

RELIGIOUS JUSTIFICATION OF THE KING'S AUTHORITY
IN POLISH POLITICAL THOUGHT
IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 18TH CENTURY

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Abstract. The Polish monarchists presented a providence-based interpretation of the abduction of the king in November 1771 and his rescue. The trust in the authority of Providence, the manifestation of which was that the monarch guaranteed order in the state. Thanks to continuous confirmation of the royal anointing, the transfer of the relationship between God and the guarantor of the world order, and the relationship between the monarch and the guarantor of the state order might have been achieved. Such a perception of the anointing must have inspired great trust in the actions of Stanisław August.

The process of sacralization of royal power was stopped by the expansion of Enlightenment rationalism. Polish theorists of state did not always follow the path of challenging the divine origin of power, which was set by Western European philosophers. In Polish political thought the idea of charisma was very rare, which does not condition its negation. We may venture a claim that in the period extending from Stanisław Konarski's late works until the first works of Stanisław Staszic the idea of charisma as a feature of royal authority disappeared from the Polish political theory and reflections on the authority.

Keywords: charisma of power; mission; theory of power; Enlightenment thought; Polish political thought

According to Max Weber's classical definition, charisma is authority seen as a heavenly gift, exercised as a mission. This sense of mission is the main argument

of the charisma bearer in their demands of obedience and submission, the demands directed towards the subjects.¹ Weber indicated also a fundamental difference between authority exercised by means of a charisma and patriarchal authority and the authority based on the clerical system (functional authority). This element which differentiates the issue of authority in the theory of the German sociologist is the most. In this critical view the charisma was seen as an additional attribute of exercising the authority in the modern times.

The theories of Thomas Hobbes were a turning point for the modern theory of charisma. He suggested the solution of the authority system duality through the total submission of religious authority to secular authority. This idea of unity of the church and the state leads already in the 18th century to the creation of so called state cults, led by the “bourgeois religion” of Jean Jacques Rousseau and (real, not theoretical) cult of reason during the French Revolution. The crowning of this process would be Kant’s theories of the ethics theology and the moral atheism of reason, widely discussed in the late 18th century. Since then the moral behaviour is deemed to be unrelated to the existence of God who would determine the rules of such behaviour.²

In the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (Rzeczpospolita, or the Republic), the Biblical principle saying that all authority comes from God was commonly accepted.³ This could lead to assigning charisma to the authority, but also to questioning the authority exercised in contrast with the divine laws. The attempts to eliminate theology from the idea of state appeared already in the 16th century in Poland. The discussions concerned mostly the problem of legal responsibility of the king for his actions.⁴ This issue resulted in the reinterpretations of the theory of charisma in modern Polish political thought. This does not influence the fact that the conviction that the king was sacralised during the coronation ceremony was very

¹ M. WEBER, *The Three Types of Legitimate Rule*, “Berkeley Publications in Society and Institutions” 4 (1958), p. 1-11.

² W. JAESCHKE, *Religia i państwo w filozofii nowożytnej*, in: *Idee filozoficzne w polityce*, ed. T. Buksiński, Poznań 1998, p. 111, 113. The greatest Enlightenment criticism of the charisma as theocratic justification of the state authority was presented by Diderot; see his *Autorité politique*, in: *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, vol. I, Paris 1751, p. 898-900.

³ The main source of charisma in the Bible was the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans in which he wrote: “There is no authority which does not origin from God, and this which exists is established by God. Who objects the authority – objects to the divine order” Romans 13:1-2. However, an important role in the process of justifying and spreading the idea of anointing was played by the borrowings from the royal psalms referring to the image of an angel which is sent to the earth to protect the king from the regicide. See: Psalms 17, 63, 91.

⁴ U. AUGUSTYNIAK, *Wazowie i „królowie rodacy”*. *Studium władzy królewskiej w Rzeczypospolitej XVII wieku*, Warszawa 1999, p. 31.

common in the said period. The "anointment" gave him the power and the priesthood. As Urszula Augustyniak highlights in the Polish monarchy the coronation ceremony was especially important, because the elective king could not derive the divine element from his origin. According to the author of *Studium władzy królewskiej w Rzeczypospolitej XVII wieku*, the only source of charisma for a Polish king was being anointed by a priest.⁵ However, it seems that the source of sanctity was already the mere function of the monarch. As Jean-Paul Roux noticed, it was the function, not the person who was sacred, that is why one may speak of *Sacred Kings*.⁶

In discourses describing the anointing of monarch the king was often compared to Christ. In the most extreme interpretation the king could be seen as Christ – as the king of the kings or as the king-God, a king similar to God. Surprisingly, such an image was the result of the Judaic tradition and the classical tradition at the same time. Already Plato sacralised the kings-philosophers: "And the state will erect statues for their memory. The sacrifices will be made for them as half-gods... as people who are endowed with grace just as gods."⁷ In the case of this model, which had already been anachronic in the 18th century, the Bible had a creative role. In the Polish theory of the royal authority of the second half of the 18th century likening the king to Christ was extremely rare. Only the royal court preacher Sebastian Lachowski did so in a symbolic manner in his *Kazanie podczas czterdziestogodzinnego nabożeństwa* after saving King Stanisław August Poniatowski from attempted assassination by the Bar Confederation.⁸

Another significant change in the theory of charisma was a common acceptance of the idea of social contract. The authority resulting from such a contract was according to George Hegel a totally new phenomenon, as it was based on rational premises.⁹

The literature on the charisma in the Polish modern political thought is lacking. It does not exist for the second half of the 18th century. In the works from the second half of the 20th century the charisma was seen as "Sarmatian ignorance" which was not worth analysis¹⁰ and as an ideology based on Marxist interpretation.¹¹ Antoni Mączak in his *Rządzący i rządzeni. Władza i społeczeństwo*

⁵ Ibidem, p. 70.

⁶ J.P. ROUX, *Król. Mity i symbole*, transl. by K. Marczewska, Warszawa 1998, p. 233.

⁷ PLATO, *The Republic*, ed. R. Waterfield (Oxford World's Classics), Oxford 2004, 540 c-d.

⁸ S. LACHOWSKI, *Kazanie powinności szanowania króla*, Warszawa 1772, p. 21-23; IDEM, *Kazania przeciwko królobójstwu*, Warszawa 1772, p. 11, 17.

⁹ G.W.F. HEGEL, *Zasady filozofii prawa*, Warszawa 1969, p. 250.

¹⁰ I. STASIEWICZ-JASIUKOWA, *Człowiek i obywatel w piśmiennictwie naukowym i podręcznikach polskiego Oświecenia*, Wrocław 1980, p. 38-39.

¹¹ K. GRZYBOWSKI, *Nauka o państwie*, Kraków 1949, p. 106.

w *Europie wczesnonowożytnej*¹² writes about charisma at the European level. Urszula Augustyniak conducted research on the charisma in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 17th century.¹³ But the works by Mączak and Augustyniak, which contributed a lot to the Polish historiography, touch upon the question of charisma marginally. The works that are particularly vital for the attempt to describe the aforementioned notion are the critical analyses of the idea Justification of the King's Authority by Mariusz Markiewicz¹⁴ and Andrzej Stroynowski.¹⁵ Philosophical and theological aspects of the charisma are elaborated upon in the articles of Walter Jaeschke¹⁶ and Tomasz Dutkiewicz.¹⁷ Aleksandra Norkowska¹⁸ and Barbara Wolska¹⁹ conducted detailed analyses of selected aspects of anointing of the king based on specific texts of the political poetry. The issue was also mentioned by Martyna Deszczyńska²⁰ and Richard Butterwick-Pawlikowski²¹ in the context of the clash of Enlightenment and counter-Enlightenment ideas. The elements of the charisma appeared in the royal propaganda, that is why certain aspects of the theory are touched upon by Piotr Ugniewski in his text about the royal propaganda after the events deemed as an attempt of kidnapping Stanisław August.²²

The matter of charismatic authority, as no other question in the political theory of the Enlightenment is closely related to the period when Stanisław August Poniatowski was in power. The election of the King in presence of the Russian army on 6 September 1764 had already generated first texts indicating the

¹² A. MAĆZAK, *Rządzący i rządzeni. Władza i społeczeństwo w Europie wczesnonowożytnej*, Warszawa 2002.

¹³ U. AUGUSTYNIAK, *Wazowie i „królowie rodacy”*.

¹⁴ M. MARKIEWICZ, *Sakralizacja władzy królewskiej w czasach nowożytnych*, in: *Kultura staropolska – poszukiwanie sacrum odnajdywanie profanum*, eds. B. Rok and F. Wolański, (Staropolski ogląd świata), Toruń 2013, p. 27-34.

¹⁵ A. STROYNOWSKI, *Stanisław August – król elekcyjny czy z łaski Bożej?*, in: *Kultura staropolska*, p. 515-530.

¹⁶ W. JAESCHKE, *Religia i państwo*, p. 107-121.

¹⁷ T. DUTKIEWICZ, *Czy władza pochodzi od Boga? Filozoficzne podstawy rozumienia władzy państwowej*, “Theologica Thoruniensia” 4 (2003), p. 381-393.

¹⁸ A. NORKOWSKA, *Stanisław August i powracające Muzy. Rzecz o panegirycznym wierszu elekcyjnym*, “Napis” 4 (1998), p. 56-69; A. NORKOWSKA, “Le Roi-Soleil”? *O kreowaniu królewskiego mitu solarnego w poezji okolicznościowej czasów stanisławowskich*, “Wiek Oświecenia” 15 (1999), p. 185-202.

¹⁹ B. WOLSKA, *W świecie żywiołów, Boga i człowieka. Studia o poezji Adama Naruszewicza*, Łódź 1995.

²⁰ M. DESZCZYŃSKA, *Polskie kontroświecenie*, Warszawa 2011.

²¹ R. BUTTERWICK-PAWLIKOWSKI, *Between Anti-Enlightenment and enlightened Catholicism: Provincial preachers in late eighteenth-century Poland-Lithuania*, “Studies on Voltaire and the eighteenth century” 2008, p. 201-228.

²² P. UGNIEWSKI, “Szkardny występ królobójstwa” w międzynarodowej propagandzie Stanisława Augusta, “Przegląd Historyczny” 3 (2004), p. 327-347.

charisma of this period. They were present in majority poetic texts, but not political theories. The district governor of Rumsza Stanisław Piórko only ten days after the election of the King assessed and described the election in the following way:

*Thus, the Creator glanced at the Polish Crown
with mercy and to salvage it He kindly has come.
Seeing it orphaned and weak
Gave it protection and help
as favourite in all of Europe.
Gave her the greatest lord as a Monarch
This is the sweet, expected truth.*²³

God appointed the king, God chose him – Stanisław Piórko asserted. This was an exceptional choice as Poland was exceptional in his plans. The perfect choice was a sign of care that God had for the Polish State. The notion of sanctioning the political system of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth through transcendence (the gift of God) and special divine protection of Poland was traditional. It reserved exceptional place in the Enlightenment philosophy despite the fact that it was primarily associated with the Sarmatian myth of Poland as the bulwark of Christianity.

A particular revival of panegyrics attributing divine origin to the authority was widely present during subsequent anniversaries of the election. The universal character of the panegyric exultations was based on constant references to the supernatural origin of the king's authority, the authority which was exercised. It may be supposed that in Poland this conviction of the anointing of the king's authority through election was for many authors the only source of charisma. It was so to such an extent that in their theories the king possessed the charisma only on that account, it was not gained during the exercise of power, not inherited with the authority of the throne. This idea determined another conviction that the charisma was not manifested during the exercise of power.

²³ S. PIÓRO, *Aplauz tryumfalny w czasie Elekcji Nowego szczęśliwie obranego Najjaśniejszego Stanisława Augusta Króla Imści polskiego. Najpierwej Światu Palemońskiemu w Stołecznym Mieści J. K. Mości Wilnie w pałacu Piromoncie roku 1764 Dnia 16. septembra Ogłoszony*, [Wilno 1764], n.p. Similar texts were created massively in the period after the election. The authors of similar panegyrics were, for example, Ignacy Krasicki (in *Cnota i mądrość* Krasicki proved that the charisma is over the temporality of the authority, it is independent from it) or Franciszek Dionizy Kniaźnin (in *Do Boga* – incipit – *Ty nami wladasz...*). Kniaźnin published many poems so entitled. The charisma seen by Kniaźnin was so marginal that it wasn't present in a book concerning the religious motives in his works, see T. KOSTKIEWICZOWA, *Transcendencja w liryce Kniaźnina*, in: *Motywy religijne w twórczości pisarzy polskiego Oświecenia*, ed. T. Kostkiewiczowa, Lublin 1995, p. 191-214. Other authors included Józef Bielawski, Kajetan Kościalkowski and Piarists Felicjan Sakowicz and Marcin Eysymont.

In the hereditary monarchy, the royal anointing was a gift received after the predecessor. It was a natural inheritance. In Poland, the element of inheriting the charisma did not exist. That is why the primary intervention of God, that is to say, the election of the king was so important for the Polish theoreticians of authority. The act of election gained a sacred feature. In the second half of the 18th century the actions of Polish kings were rarely attributed to supernatural sources. No information about “God’s hand” or “God’s voice” as the *spiritus movens* of the king’s action was indicated in the Polish theory of authority. In hereditary monarchies it was a natural and frequent phenomenon in the theory and practice of exercising monarchical authority. That is why a hereditary king could not be assessed according to the same moral laws as his subjects. In Poland such a theory could not be accepted.

The incentive for further reflections after the election concerning the royal anointing was provided by the political crisis resulting from the attempted abduction of Stanisław August Poniatowski. Diverse causes of this crisis stem from the specificity of the Polish political and social system. The first sign of problems may be deemed the proclamation of the Bar Confederation, but the final decision of attack on the anointed was made on the 13th October 1770. It was during the session of the Confederation General Command when the secretary Ignacy Bohusz presented the act of interregnum to be approved by the assembly. The document was approved by acclamation, but the generals did not announce it immediately. After nine days the interregnum was proclaimed to the Republic and the world, but the date on it was over two months earlier than the true date of its creation. The document presented the idyll of August III’s rule, and criminal, tyrannical and godless times of Stanisław August’s rule. The author of the act – Ignacy Bohusz, called the Mirabeau of Preszów²⁴ by Charles François Dumouriez – did not miss the royal charisma. He resolved this problem easily by noticing:

Enraged God gives us kings, and we would endure with patience this punishing whip, humiliated by the Highest Hand, if we had chosen [to suffer] it ourselves within the freedom attributed to us by the Providence; but it was imposed by the evil army, ungrateful to God and people, he [i.e. King] destroyed all relationships, betrayed the holy Roman Catholic religion, insulted God’s temples and the secrets that dwell inside them, the houses of virtue and security, he complemented the rage and the punishment, he became himself the object of common curses.²⁵

²⁴ Ch.F. DUMOURIEZ, *Souvenirs et mémoires*, Paris 1899, p. 257-258. The General Command was seated in Preszów.

²⁵ *Interregnum*, in: *Wybór tekstów do dziejów konfederacji barskiej*, ed. W. Konopczyński, Kraków 1928, p. 91.

Bohusz used so many arguments in order to refute accusations of breaching the royal anointing that the discourse became illogical. A thesis about God's sending the king as a punishment for the subjects was not an original measure.²⁶ But this was an interpretation of a rule as an argument justifying the assassins. Already after the attempt to assassinate (or maybe just deprive of freedom) King Stanisław August, Stanisław Konarski would give an answer to this argument of Bohusz writing about "God who punishes us for our sins, whose punishment we should bear with humiliation."²⁷ The rule of punishing the subjects with a bad king was an element of the system, not a reason to deprive the king of his authority. The interpretation of Bohusz, and thus of other confederation members may be seen as opposition to God's will. Such a manner of perceiving the king's anointing was conditioned by the current politics and republican ideas, not a deep reflection on the charisma.

The attribution of the anointing to the aristocratic freedom by the author of the Interregnum Act is fully understandable. It was one of the main features of the republican rhetoric. The argument about an evil, unfavourable choice of Poniątkowski for the Polish throne completes the image of chaotic abundance, created hurriedly and in fear. The abovementioned fragment proves the importance of the charisma in the environment of the Confederation leaders and the aristocracy to which the message was directed. The author of a short text indicated the betrayal of the divine mission by the king, ungratefulness of the Anointed before God, the betrayal of religion, and the profanation of temples. Those were fundamental features of the aristocratic system of values of the second half of the 18th century.

Only by refusing the right to the anointing, were the Confederates able to issue an uncompromising and disastrous appeal:

Join your arms, raise your arm, in the blood of the declared friend of Moscow, the enemy state, the tyrant Stanisław Poniątkowski, cleanse the nation of the disgrace and the insult, beg famous ashes of the sacred, dear to you men, this is what God, whose secrets are deformed, this is what the disparaged religion expects, this is what rights and freedom demand, this is what our homeland, on the verge of final destruction awaits.²⁸

²⁶ This principle will be reversed by Sebastian Lachowski in his sermon after the rescue of Stanisław August Poniątkowski, writing that the divine punishment for the king was giving him the subjects. S. LACHOWSKI, *Kazanie podczas czterdziestogodzinnego nabożeństwa kiedy król JMC pierwszy raz po swoim przypadku stawiał się w kościele [...]*, Warszawa 1772b, p. 24.

²⁷ S. KONARSKI, *Boskiej oparznosci dowód oczywisty. Uwaga historyczna nad strasznym niebezpieczeństwem życia najjaśniejszego Pana, roku 1771, dnia 3 listopada*, in: *Wybór pism politycznych*, ed. W. Konopczyński, Kraków 1921, p. 325.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 92.

The Confederates took the assassination (abduction) of the King to be the fulfilment of God's order by the Interregnum Act and avenging the sacrilege. What is more, Bohusz seemed to attribute the anointing to the future assassins of the King. In his opinion, the Confederation members – the assassins by God's order, were to annihilate the traitor – the King. However, an attempt to assassinate the monarch, even if he was called the traitor of God and motherland, showed how wrong the theories of the General Command were, how absurd the construction of traditional and republican theories was based on challenging the King's charisma.

The Interregnum Act divided the opinion of the aristocracy into two extreme camps – not according to the division into the Confederation members and the royal camp. The criticism and condemnation for the authors appeared also in the group of influential Confederation members being outside the Preszów centre of power, including the bishop of Kamień Adam Stanisław Krasieński.²⁹

For over a year the appeal of the Confederation General Command was ineffective. However, the arguments of Bohusz found themselves determined supporters. Late in the evening, on 3 November 1771 a small group of Confederation members entered Warsaw full of Russian troops. The assassins captured the King who was returning from the residence of Michał Czartoryski, they hurt him and humiliated him. In unknown circumstances the King managed to liberate himself and early in the morning on 4 November, escorted by the guard of Colonel Karol Fryderyk Coccei (the leader of the Crown Infantry Guard), returned to the Royal Castle in Warsaw. The General Command immediately denied any involvement with the "regicides", as the members of the group who abducted the monarch were called. The mere term "regicide" was rather a propaganda attempt to come to terms with the unusual situation. Primarily it was the King and his closest subjects who used the term. Then, it became more common in Poland and abroad due to the endeavours of Poniatowski and the monarchists.³⁰ If the assassins had intended to murder the King, they would surely have done it. It seems that probably they tried to put him before the General Command, which possessed judiciary competences.³¹ The events of that November night triggered an international affair. In December 1771, answers to appeals dispatched to royal courts of Europe by Stanisław August started to arrive. Naturally, even those monarchs who saw the Confederation as a perfect tool for political activity in this part of Europe

²⁹ List by A.S. Krasieński to Józef Zboiński, 7 November 1770, in: *Konfederacja barska: wybór tekstów*, ed. W. Konopczyński, Kraków 1928, p. 93-96.

³⁰ W. KONOPCZYŃSKI, *Konfederacja barska*, Warszawa 1991, vol. 2, p. 580.

³¹ W. STANEK, *Konfederacje generalne koronne w XVIII wieku*, Toruń 1991, p. 146-159; A. ABRAMSKI, *Sądownictwo podczas konfederacji w Polsce 1672-1793*, Katowice 1986, p. 84-93.

and who unofficially supported the leaders of the Bar movement condemned the attack on the freedom, majesty and, in public opinion, life of the monarch.

Polish bishops, by condemning the regicide in their pastoral letters, induced the offensive of pro-royal discussions after the attempted assassination. On 9 November, the Bishop of Poznań Andrzej Młodziejowski was the first to write a published letter. He was followed by the Bishop of Chełm Antoni Onufry Okęcki (13 November), the Bishop of Wrocław Antoni Ostrowski (15 November, the administrator of the Kraków diocese Józef Olechowski (23 November). Those letters lacked a deeper political reflection, they mostly indicated the threats which awaited the Republic in case of a successful assassination. Their major role was to intensify the discussion and create predictive descriptions of an assassination. And the pastoral letters induced a diverse reflection concerning the royal anointing. The discussion started at the beginning of 1772.

The sermons after the assassination doubled the theses of the bishops which existed already before. Grzegorz Piramowicz announced that the death of “the king who was thinking about the welfare of the homeland would be the demise of the homeland, [as the preacher addressed the king] oh, the King, with the entirety and the life of yours the entirety, the welfare and the blooming of the homeland is united.”³² The texts of the sermons most of all confirmed divine election of the king, proving that during the assassination attempt it was God who saved the king from death. The preachers agreed with regard to the interpretation and meaning of the “miracle” of the liberation. Sebastian Lachowski expressed it explicitly by marking that “it was God who saved our lord and king, not a man, this is a true miracle... God who saved him pushed away the sacrilegious hand and made him back to the throne.”³³ Then, the preacher quickly rejected any opinions, including those expressed by the Interregnum Act about the unfavourable choice of the king during the 1764 election. If the objections of the confederation were to be true, God wouldn't save the king from the November “assassination”.³⁴

³² G. PIRAMOWICZ, *Na wotywnie dziękczynienie panu Bogu za zachowanie króla jegomości z przypadku z dnia 3 na 4 listopada*, Warszawa 1772, p. 15-16. Grzegorz Zacharasiewicz identified the rescue of the king with the rescue of *us all*; G. ZACHARASIEWICZ, *O powinności szanowania króla*, Warszawa 1772, p. 12.

