

## **Iurii Zazuliak**

### *Slavery, Serfdom and Violence on the Periphery of Eastern Europe in 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Old Themes and New Approaches*

In my paper I would like to discuss how the analysis of social processes and phenomena which took place on the periphery of East-central Europe can provide new insights to some central issues and problems of the late medieval history of the region in general. More specifically, I intend to demonstrate how local evidence from the 15<sup>th</sup>- and early 16<sup>th</sup>-century Galicia which in that time was a south-eastern part of the Polish Kingdom can be used to highlight neglected but important aspects of such fundamental problems of East European history of 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> centuries like violence, slavery, and serfdom.

I am particularly interested in addressing two issues. My first question concerns the local Galician evidence about slavery. I intend to take issue with the point of view adopted in the previous historiography which considered slavery merely as a survival of the early medieval social relations. Instead I propose to analyze evidence about slavery in the context of the uses of violence in the fifteenth-century Galician society, and interpret them as one of the harsh forms of lordship which was closely tied with the exercise of violence both inside and outside of the courtroom. As a hypothesis I also consider a possibility to link those evidence to the context of the trans-regional slave trade whose routes run through Galician Rus' and thus to attempt to pose a question about the possible influence of the transitional slave traffic on the local social relations.

I also intend to argue that the emphasis on the crucial role of violence in the pursuit of lordship in medieval societies made in the present-day western historiography provides a useful analytical perspective which helps to highlight some aspects of the establishment of the new regime of serfdom in the Kingdom of Poland during the 15<sup>th</sup> and early 16<sup>th</sup> centuries.