Quaestiones Medii Aevi Novae

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Bolesław the Brave

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• Bolesław the Brave

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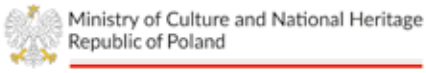

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Carolingian Models of Power in the First Piast Monarchy

The period between Poland's first recorded historical event (the baptism of 966) and its first royal coronation in 1025 is as vivid and fascinating as it is mysterious and difficult to reconstruct. The sources we possess vary greatly in reliability; they resemble assorted fragments of a once-colorful fabric, clearly deriving from different parts, with patterns that do not form a coherent whole. At times they contradict one another, only rarely do they complement each other, and most often they offer vague clues that explain little. Out of this historical darkness emerges the image of a state that arose on the fringes of the Christian world at that time - outside the borders of the Carolingian Empire - in a region only known to wandering travelers, itinerant merchants, and zealous missionaries.

Of the accounts recorded by the anonymous chronicler known as Gallus Anonymus, one which has continued to spark great interest and much controversy is his description of Holy Roman Emperor Otto III's meeting with Bolesław the Brave in Gniezno in the year 1000. Otto was so deeply impressed by Bolesław's wealth and power that he deemed him worthy of a royal crown. Gallus writes that after consulting his advisers, Otto "added before the whole company, 'such a great man does not deserve to be styled duke or count like any of the princes, but to be raised to a royal throne and adorned

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with a diadem in glory.' And with these words he took the imperial diadem from his own head and laid it upon the head of Bolesław in pledge of friendship. And as a triumphal banner he gave him as a gift one of the nails from the cross of our Lord with the lance of St Maurice."[1]

The chronicler's account of this event has been discussed a great many times, and the central point of contention has always remained the same: the meaning of the emperor's gesture. Contributing anything new to this ongoing debate will be impossible without considering an analogous example from outside Poland. Such an example is provided by the story of Holy Roman Emperor Charles the Bald and his close associate, Count Boso. During his return journey from Rome to Gaul in 877, the newly crowned Charles the Bald stopped in Ravenna. There, at a ceremony held in Boso's honor, the emperor placed a crown upon his head and ordered that he be addressed as king.[2] This ceremony coincided with Boso's marriage to Irmingard, the daughter of Emperor Louis II. Along with his elevation to the royal throne, the territory over which Boso had previously exercised authority within the administrative structure of the empire was formally defined and transformed, by imperial decree, into a royal dominion.[3] This area encompassed the region around the lower Rhône and the southern part of the Alps descending into the river valley - both territories forming a large and strategically important component of Charles's empire.

In reporting this ceremony, the chronicler Regino of Prüm noted that the act of making someone king was an ancient and well-known imperial custom. By so doing, Charles the Bald was reaffirming his prerogatives and publicly displaying his unrestricted power. His right to the highest dignity had been crudely challenged, and his coronation in Rome was widely regarded as a clear act of usurpation. A wave of accusations and mockery swept across the Carolingian realm; the influential Abbey of Fulda became deeply involved in the campaign against the rival ruler from the western part of the former empire. The annals written there referred to him as "Jugurtha" and accused him of folly, sparing no words of condemnation.[4] In such a situation, a demonstration of imperial rights rooted in ancient and established tradition served to enhance his prestige and reaffirm his authority. Without doubt, exercising the right to appoint a subordinate king was intended to

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[1] Gallus Anonymus, *Cronica et gesta ducum sive principum Polonorum/Chronicles and Deeds of the Dukes or Princes of the Poles*, transl. P.W. Knoll and F. Schaer, Budapest 2003, I, 6.

[2] *Reginonis Chronica*, in: *Quellen zur Karolingischen Reichsgeschichte*, vol. 3, ed. R. Rau, Berlin 1960, p. 252 (year 877): *Dedit insuper eidem Bosoni Provintiam, et corona in vertice capitis imposita eum appellari iussit, ut more priscorum imperatorum regibus videretur dominari.*

[3] J. Fried, *Otton III i Bolesław Chrobry*, Warszawa 2000, p. 127, where Boso's coronation is cited in an analogous context.

[4] *Annales Fuldenses*, in: *Quellen…*, pp. 98-102.

boost the contested ruler's own position and legitimacy, helping him in his difficult struggle within the Carolingian dynasty and across the empire as a whole.[5] Soon thereafter, Charles's sudden death during the Alpine crossing on 6 October 877 abruptly ended the growing wave of accusations - yet it did not curb Boso's ambitions. Two years later, taking advantage of another interregnum on the West Frankish throne, he accepted the crown of King of Provence and Burgundy. His formal coronation took place amid a temporary dynastic crisis, yet that did nothing to halt the fierce criticism from the Carolingians, who could not tolerate the elevation of a nobleman from outside their own lineage.[6]

Note the similarities between the two cases. In both instances, the emperor conferred the royal title of his own will and confirmed it by placing a crown on the candidate's head. Neither Bolesław the Brave nor Boso acted on this designation immediately; both waited for a considerable time before later, under favorable circumstances, performing a formal act of their enthronement. In the land of the Polans, the interval lasted as long as twenty-five years, whereas in Provence it was much shorter, just two and a half.

In both cases, the act of investiture itself did not provoke much commotion, whereas the coronation ceremony that came later met with sharp criticism and angry attacks, emphasizing its lack of legal foundation and its openly usurpatory character. The difference in reaction stemmed from the distinct nature of the two ceremonies. The first was an imperial appointment, grounded in the traditional prerogatives of the supreme ruler, who could, without any legal or practical limitation, bestow his favor and appoint a subordinate king.[7] He could also grant the newly appointed monarch a portion of his own territory. The second stage of elevation - the formal coronation - was, by contrast, the unauthorized initiative of an ambitious candidate, lacking justification, ideological basis, or roots in established tradition. It provoked outrage because it violated the accepted principles governing royal consecration. For the effective governance of the empire, the imperial designation alone was sufficient; the emperor had no reason to support preparations for a full coronation and therefore left the matter to rest. This is why Bolesław's formal royal coronation had to wait so long and required additional effort to bring it about.

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[5] On auxiliary kings in the Carolingian period, see G. Eiten, *Das Unterkönigtum im Reiche der Merowinger und Karolinger*, Heidelberg 1907, *passim*.

[6] The broader context of the situation and further literature are presented in W. Fałkowski, *Potestas regia: Władza i polityka w królestwie zachodniofrankijskim na przełomie IX i X wieku*, Warszawa 1999, pp. 31-42.

[7] Pope John VIII, in a supplicatory letter to Emperor Charles the Bald, explicitly called him "the head of the world," *Patrologia Latina*, ed. J.P. Migne, vol. 126, 1879, col. 731: *et Dominus, qui elegit vos caput orbis et dominum fecit…*

A somewhat later source, written in the early twelfth century - the *Universal Chronicle* of Ekkehard of Aura - refers to these imperial prerogatives when recounting (with some errors and a touch of confusion) the coronation of Odo Robertian, ruler of the western Franks, in 888. The powerful count became king after Emperor Arnulf presented him with the diadem, scepter, and other royal insignia, as well as the kingdom itself. The chronicler was careful to add that this took place by the grace of the supreme ruler.[8] The memory of the emperor's right to "make kings" thus persisted, despite inaccuracies and errors of dating, and it found a place in Ekkehard's chronicle as well.

Such a new auxiliary king exercised his power on the basis of the authority of the higher monarch who had chosen him and endowed him with royal prerogatives. The emperor's support and the clear display of his majesty enabled such a ruler to occupy a prominent place within the imperial elite and to govern effectively. Both Boso and Odo had long belonged to the upper ranks of the Frankish aristocracy, and their ability to rule and command obedience stemmed from their hereditary domains and extensive family connections. The royal title and the authority granted by imperial favor allowed them to aspire to an exceptional position among the Carolingian magnates.

Bolesław the Brave, by contrast, had to acquire additional marks of distinction to compensate for his earlier position on the periphery of the empire. In addition to the customary insignia of power - the diadem and the spear - he was also honored with the title of imperial associate and brother (*frater et cooperator imperii*). Unlike in the time of Charlemagne and his descendants, appointment as a subordinate king was no longer sufficient to secure a place within the elite of the post-Carolingian world. The lack of understanding and cooperation among the highest dignitaries made it difficult to maintain one's position and fulfill one's entrusted mission. For that reason, the emperor, along with the royal dignity and the right to rule over a designated territory, also bestowed marks of prestige and an implicit promise of admission into the narrow circle of aristocracy.

The title bestowed upon Bolesław by Otto - "friend and ally of the Roman people" (*populi Romani amicus et socius*) - was an exceptional distinction. This was all the more remarkable because the ruler of the Polans was simultaneously referred to as a "brother and collaborator" and entered into a pact of friendship (*foedus amicitiae*) with the emperor. Together with the designation for a royal throne, the symbolic presentation of the diadem, and the granting of a dominion, these honors placed Bolesław the Brave in an extraordinarily high position among the emperor's trusted advisers. No equally rapid or exalted advancement

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[8] *Ekkehardi Uraugiensis Chronica*, ed. G. Waitz, in: Monumenta Germaniae Historica (hereafter: MGH), Scriptores 6, Hannover 1844, p. 180: *Huic Outo et diadema et sceptrum et cetera regalia ornamenta obtulit, regnumque domini sui gratia imperatoris Arnolfi obtinuit*.

can be found either in the Carolingian or the Ottonian period, which raises the question of what lay behind such exceptional elevation. A tradition dating back to antiquity linked the title of "friend of the Romans" with close political cooperation and effective support in warfare.[9] It was thus a relationship identical in nature to the Carolingian *amicitia* - a solemn and formalized pact of friendship that excluded mutual aggression and required loyal collaboration.[10] In every case, this ritual signified the unbreakable commitment of two partners who henceforth renounced all hostile acts toward each other and the support of one another's enemies. In Gallus's account, which includes both this equal alliance and the honorific title of imperial friend, we find a further strengthened form of such cooperation between rulers.

The same title had already been granted to Mieszko I, back in 967. At that time, he was repelling attacks by the Saxon count Wichmann, who had conspired with the Wolinians to launch a joint assault on the "imperial friend."[11] Even so, Mieszko's status differed from that of his son; it was certainly lower and easier to challenge, since he ruled over what had only recently been considered *barbaricum* and had not yet established any ideological foundations for his authority. Throughout his reign he remained a duke, an imperial vassal obliged to pay homage and provide military support for the emperor's campaigns. Mieszko took part in these expeditions on multiple occasions and was compelled to pay tribute from territories reaching as far as the River Warta. Nevertheless, throughout his rule he remained an important and valued ally who safeguarded the empire's eastern frontier provinces. For this reason, Mieszko had been received at the royal court and was granted clear tokens of imperial recognition and respect.

Bolesław the Brave was entrusted by Otto III with the mission of governing the *Sclavanensis provincia*[12] - most likely including Rus' and probably also

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[9] See: *Jordanis Romana et Getica*, ed. Th. Mommsen, MGH, Auctores Antiquissimi 5/1, Berlin 1882, p. 29; *Eutropius, Breviarium ab urbe condita*, ed. H. Droysen, MGH, Auctores Antiquissimi 2, Berlin 1879, p. 72; *Pauli Diaconi, Historia Romana*, MGH, Scriptores rerum Germ. in usum scholarum 49, Berlin 1879, IV, 37.

[10] On the period of the late Carolingians, see W. Fałkowski, *Contra legem regem sibi elegerunt: Les principes régissant l'exercice du pouvoir royal sous le règne de Charles le Simple*, "Cahiers de civilisation médiévale" 35 (1992), 3, pp. 234-238. On *amicitia* in a broader sense, see V. Epp, *Amicitia: Zur Geschichte personaler, sozialer, politischer und geistlicher Beziehungen im frühen Mittelalter*, Stuttgart 1999, *passim*.

[11] *Die Sachsengeschichte des Widukind von Korvei*, ed. H.-E. Lohmann, P. Hirsch, MGH, Scriptores rerum Germ. in usum scholarum 60, Hannover 1935, p. 144: *quomodo Misacam amicum imperatoris bello lacesserent*; p. 145: *accipe, inquit, hunc gladium et defer domino tuo, quo pro signo victoriae illum teneat imperatorique amico transmittat.*

[12] MGH, Diplomata regum et imperatorum Germaniae 2: *Ottonis III. Diplomata*, Hannover 1893, no. 396, p. 828: document issued in Ravenna, 4 April 1001, *Anastasius abbas monasterii sancte Marie Sclavanensis provincie.*

Bohemia. As a subordinate king, he held full authority over this territory and was tasked with advancing the restoration of a great empire beyond the old Carolingian frontier. The presentation of the spear of Saint Maurice, containing a nail from the Cross of the Passion, symbolized sovereign rule over the region entrusted to him. In this way, the Piast ruler became the custodian of a share of imperial power, exercising autonomous authority within the limits of his mandate. This mission followed an old pattern dating back to Charlemagne's reign, when the emperor assigned specific responsibilities and designated regions for administration or oversight. Otto III's gesture at Gniezno was a modified version of the Carolingian ritual of investiture into a delegated kingdom, now combined with a Byzantine element - a rite adopted at the court of the eastern Franks, in which a ruler's power was conferred through the sanctity of a holy spear.

The significance of the holy spear is well illustrated by a ceremony organized by the Saxon Duke Bernard, who in 1002 at Merseburg confirmed King Henry II's authority over his province. In the presence of knights and townspeople, he presented a holy spear to the king as a symbol of his sovereignty and dominion, as well as of his own consent to full submission and faithful service. Afterward, the other nobles paid homage by clasping the king's hands and solemnly swearing their loyalty and assistance.[13] The use of the holy spear in ceremonies marking the assumption of power over individual provinces symbolized both might and the readiness to defend the land and its people. After receiving a holy spear, Bolesław the Brave, I believe, followed this same ritual when entering the main strongholds of each principal province. In doing so, he not only consolidated his rule but also bound together a realm composed of large tribal territories that had only recently been incorporated into the Piast center of power.

The status of the spear as a symbol of granted benefice and exercised authority is well illustrated by the story of Gerard, Count of Alsace. He had received a large land grant from King Henry II, and the emblem of this donation was a spear adorned with a banner. One night, while the count's party was encamped, that spear was planted in front of his tent and was stolen by a townsman from a nearby settlement, who then fled behind the city walls. The townspeople refused to return the stolen object and mocked the count from atop their fortifications, shouting that the beneficiary had lost his honor. Gerard first tried to persuade them to give the spear back,

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[13] *Die Chronik des Bischofs Thietmar von Merseburg*, ed. R. Holtzmann, MGH, Scriptores rerum Germanicarum, n.s., vol. 9, Berlin 1935 (hereafter: *Thietmar*), V, 17: *Bernhardus igitur dux, accepta in manibus sacra lancea, ex parte omnium regni curam illi fideliter committit*; V, 18: *Omnes, qui priori imperatori servierant, (…) regi manus complicant, fidele auxilium per sacramenta confirmant*.

but when his appeals proved fruitless, he rode away in sorrow, having lost both his benefice and his martial emblem.[14] Although Thietmar's chronicle does not refer to a holy lance, this story vividly conveys the significance of the spear as a recognizable symbol of authority and ownership.

The title of imperial collaborator (*cooperator imperii*), besides conferring prestige, also granted the opportunity to take part in the most ambitious and important political projects. During the Carolingian period, it denoted a high-ranking adviser and participant in imperial undertakings who could provide effective assistance. In the text of the oath exchanged between Louis the German and Charles the Bald during their meeting in Metz in 867, there was an assurance that they would be sincere helpers and collaborators to one another (*sincerus auxiliator et cooperator ero*).[15] An important example is found in the Treaty of Meerssen of 851, which established peace among the brothers - the sons of Louis the Pious - Charles the Bald, Louis the German, and Lothar. In a solemn and formal manner they guaranteed the observance of the agreement's terms and the full cooperation of their vassals, who were to become true helpers and collaborators by offering counsel and assistance.[16]

The dignities conferred upon Bolesław the Brave at Gniezno fit within the long tradition of Carolingian policy, making the Piast ruler one of the principal executors of Otto's vision. This was expressed through the obligation to provide active assistance in counsel and in war (*consilium et auxilium*). At the same time, the title of friend and ally of the Romans turned a ruler governing on the periphery of the empire into an important partner and a continuator of the classical models of conduct and political canon, once renewed by Charlemagne and put into practice by Otto III.[17] In this context, the account of the chronicler Ademar of Chabannes describing the joint visit of the two rulers to Aachen, shortly after the meeting in Gniezno, should be

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[14] Thietmar V, 21: *E quibus unus* [one of the townsmen], *calliditate equae et velocitate persepe probatus, propius accessit signiferamque lanceam, qua beneficium ducis comes isdem acceperat a rege, coram tentorio eius affixam elevando circumspexit … In urbe mox exultatio magna extollitur, porta clauditur, comes quasi honore privatus irridetur. (…) tristis abiit, tam vacuus a beneficio quam a militari signo.*

[15] *Capitularia regum Francorum*, ed. A. Boretius, V. Krauze, MGH, Capitularia 2, Hannover 1897, no. 245, p. 168.

[16] *Ibidem*, no. 205, p. 73: *veri adiutores atque cooperatores vero consilio et sincero auxilio ad ista peragenda*.

[17] Cf. T. Jasiński, *Tytulatura Bolesława Chrobrego na zjeździe gnieźnieńskim*, in: *Memoriae amici et magistri*: *Studia historyczne poświęcone pamięci prof. Wacława Korty*, ed. M. Derwich *et al*., Wrocław 2001, pp. 23-31. In his analysis of the terminology used by Gallus, the author referred to the Letters of St Paul and to Carolingian examples. See also R. Michałowski, *Zjazd Gnieźnieński: Religijne przesłanki powstania arcybiskupstwa gnieźnieńskiego*, Wrocław 2005, pp. 124-126.

taken with full seriousness.[18] The opening of Charlemagne's tomb symbolized the beginning of the realization of a new imperial project and a clear demonstration of the continuation of the work and mission of the legendary monarch. The presence of the Piast ruler confirmed his position at the emperor's side and his recently granted mandate, while at the same time making the project truly tangible - showing that the distant frontiers of the Christian world were becoming accessible and ready for inclusion.

A miniature created shortly before the year 1000 in the monastery of Reichenau vividly illustrates the emperor's vision. The restoration of the empire was to be achieved by shaping the supreme ruler in the image of Charlemagne. Otto's new realm was conceived to encompass the territory of the Carolingian *regnum Europae* - naturally including both France, where the Carolingian dynasty had ended only shortly before, and Rome, which remained the undisputed *caput mundi*. The German kingdom and the enigmatic *Sclavinia* completed the whole. Together, these four great provinces, formed from distinct states, constituted the planned imperial structure. Under this concept, Bolesław was to reign as a subordinate king over the entire Slavic region, defined as the lands lying east of the German marches. The significance of this elevation can be better understood in light of the later assembly at Merseburg in 1013. On that occasion, the Polish ruler paid feudal homage to King Henry II and, during the procession to the church, carried the king's sword before him as a member of his retinue. The following day he presented the monarch with magnificent gifts and, in return, received the long-awaited benefice.[19]

The scene at Merseburg illustrates the clear change that had taken place in the years preceding the event - both in the status of the Polish ruler and in the political aims and actions of the king. It represents almost the exact opposite of Otto's proposal, in which Bolesław had been offered a royal throne, treated as a particularly privileged collaborator, and consulted on the territorial scope of a mission conceived on the scale of a vast empire. At Merseburg,

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[18] Cf. *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. P. Bourgain in collaboration with R. Landes and G. Pon, Turnhout 1999, III, 31. The edition and historical value of the chronicle - often questioned - were discussed in detail by D. A. Sikorski, *Kronika Ademara z Chabannes – odzyskane źródło dla najwcześniejszych dziejów Polski*, "Studia Źródłoznawcze" 40 (2002), pp. 215-220, who accepted the editors' thesis on the authorship of the passage concerning Bolesław the Brave's visit to Aachen. On the opening of Charlemagne's tomb, see K. Görich, *Otto III. öffnet das Karlsgrab in Aachen: Überlegungen zu Heiligenverehrung, Heiligsprechung und Traditionsbildung*, in: *Herrschaftsrepräsentation im ottonischen Sachsen*, ed. G. Althoff, E. Schubert, Sigmaringen 1998, pp. 381-430.

[19] Thietmar VI, 91: *In die sancto manibus applicatis regis miles efficitur et post sacramenta regi ad ecclesiam ornato incedenti armiger habetur. In secunda feria regem magnis muneribus a se et contectali sua oblatis placavit; ipse vero regia largitate hiis meliora et maiora cum beneficio diu desiderato suscepit et obsides suos cum honore et letitia remisit.*

Bolesław the Brave became a vassal and accepted a benefice that he greatly desired (regardless of which territory it concerned), while the honor bestowed upon him was the ceremonial office of court sword-bearer.

The assembly of nobles convened by Henry II took place on the feast of Pentecost, a choice meant to emphasize the king's wisdom and the divine inspiration behind his actions. In this context, the portrayal of the Polish ruler as an official and vassal was a deliberate gesture, underscoring the established hierarchy and the current political objective - one that carried the Creator's approval. Bolesław was assigned a subordinate political role, becoming merely an executor of royal commands. Nothing remained of Otto III's grand vision that he had once been meant to help fulfill. The only possible response capable of countering this plan of domination and complete subordination was not evasion - such as his later refusal to send troops for the Italian campaign - but the pursuit of royal coronation itself.[20]

During the years of war and rivalry with King Henry II, relatively large denarii bearing the inscription *Bolizlavus Rex* were struck in Polish mints. Thirteen specimens of these coins are known. Stanisław Suchodolski has deemed them to have been issued between 1005 and 1015.[21] This emission cannot be connected either with the royal designation of 1000 or with the formal coronation of 1025. It should be regarded as a response to the completely different treatment the Polish duke received from the new German ruler. The appearance of the royal title in public circulation was a clear manifestation of royal ambitions and a reminder of the act performed at the Congress of Gniezno - a kind of "renewal" of the great imperial project in which Bolesław played a leading role and refused to be reduced to that of a subordinate vassal or obedient executor of orders. The series of "royal" coins, apart from their normal fiscal function in economic exchange, also served a propagandistic purpose, recalling the mission of the auxiliary king as an essential part of the grand work of renewing the Roman Empire.

Consolidating the monarch's new image after his designation at Gniezno - and presenting him in this new role - required different forms of communication and special means of demonstrating leadership. The minting of coins bearing the royal title during the wars with King Henry II was one way to strengthen internal authority and to present Bolesław as being equal to his rival. Another means of promoting this new image was the change of the ruler's main

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[20] Henry II demanded military assistance from Bolesław for his expedition to Rome undertaken in the autumn of 1013, the goal of which was to obtain the imperial crown, finally achieved on 14 February 1014. At the same time, sending troops to Italy would have been an explicit confirmation of vassal status and entry into the circle of royal liegemen. On the German king's demands and Bolesław the Brave's refusal, see Thietmar VI, 92; VII, 4, 9.

[21] S. Suchodolski, *Rex Bolizlavus – tzw. Królewskie monety Bolesława Chrobrego*, in: *Heraldyka i okolice*, ed. A. Rachuba *et al*., Warszawa 2002, pp. 285-295.

residence during his travels or longer stays in the provinces he visited. Arriving at the principal stronghold of a former tribal territory offered an opportunity to display majesty in every part of the realm.[22] The attributes of his new dignity - the royal diadem and the holy spear - were shown publicly as proof of divine favor and of the position he had attained within the Christian world. The crown confirmed his influence at the imperial court and his close ties with the empire's elite, while the spear symbolized military fortune, the effective intercession of Saint Maurice, and the ability to establish a victorious peace.

Bolesław's response to the subordination that King Henry II sought to impose after 1003 was to expand into the territories bordering his realm and to create an external chain of marches - including Milsko and Lusatia, Bohemia and Moravia, and, finally, the frontier regions adjoining Rus'. The conquest of these lands and their transformation into a buffer zone was pursued consistently for more than fifteen years, until 1018. The captured territories brought prestige and a sense of power to the victor, but above all they served to keep hostile attacks away from the core of the state - the original lands of the Polans around Gniezno. Particularly important were Milsko and Lusatia, which ensured free communication with the Saxon nobility and blocked an easy route of invasion toward Silesia and southern Greater Poland.[23] The very idea of creating a protective ring of marches derived from Carolingian military thought and administrative organization.

