

To Žygimantas Augustas

# To Žygimantas Augustas

(to SIGISMUND II AUGUSTUS 1520–1572)

Edited by ŽYGIMANTAS AUGUSTINAS

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ŽYGMANTUI AUGUSTUI (TO SIGISMUND II AUGUSTUS)

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# Žygimantas August(IN)as to Žygimantas Augustas

The reason behind the emergence of this volume is the similarity of its editor's name to that of the King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania Žygimantas Augustas (in Lithuanian) or Zygmunt II August (in Polish), or Sigismund II Augustus (in Latin), who lived from 1520 to 1572. Žygimantas Augustinas has been lucky to be associated with a very controversial personality: some call his namesake a tyrant while others consider him to be an exemplary symbol of a man passionately in love with a woman. His education and collecting of cultural treasures are often downplayed in favour of emphasising the inutility of difficult political decisions to concerned groups. Perhaps a book that would encompass all the mentioned issues and individuals simply had to emerge. The Lithuanian version of the book contains more texts, while the English one is presented abridged.

Historical figures' biographies are rarely complemented with new facts; usually they are researched well enough by historians, hence this is not just another study of one person's life. This is a different kind of publication – one that does not present a comprehensive and veritable set of facts, and instead contains contradictory information which fluctuates between scientific seriousness and annoying delirium. Obviously, deceiving or amusing images are used like medications whose poisonous substances fortify the organism's immunity. The science of history has often served political powers, helping mobilise or inspire people. Although the editor acknowledges the importance of politics, this book seeks to reveal the absurd side of such intentions and their various permutations. A publication of this kind was prompted by the excessive insincere pomp typical of history-related events and speeches. The present book attempts to combine seriousness, irony, and humour.

The book opens with an introductory text by art historian Dr. Giedrė Mickūnaitė entitled *Bodily Matters*, in which she points out the non-identity of a king's physical and political bodies. Professor Mickūnaitė's text presents findings from the research project *The Jagiellonians: Dynasty, Memory and Identity in Central Europe*, carried out at Oxford University in 2013–2018. The rest of the book consists of the (IN) project, which Žygimantas Augustas had been developing for over five years. (IN) are the letters which complement and distinguish the author's surname from that of the king; they can also be read as the English preposition referring to place, time, means, state, and purpose. It was these strange coincidences that shaped a tragicomic project about an individual trying to inhabit the body of a king. It is a story of vanity and the inclination to disguise it with historical or scientific facts. The (IN) project cynically exploits history and offers the viewer numerous perplexing or amusing images. One should not expect any historical truths here: The images are intended for relaxation or for contemplation of the ethics of using historical facts and the human aspiration to be someone else at any cost. Short textual interjections will point out the noteworthy aspects – but if museum guides' storytelling annoys you, feel free to skip them.

# Bodily Matters

GIEDRĖ MICKŪNAITĖ, art historian

The dual concept of a king's two bodies – one personifying the state and the other a physical human being – not only ignored the distinction between public and private life, but also subjugated the body to political ends. A person who became king by the Grace of God, according to the titulature of the time, was obliged to embody the kingdom, ensure the continuation of his body, and thereby guarantee the continuity of the political body of the state. The identity of the sovereign's body as a human and an institution is by far best known from phrases attributed to Louis XIV: “I am the state” (*l'État, c'est moi*) and “I depart, but the state never dies” (*Je m'en vais, mais l'État demeurera toujours*). This notion contained physical, legal and political contradictions, as the ideal political body of the state both coincided with and surpassed the mortal human body. Medieval and early modern European monarchies relied on bodily continuity: A successful ruler married to a politically appropriate woman had to produce a son, since the misogynistic thinking of that time held that a man was suitable for ruling and a woman was suitable for giving birth. The absence of a proper heir marked the first decades of the reign of Žygimantas the Old (Sigismund I the Old, 1467–1548). Astrologists in Krakow, the noblemen of Poland and Lithuania, and poets were trying to solve the problem of heirloom, the first group by looking for the promise of a future son in the constellations, the second in diplomatic legations, and the third, like Joannes Vislicensis, by recalling the elderly Jogaila's late marriage with the “Ruthenian nymph” Sophia and planning the wedding for the aging king.

In 1518, Žygimantas the Old married Bona and produced their firstborn Isabella one year later. The astrologists' dictum that the king would not have sons because of illegitimate children produced in his youth collapsed when Žygimantas Augustas (Sigismund II Augustus) was born on 1 August 1520. The news of the royal family's heir spread not only through words and letters, but also by means of a specially minted token with an image of the Annunciation on the reverse and the parents' gratitude to the Blessed Virgin Mary for their son in the legend. Less than three centimetres in diameter, the piece of forged lead not only delivered the news to King Žygimantas' subjects, but also became a reproduced material message representing the newborn son. Later, visual substitutes would inform about the maturing prince. Particularly notable were a portrait published in Justus Decius' treatise *De Jagellorum familia* (1521), a medal by Giovanni Maria Padovano portraying the twelve-year-old prince specified as being thirteen in

the inscription and thus considered of legal age by the law of the time, and a golden thaler with portraits of both Žygimantas declaring their joint rule. The design for a medal portraying the twenty-year-old Žygimantas Augustas conveyed the young man’s maturity and thus his suitability for assuming the throne and the ruler’s duties by depicting him with a growing beard, whose lushness would be emphasised on Lithuanian four-groat coins in subsequent years. Dedicated to the coronation of Žygimantas Augustas, the medal announced the king’s virility and strong will, simultaneously declaring the harmony of the physical and the political body.

Nevertheless, this visual representation differed from the body that was living a physical and political life. Žygimantas Augustas’ secret wedding to Barbara Radziwiłł in Vilnius in July 1547 became an astounding rumour, and less than a year later it had transformed into a state problem, political dilemma, and human drama. When Žygimantas the Old died, Augustas, who had been crowned King of Poland already at the age of ten, assumed his late father’s throne and office. According to Polish senators, the king’s physical body did not properly personify the kingdom, because it had been damaged by a secret and unequal wedlock “with neither God, nor honour, nor reason”.<sup>1</sup> The issue of the king’s marriage immediately ended up on the agenda of the Diet. After heated parliamentary discussions lasting for three months in the autumn of 1548, the question was exhaustively summarised by Piotr Boratyński, envoy of the Krakow Palatinate. Ignoring the king’s objections and requests to desist, Boratyński ended his forceful speech thus:

May you, Your Royal Majesty, not turn away from the will of God, the kind council of the Senate and the appeals of your subjects, given without cunning or discord but with honest and humble tears, but may you deign to dissolve this secret marriage to a person of lower status than your own, for the sake of your love towards God and the good of your royal person and your countries. If you do this, Your Royal Majesty, you will soothe the people’s hearts, and remedy that with which you, our gracious Lord, humiliated your royal dignity, insulted and bitterly disappointed your friends and knights, and with which you, Your Royal Majesty, encouraged the enemies of the Crown, all of this you can rectify by abandoning this marriage. And with it, Your Royal Majesty, you will match the glorious memory of other formerly famous kings of the world, when you, Your Royal Highness, deign to indulge your subjects rather than the short lasting pleasure of your marriage. And with it, gracious King, you will deign to gain even more loyal support from your subjects who are already loyal to the point of spilling blood in your name.<sup>2</sup>

Boratyński’s address followed all the principles of high rhetoric, while the scabs, quibbles, and caricatures that lampooned the wedding competed for more suggestive obscenity. Žygimantas’ love for Barbara revealed the human body, and since the king’s political self continued to discipline the slander, suspicions and fantasies could be vented by depicting Barbara as a harlot, seductress, and enchantress, as well as by disparaging her kin and lineage. It was not Barbara’s coronation as Queen of Poland on 7 December, 1550 but rather her death in May of the following year that somewhat suppressed the gossip and directed the ruler’s corporeal matters towards the search for an heir again. Yet Žygimantas Augustas’ political and physical bodies already functioned in separate discourses through different forms of expression and media. Hence, the mints, cannon foundries, and chancelleries of both the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania asserted the king’s political body, while miscellaneous civil writings focused on the domain of the physical body. The primary questions were ones which had agitated the members of the 1548 Diet: Is a person who cannot control his physical desires capable of embodying the state? Is a person

who cannot restrain himself suitable for ruling over others? Doubts about the king’s misaligned bodies were further deepened by Žygimantas’ unsuccessful and childless third marriage to Catherine of Austria, as well as the officially failed divorce of the royal couple.

The finitude of the human body raised political concerns. For instance, at the 1563 Warsaw Diet, Mikolaj Radziwiłł the Black followed up his overview of the long and successful reign of Jogaila and his lineage by stating that since Augustas had no male descendants, there was no one

who could inherit the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the ducal throne. This meant nothing prevented Augustas from renouncing his patrimonial rights and letting the steed of the Vytis (the mounted armoured knight depicted on the coat of arms of the Grand Duchy) graze freely. Radziwiłł assured that if a legitimate heir were to appear, the Grand Duchy’s nobility would recognize his blood right to be Lithuania’s ruler and the rider of the Vytis’ steed.<sup>3</sup> The absence of legitimate children came to be viewed as the king’s fundamental flaw. After the death of Catherine, the Diet urged Žygimantas to marry and, according to Anna Jagiellon’s letter to her sister Sophia, even mocked the ruler’s inability to produce offspring, claiming that even this feat (which had been mastered by most kings) was an insurmountable challenge for Augustas.<sup>4</sup> Childlessness meant that the physical body had failed to ensure the continuation of the political body. It seems that such termination of the dynasty also depressed the aging king himself, who included an unspecified descendant or heir (*potomek/succesor*), who was to take his throne, among the inheritors in his will.<sup>5</sup>

Žygimantas Augustas’ death in the summer of 1572 gave the Polish and Lithuanian magnates hope to find an appropriate body to personify the Commonwealth. The deliberations regarding the desirable nature of a new ruler were based on contrast and discussed the king’s flaws, sins, and faults without mentioning the name of the deceased awaiting his burial until the successor of his political body was found and crowned. Andreas Volanus, who provided perhaps the most consistent scrutiny of this topic by far, wrote in the *Address to the Senate of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania* (1573):

I believe there is no better cure for all of the state’s illnesses than immediately electing a new ruler in the place of the deceased, upon your unanimous agreement and measured decision. I am speaking of a ruler, not a tyrant; that is, one who would rule the nation according to law rather than succumb to his own heart’s passion, care only for his human matters, and thus lead the nation to perdition. ... Thereby, having learned from your domestic misfortunes, choose the ruler with great care, so that the people could look up to him as the one who wilfully destined his homeland to prosper rather than perish. ... I will not speak of all the harm caused to the state due to the sovereign’s undue execution of his office (I do not want to insult the deceased). ... And first of all, in my opinion, it is necessary to pass a much needed law regarding the ruler’s moral rigor to prevent him from defiling the chaste and legitimate nuptial bed by most disgraceful passions, calling down God’s wrath upon himself and the entire state, and harming everyone with his bad example. ... I hope that the Lord grants this state a ruler famed for such temperance and chastity, so that we could instantly witness him driving out that stinking hoard of shameless harlots from the palace, and thus could call the palace a seedbed of all sorts of virtues, rather than a pit of filthy vices. ... It does not befit the one who must guard everybody and keep vigil to be idle like some slouch, to ignore the public good, and be convinced that he was born only for himself. ... However, a ruler who is hard to access for the people, whose door is constantly besieged by a crowd from the outside, can rightly be called a Polyphemus enjoying his cave, or, more accurately, a beast hateful of the human kind. There is no hope that he would be agile in performing his military duty, because when it comes to civil matters he turns out to be languid and sluggish. He who runs the state in such a manner that his carelessness and inertia prevents him from guarding peace and general happiness both at home by observing the law and beyond the borders by fighting off the menacing threats with arms seems to definitely want to ruin the state, and is thus worthy of being flung from the state heights to despicable and dismal living conditions.<sup>6</sup>

While the senators were looking for a suitable king and preparing the legal conditions (*pacta conventa*) for the future political body, the heirless death of Žygimantas Augustas, which ended the Jagiellonian dynasty, was being lamented. The dead human body was perceived as the end of a continuous Jagiellonian political body, although preachers and participants of mourning commemorations, held not only in Krakow, Warsaw, and Vilnius, but also in Rome, called for taking care of the deceased king’s sisters, particularly princess Anna – a living remnant of the Jagiellonian blood. For instance, the canon of the Krakow Cathedral and Cistercian abbot Marcin Białobrzeski addressed the mourners in his oration at the king’s funeral as follows:

<sup>3</sup> *Źródłopisma do dziejów unii Korony Polskiej i W. X. Litewskiego*, ed. Tytus Działyński, pt. 2.1, Poznań, 1861, p. 241-242.

<sup>4</sup> Aleksander Przeździecki, *Jagiellonki Polskie w XVI wieku*, vol. 3, Kraków, 1868, p. 223-224.

