WARFARE, LOYALTY, AND REBELLION

THE GRAND DUCHY OF LITHUANIA AND THE GREAT NORTHERN WAR, 1709–1717

Mindaugas Šapoka

Warfare, Loyalty, and Rebellion

This book examines the politics of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania during the crucial period between the Russian tsar Peter the Great's victory over Sweden at the battle of Poltava and the 1717 Silent Sejm, the Polish-Lithuanian parliament's session which is traditionally seen as responsible for opening the way to Russian domination of Polish-Lithuanian politics. It not only challenges the accepted view of the passivity of the Lithuanian gentry and their subservience to the Russians but also presents a clear view of how the Lithuanian economy and political system were functioning in 1710–1717, factors which have never been studied in depth in any language. Šapoka argues that much more blame for the Confederations of Vilnius and Tarnogród that had led to the Silent Sejm can be attributed to the Polish king Augustus II than is argued by the conventional scholarship. By so completely and deliberately ignoring the Commonwealth's institutions and refusing to work within them, the Polish king provoked justified suspicion that by destroying the basis of the consensual political system, he wanted to introduce absolute monarchy.

Mindaugas Šapoka was educated at Vilnius University and the University of Aberdeen, where he wrote his doctorate under the supervision of Profs. Robert Frost and Karin Friedrich. In 2015, he was awarded a one-year Junior Research Fellowship by the Institute of Historical Research at the University of London to research Jacobite connections with the Sobieski family. He is now employed as researcher at the Lithuanian Institute of History.

Warfare, Loyalty, and Rebellion

The Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Great Northern War, 1709–1717

Mindaugas Šapoka

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2018
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
A catalog record for this book has been requested

ISBN: 978-1-4724-8435-2 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-1-315-54766-4 (ebk)

Typeset in Sabon
by Apex CoVantage, LLC

Contents

Figures

Tables

Foreword

This book covers a crucial part of the Great Northern War of 1700–1721, which saw the rise of Russia's status as a great power, the collapse of the Swedish Empire, and the accelerated decline of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. It focuses on the effects of sustained warfare on the consensual political system of Poland-Lithuania, paying particular attention to the crisis of 1715–1716 when noble confederations were formed in Poland and Lithuania to oppose the policies of the Polish king Augustus II. This study shows that, despite conventionally held beliefs which emphasise chaos and underdevelopment, Lithuania's economy and political system were functioning fairly well during this era. It challenges deep-rooted myths which portray the Lithuanian nobility as largely subservient to the magnates, and the Lithuanian magnates as entirely subservient to Peter I of Russia. The ill-advised policy of Augustus II was the main reason why Russia had become a defender of noble freedoms while the king's secret plans to impose royal absolutism ruined the basis for an alliance between the king and his subjects that might have allowed the Commonwealth to recover in the aftermath of the Great Northern War.

Preface

Every researcher of Polish-Lithuanian history faces the problem that the successor states to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth established different forms of geographical and personal names in their own languages. Since this book is in English, it seems reasonable to use geographical and personal names in Polish, which was also the language of the sources and the language of the Lithuanian noble elite. It seems, however, judicious to use the modern Lithuanian form of the city Vilnius (Wilno in Polish) and the Belarusian form of Brest (Brześć in Polish), because these forms are established and recognised internationally. When there is a generally accepted English equivalent or, occasionally, a contemporary Latin name (for instance, Samogitia), this form is used. All Russian names and bibliographical positions are transliterated into the Latin alphabet with a simplified version of the Library of Congress system. All dates are presented in the New Style unless otherwise indicated. The Lithuanian *metryka*, documents stamped by chancellors, were accessed in microfilms in the Lithuanian State Historical Archives. For the sake of simplicity, signatures of the microfilms are given.

When the type of an archival document and its exact or approximate date can be perceived from the text, this information is not noted in the footnotes. Since the correspondence of the Radziwiłł archive at the Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw (AGAD AR), the Sapieha family correspondence at the Wróblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Science (LMAVB F139) and a few other archival collections of letters occasionally used in this research are arranged in chronological order, the footnotes are limited to an author, recipient, and date. Scholars tend to use the term 'Muscovite' to refer to Russians before 1667 and 'Russian' thereafter, but since 'Muscovite' is very common in the sources and because it indicates the superiority the Polish-Lithuanian society felt towards Russians, 'Muscovite' is used as a synonym for 'Russian'. For the sake of convenience, the terms 'Poland' or 'Polish' are sometimes throughout the text used to refer to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, without distinguishing between the sometimes distinct policies of its Polish and Lithuanian components.

The term 'szlachta' is used to refer to the rest of the noble estate as opposed to wealthy and powerful nobles or magnates.

I would like to thank many people who contributed to this book. I am indebted greatly to my supervisors at the University of Aberdeen, Profs. Robert I. Frost and Karin Friedrich, whose guidance has been indispensable and whose influence will be obvious in this book, which is based on my Ph.D. thesis. I owe a great deal to their patience, encouragement, and constant advice. I am grateful to Dr. Gintautas Sliesoriūnas who inspired my interest in the Great Northern War. I would like to express my gratitude to many people from different countries: Drs. Almut Bues and Andrzej Link-Lenczowski for acting as my supervisors in Poland; Profs. Bogusław Dybaś, Wojciech Kriegseisen, Mariusz Markiewicz, Rimvydas Petrauskas, Andrzej Rachuba, Andrzej Zakrzewski; and Drs. Urszula Kosińska, Andrei Matsuk, Kiril Kochegarov, Vydas Dolinskas, and Dzianis Liseichykaŭ for their advice and conversations. I am very grateful to the Lithuanian Academy of Science in the USA and its board members Drs. Mirga Girniuvienė and Ramūnas Girnius, the Lithuanian Foundation, the German Historical Institute in Warsaw, the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies, the Polish History Museum, and the Royal Historical Society for awarding me scholarships and travel grants. My special thanks go to Simona Stelmokaitė who drew the map for this book. I also owe thanks to the staff of the many libraries and archives I worked at, and who have been endlessly helpful to me.

Abbreviations

AGAD	Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych
AIVAK	Akty izdavaemye Vilenskoiu arkheograficheskoiu kommissieiu
AKW	Archiwum Koronne Warszawskie, dział rosyjskie
AMch	Archiwum Młynowskie Chodkiewiczów
Ap	Aprašas (inventory)
APW	Archiwum Państwowe w Krakowie, Oddział na Wawelu
APP	Archiwum Publiczne Potockich
AR	Archiwum Radziwiłłów
ARC	Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych, Archiwum Radziwiłłów, V 126 (Maciej Ancuta to Karol Radziwiłł, correspondence)
AS	Archiwum Sanguszków
BC	Biblioteka im. Ks. Czartoryskich w Krakowie
BJ	Biblioteka Jagiellońska
BL	The British Library
BN	Biblioteka Narodowa
BOZ	Biblioteka Ordynacji Zamojskiej
BPANKor	Polska Akademia Nauk Biblioteka Kórnicka
BPANKr	Biblioteka Naukowa Polskiej Akademii Umiejętności i Polskiej Akademii Nauk w Krakowie
BR	Biblioteka Raczyńskich
BUW	Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Warszawie
Diary	Lietuvos mokslų akademijos Vrublevskių biblioteka, F9 3116 (Diary of the Confederation of Tarnogród)
F	Fondas (archival section)
IIMI	Istoriko-iuridicheskie materialy
Ks	Księga (book)
LMAVB	Lietuvos mokslų akademijos Vrublevskių biblioteka
LVIA	Lietuvos valstybės istorijos archyvas
LVIALM	Lietuvos valstybės istorijos archyvas, Lietuvos metrika (Lithuanian *metryka*)
LVIASA	Lietuvos valstybės istorijos archyvas, Senieji aktai (Old acts)
NHAB	Natsyianal'ny histarychny arkhiŭ Belarusi
NS	New Style

Op	Opis' (inventory)
OS	Old Style
OSS	Biblioteka Ossolineum
Rkps	Rękopis (manuscript)
Pawł	Rękopisy Pawłik
PIB	Pis'ma i bumagi Imperatora Petra Velikogo
RGADA	Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv drevnikh aktov, F79 Op. I
SIRIO	Sbornik imperatorskogo russkogo istoricheskogo obshchestva
SMPK	Sbornik materialov i statei po istorii Pribaltiiskogo kraia
SP	Sheremetev – pis'ma k gosudariu imperatoru Petru Velikomu
TNA	The National Archives
VL	Volumina legum
VUB	Vilniaus universiteto biblioteka
ZMN	Zbiór z Muzeum Narodowego

Figure I.1 The Commonwealth of Poland-Lithuania in 1709
Source: Map drawn by Simona Stelmokaitė.