The expansive policy pursued by Bolesław the Brave was inevitably moving toward an official, ecclesiastical royal coronation. A favorable moment for this came after Henry II's death in 1024. The solemn ceremony most likely took place at Easter 1025 and was immediately met with harsh, unrestrained criticism from the German elites and the court circle of the new German king, Conrad II. The chronicler Wipo emphasized that this was done at the monarch's expense - and that the Polish prince's audacity was immediately punished by death.[24] The *Annals of Quedlinburg* commented even more sharply, accusing Bolesław of pride and arrogance that drove him to take such an unworthy step on hearing of King Henry's death - whereupon, they said, God's vengeance struck him and he soon died.[25] Such vehement

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[22] See Gallus Anonymus, *Cronica…*, I, 12.

[23] Cf. Thietmar VII, 29 (21).

[24] *Gesta Chuonradi imperatoris*, in: *Wiponis Opera*, ed. H. Bresslau, MGH, Scriptores rerum Germ. in usum scholarum 61, Hannover 1915, IX, 31-32: *Bolizlaus Sclavigena, dux Bolanorum, insignia regalia et regium nomen in iniuriam regis Chuonradi sibi aptavit, cuius temeritatem cito mors exinanivit.*

[25] *Die Annales Quedlinburgenses*, ed. M. Giese, MGH, Scriptores rerum Germ. in usum scholarum 72, Hannover 2004, p. 578: *Bolitzlawo dux Poloniae obitu Heinrici imperatoris augusti comperto elatus animo viscere tenus superbiae veneno perfunditur, adeo ut uncto etiam sibi imponi coronam temere sit usurpatus. Quam animi sui praesumptionis audaciam divina mox subsecuta*

reactions stemmed both from Bolesław's unilateral decision and from his definitive break with the imposed forms of subordination. The Polish court surely anticipated sharp criticism and attempts at retaliation, and therefore the ceremonial staging of the coronation - together with every organizational detail and the liturgy itself - had to be carefully planned in advance and meticulously chosen to hinder attacks and forestall any challenge to the legality of the rite.

In the coronation ritual of Emperor Otto I, reconstructed by Carl Erdmann from the Pontifical of Sens, there appears a lengthy passage concerning war against sinful enemies and the merciless struggle with pagans - the foes of Christianity.[26] It laid out in detail the ruler's solemn duty to wage tireless battle and to restrain the enemies of the faith, for which he would be granted the reward of eternal communion with the saints in heaven.[27] Expanding the *imperium christianum* and furthering the struggle against paganism belonged to the sovereign's fundamental obligations; thus, the inclusion of formulas announcing these aims in the *ordo* was both justified and essential. Christianization in this context meant waging war against pagans and armed intervention, regarded as a core element of the political canon. Border defense and the establishment of peace by force were natural consequences of such actions, pursued with full conviction. Another approach to dealing with pagans, however, involved conversion - a program of missionary activity undertaken in the *barbaricum* by envoys sent to those regions. There were even suggestions (from Bruno of Querfurt, for instance) that to pursue political aims without engaging in missionary work was a betrayal of the royal mission. In the early years of Henry II's reign, the conflict with Bolesław the Brave took the form of a clash between two very different visions of how to deal with pagan tribes. One sought to achieve the aims of monarchy through conquest - for the sake of political domination and territorial expansion - even if doing so meant enlisting the aid of pagan tribes participating in military campaigns. The other emphasized the support of missionaries, the gradual construction of networks of influence, and the steady advance of borders, including the use

est ultio. In brevi namque tristem mortis sententiam compulsus est subito. On the circumstances of the coronation, see J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry*, Poznań: 1999, pp. 192-198; see also J. Sochacki, *Koronacje królewskie Bolesława Chrobrego 1000 i 1025 r.*, "Słupskie Studia Historyczne" 9 (2001), pp. 259-285, where the author emphasizes the significance of the Roman and Carolingian traditions.

[26] C. Erdmann, *Der Heidenkrieg in der Liturgie und die Kaiserkronung Ottos I*, in: *Heidenmission und Kreuzzugsgedanke in der deutschen Ostpolitik des Mittelalters*, ed. H. Beumann, Darmstadt 1973, pp. 62-64: *Benedictio quando ad bellum contra hostes proficiscitur. Item benedictio quando contra paganos pugnandum est.*

[27] *Ibidem*: *Idem etiam ex hoste reportare tribuat gaudia pacis et pro istiusmodi laboribus regnare vos faciat in aeternum cum sanctis.*

of military force, but only within the framework of controlled, deliberate expansion that rejected alliances with barbarians.

The opposition between the two conceptions is clearly visible in the letter written by Bruno of Querfurt to King Henry II in early 1009.[28] It contains a passage describing the intervention of Saints Peter and Adalbert. In the struggle against the pagans and in defense of Bolesław the Brave, both saints acted in solidarity and gave him powerful support: "Did not Saint Peter, whose tributary he claims to be, and Saint Adalbert the martyr protect him?"[29] The memory of Poland's dedication to Saint Peter and to the Apostolic See was not only vivid but functioned as a permanent element of royal statecraft and a visible sign of close ties with the papacy. The presence of Saint Adalbert's relics, in turn, was clear proof of the heavenly patron's continual protection over the devout ruler's realm. In such circumstances, any armed attack on Bolesław's country was regarded as an alliance with the devil - especially when the aggressors included troops of the Lutici and the Veleti. Bruno of Querfurt captured this clash of principles with precision and horror, exclaiming that the holy spear must stand against the banners of the devil, and that Christians were being slain as offerings to demons.[30] His severe judgment of Henry II's conduct went far beyond rhetorical comparisons and took the form of serious accusations. The honorific parallels often drawn with the emperors Constantine and Charlemagne turned here into sharp reproach: "Alas, for our unhappy times! After the holy emperor, the great Constantine, after the best model of piety, Charles, there is now one who persecutes Christians, and hardly anyone left who converts pagans."[31] Bruno thus set forth two models of kingship, exemplified by two opposing rulers. In this comparison, Bolesław emerges as the ideal monarch - one worthy of admiration and elevation to the throne - while the two patrons of his reign, Saints Peter and Adalbert, stand beside him as his protectors and advocates in his rise to the highest dignity.

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[28] On Bruno's letter, see W. Fałkowski, *The Letter of Bruno of Querfurt to King Henry*, "Frühmittelalterliche Studien" 43 (2009), pp. 417-438. See also H.D. Kahl, *Compellere intrare: Die Wendenpolitik Bruns von Querfurt im Lichte hochmittelalterlichen Missions- und Völkerrechts*, "Zeitschrift für Ostforschung" 4 (1955), pp. 360-401; and R. Wenskus, *Studien zur historisch-politischen Gedankenwelt Bruns von Querfurt*, Münster 1956.

[29] *Brunonis Querfurtensis Epistola ad Henricum regem*, in: Monumenta Poloniae Historica n.s. 4/3, ed. J. Karwasińska, Warszawa 1973 (hereafter: *Epistola*), p. 103: *Quid tum? Sanctus Petrus cuius tributarium se asserit, et sanctus martyr Adalbertus, nonne protexerunt?*

[30] *Epistola*, pp. 101-102: *…coeunt sacra lancea et qui pascuntur humano sanguine diabolica vexilla? Non credis* [Henry] *peccatum, o rex, quando christianum caput, quod nefas est dictu, inmolatur sub demonum vexillo?*

[31] *Epistola*, p. 104: *Eheu nostra infelicia tempora! Post sanctum imperatorem magnum Constantinum, post exemplar religionis optimum Karolum, est nunc qui persequatur christianum, nemo prope qui convertat paganum.*

Bishop Adalbert's body being brought back to Poland and its burial in the church at Gniezno brought new prestige and solemnity to the realm, transforming the main stronghold of the Polans into a holy city modeled on Ravenna and Rome. The anonymous author of a hymn from Reichenau, written around the year 1001, even proclaimed that Poland "blossoms with the relics of martyrdom."[32] A similar image appears in the anonymous Passio from the monastery of Tegernsee, describing the time after the missionary bishop's remains were brought home. The procession carrying his body was solemnly led by Bolesław the Brave to the Gniezno basilica, originally built by Mieszko I. There the saint was laid to rest, and "by God's grace each day he blossoms with continual signs of virtue"[33] - a phrase that evokes the spread of holiness throughout the city and the land. John Canaparius's *Life of Saint Adalbert* makes it clear that only Rome - the capital of the world and the queen of cities - could appoint rulers over all nations, for there rested Saint Peter, prince of the apostles.[34] The cult of Rome's first bishop gave the city primacy in the Christian world, both spiritual and temporal. The analogy with Gniezno, where Saint Adalbert's body was enshrined, was therefore unmistakable, making it possible to envision concrete plans for royal coronation. Just as Ravenna had once been regarded as a holy city (*sacra urbs*),[35] so too Gniezno, after the arrival of the missionary's relics, became a sacred space, sanctified by their presence and by the memory of the ruler's devotion in protecting and spreading the saint's cult. In his charter issued at Gniezno, Emperor Otto III noted that it had been granted "in Sclavinia, in the city of Gniezno, where the body of the blessed martyr Adalbert rests."[36] In so doing, he recognized the exceptional status of the area surrounding the saint's relics. The tomb of the monarchy's patron and protector was the most fitting place for a coronation and for elevating the dynasty to royal rank, for it had become truly sacred ground.

At the heart of the early Piast state lay two strongholds of supra-regional importance. Gniezno remained the principal seat of the ruling dynasty

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[32] *Pieśń "Annua recolamus"*, cited in A. Budzińska-Bennett, *Utrwalone w pieśni: Otto III, Bolesław Chrobry, Polska i Polacy w pieśni średniowiecznej*, in: *Kultura muzyczna w początkach państwa polskiego*, ed. M. Robaczewska, A. Jabłońska, Gniezno 2019, p. 111: *Polania ergo tanti sepeliens//floret martyrii pignora.*

[33] M. Sosnowski, *Anonimowa Passio s. Adalperti martiris (BHL 40) oraz Wiperta Historia de predicatione episcopi Brunonis (BHL 1471b) – komentarz, edycja, przekład*, "Rocznik Biblioteki Narodowej" 43 (2012), p. 70: *Condigno honore suam deportari fecit [Bolesław] in urbem, ac in basilica quam Misico bone vir memoriae domino fabricaverat reverenter collocavit, ubi deo prestante assiduis virtutum in dies floret signis.*

[34] *Sancti Adalberti episcopi Pragensis et martyris vita prior*, ed. J. Karwasińska, in: Monumenta Poloniae Historica n.s. 4/1, Warszawa 1962, chap. 21, 32.

[35] *Adalberti pragensis episcopi et martyris vita prior…*, chap. 21, 32: *sacram urbem Ravennam.*

[36] *Ottonis III. Diplomata*, no. 349, 779: *Actum in Sclavania in civitate Gnesni, ubi corpus beati martyris Adalberti requiescit.*

and the place that recalled its origins. At the same time, thanks to the relics of Saint Adalbert, it was transformed into a spiritual center which, at the Congress of Gniezno, also became the seat of the archbishopric. Nearby, in Poznań, a rival center developed, which had played an important role in regional governance since the time of Mieszko I. The discovery of a stone ducal throne on Ostrów Tumski indicates that ducal authority was exercised there and confirms Poznań's position as the principal stronghold in the area. The throne - used to manifest power and likely also for holding court and issuing administrative and judicial decisions - stands as a clear sign of Poznań's dominant role in the region as a royal residence and center of oversight.[37] Together with Gniezno, the stronghold on the Warta River formed the core of the early Polish state: Gniezno, as the old dynastic seat, served as a bastion of lineage and spiritual strength, while Poznań assumed administrative functions and became the necropolis of the ruling family, with the burials of Bolesław the Brave and Mieszko I.

The division of roles and the balance of power between the two closely situated strongholds made it easier to negotiate with smaller regional communities and to build a unified state - one that had only recently been "assembled" and brought under central control. The Piast dynasty ruled over a vast, newly consolidated territory, and the state structure it created required constant oversight and maintenance. Having several parallel centers of power, each serving distinct administrative, economic, and organizational purposes, followed a proven Carolingian model. A number of selected palaces and royal estates together had formed what might be called the Carolingians' "dispersed center" of authority.[38] Each was responsible for a specific political direction, while its local court maintained specialized knowledge of the surrounding region and borderlands. In the formative period of the Polish state, this kind of dispersed center was mirrored by the chief strongholds of the annexed provinces, which combined administrative duties with supervisory authority over the territories "entrusted" to them.[39] In Silesia this role was filled by Wrocław; in Lesser Poland by Kraków; and

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[37] M. Kara, *Kamienny tron piastowski przy kościele Najświętszej Marii Panny in Summo na poznańskim Ostrowie*, in: *Bolesław Chrobry z Poznania po władzę i koronę*, vol. 2, ed. A. Stempin, Poznań 2025, pp. 90-101.

[38] On the Carolingian model of a state with a dispersed centre, see W. Fałkowski, *Wielki król: Ideologiczne podstawy władzy Karola Wielkiego*, Warszawa 2011, pp. 18-24.

[39] Cf. M. Kara, *Najstarsze państwo Piastów – rezultat przełomu czy kontynuacji? Studium archeologiczne*, Poznań 2009, pp. 282-321. See also Z. Dalewski, *Między Gnieznem a Poznaniem. O miejscach władzy w państwie pierwszych Piastów*, "Kwartalnik Historyczny" 98 (1991), 2, pp. 19-43, where the author emphasizes the significance of the Poznań necropolis established for the Piast dynasty, which is taken to confirm the important role of the stronghold (this interpretation is endorsed by the present author).

in Kuyavia, it seems, by Włocławek. Central power, meanwhile, was divided between Gniezno and Poznań - both serving as the ruler's principal seats and symbols of dynastic power and majesty. Together they can be seen as playing complementary roles, shaping the ideological foundations of the monarchy while carrying out its political and administrative tasks. The Piasts thus created a carefully designed network structure, attentive to earlier tribal divisions, adapted to the ruler's needs, and flexible enough to respond to changing regional circumstances. The effective functioning of this system was one of the main reasons for the state's early success.

In conclusion, the coronation of Bolesław the Brave marked the culmination of a long and deliberate process through which the Piast monarchy sought to define its position within the political and ideological landscape of Christian Europe. From the symbolic act of imperial investiture performed by Otto III at Gniezno, through the appropriation of Carolingian models of rulership, to the careful construction of dynastic centers at Gniezno and Poznań, the evolution of Piast authority followed patterns of power familiar from the Frankish world yet adapted to local realities. The titles, insignia, and ceremonies that Bolesław received reflected both the emperor's vision of a renewed Christian empire and the Polish ruler's own ambitions for autonomy and royal dignity. By consciously invoking the language and ritual of Carolingian kingship, Bolesław transformed these imperial symbols into instruments of sovereignty, culminating in his coronation of 1025 - a solemn affirmation of independence and divine favor. The event not only secured the Piast dynasty's legitimacy but also integrated the early Polish state into the wider Christian world, where it stood as both a successor to and a creative interpreter of the Carolingian tradition.[40]

Abstract

The coronation of Bolesław the Brave marked the culmination of a long and deliberate process through which the Piast monarchy sought to define its position within the political and ideological landscape of Christian Europe. From the symbolic act of imperial investiture performed by Otto III at Gniezno, through the appropriation of Carolingian models of rulership, to the careful construction of dynastic centers at Gniezno and Poznań, the evolution of Piast authority followed patterns of power familiar from the Frankish world yet adapted

[40] This article appeared in Polish in: *Potestas regia et Christianitas. Polska w tworzeniu Europy. Z okazji jubileuszu 1000-lecia koronacji Bolesława Chrobrego*, ed. S. Rosik, M. Sołomieniuk, Wrocław 2025.

to local realities. The model for an act at Gniezno was an ancient and well-known imperial custom, the emperor could conferre the royal title of his own will and confirmed it by placing a crown on the candidate's head as it happened with count Boso in 877. The titles, insignia, and ceremonies that Bolesław received reflected both the emperor's vision of a renewed Christian empire and the Polish ruler's own ambitions for autonomy and royal dignity. By consciously invoking the language and ritual of Carolingian kingship, Bolesław transformed these imperial symbols into instruments of sovereignty, culminating in his coronation of 1025 - a solemn affirmation of independence and divine favor.

Keywords: Bolesław the Brave, coronation, Carolingians, Otto III, ritual

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Thietmar und Bolesław. Der Merseburger Bischof als Chronist und der Beherrscher des östlichen Grenzgebietes des deutschen Reiches

Beginnen wir mit einem allgemeinen Gedanken! Es ist gut, wenn wir wissen, was der Chronist in seinen Ausführungen präsentiert, aber noch besser wäre es, wenn wir Bescheid wüssten, warum er diese Dinge gerade so schildert. Der Merseburger Bischof und Chronist bietet seinem Leser diese bessere Situation. Er sagt mehr über sich selbst als seine Schriftstellerkollegen, sowohl Zeitgenossen als auch spätere Autoren. Dabei verrät er seine Ansichten über die Welt, liefert auf detaillierte und konsequente Weise nachdenkliche Überlegungen und solche von allgemeinem Charakter und zeigt nur allzu gut, dass gerade sie es sind, die von ihm wahrgenommene Geschichtswirklichkeit gestalten.

Obwohl diese Aufgabe eine größere Abhandlung erfordern würde, wollen wir versuchen, Thietmars intellektuellen Kosmos näher zu bestimmen.[1] In dieser Welt ist am wichtigsten seine Zugehörigkeit zu sächsischen Gemeinschaft, was politisch gesehen in grenzenloser Treue zum sächsischen Kaiserreich und seinem (damaligen) Kaiser zum Ausdruck kommt. Insbesondere weil Heinrich II. endlich die Sünde der Liquidierung des Bistums Merseburg praktisch wiedergutgemacht hatte, das er nach dem Tod von Bischof Wigbert selbst auf Willen dieses Herrschers im Jahre 1009 übernahm.

[1] Wir benutzen die Edition: *Thietmari merseburgensis episcopi Chronicon*, hg. v. R. Holtzmann, MGH, Scriptores rerum Germ. n. s. 9, Berolini 1935 [weiter: Thietmar].

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Merseburg ist einer der vordringlichsten Helden der *Chronik*,[2] und die Bemühungen um Wiedergewinnung der Bischofswürde und des früheren Besitzes bilden ein wesentliches Motiv in Thietmars Darlegungen. Wie bewiesen wurde, situierte der Bischof die Gestalt des 'bösen' Giselher, der diese Diözese verloren hatte, im Szenarium seiner eigenen Idee, womit er zugleich den guten Ruf seines Onkels Lothar von Walbeck rettet.[3]

Im Rahmen seines Werkes bleibt er mit allen Bischöfen und Verwaltern des Königreiches solidarisch, d. h. wenn er keinem von ihnen vorwirft, eine ernstliche Sünde begangen zu haben. Wie bemerkt wurde, sind die *Nostri* bei Thietmar auch Stammesgenossen des Chronisten, Personen des Bistums Merseburg, eben Kollegen im Bischofsamt, und im weiteren Plan auch ehrliche Christen und Untertanen des Reiches – selbst wenn daraus nicht viel resultiert, weil sich die Bedeutung dieses Begriffs in konkreter und vom eingeführten Kontext geforderter Opposition realisiert. Aber das Prinzip der *Saxonitatis* scheint für den Merseburger Bischof als „eine historisch begründete Identität" übergeordnet zu sein.[4] Andere Deutsche, wenn wir sie so nennen wollen, sind viel weniger die Seinigen, wovon übrigens Heinrich IV. und die übrigen seiner Untertanen durch die sächsische Fronde gegen Fremde, die sie regieren sollten, vorzüglich überzeugt wurden.[5]

Thietmar bekennt: Wehe den von Fremden regierten Menschen, sie werden unterdrückt und die Freiheit leidet.[6] Die breiter und institutionell

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[2] B. Tock (*Thietmar de Mersebourg et son lecteur,* in: *Faire lien. Aristocratie, reseaux et échanges compétitifs – Mélanges en l'honneur Régine Le Jan*, hg. v. L. Jégou, Paris 2015, S. 366) nimmt sogar an, dass der Bischof die Chronik für seinen Amtsnachfolger schrieb.

[3] M. Belitz, *Die Bemühungen um die Wiedererichtung des Bistums Merseburg,* in: *Thietmar von Merseburg zwischen Pfalze, Burge und Federkiel*, hg. v. M. Belitz u. a., Regensburg 2021, S. 77–108; Thietmar und seine *parrochia* siehe S. Patzold, *L'archidiocèse de Magdebourg. Perception de l'espace et identité (X^e-XI^e siècle)*, in: *L'espace du diocèse. Gènese d'un territoire dans l'Occident médiéval (V^e-XI^e siècle)*, hg. v. F. Mazel, Rennes 2014, S. 179 ff.

[4] H. W. Goetz, *Die Gegenwart der Vergangenheit im früh- und hochmittelalterlichen Geschichtsbewußtsein*, „Historische Zeitschrift" 255 (1992), 1, S. 83; A. Schneider, *Thietmar von Merseburg über kirchliche, politische und ständische Fragen sejner Zeit*, „Archiv für Kulturgeschichte" 44 (1962), 1, S. 35, 68.

[5] Siehe G. Althoff, *Heinrich IV.*, Darmstadt 2006, S. 86 ff.; C. Ehlers, *Recht und Raum. Das Beispiel Sachsens im frühen Mittelalter*, „Rechtsgeschichte-Legal History" 13 (2008), S. 12–24; M. Becher, *Die Auseinandersetzung Heinrichs IV. mit den Sachsen. Freiheitskampf oder Adelsrevolte?*, in: ders., *Macht und Herrschaft: Praktiken-Strukturen-Begründungen. Ausgewählte Aufsätze*, hg. v. L. Dohmen u. a., Bonn 2019, S. 202–207. Gewährleistet wurde eine Untermauerung der stolzen Besonderheit der Sachsen, siehe R. Schuhmann, *tamquam oder quamquam: Zu Tacitus, Germania, c. 4 und zur Überlieferung der Germania im Mittelalter*, „Glotta" 79 (2003), 1/4, S. 215.

[6] S. Patzold, *Königserhebungen zwischen Erbrecht und Wahlrecht*, „Deutsches Archiv" 58 (2002), S. 486.

verstandene *Christianitas* ist eine notwendige Bedingung, um auf der richtigen Seite zu bleiben, und diese Glaubensgemeinschaft muss als Ganzes unterstützt und erweitert werden. Was der Chronist oft betont, aber die Bündnisse mit den Heiden und ihre nachbarschaftliche Präsenz werden ohne größere Emotionen akzeptiert, weil sich die irdische Wirklichkeit eben so darstellt.[7] Die Zugehörigkeit zu einem vorzüglichen Geschlecht und zum aristokratischen *Ordo* weckt bei Thietmar viel lebendigere Gefühle.[8]

Jedoch sind das nur weltliche und zumindest theoretisch keineswegs die wichtigsten Determinanten von Thietmars Wahrnehmung einer sich verändernden Gegenwart. Gott, und zwar der des Alten Testaments, ist der wahre Senior sowohl der Sachsen und ihres Reiches als auch von allem anderen. Er lenkt die menschlichen Schicksale unmittelbar und lässt nicht mit sich spaßen. Wenn du sündigst, dann verlierst du. Das ist Thietmars überall und an alle gerichtete kürzeste Formel.[9] Auch an die Größten und die Seinigen. Jedesmal, wenn Heinrich I., wie der Chronist schreibt, sich in seinem Hochmut gegen Gott erhob, wurde seine Macht erniedrigt. Die Sünden der Großen, besonders die der Herrscher, verderben das Volk, und gemäß der augustinischen Auslegung sozialen Erfolges kann keine Gemeinschaft dann in Frieden und Wohlstand erblühen.[10]

Erwähnenswert ist auch, dass die Welt für Thietmar voll von verborgenen Bedeutungen ist, auch von ungewöhnlichen Boten, die, wie der Chronist erklärt, wahrgenommen und dokumentiert werden müssen, weil Gott oft einen gebrechlichen Menschen heimsucht, um ihn zu trösten und ihm seine

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[7] H. Lippelt, *Thietmar von Merseburg*, Köln 1973 (= Mitteldeutsche Forschungen 72), S. 169.

[8] A. Schneider, *Thietmar von Merseburg…*, S. 65 f.