<sup>5</sup> Antoni Franaszek, Olga Łaszczyńska, Stanisław Edward Nahlik, *Testament Zygmunta Augusta*, Kraków, 1975, p. 1-45.

<sup>6</sup> Andrius Volanas, *Rinkiniai raštai*, Vilnius, 1996, p. 189-197, translated to Lithuanian from Latin by Marcelinas Ročka.

<sup>1</sup> Urszula Borkowska, *Dynastia Jagiellonów w Polsce*, Warszawa, 2012, p. 544.

<sup>2</sup> *Scriptores rerum polonicarum*, t. 1, ed. Józef Szujski, Kraków, 1872, p. 207-208; English translation quoted after Katarzyna Kosior, *Becoming a Queen in Early Modern Europe*, Queenship and Power, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019, p. 214.

Your King, ruler and protector, whose family and ancestors have been ruling over you for 187 years. They have ruled so long, so gloriously, so virtuously that there is no noble family in Poland that would not have experienced their kindness. It is the last king from these benefactors, the last of his kin, thus upon his death we are burying not just the king, but the entire family of great rulers.<sup>7</sup>

The urge to “remember, remember” recurring in Białobrzski’s eulogy clearly points out that after Žygimantas Augustas’ burial the corporeal continuity of the king ceases, and the former ruler becomes the shape of memory, a task and obligation. Hence, the king’s funeral endowed the political body with a verbal and visual representation later named the Jagiellonian dynasty, whose remembrance was devoutly immortalised by princess and later Queen Anna. Thus, this shaped body of the past inhabited texts, which, unlike images, continued to recall Augustas’ controversial reputation. In his book *The Parallel Lives of Caesars, Kings, and Rulers* (1603), Christophorus Varsevicius contrasted King Jogaila, a great ruler who had started a lineage which ensured the state’s peace and prosperity for a long time, with Žygimantas Augustas, a king who lacked God’s grace, led a vicious life, and even built a nest of amusement and lust in Vilnius.<sup>8</sup> Still, such an evaluation by Varsevicius seemed to complete the image of Žygimantas Augustas as a flawed man who had held the state’s political body hostage, as later tradition, scrupulously engineered by Anna Jagiellon, not only rehabilitated him and his ancestors on the Polish and Lithuanian thrones, but also constructed the king’s image according to the humanist honed patterns of what a Renaissance prince should be.

As it usually does, memory not only improved the past, but also carried Žygimantas’ body like a container for personalised time, changing expectations and desired reality. The essential thing is that the historical tradition eventually reconciled both of Augustas’ bodies by identifying them with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, unsettled and torn by contradictions. Furthermore, the marriage of Žygimantas and Barbara, scorned in the sixteenth century, became a space of solace for patriots lamenting the lost state in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Most importantly, the rulers’ bodies, recycled into expectation containers, did not reject their obligations to the state and the citizens. By giving shape to tradition and having clear coordinates in history, these bodies continue to be a cornucopia of roles; as soon as present-day society or its influential celebrities call upon the past rulers and fill them with today’s concerns, the body of the ruler instantly becomes a political currency, an icon for patronage, a sign of Europeanness, or a personification of tolerance. Thus, Žygimantas Augustas’ bodies, united by tradition, are a bottomless and thus inexhaustible container of images and roles.

<sup>7</sup> Książca Marcina Białobrzskiego ... Kazanie na pogrzebie świętej pamięci zacnego Sigmunta Augusta z domu Jagielow ostatniego krolia polskiego y wielkiego kksiążęcia lytweskiego etc., Kraków, 1574, p. H2v.

<sup>8</sup> Christophorus Varsevicius, *Caesarum regum et principum, unius et eiusdem, partim generis at nominis, partim etiam imperii ac dominationis, vitarum paralellum libri duo*, Kraków, 1603, p. 130.

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P R O J E C T

( I N )

# ‘The Zygmunt’s’ rule was and will remain the golden age of our past.’

Historians Maria and Zygmunt Wojciechowski, 1946<sup>1</sup>

(IN) is an art project which reveals Žygimantas August(IN)as’ methodical transformation into a ‘historical’ personality and his immersion into the creation of an absurd identity in which he is implicated by circumstance. The project is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter introduces the method invoked to ground the ‘authenticity’ of the becoming. In the chapters that follow, you will find the self-validating construction of a personal story by an individual who got caught up in the toils of a fabricated reality, while in the seventh chapter you will see the unveiling of a monument to Žygimantas August(IN)as’ doppelganger. The texts in the chapters function like museum guides, hinting at noteworthy aspects, and historians’ quotes provide a contrast to the paintings or complement them with ‘unquestionable’ statements. The accompanying documentary photographs link the reality of the paintings to the more habitual present-day visual environment and current issues.

From his early childhood, the author of the (IN) project, Žygimantas August(IN)as, was collated with the namesake King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania, the last male of the Jagiellonian dynasty, Žygimantas Augustas (Sigismund II Augustus (in Latin) or Zygmunt II August (in Polish), 1520–1572). The small

difference of two letters, i and n, between the names has led to numerous funny situations, from the unintentionally skipped ‘in’ in documents or during official presentations, to the mockery of friends and colleagues. These incidents undoubtedly had to leave a trace on the author’s psyche. While he was drinking tea with a renowned artist in a vegetarian cafe in the autumn of 2013, Žygimantas Augustinas began to realize that he could not escape the haunting of the King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania. Gradually at first, he became increasingly interested in history, collecting paintings portraying him as king, making and commissioning portraits of his royal family, and celebrating the anniversaries of his alleged father Žygimantas the Old (Sigismund I the Old (in Latin) or Zygmunt I Stary (in Polish), 1467–1548). Moreover, Augustinas commissioned a redesign of the Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania, began looking for ties to present-day rulers, attempted to create a non-existent Jagiellonian descendant, participated in the unveiling of a monument to King Žygimantas Augustas in the town of Pasvalys, and surely struck the people around him with his arrogance. The purpose of these actions was not clear then and remains so. Psychoanalysts might say they are a consequence of childhood traumas, but we don’t trust them anymore. Cynics

might laugh at the author’s folly, but they aren’t worth the attention. Serious people, meanwhile, would likely silently shake or nod their heads.

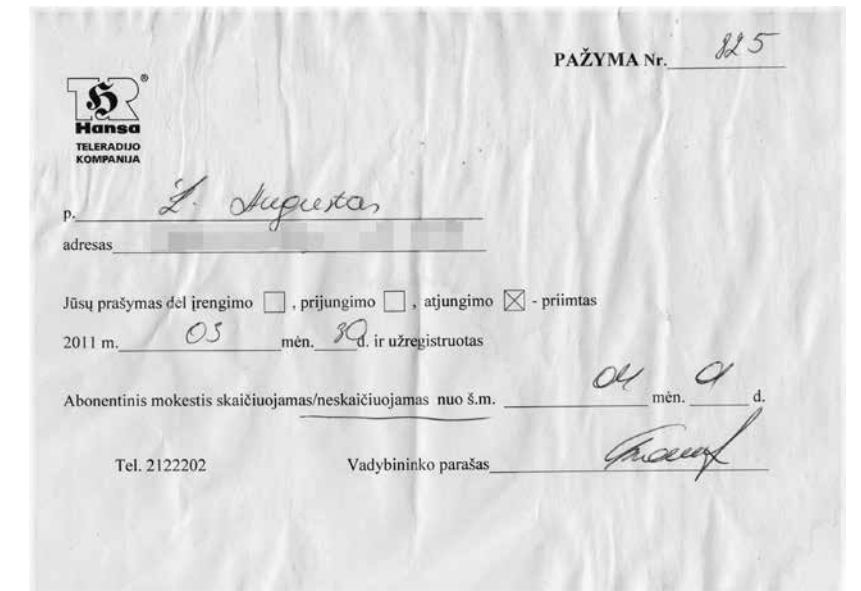
Realization of the absurd notion that one’s name determines one’s actions provided a pretext for producing a series of works and reading a number of intriguing books. Particularly noteworthy here is the historian Natalia Nowakowska’s *Remembering the Jagiellonians*<sup>2</sup>. The author researches how remembrance of the same historical personalities changes depending on place and time. Until recently, the popular convention held that historians write history from the perspective of their era, but the aforementioned book enriches this idea by pointing out society’s habit of remembering particular rulers as either positive or negative. This can last for centuries. For instance, in Finland and Bavaria the Jagiellonians are seen as positive historical characters, while in Lithuania, Poland, and Hungary nationalistically minded people have a negative view of them. Regardless of the shifting perspectives on nationalism and history written in the era of Romanticism, as well as increasing emphasis on the ambivalent nature of historical facts even in very popular television shows,<sup>3</sup> society’s opinion changes little. In Lithuania habitual thinking remains that Jogaila (Władysław II Jagiełło) betrayed Lithuania

when he became the King of Poland and that Žygimantas Augustas gave Lithuania away to the Poles. The need for a change in mentality determined the reference points of the (IN) project, which seeks to avoid a dichotomous opposition of good and evil, while the name of the ruler of Poland and Lithuania, Žygimantas Augustas, facilitates speaking about a peculiar love of the grandeur of history, the perception of realness, and the historical potential of the painting genre. The project does not seek to reveal the history of Lithuania or Poland (this is a job for historians), but instead portrays an individual attempting to adapt history to himself – to his own trivial egotistical aims and vanity. (IN) looks for useful and entertaining historical ‘truths’ which may have been fabricated earlier by very similar people. Here, science does not serve to produce an ‘undeniable truth’, but instead provokes contemplation on the part of the reader and viewer, hence pseudoscientific methods end up alongside works by authoritative scientists. Painting becomes a tool for constructing an alternate reality rather than a solution for aesthetical problems.

A certificate issued by the Hansa television and radio broadcasting company to the author of the (IN) project, 2011.

<sup>2</sup> Natalia Nowakowska, *Remembering the Jagiellonians*, London/New York: Routledge, 2019.

<sup>3</sup> I have in mind the extremely popular Lithuanian Television (LRT) show *Būtovės slėpiniai* (Mysteries of Being), which ran in 1993–2004.



<sup>1</sup> M. Wojciechowska, Z. Wojciechowski, *Polska Piastów, Polska Jagiellonów*, Poznań, 1946, p. 467. ‘Czasy zygmuntofskie są i pozostaną złotym okresem naszej przeszłości.’

The Beloved King, 2018.



# I.

## Craniometry – Žygimantas Augustas’ Genes

Craniometry (Greek *kranion* – skull, *metreo* – measure) is a research method used to analyse the measurements and proportions of the human skull with the aim of understanding human physical diversity. In his treatise *Physiognomonics*, Greek philosopher Aristotle dedicated considerable attention to the connection between the shape and proportions of the face and an individual’s character. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, craniometry was often used by phrenologists, who believed that the form of the skull was related to an individual’s mental traits. They also sought to demonstrate the differences between races and individuals, positing some as superior to others. There were also attempts to identify criminals based on their facial structure alone. In 1895, the renowned criminologist and anthropologist Cesare Lombroso argued that killers had protruding chins while pickpockets had small ones. Inspired by these ideas, psychologist William Sheldon also tried to find parallels between physical and psychological traits in 1940. The Nazis employed craniometry during the Holocaust to underscore the superiority of the Aryans, determine an individual’s race, and often to decide a person’s fate based on physical measurements. At the time, this approach was perceived as a progressive science that provided numerous prospects for

improving society and the human race. According to today’s science, however, human capabilities and traits have nothing to do with skull measurements, thus phrenology is classified as a pseudoscience, while craniometric methods are still in use, albeit for different purposes.

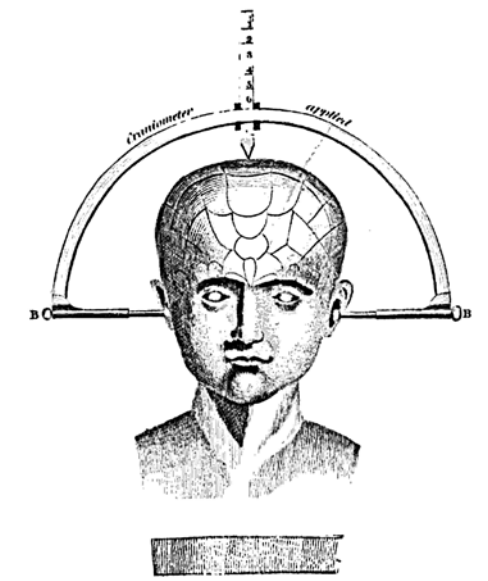
Caroline Wilkinson, an expert on forensic facial reconstruction, claims that skulls are just as different as faces, but we are not used to noticing those differences. The history of forensics, too, testifies to the importance of anthropological measurements for identifying individuals. Alphonse Bertillon (1853–1914) applied anthropometric measurements in the identification of criminals; he proposed adding to a perpetrator’s frontal and profile photographs a table of eleven measurements of the human body, including the head, feet, palm, etc. This method was used until the introduction of the fingerprint identification system.

