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POLITICAL GAMES, SOCIAL COMMUNICATION,
DIPLOMACY

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Quite the contrary is true, in fact. Main objective of the journal is to create a space for reflection and discussion on topics pertaining to Central and Eastern Europe, but also relations with Continental Europe, encouraging dialogue between scholars and experts in the field, and between different approaches of scientific research.

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ELECTION 1648 FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF CHARLES FERDINAND VASA

ABSTRACT

Within the framework of the following article particular stages of Prince Charles Ferdinand Vasa's fight for the Polish and Lithuanian crown will be presented. They can be considered as a contribution for the analysis of his failure. It will be possible thanks to this analysis to recognize manner in which independent events in the country and abroad impacted on the elections' ultimate result. Various elements of candidate's means of persuasion and their impact on a change of the nobility's opinion will be analyzed as well. The choice of unsuccessful candidate's perspective can help observe what kind of features and mistakes could discredit candidates for the crown in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

KEYWORDS: Election 1648; Charles Ferdinand Vasa; John Casimir Vasa; Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth; House of Vasa.

The interregnum in 1648 in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was considered, inter alia by historian Edward Opaliński, as «the most tragic among the interregnum under the Vasa dynasty»¹. The death of Vladislaus IV Vasa in May 1648 was preceded by a battle loss of Zhovti Vody, when the Polish troops had been defeated by Zaporozhian Cossacks². In addition, directly after the king's passing another loss took place (Battle of Korsuń in which two Polish hetmans Mikołaj Potocki and Marcin Kalinowski had been taken prisoner). News of these consecutive, alarming events have reached different parts of the country in very small intervals.

Within the framework of this article interregnum of 1648 will be presented from the perspective of one of the most considerable candidates for the Polish throne namely Prince Charles Ferdinand Vasa. In the Polish historiography already exist works concerning the election of 1648; however, they are concentrated on his brother John Casimir's point of view as well as his final victory. It can be mentioned, inter alias, Maciej Franz's³, or Adam Andrzej Witusik's works⁴. A failure case study remains,

1 Edward Opaliński, "Elekcje wazowskie w Polsce. Stosunek do instytucji okresu bezkrólewia", *Kwartalnik Historyczny*, 92/3 (1985): 536.

2 AGAD, AR, II, 14, "Relacja Iednego niedobytka Muszkietera zpod Regimentu P. Henryka Denhoffa Obersztera o pogromie P.P. Hetmanów pod Korszuniem", 22 V 1648, 102-111.

3 Maciej Franz, "Wojna elekcja w czasie wojny: o okolicznościach elekcji króla Polski w 1648 roku", in *Wokół wolnych elekcji w państwie polsko-litewskim XVI-XVIII wieku: o znaczeniu idei wyboru-między prawami a obowiązkami*, eds. Mariusz Markiewicz, Dariusz. Rolnik, and Filip Wolański (Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2016), 279-92.

4 Adam Andrzej Witusik, "Elekcja Jana Kazimierza w 1648 roku", *Annales*

nevertheless, an interesting question. It exists also Polish historian Władysław Czapliński's article regarding Charles Ferdinand's election, however, it was his bishop election in 1625⁵.

Diarist Bogusław Kazimierz Maskiewicz wrote that «on 19th of June came the news about king Vladislaus IV's death. One week before hetmans' massacre»⁶. According to another diarist Nathan ben Moses Hannower, «at the same day when the Polish army with both of hetmans were captured, arrived news about king Vladislaus's death»⁷. On 5th of June the message about Mikołaj Potocki's army rout in the Battle of Korsuń reached Warsaw⁸. The fact that even regional assembly's documents from the western part of the country underlined the necessity to save the Commonwealth indicates the seriousness of this situation⁹. Pope Innocent X via nuncio Giovanni de Torres incited to rapid election and agreement due to threat of the state¹⁰.

In this difficult situation two Vladislaus IV's half-brothers fought for the crown. The first one, Charles Ferdinand served as Bishop of Wrocław and Płock. However, he was never ordained to the priesthood, most probably because of his hope of obtaining the Polish crown¹¹. According to diarist Mikołaj Jemiołowski, courtesy and piety could be seen as its advantages from the standpoint of the nobility¹².

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Universitatis Mariae Curie-Skłodowska, 17 (1962): 119-53.

- 5 Władysław Czapliński, "Elekcja ostatniego polskiego biskupa wrocławskiego w roku 1625", *Rocznik Zakładu Narodowego imienia Ossolińskich*, 3 (1948): 251-89.
- 6 Bogusław Kazimierz Maskiewicz, "Diariusz Bogusława Kazimierza Maskiewicza", in *Zbiór pamiątek historycznych o dawnej Polsce wydanych oraz z listami oryginalnymi królów i znakomitych ludzi w kraju naszym*, t. 5, ed. Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Haertel, 1840), 99.
- 7 Natan Hanower, *Jawein Mecula tj. Bagno Głębokie kronika zdarzeń z lat 1648–1652 napisana przez Natana Hannowera z Zasławia i wydana po raz pierwszy w Wenecyi w r. 1653*, ed. Majer Balaban (Lviv: Drukarnia Jakubowskiego, 1912), 21.
- 8 Artur Goszczyński, "Adam Kazanowski wobec powstania Chmielnickiego", in *Patrimonium. Studia z historii nowożytnej w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej, Wczesnonowożytny człowiek: przestrzeń-władza-prawo w XVI–XVII wieku*, t. 1, eds. Witalij Mychałowski, Jarosław Stolicki (Kyiv, Cracow: Lotus, Historia Iagiellonica, 2015), 259.
- 9 AGAD, AR, II, 14, "Laudum Województw Wielkopolskich pod zjazd pro die 4. Junii do Poznania tempore moderni Interregni 1648", 4 VI 1648, 41-9.
- 10 Wawrzyniec Jan Rudawski, *Historja Polska od śmierci Władysława IV aż do pokoju oliwskiego, czyli dzieje panowania Jana Kazimierza od 1648 do 1660 r.*, t. 1 (Saint Petersburg, Mogilev: Bolesław Maurycy Wolff, 1855), 47.
- 11 Tadeusz Fitych, "Charakterystyka biskupów polskich w okresie nuncjatury Giovanniego Battisty Lancelottiego i Onorato Viscontiego", *Częstochowskie Studia Teologiczne*, 27 (2000): 263.
- 12 Mikołaj Jemiołowski, *Pamiętnik Mikołaja Jemiołowskiego. Towarzysza lekkiej chorągwi, ziemianina województwa bełzkiego obejmujący dzieje Polski od roku 1648 do 1679 spółcześnie, porządkiem lat opowiedziane*, ed. August Bielowski (Lviv: Zakład Narodowy Ossolińskich, 1850), 9.

The seventeenth-century historian Wawrzyniec Jan Rudawski also pointed to his religiousness as an asset during the election¹³.

However, descriptions of this candidate's personality were not unanimous. They indicate contradictory character traits of Sigimund III Vasa's son. According to apostolic nuncio Horatio Visconti description, his appearance was not making a good impression – he was characterized by dark complexion, tall height and frail body. In addition, the nuncio presented Charles Ferdinand's character features in an even less favorable light. He considered him to demonstrate personality traits such as: severity, obstinacy, unchangeable opinions regardless of the circumstances as well as impetuosity even towards very devoted collaborators¹⁴.

Despite this clearly negative assessment of the bishop's character, Visconti paid attention to one positive prince's feature which could particularly appeal to the nobility during the time of big crisis, namely his thriftiness, attentive disposal of fortune as well as a model of living, which significantly differed from standards of courtly life¹⁵. He started for instance to take an interest in the diocese of Breslau to a much greater extent once it had generated lower revenues due to the war destruction¹⁶.

However, this would not necessarily be positive monarch's characteristic, because according to historian Anna Filipczak-Kocur, although his brother Vladislaus IV is regarded as lavish ruler, he remained destitute in comparison to other monarchs¹⁷. Spending larger amounts of money was, nevertheless, necessary to maintain royal prestige and to foster political plans¹⁸. Charles Ferdinand gained experience, what should be emphasized, managing two dioceses, property in Żywiec (Silesia) as well as since 1645 Duchy of Cosel¹⁹.

Charles Ferdinand's education can be also considered as his advantage. In addition to basis of canon law and theology, he had mastered few foreign languages (for instance Latin and German) also he knew a thing about art, especially music²⁰. Both of brothers obtained the knowledge of German through upbringing by Ursula Meyerin²¹. He appreciated Italian music as well as his father and brothers: Vladislaus

13 Rudawski, *Historja Polska*, 43.

14 Witusik, "Elekcja Jana Kazimierza", 132.

15 Witusik, "Elekcja Jana Kazimierza", 133.

16 Fitych, "Charakterystyka biskupów", 263.

17 Anna Filipczak-Kocur, "Skarbowość Rzeczypospolitej lat 1587-1697: (stan badań, źródła i postulaty)", *Studia z Dziejów Państwa i Prawa Polskiego*, 8 (2003): 42.

18 Filipczak-Kocur, "Skarbowość Rzeczypospolitej", 42.

19 Józef Mandziuk, "Postacie śląskiego Kościoła katolickiego w czasach nowożytnych", *Saeculum Christianum: pismo historyczno-społeczne*, 17/1 (2009): 111.

20 Mandziuk, "Postacie śląskiego Kościoła", 110.

21 Aleksandra Barwicka-Makula, "Tacierzyństwo i samotne ojcostwo. Zygmunt III i jego dzieci w latach 1593–1605", *Wieki stare i nowe*, 18 (2023): 18.

IV and John Casimir²². He continued his commitment to development of Carolinum Jesuit gymnasium in Neisse²³.

On the other hand, according to tsarist ambassador Kulikov's report, John Casimir had started before his brother's death efforts in Vatican to return to secular status²⁴. After Vladislaus IV's demise, he became titular king of Sweden, he owned Duchy of Opole and Racibórz as well. According to 17th-century historian Wawrzyniec Jan Rudawski, he seemed to be more suitable, because of his seniority and military skills, which he gained during the war with Moscow²⁵. In the spring of 1648, French ambassador Louis d'Arpajon's secretary informed French diplomacy about plans related to John Casimir's departure to Italy²⁶.

Both candidates were actively trying to get support outside the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Charles Ferdinand as well as John Casimir strived for good relations with France, since marrying one of candidates for the Polish crown with Marie Louise Gonzaga has remained one of the important goals of French diplomacy²⁷. It was therefore essential to gain her support, which indicated intensity of their efforts. Charles Ferdinand maintained contact with French diplomacy. He has already sent his secretary to diplomatic mission to France in May 1647²⁸. He drafted three letters to French diplomacy in June 1648. According to French ambassador Nicolas de Brégy, Charles Ferdinand could be considered as more projesuit and prospanish²⁹. It seems that exactly this opinion of French diplomacy about Bishop of Wrocław caused noticeably smaller enthusiasm in Paris, despite numerous attempts to receive the support.

His opponent fighting for the throne had established contact with France extremely early, which can be considered as an advantage within this rivalry. His letters or a mission, moreover, very quickly began to concern quite specific issue. At the beginning of 1647, John Casimir had a talk with French ambassador in the Republic of Poland de Brégy regarding the succession of his ill brother, as he had decided to come back from Rome. He was probably talking with de Brégy about his wedding

22 Barbara Przybyszewska-Jarmińska, "The Polish contribution to Central European Musical Culture in the Seventeenth Century. The Case of Marcin Mielczewski", *Musicological Annual*, 40 (2004): 142-43.

23 Józef Mandziuk, "Biskupie księstwo nysko-otmuchowskie", *Saeculum Christianum: pismo historyczno-społeczne*, 19/2 (2012): 49.

24 Witusik, "Elekcja Jana Kazimierza", 133.

25 Rudawski, *Historja Polska*, 43.

26 AMAEF, CP, Pologne, 9, Louis d'Arpajon to Jules Mazarin, Gdansk 7 V 1648, 233.

27 Karol Szajnocha, *Dwa lata dziejów naszych 1646–1648*, t.2 (Lviv: published by the author himself, 1865), 175.

28 AMAEF, CP, Pologne, 8, Charles Ferdinand Vasa to Jules Mazarin, 15 V 1647, 278-79.

29 AMAEF, CP, Pologne, 9, Nicolas de Brégy to Jules Mazarin, Gdansk 26 VI 1648, 314-18.

in January 1648³⁰. De Brégy wrote directly that John Casimir «remains related to France» in February 1648³¹. According to this diplomat, John Casimir was likely to talk with Ladislaus IV to convince him to French policy³².

John Casimir in a letter to France in May 1648 paid attention to the Vasa dynasty's situation after his brother death and underlined the fact that Charles Ferdinand as a clergyman cannot ensure continuity of the dynasty³³. This type of argumentation could be work in favor of older brother as potential Queen Louise Marie Gonzaga's husband. According to de Brégy, John Casimir collaborated with Louise Marie in February 1648³⁴. He contacted her by letter in July 1648 (the French diplomacy was informed on this)³⁵. De Brégy has written already after the election in December 1648 that «it is still outstanding problem, if she will become two brothers' wife whether she will have power which she deserves and which we wish for»³⁶.

D'Arpajon underlined John Casimir's positive attitude towards France in May 1648³⁷. One month later French diplomacy was counting on him to lead the army to the victory³⁸. It can be stated that in addition to the military skills of this prince noticed in Paris, he was seen as more secure ally in international relations. However, French court did not have enough money to support his candidate. John Casimir, moreover, was complaining to Mazarin that De Brégy encourages Charles Ferdinand³⁹.

According to speech of viscount d'Arpajon, French ambassador, the nobility should have chosen John Casimir, as he has been blessed with military talent and due to his seniority⁴⁰. D'Arpajon came accompanied by voivode of Brześć Jan Szymon Szczawiński as well as castellan of Brześć Jan Szymon Dąmbiski to pay homage to Ladislaus IV's corpse together with senator's assurance about French friendship «accompanied by numerous well-chosen noblemen»⁴¹. On the other hand, de Brégy underlined that hereditary title of Swedish king held by John Casimir could be

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- 30 AMAEF, CP, Pologne, 9, Nicolas de Brégy to Jules Mazarin, 15 I 1648, 31-42.
 - 31 AMAEF, CP, Pologne, 9, Nicolas De Brégy to Jules Mazarin, 19 II 1648, 99-102.
 - 32 AMAEF, CP, Pologne, 9, Nicolas De Brégy to Jules Mazarin, Warsaw 15 I 1648, 31-42.
 - 33 AMAEF, CP, Pologne, 9, John Casimir Vasa to Jules Mazarin, Cracow 8 V 1648, 223-25.
 - 34 AMAEF, CP, Pologne, 9, Nicolas De Brégy, Warsaw, 5 II 1648, 76-84.
 - 35 AMAEF, CP, Pologne, 10, Nicolas, De Brégy, 3 VII 1648, 15-9.
 - 36 AMAEF, CP, Pologne, 9, Nicolas De Brégy, 11 XII 1648, 453-54.
 - 37 AMAEF, CP, Pologne, 9, Louis d'Arpajon to Jules Mazarin, Gdansk 22 V1648, 241-44.
 - 38 AMAEF, CP, Pologne, 9, Louis d'Arpajon to Jules Mazarin, Gdansk 12 VI.1648, 283-84.
 - 39 Witusik, "Elekcja Jana Kazimierza", 136.
 - 40 Rudawski, *Historja Polska*, 50-1.
 - 41 Karol Szajnocha, *Dwa lata dziejów naszych 1646-1648*, t. 2 (Lviv: published by the author himself, 1869), 176.

useful for the Commonwealth if it would like to reclaim Livonia⁴².

According to historian Karol Szajnocha, Swedish court opted for John Casimir's election⁴³. In a letter to Lord High Chancellor of Axel Oxenstierna from October 1648 Queen Christina wrote, as far as she knew, about increasing popularity of Charles Ferdinand in the Commonwealth, but at the same time she was concerned about his victory⁴⁴. A secretary Lars Cantersten was sent to the Commonwealth in September this year to keep eye on Swedish interests during the election⁴⁵. Despite distrust towards Charles Ferdinand on her part, he asked Christina about the encouragement in October 1648⁴⁶.

Swedish diplomacy was also interested in other groups supporting particular candidates. Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna sent a courteous letter to Ossoliński before the election⁴⁷. According to Swedish Chancellor, John Casimir was supported by the most important magnates and bishops, while Charles Ferdinand by medium and catholic nobility. Oxenstierna presented John Casimir's faction as more numerous. Swedish Chancellor also underlined John Casimir's ability as a soldier⁴⁸.

It seems that the Apostolic See did not favour any side. According to nuncio's speech, both princes «they are two wonderful offsprings of Sigismund III Vasa's house and each of them represents their father merits thanks to divine fortune»⁴⁹. At the end of October, the nuncio abandoned Charles Ferdinand and urged him to resign in favor of the brother⁵⁰. According to Karol Szajnocha, John Casimir could count on German emperor's support⁵¹. In de Brégy's opinion Charles Ferdinand had hoped, though, for neutrality of Emperor's diplomacy⁵². Bishop of Breslau maintained good enough relations with the Habsburgs (from which originated the mother of both brothers) that he replaced imperial ambassador during the wedding celebration of Ladislaus IV and Marie Louise⁵³.

After Polish king's death diplomat from Brandenburg Johann von Hoverbeck proposed Elector Frederick Wilhelm's candidacy, however, he received advise to

42 AMAEF, CP, Pologne, 9, Nicolas De Brégy to J. Mazarin, 26 VI 1648, 314-18.

43 Szajnocha, *Dwa lata dziejów naszych 1646–1648*, t. 2, 293.

44 RA, E 582, n. 4029 Christina Vasa to Axel Oxenstierna, Stockholm 9 X 1648, 1-2.

45 RA, E 582, n. 4027, Christina Vasa to Axel Oxenstierna, Uppsala 10 IX 1648, 1-2.

46 RA, E 536, n. 1773, Axel Oxenstierna to Christina Vasa, Tidö 10 X 1648, 1-6.

47 RA, E 536, n. 2895 Axel Oxenstierna to Jerzy Ossoliński, Stockholm 15 IX 1648, 1.

48 RA, E 536, n 1773, Axel Oxenstierna to Christina Vasa, Tidö 10 X 1648, 1-6.

49 Szajnocha, *Dwa lata dziejów naszych 1646–1648*, t. 2, 293.

50 Witusik, "Elekcja Jana Kazimierza", 147.

51 Szajnocha, *Dwa lata dziejów*, 293.

52 AMAEF, CP, Pologne, 9, Nicolas De Brégy, 18 VII 1648, 340.

53 Jean Le Laboureur, *Histoire et relation du voyage de la reine de Pologne et du retour de Madame la Maréchale de Guebrian, Ambassadrice extraordinaire et Surintendante de sa conduite [...]*, t. 1 (Paris: VVe J Camusat, 1647), 194.

support other candidate⁵⁴. At the beginning of June a diplomacy of Brandenburg indicated John Casimir as a favorite due to French support⁵⁵. According to historian Adam Andrzej Witusik, the diplomacy of Brandenburg (Adersbach) was mistaken about crucial magnates' affection⁵⁶. The elector favored John Casimir because of his more positive attitude towards Lutherans⁵⁷. Ambassadors of Count Palatine of Neuburg only recommended to respect royal blood⁵⁸. Prince of Transylvania George I Rákóczi intended to gain the Polish throne for son, yet he had died in October⁵⁹. According to French ambassador de Brégy, this has facilitated the election of John Casimir⁶⁰.

It can be therefore concluded that Charles Ferdinand received less support from other European rulers than his older brother. A lot of states remained quite neutral in this case and did not encourage explicitly any of candidates. France can be considered as an exception and Charles Ferdinand sought noticeably their support. However, his rival has started very early the concrete negotiations with the diplomacy from this country. He combined them, moreover, with cooperation with the Queen Louise Marie. Election 1648 coincided with the beginning of the Fronde in Paris⁶¹ therefore internal factors can be considered as crucial within this election.

Internal support in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was likewise important or even more crucial. Therefore, attention should be paid to Bohdan Khmelnytsky's attitude towards both candidates due to the Polish-Cossack War. John Casimir has established relationships with the leader of the rebellion in August 1648. Bohdan Khmelnytsky officially backed him in Lviv. On 6th of November nearby Zamość Khmelnytsky claimed that the election of John Casimir is the one guarantee for the Cossacks⁶². According to Jan Wawrzyniec Rudawski, «Khmelnytsky in the letters to the Senate and to private individuals expressed intensively his wish to elect John

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- 54 Andrzej Kamieński, "Kandydatury Hohenzollernów Brandenburskich do tronu polskiego od XV do końca XVII wieku. Realny cel czy też gra polityczna?", in *Między Zachodem a Wschodem. Etniczne, kulturowe, religijne pogranicza Rzeczypospolitej w XVI–XVII wieku*, eds. Krzysztof Mikulski, and Agnieszka Zielińska-Nowicka (Toruń: Grado, 2005), 31-2.
- 55 "Peter Bergmann an den Kurfürsten", Gdańsk 5 VI 1648, in *Urkunden und Actenstücke zur Geschichte des Kurfürsten Friedrich Wilhelm von Brandenburg*, I: *Politische Verhandlungen*, vol. 1, ed. Georg Reimer (Berlin: B. Erdmannsdörffer, 1864), 249.
- 56 Witusik, "Elekcja Jana Kazimierza", 137.
- 57 Barbara Szymczak, "Działalność dyplomacji brandenburskiej w okresie bezkrólewia w Rzeczypospolitej w 1648 r"., *Przegląd Historyczny*, 89/1 (1998): 30.
- 58 Szajnocha, *Dwa lata dziejów*, 301.
- 59 Szajnocha, *Dwa lata dziejów*, 304.
- 60 AMAEF, CP, Pologne, 9, Nicolas de Brégy, 11 XII 1648, 453-54.
- 61 Richard Bonney, "Cardinal Mazarin and the Great Nobility during the Fronde", *The English Historical Review*, 381/96 (1981): 818.
- 62 Witusik, "Elekcja Jana Kazimierza", 149-50.

Casimir»⁶³. Bohdan Khmelnytsky can be, paradoxically, considered as the most important ally within the fight for the crown in the Commonwealth regarding the extent of the uprising and panic caused by the Cossacks troops (battle of Pyliavtsi)⁶⁴. However, Charles Ferdinand initially received the support from many various groups in the country. According to Wawrzyniec Jan Rudawski, «was encouraged by powerful factions and he expected the promotion by will of free states »⁶⁵. He was supported by Catholic nobility from Mazovia⁶⁶. This was primarily due to exercise of the episcopal function in Płock. The support of the nobility from region had substantial impact because of their large number⁶⁷ as well as their short distance to the place of election. Charles Ferdinand at his own expense brought many destitute representatives of nobility from Mazovia to vote at the place of election⁶⁸. The Mazovian nobility was also the most numerous there because of the threat in the east⁶⁹. It can be therefore concluded that the concept of the younger Sigismund III Vasa's election remained popular among the destitute nobility.

In the initial period after Ladislaus IV's death, persons performing the most function in the state were active in the Charles Ferdinand's faction. The Court Marshall Adam Kazanowski belonged to the Charles Ferdinand's faction⁷⁰, as he had condemned John Casimir's character traits. Kazanowski was conflicted with the Ruthenian voivode Jeremi Wiśniowiecki what could be to the detriment of whole faction. He was hoping, moreover, for raising of his own influence at Crown Deputy Chancellor Jerzy Ossoliński's expense⁷¹. A clergyman and Crown Deputy Vice-Chancellor Andrzej Leszczyński postulating the resolute policy towards the Cossacks⁷² was also Charles Ferdinand's follower⁷³.

63 Rudawski, *Historja Polska*, 45.

64 Janusz Kaczmarczyk, *Bohdan Chmielnicki* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 2007), 76-7.

65 Rudawski, *Historja Polska*, 43.

66 Witusik, "Elekcja Jana Kazimierza", 135.

67 Jolanta Choińska-Mika, *Sejmiki mazowieckie w dobie Wazów* (Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 1998), 5.