[9] Geteilt wurde sie allerdings umfassender und seit langem, auch von Heinrich II., siehe S. Weinfurter, *Herrschen durch Gnade. Legitimation und Autorität des Königtums in ottonisch-frühsalischer Zeit* [Sudetendt. Akad. der Wiss. und Künste, Geisteswiss. Kl.: Forschungsbeitr. der Geisteswiss. Kl.], München 2009, S. 109–126; B. Schneidmüller, *Ganz oben und doch nicht allein. Verflochtene Herrschaft oder die mittelalterliche Zähmung von Monarchie*, in: *Herrscher und Eliten zwischen Symbiose und Antagonismus. Kommunizieren in vormodernen Herrschaftsstrukturen*, hg. v. M. Becher, K. Gahbler, Göttingen 2023, S. 237 ff.; S. Patzold, *Der König Alleinherscher? Ein Versuch über die Möglichkeit der Monarchie im Frühmittelalter* in: *Monarchische Herrschaft im Altertum*, hg. v. S. Rebenich, J. Wienand, Oldenbourg 2017, S. 630 ff.; J. Reitmeier-Filex, *Eschatologisches Denken und politisches Handeln in der Karolingerzeit*, Paderborn 2025, S. 163–258.

[10] Thietmar VIII, 23, S. 520: „Superbia seniorum instigat furorem satelitum"; K. Schulmeyer-Ahl, *Der Anfang vom Ende der Ottonen. Konstitutionsbedingungen historiographischer Nachrichten in der Chronik Thietmars von Merseburg*, Berlin 2009, S. 107, 127 ff. Diesen vom Chronisten oft angewandten Kunstgriff (Schuld des Herrschers = Misserfolg der Gemeinschaft) qualifiziert die Autorin als *heilsgeschichtliches Deutungsmuster.*

Schwäche bewusst zu machen.[11] Das Leben ist ein riskantes und schwieriges Spiel, es geht um einen kostbaren Lohn, um das Seelenheil. Und nicht jeder konnte, wie im Falle des Havelberger Bischofs Hilderich, noch eine so gute Nachricht erhalten, er habe noch ein paar Jahre vor sich, und daher, wie ihm der Prophet rät, nicht aufhören solle, so viele gute Werke zu vollbringen wie er nur kann.[12] Allein schon das Bewusstsein eines solchen Spiels lähmte den Chronisten. Geradezu obsessiv quälte er sich dann selbst mit seiner entblößten Niederträchtigkeit, er bemühte sich um Vergebung der Sünden und wiederholte: „ego peccator, deteriorem me nescio", ich wälze mich im Schlamm der Missetat, wie ein Schwein.[13] Er bekannte; Ich bin nicht gewillt zum Guten, ich bin jähzornig, eifersüchtig, höhnisch, ich vergebe niemandem, und im weiteren Verlauf dieser Litanei stellte er sich als Vielfraß, Lügner, Geizhals und Verleumder dar.[14] Die panische Angst, ob er es schaffen würde, sich noch vor dem Tod von seinen Sünden zu reinigen, durchdringt viele Äußerungen Thietmars.[15]

Die gestrenge Wahrnehmung der Menschen seiner Umgebung verstärkte bei Thietmar das Gefühl eigener Unvollkommenheit, auch in körperlicher Hinsicht. Lieber Leser, lerne mich edlen Herren nur näher kennen, dann wirst du einen kleinen Mann mit verunstaltetem Kiefer sehen und entstellt durch ein

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11 K. Schulmeyer-Ahl, *Der Anfang von Ende…*, S. 167; G. Althoff, *Das Wissen Thietmars von Merseburg über göttliche und teuflische Interventionen*, in: ders., *Gott belohnt, Gott straft. Religiöse Kategorien der Geschichtsdeutung im Frühem und Hohen Mittelalter*, Darmstadt 2022, S. 123–136; Thietmar VI, 48, S. 330, 332.

12 Thietmar VI, 46, S. 332.

13 Vgl. W. Erhart, L. Gumpert, S. Siemanowski, *Ähnlich, Anders, Einzigartig. Sich selbst Vergleichen und die Historisierung des autobiographischen Schreiben*, in: *Sich selbst Vergleichen. Zur Relationalität autobiographischen Schreibens vom 11. Jahrhundert bis zum Gegenwart*, hg. v. F. Arlinghaus u. a., Bielefeld 2020, S. 26 f. Die Direktive, sich mit 'guten Vorbildern' zu vergleichen, und die mangelnde *imitatio* mit diesen liegt den Autoren zufolge einer pejorativen Selbsteinschätzung Thietmars zugrunde und führt zur Detestation der eigenen Person. Der Bischof kennt den Mechanismus, sich durch Erniedrigung reinzuwaschen („»Dicat aliquis: male laudasti te!«, Jemand würde sagen: »Da hast du dich aber verkehrt herum gelobt!« – Thietmar I, 20, S. 26). Ein Topos, der aber, wie ich meine, als kulturelle Ausstattung ehrlich verwendet wurde, vgl. H.W. Goetz, *Die Chronik Thietmars von Merseburg als Ego Dokument: ein Bischof mit gespaltenen Selbstverständnis*, in: *Ego Trouble. Authors and Their Identities in the Early Middle Ages*, hg. v. R. Corradini u. a., Wien 2010 (= Denkschriften österr. Ak. der Wiss. 385), S. 270; G. Misch, *Geschichte der Autobiographie*, Bd. 2/2, Frankfurt/Main 1992, S. 508–518.

14 Thietmar IV, 75, S. 218; VIII, 11, S. 506.

15 Gegen Ende seines Werkes richtet er an den Leser oder seinen Nachfolger einen dramatischen Appell: Mit beständigem Gebet und Almosen sollt ihr mich, diesen seit langem stinkenden Sünder, aus den Krallen des gefräßigen Wolfes befreien, der mich zerreißt, Thietmar VIII, 12, s. 506; R. Meens, *Kirchliche Buße und Konfliktbewältigung (Thietmar von Merseburg näher betrachtet)*, „Frühmittelalterliche Studien" 41 (2007), S. 322 f.

Geschwür im Gesicht.[16] Zusätzlich vernachlässigt diese Person ständig wichtige Dinge: er hat keine Zeit dafür und verspätet sich sogar zu den für ihn wichtigsten Feierlichkeiten, darunter zu seiner eigenen bischöflichen Investitur.[17] Scharfsinnig und mitleidlos sucht er nach sündigen Taten, umso mehr als die *moderni*, seine Zeitgenossen, in schlechteren Zeiten leben, die kaum mit den früheren, so guten, verglichen werden können. Das goldene sächsische Zeitalter war ja mit Otto I. vergangen, darauf folgte ein bleiernes.[18] Eigenhändig schrieb der Bischof in den Text der *Chronik* den Satz: „Die jetzige Zeit ist schlimmer als alle früheren", und obwohl alles einst viel besser war, empfiehlt Thietmar den Gläubigen, demütig darum zu bitten, Gott möge in seiner Sanftmut dem nach Karl dem Großen besten Kaiser vergeben, da dieser in seinen Handlungen ja nicht vermeiden konnte, zahlreiche schreckliche Untaten (*flagitia innumera*) zu begehen.[19]

Thietmar war kein Mann der neuen oder unserer Zeit und er stochert nicht so tief in den Wunden sträflicher Taten, um die Zwiespalte des Willens, die Skrupel oder anderes Zögern zu untersuchen, von denen jeder Handelnde geschüttelt wird.[20] Es gibt Gesetze der Kirche, eine von dieser Institution vorgegebene Frömmigkeitspraxis, und entweder du befolgst alles, denn hier gibt es keine mehr oder weniger wichtige Anordnungen, oder ganz einfach: du sündigst auf sträfliche Weise. Dann kann dich das Übel in jede Gestalt heimsuchen.[21]

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[16] Vgl. H.W. Goetz, *'Nobilis' Der Adel im Selbstverständnis der Karolingerzeit*, „Vierteljahresschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte" 70 (1983), 2, S. 163. Siehe auch die allgemeinen Bemerkungen von B. Reudenbach, *Gestörte Ordnung – deformierte Körper. Beobachtungen an mittelalterlichen Darstellungen des Sündenfalls*, in: *Geschichtsvorstellungen. Bilder, Texte und Begriffe aus dem Mittelalter. Festschrift für Hans-Werner Goetz*, hg. v. S. Patzold u. a., Köln 2012, S. 354–371.

[17] Siehe H.W. Goetz, *Die Chronik Thietmars von Merseburg als Ego-Dokument*, S. 259–270; H. Lippelt, *Thietmar von Merseburg…*, S. 197–202.

[18] Thietmar III, 45, S. 94.

[19] Ebd., 13, S. 508; II, 45, S. 94. Der Gedanke an die Unvermeidlichkeit, schreckliche Sünden zu begehen, machte auch dem ungarischen Ladislaus I. zu schaffen: „pecator existam quoniam cura terrenae dignitatis absque gravissimis non potest promoveri criminibus", *Diplomata Hungariae antiquissima*, Bd. 1, hg. v. G. Györffy, Budapest 1992, Nr. 91, S. 272. Siehe D. von der Nahmer, *Sünde. Zur Chronik Thietmars von Merseburg und zu einigen Werken Bernwards von Hildesheim*, „Studi Medievali" Spoleto 2013, Reihe III, 54, 2, S. 542 ff.

[20] Anders sieht das R. Meens, *Kirchliche Buße…*, S. 325. Entgegen der verbreiteten Meinung soll der Bischof (in neuzeitlicher Sicht) angenommen haben, die *Intentionshaftung* sei wichtiger als die *Tathaftung*. Siehe jedoch F. Neiske, *Ecclesia cluniacensis – ecclesia christiana. Auswirkungen einer monastischen Reformbewegung auf Kirche und Gesellschaft des Mittelalters*, in: *Die Orden im Wandel Europas. Historische Episoden und globalen Folgen*, hg. v. P. Bsteh u. a., Wien 2013, S. 22.

[21] G. Althoff, *Thietmar von Merseburg*, Lexikon des Mittelalters, Bd. 8, 1997, Sp. 695–696; G. Graf, *Zwischen Hoffnung und Angst. Beispiele aus Bischof Thietmars Glaubenswelt*, in: *Thietmars Welt: ein Merseburger Bischof schreibt Geschichte*, hg. v. M. Cottin, L. Merkel, Petersberg 2018, S. 265–269.

Kehren wir wieder zurück zu Heinrich I., den, so der Chronist, Gott sein ganzes Leben lang geschützt hat. Und er war dem Chronisten lieb und teuer als der (nach dem Cäsar) eigentliche Gründer Merseburgs. Und dennoch, als sich der Herrscher am Gründonnerstag betrank und seine Gattin zum Geschlechtsverkehr zwang, selbstverständlich gegen das Verbot der Kirche, zeugte er einen Sohn, der ohne die Umsicht einer gewissen frommen Matrone um ein Haar fast ein Kind des Teufels geworden wäre. Aber auch für diese Sünde bezahlten Heinrich und seine Nachfolger mit häufigen Unruhen, die das Land zerrissen, und erst unter Heinrich II. „erblühte die Blume des Friedens".[22]

Also prinzipiell realisierte er gegenüber allen, was man ihm zugutehalten muss, sein moralisches Lebenscredo gar nicht schlecht, und das Bewusstsein geradezu arithmetischer Rücksichtslosigkeit auf dem Gebiet der Verrechnung menschlicher Sünden (darunter ja auch seiner eigenen) gab ihm das Gefühl, dass die von ihm geschriebene Geschichte mehr wert sei als die anderer Schriftsteller. Als Schöpfer und Historiograph betrachtet sich Thietmar in eben dieser Perspektive – er folgt, wie er sagt, nicht dem Beifall der Menge, lässt sich nicht leiten vom *favore vulgi*, sondern aus dieser Sensibilität für die sich durch Sünde, Strafe, Buße und Erlösung vollziehende Mechanik des Wirkens der menschlichen Welt zieht er den Schluss, dass er aufrichtiger sei als andere. Er schreibt: „Ego conscius mihi multo credibiliora tibi quam alius indico."[23] Obwohl er dieses Bekenntnis in einer Art Appell an seinen Amtsnachfolger situiert und es durch den Kontext einer besonderen Mitteilung einschränkt, begehen wir keinen allzu großen Fehler, wenn wir sagen, dass die hier dargelegte Selbstreflexion des Bischofs ihn auch gegenüber denen, die sich mit dem Aufschreiben der Ereignisse befassen, überlegen macht (auch in seinen eigenen Augen, wie zu unterstreichen ist).

Auf den Seiten der *Chronik* vollzieht sich auch ein Kampf um das Wohl seiner Helden (und seines eigenen), um das höchste Wohl, d. h. das Seelenheil. „Erwähnen möchte ich auch das kurze Leben des Wormser Bischofs Franco" – schreibt der Chronist und lässt seine Gestalt aus dem Bereich des Nichtseins und der Vergessenheit hervortreten.[24] Ich möchte aus gan-

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22 H. Lippelt, *Thietmar von Merseburg…*, S. 145 ff.; M.L. Portmann, *Die Darstellung der Frauen in der Geschichtsschreibung des frûheren Mittelalters*, [Diss. Basel] Basel–Stuttgart 1958, S. 121–124; K. Schulmeyer-Ahl, *Der Anfang von Ende…*, S. 83 ff.

23 Thietmar VIII 12, S. 506. H.W. Goetz, *Die Chronik Thietmars…*, S. 269, übersetzt den Satz „Ich zeige mich dir bewußt viel wahrhaftiger als jeder andere". G. Misch (*Geschichte der Authobioraphie…*, S. 511) dagegen so: „Ich gebe Dir den Zustand meines Inneren nach der Mahnung meines Gewissens viel wahrhafter an, als ein anderer es vermag".

24 Thietmar IV, 61, S. 200. H. Lippelt (*Thietmar von Merseburg…*, S. 135) vermutet, dass der Chronist Franco für das Fehlen einer komemorativen Notiz im Merseburger Nekrolog 'entschädigen' wollte.

zem Herzen, wie er sofort bekennt, dass die von meiner ungeeigneten Hand notierte Erinnerung an tugendhafte Menschen unter Zeitgenossen und Künftigen ständig neu erblüht, und dass diese erwähnten Helden, keineswegs wegen irgendwelcher Annehmlichkeiten, sondern aufgrund ihrer Frömmigkeit, den Allmächtigen Gott an mich erinnern.[25]

Da der Tod nur die zeitliche Existenz des Menschen beendet, liefern Thietmar bekannte Personen aus dem Jenseits ihm und anderen verschiedene Beweise ihrer Existenz – man möchte hinzufügen, sie können mit den Lebenden in der Regel in für diese wichtigen Angelegenheiten Kontakt aufnehmen.[26] Das Gedenken an sie und ihre Unterstützung im Gebet hält diejenigen, die von uns gegangen sind, in Bereichen einer umfassenderen Gemeinschaft von Lebenden und Toten fest.[27] Der Chronist 'wendet sich' auf den Seiten seiner Chronik sogar an alle gegenwärtigen und künftigen Menschen und versichert ihnen: „Ich sage (euch), wieviel Gutes auf dieser Welt zum Gedenken an jemanden getan wird, selbst falls es dem, für den es getan wurde, nicht helfen sollte, dies dann bei Gott keineswegs für nichts angerechnet werden, wenn es mit Hingabe getan wurde".[28]

Er wendet sich auch, und nicht nur einmal, an seine Amtsnachfolger und übermittelt ihnen von sich aus gewisse Anordnungen oder Bekenntnisse und zeigt damit, dass der Dialog zwischen beiden Welten notwendig und wirklich ist.[29] Der Chronist ist sich deutlich darüber im klaren, dass sein Werk nicht in seiner Zeit verankert ist – es soll fortdauern und verbessert werden (was er seinem Bruder Siegfried anempfiehlt),[30] aber es soll auch genutzt werden, daher nimmt er gern und oft den Diskurs mit seinem postulierten (und ihm lieben – „lector carissime, amate") Leser auf. Er unterhält

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[25] Ebd., IV, 61, 202; diese Aussage enthält die für den Chronisten charakteristische Ersetzung des Possessivpronomens durch ein Personalpronomen im Genitiv, verstärkt durch *-met* (*opera meimet manuum*), siehe N. Finckermann, *Thietmar von Merseburg in der lateinischen Sprachtradition, Für eine sprachgerechtere Edition seiner Chronik*, „Jahrbuch für die Geschichte Mittel- und Ostdeutschlands" 6 (1957), S. 64.

[26] A. Krawiec, *Sny, widzenia i zmarli w Kronice Thietmara z Merseburga*, „Roczniki Historyczne" 69 (2003), S. 33.

[27] G. Althoff, *Adels- und Königsfamilien im Spiegel ihrer Memorialüberlieferung. Studien zum Totesgedenken der Billunger und Ottonen*, München 1984, 'Exkurs: Thietmar von Merseburg. Der Zusammenhang zwischen Necrolog und Chronik', S. 228–236; H. Lippelt, *Thietmar von Merseburg…*, S. 129–137; H. Wellmer, *Persönliches Memoria im deutschen Mittelalter*, Stuttgart 1973, S. 61 ff.; J. Lieven, *Liturgische Memoria und historische Erinnerung – zur Frage ihrer Verflechtung und Entgrenzung im persönlichen Memento Thietmars von Merseburg*, in: *Thietmar von Merseburg. Historiographie der Grenzwelten*, hg. v. D. Jäckel, L. Klocke, Berlin 2021, S. 221–236.

[28] Thietmar VI, 85, S. 376.

[29] Siehe B. Tock, *Thietmar de Mersebourg…*, S. 359–367.

[30] Thietmar, Prolog zur *Chronik*, S. 3.

sich geradezu mit ihm – wie man wohl sagen müsste. Mehr als zwanzig Mal redet er ihn an und richtet seine Aussage an ihn, bittet ihn um seine besondere Aufmerksamkeit, teilt ihm seine großen Emotionen mit oder versichert ihm die Wahrhaftigkeit der vermittelten Dinge.[31]

Sehr interessant stellt sich dieser vom Bischof geschaffene und Zeitgenossen, Zukünftige und Verstorbene in einem großen Gespräch miteinander verbindende Kommunikationsknoten dar. Seine an sie alle gerichteten schriftlich fixierten Aussagen erschöpfen die Art und Weise der Führung dieses Gesprächs nicht. Einen Kontakt ermöglicht auch die *vox cordis* und das *memor cordis*[32] – und alle genannten Wege gewährleisten das gegenseitige Verständnis im Rahmen dieser ganzen Gemeinschaft. Und sind selbstverständlich im Kontext des Gebets situiert.

Wir sind geneigt, Thietmar zumindest teilweise Recht zu geben – die religiösen und moralischen Prinzipien des Chronisten durchbrechen oft die üblichen patriotischen und politischen Urteile, beruhend auf der Überzeugung, dass immer dann, wenn jemand bestohlen wird, eine Sünde geschieht. Es wird Zeit, dass wir noch auf sein Naturell, wie wir heute sagen würden, zu Klatsch und auf die vorwitzige Neugier des Merseburger Bischofs verweisen, obwohl die diesbezüglichen Aussagen naturgemäß unpassend sind, weil sie nicht ganz zu einer Epoche passen, in der man nur allzu gern umlaufenden Gerüchten und Novitäten Gehör verlieh und durch ihre Vermittlung dann selbst seine Meinungen in die Welt hinausposaunte.[33]

Der Bischof verfolgt, was besonders erwähnt werden muss, mit größer Aufmerksamkeit das, was von den Menschen 'geredet wird', besonders von herausragenden Personen, die dann oft als die Helden seiner Erzählung fungieren. In diesen Mitteilungen sieht er einen gewissen Beweiswert, wenn er sie in den Chronikverlauf des Prozesses zur Feststellung einer objektivierten

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31 B. Tock (ebd., S. 361) erwähnt 25 Bezugnahmen auf den Leser; wir fanden die folgenden: Buch I: 1, S. 5; 28, S. 34; Buch II: 27, S. 72; Buch III: 11, S. 110; 14, S. 114;16, S. 118; 23, S. 126; Buch IV: 56, S. 194; 67, S. 206; 70, S. 210; 72, S. 214; 75, S. 218; Buch V: 30, S. 255; Buch VI: 23, S. 302; 25, S. 304; 50, S. 336; 75, S. 364; 92, S. 384; Buch VII: 10, 408; 75, S. 490; Buch VIII: 12, S. 506; 16, S. 512; 28, S. 524. Im vorletzten Fall wendet sich der Chronist gleichzeitig an den Leser und an seinen Nachfolger im Bischofsamt, dann aber bald wieder nur an den zweiten (VIII, 13, S. 508). An seinen Nachfolger wendet sich Thietmar noch mehrere Male: im Prolog zu Buch I, S. 3 und weiter in Kap. 20, S. 26; Buch II. 45, S. 94; Buch III, 25, S. 130.

32 Thietmar, Prolog zur *Chronik*, S. 3; VI, 75, S. 364. Der Bischof bemerkt, die Erinnerung an den Erzbischof Walthard sollte im „Gedächtnis des Herzens und nicht in Stein" eingemeißelt sein. Siehe C. Treffort, *Mémoires carolingiennes. L'épitaphe entre célebration mémorielle, genre littéraire et manifeste politique (mileu VIII^e^-début XI^e^ siècle)*, Rennes 2007, S. 20 ff.

33 Gegenwärtig, schreibt der Chronist in seinen auf Anfang 1018 datierten Notizen, „will ich mich, solange mir die „fama velox" nichts Neues zum Aufschreiben liefert, mit dem Leben frommer Menschen befassen", Thietmar VIII, 8, S. 502.

Sicht der Ereignisse einfügt. Die *vox populi* dient der Schattierung des Falles allzu beispielhafter Bestrafung des Geschlechts der Walbecks für die Missetaten Wirinhars (Werners), und das ist eine handliche Waffe, die Thietmar zur Verteidigung seines Verwandten und der Seinigen erlaubt, offene (und strenge) Kritik an Heinrich II. selbst zu vermeiden.[34] Dies erlaubt ihm auch, Bolesław zuzugestehen, was ihm gebührt. Der Chronist meldet also, dass – „a nonnullis veracibus perhibeatur" – auf der Grundlage des Zeugnisses glaubwürdiger Menschen bekannt sei, dass Bolesław Reue über den Tod vieler vorzüglicher deutscher Ritter gezeigt hat, die im Jahr 1015 im Gefecht an der Spree ihr Leben verloren.[35]

Diese einfache und gleichsam unverfälschte Erklärung des Chronisten sowie andere, ähnliche, die Mieszko Bolesławowic und seine ritterliche Geste gegenüber den im Kampf besiegten Gegnern betreffen, ist bei uns sorgfältig zum Lob der Piasten und als Beweis ihrer zivilisatorischen Sensibilität herausgefiltert worden.[36] Aber bringen uns solche Deklarationen Thietmars wirklich den Realitäten näher, geben sie die Haltungen der vom Merseburger Bischof genannten Helden wieder? Vielleicht resultieren sie eher aus einer noch anderen moralischen Abrechnung des Chronisten gegenüber den Akteuren der historischen Szenerie?

Wirinhar, der Cousin des Chronisten und eine ihm teure Person, dessen Geschichte Thietmar in den Strom der großen Geschichte einschreibt, wie – mit Verlaub – Widukind die Geschichte Wichmanns des Jüngeren, war ein aufbrausender Markgraf.[37] Im Kampf tötete er seinen Gegner, den Grafen Dedi (Ziazo). Aber obwohl das Wegnehmen Mathildes durch Heinrich I. und also der kaiserlichen Schwester durch Ezzo damals als die einem wahren Raufbold würdige Tat stilisiert wurde, d. h. als Entführung der

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[34] Halblaut und *occulte* sagten die Leute, der Gesalbte des Herrn habe gesündigt, Thietmar VII, S. 406. K.J. Leyser, *Herrschaft und Konflikt. König und Adel im ottonischen Sachsen*, Göttingen 1984, S. 154. Wie bemerkt wurde, sollte die Fama auch denjenigen ermöglichen, zu Wort zu kommen, die in der geltenden Sozialordnung sonst kein Recht auf Äußerung hatten. Siehe H.J. Mierau, *Fama als Mittel zur Herstellung von Öffentlichkeit und Gemeinwohl in der Zeit des Konziliarismus*, in: *Politische Öffentlichkeit im Spätmittelalter*, hg. v. M. Kintzinger, Ostfildern 2011, S. 243; E. Schubert, *Erscheinungsformen der öffentlichen Meinung im Mittelalter*, „Das Mittelalter. Perspektiven mediävistischer Forschung" 6 (2001), S. 109–127. Der Chronist vermag ihre unpersönliche Natur und soziale Wirkkraft für seine eigenen Bedürfnisse zu nutzen – wenn er sich aber auf Kritik einlässt, die mit Angelegenheiten der Kirche zu tun hat, dann tritt er scharf und mit offenem Visier hervor. Wie gegen Heinrich den Zänker, den Vater seines Souveräns, dem er die begangenen Schandtaten vorwirft, Thietmar II, 40, S. 88.

[35] Thietmar VI, 22 (302).

[36] H. Lippelt (*Thietmar von Merseburg…*, S. 58 ff., hier 61) erkennt darin ein Zeichen der Solidarität des Ritterstandes.

[37] K. J. Leyser, *Herrschaft…*, S. 154, 159.

Auserwählten,[38] war der Brautraub eigentlich ein außerordentlich riskantes Unternehmen, besonders in der Zeit Heinrichs II. Daher besiegelte er, als Wirinhar dies erneut tat, sein elendiges Ende. Umzingelt stirbt er schnell an den beim Raub seiner Erwählten davongetragenen Wunden – und was hat Thietmar uns jetzt zu sagen? Der König, der erzürnt Wirinhar eben noch mit den strengsten Strafen gedroht hatte, versinkt in tiefe Trauer (*rex tristatur*), und Dietrich, der Sohn des von Wirinhar getöteten Dedi, weint (*lacrimatur*).[39]

Der Tod des Feindes hebt also die Feindschaft seiner Gegner auf. So sollte es auch sein (Thietmar zufolge) und dieses Privileg erkennt der Bischof nur Menschen zu, die er für würdig hält. Lassen wir uns daher nicht täuschen durch Thietmars strenge Urteile über diesen oder jenen seiner Helden, wenn sie böse handelten (sündigten) oder sich dem Herrscher oder hochgestellten Angehörigen gegenüber falsch verhielten! Prestige und eine moralische Silhouette gewinnt man in Thietmars Welt nicht durch besondere Taten, selbst wenn diese konsequent begangen wurden, sondern durch ihre Position in der feudalen Stammeskonstruktion, gestützt durch flehentliche Gesten zu Gott hin. Wenn sich der 'böse' Herr der Polanen unter denen befinden konnte, die angesichts ihrer gefallenen Feinde weinen, dann kann nicht die Rede sein von mangelndem Respekt des Merseburger Bischofs für ihn. Dann schwindet die Überzeugung unserer Forscher von seinem bekannten und programmatischen Widerwillen gegen den Polanenherrscher, der sich nur auf leere Beschimpfungen des Chronisten an die Adresse Bolesławs stützt.

Diese Angelegenheit entfernt uns nur scheinbar von der Hauptrichtung unserer Ausführungen, sie konstituiert eine wichtige Frage über die Beurteilung, wie der Bischof seine Helden porträtiert. Kehren wir noch einmal zu Wirinhar zurück, dann bemerken wir, dass trotz Thietmars durchaus gewissenhafter Aufzählung so vieler schwerer Vergehen seines Cousins, die er schließlich über einen sehr langen Zeitraum beging, das ihn krönende Bild

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[38] Siehe *Vita Mathildis reginae antiquior*, hg. v. B. Schütte, Monumenta Germaniae Historica, SS rerum Germ. in usum schol. 66. Hannoverae 1994, c. 2, S. 116; *Fundatio monasterii Brunwilarensis*, hg. v. H. Pabst, „Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde" 12 (1872), S. 158 f. M.L. Portmann, *Die Darstellung…*, S. 81; P. Corbet, *Le mariage en Germanie ottonienne d'après Thietmar de Mersebourg*, in: *La femme au Moyen Âge*, hg. v. M. Rouche, J. Heuclin, Maubeuge 1990, S. 188; S. Joye, *Les mariages dit 'germanique' entre anthropologie, ideologie et histoire*, „Anabases. Traditions et Réceptions de l'Antiquité" 22 (2015), S. 85–95. Heinrich nimmt seine Auserwählte weg „mane, certis parentum ignorantibus … non cimbalis seu organis proludentibus, sed clam lectis principum maniplis".

[39] Den Fall Wirinhar und Mieszko analysiert M. Becher, *'Cum lacrimis et gemitu'.Vom Weinen der Sieger und der Besiegten im frühen und hohen Mittelalter*, in: *Formen und Funktionen öffentlicher Kommunikation im Mittelalter*, hg. v. G. Althoff, Sigmaringen 2001, S. 45 f. Diese interessante Analyse ist jedoch nicht auf die von einer stark eschatologischen Wahrnehmung des Diesseits bedingte 'Weltanschauung' des Bischofs bezogen.

an den 'Schuldigen' als Opfer seines jugendlichen Temperaments (und der Machenschaften der Frauen) erinnern soll. Angesichts eines solchen Dictum kann nur an die lakonische Bemerkung von Sverre Bagge erinnert werden,[40] dass dieses jugendliche Temperament dann doch wohl sehr stark und langandauernd gewesen sein muss, wenn es sich im Jahre 988 durch Entführung der Luitgard zu erkennen gab und bis 1014 lebendig blieb, als Wirinhar unglücklicherweise eine zweite Frauenentführung beging.

Kontrapunktieren wir Thietmars *modus operandi* jetzt mit der Schlussfolgerung, die sich uns bereits aufdrängte, als wir die Haltung besprachen, die unserem Chronisten zufolge edle Gegner gegenüber ihren gefallenen Feinden einnahmen. Die Mitglieder der sächsischen Stammes- und politischen Elite, oder umfassender: Helden mit vorzüglicher Position, selbst wen es eigentlich nicht gerade die besten sind, können in letzter Hinsicht, in bestimmten Situationen oder in gewissem Grade, in Thietmars Wirklichkeit mit einem würdigen, repräsentativen und den Erfordernissen des *decorum* entsprechenden Bild rechnen.[41]

Seine eindeutige und rücksichtslose Kritik verurteilt nicht einmal einen so gefährlichen Rebellen wie Heinrich von Schweinfurt. Aber hören wir dennoch Thietmar: „Dicat aliquis" – jemand, der die Sache kennt, dass er sich gegen den König wenden musste, weil es einem Oberen eben nicht gebührt, einem Untergebenen so entschieden gegebene Versprechen zu widerrufen.[42] Also mit einem wohlüberlegten Urteil, wie mit dem '*deditio*-Privileg', welches Aufrührern erlaubt, mit heiler Haut gefährlichen Konflikt mit dem Herrscher zu entkommen. Sowohl das eine wie auch das andere steht nur großen Herren zu![43]

Wie dann weiter mit Bolesław? Versuchen wir herauszufinden, inwieweit Thietmar, so wie wir ihn gezeichnet haben, den polanischen Herrscher wirklich mögen konnte, oder anders formuliert, warum er ihn eben nicht allzu sehr mögen konnte. Die erste, außerordentlich wichtige Prämisse von Thietmars Gefühl ist: Bolesław war nun mal kein Sachse und gehörte nicht

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40 S. Bagge, *Kings, Politics, and the Right Order of the World in German Historiography c. 950–1150*, Leiden 2002, S. 145, Anm. 167.

41 Vgl. die Bemerkungen über den 'unruhigen' Ritter Kizo: G. Bührer-Thierry, *Des évêque sur la frontière: christianisation et sociétés de frontière sur les marches du monde germanique selon Thietmar de Mersebourg (X^e^-XI^e^ s.)*, in: dies., *Aux marges du monde germanique: l'évêque, le prince, les païen (VIII^e^-XI^e^ siècles)*, Turnhout 2014, S. 338–340.

42 Thietmar V, 32, S. 256. Der Bischof ist konsequent: schon früher signalisierte er die Schwierigkeiten Heinrichs II. mit der diesem Magnaten versprochenen Übergabe Bayerns, ebd., V, 14, S. 236.

43 Gerd Althoffs Thesen kommentiert L. Körntgen, ders., *Heinrich II.: König der Konflikte*, in: *Kaiser Heinrich II.: Herrschaft, Handschriften und Heiligenkult im Mittelalter*, hg. v. Ch. Rolker, Bamberg 2024, S. 164 f.

zu den 'Unsrigen'.[44] Er gehörte nicht dazu, obwohl sich der Merseburger Bischof in dieser Sache selbst verheddert. Er schreibt einen Satz, der von den polnischen Historikern zwar unterschätzt wird, das kulturelle und politische Klima hinsichtlich der Anfänge des Staates der Polanen aber ganz vorzüglich definiert.

Und zwar stellt Thietmar fest: „All das, nämlich dass Chrobrys Vater und Bolesław selbst mit uns (*nobis*) verbunden wurden durch Ehebande und große Freundschaft, brachte uns in der Konsequenz mehr Übel als es früher Gutes gebracht hatte, und auch in Zukunft Übel bringen wird". Das ist trotz allem eine sehr starke Deklaration enger Verbindungen polanischer Dynasten mit der sächsischen Elite.[45] Eine *familiaritas magna*, um Thietmars Formulierung zu verwenden, die beide Seiten verbindet, das ist doch schließlich nicht irgendetwas! Auf die uralte, auf die Jugendzeit zurückreichende *familiaritas* mit Otto III. verweist Heinrich im Januar 1003 als auf eine Prämisse, von welcher sich unter anderem die Mächtigen leiten ließen, als sie ihn zum König wählten.[46]

Fast 'die Unsrigen', d. h. 'die der Ihrigen', möchte man sagen! Sie mögen uns (nos) dann, führt der Chronist weiter aus, wenn sie friedliche Absichten vortäuschen. Denn im Grunde genommen versuchen sie, uns mit Hilfe verschiedener sekreter Versuche von der gegenseitigen Herzlichkeit und – jetzt fällt das entscheidende Argument – von der uns angeborenen Freiheit abzubringen. Wir sahen, dass jeder Fremde, wenn er bei den Sachsen regiert, dies letztendlich aus Thietmars Definition und Weisheit will! Die Machenschaften der Herrschaft, der kleineren oder größeren Herren, Verrat, Trickserei

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44 G. Bührer-Thierry (*Des évêques sur la frontière…*, S. 342) erwähnt, dass die sächsisch-polanisch/slawische Nahtstelle eine Grenzlandgesellschaft hervorbringt, in der persönliche Bande geknüpft werden und ohne Rücksicht auf die (ethnische) Herkunft der Personen eine gewisse Loyalität entsteht. Die Autorin unterstreicht die Beständigkeit solcher Verbindungen auf allen Ebenen der aristokratischen Gesellschaft sowie ihre Unabhängigkeit von den wechselhaften politischen Bedingungen.

45 Thietmar VIII, 2, S. 494. Ch. Halsted (*Sexuality, Alterity, and Riding in Thietmars Chronicon,* in: *Saint and Sinners on Horseback*, hg. v. M.A. Bibby, Bd. 1, Budapest 2023, S. 231–255) gelangte im Ergebnis „müheloser" (dem Text gegenüber apriorischer und oberflächlicher) Interpretationen zu dem Schluss, diese Äußerung stehe in einem von Thietmar dargestellten ideologischen Zusammenhang mit „the awkward entry into Christianity of eastern peoples", siehe ebd., S. 251.

46 Siehe L. Körntgen, *'In primis Herimanni ducis assensu'. Zur Funktion von D H II. 34 im Konflikt zwischen Heinrich II. und Hermann von Schwaben, Exkurs: Zu 'familiaritas' in D H II. 34*, „Frühmittelalterliche Studien" 34 (2000), S. 182–185; S. Huppertz-Wild, *Heinrich II (1002-1024) – Träger der Totenbahre und Schlüsselverwahrer des Ramwold-Grabes in St. Emmeram. Totenkult und Herrschaftsanspruch,* in: *mors. Tod und Totengedenken in den Oberpfälzer Klöstern*, hg. v. G. Schrott, Ch. Malzer, Kallemünz 2019, S. 239 ff. Diese f*amiliaritas* verbindet, wie der Chronist schreibt, Otto III. mit seinem Kollegen Franco, Thietmar IV, 61, S. 200; siehe hier auch Anm. 24 und 99.

und was noch alles aus der schmutzigen Politik ließe sich hinzufügen, und was der Chronist schreibt, ist verständlich, denn so sind die Realitäten. Auch das weiß Thietmar sehr wohl – dass sich alle mit Sünden beflecken; einfache Leute, Herren, sogar Kaiser Heinrich.[47] Aber wenn es um einen Fremden geht, dann bekommt die Sache eine höchst gefährliche Dimension – denn auf der Wagschale liegen die Freiheit und der Erfolg der Sachsen.

Mieszko, der *dux inclitus*, machte unserem Autor zufolge keine solchen Schwierigkeiten und stellte keine solche Gefahr dar. Er war dem Kaiser treu. Er zahlte Tribut und unterwarf sich (geschickt, wie hinzugefügt werden muss) der Arbitrage der sächsischen Herren, dem alten Kaiser sowie der Regentin. Er unterstützte politisch und militärisch den kleinen Otto III. und dessen Mutter Theophanu, wenn sich der junge Herrscher unter ihrer und der Großmutter Obhut befand. Obwohl er den Markgrafen Hodo im Kampf besiegt hatte, reizte er ihn nicht durch Hochmut.

Der Merseburger Bischof lobt den Herrscher der Polanen, er will ausführlicher von ihm sprechen und deklariert sogar die Notwendigkeit, das zu ergänzen, was er früher über ihn geschrieben hatte. Denn er verdient, in seiner Chronik erinnert zu werden (memoria). Mieszko kannte die Regel, schreibt Thietmar, welche die Präsenz des Polanenherzogs in der Konstruktion des sächsischen Staates definierte. Bolesław, *patri longe inferior*, vergaß diese – wird ihm vorgehalten. Der *elatus prosperitate* Chrobry lehnte im Falle Böhmens sogar ab, es als Lehen aus der Hand Heinrichs II. anzunehmen. Darüber hinaus zahlte er auch deshalb keinen Tribut, weil „sein geliebter Kaiser", d. h. Otto III. – möge Gott ihm das verzeihen!, schreit Thietmar – aus ihm doch einen Herren gemacht hatte. Einen Herrscher, der aktiv und effektiv auf der sächsischen oder sogar landesweiten innenpolitischen Szene agiert. In den Kämpfen, die nach dem Tod des Meißener Markgrafen Ekkehard entbrannten, erzielte Bolesław große Erfolge, und er erklärte auch, dass er mit Heinrichs Einverständnis vorgeht, wenn er sich um die Krone bemüht, und wenn er sie erlangt habe, sich dann selbst dem Willen des neuen Herrschers unterwerfen werde. Die Unsrigen gingen zu ihm *inhoneste quasi ad dominum*.

Und hier endet Thietmars Verständnis für Bolesław! Sie alle, selbstverständlich vom 'Fremden' verführt, verwandeln die angeborene Ehre in unverdiente Knechtschaft. Unter unseren Vorfahren war das nicht so – o *tempora*, o *mores*! erinnert Thietmar.

Obige Qualifizierung von Bolesław Chrobry führt dazu, dass dieser Polanenherzog, generell gesehen, die Rolle eines Helden zugewiesen bekommt, der sowohl den Sachsen als auch dem Kaiser schadet. Generell,

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[47] L. Körntgen, *Königsherrschaft und Gottesgnade. Zu Kontext und Funktion sakraler Vorstellungen in Historiographie und Bildzeugnissen der ottonisch-salischen Zeit*, Berlin 2001, S. 127.

weil Thietmar, was man ihm zugutehalten muss, aus Chrobry nicht einfach bloß einen Schwarzcharakter macht. Dieser Herrscher, wie aufgrund der Chronik erkennbar ist, fasziniert ihren Autor eigentlich, er bringt ihn auf, er beunruhigt ihn und entgleitet ihm hinter den eindeutig strengen Urteilen so wie kein anderer in der vom Bischof geschilderten Geschichte. Er stellt Thietmar oder dessen präzise und gerechte Weltanschauung auf die schwersten Proben. Betrachten wir also deren gefährlichste.

Es ist Juli 1002, nach Merseburg kommt Bolesław zusammen mit vielen anderen sächsischen Herren, um auf dem Hoftag auch in diesem Herzogtum die Königswürde Heinrichs II. zu bestätigen.[48] Im Verlauf dieser Versammlung kommt es zu einem gefährlichen Zwischenfall, der damals überhaupt nicht hätte geschehen dürfen, erst recht nicht in so unmittelbarer Nähe des Königs und seines Hofes. Thietmar hätte ihn mit einem Gemeinplatz abtun können oder ihn überhaupt nicht erwähnen. Wir erfuhren über den Angriff auf Herzog Bolesław nur durch Mitteilung der jüngsten Version der *Chronik*, die, allerdings ungenau, in ihre Corvey-Redaktion von etwa 1120 bewahrt.[49] Wir wissen nicht, in welcher Beziehung diese zu Thietmars in diesem Abschnitt verlorengegangener Niederschrift steht.

Jedenfalls erlaubt die Gewissensprüfung (eine Missetat darf nicht verschwiegen werden) dem Historiographen nicht, sich der Darstellung dieser Angelegenheit zu entziehen oder gar keinen Standpunkt zu beziehen. Das kann sowieso nicht anders sein, nämlich dass der fragwürdige Bolesław den überaus vollkommenen und religiösen Heinrich überträfe, der hier als schlechter Hausherr erscheinen würde, der seinen hohen Gast nicht vor einem lebensgefährlichen Angriff schützen kann.[50] Thietmar muss übrigens keinen schlechten Einblick in die ganze Affäre gehabt haben, denn in ihrem Mittelpunkt stand Heinrich von Schweinfurt, ein Verwandter (*nepos meus*) des Bischofs von Merseburg und Verbündeter des Polanenherzogs. Sehr interessant und wichtig ist, dass unser Geschichtsschreiber, der notorisch und überlegt seine familiären Verbindungen nutzt, um Informationen über

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48 K.J. Leyser, *Herrschaft…*, S. 161: „sah Heinrich sich einer neuen Art von Opposition in Sachsen gegenüber. Jetzt war kein rivalisirender Liudolfinger da, der Heinrichs Feinde um sich sammelte – diese Rolle fiel nun für enige Jahre Boleslas Chrobry von Polen zu. Bis zu einem gewissen Grade war der Krieg gegen ihn ein innersächsischer Konflikt".

49 K. Naß, *Die Reichschronik des Annalista Saxo und die sächsische Geschichtsschreibung im 12. Jahrhundert*, Hannover 1996 (= Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Schriften 41), S. 145 f., 168; D. Sikorski, *Kto dokonał ostatniej redakcji Kroniki Thietmara*, in: *Hortus medievalis. Prace ofiarowane Prof. Wojciechowi Fałkowskiemu w 70 rocznicę urodzin*, hg. v. W. Długokęcki u. a., Wrocław 2022, S. 93–102.

50 „Die Gegenwart des Königs galt als Garantie für die Geltung von iustitia und pax" – T. Zotz, *Die Gegenwart des Königs. Zur Herrschaftspraxis Ottos III. und Heinrichs II.*, in: *Otto III. – Heinrich II.: eine Wende?*, hg. v. B. Schneidmüller, S. Weinfurter, Sigmaringen 1997, S. 350.

die geschilderten Ereignisse zu erlangen, seine Darlegung des Überfalls auf Bolesław so darstellt, als ob Heinrich den Verlauf des Geschehens beobachtend davon berichtet habe, während Thietmar, der Autor der *Chronik*, sich mit dem Aufschreiben seiner Beobachtungen zufriedengegeben hätte.

Also half Heinrich von Schweinfurt dem Herzog Bolesław vor Ort gern und aus Freundschaft, und als er gleich nach der Audienz bei Heinrich II. den Herzog begleitete, der dort reich beschenkt wurde und sich mit Erlaubnis des deutschen Herrschers entfernte, erblickte der Markgraf eine große und bewaffnete Schar, die ihm entgegentrat. Als Bolesławs deutscher Gefährte erfahren wollte, was die Ursache des entstehenden Tumults sei, damit nicht Schlimmeres geschieht, wie der Autor betont, konnte er seinen Kollegen nur – und erst nach Aufsprengen einer Seitentür – mit Mühe sicher hinausbegleiten. Die bewaffnete Rotte wusste, wozu und gegen wen sie zog, was aus dem Bericht klar hervorgeht, und nur die schnelle Flucht gab den Notablen der 'polanischen Gruppe' eine Chance, die Situation unbeschadet zu überstehen. Das ist der erste Aufzug des Geschehens in der Version des Chronisten. Der zweite, wo Heinrich von Schweinfurt bereits aus dem Plan der Erzählung verschwindet, stellt sich folgendermaßen dar: An der Spitze des Gefolges oder hinter dem Herzog her gingen oder rannten, als der Tumult ausbrach, seine Krieger. Sie wurden angegriffen, einige von ihnen beraubt, wie wir hören, während andere stark Verwundete nur dank der Hilfe des sächsischen Herzogs Bernhard dem Tod entgingen.

So scheint die 'Niederschrift trockener Fakten' auszusehen, die wir über dieses Geschehen erhalten.[51] Sie stellt Bolesław jedoch allzu deutlich schuldlos dar, während der Kaiser in ein schlechtes Licht gerät. Zwei Erklärungen des Chronisten verändern die Optik der ganzen Geschichte. Wieder ist es außerordentlich interessant, dass Thietmar referiert, wie sein Verwandter und Markgraf den Vorfall sah, „concurrentem vidit armatam multitudinem …contra se insurgentem", dann aber plötzlich die Ebene seiner Aussage wechselt und in die Mitte dieses Satzes mit einem Kommentar seine Exklamation einfügt: *per Deum testor*, vor Gott bezeuge ich, dass dies ohne Hilfe und ohne Wissen des Königs geschah.

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[51] Viel Raum widmete der Sache des Merseburger Angriffs Andrzej Pleszczyński (*Niemcy wobec pierwszej monarchii piastowskiej 963–1034. Narodziny stereotypu. Postrzeganie i cywilizacyjna klasyfikacja władców Polski i ich kraju*, Lublin 2008, S. 184–199. Unter Bemühung eines reichhaltigen und interessanten wissenschaftlichen Apparats forciert die These vom Ausbruch des Konflikts wegen der Forderung des Gastgebers, Bolesław Chrobry sollte mit seiner Leibwache die Waffen ablegen, wenn er vor König Heinrichs Angesicht tritt. Aber der Herzog erzwang eine Audienz mit Waffen, und aus Revanche wurde er schon in der Burgsiedlung dafür angegriffen. Der Text bietet, wie ich aus Obigem schlussfolgere, keine solche Interpretationsmöglichkeiten, und es müssen auch die in dieser Arbeit enthaltenen Fehler in seiner Übersetzung notiert werden, ebd., S. 193 f.

Markgraf Heinrich sah (*vidit*), wie es war, aber Thietmar, den Bericht seines Verwandten verletzend, schwört bei Gott, das das, was diesen Anschein erwecken konnte, nicht wahr sei.

Die zweite Korrektur zeigt, dass vielleicht nicht Bolesław, aber die polanischen Krieger an diesem Überfall gegen sie selber schuld waren. Denn sie betraten das Gelände des königlichen Hofes bewaffnet (die Frage ist nur, wann und unter welchen Umständen?) und wollten es trotz Aufforderung nicht verlassen, sodass sie durch eigene Schuld eine solche Gefahr verdient hätten, schlussfolgert der Autor. Und Bolesław missverstand also diese verdiente Strafe, die für sein undiszipliniertes Geleit bestimmt war, unnötigerweise als abgekarteten und listigen Angriff gegen seine Person. In der Konfrontation der 'Unsrigen', insbesondere des deutschen Herrschers, mit den 'Fremden' fällt es dem Chronisten nicht leicht zu erkennen (obwohl auch das vorkam), dass erstere von sich aus oder unprovoziert eine sträfliche Tat begangen haben.

Was interessiert uns hier? Der Chronist dämonisiert den Feind nicht, er präsentiert die Angelegenheit, wie er das üblicherweise tut, nach dem angehörten Bericht einer glaubwürdigen Person, noch dazu eines von Bolesławs Mitgenossen. Sicher, er verwischt sie, indem er sie, vielleicht nicht ohne Grund, als eine gewöhnliche Schlägerei darstellt, wie solche oft vorkamen, wenn bewaffnete, kulturell und sprachlich verschiedene Gefolge von Herrschern einander begegneten – hiesige mit neuangekommenen. Hier lohnt sich als Zwischenbemerkung, ein paar Sätze darüber zu sagen, wie Thietmar seine 'historischen' Berichte gestaltete. Diesbezüglich interessante Bemerkungen verdanken wir Kirsten Schulmeyer-Ahl.[52] Generell gesehen, charakterisierte diese Wissenschaftlerin die Erzählungen des Chronisten über Fälle aus der Epoche immer als narratives Ganzes voller geringfügiger Fakten und Bemerkungen, insgesamt gleichsam ohne Selektion, die schwer eindeutig lesbare Netze von Ereignissen schaffen.[53]

Der Autor berauscht sich geradezu an all dem, worüber er in dem geschilderten Fall verfügt, er schreibt, als würde er das stattfindende Ereignis emotional begleiten, und stürzt sich, erdrückt durch die Pflicht, die Sache richtig wiederzugeben, mal auf den einen, dann wieder auf den anderen Aspekt der Angelegenheit. Diese Methode hat vor langer Zeit Erich Auerbach auf

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[52] K. Schulmeier-Ahl, *Der Anfang vom Ende…*, S. 12.

[53] Ähnlich charakterisiert wird die Aussage des Chronisten über den Überfall auf den Polanenherzog von K. Görich, *Eine Wende im Osten: Heinrich II. und Bolesław Chrobry*, in: *Otto III. – Heinrich II.: eine Wende?…*, S. 118: „Thietmar liefert einen ebenso ausfürlichen wie dunklen Bericht über das entscheidende Ereignis". R. Teufel (*Individuelle Persönlichkeitsschilderung in den deutschen Geschichtswerken des 10. und 11. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin 1914, S. 9) bemerkt in der *Chronik* eine Anhäufung vieler unwesentlicher, unter dem frischen Eindruck niedergeschriebener Einzelheiten, was ihr „fast den Charakter eines Tagebuchs" verleiht.

der Basis der historischen Prosa Gregors von Tours gut diagnostiziert und sie scharf dem klassischen, rhetorisierten Komponieren von Mitteilungen durch klassische Historiker gegenübergestellt. Wir irren uns nicht, wenn wir sein Urteil (über Gregor) auf Thietmar beziehen: er stellt einen vielgliedrigen faktischen Zustand dar, den er nicht in eine syntaktische Folge zu fassen vermag. Zwar „er hat die Absicht, um die Ursache des im ersten Hauptsatz vorwegenommenen Resultas zu geben, wird aber von der Menge der dazu erfordelichen Angaben in Verwirrung gebracht: weder hat er die Energie, sie in einer einzigen Periode, mit Hilfe eines Systems von Nebensätzen, zu organisieren, noch die Voraussicht, sich in Erkenntnis dessen mit einem ordenden Einleitungssatz (etwa: 'das kam so') aus der Schwierigkeit zu befreien…".[54]

Religiös weiterhin aufmerksam, besonders in den Kontakten mit Gott, wagte es der Bischof nur noch einmal, sich so entschieden und pragmatisch auf den Namen des Herrn zu berufen, wie er dies bei der Verfolgung der Schuldigen des Angriffs auf Bolesław in Merseburg getan hat: wenn er versichert, nicht zu ruhen in seinen Bemühungen um Wiedergewinnung all dessen, was ursprünglich zur Ausstattung des Merseburger Bistums gehörte („Testificor coram Deo"). Hätte der Kaiser wirklich etwas mit dem Überfall auf Bolesław zu tun gehabt, dann wären wir bereit zu glauben, Thietmar selbst habe in seiner Beurteilung der Situation keinerlei Indizien gefunden, die auf eine Schuld Heinrichs II. hingedeutet hätten, der vom Chronisten ja viel mehr geschätzt wurde als die beiden vorherigen Herrscher.

In der politischen, auf Rivalität zwischen Polanen und Sachsen beruhenden Perspektive konnte Thietmars Bolesław dann nicht mehr mit viel rechnen. Untreu, leicht das Recht und das gegebene Wort brechend, listig, aber auch selbst betrogen,[55] und schließlich hochmütig. Wenn es ihm nicht gelingt zu siegen, dann flieht er. Wieder stelle ich eine schon früher formulierte Bemerkung in den Vordergrund. Thietmar macht aus keinem dieser

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[54] E. Auerbach, *Mimesis. Dargestellte Wirklichkeit in der abendländischen Literatur*, Bern 1959, S. 82 (die Kapitel Sicharius und Chramnesindus). Mit einer solchen Diagnose korrespondieren ganz gut die Beobachtungen von Robert Holtzmann, Herausgeber des Werkes, und Hartmut Hoffmann (ein ungezwunges, von spätantiker und frühmittelalterlicher Tradition genährtes Latein) siehe P. Orth, *Thietmars Rezeption Antiker Autoren*, in: *Thietmars Welt…*, S. 117. Thietmars Werk vergleicht mit Flodoard und seiner *Geschichte der Kirche von Reims* Gerhard Lubich (*Der Geschichtsschreiber als Grenzgänger. 'Geschichte' als kommunikation und die Position von Thietmars Werk in der Historiographiegeschichte*, in: *Thietmar von Merseburg. Historiographie der Grenzwelten*, S. 322). S. Rossignol, *Die Spukgeschichten Thietmars von Merseburg. Überlegungen zur Vorstellungswelt und zur Arbeitsweise eines Chronisten aus dem 11. Jahrhundert*, „Concilium medii aevi" 9 (2006), S. 55, bemerkt dagegen eine Ähnlichkeit beim Verwenden von Prodigien bei Gregor von Tours und Thietmar.

[55] Thietmar V, 37, S. 262.

Fälle eine Tragödie, gewöhnlich macht er den Gegner nicht schlechter als mit einem tadelnden Wort, das zu dem geschilderten Fall passt und ihn moralisch positioniert:[56] ganz einfach *fugit* hat er Brauch und Recht mit Füßen getreten, sich hochmütig aufgeblasen, Listen ausgeheckt.

Wenn irgendeine Handlung Bolesławs oder eine mit ihm verbundene Angelegenheit Chancen bietet, ihn negativ zu kontrapunktieren, dann geschieht das auch. Gut, dass es gelang, in Bautzen Frieden zu schließen, bekräftigt durch die Ehe des Polanenherzogs mit der Tochter des Markgrafen Ekkehard! Das war eine große und geplante sächsische Einheirat Bolesławs, und der Bischof wusste davon! Jedoch hebt er in großer Sorge um Einhaltung der kirchlichen Normen (siehe den Fall des von Thietmar geliebten Mieszko mit seiner Oda[57]) hervor, dass diese Ehe nach Septuaginta ohne kanonischen Dispens geschlossen wurde, kommentiert diesen Vorwurf jedoch auf keine Weise.

Viel schmerzlicher, weil gegen den Helden selbst gerichtet, schlägt Thietmars Bemerkung über die Braut zu Buche. Diese Aristokratin, schreibt der Bischof, lebte bis zu diesem Zeitpunkt *sine matronali consuetudine*, d. h. kurz gesagt nicht als Matrone (wie es sein sollte).[58] Sie war dieser Ehe durchaus würdig – beschließt Thietmar seinen Gedanken, aber beim Leser entstehen Zweifel, ob Bolesławs Ehe tatsächlich ein Erfolg war. Bolesławs Fluchten, die ihm in der Erzählung vorgehalten werden, waren oft problematisch, ähnlich wie die Freude dieses Herrschers über seine Erfolge übertrieben klingt,

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[56] So z. B. in dem Fragment über den Kriegszug zum Zweck der Rückeroberung der vom Herzog besetzten Stadt Prag, d. h. „ad capiendum seu occidendum venenosum serpentem". Hier bringt der Chronist Bolesław mit den böhmischen Herrschern zusammen: Vladivoj – *aspis venenata*, Boleslav der Rote als Basilisk. Dabei bringt die so gefährlich klingende Wendung „zur Festnahme oder Tötung" als Grund für die unternommene Aktion, unserer Meinung nach, keinen besonderen Hass des Schriftstellers gegen jene Giftschlange zum Ausdruck. Der Otto II. gegenüber positiv eingestellte Richer verwendet dieselbe Phrase 'um sie festzunehmen oder zu töten', wenn er vom Überfall König Lothars auf Aachen berichtet, wo der Kaiser residierte. Thietmar verwendete, wie Richer, wenn er die Kriegshandlungen Heinrichs gegen Bolesław schildert, einen ähnlichen narrativen Kunstgriff, der den unvollständigen militärischen Erfolg der Seinen auf würdige Weise erklärt: wenn die Lutizen sich beeilt hätten, dann hätte Heinrich Bolesławs Heer zerschlagen (bei Richer: falls die Wagenkolonne den Zug nicht verspätet hätte, dann hätte Lothar Otto in Aachen erwischt.).

[57] Thietmar IV, 7, S. 196. Hier wird der kanonische Formalismus Thietmars leicht von der politischen Staatsräson besiegt; auf die pragmatische Veranlagung des Chronisten verweist H. Lippelt, *Thietmar von Merseburg…*, S. 171.

[58] Eine Matrone ist eine gut ausgestattete Person, eine Aristokratin (patrimonium, potestas, honor, pietas), tugendsam und ehrenhaft. Siehe H. Röckelein, *Matrona*, in: *Geschichtsvorstellungen. Bilder, Texte und Begriffe aus dem Mittelalter*, hg. v. S. Patzold u. a., Wien 2012, S. 296 f. Man kann den Verdacht äußern, dass Thietmars Vorbehalte gegen Oda in seiner von Misogynie bestimmten Vorstellung von Frauen wurzeln – sie war ihm nicht religiös genug, aber allzu feminin.

die unter der Feder des Chronisten in Ausbrüche primitiven Hochmutes verwandelt werden. Die Feststellung, der Herzog habe Brauch und Recht gebrochen, in einer Situation, als er mit Oda und ihren Söhnen um die Herrschaft kämpfte, fällt auf dem Hintergrund dessen, was der Chronist selbst über den sich um den Thron bemühenden Heinrich geschrieben hatte, eher unschuldig aus.

Am stärksten kommt Thietmars Reserviertheit gegenüber Bolesław, wenn auch durchdrungen von einer Art Hassliebe, beim Besprechen von Ereignissen zu Wort, die an sich gut vom Polanenherzog zeugen. Betrachten wir zwei charakteristische Beispiele. Bruno wurde von Chrobry großzügig (*multa bona*) beschenkt. Nach seinem Märtyrertod bemühte sich der Herzog um seinen Leichnam. Auch die sterblichen Überreste des Märtyrers Wojciech (Adalbert) holte er von den Pruzzen zurück. Diese beiden löblichen Unternehmungen Bolesławs wurden von Thietmar mit keinem einzigen herzlichen Wort kommentiert. Er informierte darüber überaus sachlich und verwendete dazu, kurz gesagt, die gleiche Narrationsmatrix sowohl für Bruno als auch für Wojciech. Bolesław „id comperiens/comperiens corpora martirum (Bruno mit Gefährten) / membra cum capite (Wojciech) mercatur".

Der Historiograph beschränkte sich ausschließlich auf den pekuniären Aspekt des Reliquienerwerbs. Keinerlei geistliche, religiöse Begierde nach solchen Schätzen. Bei Bruno gibt es lediglich die aus Thietmars religösem Algorithmus resultierende Bemerkung: eine gute Tat, die belohnt wird – der Herzog hat den Heiden die Leiber der Märtyrer abgekauft und seinem Haus damit für die Zukunft Unterstützung zugesichtert. Bei Wojciech nichts, überhaupt kein Kommentar. Das Verhältnis von Thietmars Bolesław zu beiden Translationen ist, würde ich sagen, rein technisch. Aber der Historiograph hat dennoch Lust zu zeigen, wer in Wirklichkeit und im geistlichen Kontext aus dem Martyrium des einen und des anderen Missionars Nutzen zieht. Benefiziant des Martyriums von Bruno ist *serenissimus rex Henricus*, den der Allmächtige Gott selbst mit Freude über den Besitz eines solchen Priesters geehrt hat.

Auch im Bericht über den Märtyrertod Wojciechs und den Erwerb seines Leichnams durch Bolesław wurde die Person übergangen, unter dessen Patronat dieser Missionar ja stand und der dann die Mühe auf sich nahm, seinen heiligen Leib heimzuholen. Dafür tritt Otto III. in Erscheinung, der Gott dankt, dass er zu Lebzeiten *per palmam martirii* einen solchen Famulus gewonnen hat. Dass das Geld als wichtigstes Mittel der Handlungen des Polanenherzogs fungiert, der – versteht sich – davon überzeugt ist, dass mit dem schnöden Mammon alles erledigt und gekauft werden kann: dieses Motiv wird von Thietmar ständig verwendet. Selbst in der Zeit jener für ihn unglücklichen Hoftag in Merseburg bemühte sich Bolesław, ohne von der Feierlichkeit der Versammlung ergriffen zu sein, an welcher er selbst

teilnahm, Meißen zu kaufen, wofür er Heinrich II. hohe Summen bot. Das ist ein niedriges Verhalten, wie es Thietmar auch in Kreisen der sächsischen Aristokratie oft erblickt.

Dieser pekuniär motivierte Herzog ist Thietmar zufolge auch ein außerordentlich hochmütiger Herrscher. Der an die Adresse Mächtiger gerichteter Vorwurf der *superbia* ist überhaupt ein außerordentlich bequemes Instrument, Potentaten schlechtzumachen und ihnen ein möglichst schlimmes Schicksal oder Ende zu prophezeien. Wie wir wissen, funktioniert in der Welt des Merseburger Bischofs pausenlos und ohne Ausnahme diese Schere: mit Hochmut als der einen Schneide und mit Strafe als der anderen.[59] Aus der reichen Fülle solcher Fälle wollen wir drei uns interessierende auswählen, weil sie, selbst wenn sie nicht nur im ersten Augenblick keine allzu grellen Symptome von Bolesławs Überheblichkeit bieten, dennoch von Thietmar bewusst arrangiert wurden, wie wir zeigen werden – nach dem Kanon, der einen unrechtmäßigen Herrscher brandmarkt, dem eine göttliche Strafe droht.

Alle diese Improvisationen situiert der Historiograph im militärischen Kontext. Die stattlichste davon betraf die Kämpfe Bolesław mit Heinrich im Jahre 1004. Der einen Kriegszug gen Osten *in Poleniam*, wie Thietmar schreibt, vortäuschende Kaiser zog in Wirklichkeit gegen Böhmen und das von polanischen Kriegern besetzten Prag. Der Weg führte übers Erzgebirge und Kulm, und an der Pforte zu Böhmen, in der von einem Berg flankierten und im Wald gelegenen Landenge mit Namen Mirkwid, bemühte sich Bolesław, den Zug des Feindes aufzuhalten. In der Schilderung des Merseburger Bischofs sieht diese Aktion wie eine Falle aus, die Bogenschützen sollten die durch den engen Durchgang Kommenden sicher ins Kreuzfeuer nehmen.

Als der König die Situation durchschaute, sandte er gegen die Verteidiger des Durchgangs heimlich auserlesene und gepanzerte Ritter, die für die übrigen den steilen Weg freimachten. *Inter haec*, schreibt jetzt Thietmar, und beginnt mit dem Abspielen eines Spektakels mit dem Polanenherzogs in der Hauptrolle: Als das geschah, tafelte Bolesław eines Tages. Zusammen mit seiner Begleitung. Einer der Unsrigen, fährt der Geschichtsschreiber fort, konkret ein Kaplan von Bischof Reinbern, sprach von der Ankunft unseres Heeres (des deutschen – *nostri exercitus*). Als Bolesław dies vernahm, fragte er, wovon er rede? Dem die Sache Erklärenden antwortete Chrobry: 'Selbst wenn sie geschlichen wären wie Frösche, könnten sie schon hier ankommen'.[60]

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[59] Vgl. K. Schulmeyer-Ahl, *Der Beginn vom Ende…*, S. 164, *passim*.

[60] R. Kotecki, *The Prince and the Prandium: the Motif of the Pre-Battle Lunch in the Monk of Sázava's Account of the Battle of Chlumec (1126)*, „Kwartalnik Historyczny" 130 (2023), English Language Edition 7, S. 15, Bolesławs Aussage beurteilt der Autor anders – als Ausdruck einer *panic stricken reaction*.

Diese Genreszene ist stärker in der sog. Wirklichkeit verankert als nach ihrer apophtegmatischen Anlage scheinen könnte. Selbstverständlich ist sie vom Geschichtsschreiber inszeniert, aber ihr liegt eine mündliche Mitteilung zugrunde, für die der Historiograph Thietmar ja immer die Ohren spitzte. Er erhielt und bemühte sich um Berichte und Zeugnisse von Kollegen im Bischofsamt und von sächsischen Aristokraten, die in der Politik des Reiches in vordersterLinie aktiv waren. „Nec pontem hunc praertire volo", sagt Chrobry (zitiert von Thietmar), wenn er die Brücke an der Schwarzen Elster nicht überschreiten will, wo im Jahre 1017 auf der anderen Seite der Magdeburger Erzbischof Gero mit einigen Bischöfen und Herzog Bernhard auf ihn wartet.

Thietmar veranschaulicht uns den großen Gegner im Handeln, vergisst aber nicht, das Seine zu tun. Frösche und die königliche Armee sowie die *divina pietas* Heinrichs II. auf der einen Seite, auf der anderen die *superbia* und *magnanimitas* des Polanenherrschers. Das Ergebnis dieser Konfrontation ist unvermeidlich: Bolesław verliert.[61] Bemerkenswert ist das Szenarium dieser Geschichte. Kriegshandlungen sind im Gange, gleich nebenan, und der Herrscher amüsiert sich auf einem Festgelage zusammen mit seinem Gefolge. Er ist selbstsicher, sowohl zu Tische als auch auf dem Schlachtfeld. Hier sei an eine des mit Thietmar verwandten Bruno von Querfurt aufgeschriebene Erzählung erinnert, der Otto II. während der Belagerung von Paris im Jahre 978 ebenso präsentiert hat. Dieser begann mit großem Elan und kam mit seinem Heer bis zur Hauptstadt, aber als diese Sieger sich zum Bauch und zum Wein zuwandten, waren sie sofort zu einer schrecklichen Flucht gezwungen.

Beide Bischöfe beziehen sich mehr oder weniger deutlich auf eine häufig angewandte narrative Lösung, die – sparsam, aber überzeugend – durch die nur scheinbar höfische Szene die Gestalt eines bösen Herrschers konstituiert.[62] Sein Erfolg erreicht seinen Höhepunkt gerade dann, als er im Glanz

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[61] Die von Heinrich II. so kultivierte religiöse Dimension der Königswürde präsentierte summarisch in ihren ideologischen Ausdrucksformen und praktischen Realisierungen Werner Freitag (*Heinrich II. – ein Kaiser der letzten Tage?Ein Beitrag zur politischen Anthropologie*, „Historische Anthropologie" 6 (1998), 2, S. 217–241). Aber es war Gott, der durch den hl. Johannes den Täufer das Wunder vollbrachte, dass alle einschließlich des Recht sprechenden Königs unversehrt die Katastrophe überstanden, als das Gebäude zusammenbrach – und nicht durch Heinrich, wie der Autor behauptet (ebd., S. 235), ebenso A. Krawiec, *Człowiek średniowieczny wobec niezwykłości – przykład Thietmara z Merseburga*, in: *Cognitioni gestorum. Studia z dziejów średniowiecza*, hg. v. D.A. Sikorski, A. Wyrwa, Poznań 2006, S. 243. Siehe Thietmar VI, 9, S. 284. Dieses für den König fatale Zeichen verändert der Chronist geradezu inbrünstig und vorsorglich in ein erbauliches *exemplum*, indem er unfehlbar auf den einzigen Schuldigen und das einzige Opfer dieser Katastrophe verweist: den widerlichen ehebrecherischen Priester, der eben auf diese Weise mit dem Tod bestraft wird.

[62] Siehe J. Banaszkiewicz, *Uczta rozrachunku (Quentin Tarantino, Wincenty Kadłubek, Bruno z Kwerfurtu, Richer z Reims) Krótko o pewnym schemacie narracyjnym racjonalizującym przedstawianą rzeczywistość*, in: *Świat średniowiecza*, hg. v. A. Bartoszewicz u. a., Warszawa

des Gelages und ihrer Lustbarkeiten als Wichtigster im Kreis seiner Leute zu Tische sitzt. Die Vergeltung erfolgt unerwartet, als ein besserer Herr als er ankommt und ihn von der Tafel vertreibt, seinen Platz einnimmt und seine Überlegenheit demonstriert. Bei Thietmar, der Bolesław im Einklang mit diesem Muster dementsprechend als schlechten Herrscher darstellt, wird die *superbia* des Herzogs bald durch die Rückgewinnung Böhmens bestraft.

Man könnte den Eindruck gewinnen, dass Bolesław seine eigene Kampftaktik von der Tafel aus verfolgt, wenn man eine weitere Mitteilung Thietmars über die militärischen Unternehmungen des Polenherzogs mit allem drum und dran vernimmt. Jetzt belagert dieser Lebus und obwohl er in einer guten Lage ist, wie der Bischof hervorhebt, da die über die Ufer getretene Elbe niemandem erlaubt, der Stadt vom anderen Ufer aus zu Hilfe zu kommen, ist die Information, dass Bolesław während der Belagerung erneut zu Tische sitzt und tafelt (ad prandium sedebat), von noch stärkerem Interesse. Umso mehr, als der Geschichtsschreiber berichtet, dass er vom Ort des Festmahles, wie von einem Beobachtungspunkt aus, bewundert, wie seine Leute bereits tief in die Befestigungen eindringen. Mit Sicherheit kann man nicht sagen, ob die Anführer der Verteidigung von Lebus vor den zu Tische sitzenden Bolesław geführt wurden, aber danach sieht es aus. Jedenfalls standen sie vor dem Antlitz eines *superbi trumphatoris*. Dieser Schimpf besiegelt die Geschichte und bestärkt unsere Überzeugung, dass die skizzierte Szene gerade dazu dient, ein Bild von Bolesław zu schaffen als selbstgefälliger, überheblicher Despot ohne Gottesfurcht. Eine solche Person, die böse endet, der im ritterlichen Epos *démesure* vorgeworfen wird, und die von höheren Mächten streng bestraft wird.

Thietmar will, dass der Leser seiner Chronik oder, wie auch sagt, sein Nachfolger sich eben so an den Polanenherzog erinnert. Werfen wir noch einen Blick auf einen ähnlichen Bericht, der wie der vorige ebenfalls das Jahr 1017 betrifft. Bolesław sitzt in Breslau, berichtet der Historiograph, und verfolgt beunruhigt den Verlauf der Belagerung von Nimptsch. Als er erfährt, dass der Kaiser die Burg nicht erobert hat und mit seinem Heer abzieht – der Bischof kommentiert die Sache so: Nie habe ich gehört, dass irgendjemand sich klüger und erbitterter verteidigt hat, und mit dieser Aufwertung der Verteidiger relativiert er Heinrichs Niederlage – freut er sich natürlich. Diese Freude des erneut und nun sogar über den Kaiser triumphierenden Feindes zum Ausdruck zu bringen, bereitet Thietmar allerdings beträchtliche Mühen. Genauer genommen, resultiert diese Schwierigkeit daraus, für die entstandene Situation eine entsprechende Variante von Bolesławs Freude zu

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2010, S. 634–646; ders., *Na Akwizgran! Na Paryż! – i z powrotem w roku 978. Król Franków Lotar i cesarz Otto II w konflikcie kulturowo-militarnym*, Kraków 2022, S. 100 ff., 257 ff.: W. Michalski, *Robert Bruce i jego kompania w eposie pióra Johna Barboura 'The Bruce' około roku 1376*, Lublin 2020, S. 141 ff.

wählen. Zuerst schrieb der Merseburger Bischof, dass „laetatur in Domino militibusque congaudet in seculo".[63] Aus dem den Schreibern diktierten Autograph wird jedoch deutlich, dass diese Formulierung dem Autor nicht gefiel und dass die Phrase *in Domino* und *in seculo* gelöscht wurde, was die einfache Notiz ergab: „laetatur militibusque congaudet" – Bolesław freute sich zusammen mit seinen Kriegern.[64]

Und das ist eine gute Diagnose von Bolesławs Freude, mit der Thietmar den Polanenherzog ausstattet.[65] Und seinen Herrscher: über die Nachricht, dass Bolesław irgendwo in Böhmen in einem Gefecht umgekommen ist, freute sich Heinrich, wie der Chronist berichtet, *in Deo*, während die bestochenen Anhänger des, wie betont wird, illegitimen Herzogs ganz einfach traurig waren.[66]

In der Corvey-Überarbeitung von Thietmars Chronik oder einer späteren wurde die ursprüngliche Notiz des Autors folgendermaßen rekonstruiert: „laetatur in domino militibusque congaudet in secundis".[67] Zuerst also die geistliche Freude Bolesławs und sein Dank an Gott, der ihm den Sieg gab, dann die mit seinen ihm untergebenen Kriegern geteilte gewöhnliche soldatische Freude. Somit zuerst ein geistliches Festmahl, danach ein weltliches mit berauschenden Getränken.

Dass Bolesław ein großzügiger Herr war, der diese zweite Tafel, zusammen mit dem geradezu unerhörten Gastmahl in Gnesen, organisieren konnte, das übergeht der Bischof und Historiograph nicht. Er stigmatisiert ihn auch nicht als Slawen, d. h. als Barbaren. Irgendwie blieb (bei uns) unbemerkt, dass sich der Bischof dem tragfähigen Topos widersetzte und die Polanen wie die Tschechen aus der großen und schon *de nomine* verachteten Gemeinschaft der Slawen ausschließt, die (vom Gesichtspunkt der Sachsen) Hunde und noch dazu Heiden waren.[68] Ganz im Gegensatz zu den Korrektoren

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[63] Thietmar VII, 64, S. 476, Vers 32 f.

[64] Siehe *Die Dresdner Handschrift der Chronik des Bischof Thietmar von Merseburg in Faksimile*, hg. v. L. Schmidt, Dresden 1905, S. 170 a.

[65] In eben einer solchen Konvention erscheint das unsere Forscher ärgernde Sich-Freuen des Herzogs über die Nachricht vom Tode Ekkehards (Thietmar V, 9, S. 230); diese bietet ihm ganz einfach Gelegenheit zu Kämpfen und Raubzügen – was dem Chronisten zufolge Bolesławs *raison d'être* ist – und Bolesław greift unverzüglich und mit voller Kraft Geros Mark an. Siehe auch S. Rosik, *O tym, jak kronikarz Thietmar w relacji o Bolesławie Chrobrym wspiął się na wyżyny obiektywizmu, czyli na tropie intencji autora w świecie tekstu*, in: *Ad fontes. O naturze źródła historycznego*, hg. v. S. Rosik, P. Wiszewski, Wrocław 2004 (= Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, Historia 170), S. 59–62.

[66] Thietmar VI, 11, S. 288.

[67] Ebd., VII, 64, S. 477, Vers. 30 f.

[68] H.W. Goetz, *Slawen in der Wahrnehmung Thietmars von Merseburg zu Beginn des 11. Jahrhundert*, „Lětopis. Zeitschrift für sorbische Sprache, Geschichte und Kultur" 62 (2015), 2, S. 103–118. Als Bruno von Querfurt die Begegnung Wojciechs mit den Pruzzen auf dem Markt- und Versammlungsplatz darstellt, sagt er, der Missionar wäre von *capita canum*

der *Chronik*, die Bolesław fast bei jeder Gelegenheit als Slawen (*Sclavus*)[69] abstempeln und brandmarken. Selbst als der Bischof von der Zuteilung der in Gefangenschaft geratenen Krieger Chrobrys durch Heinrich zu seinen Herren berichtet, sagt er, dass *multitudo Poleniorum* ein solches Schicksal erlitten.[70] Der Herzog ist ein zivilisierter Schwarzcharakter, weil er vergessen hat, würde Thietmar sagen, welche Position 'bei uns' sein Vater einnahm, und die nach diesem ja auch er einnehmen sollte.[71]

Thietmar war kein Bolesław-Fresser, nicht einmal ein Slawenfresser![72] Er führte ganz sicher Gespräche mit ihnen und wollte die Meinung dieser

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umgeben. Aber nach Ansicht des Verfassers der *Vita prior* Adalberti begrüßen die Einheimischen den Ankömmling *furibundo et canino rictu*. S. Adalberti Pragensis, *Vita altera*, hg. v. J. Karwasińska, Monumenta Poloniae Historica n. s. 4/2, Warszawa 1969, c. 24, S. 30; S. Adalberti Pragensis *Vita prior*, hg. v. J. Karwasińska, Monumenta Poloniae Historica n. s. 4/1, Warszawa 1962, c. 28, S. 42. Hündische Epitheta bezeichnen nach biblischer Tradition Heiden, in der Konsequenz solche, die schlechter sind als wir; sie können auch als Otterngezücht bezeichnet werden, wie für Gallus und unsere Eliten im 12. Jahrhundert die Pomeranen.

69 Besonders symptomatisch in der jüngeren Version der *Chronik* ist der Eintrag von Thietmars berühmtem Ausdruck, wie aus einem Tributpflichtigen ein Herr gemacht wird: „tributarium Sclavum faciens dominum", V, 10, S. 233; siehe auch: V, 37, S. 263, VI, 10, S. 287.

70 Thietmar V, 34, S. 258.

71 D. Fraesdorff (*Der barbarische Norden: Vorstellungen und Fremdheitskategorien bei Rimbert, Thietmar von Merseburg, Adam von Bremen und Helmold*, Berlin 2005, S. 141) begeht beim Beweisen seiner These einen falschen Schritt, wenn er schreibt: „An anderer Stelle beendet er [Thietmar – JB] einen Exkurs über Feindschaft zwischen den slawischen Herrschern Bolesław Chrobry und Vladimir von Kiev mit der gleichen Bitte: das omnis christianitas oret für diese Länder". Eine solche Bitte äußerte der Chronist schon anlässlich der Präsentation eines skandinavischen Barbaren und Heiden, des Kleinkönigs Göttrik, was dem Autor zufolge jetzt beide slawische Herrscher und deren Länder auf demselben Niveau situiert. Bolesław zeigt sich in der besagten Narration aber nur als gerechter Rächer für die Gefangennahme und Tod von Bischof Reinbern, die Erzählung betrifft als Ganzes und ausnahmslos nur Vladimir. Der slawische Bolesław bleibt Fraesdorffs Erfindung, wie auch die beiden Länder, Bolesławs und Vladimirs, an die die besagte Gebetsadresse angeblich gerichtet war. Thietmar will lediglich, dass dafür gebetet wird, dass *in hiis partibus*, d. h. in Bezug auf die dem Kiewer Fürsten unterstehenden Gebieten, Gott sein Urteil ändern möge (sententiam mutare – Thietmar VII, 74, S. 490). Siehe auch: S. Rosik, *The Slavic Religion in the Light of 11th- and 12th Century German Chronicles (Thietmar of Merseburg, Adam of Bremen, Helmold of Bosau). Studies on the Christian Interpretation of pre-Christian Cults and Beliefs in the Middle Ages*, Leiden–Boston 2020, S. 160, Anm. 527.

72 Bestürzung weckt die These von A. Pleszczyński (*The Birth of a Stereotype. Polish Rulers and Their Country in German Writing c. 1000*, Leiden 2011, S. 30 und wiederholt in: ders. u. a., *Historia communitatem facit*, S. 200), „die Polen (Thietmar zufolge – J.B.) freuen sich, wenn sie Böses tun". Dieser Autor interpretiert die Äußerung des Chronisten aus Buch V, Kap. 9 in der Edition von Jedlicki, die die Hilfe Meißener *Wethenici* für Bolesław Chrobry betrifft. Sie öffneten dem Polanenherzog die Tore der Stadt, was der Merseburger Bischof im allgemein-moralistischen Ton kommentiert, indem er zwei Zitate aus den *Sprüchen Salomos (Proverbia)* anführt (Kap. 2, 14; Kap. 5, 3–4), die dem Leser ganz einfach klarmachen sollen, dass was anfangs Vergnügen bereitet, ein schlimmes Ende nehmen kann.

halben Christen über höhere Dinge wissen. Er kritisierte sie für ihren Unglauben an die Unsterblichkeit der Seele, für ihre Überzeugung, dass mit dem Tod alles zu Ende sei. Aber fast billigend bemerkt er, dass so wie er selbst auch die ortsansässigen Slawen die kleinen Flammen auf dem Hügel, wo einst der Würzburger Bischof Arn mit seinem Gefolge den Märtyrertod erlitten hatte, für eben diese göttlichen Märtyrer halten.[73] Er vermag jedoch die heidnische *pietas* der Glomuci zu schätzen, die, wie er bemerkt, ihre heilige Quelle mehr ehren als die Kirchen. Und schließlich betrachtet er Bolesławs Staat der Polanen ungefähr so wie Tacitus die Germanen.[74] Die verdorbene Gegenwart hat in die sittlich gesunde Gemeinschaft der 'Barbaren' noch nicht Eingang gefunden. Die Frauen betragen sich, wie es sich gehört, und harte Gesetze halten die Menschen im Zaum.[75]

Thietmar zögert auch nicht, seine Trauer über die Auflösung des Bistums Merseburg in eine mutige Metapher zu fassen und dessen Auflösung zu vergleichen mit der Zerschlagung einer wegen Schulden verurteilten slawischen Familie, deren Mitglieder in die Knechtschaft verkauft wurden. Mehr noch, er war imstande, die 'slawische Ratio' der Räson des größten Otto selbst entgegenzustellen! Wir denken dabei an eine interessante Episode in Verbindung mit den Spolien, die dem in der Schlacht auf dem Lechfeld gefallenen Herzog Konrad angeblich abgenommen wurden.[76] Wiedergefunden wurden sie in Zwenkau, nicht weit entfernt von Merseburg, und zwar nun im Besitz von Slawen mit dem beim Kaiser beliebten Kuchawic an ihrer Spitze.[77] Thietmar wagt es, eine gewisse Kritik am Vorgehen des Kaisers zu äußern, der die im Gerichtsduell unterlegenen Besitzer dieser Ausstattung hängen ließ. Der Bischof äußerte Zweifel, ob das wirklich diejenigen waren, die Konrad getötet hatten, denn schließlich konnten sie auch völlig *inculpabiles* sein und auf ganz andere Weise in den Besitz dieser Dinge gekommen sein. Lippelt zufolge „zweifelt Thietmar an Ottos Rechtlichkeit".[78] Aber man

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[73] Siehe S. Rossignol, *Die Spukgeschichten Thietmars von Merseburg…*, S. 57; S. Rosik, *Zaszczepianie chrześcijaństwa w krajach zachodniosłowiańskich w świetle Kroniki Thietmara (w zarysie): w kręgu myśli misjologicznej i historiologicznej Ludolfingów*, in: *Thiedag: Intellektueller und Reichsbischof. Reichskirche und Europa*, hg. v. V. Drška u. a., Acta Universitatis Carolinae, philosophica et historica 1, 2019, S. 171–184 und ders., *The Slavic Religion…*, S. 39 ff.

[74] Siehe J.P. Weiss, *Das Thema des guten Germanen bei Tacitus und Salvian von Marseille*, in: *Prinzipat und Kultur im 1. und 2. Jahrhundert, Wissenschaftliche Tagung 27.-30. Oktober 1992 in Jena*, hg. v. B. Kühnert u. a., Bonn 1995, S. 56–62.

[75] Vgl. H.W. Goetz, *Die Wahrnehmung anderer Religionen und christlich-abendländisches Selbstverständnis im frühen und hohen Mittelalter (5.-12. Jahrhundert)*, Bd. 1, Berlin 2013, S. 196 ff., 220 ff.

[76] Thietmar II, 38, S. 86. Siehe H. Lippelt, *Thietmar von Merseburg…*, S. 152 f.

[77] K. Hengst, *Der slawische Adel, seine Sprache und seine Namen zwischen Saale und Elbe vom 10. bis 13. Jahrhundert*, „Namenkundliche Informationen" 107/108 (2016), S. 226 f., 231 ff.

[78] Ebd., S. 153.

kann von unserem Chronisten wohl nicht zuviel verlangen! Denn wie beim Überfall auf Bolesław in Merseburg kontrapunktiert er sofort: So wie die Polanen dort selber schuld waren, weil…, so bekamen die slawischen Besitzer hier schlussendlich auch nur ihre verdiente Strafe, weil sie beschlossen hatten, diesen Erwerb zu verheimlichen.

Ähnlich wie die verdiente Strafe, die von Heinrich II. einst Jaromir erhielt. Wenn wir dieses Beispiel noch hinzufügen, dann streben wir damit die Artikulierung eines sehr wichtigen Merkmals von Thiemars Anordnung der von ihm in der *Chronik* dargestellten Wirklichkeit an. Oft arrangiert er, besonders wenn er von wichtigen Dingen spricht, die 'unsere' Würdenträger betreffen, diese fast auf ritualisierte Weise, d. h. das dem Fall entsprechende, kulturell und theoretisch (auch vom Bischof) approbierte Handlungsschema wird zur wichtigsten Prämisse für das vom Chronisten geschaffene Szenarium der Ereignisse.

Betrachten wir die Angelegenheit durch das Prisma des Casus des böhmischen Herzogs Jaromir. Dieser im April 1012 von seinem Bruder aus Prag vertriebene Herzog versuchte im August zur Unterstützung seiner Sache den Magdeburger Arzbischof Walthard zu gewinnen, fand diesen aber bereits auf dem Sterbebett vor. Einige Zeit später erschien er vor Heinrich II. und bat ihn demütig um Wiedereinsetzung in seine Position. *Pro misercordia et restitutione* – aber statt Mitgefühl und Wiederherstellung seiner Macht 'beschenkte' ihn sein Vorgesetzer mit Verbannung und Gefängnis, schreibt Thietmar. Die Feinde lachten, aber die Unsrigen erschraken, dass ihnen in Zukunft vielleicht Ähnliches zustoßen könnte.[79]

Kurz gesagt, Thietmar übergeht Heinrichs Entscheidung einfach, aber was ist hier am wichtigsten?! Gegenüber seinem treuen Vasall und demütigen Bittsteller unternahm der König diesen strafenden Schritt nicht, wie der Bischof erklärt, *ex aliqua infidelitate regis*! Nein, nein, sondern das ist eine Strafe für das Abschlachten der ohne Erlaubnis dem polanischen Bolesław zu Hilfe geeilten Bayern und für die Tötung irgendwelcher Jaromir anvertrauter Leute. Jetzt ist alles in Ordnung, Heinrich wird in seiner Rolle als Souverän nicht gekränkt, er spricht ja nur Recht. Bolesław litt in Merseburg zurecht für die Arroganz seiner Mannschaft, Kuchawic, weil er sich mit seinem 'Schatz' nicht hätte verstecken sollen, und Jaromir, weil er etwas angestellt hat. Der

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[79] Thietmar VI, 71, 83, S. 374: S. Hirsch, H. Pabst, *Jahrbücher des Deutschen Reichs unter Heinrich II.*, Bd. 2, Berlin 1884, S. 337; J. Razim, *Skryté nástrahy rituálu smíření a neslavný konec přemyslovského knížete Jaromíra*, „Časopis pro právni védu a praxi", 2013-Supplementum, S. 257 ff. Das ist ein papierenes Ritual, Generalia siehe F. J. Arlinghaus, *Rituale in der historischen Forschung der Vormoderne*, „Zeitschrift für neuere Rechtsgeschichte" 31 (2009), S. 284 f.; M. Tomaszek, *Antropologia w mediewistyce. Koncepcje i praktyka badawcza Gerda Althoffa*, „Przegląd Historyczny" 90 (2019), 3, S. 441–482.

Herrscher verbleibt, auch wenn er kritisiert wird, dennoch immer in Übereinstimmung mit dem Buchstaben rechten Verhaltens.

Oft und stark situiert Thietmar seine Gedanken nach von Gott vorgegebenen Prinzipien, daher bemüht er sich, die Arithmetik der Sünde auch gegenüber seinen größten Helden zu wahren. Unter anderem bemerkt er auch, dass falls Heinrich I. sich in der Zeit seiner Regierung des Raubes schuldig gemacht hat, wie viele annehmen, Gott ihm dies vergeben möge. Wichtig ist hier, dass Thietmar diese Deklaration gleichsam in Anknüpfung an den Bericht über die Unterwerfung der Milzener und die Zerstörung der Stadt Lebus tätigt. In einem ähnlichen Kontext geht er sogar so weit bis hin zu einer Formulierung des Berichts, der nicht gerade das beste Licht auf seinen vorzüglichen Herrscher wirft. Der Chronist bemerkte nämlich, dass während der Konzentration des Heeres in Biała Góra (*Belegori*) für den Kriegszug gegen Bolesław im Jahre 1010 Besitztümer des Markgrafen Gero zerstört wurden und „wir alle ohne jede Ausnahme" von seinen Freunden zu Feinden wurden, und als dann die Schuld zugeteilt wurde, wie der Chronist dies in solchen Fällen tut, erfahren wir, dass sich der König gegenüber diesem Ereignis weder als *defensor* noch als *ultor* verhalten hat.[80]

„Thietmar hat Bolesław ehrlich gehasst…", schreibt einer seiner zeitgenössischen Biographen.[81] Dem kann nicht zugestimmt werden. Das ist eine voreilige Vereinfachung. Weiter oben habe ich gezeigt, nach welchen Prinzipien der Chronist den Polanenherzog schlechtgemacht und seine Sünden aufgelistet hat. Gegen eine dieser Simplifizierungen muss hier leider direkt und rücksichtslos vorgegangen werden. Ein Erforscher der Geschichte der ersten Piastenmonarchie, insbesondere in ihren, kurz gesagt: deutschen Verstrickungen, spannt den armen Thietmar unnötigerweise in einen 'antipolnischen Streitwagen' ein, und das völlig entgegen den Absichten des Verleumdeten. Folgendes schreibt ein zeitgenössischer Historiker: „Einen ebenso starken Widerwillen zeigt der Historiograph gegenüber den Polen, wenn er ihre Sitten und Gebräuche schildert und

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[80] Thietmar VI, 56 (38), S. 344. Diese Sensibilität ist verständlich, weil er den König mitsamt Gefolge im Verlauf seiner neunjährigen Amtszeit als Bischof von Merseburg ja 13 mal empfangen hat, siehe R. Schieffer, *Ein Merseburger Bischof schreibt Geschichte*, in: *Thietmars Welt…*, S. 15–23, hier S. 19; sogar 26 Aufenthalte Heirichs in Merseburg notierte H. Hoffmann (*Mönchskönig und rex idiota. Studien zur Kirchenpolitik Heinrichs II. und Konrads II.*, Hannover 1993, S. 104–106).

[81] P. Urbańczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry – lew ryczący*, Toruń 2017, S. 26. So schrieb Stanisław Zakrzewski, aber das war im Jahre 1925: Die Chronik des Bischofs zeichnet sich durch „ein hohes Maß an Objektivität aus, ungeachtet seiner Feindschaft gegen die Slawen und besonders gegen Chrobry", ders., *Bolesław Chrobry Wielki*, 2. Aufl., Kraków 2000, S. 29. Jedoch herrscht überall in unserer Historiographie die Überzeugung, dass Thietmar Bolesław zutiefst gehasst hat.

diese als *mores inferiores* beurteilt, und ihre Gewohnheiten (*consuetudines*) waren ihm zufolge grausam (*dirae*)".[82]

Bei Rückkehr zur Originaläußerung des Merseburger Bischofs kann dies im Kontext der zitierten Annahme nur Verwunderung wecken. Gewiss, gegenwärtig sind die *consuetudines* im Land der Polanen schwer und grausam (*dirae*), aber dennoch *laudabiles* – lobenswert, wie der Bischof entschieden feststellt. Mehr noch, Thietmar hatte auch nicht nur die geringste Absicht, sich auf eine Beurteilung der polanischen Rechte einzulassen[83] – er schrieb lediglich, dass es außer diesen strengen, aber löblichen Rechten Bolesławs auch noch andere gibt, die schlechter (*inferiores*) sind als diese guten und weder der göttlichen Sache noch der Bevölkerung dienen, sondern lediglich zur Aufrechterhaltung des Gehorsams oder zur Einschüchterung der Leute (*ad terrorem prosunt*).

Auch im Falle des „Vergleichs (durch Thietmar – J.B.) des Verhaltens des ganzen Volkes mit einem Rindvieh oder störrischen Esel" geht dieser zeitgenössische Mediävist deutlich am Text der Äußerung seines mittelalterlichen Kollegen vorbei.[84] Dagegen beurteilt der Merseburger Bischof ganz offensichtlich nichts und niemanden, sondern verleiht nur seinem Wissen Ausdruck, dass Bolesławs Volk, wenn es dem Wohl des Herzogs dienen soll, wie eine Herde auf der Weide gehalten und wie ein faules Eselchen angetrieben werden muss, was ja auch nicht ohne strenge Strafen abgeht. Der Chronist bezieht sich auf seinen im vorigen Satz ausgedrückten Gedanken und begründet sein Lob für die strengen Strafen Bolesławs.

Zum Schluss wollen wir uns daher mit einem Beispiel beschäftigen, das, wie ich meine, wohl am vollständigsten Thietmars komplexe und mehrdeutige Einstellung zu einem der Hauptheldеn seiner *Chronik* erfasst.

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82 A. Pleszczyński u. a., *Historia communitatem facit. Struktura narracji tworzących tożsamości grupowe w średniowieczu*, Wrocław 2016, S. 200.

83 Thietmar VIII, 2, S. 494: Vers 20 f.: „Nec opus esse autumo de hoc amplius disserere."

84 A. Pleszczyński u. a., *Historia communitatem facit…*, S. 201. Ähnlich äußert sich in der Frage der Rechte bei den Polanen D. von der Nahmer, *Sünde…*, s. 574. Er modernisiert und passt diese Äußerung des Chronisten an und kommt zu dem Schluss, Thietmar habe diese grausamen Rechte zugelassen, weil das Volk der Polanen *more bovis* und *ritu asini* behandelt werden müsse. Wir wiederholen: Diese Rechte sind im allgemeinen *laudabiles*, und der Bischof erinnert doch selbst daran, dass eine untreue Ehefrau strenger bestraft werden soll: durch Steinigung oder gemäß dem Brauch unserer (sächsischen) Vorfahren durch Enthauptung (Thietmar VIII, 3, S. 494, 496). Im Gegenteil, er hat sich, und zwar sehr kritisch, über *occidentales regiones* geäusert (ebd., IV, 14, S. 148; VII, 2, S. 400). Was das 'Volk' betrifft, so darf seine Kritik nicht mechanisch als Verurteilung der ganzen politisch organisierten Gemeinschaft verstanden werden. Das Volk ist *immer* halsstarrig und widerspenstig auch gegenüber der richtig handelnden Obrigkeit: der *novus cornupeta* (sächsischer Ochse, dessen Hörner stoßen) zerstört das gute und alte Recht (Thietmar VIII, 23, S. 520), und das böhmische Volk ist in der Christianschronik (*Legenda Christiani*, hg. v. J. Ludvikovský, Pragae 1978, S. 14, 22) *dure cervicis* und *permanens in nequitia sua* etc.

Zuerst der Frieden in Merseburg zu Pfingsten 1013. In der *Chronik* ist alles so, wie sein soll und wie es sich gehört. Falls jemand nicht sehr wohl wüsste, wer Bolesław ist, dann würde er wohl denken, dies wäre ein verdienter Mitarbeiter Heinrichs II.[85] Er trägt ihm das Schwert voraus, wenn sich das königliche Gefolge zur Kirche begibt, er erhält herrliche Geschenke, größere als die von ihm seinem Senior dargebrachten, und er wird königlicher Vasall mit Milzenerland und der Lausitz. Bolesław wurde sogar militärische Unterstützung gewährt, als er in diesem Jahr gegen die Rus' zog. Jede Sequenz gegenseitiger Leistungen ist peinlich genau ausgewogen. Das ist ganz Thietmar, und zwar deshalb, weil einen Beweis liefern will, dass die 'Unsrigen' ihren Pflichten ohne jeglichen Fehler nachgekommen sind.

Und was ist mit Bolesław? Man muss Thietmar leider rechtgeben, dass der Herzog den Eid missachtet und sich als falsch und verlogen erwiesen hat. Ob *mendax more solito*, wie der Geschichtsschreiber verallgemeinert? Dagegen würde ich polemisieren. Jedoch hat er nicht nur keine Verstärkung für Heinrichs Expedition nach Rom zur Gewinnung der Krone geschickt, wozu er sich als Vasall doch erst vor kurzem verpflichtet hatte, sondern darüber hinaus, wie wir hören, auch noch eine verleumderische Kampagne beim Papst gegen seinen deutschen Senior geführt. So sah seine Gottesfurcht und seine Treue zu geleisteten Eiden aus, führt Thietmar aus, weil er hier berechtigte Gelegenheit hat, seinen Gegner ins Unglück zu stürzen.

Aber trotzdem verschweigt der Bischof und Historiograph einen Umstand nicht, der, selbst wenn er zum Bild eines großen Sünders passen würde, dies dann aber doch auf nicht einfache Weise, sodass die Sache kompliziert wird. Thietmars Ausruf „Lieber Leser, bemerke doch, was dieser inmitten von sovielen Vergehen noch geleistet hat!", insbesondere diese den künftigen Beobachter der Sache zu ihrer Auslegung in der Chronik gewinnende Adresse, betrachten wir nämlich als einen Ausbruch widersprüchlicher Emotionen beim Bischof. Sein Unvermögen, Bolesław eindeutig dem Kreis der schlimmsten Schurken zuzuordnen. Ja, dieser Bolesław ist unvollkommen, in der Regel sogar sehr, aber der Merseburger Geistliche ist wie kein anderer viel zu sensibel für das der Kirche eigene Spiel des Sünders mit Gott, als dass er eine solche Nachricht, auf die wir gleich kommen werden, bagatellisieren könnte. Besonders in einer Situation, wenn dieses Spiel ritualistisch, praktisch, um (in zeitgenössischer Sicht) nicht zu sagen recht oberflächlich verstanden wird.[86]

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[85] Siehe K. Ubl, *Der kinderlose König. Ein Testfall für die Ausdifferenzierung des Politischen im 11. Jahrhundert*, „Historische Zeitschrift" 292 (2011), S. 350–358, wo der Konflikt des Königs mit Bolesław klar auf dem Hintergrund der Hauptprobleme Heinrichs II. bei der Aufrechterhaltung seiner königlichen Position dargestellt wurde.

[86] Siehe Anm. 19. R. Meens (*Kirchliche Buße…*, S. 325) missversteht die Absicht von Thietmars Kritik an Bolesław: Der Bischof sagt nicht, der sündige Herrscher habe eine weniger wertvolle Buße geleistet; gewiss formuliert er einen Vorwurf, der aber nichts mit ihrem

Also lasst uns betrachten, was dieser Sünder getan hat! Wir überlassen Thietmar das Wort: „Als er selbst merkte, dass er viel gesündigt hatte, oder aufgrund einer freundschaftlichen Ermahnung zu dieser Schlussfolgerung gelangte, ließ er sich die Canones vorlegen, um zu erfahren, wie all dies wiedergutgemacht werden könnte, und diesen Schriften entsprechend versuchte er sofort, die böse Tat auszulöschen." Vielleicht ist er ein Sünder, aber ein starker Charakter, und was am wichtigsten ist: Auch wenn er Heinrich im Handwerk eines erzchristlichen und priesterlichen Königs nicht das Wasser reichen kann, so weiß Thietmar doch, dass man ihn auch in dieser Hinsicht nicht unterschätzen darf. Die Buße des Herzogs ist eine Manifestation von Bolesławs königlichen Aspirationen, ein Ausdruck seiner religiösen Sendung und Sorge um das Wohl seiner Untertanen.[87] Der Chronist wäre nicht er selbst, wenn er nicht hinzufügen würde: Allerdings pflegte Bolesław häufiger auf gefährliche Weise von der heilsamen Buße abzuweichen als ihr treu zu bleiben.

Dem Polanenherzog wohlgeneigte Personen erblickten schließlich statt dieser Unvollkommenheiten ein Zeichen wahrer Königlichkeit, die Bolesławs Herrschaft auszeichnete. Mathilde von Schwaben schrieb kurz nach Chrobrys Tod an seinen Sohn: „Ermutigt vom väterlichen Beispiel bleibst du fast ganz bei den göttlichen Dingen…".[88] Ihre weitere Äußerung vereinfachend: Du verbreitest jetzt den Glauben auch bei Völkern, die die Worte der heiligen Prediger nicht angenommen haben und von Bolesław *ferro* zum Tisch des Herrn geführt wurden. Wichtiger ist vielleicht, dass Mathilde, wenn sie dem König Mieszko II. ein liturgisches Buch (*De divinis officiis*) schenkt, in ihm nicht nur deklarativ den Herrscher und Gesalbten aus Gottes Willen erkennt, d. h. einen solchen Senior, zu dessen wichtigen Pflichten es gehört, über die liturgische und ideologische Seite der Kirche zu wachen.[89] Sondern

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Wesen zu tun hat. Bolesław neigt einfach stärker zum Sündigen als zum Bußetun, sagt er, und eben dieser Umstand soll die vom Chronisten erwähnte löbliche Generaltatsache in Frage stellen, d. h. dass der Polenenherzog sich diesen Bußhandlungen unterzog. In demselben Geiste wie R. Meens, D. von der Nahmer, *Sünde…*, S. 546 f.

87 Z. Dalewski, *Pokuta Bolesława Chrobrego*, in: *Księga. Teksty o świecie średniowiecznym ofiarowane Hannie Zaremskiej*, hg. v. H. Manikowska, Warszawa 2018, S. 94, 97, 101.

88 B. Kürbis, *Die Epistola Mathildis Suevae an Mieszko II. in neuer Sicht. Ein Forschungsbericht*, in: dies., *Na progach historii. Prace wybrane*, Poznań 1994, S. 344–373, Anhang 1: Edition, S. 367.

89 Siehe H. Parkes, *Henry II, liturgical patronage and the birth of the 'Romano-German Pontifical'*, „Early medieval Europe" 28 (2020), S. 134 f. In Bezug auf Mathildes Geschenk für Mieszko II. schreibt Henry Parkes, dies würde bedeuten „that an eleventh-century king might have felt *ex officio* obligation to understand the liturgical activities of his subjects", ebd., S. 135. Siebenundzwanzig Jahre vorher schlussfolgerte R. Michałowski (*Princeps fundator. Studium z dziejów kultury politycznej w Polsce X–XIII wieku*, Warszawa 1993, S. 58): „Wenn sie dem polnischen Herrscher ein Lehrbuch der römischen Liturgie schenkte, konnte Mathilde

mehr noch: einen Herrscher, der die das religiöse Leben seiner Untertanen regelnden Canones konstituiert. In wie breiter Front Heinrich II. dies tat, und worin es ihm Bolesław gleichtun wollte, als er die Große Fastenzeit um zwei Wochen verlängerte, hat Roman Michałowski gezeigt. In dem ihm von Mathilde geschenkten Buch habe Mieszko Argumente gefunden, die diese Entscheidung seines Vaters stützten.[90]

Der Merseburger Bischof kannte Bolesław – sicher hat er über viele Jahre hinweg über verschiedene Informanten viel von ihm gehört und sich auch mindestens einmal mit dem Polanenherrscher 'getroffen'. Und obwohl er den Antagonisten Heinrichs und seines geliebten Sachsen programmatisch in die Rolle eines Menschen voller weltlicher Reflexe drängt – arrogant im Gefühl der eigenen Kraft, schlicht im Streben nach dem Ziel (Geld – Bestechung, Listen), ist er dennoch weder imstande, ihn auf die sonst zur Darstellung böhmischer Herrscher angewandte Formel einzugrenzen, noch die geistliche, christliche Dimension dieser Person zu verschweigen. Wie wir bereits sahen, enthüllt Thietmar, wenn allzu viel auf der Wagschale dieses Herrschers liegt, dem Leser gerade dann eine bessere Inkarnation Bolesławs. Als auf Anweisung Heinrichs im Jahre 1007 sein Schwiegersohn Herman mit der Mission der Aufkündigung des Friedensvertrages zum Herzog kam, entscheidet sich der Chronist, wie schon öfter, eine Äußerung des – wie auch immer – großen Widersachers zu zitieren und seiner würdigen Haltung Ausdruck zu verleihen: „Christus, der Zeuge von allem, soll wissen, dass was immer ich danach tun werde, gegen meinen Willen geschieht."[91]

Wir kommen zur Schlussfolgerung. Thietmars Urteile über Bolesław sind um so wohlwollender, wenn dieser dem Kaiser im sächsischen Machtsystem treu bleibt oder bleiben will. Zwischen dem Polanenherzog und dem böhmischen Herzog Jaromir gähnt ein tiefer Abgrund.[92] Jaromir ist ein *dux inclitus et regi per omnia utilis*[93] und selbst das leichtfertige Blutbad an der Gesandtschaft der Bayern durch den Premysliden verursacht keine Kratzer

damit bewusst an die damaligen Vorstellungen von den Pflichten eines Monarchen appellieren und damit zu verstehen geben, dass Mieszko auch kompetent ist, den Verlauf der heiligen Zeremonien zu kontrolieren, und dass diese Kompetenz eben aus der Tatsache resultiert, dass er der Gesalbte Gottes ist." Pikant ist, dass vieles aus dem anonymen und unverfeinerten *De divinis officiis* (Anfang des 10. Jhd.) Parkes zufolge in das unter Beteiligung von Heinrich II. entstandene Werk gelangt ist, welches uns unter dem Titel Römisch-Germanisches Pontifikale bekannt ist.

90 R. Michałowski, *The Nine-week Lent in Boleslaus the Brave's Poland. A Study of the First Piasts' Religious Policy*, „Acta Poloniae Historica" 89 (2004), S. 23 ff., 41.

91 Thietmar VI, 33, S. 314.

92 Aber bemerkenswert ist, dass zwischen Bolesławs Vater und diesem böhmischen Fürsten kein solcher Abgrund besteht! Auch Mieszko ist für Thietmar ein *inclitus dux Poleniorum* und in der *Chronik* hören wir nichts schlechtes über ihn! Siehe ebd., IV, 55, S. 194.

93 Ebd., VI, 56 (38), S. 344: „ein vorzüglicher Herzog und dem König in allem treu".

auf dem vorzüglichen Bild dieses Würdenträgers. Bolesław ist ein *dux mille atrium scientia plenus*[94] – dem gegenüber harte Schimpfworte fallen, der sich aber nicht auf das Niveau Boleslavs des Roten reduzieren lässt und dem auch nicht gewünscht wird, er möge nicht einmal die Hälfte seiner Tage erleben![95] Nun, vielleicht hat der Bischof höchstens einen Seufzer ausgestoßen: Es wäre besser, wenn der Allmächtige Gott uns seinen Namen und seine Gesellschaft erspart (lateret) hätte![96] Aber das hat er eben nicht gewollt!

Als Thietmars Vorhang der Klagen über den schrecklichen Bolesław fällt, zeigt es sich, dass der Chronist jemanden mit Invektiven bedacht hat, der überhaupt erst das Recht hat, als *miles inclitus* hervorgehoben zu werden.[97] Eben diese Attacke gegen den Polanenherzog, übrigens so einfallsreich wie andere auch, zeichnet sich durch eine besondere rhetorische Umrahmung aus. Um Bolesław in ein schlechtes Licht zu setzen, verwendet der Autor unter anderem das hochtrabende und im frühen Latein benutzte Wort *cluo*/*clueo* (*-ere*),[98] das von Thietmar noch zur Charakteristik Ottos II. und bei anderer Gelegenheit seines Freundes namens Franco, des späteren Bischofs von Worms, verwendet wurde. In beiden Fällen benutzte der Chronist die Wendung: *Qui iuvenis probitate* (Franco) / *viribus corporis* (Otto) *cluens*.[99] Es erstrahlte also (diese Bedeutung des Wortes *cluens* wählen wir) der eine wie der andere durch seine Eigenschaften. Es erstrahlte auch *firma fides militis incliti*, d. h. Bolesławs, aber *ita*, d. h. so, wie er (spöttisch formuliert) erstrahlen

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94 Ebd., VII, 10, S. 408: „Ein vom Wissen tausender Künste erfüllter Herzog". Das Epitheton *venenatus coluber* könnte nach Meinung von H. Hoffmann (*Mönchskönig und rex idiota*…, S. 155, 168) zusammen mit seinen die Redaktion Y des Werkes konstituierenden Korrekturen aus der Feder des Chronisten stammen. Diese von Hoffmann hier aufgezeigten Dinge bilden im Grunde genommen nur einen, wenn auch integralen, Teil einer größeren Überarbeitung des Textes, die das gesamte Kapitel 10 von Buch V umfasst – sodass alles in allem nicht der Autor, sondern der Redakteur den Text der Chronik in einem Thietmar fremden Geist verbessert. Er rationalisiert die Aussage durch Verwendung des Wortes *coluber* (Thietmar: *aspis*, *serpens*, *Basilisk*) und brandmarkt, was beim Bischof ungewöhnlich ist, Bolesław mit dem Epitheton *Sclavus*, siehe Thietmar V, 10, S. 233.

95 Übrigens bedenkt der Chronist die böhmischen Gebiete, und nicht die Herrschaft Bolesławs, mit folgender Botschaft: Was Gott in beiden Büchern zu befolgen geboten hat, das verbietet die blinde Gier (*ceca ambitio*) *hiis regionibus*, diese Gebote zu erfüllen. Ein ähnlicher Appell betrifft die ruthenischen Gebiete, siehe Anm. 71.

96 Thietmar VIII, 3, S. 494.

97 Ebd., VI, 92, S. 384.

98 *Ausgewählte Komödien des T. Maccius Plautus*, Bd. 4: *Pseudolus*, hg. v. A. Lorenz, Berlin 1876, S. 152; Ch. Reisig, F. Haase, *Vorlesungen über lateinische Sprachwissenschaft*, Bd. 2 in der Neubearbeitung von F. Heerdegen, Berlin 1890, S. 152 f. Siehe auch J. Ehlers, *Die Reform des Christenheit. Studium, Bildung und Wissenschaft als bestimmende Kräfte bei der Entstehung des mittelalterlichen Europa*, in: *Deutschland und der Westen Europas im Mittelalter*, hg. v. J. Ehlers, Stuttgart 2002, S. 195 ff.; Logeion latinus, s. v. *clueo*, https://logeion.uchicago.edu Abruf: Mai 2025.

99 Thietmar IV, 61, S. 200; III, 1, S. 96.

konnte, nachdem der Herzog alle im Jahre 1013 in Merseburg gegebenen Versprechungen missachtet hatte. Wir wollen die Sache abschließen mit der Bemerkung, dass Thietmar den Status oder die Bedeutung Bolesławs nicht in Frage stellt. Aber immer – das sei wiederholt – bemüht er sich, ihn als großen Herrn, einen Krieger oder einen demütigen Büßer herabzuwürdigen.

In Erscheinung treten die allgemeinen Verbrechen Bolesławs, weil es notwendig ist, den gefährlichsten Rivalen des Königs auszupunkten, und sie bedeuten daher viel weniger, weil sie als solche oft unbemerkt bleiben oder, falls die Schuldigen zu den Unsrigen gehören, vom Chronisten erklärt werden. Trotz alledem kann der Polanenherzog auf bestimmte, die Welt nach dem Willen Gottes regierende Prinzipien zählen, Prinzipien, die Thietmar selbstverständlich honoriert und dank derer seine Schilderungen und Diagnosen des Gegners zwar parteiische Berichte sind, aber keine schwarze literarische Fiktion schaffen. Wir wollen Helmut Lippelt beipflichten: „Trotz vieler Schmähungen verteufelt er Bolesław nicht."[100]

Exkurs

„Der kleine dürre halbe Krüppel Thietmar und der vor Gesundheit strotzende Riese Bolesław[101]" – „eine ungewollte 'Nebenwirkung' der Bekehrung Polens"[102]

Obwohl diese beiden Aussagen, die den Titel dieses Exkurses ausfüllen, fast ein halbes Jahrhundert voneinander trennt, befinden sie sich schließlich weiterhin in derselben Denkspur über die Arbeit des Historikers mit der Quelle. Diesem Denken zufolge wird die verbindliche Feststellung der Informationsmöglichkeiten der Mitteilung – die nähere Bestimmung der 'Gestalt' oder Bedeutung seiner Angaben – letztendlich nicht vom Autor der Quelle und seinem Text beeinflusst, sondern von den Entscheidungen des Historikers. Schließlich ist das eine Person, die in Bezug auf die Aussagen des Autors kognitiv besser situiert ist, über ein sehr umfangreiches, über die Quelle hinausreichendes Wissen sowie über ein kritisches Instrumentarium verfügt, das, wie man früher sagte, eine Trennung des Weizens (der Fakten) von der Streu garantiert.

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100 H. Lippelt, *Thietmar von Merseburg…*, S. 188.

101 J. Mitkowski, *Dwie emendacje w Kronice Thietmara*, Zeszyty naukowe UJ 2, Historia, 1955, 1, S. 131–135, hier S. 132: „Das Trauma **muss** (Hervorhebung – J.B.) stark gewesen sein."

102 G. Pac, *Kobiety w dynastii Piastów. Rola społeczna piastowskich żon i córek do połowy XII wieku – studium porównawcze*, Toruń 2013, S. 81.

Eine souveräne Haltung nimmt diesbezüglich August Bielowski ein, wenn er im kritischen Apparat zur Edition der *Chronik* von Dzierzwa auf die richtige Lesart verweist und feststellt: „Seleuciam – Sueciam haben die Handschriften irrtümlich".[103] Diese vom Herausgeber der Monumenta Poloniae Historica angewandte Praxis unterscheidet sich nicht so sehr von der von Józef Mitkowski in Bezug auf eine der Aussagen Thietmars über Boleslaw Chrobry. Ungeachtet aller anderen Gründe vermochte dieser Chronist von miserabler Postur so einen vitalen Riesen wie den Polanenherzog gar nicht zu mögen – und erst recht nicht sich selbst. Aber selbst mit bösem Willen kann Thietmars Feststellung, Bolesław sei „wie ein Ungeheuer, dem Gefühle fremd sind, der sogar die eigene Mutter boshaft verfolgt haben soll"[104] – besonders weil Dobrawa starb, als ihr Sohn erst etwa zehn Jahre alt war – nicht aufrechterhalten werden. Der Text der Chronik muss also korrigiert werden, was der Historiker auch tut, was aber uns hier nicht weiter interessiert.[105]

Wir bemerken sofort, dass sich die Kritik dieses Forschers fast auf alles konzentriert, aber nicht auf die Äußerung des Chronisten, oder umfassender: darauf, wie er seine Ansichten über Bolesław und andere Helden der Chronik zum Ausdruck bringt. Der inkriminierte Satz gibt eigentlich keine besonders harte Nuss zu knacken. Der Chronist schreibt, dass Dobrawa einen Sohn gebar und ihm den Namen ihres Bruders gab – also gebar sie „diesen (Bolesław), sage ich, der eine verborgene Abneigung in erster Linie ihr gegenüber erwies und im weiteren Verlauf gegen ihre Verwandten wütet, wie das auf meine Veranlassung deutlich werden wird".[106] Verborgene Abneigung erwies Bolesław erst dann – denn früher hätte er das gar nicht gekonnt und hat das auch, wie wir vernehmen, nicht getan – als er sich entschied, sich gegen die Familie seiner eigenen Mutter zu wenden, und in diesem Akt der Feindschaft gegen die Premysliden trifft die Wut des Sohnes sie als erste. Der Merseburger Bischof baut hier einen semantisch-rhetorischen Bogen, um Bolesławs Geburt mit der späteren Tätigkeit des Herrschers zu verbinden. Das also ist dieser Bolesław, der in Zukunft die Ursache der Vernichtung und des Unglücks für viele Mütter sein wird, und derselbe – der eben jetzt geboren wird und sich schon gegen seine eigene Mutter wendet – zwar latent, aber immerhin![107]

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103 *Miersue Chronicon*, hg. v. A. Bielowski, in: Monumenta Poloniae Historica, Bd. 2, Lwów 1872, S. 164.

104 J. Mitkowski, *Dwie emendacje…*, S. 132.

105 Eine andere Verbesserung von Thietmars Text betrifft die Feststellung des Bischofs, Bolesław habe sich *de morte laetatur comitis Ekkyhartdi* gefreut, was als unmöglich angesehen wird, J. Mitkowski ersetzt das Wort 'laetatur' durch *luctatur* – mit sich kämpft. Siehe hierzu Anm. 65, wo wir diese Freude Bolesławs kommentieren.

106 Thietmar IV, 56, S. 196.

107 Siehe auch ebd., VI, 10, S. 286 – wo der Chronist mit einer ähnlichen Wendung die innere geistige Handlung Heinrichs II. wiedergibt, der nach der Rückkehr von seinem Italienkriegszug im Jahre1004 nach Sachsen endlich das lange verborgene Geheimnis

Als Pendent zu dieser vom Bischof so meisterhaft konstruierten Verleumdung wollen wir eine zweite, ebenso meisterhaft komponierte, hinzufügen. Wir berufen uns jetzt auf das Fragment der *Chronik*, als Bolesław im Jahre 1007 beim Namen Christi schwörte, er werde die militärischen Handlungen im Verlauf des ihm eben erklärten Krieges nur gegen seinen Willen vollziehen. Thietmar erfuhr, sicher über den Emissär Herman, von dieser erbaulichen Reaktion des Polanenherrschers. Sein Gewissen, so meinen wir, erlaubte ihm nicht, sie zu verschweigen! Er konnte aber auch nicht einem Konflikt zustimmen, in welchem Bolesław auf Seiten der Gerechtigkeit stände. Also verliert der Herzog durch seinen Angriff auf das Land der Morizaner diesen Trumpf – die *hostili asperitate* (mit feindseliger Strenge) zerreißt das Band der Brüderlichkeit, das er *in Christo* früher mit den Partenopolitanen geschlossen hatte.

Roman Michałowski stellte die prinzipielle Frage, auch wenn sie eine andere, den Forscher interessierende Sache betrifft: „Warum ließ es der Herrscher Polens nicht schon im Zusammenhang mit dem Krieg von 1004–1005 zum Bruch (der Verbrüderung mit Magdeburg – J. B.) kommen, sondern erst anlässlich des nächsten Krieges?"[108] Wir sind zu folgender Antwort bereit: Aus demselben Grunde, aus dem die verborgene Wut Bolesławs gegen seine Mutter entstand. Thietmar sucht, aber auf sehr intelligente Weise, nach allen Möglichkeiten einer sehr intelligenten, in einem Diskurs mit den Taten des Polanenherrschers geführten Diskreditierung seines Gegners. Den einen wie den anderen Fall würden wir solchen Bemühungen zurechnen.

Im Plan der durchgeführten Betrachtungen wollen wir zum Schluss noch fragen, ob es sich lohnt, sich um Probleme Thietmars zu sorgen, die er selber gar nicht stellte und die sich auch nicht aus der Lektüre des Textes der *Chronik* ergeben, sondern aus einem von der einschlägigen Literatur gelieferten, nicht näher bestimmten historiographischen Usus. Der Forscher schreibt: „Ich wiederhole noch einmal: Thietmar hat eine allerbeste Meinung über Dobrawa… Aber Dobrawa gebiert Bolesław Chrobry, der so sehr aus der Art seiner Mutter geschlagen ist. Für Gallus ist die Sache klar: eine große Mutter – ein großer Sohn. Thietmar aber hat ein Problem und **muss** (Fettdruck – J.B.) die ganze Situation irgendwie erklären".[109]

An den entsprechenden Stellen der Chronik lässt sich ein solches Problem, wie es G. Pac postuliert, keineswegs erkennen, und man sieht auch nicht, dass es der Bischof für angemessen gehalten hätte zu erklären, warum eine

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verheimlichten Eifers aus seinem einfachen Herzen herausgeworfen hat (*ab simplici corde diu reconditum zeli latitantis archanum evomuit*) und Bolesławs Arroganz militärisch zu bestrafen beabsichtigt. In beiden Fällen haben wir es, wie ich meine, mit einer die durchgeführte Narration motivierenden gewissen psychologisch-rhetorischen Staffage zu tun.

108 R. Michałowski, *Bolesław Chrobry bratem kanoników magdeburskich. Próba nowego spojrzenia*, „Kwartalnik Historyczny" 112 (2005), 3, S. 67.

109 G. Pac, *Kobiety w dynastii Piastów…*, S. 77.

so ehrwürdige Mutter einen – in Thietmars Verständnis – so bösen Sohn geboren hat.[110] Natürlich hätte er das tun können, und er hätte sich in diesem Fall ja der Methode bedienen können, auf die dieser Forscher verwies. Dobrawa hat als *mulier suadens* die Prinzipien des Glaubens verletzt, um ihren Gatten effektiv zur Taufe zu bewegen, und dieses Vergehen (vielleicht wurde Bolesław ja gerade zu dieser Zeit gezeugt?) sollte gemäß dem vom Bischof honorierten Algorithmus in Form eines bösen Kindes Frucht bringen. Aber der Bischof spielt da nicht mit (wovor der die Wahrheit verfolgende Forscher die Augen verschließt), denn Thietmar stellt ganz offensichtlich fest: „Lieber Leser, du hast von ihrem (Dobrawkas – J.B.) Vergehen gehört, jetzt aber betrachte die vortreffliche Frucht ihrer frommen Wahl".[111] Da diese Wahl, die der Chronist billigend erwähnt, zur Taufe ihres Gatten und dessen Volkes geführt hat, kann auch die Zeugung Bolesławs nicht die ungewollte Folge von Dobrawkas Vergehen sein!

Wie in den weiter oben besprochenen Fällen wurde die Diskussion über den Quellentext hinaus ausgedehnt und strebt, statt die Aussage des Autors zu erkennen, danach, ihn zu korrigieren oder seine Mitteilung irgendwie logisch erscheinen zu lassen. Dies trifft uns am stärksten und macht die Gestalt des August Bielowski wieder lebendig, d. h. einen Historiker, der sich in Konfrontation mit der Quelle als Souverän gebärdet und besser weiß als der Verfasser, was in dem aus seiner Feder stammenden Text stehen soll.

ABSTRACT

Thietmar und Bolesław. Der Merseburger Bischof als Chronist und der Beherrscher des östlichen Grenzgebietes des deutschen Reiches

For a long time, Thietmar has had a bad reputation in Polish medieval studies as a chronicler who hated Bolesław Chrobry. We attempt to show how superficial the premises underlying such an opinion are. Thietmar does not fundamentally dispute Bolesław's high position within the Saxon aristocracy (or his associated dignity), but he often has to judge him as a fierce opponent of the German king, and this is the source of the insults directed at him. The Bishop of Merseburg does not demonise Bolesław, as Helmut Lippelt has already noted, and he does not stigmatise the Polish duke as a „Sclavus".

Keywords: Thietmar of Merseburg, Bolesław Chrobry, Henry II, Thietmar's chronicle, Slavs in medieval historiography

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[110] Siehe auch R. Rutkowski, *O Dąbrówce i innych piastowskich władczyniach*, „Rocznik Antropologii Historii" 5 (2015), 8, S. 303.

[111] Thietmar IV, 56, S. 194, siehe auch ebd., IV, 55. Vgl. H. Lippelt, *Thietmar von Merseburg…*, S. 171, Anm. 158.

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Once again, regarding the assassination attempt on Bolesław the Brave (Chrobry) in 1002

On 24-25 July 1002, a congress of the nobles of the Empire was held in Merseburg, with the new German king, Henry II. The Polish duke, Bolesław Chrobry (the Brave**),** also came to this meeting. It was at this time that an unsuccessful attempt was made on the life of the Polish ruler. The events connected with the congress were often recalled in works devoted to the Polish ruler, to King (later Emperor) Henry II, or to Polish-German relations in the Middle Ages.[1]

[1] *Kronika Thietmara*, ed., transl. M.Z. Jedlicki, Poznań 1953 [further: Thietmar], V, 14-18(10); *Regesten zur Geschichte der Slaven an Elbe und Oder (vom Jahr 900 an)*, bearb. Ch. Lübke, Digitale Ausgabe 2018 [further: Regesten], Nr. 354, academia.edu, access 15.11.2025. For numerous studies on this topic, see: S. Zakrzewski, *Bolesław Chrobry Wielki*, Lwów-Warszawa-Kraków [1925], pp. 175-177; A.F. Grabski, *Bolesław Chrobry 967-1025*, Warszawa 1969, pp. 69-71; J. Fried, *Der Weg in die Geschichte: die Ursprünge Deutschlands bis 1024*, Ullstein 1998, pp. 748-749; K. Görich, *Eine Wende im Osten: Heinrich II. und Boleslaw Chrobry*, in: *Otto III. - Heinrich II. Eine Wende?*, ed. B. Schneidmüller, Sigmaringen 1997, pp. 112-113, 116, 118-123; J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry*, Poznań 1999, pp. 100-115; S. Weinfurter, *Heinrich II. (1002-1024). Herrscher am Ende der Zeiten*, Regensburg 2002, pp. 210-211; J. Sochacki, *Stosunki publiczno-prawne między państwem polskim a cesarstwem rzymskim w latach 963-1102*, Gdańsk 2003, p. 70; A. Pleszczyński, *Niemcy wobec pierwszej monarchii piastowskiej (963-1034). Narodziny stereotypu. Postrzeganie i cywilizacyjna klasyfikacja władców Polski i ich kraju*, Lublin 2008, pp. 186-214; P. Urbańczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry - lew ryczący*, Toruń 2017, pp. 168-171; G. Althoff, *Die Ottonen. Konigsherrschaft ohne Staat*, Stuttgart-Berlin-Köln 2018, pp. 208-210; A. Teterycz-Puzio, *Zamachy na Piastów*, Poznań 2019, pp. 55-58; L. Körntgen, *Heinrich II.* - König der *Konflikte*, in: *Kaiser Heinrich II. Herrschaft, Handschriften und Heiligkeit im Mittelalter*, ed. Ch. Rolker, Bamberg 2024, pp. 170-174.

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The issue of identifying the individuals behind the assassination attempt was treated only as a secondary matter. Even if the German ruler, Henry II, was the instigator, as Bolesław the Brave accused,[2] people were still needed to carry out the attack, individuals who had an interest either in capturing or in killing the Polish duke. Historians have looked for enemies who might have been ready to strike at Bolesław the Brave among the Saxon nobles associated with Henry II.[3] Particular attention in this regard has been directed toward Ezyk (Esiko), the then count of Merseburg. Another candidate whom historians have suspected of preparing the assassination was Herman, the son of Ekkehard I, because the actions of the Polish duke had, in 1002, deprived Herman of any hope of inheriting his deceased father's estate.[4]

The aim of this article is to expand the list of potential assassins who might have benefited from the imprisonment, or the killing of Bolesław the Brave in Merseburg. The proposed correction to the existing scholarly reconstruction of the events in Merseburg will not be substantial. It may, however, lead to a slightly different understanding of the assassination attempt and its political consequences.

The death of Emperor Otto III in January 1002 triggered a two-year period of unrest and conflict within the Empire among the nobles who claimed the right to succeed the childless ruler. Among the several candidates for the throne, at least two should be distinguished. The first was, of course, Henry II, who ultimately emerged victorious in the race for the royal, and later imperial-crown. The second, noteworthy because of his relations with the Polish duke Bolesław the Brave, was the powerful margrave of Meissen, Ekkehard I. According to the account of the chronicler Thietmar of Merseburg, before the death of Otto III, and under the emperor's auspices, Ekkehard I established cooperation with the Polish ruler. The chronicler referred to Ekkehard I and Bolesław as friends (*amicus familiaris*)[5].

However, Ekkehard I's chances of success and of obtaining the royal crown were ruined by his arrogance, and his conflict with Siegfried of Northeim and the counts of Katlenburg. On 30 April 1002, Ekkehard I was murdered by Siegfried in Pöhlde. Some historians believe that Siegfried carried out the killing at the instigation of Henry II.[6] Some scholars have also sus-

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[2] Thietmar V, 18 (10).

[3] L. Körntgen, *Heinrich II. – König der Konflikte…*, p. 171.

[4] R. Holtzmann, *Geschichte der sächsischen Kaiserzeit (900-1024)*, München 1979, p. 386; K. Görich, *Eine Wende im im Osten…*, pp. 199-200; A. Pleszczyński, *Niemcy wobec pierwszej monarchii…*, pp. 213-217.

[5] Thietmar V, 7; H. Ludat, *Piastowie i Ekkehardynowie*, "Przegląd Historyczny" 91 (2000), 2, p. 194; A. Pleszczyński, *Niemcy wobec pierwszej monarchii…*, p. 206.

[6] S. Zakrzewski, *Bolesław Chrobry Wielki…*, p. 174; A.F. Grabski, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, p. 64; R. Holtzmann, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Markgrafen Gunzelin von Meißen*, "Sachsen und

pected that even before Ekkehard I's death, Bolesław the Brave had already taken Henry II's side.[7] In exchange for territorial concessions, namely Milsko and Lusatia, the Polish ruler allowed himself to be drawn into an intrigue directed against Ekkehard I.[8]

Ekkehard I, killed in Pöhlde, left behind a widow, Swanhild, who was the daughter of the Saxon duke Bernard I of the Billung dynasty, aside from several daughters and sons. At the time in question, however, the most important of Ekkehard I's descendants were two sons: Herman, and Ekkehard II. At the time of their father's death, Herman was certainly active politically. On his father's orders, in 1002 he attacked Weimar, where Count William II, an enemy of Ekkehard I, was defending himself.[9] Herman, together with his mother, also took part in his father's funeral and in the burial of the murdered margrave in the family seat of the dynasty at Groß-Jena on the Unstrut. Afterwards, Herman went to Meissen with his mother.[10]

Historians sometimes debate whether Herman could already have been married at that time to Regelinda, the daughter of Bolesław the Brave. This possibility was, for example, considered by Reinhard Wenskus. However, Polish scholars, since as long ago as the works of Stanisław Zakrzewski on Bolesław the Brave, and Oswald Balzer on the genealogy of the Piasts, date the marriage of Herman and Regelinda somewhat differently.[11]

They assume that an agreement regarding this union may have been reached during the congress in Merseburg in 1002. The marriage was therefore concluded in the second half of 1002 or in 1003. The basis for this hypothesis lies in the political events connected with the stronghold

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Anhalt. Jahrbuch der Historischen Kommission für die Provinz Sachsen und für Anhalt" 8 (1932), pp. 112 ff.; J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, p. 97; G. Rupp, *Die Ekkehardiner, Markgrafen von Meißen, und ihre Beziehungen zum Reich und zu den Piasten*, Frankfurt am Main 1996, pp. 81-86; A. Pleszczyński, *Niemcy wobec pierwszej monarchii…*, pp. 204-206.

[7] S. Zakrzewski, *Bolesław Chrobry Wielki…*, p. 174; A.F. Grabski, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, p. 64; R. Holtzmann, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Markgrafen Gunzelin von Meißen*, "Sachsen und Anhalt. Jahrbuch der Historischen Kommission für die Provinz Sachsen und für Anhalt" 8 (1932), pp. 112 ff.; J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, p. 97; G. Rupp, *Die Ekkehardiner, Markgrafen von Meißen, und ihre Beziehungen zum Reich und zu den Piasten*, Frankfurt am Main 1996, p. 81-86; A. Pleszczyński, *Niemcy wobec pierwszej monarchii…*, pp. 204-206.

[8] J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, p. 99; A. Pleszczyński, *Niemcy wobec pierwszej monarchii…*, p. 208.

[9] Thietmar V, 8; Regesten, Nr. 350; G. Rupp, *Die Ekkehardiner…*, p. 107; K. Görich, *Eine Wende im Osten…*, p. 116.

[10] Thietmar V, 8; H. Ludat, *Piastowie i Ekkehardynowie…*, p. 197; K. Görich, *Eine Wende im Osten…*, p. 116.

[11] S. Zakrzewski, *Bolesław Chrobry Wielki…*, p. 177; O. Balzer, *Genealogia Piastów*, Kraków 2005 [2nd ed.], p. 121; K. Jasiński, *Rodowód pierwszych Piastów*, Warszawa-Wrocław [n. d.], pp. 109-113. This dating is also used in contemporary German literature: G. Rupp, *Die Ekkehardiner…*, pp. 107-108.

of Strehla (Strzała), located in what is today the district of Meissen (Landkreis Meißen). Returning from the Merseburg congress at the end of July 1002, Bolesław the Brave burned this stronghold and took its inhabitants into captivity. During the war with Henry II in 1003, the Polish duke once again encountered the stronghold of Strehla. This time, however, he spared it. He did not attack the stronghold because, as the chronicler Thietmar explained, it was the dowry of his daughter, Regelinda.[12] She acquired it through her marriage to Herman, the son of Ekkehard I. The report of the destruction of Strehla in 1002 also suggests that Bolesław the Brave attended the Merseburg congress at the head of a force strong enough to carry out the destruction of the stronghold at Strehla and the capture of its inhabitants.

The death of Ekkehard I on 30 April 1002 triggered a dynastic dispute among his relatives. The plans of his sons, Herman, and Ekkehard II, to inherit their father's estate were opposed by the deceased's brother, Gunzelin.[13] As an ally in the conflict with his sister-in-law, Swanhild, and his nephews, he enlisted Bolesław the Brave. According to Thietmar's account, the Polish ruler rejoiced at the news of Ekkehard I's death and, seeking to take advantage of it, seized part of the territory of the Marca Geronis II (*i.e.*, the Eastern March) and Bautzen. This entailed, among other things, the necessity of removing the influence of Herman, the son of Ekkehard I, from the occupied territories.

During the military campaign, Bolesław the Brave forcibly entered the stronghold at Strehla. His next step was an attack on the stronghold of Meissen. According to Thietmar, the capture of Meissen was achieved through the bribery of the local inhabitants. It was these bribed locals, led by Ekkehard I's brother Gunzelin, who gained access to the stronghold. They took advantage of a moment when part of the garrison had left to feed the horses. A fight ensued, and the Slavic servile population of Meissen opened the gates to Gunzelin's men. At that time, Herman's vassal, named Becekon, was killed. The attackers also attempted to execute a representative of the local authority, the commander of the stronghold in Meissen, Ozer. A certain knight, Thietmar, delivered a fiery speech in which he urged the attackers to cease their hostile actions, appealing to the memory of the deceased Ekkehard I. He also promised amnesty to those attackers who wished to leave the enemy ranks. He is said to have granted this amnesty to Herman, the son of Ekkehard I, who held Meissen before the attack.

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12 Tiethmar V, 36 (22).

13 G. Labuda, *Mieszko II król Polski (1025–1034), Czasy przełomu w dziejach państwa polskiego*, Kraków 1992, p. 31; E. Karpf, *Gunzelin, Markgraf von Meißen*, in: *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, vol. 4, Stuttgart-Weimar 1999, Sp. 1795; G. Rupp, *Die Ekkehardiner…*, pp. 107 ff.

Eventually, the attackers and the defenders entered negotiations, which resulted in the stronghold falling into Gunzelin's hands. He then stationed his own garrison in Meissen, while the previous defenders, according to the agreement noted by Thietmar of Merseburg, were allowed to leave the stronghold with their lives. Soon, through the wide-open gates, Bolesław the Brave entered Meissen at the summons of Gunzelin's envoys. From Thietmar's account, some have inferred that Meissen was handed over to Bolesław. However, there is no evidence that Bolesław the Brave later became the ruler of the stronghold. It likely remained in Gunzelin's hands. Unfortunately, Thietmar does not report the subsequent fate of the stronghold at Strehla. It must be assumed that Bolesław the Brave did not keep it for himself. Returning from Merseburg in 1002, burning this stronghold, and taking its inhabitants into captivity, he would hardly have destroyed a asset under his own control. Logic would rather suggest that, anticipating a military reaction from the king and his supporters, he should have fortified it instead.

During the July congress in Merseburg, the Polish duke, presumably in exchange for recognizing the new king, sought confirmation of his authority over Meissen. He also offered money for this. However, Henry II did not agree. According to Thietmar of Merseburg, at Bolesław's request, Meissen was to be given to his ally Gunzelin, whom the chronicler referred to at the time as the brother of the Piast duke. Since the research of Robert Holzmann, it has been assumed that Bolesław the Brave and Gunzelin were brothers-in-law.[14] In any case, the Polish ruler at that time obtained confirmation of his authority over Milsko and Lusatia.[15] The new king therefore most likely confirmed the status quo as it had existed before the Merseburg congress. Ekkehard I's sons had to be content with the eastern part of the Margraviate of Meissen (Herman) and the Eastern March (Ekkehard II).[16]

These decisions were particularly significant for Gunzelin. They provided an opportunity to nullify his obligations to Bolesław the Brave. Since Gunzelin had captured the stronghold at Meissen and subsequently summoned Bolesław the Brave there, he certainly had obligations toward the Polish ruler. The Merseburg chronicler notes, under the year 1003, that Bolesław the Brave had previously, presumably even before the Merseburg congress, concluded an agreement with Gunzelin. According to this agreement, Gunzelin had promised to hand over the stronghold at Meissen to Bolesław.[17]

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[14] R. Holtzmann, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Markgrafen Gunzelin*, pp. 126 ff.; G. Labuda, *Mieszko II*, p. 34; A. Pleszczyński, *Niemcy wobec pierwszej monarchii…*, p. 122; P. Urbańczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, pp. 168-169.

[15] W. Korta, *Milsko i Łużyce w polityce pierwszych Piastów*, „Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka" 45 (1990), 2, pp. 164 ff.; G. Labuda, *Mieszko II…*, p. 31.

[16] G. Labuda, *Mieszko II…*, p. 31.

[17] Thietmar V, 36 (22).

In 1003, however, having received Meissen and other fiefs from Henry II, and out of fear of the king's men, Gunzelin renounced his agreement with the Polish duke.

As already mentioned, according to Thietmar of Merseburg, the idea of granting Meissen to Gunzelin at the Merseburg congress came from Bolesław the Brave. By agreeing to it, Henry II achieved two important political goals for himself. Meissen became Gunzelin's possession by the king's grant, not by the goodwill of the Polish duke. This fact weakened the alliance between Bolesław and Gunzelin. With his decision, Henry II also strengthened the group of Saxon nobles who opposed placing the disputed territories under Bolesław the Brave's control.

From Thietmar's account, it is known that Bolesław the Brave was accompanied by an armed retinue at the Merseburg congress. Its members refused to heed the calls to leave the place where the congress was being held because they were armed. After the audience concluded, the Polish duke, generously rewarded by the king, was preparing to depart. It was then that the events occurred which are referred to in historiography as the assassination attempt on Bolesław the Brave. Thietmar's chronicle reports these events as follows:

"At that moment, he suddenly noticed that an advancing crowd of armed men - by God, without the king's knowledge or consent - was approaching him [*i.e.*, Henry, the chronicler's Thietmar kinsman, margrave from northern Bavaria, Henry of Schweinfurt]. When [Henry - M.S.] tried to ascertain the cause of this extraordinary violence and to prevent it from causing greater harm, he barely managed to lead his companion safely through the opened outer gate. Among the warriors who followed him, some fell victim to robbery by the advancing crowd, while others, grievously wounded, avoided death only thanks to the help of Duke Bernard. Yet they had brought this danger upon themselves and not without reason, since, having entered the royal palace fully armed, they refused to leave when they were ordered to do so. Bolesław, however, suspecting that this was the result of a maliciously planned betrayal, took it very much to heart and wrongly attributed all of it to the king. Therefore, after bidding farewell to Henry [of Schweinfurt] and solemnly promising him assistance should he ever need it, he quickly returned home."[18]

The cited account provides several important pieces of information. First, it identifies the people who saved Bolesław the Brave. One of them was the Saxon duke Bernard I Billung, one of the organizers of the Merseburg congress. During the congress, he was said to have presented the spear of Saint Maurice to Henry II, part of the coronation insignia of the German kings. In addition, the Polish duke was aided by Henry of Schweinfurt,

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[18] *Ibidem*, V, 18 (10). See the literature cited in footnote 1.

margrave of northern Bavaria, and a rival of Henry II for the royal crown, who was also a relative of the chronicler Thietmar.

The second piece of information emerging from this account concerns the immediate cause of the attack on Bolesław's retinue. It lay in the fact that armed men of the Polish duke had entered the place where the congress was being held and refused to leave voluntarily. Since the chronicler emphasized this point, it suggests that other participants of the congress entered the palace, where the sessions took place, without the company of armed men. Knut Görich argued that, in the context of the royal court, the arrival of a noble with a large retinue always caused problems. It was a demonstration of one's own rank, which offended the other members of the ruler's court. Görich sought confirmation of this thesis in the times of Frederick I Barbarossa.[19] Andrzej Pleszczyński, in turn, pointed to the existing prohibitions on carrying weapons in the presence of the ruler. [20] Apparently, the right to bear arms belonged only to the king, who was presumably protected by his personal guard. It should be noted that even those who were armed had limited access to the ruler.

The surviving sources from the 11th century do not fully describe the organization of the royal court or the role of the armed guard, but some clues can be drawn from sources from a later period. In this regard, the circumstances surrounding the assassination of King Philip of Swabia in 1209 by Otto of Wittelsbach can be instructive. Among several contemporary accounts, it is worth referring to the report of the papal legate Hugo of Ostia, submitted to Pope Innocent III.

Philip of Swabia was murdered in his chamber, where, after therapeutic bloodletting, he was either alone or in the company of a few unarmed attendants. The murder weapon was a sword, which, depending on the account, Otto either brought into the king's chamber hidden under his cloak or was brought in officially, but not as a weapon-rather as a tool for circus/juggling tricks, with which Wittelsbach had performed before the ruler.

The papal legate described the situation roughly as follows: King Philip was resting in Bamberg, at the bishop's palace, when Palatine Otto, to whom Philip had first promised his daughter in marriage and then withdrew his promise, entered the palace. Philip was in the company of the Duke of Bavaria, the Margrave of Istria, the brother of the Bishop of Bamberg, and ten armed men. The newcomers knocked on the door and, according to custom, were admitted into the chamber. When Philip greeted Otto with kind words and jokes, as was his custom, the palatine drew the sword he carried. He began performing tricks with the sword. At one point, he stopped and told Philip that this time it would not be a jest meant to amuse the ruler. Casting

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19 K. Görich, *Eine Wende im Osten…*, pp. 119-120.

20 A. Pleszczyński, *Niemcy wobec pierwszej monarchii…*, pp. 196-198.

aside all fear of God, he thrust the sword into Philip. He then inflicted a mortal wound on Henry, the chamberlain of the Empire, who had tried to prevent the crime. Fearing that the man he had struck might still be alive, Otto slit his throat. With the help of his accomplices who protected him, the murderer departed, and since the armed guard was completely dispersed, God allowed him to escape without punishment for his wicked deed.[21]

The event described illustrates the potential consequences of a ruler meeting with a hostile armed subject while accompanied by an inattentive or insufficiently vigilant guard. The presence of armed men at such a meeting could raise suspicions about the visitor's intentions. The weapons brought by his men also offended the honour of the host: in the presence of the ruler, guests were expected to feel sufficiently safe that they should not appear with armed escorts.

The entrance of armed men of the Polish duke into the palace where the Merseburg congress took place may have been motivated by concerns for Bolesław the Brave's safety. Yet foreign warriors in close proximity to the ruler always posed a threat. Their presence could be perceived as menacing and provoke widespread outrage among the ruler's entourage. Such an expression of distrust toward the host undermined the king's authority. His rule was meant to bring peace to the Empire. Bolesław the Brave's armed companions therefore challenged the king's position as a bringer of peace ("rex pacificus"), a title often applied to the ideal medieval ruler. Their presence disrupted the domestic order and violated the feudal symbolism of the relationship between king and subject. Despite Thietmar of Merseburg's efforts to deny that Henry II had any role in inspiring the assassination attempt on Bolesław the Brave, the new king had both political and ideological motives to remove the Polish duke.

The restoration of peace and proper order in the relations between Henry II and Bolesław the Brave, after years of warfare, was also accompanied by ceremonial displays involving weapons. During the ceremony in Merseburg on 24 May 1013, Bolesław the Brave carried a sword before Henry II.[22] Historians debate whether this event indicated Henry II's recognition of the Polish duke's importance, or primarily reflected the political subordination of the Polish ruler to the emperor.[23]

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[21] *Die Register Innocenz' III.*, vol. 12: *Pontifikatsjahr, 1209/1210, Texte und Indices*, ed. A. Sommerlechner, O. Hageneder *et al*., Vienna 2012, No. 152.

[22] Thietmar VI, 91 (55).

[23] G. Labuda, (rev.) *Kazimierz Tymieniecki, Traktat merseburski z r. 1013 (Z ze studiów nad kroniką Thietmara), Wiadomości Archeologiczne, T. XVI, Posen 1940, p. 451-471*, „Roczniki Historyczne" 17 (1948), pp. 242-246; *idem*, *Mieszko II…*, pp. 36-37; K. Görich, *Eine Wende im Osten* pp. 154 ff.; P. