
Commercial Expansion in XVIIIth Century Poland: the Case of Poznań

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1. PROBLEMS AND SOURCES.

In the history of the early modern economy of Poland the study of commercial activity has gradually attracted more attention. But, while historical research has for some time been directed toward the foreign and domestic trade of the XVIth and the early XVIIth Century, Polish commercial activity in the XVIIIth Century has only recently become a subject of interest. The following studies have made important contributions in this field: W. Rusiński's study of the Polish domestic market in the second half of the XVIIIth Century,¹ M. Kulczykowski's study of domestic commercial relations in Southern Poland (Małopolska),² and Z. Guldon's analysis of trade relations between the magnates of the Western Ukraine and the city of Gdańsk.³ There are also important works on agrarian problems, such as those contained in the *History of the Polish Rural Economy*,⁴ as

¹ W. RUSIŃSKI, *O rynku wewnętrznym w Polsce w drugiej połowie XVIII wieku* (The Polish domestic market in the second half of the Eighteenth Century, in: «Roczniki Dziejów Społecznych i Gospodarczych», vol. 16, 1954).

² M. KULCZYKOWSKI, *Kraków jako ośrodek towarowy Małopolski zachodniej w II połowie XVIII wieku* (Cracow, the trading centre of western Małopolska in the second half of the Eighteenth Century), Warszawa 1963.

³ Z. GULDON, *Związki handlowe dóbr magnackich na prawobrzeżnej Ukrainie z Gdańskiem w XVIII wieku* (Trade relations between magnate estates in the Western Ukraine and the city of Gdańsk in the Eighteenth Century), Toruń 1966.

⁴ *Zarys historii gospodarstwa wiejskiego w Polsce* (A short history of the Polish rural economy), vol. II, Warszawa 1964.

well as other studies of industry by Cz. Łuczak,⁵ J. Wojtowicz,⁶ W. Kula⁷. There are also studies dealing with the problems of consumption, including those by I. Turnau,⁸ Z. Kuchowicz⁹ and A. Kruppé,¹⁰ which deal with different forms and levels of consumption and thus provide a basis for the study of the distribution of the national income in pre-partition Poland.

There are also a few studies of a more general nature, such as that by H. Madurowicz and A. Podrazy, which outlines a general picture of the economy of Southern Poland (Małopolska) in the second half of the XVIIIth century;¹¹ a collective work on history of Western Poland (Wielkopolska), edited by J. Topolski, which stresses the specific character of the development of the province,¹² and another collective volume edited by B. Leśnodorski, on *Poland in the age of the Enlightenment* (subtitled: State, Society, Culture), and published in the « Historical Confrontations » series.

The present state of research urgently demands further studies of the XVIIIth Century economy in Poland, because the available studies only enable us to explain some of the features of the economic situation; and many phenomena cannot be explained at present except in hypothetical terms. A general comparative interpretation is far from easy. From the point of view of comparison with the European economy, the central issue is the question of the degree to which the economic and social structure of Poland reflected the general characteristics and tendencies of development in Europe as a whole, and to what extent the Polish economy was typical of the pre-industrial model. An analysis of different branches of the economic structure and superstructure should facilitate the proper evaluation of the

⁵ Cz. ŁUCZAK, *Przemysł spożywczy miasta Poznania w XVIII wieku* (The food industry in the city of Poznań in the Eighteenth Century), 1963.

⁶ J. WOJTOWICZ, *Studia nad kształtowaniem się układu kapitalistycznego w Toruniu. Stosunki przemysłowe miasta Torunia w XVIII wieku* (The formation of the capitalist system in Torun: industrial relations in the city of Torun in the Eighteenth Century), Torun 1960.

⁷ W. KULA, *Szkice o manufakturach w Polsce XVIII wieku* (Manufactures and workshops in Poland in the Eighteenth Century), parts I-III, 1720-1795, Warszawa 1966.

⁸ I. TURNAU, *Odzież mieszczaństwa warszawskiego w XVIII wieku* (The clothing of the Warsaw middle-classes in the Eighteenth Century), Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków, 1967.

⁹ Z. ZUCHOWICZ, *Wpływ odżywiania na stan zdrowotny społeczeństwa polskiego w XVIII wieku* (The influence of diet on the health condition of the population of Poland in the Eighteenth Century), Łódź 1966.

¹⁰ A. KRUPPE, *Ze studiów nad materialnymi warunkami bytu w środowisku mieszczańskim Poznania XVIII wieku* (The living conditions of the Poznań middle-classes in the Eighteenth Century), in: « Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej », 1974, XXII, No 3.

¹¹ H. MADUROWICZ, A. PODRAZA, *Regiony gospodarcze Małopolski Zachodniej w drugiej połowie XVIII wieku* (The economic regions of western Małopolska in the second half of the Eighteenth Century), Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków, 1958.

¹² *Dzieje Wielkopolski* (A History of Western Poland), vol. 1, to 1793, ed. by J. Topolski, Poznań, 1969.

Polish economy in the age of the Enlightenment. A description of the role of Poznań — a town which even at this time was an important commercial centre — is directly relevant to this general issue.

