und Vertrieb von Ostseebering zwischen Norwegen und Italien (12.-16. Jb.)*. Köln-Weimar-Wien, 2000: 39 ff; HENN, V. "Lübisches Recht in den Auslandsniederlassungen der Hanse"; LÜCK, H.; PUHLE, M.; RANFT, A. (Eds.) *Grundlagen für ein neues Europa. Das Magerburger und Lübecker Recht in Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit*. Köln-Weimar-Wien, 2009: 61-68; HILL, Th., "Der Schonenmarkt – die große Messe im Norden", BRACKER, J. (Ed.) *Die Hanse, Lebenswirklichkeit und Mythos*, Hamburg, 1989: 536-538; CHRISTENSEN, A.E. "La Foire de Scanie", *La Foire: Recueils de la Société Jean Bodin*, 5, 1953: 241-266.

10. GOETZE, J. "Hansische Schifffahrtswege in der Ostsee", *Hansische Geschichtsblätter*, 93, 1975: 72-83; SEIFERT, D. *Kompagnons und Konkurrenten. Holland und die Hanse im späten Mittelalter*. Köln-Weimar-Wien, 1997: 89; JENKS, S. "Die Ordnung für die englische Handelskolonie in Danzig (23. Mai 1405)"; JÄHNIG, B.; LETKEMANN, B. *Danzig in acht Jahrhunderten*: 106; *idem*, *England, die Hanse und Preußen. Handel und Diplomatie 1377-1474*. Köln-Wien, 1992: 484, 500.

11. HOFFMANN: 2008, *op.cit.*: 192-193; ANGERMANN, N. "Der hansische Rußlandhandel. Zur Forschungslage"; ANGERMANN, N., FRIEDLAND, K. (Eds.) *Novgorod. Markt und Kontor der Hanse*. Köln-Weimar-Wien, 2002: 5-14; RENNKAMP, W., *Studien zum deutsch-russischen Handel bis zum Ende des 13. Jahrhunderts. Nowgorod und Dünabiet*. Bochum 1977.

an increase in the significance of the navigation through the Sund Strait up to Riga and the mouth of the Vistula River, where the number of ships from the Netherlands was systematically rising¹².

As was mentioned above, the Hanseatic trade was based on the cooperation between two different economic zones: on the one hand the industrialized and urbanized North-Western Europe; and on the other hand the Baltic region, less populated, providing mainly raw materials, agricultural and forest products. Such a general description of the product structure in the Hanseatic trade requires taking into consideration the changes resulting from the passage of time and diversification relating to individual Baltic countries. The structure of goods imported from the West (among which the most important was cloth) was relatively uniform for the whole Baltic zone. Until the end of the 14th century the cloth produced in Flanders dominated the market, but in the second half of the 14th century the cloth imported from England and sold mainly by English merchants became more important¹³. In the 15th century there appeared Dutch cloth on the Baltic market, which was cheaper and of worse quality than the Flemish and English cloth ; thus, it was gradually driving the latter out of the market. For example, at the end of the 15th century the cloth from Holland constituted about 70% of the cloth transported to Danzig¹⁴. The second important imported product was salt, as in the 1360s salt constituted about 50% of the value of the trade between Lübeck and towns in the eastern part of the Baltic area. In the same time, very good quality and very expensive salt from Lüneburg was sold in the Baltic zone through the agency of Lübeck merchants. On the other hand, as the navigation around the Jutland Peninsula developed, the importance of sea salt from the coast of Western France increased¹⁵. Salt was closely related to the herring trade. In the 13th and 14th centuries the herring trade from the

12. SEIFERT, 1997, *op.cit.*: 29; KOPPE, W. "Revals Schiffsverkehr und Seehandel in den Jahren 1378/84", *Hansische Geschichtsblätter*, 64, 1940: 111-152.