Science and precise measurements are somehow imposing. If we rejected the influence of the human hands and senses on making a portrait and allowed the scientific method itself to shape the image, we would get rid of the subjectivity characteristic of the human faculties and come closer to the objectivity we so desire. The portraits of King Žygimantas Augustas’ family are unlikely to have been paint-

ed from nature. Sixteenth-century artists usually employed drawings which they or their colleagues had made, portraits were reproduced by copying earlier images, while the likeness of a person was maintained by very carefully copying only the principal proportions and features of the face and the body: the location and shape of the nose, eyes, and mouth. The proportion of the head and the placing of facial features is determined by special skull points which often match those used in craniometry. When drawing and painting the human head, artists do their best to perceive the skull beneath the skin. Skull bones are most visible in the upper part of the human face, i.e. in the areas of the forehead, the root of the nose, and the cheekbones. Other areas of the face, although influenced by the shape of the skull, have a rather thick layer of soft tissue beneath them. Seeking to show the ‘real’ face of the portrayed person without any embellishments, Žygimantas August(in)as developed the craniometric portraiture method during his art doctorate studies. The essence of this approach lies in the ‘extraction’ of craniometric points from the face of the subject and their exposure to the viewer.

The first chapter includes illustrations of craniometric portraits of the closest relatives of the King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania Žygimantas

Augustas. The images were created using the portraits of the royal family – Žygimantas the Old (Zygmunt I Stary, 1467–1548), Bona Sforza (Bona Sforza, 1494–1557), Elżbieta Habsburgaitė (Elizabeth of Austria, 1526–1545), Barbora Radvilaitė (Barbara Radziwiłł, 1520–1551), Kotryna Habsburgaitė (Catherine of Austria, 1533–1572), and Žygimantas Augustas (Zygmunt II August, 1520–1572) – created in the studio of Lucas Cranach the Younger and now part of the collection of the Czartoryski Museum in Krakow. According to historians, Žygimantas Augustas was an egotistical person, thus we will not find any portraits of his sisters Ona (Anna I of Poland), Izabelė (Isabella, Queen of Hungary), Zofija (Sophia, Duchess of Brunswick-Lüneburg) and Kotryna (Catherine, Queen of Sweden), or any other relatives.



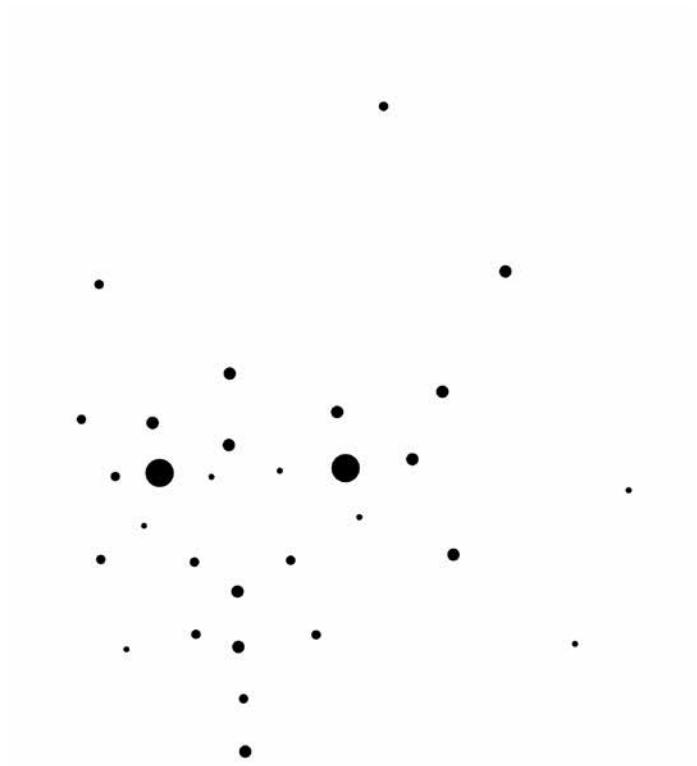
The craniometer and the principle of its use, 1835.

‘One who has a very low and small forehead is understanding, generous, but exceptionally impudent and self-confident, and demands a great deal of love and respect.’

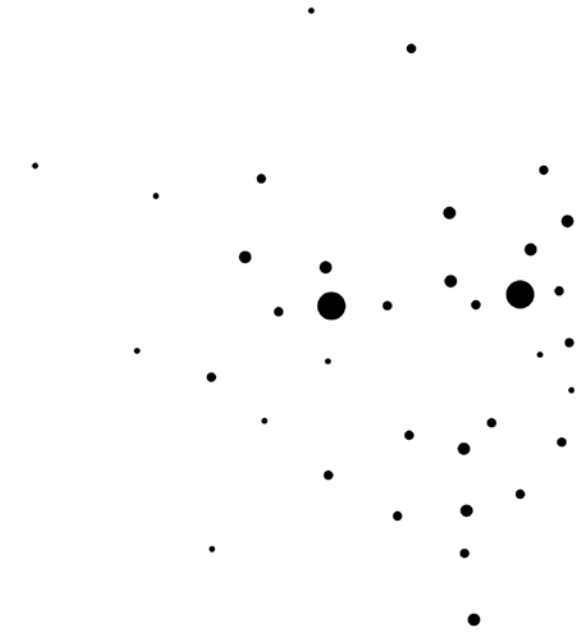
Aristotle [1]



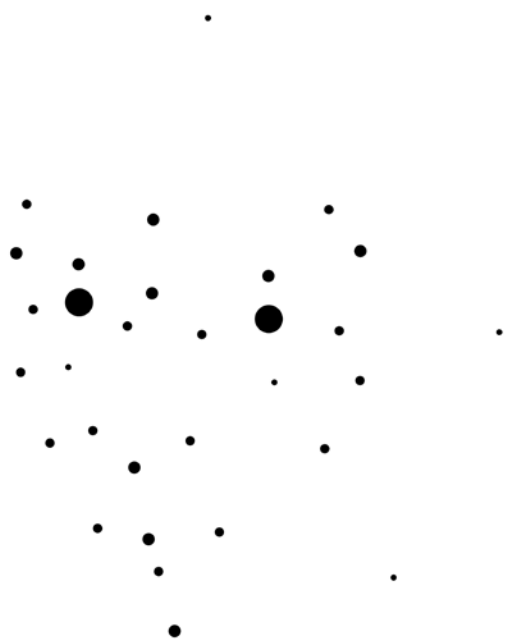
Craniometric portrait of Žygimantas the Old, 2016.



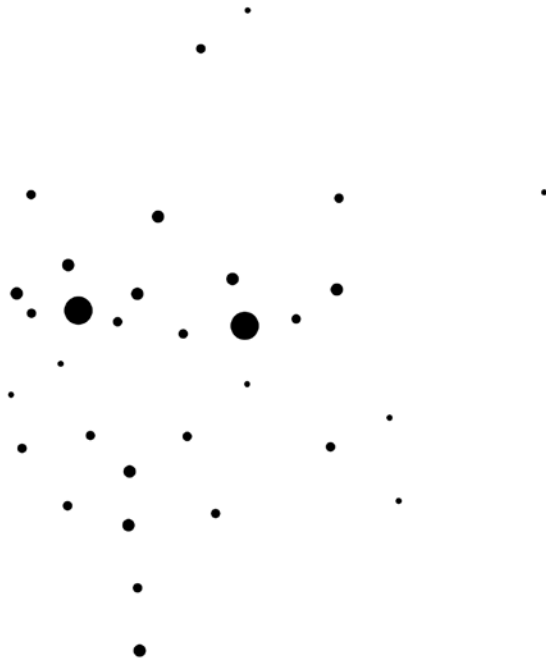
Craniometric portrait of Bona Sforza, 2016.



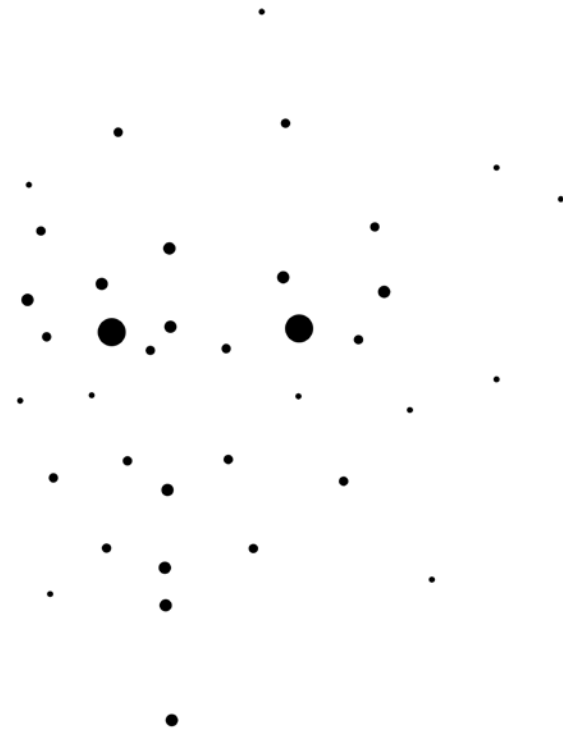
Craniometric portrait of Elizabeth of Austria, 2014.



Craniometric portrait of Barbara Radziwiłł, 2014.



Craniometric portrait of Catherine of Austria, 2014.



Craniometric portrait of Žygimantas Augustas, 2014.

‘A big head and wide face suggest  
that a person is very brave,  
a great skirt-chaser, very suspicious,  
insolent and shameless.’

Aristotle [11]



# II.

## The Portraits of Žygimantas August(IN)as' Family

In medieval Lithuania, one's status and value usually depended on officially confirmed blood ties with members of the nobility. Ancestors and close relatives were a warrant of social success. Hence it is only logical to begin this chapter with Žygimantas August(IN)as' attempt to create a set of worthy parents. A gallery of noble ancestors' portraits is a must-have attribute of every self-respecting individual who knows the value of blood ties. If historical cataclysms prevent one from proving a blood relation with the desired persons, science of some kind will always be invoked. The DNA molecules in the blood surely have an influence on the shape of the skull and facial features; we can easily demonstrate that based on well-known portraits of the Habsburg dynasty. Thus, the craniometry technique described in the first chapter can serve as a source of unquestionable proofs. If we create a portrait gallery to show our obvious resemblance to noble historical figures, we can boldly parade it in front of guests and boast our pedigree. Our aim is to produce something similar to the Jagiellonian portrait gallery commissioned by Ladislaus IV Vasa and displayed in the Marble Room of the Royal Castle in Warsaw.

The portrait gallery of Žygimantas August(IN)as' family is not very rich; it begins with the images

of his father and mother based on the portraits of Žygimantas the Old and Bona Sforza d'Aragona painted in the studio of Lucas Cranach the Younger. The anthropometric and craniometric points (the black dots visible in the portraits) sourced from them create the necessary ties and form proofs of kinship that are hard to refute. These portraits' ties with Žygimantas August(in)as are also reinforced by their similitude to this person's photographic images.

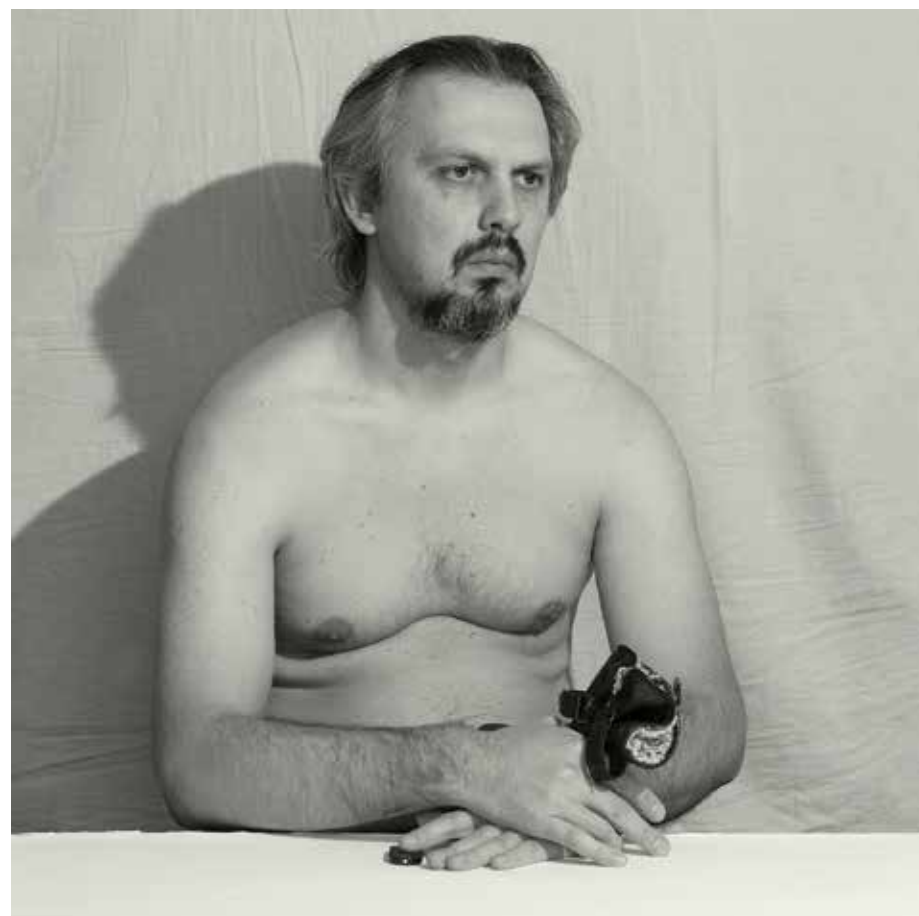
We can spot tattoos of family coats of arms on the bodies of Žygimantas August(in)as' parents. The mother sports a tattoo of a serpent devouring a human – the Sforza coat of arms. The father has a tattoo of an eagle with the wings spread out (the Jagiellonian coat of arms) as well as the Pillars of Gediminas and even the relatively modern sign of the Vytis (the coat of arms of Lithuania). The latter symbols surely demonstrate loyalty to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The accessories in the portraits suggest ancestry and wealth: the mother wears a cameo crafted by the prominent Italian artist Giovanni Jacopo Caraglio (1500/1505–1565) who worked for the Jagiellonians. This cameo is currently part of the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York; it is easy to surmise that it ended up there without the owners' knowledge. In front of the queen we see an extravagant orange

handbag and in her hands, adorned with a golden ring and a watch, she holds a pair of gloves – a typical attribute seen in the portraits of affluent people. The father wears a massive golden chain and, on his right middle finger, a signature ring with a crowned letter 'S' symbolising the Latin version of his name, Sigismund (the same insignia can be seen on his right upper arm). He also holds a pair of gloves in his hands, resting them on a blueprint of the Lower Castle in Vilnius. The portraits of the spouses reveal a significant age difference typical of rich couples.