³³ S. LACHOWSKI, *Kazanie podczas czterdziestogodzinnego nabożeństwa*, p. 23. Similar fragments can be found in the sermon of Grzegorz Piramowicz; G. PIRAMOWICZ, *Na wotywnie dziękczynienie panu Bogu*, p. 3, 4, 6, 15. The role of Providence in the rescue of Stanisław August was often highlighted in the sermons.

³⁴ S. LACHOWSKI, *Kazanie podczas czterdziestogodzinnego nabożeństwa*, p. 24.

Such a perception of the events which happened on the night of 3rd November 1771 bears significant theoretical consequences for my reflections. Some of the authors of the sermons which appeared after the attack assessed the rescue of Stanisław August Poniatowski as his repeated election to the Polish throne. Grzegorz Zacharasiewicz noted: “the King is... not only once given from God, but also confirmed by the miracle of the Providence again.”³⁵ But while Zacharasiewicz saw the rescue of the King as the confirmation of the royal anointment, Lachowski wrote about the confirmation of the King’s predispositions to rule and about a repeated non-elective choice. He said: “First he was raised to the throne by the Polish hearts and the human hands, today was only confirmed by the hand of the Greatest God.”³⁶ It was not solely a confirmation, it was an election without human mediation (a political one – of the aristocratic electors, but also without foreign influence, read Moscow). Thanks to this the anointing became pure and unquestionable. Only Piramowicz thought it was necessary to recall an old rule of the election field: “common voice of the whole nation, the enlightened and well-wishing nation shall confirm and precise the God’s choice.”³⁷ He did not name the November rescue of the king another real, as non-mediated election.

Stanisław Konarski had no doubts as for the nature of the confederation members’ actions. The cooperation between the Piarist and the Czartoryski camp began around 1763. After Poniatowski’s election the cooperation between the king and Konarski became closer and closer every year.³⁸ After the abduction attempt he explained:

The head of the Holy Catholic Church, the Rome and universal councils and any doctors of the holy Church explicitly and severely prohibit the assassination, even on the plea of tyranny, of holy rulers, as a crime of sacrilege, the greatest crime, and this is based on the sentence of the God himself: “Don’t touch those whom I anointed.”³⁹

The regicide according to this ancient Piarist was a sacrilege, in accordance with the laws of God and Church institutions. Konarski also repeated the principle

³⁵ G. ZACHARASIEWICZ, *O powinności szanowania króla*, p. 53. The revival of the divine anointing of the king was common among ancient Greek monarchies. The new consecration took place after eight years of ruling. See: J.G. FRAZER, *Złota gałąź. Studia z magii i religii*, Warszawa 2002, p. 221. The literature is full of opinions that the propaganda actions of Stanisław August after the attack resulted from his conviction about a marvelous nature of his rescue. This is proved by passion with which he collected memories after the assassination night. See: Z. ŻYGULSKI jr., *Garnitur nie-szczęśliwości króla Stanisława Augusta*, “Roczniki Humanistyczne” 47 (1999), no. 4, p. 240.

³⁶ S. LACHOWSKI, *Kazanie podczas czterdziestogodzinnego nabożeństwa*, p. 24.

³⁷ G. PIRAMOWICZ, *Na wotywnie dziękczynienie panu Bogu*, p. 8.

³⁸ J. NOWAK-DŁUŻEWSKI, *Stanisław Konarski*, Warszawa 1989, p. 79-80.

³⁹ S. KONARSKI, *Boskiej opatrności dowód oczywisty*, p. 325.

which appeared in the sermons, that the divine anointing is unalterable even in the case of tyranny. Konarski accused the supporters of the French Enlightenment of the attempt to breach the charismatic authority of the monarch by the confederation, saying: "as enemies of God, they are the enemies of the nation and the human society."⁴⁰ When writing about the strength of this sect in Poland, Konarski was highly reserved. However, it may be supposed that the group which wants to "overthrow the throne" and thus "overthrow the altars" was deemed to be Polish republicans led by Michał Wielhorski and Franciszek Rostworowski. It is difficult to judge whether Konarski was right in perceiving republicans as deists, however, undoubtedly they were supporters of radically republican solutions as for the state system inspired by the works of John Locke and Jean Jacques Rousseau. Undoubtedly they also did not relate the law of nature to the law of God. The former was seen as the basis of state authority. Importantly, they wanted to get to know this law of nature by means of reason.⁴¹