13. JENKS, S. *England, die Hanse und Preußen. Handel und Diplomatie 1377-1474*. Köln-Wien, 1992: 255-256.

14. SAMSONOWICZ, H. "Handel zagraniczny Gdańska w drugiej połowie XV wieku (rejonizacja handlu na podstawie ksiąg cla palowego)", *Przegląd Historyczny*, 47:2, 1956: 331; MUNRO, J.H. "Hanseatic Commerce in Textiles from the Low Countries and England during the Later Middle Ages: Changing Trends in Textiles, Markets, Prices and Values 1290-1570", HECKMANN, M.-L.; RÖHRKASTEN, J. (Eds.) *Von Nowgorod bis London. Studien zu Handel, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft im mittelalterlichen Europa*. Göttingen, 2008: 97-181.

15. WITTHÖFT, H. "Struktur und Kapazität der Lüneburger Saline seit dem 12. Jahrhundert", *Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, 63, 1976: 1-117; ABRAHM-THISSE, S. "Le commerce des hanséates de la Baltique à Bourgneuf", *L'Europe et l'océan au moyen âge*. Paris, 1988: 131-180; JENKS, S. "Der hansische Salzhandel

fishery in the coast of Scania was one of the most important sources of income for Hanseatic merchants, particularly from Lübeck and other towns in the south-western part of the Baltic zone¹⁶. In the 15th century the share of herring caught by Dutchmen in the North Sea was increasing, as in 1469 it constituted 39% of the value of goods supplied to Danzig¹⁷. Among other goods imported from the West, mainly through Bruges, one should enumerate wine, spices and silk.

As can be seen in the tariff of the Netherlandish towns from the end of the 13th century and the first half of the 14th century, the structure of goods exported from the Baltic area was quite uniform: fur, food (corn, flour, fish, butter), forest products (wood, ash, tar, wax), metals (copper, lead, iron) and amber¹⁸. They were a composition of goods coming from different parts of the Baltic area. In the 13th and 14th centuries fur from Russia played a major role. It was taken out through the Hanseatic agency in Novgorod. The subject of trade were both good quality fur, regarded as a luxury product, and cheap fur made for example from squirrel. Smaller quantities of fur were taken out from Scandinavia, Livonia, Lithuania and Prussia¹⁹. Between the 13th and 14th centuries the import of corn (mainly rye) from the Baltic area developed rapidly. In the 13th century and in the first half of the 14th century it was imported mainly from Brandenburg, Pomerania and Mecklenburg. Its major consumers were Norway and the Netherlands. The great epidemic of 1349 affected the corn trade, as did the plagues of the 1350s and the 1360s, which on the one hand led to the decrease in the demand for corn in the West, but on the other hand they caused the crisis of agricultural production in the Brandenburg-Mecklenburg-Pomerania region²⁰.

im 15. Jahrhundert im Spiegel des danziger Pfundzollbuchs von 1409", *"Vom rechten Maß der Dinge". Beiträge zur Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte*. St. Katharinen, 1996: 257-284.

16. JAHNKE, 2000: *op.cit.*, *passim*.

17. BLOCKMANS, W.P. "Der holländische Durchbruch in der Ostsee"; JENKS, N. (Eds.) 1993, *op.cit.*: 53; SAMSONOWICZ, 1956, *op.cit.*: 331.

18. HÖHLBAUM, K. (Ed.) *Hansisches Urkundenbuch*. Bd. 2, Halle, 1879, nr. 658, 674; *ibidem*, Bd. 3, ed. HÖHLBAUM, K. Halle 1886, nr. 88.

19. LECHNER, G. (Ed.) *Die hansischen Pfundzolllisten des Jahres 1368*. Lübeck, 1935: 60.

20. ZIENTARA, B. "Einige Bemerkungen über die Bedeutung des pommerschen Exports im Rahmen des Ostsee-Getreidehandels im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert", HEITZ, G.; UNGER, M. (Eds.) *Hansische Studien. Heinrich Sproemberg zum 70. Geburtstag*. Berlin, 1961: 422-431; BURKHARDT, M. *Der hansische Bergenbandel im Spätmittelalter. Handel-Kaufleute-Netzwerke*. Köln-Weimar-Wien, 2009: 139 f; WUBS-MROZEWICZ, J. *Traders, ties and Tensions. The Interaction of Lübeckers, Overijsslers and Hollanders in Late Medieval Bergen*. Hilversum, 2008: 189-190; RISS, Th., "Der Einfluß des hansischen Handels auf die Entwicklung der norwegischen Wirtschaft", GRABMANN, A.

The fall in the population in the North and West European countries led to a long-lasting fall in the prices of corn and other goods taken out from the Baltic area (excluding wax). Nevertheless, the demographic and economic crisis of Western Europe was not global, unlike it was presented in older research. It was significant for the Baltic trade that the plague did not affect so much the Netherlands, where from the end of the 14th century the demand for corn (mainly in Zeeland, Holland) was gradually rising. In the 1380s the territorial structure of the export of corn from the Baltic area changed. The major part was played here by Livonian towns (Riga, Tallin) and Danzig. In the 14th century corn became the main product in the Prussian and Livonian trade. At the same time the role of Netherlandish ships in its export to the West increased. In 1492 corn constituted 80% of the export through the harbour in Danzig²¹.

The development of the shipbuilding industry in Holland and England at the end of the 14th century contributed to the increasing significance of the export of wood and tar from the Baltic region. Sweden, Livonia and Prussia had the biggest share in the production of those goods²². In the 15th century the export of metal changed considerably. From the end of the 13th century copper and lead reached the Baltic region from Upper Hungary (now Slovakia) through the ports situated at the mouth of the Vistula river. The second important metal producer for the Hansa was Central Sweden, where mainly through Lübeck copper and lead were taken out. The crisis of the mining industry in Sweden from the end of the 14th century and the competition of merchants from Southern

(Ed.) *Das Hansische Kontor zu Bergen und die Lübecker Bergenfahrer – International Workshop 2003*. Lübeck, 2005: 33-37.

21. SCHILDHAUER, J. "Sehandel Danzig im 16. Jahrhundert und die Verlagerung des Warenverkehrs im nord- und mitteleuropäischen Raum", *Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, 3, 1970: 166-178; LAUFFER, V. "Danzigs Schiffs- und Warenverkehr am Ende des XV. Jahrhunderts", *Zeitschrift des Westpreussischen Geschichtsvereins*, 33, 1894: 29; NORTH, M. *Geldumlauf und Wirtschaftskonjunktur im südlichen Ostseeraum an der Wende zur Neuzeit (1440-1570)*, Jan Thorbecke Verlag, Sigmaringen 1990: 164 f; SAMSONOWICZ: 1956, *op.cit.* p. 315; MAŁOWIST, M. "L'expansion économique des Hollandais dans le bassin de la Baltique aux XIVE et XVE siècles"; *idem*, *Croissance et régression en Europe. XIVE-XVIIe siècles. Recueil d'articles*, Cahiers des Annales 34, Paris, 1972: 91-138; HOLBACH, R. "Die preußischen Hansestädte und die Niederlande", NOWAK, Z.H.; TANDECKI, J. (Eds.) *Die preußischen Hansestädte und ihre Stellung im Nord- und Ostseeraum des Mittelalters*. Toruń 1998: 91-113.

22. CHILDS, W.R. "Timber for Cloth: Changing Commodities in Anglo-Baltic Trade in the Fourteenth Century", BERGGREN, HYBEL, LANDEN, (Ed.): 2002, *op.cit.*: 181-211; BLOCKMANS: 1993, *op.cit.* p. 57.

Germany in the export of Hungarian copper made the share of metal in the Hanseatic trade diminish in the 15th century²³.

In the late Middle Ages in the Baltic towns the production of goods for export did not develop on a larger scale. The relation between international trade and production was visible only in brewery, cloth industry, cooperage and shipping industry²⁴. However, from the end of the 15th century as a result of the development of the shipping industry in Holland, the production of big vessels in the Baltic region started to lose its significance.

The specific character of the Hanseatic trade, the essence of which was the transit trade between zones of different economic character influenced the social structure of towns. In big Baltic towns merchants constituted the ruling group, as their common area of activity was international wholesale trade. Retail had a secondary importance for their incomes. In the vertical social structure of the Hanseatic towns skippers and producers of beer (brewers) were below merchants. Skippers were captains of ships, who dealt with organizing and running navigation. The high cost of the ship construction caused that very often ships were the property of more than one person- merchant. Skippers were also proprietors of big ships, but to a much smaller extent. The lower social position was occupied by craftsmen, who in big Baltic cities were deprived of the right to sit in the town council²⁵.

23. DAHLBÄCK, G. "Eisen und Kupfer, Butter und Lachs. Schwedische Produkte im hansischen Handel"; HAMMEL-KIESOW, R. (Ed.) *Vergleichende Ansätze in der hansischen Geschichtsforschung*. Trier, 2002: 163-164; IRSIGLER, F., "Hansischer Kupferhandel im 15 und in der ersten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts", *Hansische Geschichtsblätter*; 97, 1979: 15-35.

24. HOLBACH, R. *Frühformen von Verlag und Großbetrieb in der gewerblichen Produktion (13.-16. Jb.)*. Stuttgart, 1994: 102-110, 367-371; *idem*, "Formen des Verlags im Hanseraum vom 13. bis zum 16. Jahrhundert", *Hansische Geschichtsblätter*, 103, 1985: 41-47; *idem*: "Zur Handelsbedeutung von Wolltuchen aus dem Hanseraum", JENKS, NORTH: 1993, *op.cit.*: 135-190; VON BLANGKENBURG: Ch. *Die Hanse und ihr Bier. Brauwesen und Bierhandel im hansischen Verkehrsgebiet*. Köln-Weimar-Wien, 2001, *passim*.

25. MILITZER, K. "Die soziale Gliederung der Bevölkerung in den Hansestädte"; BRACKER, J., (Ed.) 1989, *op.cit.*: 304-313; HAMMEL-KIESOW, R. "Die Entstehung des sozialräumlichen Gefüges der mittelalterlichen Großstadt Lübeck: Grund und Boden, Baubestand und gesellschaftliche Struktur", MEINHARDT, M. (Ed.) *Die Sozialstruktur und Sozialtopographie vorindustrieller Städte*. Berlin, 2005: 139-203; CZAJA, R., "Patrician guilds in medieval towns on the Baltic coast", *Acta Poloniae Historica*, 92, 2005: 31-51; BRÜCK, Th., *Korporationen der Schiffer und Bootsleute. Untersuchungen zu ihrer Entwicklung in Seestädten an der Nord- und Ostseeküste vom Ende des 15. bis zum Ende des 17. Jahrhunderts*. Weimar, 1994: 18.

The diversified structure of sea routes and the structure of goods and territories of the trade in the Baltic Sea corresponded with various types of ships participating in the navigation. The Cog – a one-masted vessel with high sides- is considered to be the symbol of the Hanseatic trade, and it played the most important role in the long-distance navigation²⁶. In fact, the term referred to ships of different sizes. From the mid-14th century the Cog was being gradually replaced with a bigger ship called the Holk or the Hulk with the carrying capacity of about 300–400 tons. Vessels of this type were used mainly in the navigation between the Netherlands and Prussian and Finnish ports, which involved the transport of mass products (corn, wood and salt). In the second half of the 15th century there began to appear big ships – three or four-masted of the carrack type (on average the carrying capacity was 800 tons), modelled on ships used in the Atlantic navigation²⁷. Apart from big ships, small flat-bottomed vessels adapted to inshore and river navigation played a major role. They varied in size. Lübeck customs tariffs of 1222 distinguish three kinds of ships according to their carrying capacity: below 5 lasts, between 5 and 12 lasts and over 12 lasts. At the beginning of the 15th century small ships adapted to inshore navigation were considered to have the carrying capacity below 24 lasts²⁸.

A variety of ships navigating in the Baltic required the construction of harbours enabling the operation of different types of ships. Most of the Baltic harbours were situated not at the sea, but in the lower part of the rivers. Such a location complicated the operation of big ships with deep draught. That is why the key element of the harbour infrastructure were gangways serving as places where ships arrived and where goods were unloaded. Ships with deep draught which

26. PAULSEN, R. "Die Koggendiskussion in der Forschung. Methodische Probleme und ideologische Verzerrungen", *Hansische Geschichtsblätter*, 128, 2010: 19-112; ELLMERS, D. "Koggen kontrovers", *ibidem*: 113-140; JAHNKE, C. "Zur Interpretation der ersten Lübecker Schiffssiegel", *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, 88, 2008: 9-24; WESKI, T. "The IJsselmeer typ: Some thoughts on Hanseatic Cogs", *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology*, 28, 1999: 360-379.

27. HIRTE, CH.; WOLF, TH. "Der Holk", BRACKER" (Ed.) 1989, *op.cit.*: 570-575; ELLMERS, D. "Zur Herkunft des spätmittelalterlichen Schiffstyp Holk", *Zeitschrift für Archäologie des Mittelalters*, 27/28, 1999: 119-128.

28. HÖHLBAUM, K. (Ed.) *Hansisches Urkundenbuch*. Bd. I, Halle, 1876: 69; KOPPMANN, K. (Ed.) *Die Reesse und andere Akten der Hansesstage von 1256-1430*. Bd. VI, Leipzig, 1889: 374, § 34; JAHNKE: 2008, *op.cit.*: 179; PAULSEN: 2010, *op.cit.*: 36-38.

could not reach the gangway or the shore were unloaded on the sea using boats and small ships²⁹.

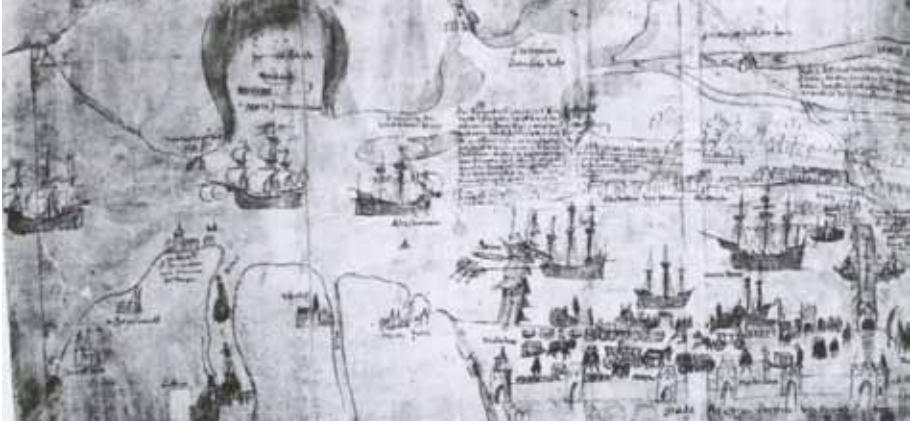


Fig. 1. Anonym, Port panorama of Szczecin (Stettin), Drawing-Pen about 1580; From: BLÜHM, A., JÄGER, E. (Eds.), *Ansichten aus fünf Jahrhunderten*, Museum Ostdeutsche Galerie und Institut Nordostdeutsches Kulturwerk, Regensburg 1991: 12

Adjusting harbours to operating different types of ships is well seen on the example of Danzig and Stettin. In both towns gangways adjusted to operating bigger ships were situated on the river bank adjacent to the town walls. On the other side of the river there were warehouses of mass products, granaries, storage spaces of wood and stations for quality control. It is worth underlining that warehouses in the harbours of Danzig and Stettin did not have gangways. Supposedly, mass products were transported to big ships using boats and small vessels. Both harbours marked the border between the sea and river navigation, which entailed trans-shipment of goods from sea ships to vessels used in river navigation³⁰.

29. STOOB, H. "Über Wachstumsvorgänge und Hafenausbau bei hansischen See- und Flußhafen im Mittelalter", idem (Ed.), *See und Flußhäfen vom Hochmittelalter bis zur Industrialisierung*. Köln-Wien, 1986: 1-66; GLASER, M. "Die Lübecker Hafen des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts. Grabungsergebnisse und Rekonstruktionen", *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, 69, 1989: 49-73; idem. "Die Häfen an der Ostsee"; BRACKER: 1989, *op.cit.*: 588-591.

30. FILIPOWIAK, W. "Wolin und Szczecin – Hafen und Topographie der mittelalterlichen Stadt", *Maritime Topographie and Medieval Town*. Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen, 1999: 61-70; REBKOWSKI, M. "The maritime topography of medieval Kolobrzeg", *ibidem*: 55-60; PANER, H., "The harbour topography of Gdańsk", *ibidem*.: 45-54; WACHOWIAK, B. *Port średniowiecznego Szczecina*. Gdańsk, 1955: 17-43.



Fig. 2. Gdańsk (Danzig), View of harbor 1617; from: Z. JAKRZEWSKA-ŚMIEŻKO, Gdańsk w dawnych rycinach, Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Wrocław 1980, Fig. 12..

The condition under which the Hansa trade could work was obtaining privileges guaranteeing safe navigation by merchants. When the legal bases of the Hanseatic trade were being created, the question which generated the most interest was “*ius naufragii*”, which allowed the monarch to seize goods washed ashore from the wreck of a ship to his territory. Hanseatic ships navigated on the Baltic Sea mainly along the coast, which frequently led to crashes. Thus, the privilege of the shipwrecked to collect goods thrown to the shore was essential for the development of sea trade. In the first half of the 13th century Lübeck obtained privileges from Emperor Frederick II, Kings of Denmark and Sweden and Dukes of Eastern and Western Pomerania, which reduced or lifted the right of shipwreck for Lübeck’s inhabitants. By the end of the 13th century Lübeck was granted 30, and in the 14th century – 11 privileges – freeing its burghers from the burden of the right of shipwreck³¹. From the end of the 13th century other Baltic towns received similar privileges for their inhabitants. They included Wismar, Stralsund, Rostock, Greifswald, Elbing. Regardless of individual privileges con-

31. CZAJA, R. "L'idea del potere sul mare Baltico nella legislazione della Lega Anseatica dal XIII al XVI secolo", CAVACIOCCHI, S. (Ed.) *Ricchezza del mare ricchezza dal mare secc. XIII-XVIII*. Prato, 2006: 1169-1178; NIITEMAA, V. *Das Strandrecht in Nordeuropa im Mittelalter*. Helsinki, 1955: 14-18; MATYSIK, S. *Prawo nabrzeżne (ius naufragii)*. *Studium z historii prawa morskiego*. Toruń, 1950: 97-123.

cering individual towns, the Hansa took action to obtain privileges embracing merchants from all towns belonging to the Hansa³².