Every 'real man' is proud of himself and his wives, hence the family portrait gallery cannot do without the portraits of Žygimantas August(IN)as and his three spouses. They are also based on the aforementioned craniometric portraiture method and genetic data sourced from the images of Elizabeth and Catherine Habsburg and Barbara Radziwiłł painted in the studio of the same Lucas Cranach the Younger. The portraits show young women dressed up modestly yet tastefully, displaying the traits and pride of their eminent kin. The paintings are somewhat smaller than the parents' portraits; however, the collection also includes a supplementary immense sculptural portrait of the favourite second wife which adorns Vokiečių Street in Vilnius. The work's author was the renowned Lithuanian sculptor Vldas Vildžiūnas (1932–2013).



Portraits of the royal family (left to right, top to bottom): Žygimantas the Old, Elizabeth of Austria, Barbara Radziwiłł, Catherine of Austria, Bona Sforza, Žygimantas Augustas, ca. 1565.



Žygimantas August(IN)as, 2016.



Portrait of Žygimantas August(IN)as' father, 2017.

‘Sigismund the Old was fifty, and was a stalwart and strong man able to break a horseshoe and tear a deck of cards with his fingers. His appearance and stature commanded respect, as his face reflected majesty and gravity, while the eyes under the thick eyebrows had a stern look. He was the strongest and healthiest son of Casimir Jagiellon. The great-grandson of the Grand Duke of Lithuania Algirdas inherited physical strength and endurance in war.’

Stanislaw Cynarsky [III]



Anthropometric portrait of Zygmantas the Old, 2016.





Žygimantas August(IN)as, 2016.



Portrait of Žygimantas August(IN)as' mother, 2017.

‘The young Bona was undoubtedly  
a very beautiful woman... The queen’s  
health was perfect – the young woman  
was in full bloom.’

Malgorzata Duczmal [iv]



Anthropometric portrait of Bona Sforza, 2016.

‘Elizabeth embodied the female ideal of the time: she was quiet, obedient, and gentle.’

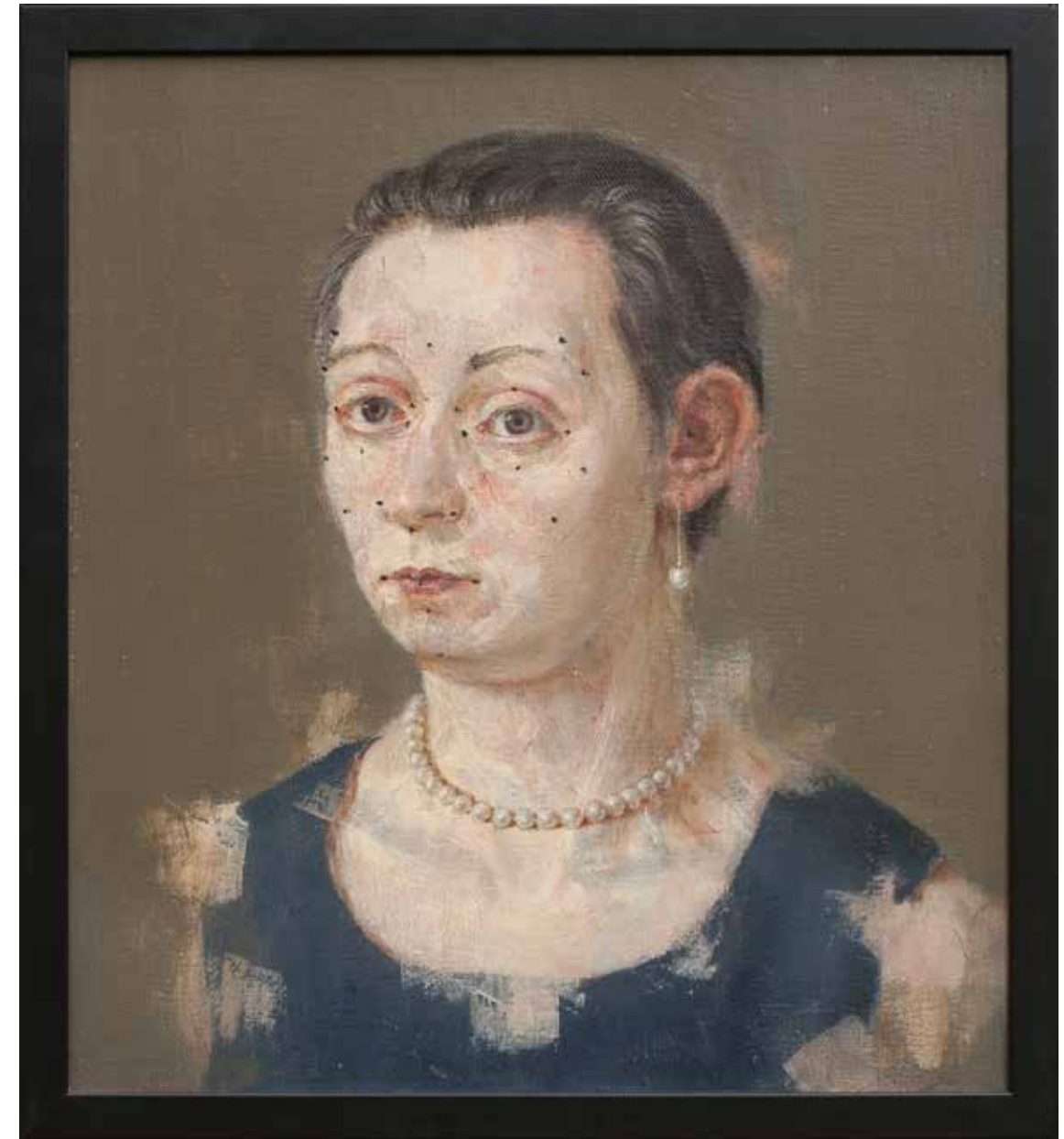
Malgorzata Duczmal [v]



First wife of Žygimantas August(IN)as, 2014.

‘Barbara’s dominant trait was definitely that of egocentrism. It dictated a hedonistic view of life which manifested itself as a craving for garments, jewels, entertainment and erotic life.’

Malgorzata Duczmal [vi]



Second wife of Žygimantas August(in)as, 2014.



‘... As soon as he was certain that nobody would ever free him from Catherine, he did not want not only to live with her but even to see her.

On January 24, 1564 Comendone wrote from Warsaw that the king had said in the former Diet he would have gladly become a friar to get rid of the wife.’

Malgorzata Duczmal [vii]



Third wife of Zygmunt August (IN)as, 2015.



‘Žygimantas Augustas was considered a handsome man. A swarthy dark-haired and dark-eyed brunet with an oblong face, a regular-shaped straight nose, elegant lip line, and large expressive eyes.’

Malgorzata Duczmal [viii]



Portrait of Žygimantas Augustas, 2014.



‘Without any doubt, Barbara was a sensuous woman of hot temper, erotic, bursting with the joy of life and uncomplicated thinking.’

Malgorzata Duczmal [IX]

< *Barbora* sculpture by Vladas Vildžiūnas, 1982.



# III.

## Father's Birthday and the Reconstruction of the Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania

Some people like to demonstrate their love for their father very publicly. This is especially necessary, of course, if one became part of a dynasty thanks to that father. Preservation of a father's memory and the celebration of his anniversaries is a son's indisputable duty. Hence, in 2017 the 550<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Žygimantas the Old was commemorated. There is probably no better gift to a father than a renovation of his residential palace.<sup>1</sup> Every gift is also useful to the giver, thus the aim of the reconstruction of the Palace of the Grand Dukes is to make it worthy of pride, as well as suitable for the son's inclinations – a merry life.

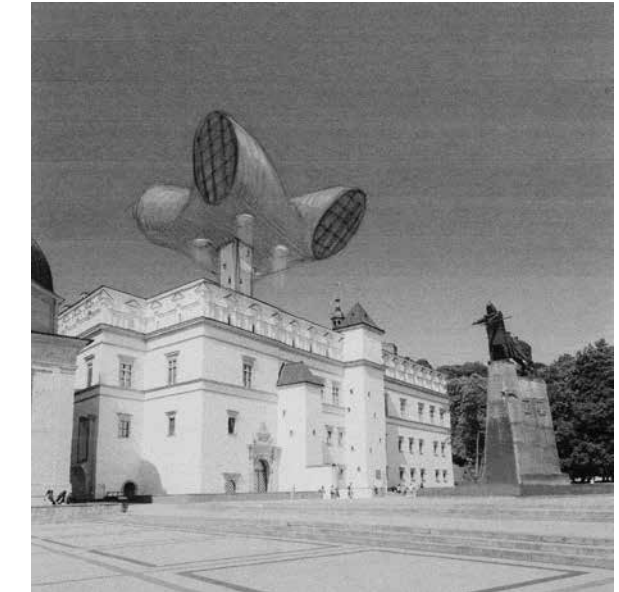
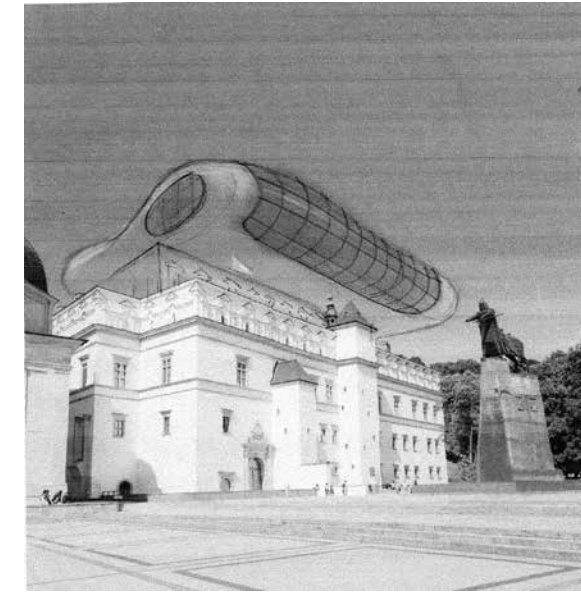
The supervision of the palace reconstruction project was entrusted to an authoritative jury comprised of respected experts from different fields: art historian Dr. Giedrė Mickūnaitė, contemporary artist Professor Artūras Raila, architect Linas Žičkis, and contemporary art critic Jurij Dobriakov.

The open call for architectural projects specified that they had to take into account the pleasure-seeking royal personality of Žygimantas Augustas (the palace had to be imposing and arouse guests' fascination and envy, as well as to be well-fitted for feasts and entertainment). The competition met all the formal requirements

and involved two artists who proposed eight architectural reconstruction ideas. There was talk that one of the contestants was a former classmate of the competition organiser, but the jury did its work honestly and the proposals were encoded with numbers. Proposal 6 was selected as the most compliant with the requirements out of eight submitted designs. The winning proposal presented a building whose grandeur obscured the symbol of the Gediminid dynasty – Gediminas Castle. The design's functional properties were also impeccable: they were exceptionally well adapted to feasts and parties – festivities and revelries would be visible to the entire city, arousing envy and admiration, stimulating the citizens to climb up the social ladder (evident luxury would foster their ambitions). The winner of the competition was the architect Vaidas Grinčelaitis,<sup>2</sup> who was entrusted with the task of drafting a comprehensive reconstruction project. The painter Žygimantas Augustinas was commissioned to produce a visualisation of the reconstructed palace.

