

INTRODUCTION

German-language letters account for about 40% of the known correspondence of Ioannes Dantiscus – poet and humanist, diplomat in the service of Sigismund I and Bona Sforza, bishop of Chełmno and Warmia. German was his native tongue, as he was born to a Gdańsk burgher family descended from Prussian gentry of the name of von Höfen, impoverished after the Thirteen Years' War. Thus, German was the natural language of communication for Dantiscus, both on personal matters and in political, economic and cultural contacts in German territories and in the borderland between Prussia and the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

The 2651 German letters known to us mainly document Dantiscus' family ties, his contacts with German princes, noblemen and burghers (primarily the Fuggers, Welzers and their agents), and his activity as a bishop in Royal Prussia.

Apart from a small body of letters published in the final volumes of the series *Acta Tomiciana*¹, so far these materials have only been presented in the part that concerns contacts between Dantiscus the bishop and the court of Prussian Duke Albrecht, in an edition of the registers from the Prussian Dukes' Archives (Herzogliches Briefarchiv)². This is an inventory of the collection housed at the Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz in Berlin-Dahlem, which by its nature does not cover the entirety of known source material. The letters Albrecht and his close circle wrote to Dantiscus that are found only in the form of rough drafts, office copies or registers in Berlin, can be found in the form of original fair copies in Polish archives and libraries. The most important of these institutions are the Warmia Archdiocese Archive in Olsztyn and the Czartoryski Library

¹ AT vol. 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.

² Benninghoven, Hartmann.

in Cracow. On the other hand, fair copies of Dantiscus' letters that are housed in Berlin, often appear in Polish collections in the form of supplementary sources (i.e. rough drafts and office copies).

The inventory presented here, the result of a research program carried out at Warsaw University for some years, *Registration and Publication of the Correspondence of Ioannes Dantiscus (1485-1548)*, aims to provide complete information on the source materials and prints in which Dantiscus' German-language correspondence is available. Hence the volume also includes information on the resources of the Herzogliches Briefarchiv.

The inventory is divided in two parts: part one presents Dantiscus' letters, part two – letters to Dantiscus. Both are arranged in chronological order. The letters have been given consecutive numbers, followed by the name of the addressee (in part one) or the sender (in part two), and the date and place of dispatch.

This information is followed by data concerning manuscript and printed versions of a text. For the manuscripts, apart from the location and catalogue number, sometimes notes are provided in brackets on the source's condition, and in the case of rough copies of Dantiscus' letters, there is also a note on whether the source was handwritten by himself. Information on publication in the inventory of the Prussian Dukes' Archives means the letter is available there in the form of a register, while for other prints – *in extenso*. Any exceptions have been additionally marked.

Next comes the *incipit*, or the letter's first words besides the allocution. The *incipit* is given in transliteration with the abbreviations worked out, except the most of personal titles. The punctuation and the use of capital letters has been modernized: capital letters has been used in personal and geographical names and in the terms that referred to the addressee (e.g. *Eure Gnade, Derselben*). This is followed by information on the date and place where the addressee received the letter (*redditum*), of course only where such information is available (Dantiscus used to note this himself next to the address on letters he received, but he was not absolutely consistent in this). After the *incipit* and *redditum*, separated by a semicolon, come notes on the date of the reply, or the basis on which the addressee or date not contained in the source was identified. This information was one of the most difficult tasks of this inventory's compiler, since a large part of the letters has come down in the form of rough drafts or office copies which often lack such data. The reconstructed information is given in square brackets.

The names of Dantiscus' correspondents are provided in a unified form usually reflecting the form used at the time. Most often, German names have been given preference over Polish variants, which are provided in brackets. Whenever the variation of names used by one correspondent is wider, one name has been

selected arbitrarily while the others are included in the index. The best case in point is Dantiscus himself, who used at least five names: the German family name von Höfen and its Latin form *de Curiis*, the family byname Flachsbindler and its Greek translation Linodesmon, as well as the nickname Dantiscus (Dantzig citizen) under which he was most widely known. The names of crowned rulers are given in their English translation. Geographical names have been unified and again the care was taken not to use achronous forms. Next to these names, variants or contemporary names are given in brackets to facilitate identification. Complete information on the names is provided in the index.

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