Introduction

The Polish-Lithuanian political system

The Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania were connected by a loose union that gradually grew closer until, in 1569, the Union of Lublin established a new multicultural and multireligious polity, called the Commonwealth of the Two Nations (also known as Poland-Lithuania, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, or simply the Commonwealth). The Union of Lublin established common institutions: an elective monarchy and a common parliament (Sejm). The union formally merged Polish and Lithuanian nobilities into a single noble estate (szlachta). According to various studies, it comprised 5–10 per cent of the total population. Yet Lithuania managed to preserve its separate treasury, system of offices, and the army, while Lithuanian nobles retained their sense of distinctiveness from the Polish nobility. The Kingdom of Poland (*Korona* or the Crown) was not an integral country itself. It consisted of three major parts enjoying greater or smaller degrees of autonomy: Royal Prussia (the palatinates of Pomerania, Chełmno, and Malbork), Wielkopolska (the palatinates of Poznań and Kalisz), Małopolska (several palatinates from which the most important were Sandomierz, Kraków, Lublin, Volhynia, and Podolia), and Mazovia, incorporated in 1529. These regions regarded themselves as parts of the Commonwealth and retained a greater or lesser degree of autonomy.

The king's powers were limited. He was theoretically elected by universal suffrage of all nobles, but usually the nobles of particular territories elected several dozen representatives to participate in a monarchical election in Warsaw. Substantial prerogatives were lost in favour of the szlachta after the death of the last king of the Jagiellonian dynasty, Sigismund August, in 1572. When the new king, Henri of France, was elected, he had to confirm the *Articuli Henriciani*, a statute which was compiled by the szlachta to secure their freedoms. The king promised not to attempt to elect a successor during his own lifetime. He was not allowed to recruit troops and impose taxes without parliamentary consent, nor could he adopt any decision contrary to the Commonwealth's freedoms, laws, and liberties. When the king died, an election was called by the primate, the archbishop of Gniezno.

Every new king had to confirm the *Articuli Henriciani* and the *Pacta conventa*, a compendium of specific commitments of what the new king would do for the country before he was crowned. These documents established the limits of royal power and defined the extent of noble rights, which were called 'the Golden Freedom'.

The political doctrine of the Commonwealth was that the nobles should run their own affairs, free from any interference. The Sejm was a centre of political life. King Alexander's statute of 1505 determined that only the Sejm can pass new laws, called *konstytucje* (sg. *konstytucja*). The parliament was composed of an upper chamber, the Senate, and a lower house – the Chamber of Envoys, presided over by the elective marshal, in which the real legislative power lay. The Senate comprised Catholic bishops, palatines, castellans, and government ministers. There were about 150 members in the Senate and 172 szlachta delegates in the Chamber of Envoys in the early eighteenth century. Lithuanian representatives comprised only 1/5 of the Senate while in the Chamber of Envoys the number of Lithuanian delegates was slightly under 1/3. To facilitate the running of the Sejm provincial sessions were called. Wielkopolska, Małopolska, and Lithuania had their separate provincial sessions. Each of these three provinces, as well as Mazovia and Royal Prussia, had their own gathering (general *sejmik*) which met before the Sejm. In this assembly, delegates and senators from one particular province resolved their differences. The unanimity of decision-making was in force during the Sejm. The fundamental right of every noble to force an immediate end to the Sejm, nullifying all resolutions, was called the *liberum veto*. Its first use was in 1652 and in the eighteenth century this right turned, or rather degenerated, from a tool of constitutional defence against the monarch or other delegates to a means of fighting between different political groupings. By the mid-eighteenth century, it completely paralysed the functioning of Sejms. The Union of Lublin abolished separate Lithuanian Sejms, but the quasi-legislative gatherings of Lithuanian senators and szlachta envoys, called convocations, remained. They were called by the king or Lithuanian ministers in times of great urgency, usually to raise taxes and when there was not enough time to wait for the Sejm to be called. They were common in the early seventeenth century but were called out rarely later on; the last convocation was summoned by the king in 1671. The practice of the summoning of convocations, however, revived in 1698 in a shape of the gatherings of the nobility convened not by the king but by the leading Lithuanian officials or ministers.

The Sejm appointed 16 senators to reside at the king's court and serve him with their advice, but they could be joined by any other senator at any time. The meetings of senators were called the *Senatus Consilium* ('Senate councils'). Such meetings could be convened by the king at any time. It had a dual function as an executive body empowered, within the limits set by the Sejm, to take executive decisions between the Sejm sessions, but also to keep an eye on the king and his actions. Although formally no important

questions, for example, peace or war and new taxes, which were under the jurisdiction of the Sejm, could be deliberated at the *Senatus Consilium*, this rule was frequently ignored.

The szlachta regarded every king, often not without reason, as a threat to its freedoms; moreover, it suspected the senators of plotting with the king against their liberties. For these reasons, the szlachta viewed the Sejm as a check upon the king, ministers, and senators. From the king's point of view, the Sejm was the main source of the ever-increasing restrictions on his powers. In the second half of the seventeenth century, the increasing disruption of Sejms triggered the growing importance of local noble assemblies, known as sejmiks (*sejmiki*). This increased decentralisation and made the strengthening of the king's powers virtually impossible to achieve. The king, senators, and szlachta found themselves in an endless struggle, presented as a fight between the king's authority and the golden freedom (*inter maiestatem ac libertatem*). These conflicts increased dramatically during the reign of Augustus II (1697–1733), called the strong because of his exceptional physical strength.

Augustus was elector of Saxony at the same time (1694–1733). He was a ruler with big ambitions who had failed in all of his undertakings. The main aim of his long reign was to strengthen his authority in Saxony and in the Commonwealth, if not to establish an absolute monarchy. The relationship between Augustus's Saxon government and the Polish-Lithuanian state was complex. The king relied on the inner circle of his advisers who were mostly Saxons or from that court and among whom Jacob Flemming was the most prominent. Augustus frequently took decisions in this circle, before presenting them for approval by the Commonwealth's institutions. Saxon interference into Polish-Lithuanian affairs caused growing dissatisfaction among the Poles and Lithuanians; and, conversely, there was widespread discontent among the Saxon nobility at the king's involvement into Polish affairs. Augustus came from a state whose model of government posed a threat to the basic philosophy and nature of the noble political system and the right of free election. Neither Augustus nor his Saxon advisers were trusted to respect the freedoms of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

The territory of Lithuania was divided into nine palatinates, the majority of which (with the exception of Samogitia, Połock, and Mścisław) consisted of several districts. After Smoleńsk was formally ceded to Russia in 1667 Lithuania retained the offices of this palatinate, but they became mere titular posts. Every territorial unit, be it a palatinate or a district, had its own noble self-government, each with courts and a regular sejmik. There were different types of regular sejmiks: Candlemas sejmiks, which elected judges for the Lithuanian Supreme Tribunal, the institution in which the highest judicial power was vested; parliamentary sejmiks, which preceded Sejms and elected envoys for the lower chamber; relational sejmiks, which heard reports of their envoys on the Sejm; and economic sejmiks, which were summoned on the day after Candlemas sejmiks to adopt decisions vital for the

functioning of a district, for example, to elect tax collectors or local officials. Formally, the king's permission was needed for every sejmik to gather. But the constant disruption of Sejms meant that sejmiks had to be convened more frequently to solve urgent problems such as the payment of troops. Therefore, a new phenomenon, the prorogation of sejmik sessions known as *limita* appeared. If a sejmik ended in *limita*, it could be renewed at any time by the leading local officials. This represented an incursion upon the royal prerogative, and monarchs unsuccessfully fought against the practice from the mid-seventeenth century.

Office holding was the most important factor in determining social status, and often wealth, in Polish-Lithuanian noble society. All offices were held for life, and office holders would resign only if appointed to another, usually higher, office. All offices, with the exception of a few local posts nominated by palatines, were appointed by the king. Central offices included palatines, castellans, ministers, and other officials (see tables I.1, I.2, I.3, and I.4).

Palatines and castellans lost much of their administrative significance in the mid-sixteenth century. The main responsibility of the palatine was the command of the general levy of nobles in his palatinate. The palatine was empowered to call the local sejmik on some occasions and enjoyed certain

Table I.1 Lithuanian bishops and palatines in hierarchical order, 1710–1717

Office	*Person*	*Notes*
Bishop of Vilnius	Konstanty Brzostowski	
Bishop of Samogitia	Jan Zgierski	† 1713
	Paweł Sapieha	† 1715
	Aleksander Horain	Appointed 1716
Bishop of Smoleńsk	Aleksander Horain	Promoted 1716
Palatine of Vilnius	Kazimierz Sapieha	
Palatine of Troki	Kazimierz Ogiński	
Starosta of Samogitia	Kazimierz Zaranek	
Palatine of Smoleńsk	Jan Koss	† 1712
	Aleksander Potocki	† 1714
	Franciszek Cetner	Appointed 1714
Palatine of Połock	Dominik Słuszka	† 1713; no appointment was made before 1717
Palatine of Nowogródek	Jan Radziwiłł	
Palatine of Witebsk	Kazimierz Pociej	
Palatine of Brest	Władysław Sapieha	
Palatine of Mścisław	Michał Siesicki	† 1713
	Jan Tyzenhauz	Appointed 1714
Palatine of Mińsk	Krzysztof Zenowicz	

Source: Józef Wolff, *Senatorowie i dygnitarze Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego 1386–1795* (Kraków, 1885); Andrzej Rachuba and Henryk Lulewicz, eds., *Urzędnicy centralni i dygnitarze Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego XIV–XVIII wieku* (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1994).

Table I.2 Lithuanian castellans in hierarchical order, 1710–1717

Office	*Person*	*Notes*
Castellan of Vilnius	Ludwik Pociej	
Castellan of Troki	Mikołaj Ogiński Jan Fryderyk Sapieha	† 1715 Appointed 1716
Castellan of Samogitia	Aleksander Uniechowski	
Castellan of Smoleńsk	Karol Sokoliński-Drucki Krzysztof Szczyt	† 1713 Appointed 1713
Castellan of Połock	Michał Pac	
Castellan of Nowogródek	Antoni Nowosielski	
Castellan of Witebsk	Marcjan Ogiński	
Castellan of Brest	Renald Sadowski	
Castellan of Mścisław	Michał Kamiński Benedykt Brzostowski	† 1715 Appointed 1715
Castellan of Mińsk	Jan Fryderyk Sapieha Daniel Wyhowski	Promoted 1713 Appointed 1713

Source: Wolff, *Senatorowie*; Rachuba and Lulewicz, *Urzędnicy centralni i dygnitarze*.

Table I.3 Lithuanian ministers in hierarchical order, 1710–1717

Office	*Person*	*Notes*
Grand marshal	Marcjan Wołłowicz Aleksander Sapieha	† 1712 Appointed 1713
Chancellor	Karol Radziwiłł	
Vice-chancellor	Stanisław Szczuka Kazimierz Czartoryski	† 1710 De facto appointed 1710
Marshal of the court	Józef Mniszech Paweł Sanguszko	Promoted 1713 Appointed 1713
Treasurer	Michał Kocieł	

Source: Wolff, *Senatorowie*; Rachuba and Lulewicz, *Urzędnicy centralni i dygnitarze*.

administrative functions in royal towns. Even though the castellan used to be a deputy of the palatine, by the early eighteenth century, it was a mere titular office. There was one palatine (see table I.1) and one castellan (see table I.2) per palatinate in Lithuania.

Ministers in Table I.3 were the five government ministers of senatorial rank. The grand marshal's main duties included keeping order at the royal court. The marshal of the court was the grand marshal's deputy. Much more important were the chancellor and vice-chancellor. The latter was lower in status but was not subordinated to the chancellor. All royal documents for Lithuania had to be sealed by the Lithuanian chancellor or the vice-chancellor. A document sealed by the Polish chancellor was not valid. Therefore, the chancellor's post gave a solid lever of power to resist the

Table I.4 The most important Lithuanian officials in alphabetical order, 1710–1717

Office	*Person*	*Notes*
Court *chorąży*	Michał Tyzenhauz Michał Puzyna	Resigned 1712 Appointed 1712
Court treasurer	Paweł Sanguszko Józef Sapieha	Promoted 1713 Appointed 1713
Field hetman	Stanisław Denhoff	
Field scribe	Michał Sapieha	
Field *strażnik*	Lukasz Baranowicz	
Grand hetman	Ludwik Pociej	
Krajczy	Michał Radziwiłł	
Łowczy	Hrehory Kotowicz	
Miecznik	Mikołaj Radziwiłł	
Oboźny	Michał Chalecki Antoni Pociej	† 1715 Promoted 1715
Podczaszy	Kazimierz Czartoryski Fryderyk Denhoff	Promoted 1712 Appointed 1712
Referendary	Wincenty Wołłowicz	
Scribe	Krzysztof Pac	
Skarbny	Jan Szretter	
Stolnik	Jerzy Sapieha	
Strażnik	Stanisław Potocki	

Source: Wolff, *Senatorowie*; Rachuba and Lulewicz, *Urzędnicy centralni i dygnitarze*.

king's policies if the chancellor wanted. As a rule, this post was always held by the leading Lithuanian families. The treasurer was entitled to administrate all taxes, but by the early eighteenth century, he had lost most of his practical authority to sejmiks. In the Senate, these office holders were joined by the bishops of Vilnius, Samogitia, and Smoleńsk formally regarded as the leading Lithuanian senators in the hierarchy. Bishops of Smoleńsk continued to be appointed, but since this territory was lost, they were much lower in status to compare with the bishops of Vilnius or Samogitia.

In addition, there were several dozen central officials in Lithuania (see table I.4). This group included important offices, some held by powerful figures and endowed with important functions and posts which were entirely honorific. The most important officials were the grand and field hetmans: they commanded the Lithuanian army, allocated winter quarters, paid the troops' wages, and appointed lower-rank officers. The field hetman was not subordinated to the grand hetman. Although the hetmans were not Senate members ex officio, they were usually appointed to other offices of senatorial rank; in the case of the grand hetman usually that of the palatine of Vilnius. The court treasurer, who had once administered the king's private income, had become a titular dignity by the start of the eighteenth century.

Some of the other non-senatorial offices were related to military and fiscal affairs. The grand and field *strażnik* (guardian) were the closest associates of the hetmans. At first, their responsibilities included safeguarding the country's borders, but in the early eighteenth century, they were commanders of army divisions. The *oboźny* (master of the camp) used to be responsible for the selection of the place of army encampments, but like the grand *strażnik*, in the early eighteenth century, the *oboźny* commanded a division of the army. The grand and court *chorąży* (standard-bearer) once bore the standard of Lithuania on the battlefield but became only titular dignities. The scribe and field scribe were more important offices, as they frequently took part in the inspection of the army before it was allowed to move to winter-quarters.[1] The *skarbny* (treasury secretary) was the treasurer's deputy. Other central dignities, including the offices of *podczaszy* (cup-bearer), *stolnik* (steward), *miecznik* (swordbearer), were usually held by young members of magnate houses, for whom these offices were a springboard for senatorial offices. Other offices such as *łowczy* (master of the hunt) were given to middling nobles by the king, often as a final reward for their lifetime participation in the country's politics.

Some of the district officials were directly appointed by the king while others were elected by sejmiks, but they also needed the king's approval. The most prestigious office in a district's hierarchy was the marshal. The central districts of the multi-district palatinates had no marshals because their duties were performed by castellans. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the marshal presided at the local sejmik sessions, but by the early eighteenth century, sejmiks usually elected a new sejmik marshal for each session, or a marshal to preside over the sessions for the whole year. The district marshal or the district *chorąży* would also command a local noble levy if it was summoned by the king. Although the armed musters and general levy had completely lost their military value by the mid-seventeenth century, such gatherings of armed szlachta did not disappear but became a popular way of expressing the district's opinion. For this reason, such offices like the district *chorąży* afforded great opportunities for establishing a political career and were actively sought by ambitious middling nobles.