68 Ryszard Zieliński, "Województwo płockie w bezkrólewicach i elekcjach. Część III- Na przełomie-elekcje 1632 i 1648 r"., *Notatki płockie, Kwartalnik Towarzystwa Naukowego Płockiego*, 14/4 (1959): 30.

69 Michał Kopczyński, "Obywatele czy tłum? Elektorzy władców Rzeczypospolitej z województwa mazowieckiego w latach 1632–1764", *Przegląd historyczny*, 61/1 (2015): 122.

70 Władysław Czapliński, and Adam Przyboś, "Kazanowski Adam", in PSB, vol. 12 (1966/67), 251.

71 Goszczyński, "Adam Kazanowski", 265-66.

72 Władysław Czapliński, "Andrzej Leszczyński h. Wieniawa", in PSB, vol. 17 (1972), 105-07.

73 Albrycht Stanisław Radziwiłł, *Pamiętniki Albrychta Stanisława Radziwiłła*, vol. 2., ed. Edward Raczyński (Poznań: K.A Pompejusz, 1839), 327.

As part of the legation of Charles Ferdinand's when he was negotiating with his opponent participated: Bishop of Kiev Stanisław Zareba, Prince Adam Sanguszko⁷⁴, Castellan of Chełm Albrecht Czyrski, Castellan of Inowrocław Andrzej Ruszkowski⁷⁵, Castellan Teodor Potocki, Warrant Officer of Bełsk Stefan Niszczycki and Izydor Zasławski⁷⁶. Lack of Lithuanians among the representatives caused certain indignation⁷⁷. Charles Ferdinand's faction at the beginning of interregnum was so strong that John Casimir was thinking he will lose the rivalry for the Polish throne. He probably even mentioned to Ambassador of Brandenburg Johann von Hoverbeck that he would rather see the Elector of Brandenburg or Transylvanian prince as a king⁷⁸. It can be noticed that Charles Ferdinand could count on the support of other bishops, who were senators at the same time.

On the other hand, Chancellor Jerzy Ossoliński was one of the most important senators supporting John Casimir⁷⁹. Jerzy Ossoliński previously wished to elect the Elector of Brandenburg Frederick William, but he decided to choose older of Vasa's brothers hoping for own domination in the Commonwealth's policy under his rule⁸⁰. In autumn, he reduced his activity, being aware of his unpopularity. However, he could remain in contact with Bohdan Khmelnytsky⁸¹. A voivode of Braclaw Adam Kisiel collaborated with Jerzy Ossoliński in aid of John Casimir's election⁸². The Ruthenian voivode Jeremi Wiśniowiecki had to support John Casimir under pressure of his soldiers⁸³ what made John Casimir's faction diverse. His allies were divided over the issue of Khmelnytsky's.

According to Karol Szajnocha, John Casimir was supported by the whole Lithuania⁸⁴. However, Field Hetman of Lithuania Janusz Radziwiłł discussed the conditions of John Casimir's encouragement with Lithuanian Protestants at the

74 Witold Kłaczewski, "Sanguszko Adam Aleksander", in PSB, vol. 34 (1992/93), 465.

75 Włodzimierz Kaczorowski, "Ruszkowski Andrzej", in PSB, vol. 33 (1991/92), 188.

76 *Historia panowania Jana Kazimierza przez nieznanego autora napisana*, t.1, ed. Edward Raczyński (Poznań: Księgarnia Walentego Stefańskiego, 1840), 18.

77 Wespazjan Kochowski, *Pamiętniki do panowania Zygmunta III, Władysława IV i Jana Kazimierza*, vol. 2, ed. Kazimierz Władysław Wóycicki (Warsaw: S. Orgelbrand, 1846), 24.

78 Witusik, "Elekcja Jana Kazimierza", 141.

79 Władysław Czapliński, "Jerzy Ossoliński h. Topór (1595–1650)", in PSB, vol. 24 (1979), 405.

80 Goszczyński, "Adam Kazanowski wobec", 265.

81 Witold Kłaczewski, *Jerzy Ossoliński. Wielki kanclerz Rzeczypospolitej* (Lublin: WSS-P, 2011), 313-15.

82 Jakub Sytniewski, "Działalność polityczna Adama Kisiela w 1648 roku", *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Prace Historyczne*, 149/4 (2022): 661.

83 Jemiołowski, *Pamiętnik Mikołaja Jemiołowskiego*, 9.

84 Szajnocha, *Dwa lata dziejów*, 293.

beginning of November because of George I Rákóczi's death⁸⁵. Despite everything, Charles Ferdinand was trying to receive the support in Lithuania, and he contacted for instance the Great Chancellor Albrycht Stanisław Radziwiłł to ask him for help regarding his fight for the crown, but he claimed that «I responded him *indifferenter* at this point»⁸⁶.

At the beginning «princes were negotiating with each other so that one to another do not bother in the election for king. As part of the John Casimir's legation participated: Bishop of Samogitia Jerzy Tyszkiewicz, voivode of Mazovia Stanisław Warszycki, voivode of Bełsk Krzysztof Koniecpolski⁸⁷, voivode of Cracow Stanisław Lubomirski⁸⁸, starost of Lviv Adam Hieronim Sieniawski⁸⁹ as well as referendary of the Crown Wojciech Łubieński, the Presiding Bishop's nephew»⁹⁰.

Military issues can be considered as crucial during this election due to Khmelnytsky's Uprising. According to historian Mirosław Nagielski, a lot of military men were active in both candidates' factions⁹¹. Within the John Casimir's faction warrant officer Aleksander Koniecpolski⁹², starost of Lviv Adam Hieronim Sieniawski as well as Tomasz Kazimierz Sapieha, cavalry captain in 1648, could be classified as active soldiers⁹³. Andrzej Potocki⁹⁴ and chamberlain of Halicz Jan Teodoryk Potocki⁹⁵ can be attributed to Charles Ferdinand's faction⁹⁶. According to Mieczysław Nagielski, «it is highly probable that cavalry regiment of J. Wiśniowiecki participated at the place of election»⁹⁷.

Both of candidates as in other election used various means of persuasion to influence the nobility's opinion⁹⁸. Charles Ferdinand touted the system of election

85 Aleksandra Ziober, "The political attitudes of Krzysztof and Janusz Radziwiłł towards the election of Władysław IV and Jan Kazimierz. Outline of the problem", *Open Political Science*, 1/1 (2018): 200.

86 Radziwiłł, *Pamiętniki Albrychta Stanisława*, 294.

87 Adam Kersten, "Koniecpolski Krzysztof", in PSB, vol. 13 (1967/68), 521.

88 Władysław Czapliński, "Lubomirski Stanisław", in PSB, vol. 18 (1973), 44.

89 Mirosław Nagielski, "Sieniawski Adam Hieronim", in PSB, 37 (1996/97), 104.

90 Raczyński, *Historia panowania*, vol. 1, 18.

91 Mirosław Nagielski, "Udział wojskowych w sejmie elekcyjnym 1648", *Wiekі stare i nowe*, 17/12 (2017): 15.

92 Andrzej Rachuba, "Sapieha Tomasz Kazimierz", in PSB, vol. 35 (1994), 155-56.

93 Raczyński, *Historia panowania*, vol. 1, 18.

94 W. Majewski, "Potocki Andrzej", in PSB, vol. 27 (1982), 770.

95 Maria Sipayłło, "Potocki Jan Teodoryk", in PSB, vol. 28 (1984), 28.

96 Raczyński, *Historia panowania*, vol. 1, 16.

97 Raczyński, *Historia panowania*, vol. 1, 18.

98 Aleksandra Ziober, *Postawy elit Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego wobec elekcji Władysława IV Wazy i Michała Korybuta Wiśniowieckiego* (Cracow: Księgarnia Akademicka, 2020), 153.

as «hereditary jewel of freedom» in a letter to deputational sejmik in Środa. He underlined his royal blood as well as desire to serve his country. He tried to convince at the time that he is not derived by the ambition or greed⁹⁹.

He was making also promises according to which he declared to equip 10,000 soldiers at his own expenses and offered sanctuary for exiles from Ukraine in his dioceses of Wrocław and Płock¹⁰⁰. In addition, Charles Ferdinand during the civil war which has already lasted, had supplied 900 soldiers at his own expense¹⁰¹. However, using ecclesial funds was widely criticized by inter alias chamberlain of Różańsk Aleksander Petrykowski¹⁰² who told that «the Polish Kingdom has already become a market and clerical goods are distributed. He is very generous when it comes to someone's else possession»¹⁰³. However, according to an article from "Gazette de France", John Casimir has promised to equip 3000 soldiers against the Cossacks and fight with them as a commander¹⁰⁴.

Both of candidates were looking out for the support by writing letters or meeting with often the same senators, John Casimir asked for the support of a voivode of Malbork Jakub Wejher¹⁰⁵. Charles Ferdinand also wrote a letter to the voivode of Malbork at the same month «I asked vice-chancellor to convince you to my candidature»¹⁰⁶. Charles Ferdinand still wanted to fight and meet in Jabłonna the voivode of Malbork on 23th October¹⁰⁷. In addition, Louise Marie probably gave several loans to John Casimir in exchange for marrying her. A voivode of Mazovia Stanisław Warszycki presumably spent large sums of money to convince the nobility to elect John Casimir¹⁰⁸.

Charles Ferdinand had more money at his disposal to spend on persuading the nobility to vote for him. Building at his expense a tavern in Jabłonna where he offered for the nobility free food and alcohol can be considered as an interesting example of his electoral activity¹⁰⁹. This kind of generosity had to probably appeal to the nobility, in particular to their Mazovian poorer representatives.

99 AGAD, AR, II, 14, "A copy of His Majesty Prince Bishop of Płock Charles' letter to sejmik in Środa", 15 VII 1648, 160-61.

100 Raczyński, *Historia panowania*, vol. 1, 18.

101 Szajnocha, *Dwa lata dziejów naszych 1646–1648*, vol. 2, 293.

102 Jan Dziegielewski, "Petrykowski Aleksander", in PSB, vol. 25 (1980), 708.

103 Wespazjan Kochowski, *Pamiętniki do panowania Zygmunta III, Władysława IV i Jana Kazimierza*, vol. 2., ed. Kazimierz Władysław Wóycicki (Warszawa: Orgelbrand 1846), 24.

104 "Gazette de France", n. 108 (1648), 928.

105 BK PAN, 1318, [The documents and letters from 1648–1668] John Casimir Vasa to Jakub Wejher, 2 VIII 1648, 5.

106 BK PAN, 1318, Charles Ferdinand Vasa to Jakub Wejher, Warsaw 4 VIII 1648, 12

107 BK PAN, 1318, Charles Ferdinand Vasa to Jakub Wejher, 23 X 1648, 20.

108 Witusik, "Elekcja Jana Kazimierza", 145.

109 Radziwiłł, *Pamiętniki Albrychta Stanisław*, 332-33.

Local council before election Sejm were convened at the request of the Primate 25th June, while a date of the convocation Sejm was fixed on 16th July 1648¹¹⁰. A letter from the Cossacks to a king was read in the Senate on 17th June¹¹¹. Ladislaus IV's corpse was escorted from Grodno to Warsaw on 22th June and both of the brothers went riding out to honour it¹¹². Ambassador de Brégy predicted at the beginning of June that John Casimir's arrival at the end of the month will change the middle nobility's affinities supporting the younger brother thus far¹¹³. It has been reported that letters of the deceased king are written by unauthorized people at the of August¹¹⁴. The country remained unceasingly threatened during this period and the Primate Maciej Łubieński as interrex were sending conscript proclamations to the cavalry captains as well as colonels on 25th August¹¹⁵. The Sejm session began on 6th October¹¹⁶.

136 The election Sejm began on 24th October and according to Wawrzyniec Jan Rudawski, it was feared that the quarrels would impede the war against the Khmelnytsky's troops therefore the magnates were to prone to reach an agreement¹¹⁷. A newly elected king as well as Divine Providence were considered as the only hope of being rescued. Certain individuals (including the Queen Louise Marie de Gonzague) were considering escaping from Warsaw to Gdansk due to the sense of danger caused by the Cossack's attacks. However, the panic reaction was not so spread and, ultimately, wojski of Lithuania of Mozyr Filip Obuchowicz¹¹⁸ was elected Marshal of the Election Sejm¹¹⁹. Protestants initiated complaints during the parliament¹²⁰. Bogusław and Janusz Radziwiłł as well as well Gerard Denhoff were considered as main protectors of Protestantism¹²¹.

110 *Uniwersał Prymasa Macieja Łubieńskiego*, Łowicz 26 V 1648, in *Volumina Legum*, vol. 4, ed. Jozafat Ohryzko (Saint Petersburg: Jozafat Ohryzko, 1859/60) 72.

111 "Dyaryusz konwokacyi warszawskiej podczas bezkrólewia od 16 lipca do 1 sierpnia 1648 odprawiającej się", in *Jakuba Michałowskiego wojskiego lubelskiego a później kasztelana bieckiego księga pamiętnicza* (Cracow: Drukarnia C.k. uniwersytetu, 1864), 104.

112 Radziwiłł, *Pamiętniki Albrychta Stanisława*, 293-94.

113 AMAEF, CP, Pologne, 9, Nicolas De Brégy to Jules Mazarin, 26 VI 1648, 316.

114 F.G. Montal to Virginio Orsini, Warsaw 26 VIII 1648, in *Elementa ad fontum editiones*, VII: *Repertorium rerum polonicarum ex Archivo Orsini in Archivo Capitolino Romae II Pars*, ed. Wanda Wyhowska de Andreis (Cracow: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 1962), 202.

115 Jemiołowski, *Pamiętnik Mikołaja Jemiołowskiego*, 6.

116 Nagielski, "Udział wojskowych", 9.

117 Rudawski, *Historja Polska*, 42.

118 Adam Przyboś, "Obuchowicz Filip Kazimierz", in *PSB*, vol. 23 (1978), 234-36.

119 Kochowski, *Pamiętniki do panowania*, 21.

120 Raczyński, *Historia panowania Jana Kazimierza*, vol. 1, 16.

121 Kochowski, *Pamiętniki do panowania*, 22.

A disgracefully defeat of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth army namely the Battle of Pyliavtsi should be recognized as a turning point during this election when first indications of changing an ounce of sympathy the candidates, as Charles Ferdinand's supporter Jerzy Ossoliński had designated war commissioners. The nobility claimed that he advised Prince Dominik Zasławski-Ostrogski to flee from the battle entirely as well¹²².

According to Chancellor Stanisław Albrycht Radziwiłł, Charles Ferdinand's supporters «have changed their intention after the loss in Pyliavtsi». According to Edward Opaliński, the political situation was complicated by demands to punish persons responsible for the defeats, in particular of Pyliavtsi. This elevated the discussion into divisions even among the allies (for instance Dominik Zasławski, voivode of Sandomierz, and Jeremi Wiśniewiecki, voivode of Ruthenia – both advocates of the Cossack's question military solution¹²³.

Already in the mid-October it has been believed that one of princes should resign in the battle for the crown for the country's sake¹²⁴. On 19th October Chancellor Albrycht Stanisław Radziwiłł together with Marshall, Vice-Chancellor Kazimierz Leon Sapieha and Lithuanian Treasurer have begun to convince Charles Ferdinand at dinner in Jabłonna for resignation for the brother¹²⁵. A deterioration of highly disadvantageous military situation counted against Charles Ferdinand lacking military skills.

In addition, after George I Rákóczi's death, his supporters led by Prince Janusz Radziwiłł were reluctant to encourage the candidate so closely associated with the Catholic church¹²⁶. When the news about him arrived, Charles Ferdinand was abandoned by the Starost of Greater Poland Bogusław Leszczyński, Bishop of Kujawy Mikołaj Wojciech Gniewosz and Vice-chancellor Andrzej Leszczyński was having second thoughts¹²⁷. The Lithuanian nobility have decided to support John Casimir at the end of October, if the Polish nobility was not convinced to Charles Ferdinand¹²⁸.

On 9th October after previous speech of Charles Ferdinand supporters, John Casimir's followers could perform such as Bishop of Samogitia Jerzy Tyszkiewicz, voivode of Bełsk Krzysztof Koniecpolski, starost of Lviv Hieronim Sieniawski, warrant officer of Sieradz Wojciech Łubieński and Tomasz Sapieha, John Casimir's courtier¹²⁹. On 29th October Bishop of Poznań Andrzej Szołdrski and Polish Cupbear Mikołaj Ostroróg changed their minds and supported John Casimir as

122 Witusik, "Elekcja Jana Kazimierza", 143-44.

123 Opaliński, "Elekcje wazowskie", 536.

124 Radziwiłł, *Pamiętniki Albrychta Stanisława*, 326.

125 Radziwiłł, *Pamiętniki Albrychta Stanisława*, 334.

126 Witusik, "Elekcja Jana Kazimierza", 145.

127 Radziwiłł, *Pamiętniki Albrychta Stanisława*, 327.

128 Witusik, "Elekcja Jana Kazimierza", 146.

129 Radziwiłł, *Pamiętniki Albrychta Stanisława*, 336.

well as Dominik Zasławski¹³⁰. It can be concluded that at the end of October 1648 Charles Ferdinand's faction was almost broke up as a result of fear the country's future caused by shameful loss of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth troops in Pyliavtsi. The unity and instant king's election was expected, focusing on the candidate with military experience.

Abandoned by many supporters Charles Ferdinand has begun to be urged to withdraw his candidacy recalling the difficult situation of the state. The Presiding Bishop Maciej Łubieński, Great Chancellor of Lithuania Albrycht Stanisław Radziwiłł, Vice-Chancellor of Lithuania Leon Kazimierz Sapieha, Great Treasurer of Lithuania Michał Tryzna, among others, arrived in Jabłonna for this purpose¹³¹. On 2nd of November Queen Louise Marie invited senators and asked them to persuade Charles Ferdinand to resign¹³². However, such acts as well as abandonment by many crucial supporters have not convinced Charles Ferdinand to resignation.

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On 3rd November Jeremi Wiśniowiecki arrived and announced that he does not intend to get involved in the proceedings, but request equipment of 60,000 soldiers¹³³. Great military needs of the country made that pressure on Charles Ferdinand was increasing. However, he wanted to convince the nobility and the most important senators. This day, more and more desperate Charles Ferdinand started to make quite unrealistic promises - equipment of 10,000 soldiers at his own expense, donation of his property in Żywiec for the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth along with his land in the Duchy of Opole and Racibórz¹³⁴.

The unfulfillable promises destroyed this candidate's image in the nobility's eyes; however, the worst impression caused a pledge which was openly ridiculed and totally discredited Charles Ferdinand in the fight for the throne. Bishop of Wrocław's declaration that he is «ready to go into battle and shed his blood» was considered as unserious. According to the nobility, «the prince had been raised rather to piety and devotion and not to a war»¹³⁵. Exactly this opinion in the face of defeat in the battle of Pyliavtsi can be seen as deciding about Charles Ferdinand's loss.

All participants of the election were getting impatient, thus the pression on the younger Vasa brother were growing. On 5th November resistance emerged because according to the previous agreement on 4th November a king should have been elected - many nobleman in the dispute were drunk¹³⁶. John Casimir's supported remained indignant as they knew that he holed an advantage at this moment and demanded his swiftly election. On 6th November, in light of the altered circumstances, older Sigismund III Vasa's son wrote a letter to his opponent «[...] if I were a younger brother, I would not disturb Your Royal Highness, but I would

130 Witusik, "Elekcja Jana Kazimierza", 14.

131 Radziwiłł, *Pamiętniki Albrychta Stanisława*, 334.

132 Witusik, "Elekcja Jana Kazimierza", 148.

133 Szajnocha, *Dwa lata dziejów naszych 1646–1648*, vol. 2, 300.

134 Radziwiłł, *Pamiętniki Albrychta Stanisława*, 336.

135 Witusik, "Elekcja Jana Kazimierza", 149.

136 Radziwiłł, *Pamiętniki Albrychta Stanisława*, 337.

help with all my strength achieve this happiness [...]»¹³⁷. A response to this letter remained negative at that time.

Charles Ferdinand's faction, led by hesitating for more than a week Vice-Chancellor Andrzej Leszczyński, met at a conference following day which has not resulted in any concrete ideas¹³⁸. Ultimately, on 11th November Charles Ferdinand, according to his friends' advice, resigned in an attempt to fight for the election and in exchange he was to receive from his brother the Duchy of Opole and Racibórz as well as help with obtaining revenues from two abbeys¹³⁹. Charles Ferdinand's delegate Stanisław Rakowski, parish priest from Pułtusk, passed on the news that he called for «resignation from the competition for the Polish crown as well as declare to support the brother Prince Casimir»¹⁴⁰.

Charles Ferdinand went to Nieporęt to announce his decision at a meeting with his brother accompanied by Bishop of Chełmno Andrzej Leszczyński, Bishop of Kiev Stanisław Zaremba, Bishop of Chełm Stanisław Pstrokoński, voivode of Ruthenia Jeremi Wiśniowiecki, Great Marshal of the Crown Łukasz Opaliński and Court Marshal of the Crown Adam Kazanowski¹⁴¹. On 13th November priest Rakowski passed his letter from Jabłonna in which he announced his resignation in favour of his brother and promised to equip 800 soldiers at his expense as well as he expressed his adherence to the homeland¹⁴². The letter has been well received by the nobility. Charles Ferdinand could thanks to this decision enjoy popularity among the nobility, despite the unsuccessful attempt to get the throne as well as count on support his further activity by John Casimir. Royal brother's assistance was also associated with material gains.

According to Wespazjan Kochowski, the nobility claimed that a quest for peace, brotherly love or resentful pride caused by criticizing his promise to give refuge to the exiles from Ukraine and related to this allegation of inadequate disposal of ecclesiastical money were the reasons of his decision. According to this diarist, the scale of the problems and the crisis the Commonwealth was facing at this moment could discourage him therefore he desired to live a calmer life concentrated on his religious career «he has changed his intention perceiving ungrateful Poles as well as learning of nefarious events in Pyliavtsi [...] he preferred to lead a life as a clergyman than put himself in obvious danger for the Crown and getting into constant troubles»¹⁴³.

Bishop of Kujawy Gniewosz expressed his thanks to Charles Ferdinand that in the difficult situation of the country, he did not obstruct the election¹⁴⁴. The following

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- 137 Witusik, "Elekcja Jana Kazimierza", 149.
 - 138 Witusik, "Elekcja Jana Kazimierza", 149.
 - 139 Szajnocha, *Dwa lata dziejów*, 304.
 - 140 Kochowski, *Pamiętniki do panowania*, 26.
 - 141 Goszczyński, "Adam Kazanowski", 267.
 - 142 Szajnocha, *Dwa lata dziejów*, 307.
 - 143 Kochowski, *Pamiętniki do panowania*, 26.
 - 144 Kochowski, *Pamiętniki do panowania*, 26.

day, the bishops as well as secular senators voted *viritim* for John Casimir¹⁴⁵. Charles Ferdinand's lack in the army experience can be considered as the reason of his failure facing expectations to solve the conflict with the Cossacks in military way. His brother's seniority can be seen as Bishop of Wrocław's disadvantage. He neither was supported by external powers (except certain strictly Catholic groups). He was primarily not supported by Bohdan Khmelnytsky. Trying to regain the nobility's support, Charles Ferdinand kept making more and more exaggerated promises undermining his credibility. After Charles Ferdinand's loss during the election 1648, the brothers' further cooperation can be considered as quite harmonious, for instance, he was involved in king John Casimir's affaires in Rome¹⁴⁶.

145 Radziwiłł, *Pamiętniki Albrychta Stanisława*, 341.

146 John Casimir Vasa to Virginio Orsini, Warsaw 12 III 1650, in *Elementa ad fontium editiones*, III: *Repertorium rerum Polonicarum ex Archivo Orsini in Archivo Capitolino Romae I Pars*, ed. Wanda Wyhowska de Andreis (Cracow: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 1961), 4.

ABBREVIATION

AGAD: Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych w Warszawie:

AR: Archiwum Radziwiłłów

AMAEF: Archive Ministère des Affaires étrangères et du Développement international République Française à Paris

CP: Correspondance Politique

BK PAN: Biblioteka Kórnicka Polskiej Akademii Nauk

PSB: Polski Słownik Biograficzny

RA: Riksarkivet (Stockholm)

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