However, it was not until the 1420s that the issues of navigation became the subject of the Hanseatic legislation. The navigation to Novgorod and trade contacts with Russia were particularly protected³³. In connection with the increasing competition in trade and navigation, law passed at the conventions of Hanseatic towns prohibited Hanseatic merchants to carry goods on ships belonging to Flemish, Dutch and English skippers. Prussian and Livonian towns refused to accept the prohibition, unlike Lübeck. Hanseatic towns did not manage to work out a common position on the ban of selling and constructing ships for non-Hanseatic English, Dutch and Flemish men, because Danzig objected to such limitations enacted at Hanseatic conventions from 1412³⁴. In the 15th century one can observe the Hansa's more radical stance on trade activity of non-Hanseatic merchants in the Baltic towns. In 1417 the law passed at the Hanseatic Diet allowed Dutch merchants to trade in Livonia, but only in ports. Such restrictions were accepted by Livonian towns, which objected to the ban on the navigation of Dutch skippers and merchants to Livonia³⁵.

The law forbidding navigation in late autumn, from 11 November (the Day of St. Martin) to 22 February (The Cathedral of St. Peter), constituted a significant limitation of the freedom of sea trade in the Baltic Sea for the Hansa. In acts passed at Hanseatic Diets, records concerning the obligatory break in navigation did not appear until the end of the 14th century. The first rulings of this kind are to be found in codes of sea law of Lübeck, Hamburg and Bremen, which were written at the end of the 13th century. The main reason why they were

32. *Urkundenbuch der Stadt Lübeck*. Lübeck, 1843: 25-25; VON BUNGE, F.G. (Ed.) *Liv- Est, und Kurländisches Urkundenbuch*. vol. 1, Dorpat, 1853: 313, 353; PRÜMERS, K. (Ed.) *Pommersches Urkundenbuch*. vol. 2/1, Stettin, 1881: 285; KOPPMANN, K. (Ed.) *Hanserecesse. Die Recesse und andere Akten der Hansetage von 1256 bis 1430*. vol. 1, Leipzig, 1870: 320; KUNZE, K. (Ed.) *Hansisches Urkundenbuch*. Halle, 1896: 142.

33. LANDWEHR, G. "Seerecht im Hanseraum im 15. Jahrhundert. Die Hanserezesse, Die Vonesse von Damme und die Ordinancie der Zuidersee im Flandrischen Copiar Nr. 9", JAHNKE, C., GRASSMANN, A. (Eds.) *Seerecht im Hanseraum des 15. Jabrbunderts. Edition und Kommentar zum Flandrischen Copiar Nr. 9*. Lübeck, 2003: 97-98; *Hanserecesse, op.cit.*, vol 1, n° 376, § 13; *ibidem*, vol. 6, KOPPMANN, K. (Ed.) Leipzig, 1889: 62-64, 397; SCHLÜTER, W. (Ed.) *Die Nowgoroder Schra in sieben Fassungen vom 13. bis 18. Jabrbundert*. Lübeck, 1916: 122, 149, 190.

34. JENKS, S. "Zum hansischen Gästerecht", *Hansische Geschichtsblätter*, 114, 1996: 9, 23; CORDES, A. "Flandrischer Copiar Nr. 9. Juristischer Kommentar"; JAHNKE, GRASSMANN (Eds.): 2003, *op.cit.*: 119-123.

35. SEIFERT, 1997, *op.cit.*: 207, 226, 229-232; *Hanserecesse*, vol 6: *op.cit.*: 383.

introduced was the protection of interests of merchants and ship owners, since the navigation in the Baltic Sea during late autumn and winter was very dangerous due to climate conditions³⁶. In the 15th century the Hansa used the acts to reduce the influence of non-Hanseatic merchants (mainly Dutchmen and Englishmen) in the Baltic Sea. In 1434 the act prohibiting non-Hanseatic merchants to spend winter in the Baltic towns during the interval in navigation was introduced (later it was repeated many times). However, not only merchants and sailors were punished for breaking the law – so were the Hanseatic towns³⁷. The Baltic towns did not run the uniform policy towards non-Hanseatic merchants. They reduced the activity of non-Hanseatic merchants on local markets to such levels which they considered appropriate for their own economic interests. The general Hanseatic legislation cannot be treated as the expression of the power of the Hansa over the Baltic Sea, because it was directed to members of the Hansa (it forbade or reduced their contacts with non-Hanseatic merchants), or it limited the rights of non-Hanseatic merchants on land, and not on the sea³⁸. From the end of the 14th century the Hanseatic diplomacy used the formula: the right of merchants to free navigation in the North Sea and in the Baltic. The risk to lose this freedom legitimized military actions taken by the Hansa towns, such as fights with piracy, which spread at the turn of the 14th and 15th centuries³⁹. The Hansa's attitude towards the idea of power over the Baltic Sea evolved in the first half of the 16th century. In acts passed at Hanseatic Diets there appeared bans on navigation through the Sund Strait for ships from the Netherlands. The instruction for the negotiations with the King of Sweden best illustrates the stance of the Hansa's political elites on the freedom of navigation. It expresses the opinion that in the Baltic Sea the Hanseatic towns have the right to forbid navigation through the Sund owing to their old privileges⁴⁰. A different position on

36. CIEŚLAK, E. "Z zagadnień historii prawa morskiego na Bałtyku i Morzu Północnym (Przerwa w żegludze morskiej w okresie późnej jesieni i zimy według postanowień Związku Hanzeatyckiego z XIV i XV w.", *Przegląd Zachodni*, 7, 1951: 89-101; SPRANDEL, R. (Ed.) *Quellen zur Hanse-Geschichte*. Darmstadt, 1982: 390.

37. JAHNKE, GRASSMANN (Eds.) 2003, *op.cit.* p. 53, 126; VON DER ROPP, G., (Ed.) *Hanserecense von 1431-1476*. vol. 1, Leipzig 1876: 207; NAPIERSKY, J.G.L. (Ed.) *Die Quellen des rigischen Stadtrechtes bis zum Jahre 1673*. Riga, 1876: 226.

38. JENKS, 1996, *op.cit.*: 54-56; CZAJA: 2006, *op.cit.*: 1175.

39. JENKS, S. "Friedensvorstellungen der Hanse (1356-1474)", FRIED, J. (Ed.) *Träger und Instrumentarien des Friedens im boben und späten Mittelalter*. Sigmaringen, 1996: 407.

40. FRIEDLAND, K.; WENTZ, G. *Hanserecense vom 1531-1560*. vol. 2, Köln-Wien, 1970: 469; SCHMIDT, G. "Städtehanse und Reich im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert", GRASSMANN, A. (Ed.) *Niedergang oder Übergang ? Zur Spätzeit der Hanse im 16. und 17. Jabrhundert*. Köln-Weimar-Wien, 1998: 35-36; PITZ, E., "Steigende und fallende

the question of the power of the Hansa over the Baltic Sea was represented by Danzig, whose economic development in the 16th century was based on trade cooperation with the Dutch. In the instruction for the Danzig envoys to the Diet in Lübeck in 1540 it said that “Dutchmen and other non-Hanseatic merchants cannot be prohibited navigation as the sea is free for everyone”⁴¹.

Summing up the above-mentioned remarks, it must be concluded that in the 15th century the economy of the Baltic area was becoming more and more dependent on the production in the agricultural sector, which defined the development of trade, craft manufacture and the capital market. It marked the place for the southern Baltic area in the European system of international division of work, which started at the beginning of the 16th century. Within the framework of the new world economy the Baltic zone could maintain its position only as a producer and exporter of mass products such as corn, food, wood and forest products. The phenomenon led to the development of Danzig and Polish lands situated in the mouth of the Vistula. The increase in the export of mass products, the main consumers of which became the Netherlands, resulted in the positive change of the trade balance between the Baltic zone and the West (from the 1480s). As a result of rising income from trade many merchants resigned from risky long-distance navigation. The example of Danzig shows that during the time of prosperous trade the number of Danzig ships participating in the navigation between the West and the Baltic decreased.

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41. MATYSIK, S. *Prawo morskie Gdańska. Studium historycznoprawne*. Warszawa, 1958: 24.

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