The administrative reforms of the 1560s established several courts in each district. The most important were the land court and the castle court. Both courts had their judges and scribes. The position of the land court officials in the formal hierarchy was much higher because they were elected by sejmiks, while officials of the castle court were appointed by palatines or in some cases by starostas. There were a number of titular offices in the district which resembled the central offices: *stolnik*, *podstoli*, *wojski*, etc. Apart from the status they conveyed, such offices allowed nobles to take an appointed seat during sejmik sessions at the front of the assembly hall. The starosta was an official whom the king had appointed for life to administer a royal estate, called a starosty (*starostwo*). Starosties comprised some 15–20 per cent of the Commonwealth's land. Many of the central and local offices were appointed together with certain starosties. The starosta

in Samogitia was called the *ciwun* since, for historic reasons, the starosta (sometimes called the general starosta) of Samogitia was the equivalent of a palatine elsewhere in Lithuania.

In 1581, the king renounced his supreme judicial authority and established the Lithuanian Supreme Tribunal (*Trybunał*), which became the highest judicial instance in Lithuania for cases involving the nobility. It comprised judges elected at Candlemas sejmiks. The Tribunal presided over by an elective marshal, sat in Vilnius, Nowogródek, or Mińsk. Formally, it was an appeal court for cases examined at the district courts, but in the early eighteenth century, many preferred to register their complaints directly to the Tribunal. One of the highest sentences which the Tribunal could pass was *infamia* (the deprivation of honour).

State income was derived from taxes which can be divided into two major groups: ordinary and extraordinary charges. Extraordinary taxes on noble and royal lands (starosties) could only be levied by the Sejm because noble farms were exempted from such taxes according to noble privileges issued since 1374. The Sejm could levy extraordinary charges on all types of lands or only on noble lands with the exception of starosties, and vice versa. In 1710–1717 in Lithuania, there was only one type of extraordinary taxation: the hearth tax, levied in 1710 and in 1716. The *hyberna*, tax paid from starosties for winter-quarters, the *kwarta*, tax paid from starosties for the army, the *czopowe szelężne*, tax paid by nobles, merchants, Jews, and residents of cities from the production of alcoholic drinks, customs duties, tax paid by merchants and nobles, and the Jewish poll tax constituted the ordinary charges. Declining receipts from taxes compelled the Sejm to establish a new institution in Lithuania, called the Fiscal Tribunal (*Trybunał Skarbowy*), to supervise the collectors in 1613. It was formed by judges elected at sejmiks and resembled the Supreme Tribunal. The only major difference was that the former needed the Sejm's authorisation to convene while the latter would gather annually on its own authority. The structure of the Polish-Lithuanian armies was identical. Both consisted of two major parts: the national contingent and the foreign contingent. The former comprised hussars (heavy cavalry), petyhors (medium-armoured cavalry), light cavalry, and Hungarian-style infantry; the latter included dragoons, reitars, and German-style infantry. The establishment of the state army was called the *komput*. Apart from the state army, szlachta from every district were obliged to attend armed musters and the general levy if it was summoned by the king. After 1648, sejmiks often raised their own cavalry companies, which were commanded by local colonels and captains elected at Candlemas sejmiks. These forces were used for the forcible collection of taxes or for the defence of the district. If these companies were raised for a short time, no payment was given.

Confederations, or noble leagues, whose origins can be traced back to the fourteenth century, played an important role. When the Polish estate representation was forming, such leagues were created to maintain peace

between subjects or to preserve certain privileges of particular people living within a limited territory. After the death of Sigismund August, the last Jagiellon king, the elections of 1573, 1576, and 1587 established the procedures that regulated all subsequent royal elections. Confederations were to be formed after the death of each king because it was believed to be the best means to maintain public order. Gradually the szlachta began to regard confederations as an alternative, authorised, and legitimate form of government that could be formed at any time in response to internal or external crises. From the mid-seventeenth to the mid-eighteenth century, nine national or General Confederations were formed in the Commonwealth, not counting the interregnum and dozens of regional, provincial, or military confederations. The army confederations were usually formed because of payment delays. Some confederations met 'with the king' to help him govern more effectively. Using the legal right to disobey the king who violated their *Pacta conventa*, confederations 'against the king', called the *rokosz* (a legal rebellion), were formed.

With virtually no legislation to determine the formation and organisation of these unions, tradition and earlier confederations served as an example. The formation of confederation could only be initiated at gatherings of nobles which formally proclaimed an act of confederation (*akt konfederacji*), in which the reasons for forming the confederation and its aims were stated. The act determined the confederation's leadership and conditions of accession. The direction of confederations was in the hands of a marshal, elected by the confederates, and an elected council, which did not recognise the *liberum veto* and enacted decisions based on majority vote. A confederate council could replace the Sejm if the king joined the confederation. Although the organisation of confederacies experienced significant changes over the years, a notable feature of the confederate council was that both chambers were in session together, in contrast to the Sejm, where they only assembled at the end to approve agreed legislation. Yet the procedures of the confederate council were similar to the Sejm: it could be preceded by sejmiks and provincial sessions were usually called.

The Great Northern War and the Commonwealth

This study is the first major research in any language on the politics of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the crucial period of Polish-Lithuanian history. This book tackles the question of why the Polish and Lithuanian nobles who had re-installed Augustus's kingship at the confederate council of Warsaw in 1710 on a very solid foundation moved from loyalty to the rebellion in the autumn of 1715. To answer this question one needs to open a window into the nature of the political process in Lithuania, affected by sustained warfare, split by controversial policy of the court, driven by the independence of sejmiks, aspirations of the petty and middling nobility, family feuds, political grievances, or the pursuit of landed wealth.

Late seventeenth-century Lithuania was dominated by the Sapieha family. That one family should have the upper hand in Lithuanian politics was not new: the Radziwiłłs enjoyed considerable power before the 1650s, only to be succeeded by the Pac clan. King Jan Sobieski's (1674–1696) major error was to put all the important offices in the hands of the Sapiehas: Benedykt was appointed Lithuanian treasurer in 1676 while his brother Kazimierz became grand hetman in 1682. The Sapiehas achieved political and financial authority the Radziwiłłs or Pac could have only dreamed of. The overall decline of the Sejm provided them the opportunity to subordinate Lithuanian senators and central officials. Furthermore, the financial strength of the Sapiehas was gradually increasing. In the late seventeenth century, their hereditary domains together with tenured royal lands estimated 8.6 per cent of total estates in Lithuania. Only the Radziwiłłs had similar economic power; however, a large part of their estates was situated in Poland.[2] The overwhelming domination of the Sapiehas threatened other Lithuanian clans. It was precisely because there was nobody in a position of authority who could oppose the Sapiehas that they were able to mount an effective opposition to the court.

Breaking the hold of the leading Lithuanian family generally required the combined forces of the king, a powerful Lithuanian family, and the nobility's support. Jan Sobieski played an essential part in encouraging the formation of the opposition to the Sapiehas, formed of the Pociejs, Ogińskis, Kociełłs, and Brzostowskis. In the 1690s, the Republican movement, called after the term 'Republic of Lithuania' that was frequently used by the nobility to define the polity of Lithuania, gained momentum. The movement, mainly composed of the szlachta, called for the reduction of the powers of Lithuanian ministers according to the Polish example. The final phase of this movement found strong support among the Polish nobility which played a substantial role in implementing the new law, called *coaequatio iurum* (equalisation of laws), at the Election Sejm of 1697 after the death of Jan Sobieski. The law eliminated the Lithuanian chancellor's right to approve certain adjudications, limited some of the grand hetman's powers on billeting, granted Lithuanian districts the administration of taxes, and instituted Polish as the official language in Lithuania.[3] Although conventional opinions portray this law as a contributor to the development of provincial political awareness, as a consolidation of political and cultural integrity between Poland and Lithuania or the nobility's victory over the magnates, embodied by the Sapiehas,[4] the legislation was rather the result of a collision between the Sapiehas and other magnates in opposition.[5] The legislation allowed the Republican movement (sometimes called the anti-Sapieha movement by scholars) to coalesce with magnates disaffected with the domination of Sapiehas. The nobility received leaders to guide them while the magnates gained the force they needed. The slogan of the complete removal of Sapiehas from military, economy, or judicial affairs was raised; the Sapiehas, however, were inclined neither to obey the c*oaequatio iurum*