On March 20, 2017, Žygimantas' name day, an exhibition and reception were held to commemorate the 550<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Žygimantas the Old. As part of the celebration, the people of Lithuania were introduced to the reconstruction

plan proposed for the Palace of the Grand Dukes and its visualisation in the form of a painting. The exhibition also featured family portraits and a new portrait of Žygimantas Augustas made by the printmaker Augustas Bidlauskas. Another exhibit was a t-shirt bearing the Jagiellonian coat of arms and dedicated to Žygimantas (Sigismund) the Old by the Red is Bad brand. The musical theme of the event was provided by Jurij Dobriakov in the role of a DJ, and the exhibition was accompanied by Giedrė Mickūnaitė's lecture on the spectacular personality of King Žygimantas Augustas. Later, to demonstrate the royal love for the citizens of Lithuania, the exhibition travelled to Klaipėda Exhibition Hall, where it successfully continued to delight local audiences. Finally, in November the design was presented to the citizens of Milan, Italy, at the Theca gallery.



Sketches of reconstruction proposals for the Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania, 2016.

<sup>1</sup> The 1513 fire destroyed the Lower Castle of Vilnius and the ruler's residence within it. In 1520-1530, Žygimantas the Old rebuilt and expanded the Lower Castle residency, which would become a modern Renaissance palace. After many years, his supposed son decided to continue the works of his supposed father.

<sup>2</sup> Vaidas Grinčelaitis (b. 1973) is an architect. In 1983-1989, he attended Vilnius 31st Secondary School (currently Tuskulėnai Gymnasium) in the same class as Žygimantas Augustas.

King of Poland, Grand Duke of Lithuania Sigismund II Augustus

Committee for Reconstruction of the Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania:  
 Prof. Dr. Giedrė Mickūnaitė – art critic, expert of the Middle Ages, lecturer of Vilnius Academy of Arts  
 Prof. Artūras Raila – contemporary artist, lecturer of Vilnius Academy of Arts  
 Linas Žičkis – architect, FlexiForma UAB  
 Jurijus Dobriakovas – contemporary art critic, curator

**MINUTES**

**OF THE TENDER FOR RECONSTRUCTION IDEAS FOR THE PALACE OF THE GRAND DUKES OF LITHUANIA**

November 2016

Two architects submitted four idea proposals each for the tender, in total eight versions numbered from # 1 to #8.

Jury members: Prof. Dr. Giedrė Mickūnaitė, Prof. Artūras Raila, Linas Žičkis, Jurijus Dobriakovas.

Discussed: The perspectives of the ideas for the reconstruction of the Palace of the Grand Dukes, each jury member selected the ideas which satisfy the tender criteria best and evaluated them by scoring from 1 to 3 (the higher the score, the higher the quality).

Evaluation results

| Reconstruction idea No.                       | # 1 | # 2 | # 3 | # 4 | # 5 | # 6 | # 7 | # 8 |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Prof. Dr. Giedrė Mickūnaitė – art critic      | 1   | -   | -   | -   | 2   | 2   | 1   | 1   |
| Prof. Artūras Raila – contemporary artist     | 1   | 2   | -   | -   | -   | 3   | -   | -   |
| Linas Žičkis – architect                      | 1   | -   | 2   | -   | -   | 1   | -   | 3   |
| Jurijus Dobriakovas – contemporary art critic | -   | -   | -   | -   | 1   | 2   | -   | 3   |

Annexes: Photographs of the sketches of the ideas for the reconstruction of the Palace of the Grand Dukes

Chair of the meeting: Sigismund Augustinas

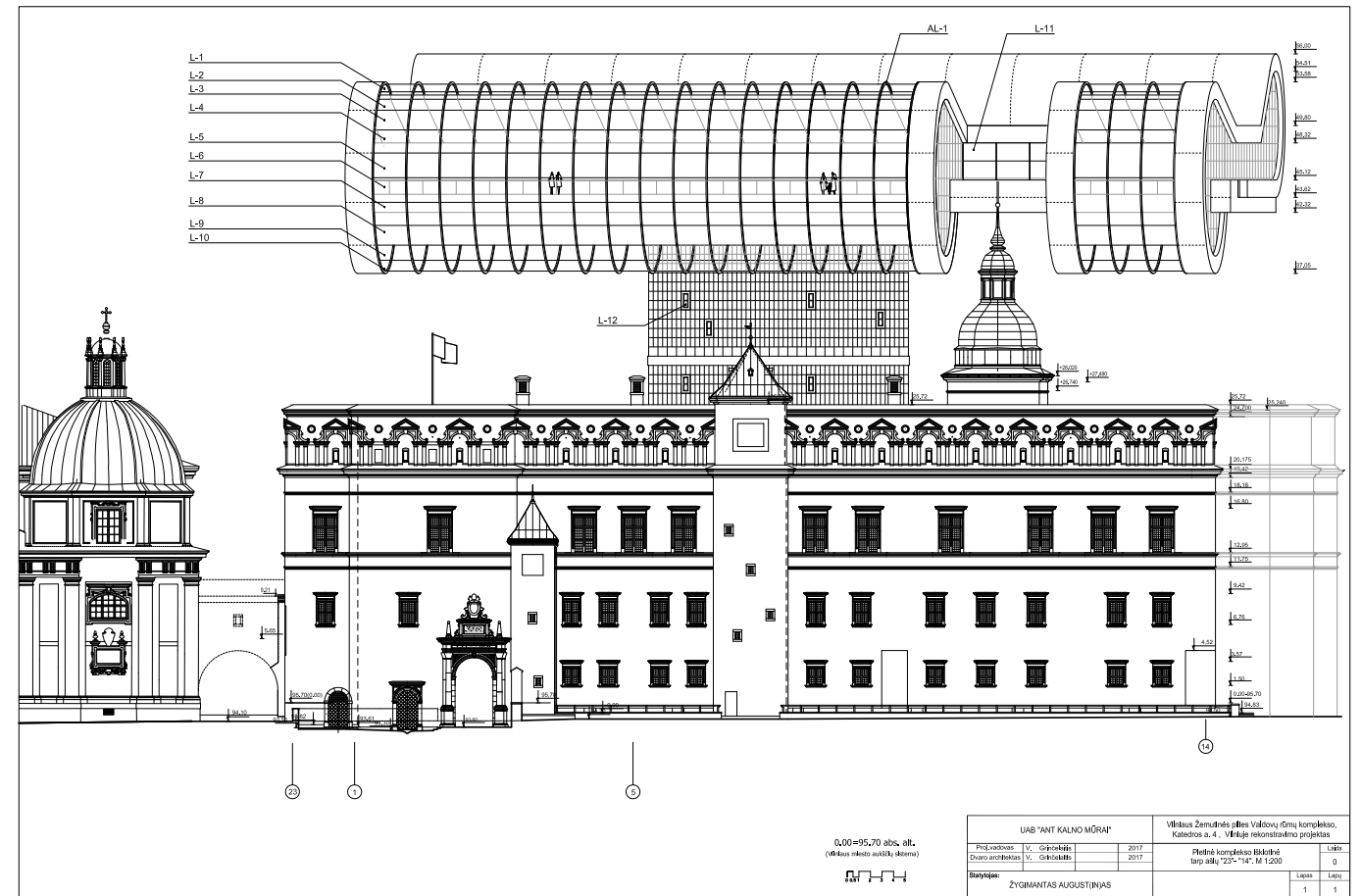
Jury members:

Prof. Dr. Giedrė Mickūnaitė

Prof. Artūras Raila

Linas Žičkis

Jurijus Dobriakovas



43.62  
42.32

AL-2

IK-1  
IK-2  
IK-3

37.05

Ob-1

L-14 L-14 L-14

R-4

KK-4a;KK-4b;KK-4c

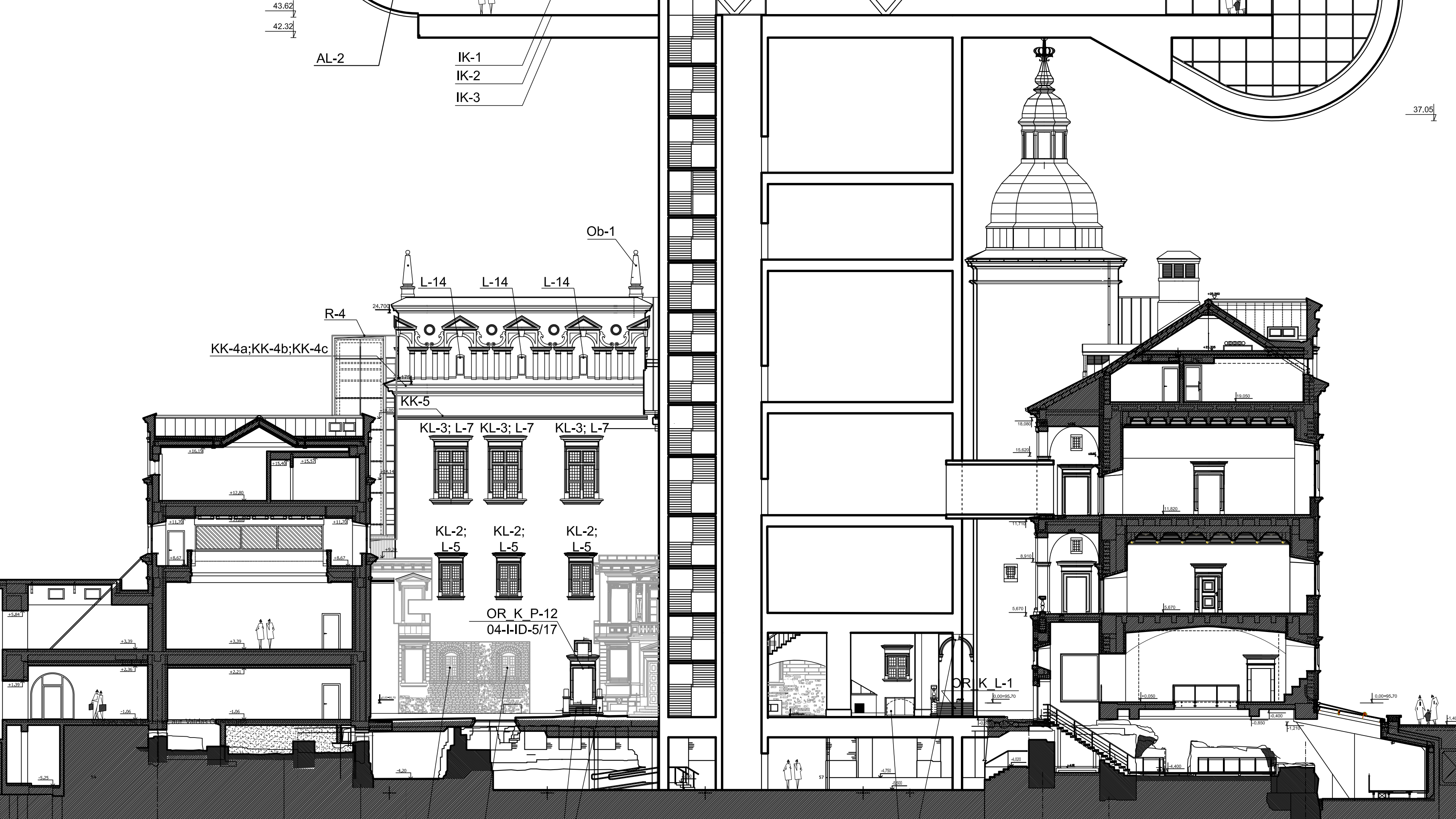
KK-5

KL-3; L-7 KL-3; L-7 KL-3; L-7

KL-2; L-5 KL-2; L-5 KL-2; L-5

OR K P-12  
04-I-ID-5/17

OR K L-1





“Vilnam ceu voluptatum quandam  
suam iuisset officinam.”

Varsevicius Christophorus [x]



Visualisation of the reconstruction of the Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania, 2017.

‘The figure of Sigismund I radiates the virtuous spirit of Christian ethics and firm faith.’

Anna Dembinska [xt]



Poster for the celebration of Žygimantas the Old's 550th anniversary, 2017.

‘One should remember that among Sigismund’s contemporaries were Alexander VI (Rodrigo de Borgia), a lecherous and wily Pope, King of England Henry VIII, the infamous killer of his wives and England’s most prominent aristocrats, and Francis I, whose mistresses were emptying the state treasury even though the country was battling financial problems at the time...’

Malgorzata Duczmal [XII]



Red is Bad branded t-shirt dedicated to Žygimantas the Old, ca. 2016–2017.





Exhibition dedicated to the celebration of Žygimantas the Old's 550th anniversary at the Klaipėda Culture Communication Centre's Exhibition Hall, 2017.



Exhibition dedicated to the celebration of Žygimantas the Old's 550th anniversary at the Theca Gallery in Milan, 2017.

# IV.

## Mom and Her Cuisine

King Žygimantas Augustas' mother, Bona Sforza d'Aragona (1494–1557), was renowned as an imperious and intelligent woman who initiated many useful political reforms. An analogous personality in present-day Lithuania would be Dalia Grybauskaitė (b. 1956), who served as President of Lithuania from 2009 to 2019. Both women decidedly stuck to their principles, defended Lithuania from threats posed by states to the East, did not succumb to the parliament, and were respected and even somewhat feared. These reasons prompted a craniometric analysis of these persons' skulls. The scheme shows that more than half of the craniometric points coincide. It cannot be merely an odd coincidence, because the character traits are quite similar, too.

If we spliced these women and extracted their best genes, their son could surely be Žygimantas August(1N)as. Hence the portrait gallery must be complemented with an image of a strong politician mother. The portrait of a hybrid of Bona Sforza and Dalia Grybauskaitė is based on the average of both women's craniometric data as well as their respective portraits, while the sitter for the painting was Žygimantas August(1N)as' mother Vida Valeckaitė (b. 1947).

The stern image of a politician should not overshadow that of a loving mother,

necessary for proper storytelling. A sweet homely atmosphere usually originates in family members' favourite dishes cooked by their mother. We only know a few details about Dalia Grybauskaitė's culinary preferences from her interviews: *'I have several traditional dishes to treat my friends and acquaintances. First of all, of course, there is my homemade marinated boletus mushrooms – they are a must, even my surname is similar [grybas is Lithuanian for mushroom], this is a family specialty. I also make dressed herring and a few times I roasted a leg of lamb according to Oliver's recipe – it was actually quite successful. But since the leg was large, it took three days to finish it, so I said I would not cook it again; at least I had tried it.'*<sup>1</sup> Bona Sforza is much more famous in this regard – in 2018, the Aukso Žuvys publishing house released a book entitled *Queen Bona's Cuisine*. We might infer that as a prince Žygimantas Augustas was pampered, as there are numerous recipes for sweets in this book. Jolita Bernotienė and Egidijus Simutis lift the veil off the secrets of King Žygimantas Augustas' mother's cuisine. Bona's son's favourite must surely have been the cherry tart. The tart we baked according to this recipe looked surprisingly similar to the tart in a still-life painting depicting a knife and plate with Žygimantas' signature (a crowned letter S). The tart's decorations are richer than those

described in the recipe book: four pairs of yellow cherries with stems laid out around a rose in the middle form a crown-like shape. The monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) landing on the tart was definitely an allusion to the ruler of Lithuania and Poland. Butterflies also frequently symbolised the heavenly good and holy welfare in Renaissance and Baroque-era still-life paintings.

Queen Bona Sforza's appearance in the newly rebuilt Palace of the Grand Dukes in 2017 was captured in a painting and was probably also related to the kitchen. The painting shows the queen dressed in her favourite Renaissance garment. For some reason the face looks unfinished, with visible craniometric points; it is unclear whether this is the painter's artistic license or a precise documentation of a phantom's apparition. Bona Sforza is standing by a door decorated with fire hazard signs (fires often broke out in kitchens).

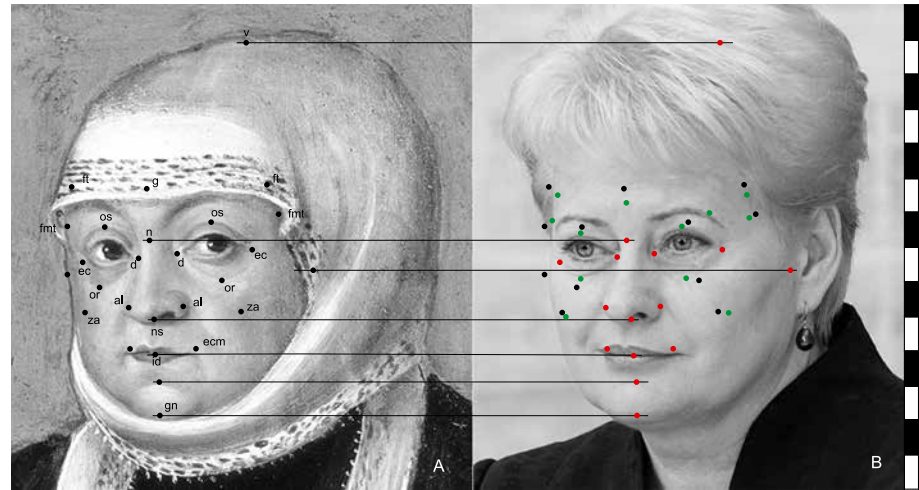
Queen Bona's merits in horticulture (she brought and cultivated many vegetables hitherto unseen in Lithuania) and agriculture (the Vokė Reform) are undoubtedly symbolised by a strange agricultural tool whose photograph is featured in this chapter. The tool's handle slightly resembles a bludgeon favoured by militant ancient Lithuanians (later replaced by a baseball bat). This object is the result of artist



Vida Valeckaitė, the real mother of Žygimantas August(1N)as, 2017.

Aistė Kisarauskaitė's research into Bona Sforza's gardening and Soviet agriculture.

<sup>1</sup> Lietuvos Rytas TV show, in: <https://zmones.rytas.lt/tv-antena/2017/12/28/news/prezidente-dalia-grybauskaite-papasakojo-apie-savo-kulinarinius-eksperimentus-4025244/>



Juxtaposition of craniometric points according to the Martin-Saller standard method  
 (black craniometric points for Queen Bona Sforza (1494-1557),  
 green and red for President of Lithuania Dalia Grybauskaitė (b. 1956), red for coinciding points).



Portrait of a hybrid of Queen Bona Sforza and President of Lithuania Dalia Grybauskaitė, 2017.





Sun-dried tomato paste jar, 2016.



Teleportation of Queen Bona Sforza, Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania, Vilnius, 2017.

### CHERRY TART

#### For the base:

200 g flour  
100 g butter  
50 ml cold water  
Pinch of salt

#### For the stuffing:

500 g ripe cherries  
200 g soft curd or ricotta cheese  
10 g grated hard cheese  
Handful of freshly picked red rose petals  
Unrefined brown sugar  
1 tsp each of cinnamon, ground ginger and  
freshly ground black pepper  
2–3 eggs  
1 tsp rose water

Prepare the base of the tart: grate the butter, pour in the flour, salt and water. Form a dough ball and leave to cool in the fridge for 1 hour. In the meantime, prepare the stuffing: pour two thirds of the sugar and all the spices on pitted cherries, set aside for a few moments for the flavours to blend, then mash everything with a blender. Chop the rose petals with a knife and mix with the mashed cherries. Gently stir in the curd or ricotta, grated cheese, and beaten eggs. Roll out the dough and lay it out on a shallow baking dish with wavy edges (the edges of the dough should slightly hang over the edge). Put the dough base in an oven preheated to 190° C and bake for 10 minutes. Gently press down the raised bottom. Pour the prepared stuffing onto the dough and bake for 50 more minutes. Sprinkle the baked pie with the reserved sugar and rose water.

- Recipe from Jolita Bernotienė, Rasa Leonavičiūtė, *Karalienės Bonos virtuvė*, Vilnius: Aukso žuvys, 2018, 97 p.



Still life with a royal cherry tart, 2019.





‘The Italian queen’s intuition was annoying – she was not credulous, it was difficult to deceive or manipulate her.’

Malgorzata Duczmal [xiii]

< Bona’s Tool reconstructed by Aistė Kisarauskaitė, 2019.

# V.

## From the King's Private Life

Žygimantas Augustas' private collection consists mostly of paintings portraying him on his estate. Here, one will find a portrait of him admiring himself after a boisterous party, as well as paintings capturing interior details, such as the floor of the Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania. In some of the paintings, the protagonist poses proudly, while in others he appears to have been caught unawares by the paparazzi. A suspicious tendency of giving excessive prominence to names is also visible in a highlight of the collection: a commissioned print by the engraver Augustas Bidlauskas depicting King Žygimantas Augustas with a tattoo commemorating his love for Barbara Radziwiłł. Also included is a copy of Barbara's letter to King Žygimantas Augustas written around the end of November 1547. The abundance of affectionate epithets addressed to the king must have been extremely moving. An analogue of the ring mentioned in the letter is also a valuable part of the collection. Another notable item is an odd portrait of the weary ruler who nevertheless consolidates the vision of the Union of Lublin with a gesture befitting the creator of the world. A barely discernible inscription, 'LDK' (Lithuanian for GDL, or Grand Duchy of Lithuania) is seen in the background. Almost all of the paintings in the collection follow the style characteristic of the humanist era; a

human is their primary protagonist, the colours are subdued, the beauty of the human body is emphasised while its imperfections are also tolerated. The collection radiates love for sixteenth and seventeenth century Western European painting.



Anthropometric King Žygimantas Augustas, 2015.





Gitanas Nausėda, the future President of the Republic of Lithuania, 2010. (ELTA)

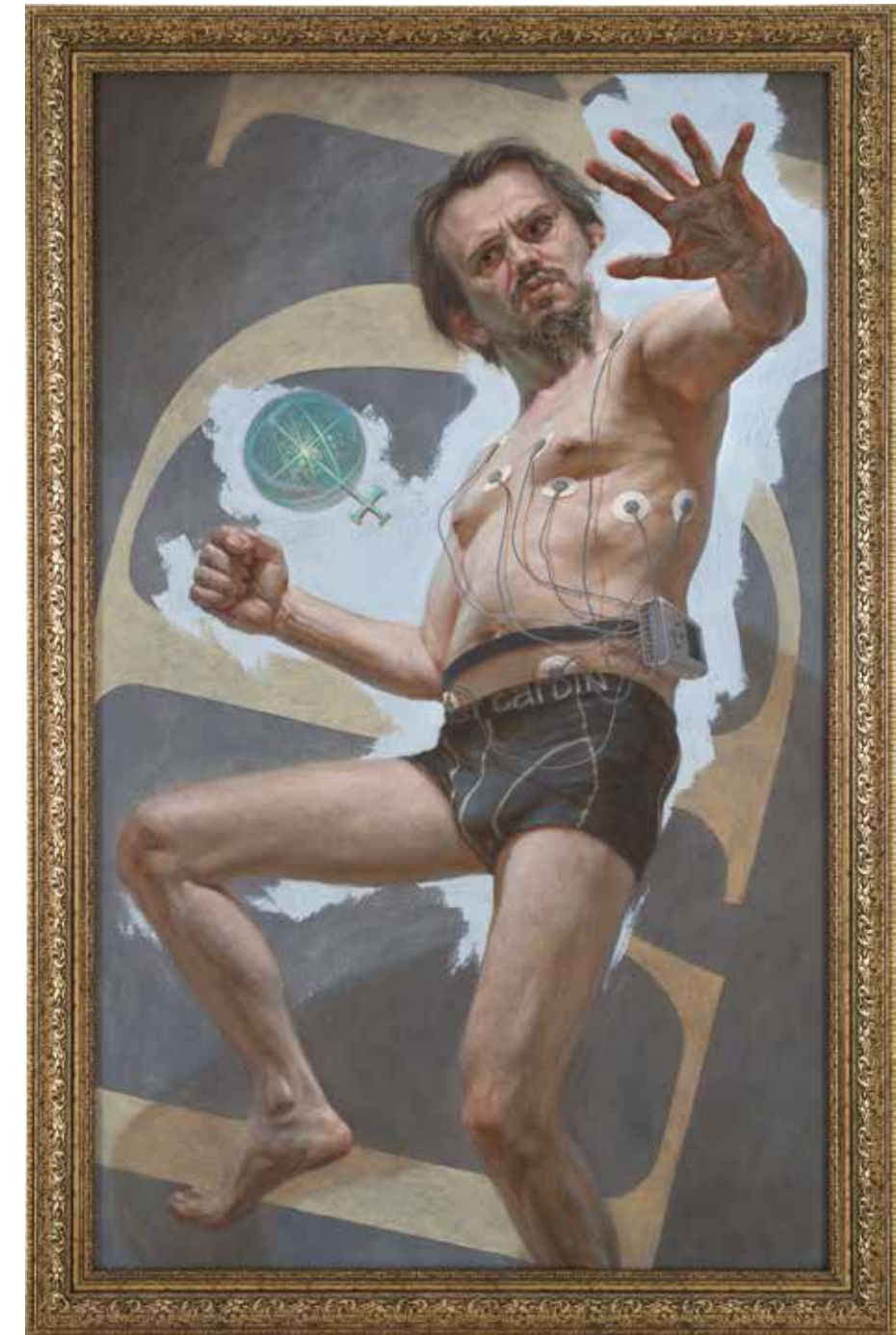


King Žygimantas Augustas, 2015.



‘Regardless of feeling unwell, the king wholeheartedly engaged in organising the Union Sejm. The latter took place in the first half of 1569 in Lublin.’

Malgorzata Duczmal [xvii]



King Zygmantas Augustas envisions the Union of Lublin, 2019.

‘In 1546 he spent 223 days hunting.  
Nevertheless, it is understandable that  
the king needed to regain balance after  
escaping the control of his parents in  
Wawel and a failed marriage.’

Malgorzata Duczmal [xiv]



From the private archive # 1, 2015.



‘He also easily fell for women, and this diminished the king’s authority, particularly in the end of his reign. Still, these abundant love affairs do not seem to be signs of erotomania or exceptional depravity.’

Malgorzata Duczmal [xv]



From the private archive # 2, 2019.

‘He always remained majestic  
wherever he went, whether to  
the throne or to the bedroom.’

Eugeniusz Gołębowski [xvi]



From the private archive # 3, 2019.



Engravings published in M. Bielski's chronicle in 1551 and 1564 (left to right, top): Monogrammer "I B", King Žygimantas Augustas; Unknown engraver, King Žygimantas Augustas. Engravings published in the Sejm Statute of 1524 (left to right, bottom): Unknown engraver, King Žygimantas the Old; Monogrammer "c s", King Žygimantas the Old.



Žygimantas Augustas by the engraver Augustas Bidlauskas, 2017.



My Fairest Gracious King, lord oh lord, graciously benevolent to me! I have learned of Your Royal Grace my gracious lord's good health and happy journey from Your Royal Grace's letter. Upon hearing this, I thank God Almighty and thence beg His Holy Grace that His Holy Grace keep Your Royal Grace my gracious lord healthy happily and for a long time for the pleasure of other people, the subjects of Your Royal Grace, and not least for the great joy of mine, the eternal captive and smallest servant of Your Royal Grace. For I swear by God that I value the health of Your Royal Grace my gracious lord as much as I do the salvation of my soul. I humbly ask that I could hear of it from Your Royal Grace frequently, as I cannot see You in person presently. You condescended, Your Royal Grace my gracious lord, to inquire of my, Your servant's, health in Your letter, and send me a sign of Your gracious benevolence — a ring. For this I humbly thank Your Royal Grace and will eternally serve Your Royal Grace for that...

Your Royal Grace's smallest servant  
Barbara Radziwill



# VI.

## The Heir Project

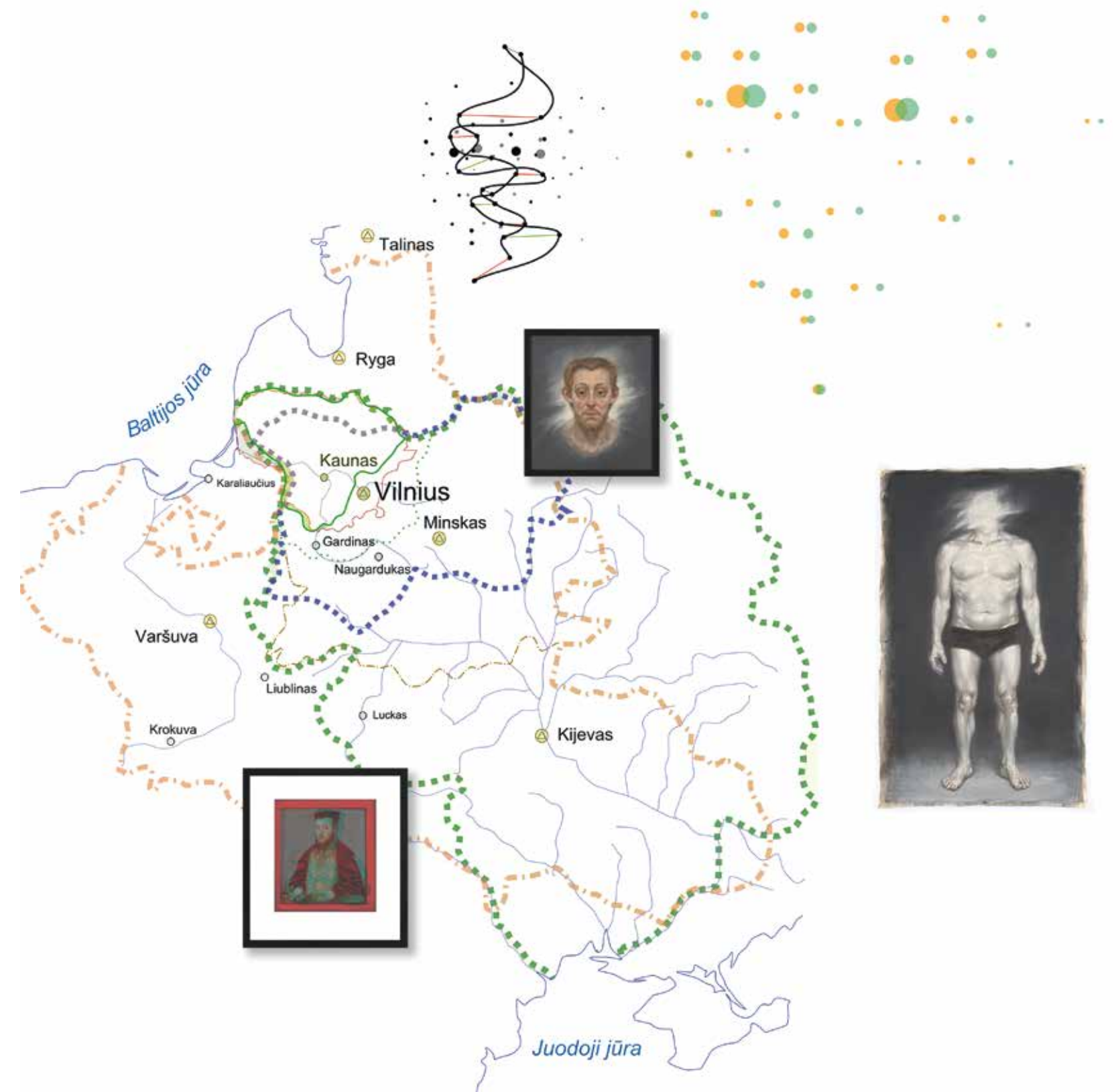
*'In addition to rapidly deteriorating health, the last years of Žygimantas Augustas' life were soured by the drama of a ruler with no legitimate successor to continue his works.'*<sup>1</sup>

The love story of King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania Žygimantas Augustas and Barbara Radziwiłł, which stunned sixteenth century Europe, should not have ended as it did: Queen Barbara died early, while Žygimantas Augustas, the last male descendant in the Jagiellonian lineage, never produced a legitimate successor. If we are to create a perfect world in accordance with our needs, we must also correct the mistakes we believe to have been caused by a wrong turn in the flow of history. Science and technology are usually helpful in this regard, as they provide us with the necessary methods and tools. With the help of the science of craniometry (introduced in the first chapter of the project) and the peculiarities of human vision, Žygimantas Augustas created portraits of Žygimantas Augustas' heir.

The point of departure for the portraits is a juxtaposition of the faces of Žygimantas Augustas and Barbara Radziwiłł, and a craniometric analysis of the

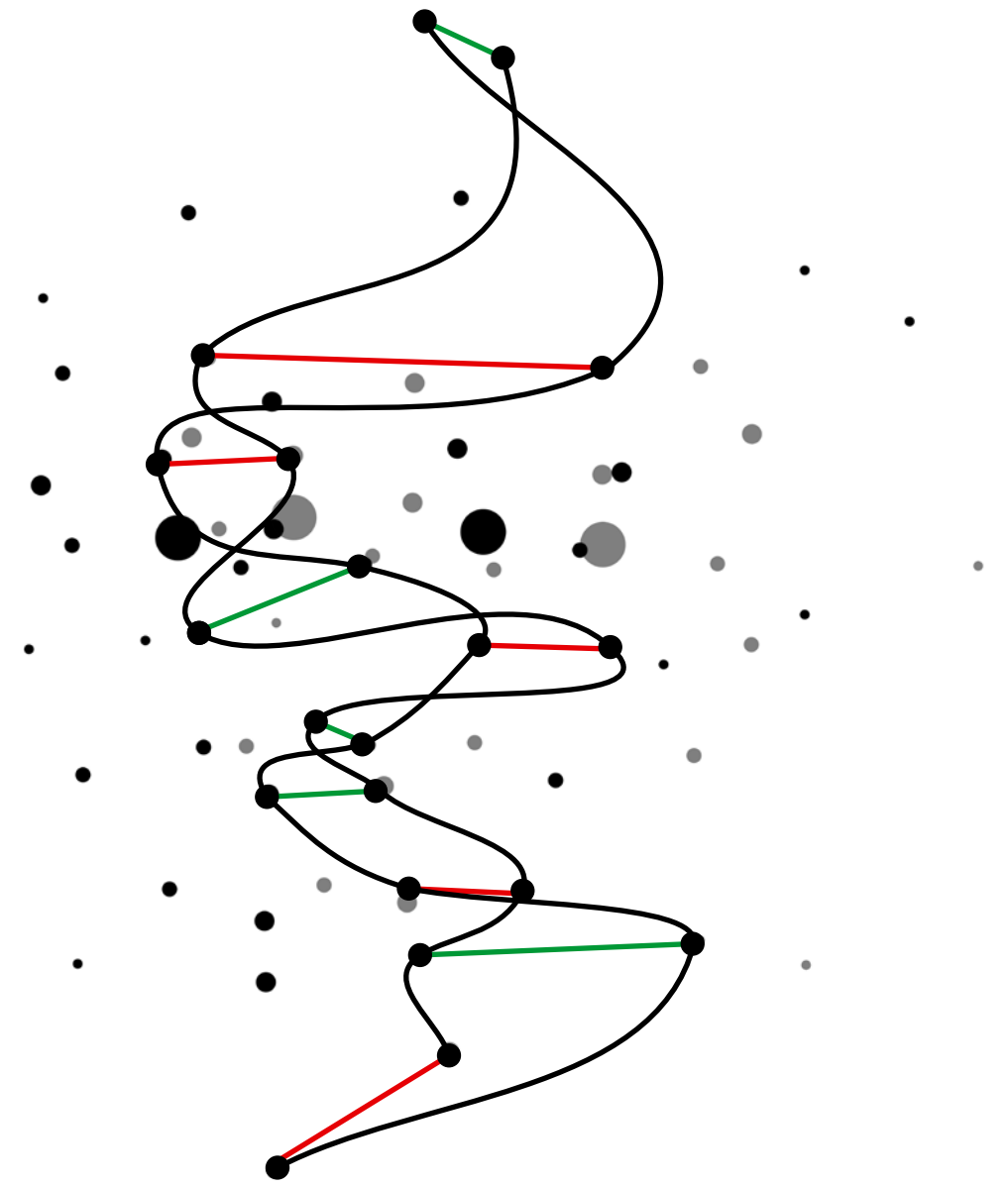
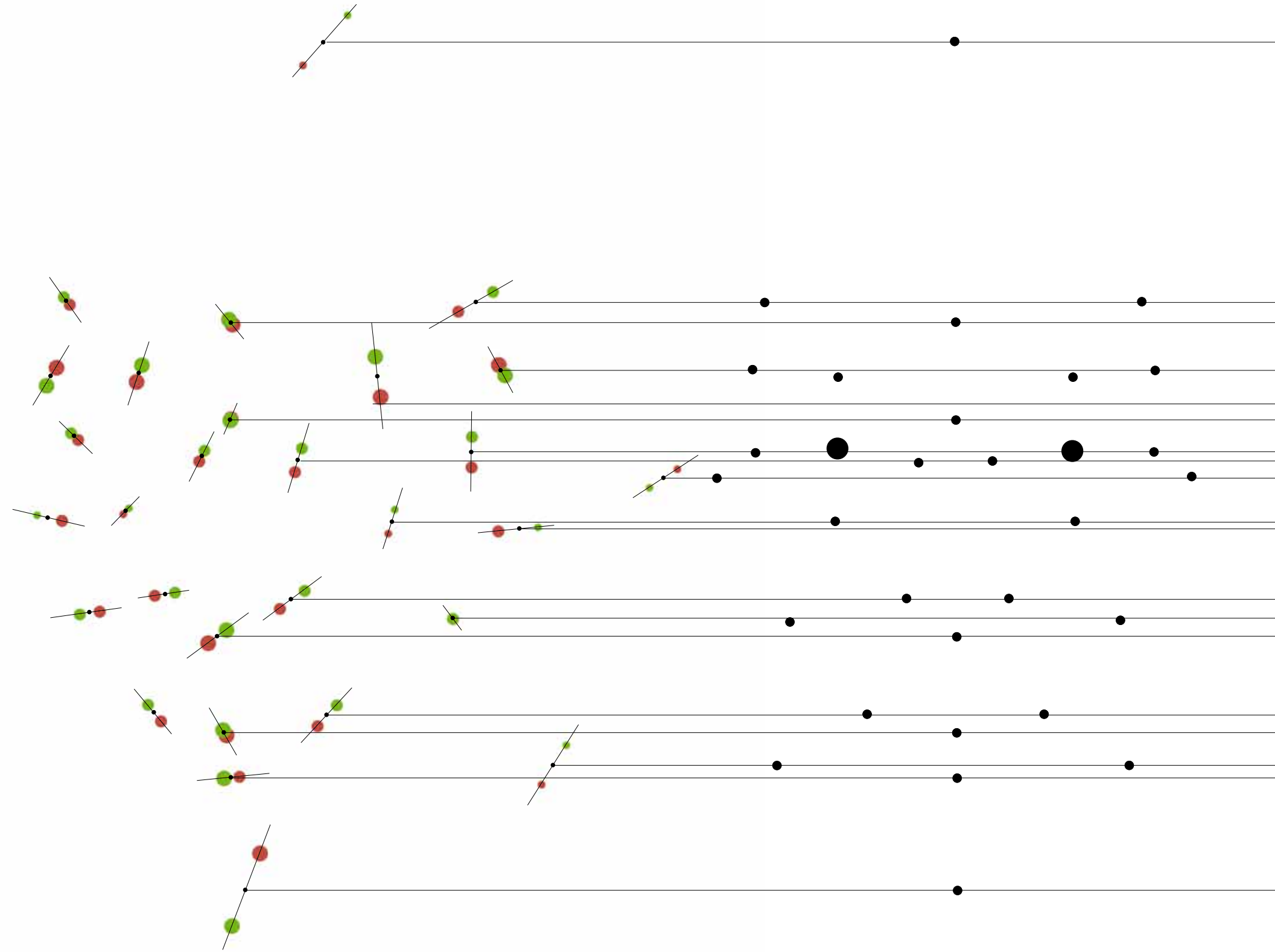
proportions of their skulls. The portraits of the king and queen painted in the sixteenth

century by Lucas Cranach the Younger have again served as donors of craniometric data, while comparison of the latter has made it possible to derive an average of the craniometric points and obtain the craniometric data of a putative heir. The author has also employed an alternative juxtaposition of the faces and craniometric points using stereoscopic eyeglasses. This method is based on the human eye's processing of images seen with two eyes into a single binocular image. With the stereoscopic glasses, the left eye sees Barbara Radziwiłł and the right one sees Žygimantas Augustas, while the portrait of their son emerges when the viewer's perception connects the two images. A combination of a precise transposition of craniometric points and viewing the portraits of Žygimantas Augustas and Barbara Radziwiłł through stereoscopic glasses yields a traditional painted portrait of a successor to the Jagiellonian dynasty much needed by Lithuania. The body of the heir is presented separately because of the different levels of the images' objectivity (the data turned out to be insufficient for objectivisation).



Installation scheme for the Heir project, 2018.

<sup>1</sup> Malgorzata Duczmal, *Jogailaičiai*, Vilnius, Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidybos centras, 2012, 538 p.



Craniogenetic study of King Žygimantas Augustas and Queen Barbara Radziwiłł, 2018.





Stereoscopic portrait of the heir (green - craniometric Žygimantas Augustas, red - craniometric Barbara Radziwiłł), 2018.



Parents of the heir (green - Žygimantas Augustas, red - Barbara Radziwiłł), 2018.



Traditional portrait of the heir, 2018.



Body of the heir, 2017-2018.

# VII.

## Unveiling of a Monument to Žygimantas August(IN)as' Doppelganger in Pasvalys

In 1557, King Žygimantas Augustas signed three historical treaties with the Livonian Order, thereby averting the threat from the East and bringing fame to Pasvalys, a peripheral town of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Strange as it may seem, Pasvalys is also the hometown of Vida Valeckaitė, the mother of the (IN) project's author. As a child, Žygimantas August(IN)as spent his summers in this town, in the house of his mother's parents on Palėvenės Street or at her sister's place on Joniškėlio Street. Hence, the over five-metre-tall monument to Žygimantas Augustas inaugurated in the centre of Pasvalys on 7 December 2018 cannot be a random coincidence.

The monument to Žygimantas Augustas was made by Ukrainian sculptors Boris Krylov and Oles Sydoruk, who had previously cast the 'Freedom Warrior' statue in Kaunas. According to press releases, the sculptors were assisted by the Lithuanian artist Rimantas Dichavičius, the famous pioneer of Lithuanian erotic photography. Presentations of the monument emphasise that it cost almost forty thousand euros, while the

biggest financial backer was the entrepreneur Pranas Kiznis, an honorary citizen of the Pasvalys region.<sup>1</sup> The initiator of the monument was the Vytis Support Foundation and bronze casting was aided by the Crown of the Dukes Ostrogski Foundation.

*'The Mayor of the Pasvalys District Municipality Gintautas Gegužinskas congratulated the assembled and expressed his joy that the adverse weather conditions had not prevented such a big crowd from gathering on this outstanding occasion to admire the moment. The guests took turns congratulating the town of Pasvalys and the attendees, sharing their thoughts on Lithuania, its history and centenary, and wishing everyone a merry coming holiday season.'*<sup>2</sup>

One can easily spot Žygimantas August(IN)as sporting a crown and an ermine mantle in the photographs. Next to him are other honourable guests: Lithuanian MPs Antanas Matulas and Rita Tamašunienė (since 2019 the Lithuanian Minister of the Interior); the Minister-Counsellor, Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of Poland to Lithuania Grzegorz Marek Poznański; patron of the monument Dr. Pranas Kiznis; head of the Konstanty Ostrogski Support Foundation Robertas Gabulas; Gitanas Nausėda, then a presidential candidate and since 2019 the President of Lithuania; and, surely, Mayor of the Pasvalys District Municipality Gintautas Gegužinskas. The general atmosphere was festive, people were taking selfies with Žygimantas

August(IN)as and other honourable attendees of the ceremony. The event received good publicity in the Lithuanian media, including by LRT national television (see photo), yet some sceptical opinions surfaced online as well. One of them can be found on the website of Vladas Palubinskas, a versatile engineer, aerobatics pilot, founder of the Lithuania Online guide, editor of the Lithuanian online services reference book, web domain registry and WML catalogue, founder of the Our Own Lithuania online scientific publishing platform for assisting self-education, author of the *Scientific Faith Primer*, publisher of primary Internet news, and chronicler of the Lithuanian Internet's evolution.

*The authorities reflect the politics. The festivities in Pasvalys attracted the Polish ambassador, Member of Parliament Matulas, the desired President Nausėda, but neither Latvian nor Estonian envoys came to pay tribute to the monument, nor did the event attract any local inhabitants from Pasvalys.*

*In the meantime, the Halychians and Belarusians erect monuments to the truly honourable Lithuanians: to Gediminas [Гедымін] in Grodno, Algirdas [Olgiard] in Vitebsk, Konstantinas Ostrogškis [Konstan-*



*ty Ostrogski] in the Kiev Pechersk Lavra, Tadas Kęstaučius [Tadeusz Kosciuszko] in Merechevschina, and Leonas Sapiega [Leon Sapieha] in Slonim. The Estonians have also erected a wonderful oak monument to Gediminas in their capital Tallinn.*

*By the 1557 Pasvalys Treaties, King Žygimantas II Augustas, nurtured in a Polish manner at the Krakow court since childhood and instigated by the Poles, also renounced Livonia (the present-day 'Baltic Sisters' of Latvia and Estonia) and Prussia, which sought to restore the nation's unity and join Lithuania (after all, all of them had long been christened, the fanatic terrorist crusades were over, so there was no reason for disunity). Perhaps then Pamarėnai (Brandenburg) and Plieskuva [Pskov], maybe even Naugardas [Novgorod], Kaireliai [ed. — exact location unknown] would have returned to the Lithuanian empire, and maybe Russia's animosity (constantly provoked by Poland) would have simmered down.'*<sup>3</sup>

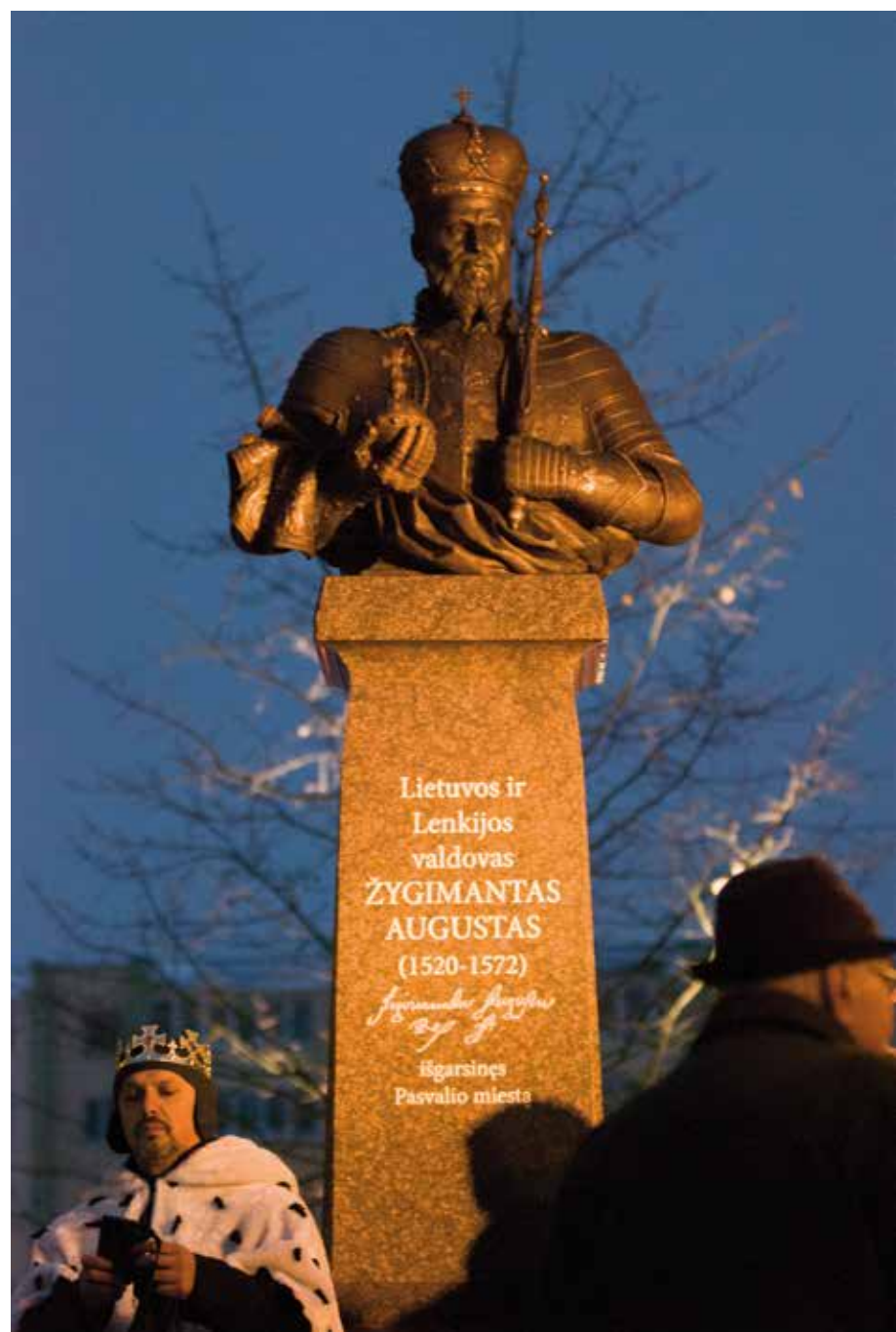
Lithuanian Radio and Television news service, LRT.lt, December 7, 2018, 10:02 pm.

<sup>1</sup> In: <https://www.15min.lt/kultura/naujiena/vizualieji-menai/pasvalyje-atidengtas-paminklas-zygimantui-augustui-929-1071578> (accessed on August 27, 2019)

<sup>2</sup> In: <http://www.pasvalys.lt/lt/naujienos/1/atidengtas-paminklas-zygimantui-augustui-6455> (accessed on August 27, 2019)

<sup>3</sup> <http://dienynas.palubinskas.lt/post/180925917507/zygimantas2augustas-pasvalyje> (accessed on August 27, 2019)





Žygimantas Augustas next to the newly unveiled monument to Žygimantas Augustas, December 7, 2018.



Photographs from the event. Honourable guests: MP Antanas Matulas (1); Rita Tamašunienė then MP, later the Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania (2); Minister-Counsellor, Deputy Head of Mission for Poland in Lithuania Grzegorz Marek Poznański (3); patron of the monument Dr. Pranas Kiznis (4); head of the Konstantyn Ostrogski Support Foundation Robertas Gabulas (5); member of the Vytis Support Foundation Vilius Kavaliauskas (6); then presidential candidate and President of the Republic of Lithuania since 2019 Gitanas Nausėda (7); Mayor of Pasvalys District Municipality Gintautas Gegužinskas (8); author of the (IN) project Žygimantas Augustas (IN) (9), December 7, 2018.

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