2. THE MAIN TRENDS IN POZNAŃ'S TRADE BEFORE THE XVIIIth CENTURY.

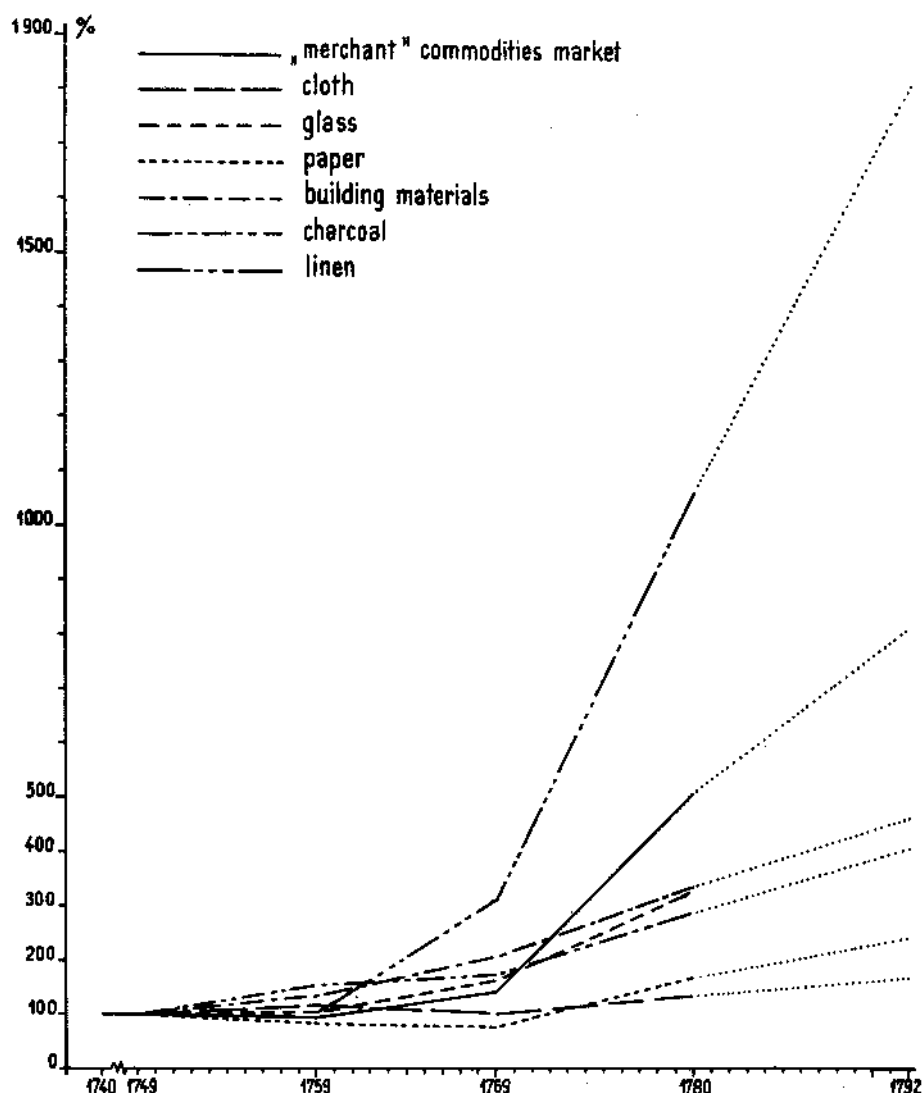
The following factors influenced the structure of Poznań's trade from the XVIth to the XVIIIth Centuries.

- 1) *Political*. The political function of the town within the Polish state;
- 2) *Economic*. The situation of the town within three interrelated economic structures: a) the European market, which was largely dependent on the exchange of consumer goods between Eastern and Western Europe, b) the developing home market, c) the regional market, which was a decisive factor in the development of specific regional economies.
- 3) *Geographical*. The location of the town, beyond the area of the Vistula grain trade, but in close proximity to Silesia, Western Pomerania and to Germany.
- 4) *Cultural*. The exposure to Western cultural trends, which contributed to determining social needs and dictated certain economic decisions.
- 5) *Administrative*. The town was the capital of the Wielkopolska region.

These factors were interdependent, though their respective influences on the commercial structure of the town changed over time. In the earliest period, from the Xth to the XVth Centuries, the political factor had been predominant.¹³ Medieval Poznań was one of the principal Polish towns, the residence of the ducal authorities and high nobility, site of the bishopric, and to meet their needs became a commercial centre developing trade with Ruthenia, Byzantium and Scandinavia. In the XIIIth and XIVth Centuries both the social and territorial range of commerce increased. The municipal craft industries catered for the demand of the local market for food products, while the textile and leather industries entered other domestic and foreign markets, in particular those of Central Europe. The political factor was at that time still decisive for the successful development of craft industry

¹³ B. LEŚNODORSKI (ed.), *Polska w epoce Oświecenia* (Poland in the age of Enlightenment), Warszawa 1971.

¹³ L. KOCZY, *Handel Poznania do połowy wieku XVI* (Trade in Poznań before the second half of the Sixteenth Century) Poznań 1930, is the fundamental work on the subject; further writings by the same author on the modern period describe the development of the commercial mechanisms in the economic activities of the various social groups. L. KOCZY, *Studia nad dziejami gospodarczymi Żydów poznańskich przed połową wieku XVII* (The economic activity of the Jewish community in Poznań before the second half of the Seventeenth Century), KMP, v. XII, 1934, No. 3, pp. 257-299; No. 4, pp. 333-362, v. XIII, 1935; No. 1, pp. 47-63, No. 2/3, pp. 171-231.



Dynamics of the industrial commodities market in the 1740-1792 period.