Konarski did not describe the King's anointing. Neither did he present subsequent descriptions about the role of the Providence in saving Poniatowski, as Lachowski, Piramowicz or Zacharasiewicz did. He saw God primarily as the judge of the kings. So if Stanisław August was saved from the assassination, God did not save him, Konarski thought, due to the anointment (the existence of which he did not doubt) but due to proper fulfilment of the mission received from God. The totality of this logic is included in the context of the philosophy from the times of Konarski. Saving life of Stanisław August did not mostly confirm his anointing, but the intervention of God into human lives. This contradicted the deistic vision of the world. The circle of Konarski's logic is closed, then the assassination was the result of propagating deistic ideas and transferring them onto the relationships with the majesty, saving the King contradicted those theories. After the attempt to abduct the King Konarski gained the evidence of the divine care for the world. He also became convinced that Voltaire was wrong perceiving the Lisbon earthquake as the confirmation of God's non-intervention into the human world.

⁴⁰ Ibidem, p. 325-326. An attempt to present the evolution of Konarski's views, going from republicanism to the monarchist ideas could be a separate research problem. An analysis apropos this problem was presented by Jadwiga Ziętarska exposing the request of Konarski to Stanisław August Poniatowski to support him in the struggle with deists and teists. This request was included in the dissertation of Konarski, published in 1769, *O religii poczciwych ludzi*. See J. ZIĘTARSKA, *Konarski – filozof*, in: *Stanisław Konarski pedagog – polityk – filozof*, ed. J. Ziętarska, Warszawa 2004, p. 91.

⁴¹ J. MACIEJEWSKI, *Geneza i charakter ideologii republikantów 1767-1775*, "Archiwum Historii Filozofii i Myśli Społecznej" 17 (1971), p. 73-74.

The established philosophical views of Konarski decided about the originality and independence of his reflections in comparison to other texts created after the attack. The Piarist did not refer himself to the issue of repeated election to the throne by God, which was so often done by other preachers.

After the events of 1771 the authority of the monarch was partly reconstructed without reference to the charisma and divine assent. However, just two years after the abduction attempt, Wincenty Skrzetuski as the first of the subjects of Stanisław August did not predict any God's punishment for the assassins writing a speech entitled *Przeciwko królobójcom*. The main fault of the Confederation members threatening the health and life of the monarch was according to this Piarist against the law of nature, not a breach of the anointment.⁴² The separation of the law of God and the law of nature was an absolute novelty in Poland at that time. But was this reduction of the law of nature to autonomic and universal orders of the human mind a conscious and well-considered borrowing or simply a compilatory transfer of a Western theory? Situating this speech in the context of the events of 1771, i.e. the abduction of Stanisław August does not presuppose creative independence of Skrzetuski. The analysis of his speeches reveals the source of the borrowings. They are theories about worldly source of royal authority of the French theoretician Jean Paul de Rome d'Ardène.⁴³ An independent thought aiming at repeated identification of the laws of nature with the will of God will be presented by Hieronim Stroynowski in *Nauka prawa przyrodzonego* created in 1780, published five years later.⁴⁴ This excessive freedom of interpretation of the natural laws in context of the personal authority differentiated Polish political writers from the theoreticians from countries where absolute monarchy was present. In such countries as France, Prussia or Sweden the theory of the nature laws was commonly interpreted to the monarch's benefit, it sometimes even gained the status of carrier of the doctrine. In the seventies the borrowings of this doctrine appeared in the Polish political theory, then in late eighties the interpretation of Western concepts was fairly independent and creative.

The reflection on the charisma in Poland in the period of Enlightenment was only induced by first, the election of the monarch in 1764 and second the attempted assassination of the king. However, it seems that this reflection might have been

⁴² W. SKRZETUSKI, *Mowy o głównych materiach politycznych*, Warszawa 1773, p. 174-187. Analogically thought Antoni Popławski. A. POPLAWSKI, *Zbiór niektórych materii politycznych*, Warszawa 1774, p. 273-277.

⁴³ W. SKRZETUSKI, *Mowy o głównych materiach politycznych*, p. 187-205.

⁴⁴ H. STROYNOWSKI, *Nauka prawa przyrodzonego, politycznego, ekonomiki i prawa narodów [...] Dla pożytku uczniów i słuchaczy do druku podana*, Wilno 1785, p. 1-6; Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych, H. STROYNOWSKI, *Zbiór prawa*, manuscript, p. 190.

largely invoked and motivated by the propaganda of the royal camp. As Piotr Ugniewski proves, after the "assassination" Stanisław August started "a real international media campaign" against the assassins and the confederation.⁴⁵ It seems that monarchists perfectly used the idea of divine source of the king's authority in order to accomplish short-term political goals.

In order to illustrate the presence of God in the political theory of the Enlightenment Carl Lotus Becker used the category of the "intellectual climate" ("opinion climate"). According to him renouncing the reference to the royal anointing in the 18th century was to be a creation of the deistic "opinion climate", not a deeper theoretical reflection.⁴⁶ According to this theory borrowed from the works of Alfred North Whitehead an argument or an idea are accepted or not due to their logical value, but taking into account their accordance or divergence from the "opinion climate", the creations of which they are and to which they belong.

Naturally, a providential interpretation of the King's abduction and rescue were introduced by the royal camp. But also subsequent political events (mostly the partitions) favoured the creation of a common ground between monarchists and traditionalists. This plan was based on continuous care of Providence and reviving trust in the historical mission of Poland and the Poles. The perception of history which favoured the reflection on the royal anointing as the fulfilment of the plan of God increased proportionally to accumulating problems in international relationships. This process was only impeded by the continuous expansion of Enlightenment rationalism, however, as it was mentioned before, it might have been creatively assimilated.

This trust in the authority of the Providence, the manifestation of which was the monarch, guaranteed state order. Thanks to continuous confirmation of the royal anointing, the transfer of the relationship between God and the guarantor of world order, and the relationship between the monarch and the guarantor of state order might have been achieved. Such a perception of the anointing must have resulted in the great trust in the actions of Stanisław August. Such trust was demonstrated by the authors supporting the charisma, but also sometimes in the reception of such texts. After the introduction of the Constitution of 3 May this trust was combined with expectations. The latter generated only disappointment.

Despite numerous theses, the rationalism did not have to preclude the reference to royal anointing. The rational approach could both question the transcendental

⁴⁵ P. UGNIĘWSKI, "*Szkaradny występki królobójstwa*", p. 329. It was a campaign directed mostly to the elites of the authority in France and Austria, i.e. states which supported the Bar Confederation as an attempt to question Russian presence in the Republic of Poland (p. 343).

⁴⁶ C.L. BECKER, *Państwo Boże osiemnastowiecznych filozofów*, Poznań 1995, p. 5.

origin of the authority, and reinforce it. However, the identification of the law of nature with *God of nature*, and thus rational explanation of the sacred sphere of life surely weakened, or even eradicated the idea of charisma from the political theory. As the conclusions of the present article indicate – when the sense of existence of the state community is decided by a human, the divine acceptance leaves the limits of theoretical reflections. However, Polish state theoreticians did not take the path of negation of divine origin of the authority which was introduced by Western European philosophers. In Polish political thought the idea of charisma was very rare, which does not condition its negation. Ideas contradictory to or resisting the divine origin of the authority did not appear. The idea of charisma may not be found either in the theoretical works or journalist articles in the 1790s. This idea only survived in the panegyric political poetry of the time. We may risk to state that in the period from last works by Stanisław Konarski until the first works of Stanisław Staszic the idea of charisma as a feature of royal authority disappeared from the Polish political theory and reflections on the authority.

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RELIGIJNE UZASADNIENIE WŁADZY KRÓLEWSKIEJ W POLSKIEJ MYŚLI POLITYCZNEJ DRUGIEJ POŁOWY XVIII WIEKU

Streszczenie. Polscy monarchiści prezentowali providencjalną interpretację porwania króla z listopada 1771 r. i jego ocalenia. Ufność we władczą Opatrzność, której emanacją był władczy monarcha, zapewniała gwarancję ładu w państwie. Dzięki ciągłemu potwierdzaniu sakry monarszej można było realizować odniesienie relacji Bóg – gwarant ładu świata do relacji monarcha – gwarant ładu państwa. Takie postrzeganie sakry musiało owocować wielkim zaufaniem wobec działań Stanisława Augusta.

Proces sakralizacji władzy królewskiej powstrzymywała ekspansja oświeceniowego racjonalizmu. Polscy teoretycy państwa nie zawsze podążyli drogą negacji boskiego pochodzenia władzy, jaką wyznaczyli zachodnioeuropejscy filozofowie. W polskiej myśli politycznej rzadko przywoływano ideę charyzmatu, co jednak nie oznaczało jego negacji. Można zaryzykować tezę, że w okresie trwającym od ostatnich prac Stanisława Konarskiego po pierwsze dzieła Stanisława Staszica idea charyzmatu jako cechy władzy królewskiej znika z polskiej teorii politycznej i rozważań na temat władzy.

Słowa kluczowe: charyzmat władzy; posłannictwo; teoria władzy; myśl oświeceniowa; polska myśl polityczna