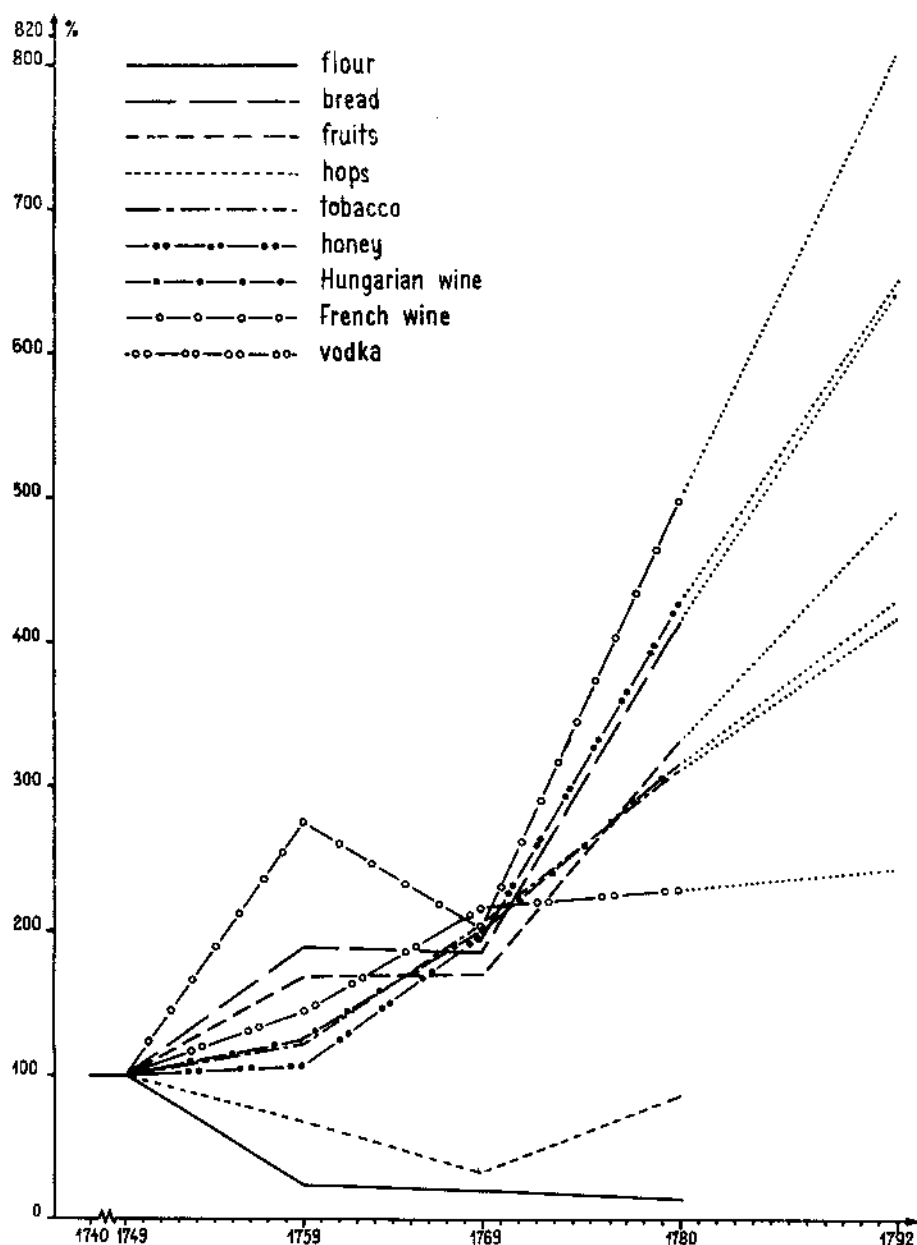
and commerce. The municipal privileges granted to Poznań by Przemysław I brought increased legal stability, which always contributes to economic development. When Władysław Jagiełło ascended the throne, an important trade route was opened from Russia (Ruthenia) to Mazovia, Wielkopolska and westwards. The export of products from Russia and Lithuania, which so far had been handled by the German Hanse, now came along the route

which crossed Poznań, due to the Polish—Lithuanian Union. Because of the conflict between Poland and the Teutonic Order, the route from Cracow to Szczecin at this time passed through Poznań as well. The right of staple (*ius stapulae depositori*) which was granted to Poznań in 1394 ultimately placed the town among the leading commercial centres in the country.

With the close of the Middle Ages a new chapter opened in the history of Poznań's trade.¹⁴ In the XVIth and beginning of XVIIth Centuries, its development became mainly dependent on the general processes of economic expansion of the country and on transformations affecting the main tendencies in European trade. While the role of the Mediterranean basis decreased, the main streams of world trade were directed toward the Atlantic and the Baltic Sea. Consequently, the trade route leading from the Black Sea and Hungary through Poland to Western Europe lost its significance, which inevitably weakened the leading position of Małopolska in Polish trade. The new geography of European trade made northern and central parts of Poland too important commercial areas in East-West trade. Wielkopolska was affected as well. It was where the "main road" (*Hobe Landstrasse*) met the "great Warsaw highway", in other words, where the German traders came to meet the stream of commodities coming from Russia and Lithuania. At the same time the developing Silesian market, whose trade with Western Pomerania was constantly impeded by Brandenburg, brought into being the route from Gdańsk through Wielkopolska and Silesia and farther on, to Bohemia, Austria and Italy. It was at Poznań in fact that the trade between Russia, Lithuania, West Europe, Silesia and South-West European came into contact, which made Poznań one of the most important commercial sites of XVIIth Century Europe. The town also became the central point for the local markets of Wielkopolska. While cloth, hardware, metal, and metalwares were the main commodities traded with the other Polish markets and with the East, the structure of the exchange with the West favoured the export of cattle, hides, furs, wool and feathers, which were only supplied to the home market in small quantities. Some of the commodities, first of all wool and cloth, were local and their share increased in the XVIIth Century, though at that time the importance of Poznań as a European market had considerably diminished.

The present state of research does not allow a general assessment of the second half of the XVIIth and XVIIIth Centuries. It seems that the

¹⁴ Poznań's trade in the modern period was first described by R. RYBARSKI, *Handel i polityka handlowa Polski w XVI stuleciu* (The trade and trade policy of Poland in the sixteenth century), v. I-II, Poznań 1928-1929; M. GRYZ, *Handel Poznania* (the trade of Poznań, 1550-1665), Poznań 1964, also attempts to provide a statistical analysis of certain unusual data; S. MIELCZARSKI, *Rynek zbożowy na ziemiach polskich w drugiej połowie XVI i pierwszej połowie XVII wieku* (The grain market in Poland in the late Sixteenth and early Seventeenth Centuries), Gdańsk 1962, contributes to the study of Wielkopolska.



Dynamic of the rural economy market in the 1740-1792 period.

decline of Poznań as a trading and commercial centre was due to political factors, namely to the Swedish invasion, which ruined the municipal and regional economy. An economic decline affecting the whole country, which led to the crisis, seems to have affected Poznań much later and to a far

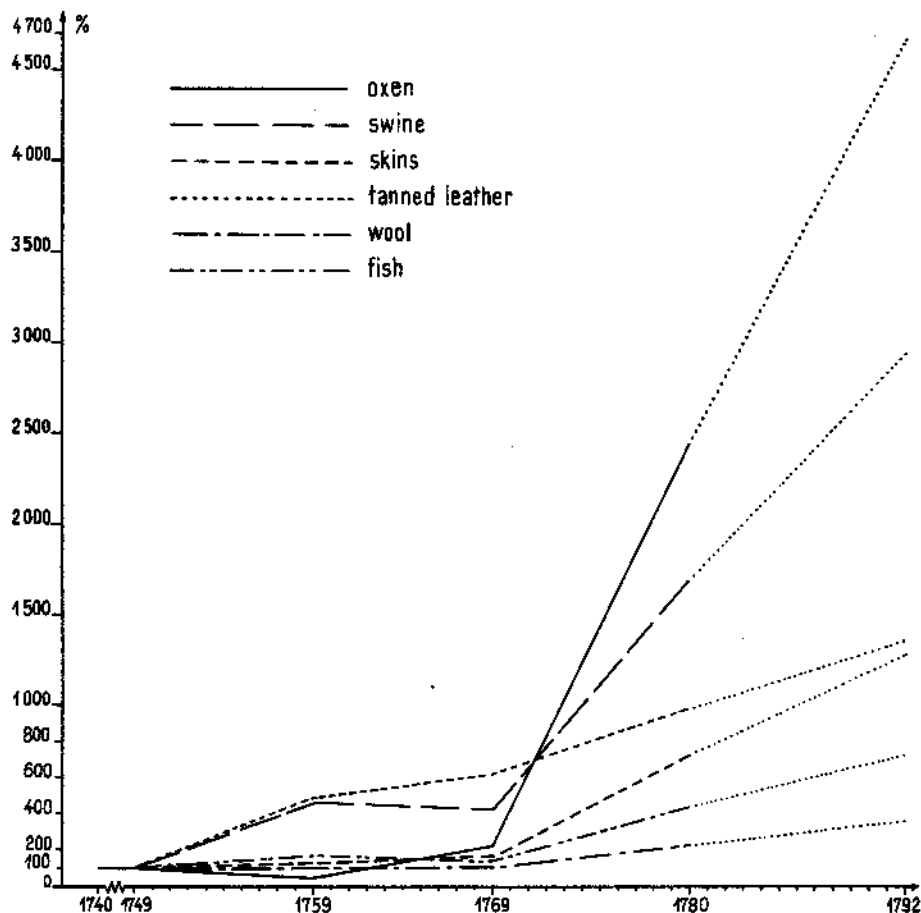
lesser extent than has hitherto been supposed. Such an interpretation follows inevitably from an acceptance of the fact that at the turn of the XVIth Century Poznań functioned primarily as the centre for the regional trade market. The significance of European commerce for the economic development of the town and Wielkopolska cannot be questioned, but we must not overlook its transitory character. Had this been responsible for the flourishing economy of Poznań, we would have to expect a decline to have been apparent in the 1580's, since at that time the export of large amounts of commodities to the West became less and less profitable, due to the changes in both the foreign and home markets. On one hand, this resulted from the intensification of agriculture in the West, the drop in both prices and demand there, and on the other from competition with Gniezno and Toruń, in particular the latter, which gradually came to dominate the Lithuanian- Russian market.¹⁵ Since this did not cause any economic disturbance, we must identify the base of the town's economy in its role in the regional market. Consequently, unfavourable changes in the foreign and domestic markets could easily be compensated.¹⁶

Economic cooperation between the town and its region was facilitated by the specific structure of the agrarian system. The manorial farms were here more tightly connected with the local market than in any other region in the country. Due to the increasing correlation between the commercial activity of the town and the economic growth of the regional market, there were not such pronounced symptoms of decline in the first half of the XVIIth Century as in other parts of Poland. Therefore it seems more correct to talk of a temporary decline in the economy of Wielkopolska at the turn of the XVIIth Century, which was due to the political events rather than to economic decline.

This hypothesis is confirmed by the relatively rapid process of rebuilding which occurred after the war, in spite of the lack of stability, and this must have been due to the previous economic accumulation. At the beginning of the period of economic renewal, the town and the region reveal a common structural system of social and economic changes (financial credit techniques), which seem to have been a necessary condition for the process of rebuilding

¹⁵ M. WOLAŃSKI, *Związki handlowe Śląska z Rzeczpospolitą w XVII wieku* (Trade relations between Silesia and Poland in the Seventeenth Century) Wrocław 1961, p. 62 ff.

¹⁶ The case for the ever stronger interdependencies between Poznań and its regional market in commodity exchange is confirmed by a number of studies which indicate both the popularity of the "enclosure" movement in Wielkopolska / cf. J. TOPOLSKI, *Wielkopolskie "ogradzanie" a europejski handel wełną w XVI i pierwszej połowie XVII wieku* ("Enclosures" in Wielkopolska and the European wool trade in the Sixteenth and early Seventeenth Centuries), forthcoming, and they also point to the fact that the trade in wool at the St. John's Fairs in Poznań reached its highest intensity in the 1630s. (cf. M. BIELECKA, *O zajazdach kontraktowych w Polsce*, in «Roczniki Dziejów Społecznych i Gospodarczych», v. 16, 1954, p. 161).



Dynamic of the animal products market, in the 1740-1792 period.

and for the development of the local market within a multi-sector economic structure. An analysis of the effectiveness of changes in Poznań's trade in the XVIIIth Century is clearly most desirable. Its dynamics and commodity structure reflect the economic growth of the region, which facilitated the reconstruction of the economy not only of Wielkopolska but of the whole country.

3. THE STRUCTURE AND DYNAMISM OF TRADE IN XVIIIth CENTURY POZNAŃ

The more detailed study which follows, covers the period 1740-1793. We have taken the first date because at that time Poznań achieved a certain degree of economic stability, from which basis it is convenient to analyse

both economic relations and their relatively homogeneous tendencies of development. The date of the second partition and annexation of Poznań to Prussia closes the period. The territorial range is identified with the area of commodity trade.

Our research has been based on manuscripts found in the Archideaconal Archives and State Archives in Poznań, as well as on printed source materials.¹⁷ The materials vary in value for our purposes which require both qualitative analysis and quantitative data. For the latter we need to draw on detailed statistical sources, but since complete statistical records are not available, the methodology we have adopted only provides some estimated assessments and conclusions. In studying Poznań activity in the regional, Polish and foreign, markets, we have noted the current "representational" method (cf. J. Topolski, M. Grycz, H. Samsonowicz), based on the formula of "large numbers". This consists in assuming that the frequency of references to particular trade trends, their increases and decreases, which are found in widespread non-statistical sources, correspond to the actual extent of trade. In analysing the dynamism of trade in general, as well as the trade in the various groups of commodities, the method of extrapolation is employed, which allows us to account for the missing period of 1780-1793 in the chronological series on the basis of what is known for the earlier period, under the assumption that the trend of development remained the same.

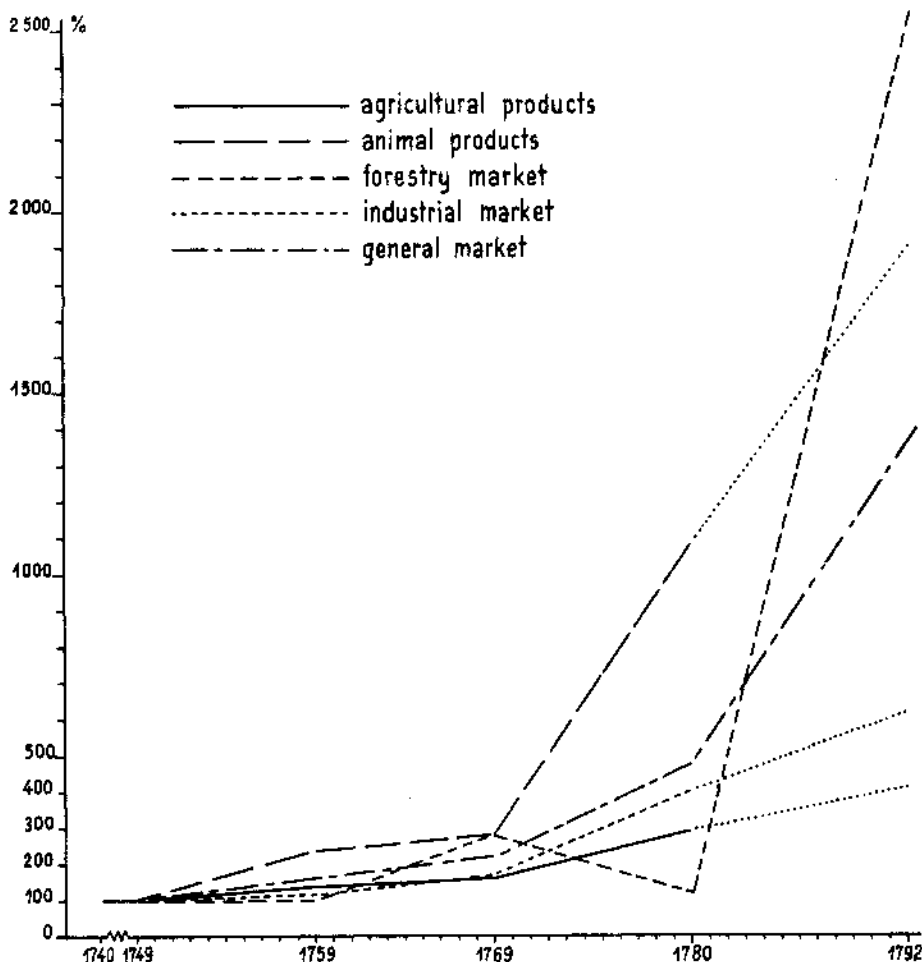
The analysis of the trade structure is based on the system of sectors of production. Accepting the criterion of final product, we can identify the following commodity markets:

- agricultural products,
- stock-breeding products.
- forestry products,
- mining products,
- manufactured products.

Our research shows that the trade in most of these commodities was increasing during the period.

In the first group, agricultural products, from 1740-1792 it was the import of French wines which increased most and reached the index number of 801 (if we take the year 1740-1749 as providing the base of 100). The

¹⁷ We studied the following series from the Archideaconal Archives: 1. *Acta Consistorii Posnaniensis* of 1750-1760, 2. *Acta Capituli* of 1755-1759; and the following sources from the State Archives: 1. *Acta consularia* of 1738-1793, 2. Books of municipal laws for 1575-1793, 3. *Price books* of 1749-1793, 4. *Books of the Committee of Good Order* of 1779-1781, 5. *Books of the Poznań merchants* for 1750-1760 and 1777-1789, and the merchants' book from Leszno for 1784-1788, 1791-1792, 6. *Dispenser accounts* for 1739-1745, 1747-1766, 1769-1780, 7. *Economic accounts* for 1780-1792, 8. *Books of licences for Grodzisz beer in Gielda and Kratka* in 1742-1792, 9. *Jurisdiction acts of St. Wojciech* for 1740-1789, 10. *Jurisdiction acts for Wenetów* of 1762-1791, 11. *Libri Civium* for 1740-1785, 12. *Relationes* 1740-1793.



General dynamics of the commodities market

next commodities in the group of consumption goods were honey (index 651), and bread (index 640). Imports of fresh fruit reached 500 on the index, but the imports of dried fruit, preserves and southern fruit were mentioned only occasionally. Similar indices are characteristic of two other articles; Hungarian wines (427) and tobacco (417). Imports of vodka grew least rapidly (243); although before 1769 imports of Russian vodka were still high, and later on the municipal distillery took over. Only two agricultural products were imported in smaller quantities, namely hops and flour. In the case of hops, the numerous breweries located in the areas around the town and the purchases of beer from the town of Grodzisk served to diminish demand. Flour was not a commodity widely used in commercial exchange, and needs were covered

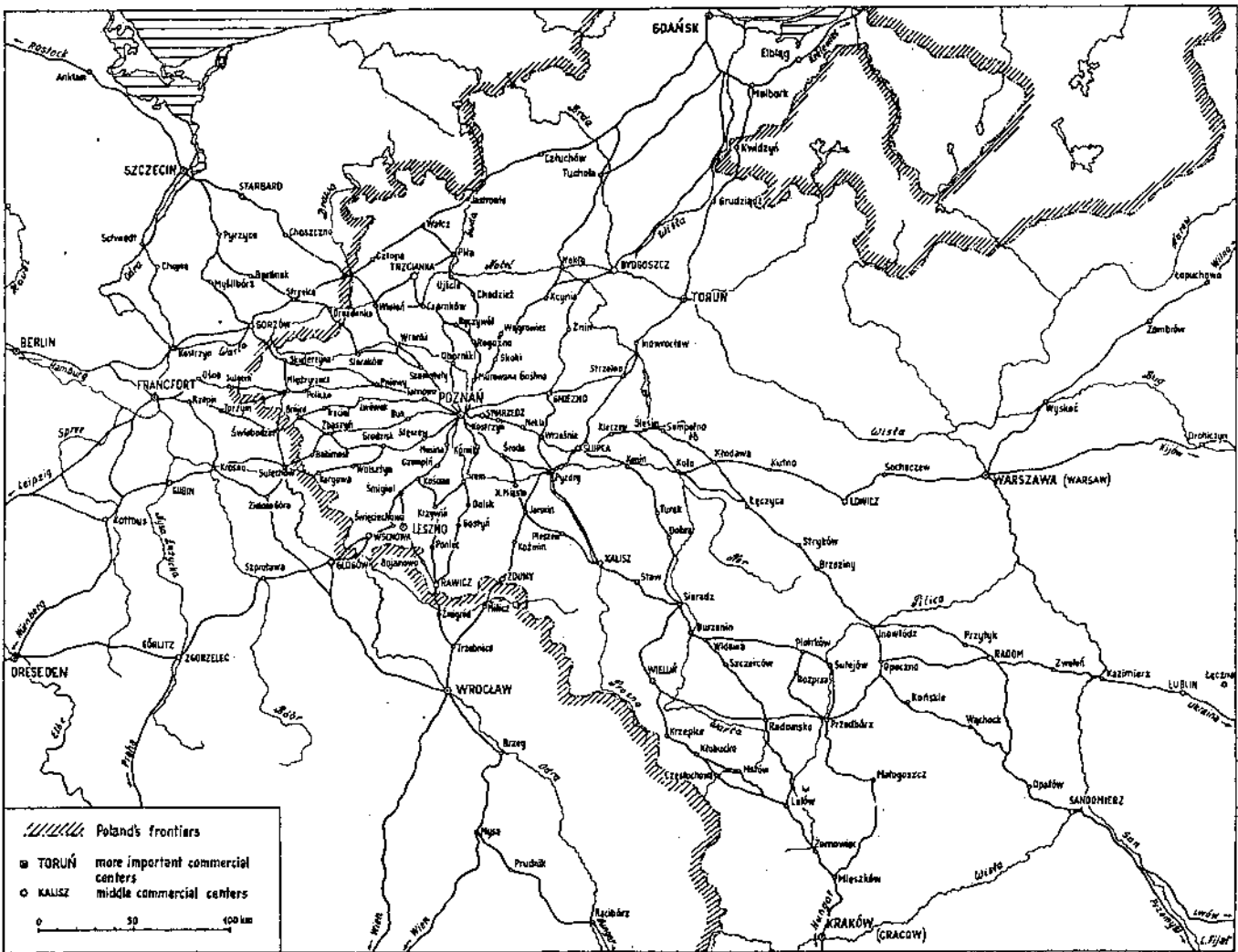
by municipal production and the local market. The grain trade was very important but cannot be measured quantitatively because of the lack of statistical data. The commercial contacts between the Poznań merchants and the nobility of Wielkopolska on which the grain trade functioned were based on a system of contracts and sample deliveries. Hence the bulk of the cereals never reached Poznań but were delivered by prior agreement to warehouses in the vicinity of the markets. The same was true of wool, which belongs to the second group of products.

Livestock commodities were characterized by the highest rates of dynamism. In relation to the same base index used above, the delivery of oxen was 4686, of pigs 2974; a similarly high rate was also characteristic of the derivative products: tanned leather (1375), hides (1295), wool (361). The intensive development of the live-stock market was due to the demands created in the municipal, regional and foreign markets. The horse trade, which after 1770's increased considerably, was geared first of all to supply the needs of the Prussian army.

The wide possibilities of water transport to Szczecin, as well as the demand of Western customers, contributed to the development of the timber market, which covered the sale of both timber and semi-manufactured products. A slight decrease in exports in the 70's was due to the customs policy of Frederick II. The highest increase is observable immediately before the second partition when the index reached 2546.

In the group of imported industrial goods, the sequence was as follows: first cotton (1809); then, the so-called mercantile products (816), which comprised the following commodities of foreign make: cloth, coarse woollens, porcelain and china, paints and ironwork, which all were imported from the same places and are therefore registered in municipal documents as one item of transportation, which makes it impossible for us to distinguish particular goods in the group. The constantly developing textile workshops increased the trade in cloth considerably, and the expansion of the town contributed to a fourfold increase in the trade in building materials. The trades in glass (488), and in paper (242), were also expanding.

The global increase in Poznań's trade from 1740-1792 was of the order of 1372. The incomplete nature of the statistical material does not mention trades in certain other commodities, such as grain, hemp, flax; or also mentions it only in part, as in case of wool, fish, and mining products. To this we must add illegal imports, whose quantity is unknown, as well as the trade carried on by local merchants which was exempt from municipal taxation, either due to the town's monopoly, or because of municipal liabilities. Consequently a diachronic approach to the data seems to be more fruitful and may more easily lead to a reconstruction which will emphasize the rates of change and the general tendencies of the market, as well as relations between particular sectors. An analysis of the commodity markets in relation to the rates of increase places them in the following order: timber (2546); live-stock



Poznań and its trade routes in the XVIIIth century.

(1907); industrial goods (628); agricultural products (409). As the highest rate affected the export markets, this would reflect a favourable trade balance. However, the timber market (the only one whose development is covered completely by the data at our disposal) was developed in response to the demand from the foreign markets and this led to a collapse in 1770-1780. The live-stock market did not stop developing even at the time of a very rigorous customs policy adopted by Prussia, because it was geared first of all to supply demand within the country. An equally favourable rate of growth affected the trade in industrial goods, whose exports developed faster than imports. Besides, the import of certain commodities in this sector, such as paints, dyes and ironwork encouraged the development of local manufactures. The trade in agricultural products shows the lowest rate of growth, as most of the articles had to supply demands for immediate consumption. Growth was therefore dependent on the town's population, on the structure of consumption within particular social groups, and, in case of luxury goods such as wine, on the distribution of consumers' income.

The dynamism of trade is also indicated if we look at the town's revenues between 1740-1780 which came from various municipal enterprises associated with trade. Constantly increasing revenues, which reached their highest figures between 1770-1780, came from municipal tolls, ironwork stalls, salt warehouses, distillery and brewery malts, licences issued to inns serving vodka and beer, taxations on imported wine, as well as from other enterprises, such as lime-kilns, brick-yards, mills and breweries, which served the local market.

4. THE SPATIAL STRUCTURE OF COMMODITY EXCHANGE.

While investigating spatial organization of Poznań trade, our attention has been focussed on the commodity exchange with relation to its economic and social consequences and the social distribution of the labour market. Accepting legal and administrative norms, we assume that the local market, which was an economic phenomenon connected with the development of the town itself, covered three areas of settlement: the town surrounded by the walls, its suburbia and the neighbouring villages. The first two areas contained a population occupied in trade, manufacture and services. The third area contained villages owned by the town and had two important features; the legal status of the villages was based on a money rent system, and contained a high number of peasants (50 per cent of the population), with little or no land of their own. This situation influenced the peasants' response to market stimuli (i.e. to increases in prices), and created a supply of labour outside the villages. The day-to-day exchanges between the two differently structured centres constituted one local market. Within this social division of labour, the town supplied articles of permanent

use, while the villages provided consumption articles. The increasing power of the market to absorb goods affected the relations of production. The static system of guilds was changing, and in the food industry, brewery and baking had gained industrial liberty. A tendency to equate rates of profit also contributed to the development of investment, which was undertaken by the merchants of Poznań in the 70's and 80's, and extended to both productive and non-productive investment (e.g. in both flour-milling and in renting municipal enterprises and state taxes). In addition to the markets described above, Poznań participated with somewhat lesser intensity in a local trading system which covered an area of 20-25 km round the town. Of the urban centres in this area, only Swarzędz became a strong trading partner; the trading partners in the rural districts were manorial farmhouses and settlements.

The commercial function of Poznań as the central regional market was connected with the economic structure of Wielkopolska as a whole, which had been created earlier but which reached its structural maturity and dynamic character in the pre-partition age. Characteristic of this were the changes which occurred in the agrarian sector. The old system of serf labour (*corvée*) was gradually replaced by money rents, and at the same time the number of peasants without land was growing, which proved most profitable from the point of view of the local labour market. At the end of the XVIIIth century the number of peasants paying feudal rent in money rose to 30 per cent, while those that did not possess land amounted to 25 per cent of the village population. Both these figures were the highest in the country.

The second characteristic of the structure was dependent on the first, and this was a good balance between the different sectors of the economy, which was manifested in the harmonious development of both agricultural and industrial production. The economic decisions taken by the nobility of Wielkopolska affected two distinct spheres of activity. The first affected non-productive investment and the development of both rural and urban settlements. In the XVIIIth Century, the number of villages increased by 800, which gave an increase of 140,000 hectares of arable land; the number of towns grew by 25. The second field of activity comprised productive investment within the agrarian sector, but was directed not so much to grain production as to stock-breeding and, in particular, sheep-farming (before the second partition the number of sheep in Wielkopolska reached 20 percent of the total number in the country), as well as the exploitation of forests, inland fisheries and the production of alcoholic liquors.

The main branches of industry in Wielkopolska (the cloth and food industries), developed on the basis of the raw materials supplied by regional agriculture. The cloth industry produced 2 million metres of woollen fabric yearly, which accounted for 70 per cent of the country's production. The annual rate of growth was 4 per cent, which figure should be considered together with the system of organization and technology of production. The

industrial complex had not yet entered a phase of industrial revolution, but together with Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia, it formed an important centre of the cloth industry which did not lag behind many Western cloth industries, such as the French.

The products of these branches of agriculture and industry were used first of all to supply the needs of the market, which determined the direction of the entire commodity exchange. The territorial area in which Poznań provided the main point of destination, comprised the *voievodships* of Poznań, Gniezno, and parts of Kalisz, Calisia, Łęczyca and Sieradz. The most intensive area of exchange was that of the *voievodships* of Poznań and Gniezno, which were the most highly industrialized. In supplying the neighbouring local markets, Poznań cooperated with the appropriate centres; in the case of the cloth trade, with Leszno, Rawicz, Wschowa, and also, though to a lesser extent, with northern centres, such as Piła, Trzcianka, Czarnków, Wieleń; in the case of the trade in agricultural and food products, with north-eastern towns, such as Chodzież, Łudomy, Wągrowiec, Skoki; in the case of stock-breeding products, with south-eastern towns, such as Jarocin, Gostyń, Września, Słupca, Środa, Łęczyca, Warta. An important subsidiary role was played by the river ports on the Warta, such as Śrem, Oborniki, Międzybóże and Skierzyna.

Generally speaking, the commercial function of XVIIIth century Poznań in terms of its regional market covered three areas of activity:

- The town purchased products from industrial centres and supplied them to the country markets.

- Poznań was also a market for industrial products. Some of them served to meet the needs of the town, but a large part which came from production surplus, particularly grain, cattle, wool, wood, was exported abroad and to other home markets.

- Finally, the town market provided the articles which were not manufactured in the region at all, or were made there only in small quantities.

The leading partners in the commodity trade with Poznań were as follows:

- Szczecin (West Pomerania), which thanks to the river route along the Warta and Odra was the main partner in Poznań's exports of agricultural articles and wood. Poznań imported via Szczecin various products of foreign make.

- Silesia, with its well developed industry and large population, provided a market for raw materials and food articles. Wrocław, the leading trade partner of the Silesian towns, supplied Poznań with textile products, leather and metalwares.

The development of trade between Poznań on the one side, and Szczecin and Silesia on the other, was dependent on natural economic

conditions, and was greatly impeded by the Prussian policy of customs duties. The consequences of the trade treaty imposed by Prussia in 1775, upset not only Poznań market, but also those of Wrocław and Szczecin. An important role in executing Prussian trade policy was played by Frankfurt-on-the-Oder. An efficient system of credit and reduced tariffs for Prussian products kept Poznań merchants away from Leipzig and directed them instead toward unilateral commodity trade with Frankfurt.

— East Pomerania, together with Gdańsk and Toruń, traded with Poznań mainly in commodities of foreign make, and to a smaller extent in products of their own industries, such as metallurgy. They also traded in cattle from Żuławy. After the first partition the importance of this trade considerably diminished.

— Małopolska (Southern Poland), in face of the structural transformations mentioned above and changes in the European trade routes, was not an important trading partner any longer. Poznań imported from there live-stock products, and exported mainly cloth. The traditional distribution of the iron market between the north, where the product was imported from Sweden, and the south, which was supplied by Małopolska (a division which was disappearing at this time), still influenced Poznań's trade with the manufacturing centre at Końskie. Direct trading contacts with Cracow were sporadic. However, the capital of Małopolska was an important transit post on the Poznań merchants' route to Hungary. A large number of Greeks arrived at Poznań in the XVIIIth century, and the demand for Hungarian wine made the town a leading trader in this commodity.

— Mazovia (Mazowse) sold the industrial products manufactured in Wielkopolska, and was an importer of live-stock. The rapidly developing town of Warsaw became the central market for domestic trade, which influenced the Poznań market as well; and from the 1770's the number of trading contacts was always growing. In particular credit trade was flourishing. The Warsaw merchants were attracted by the St. John's Fairs, at which they bought cloth to sell in Lithuania and Russia.

The commercial function of Poznań with respect to the external market was based on the economic development of the town, which was in its turn intimately connected with the town's role in the commodity exchange on the regional market. The Poznań region could offer for sale its surplus agricultural and industrial products, and on the other hand, the high demand created was one of the factors in its commercial development. It is worth stressing that the manufacturing industry of Poznań, and of all Western Poland, played an important role in the process of developing this market. In effect, the newly opened workshops manufacturing cloth, wool and silk fabrics, leather, tobacco, candles, soap and glass used

raw materials which came from the region, such as silk, wool, hides, tallow, wood, and supplied the products for everyday use for all types of customers, including peasant and lower middle classes. This had far-reaching side-effects which influenced the entire economy. An increasing demand for investment articles (raw materials) caused a growth in agriculture. In turn, the producers of raw materials who were buying the industrial goods caused a rise in employment, production of goods and services which they wanted to purchase. The above mentioned interdependent structures played an important role in the growth of the economic model of Western Poland which we sketched in the first part of the present article. The commercial activity (and investments) of the Poznań merchants contributed a lot to this growth. Together with their private incomes, social revenue increased, which allowed a growth in overall accumulation. By overall accumulation we mean the total of the contribution of small producers, both farmers and craftsmen, as well as the feudal accumulation, which contained certain elements of a capitalist economy, contributed by the nobility and merchants.

To define the geographical extent of the home market and the role of Poznań within it, we have analysed below the price system, treating it as the factor which reflects the mechanism of the market in the fullest form. Having acknowledged the great role played by grain exports in the structure of Polish trade, we have analysed the prices of rye and wheat in Gdańsk, Warsaw and Cracow, that is, towns remaining within the system of the Vistula grain trade, and in Poznań, which lay outside that sphere.¹⁸

The correlation between the prices in Poznań and in the other centres for the period of 1752-1780 is mainly negative, while the correlation of prices in Gdańsk, Warsaw and Cracow shows their interdependence. The results of the analysis achieved by Kula with reference to the prices in the latter towns in 1750-1795 also confirm the tendency to standardization.¹⁹ Though the data show the independence of the Poznań market from the Vistula market, they do not provide any evidence for treating the regional economy as being independent of the economy

¹⁸ E. TOMASZEWSKI, *Ceny w Krakowie w latach 1601-1795* (Prices in Cracow between 1601-1795), Lwów 1934; T. FURTAŁ, *Ceny w Gdańsku w latach 1701-1815* (Prices in Gdańsk in 1701-1815), Lwów 1935; S. SIEGEL, *Ceny w Warszawie w latach 1701-1815* (Prices in Warsaw 1701-1815), Lwów 1936; W. ADAMCZYK, *Ceny w Warszawie od XVI do końca XVII wieku* (Prices in Warsaw between the Sixteenth and close of the Seventeenth Centuries), Lwów 1938; H. MADUROWICZ-URBAŃSKA, *Ceny zboża w zachodniej Małopolsce w drugiej połowie XVIII wieku* (Grain prices in western Małopolska in the second half of the Eighteenth Century), Warszawa 1963.

¹⁹ W. KULA, *Teoria ekonomiczna ustroju feudalnego* (An economic theory of the feudal system), Warszawa 1962, pp. 104-105.

Wheat

Simple correlation

Poznań - Gdańsk	= 0.0167
Poznań - Warsaw	= 0.3554
Poznań - Cracow	= 0.1666
Gdańsk - Warsaw	= 0.3442
Gdańsk - Cracow	= 0.6056
Warsaw - Cracow	= 0.5182

Multiple correlation

Poznań - Gdańsk, Warsaw - Cracow	= 0.3912
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Partial multiple correlation

Poznań - Gdańsk, Warsaw - Cracow	= -0.1733
Poznań - Cracow, Warsaw - Gdańsk	= -0.0745
Poznań - Warsaw, Gdańsk - Cracow	= -0.3298

Rye

Simple correlation

Poznań - Gdańsk	= 0.2327
Poznań - Warsaw	= 0.0637
Poznań - Cracow	= 0.5850
Gdańsk - Warsaw	= 0.6410
Gdańsk - Cracow	= 0.7803
Warsaw - Cracow	= 0.6695

Multiple correlation

Poznań - Gdańsk, Warsaw - Cracow	= 0.4674
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Partial multiple correlation

Poznań - Gdańsk, Warsaw - Cracow	= -0.0487
Poznań - Warsaw, Gdańsk - Cracow	= -0.2636
Poznań - Cracow, Gdańsk - Warsaw	= 0.4883

of the country. The price system in Vistula trade was largely dependent on the conditions of the grain export imposed by Gdańsk. There is a correlation between the variations in wheat prices in Poznań and Warsaw, but since it is very low we do not assign much significance to it. In the case of variations in rye prices, the important correlation is that between Poznań and Cracow, the two markets connected with Silesia.

The next problem refers to the differences in grain prices. The prices in Poznań, for both wheat and rye, were several times higher than those in the other centres. In order to explain this peculiarity it is necessary to investigate the system of commodity prices in Poznań in relation to their real market value, and also to include in the research data from sales in markets in Silesia and Szczecin. A continuation of the investigation seems indispensable not only in order to verify our knowledge of the regional economy, but also to learn more of the economy of modern Poland.

On the basis of available material we may assume that the home market at the end of the XVIIIth century covered the territory corresponding to that of the contemporary Poland; and that the economy of Poznań, a constituent of the market, was oriented first of all toward the centres which remained at that time outside the country, i.e. Szczecin and Silesia.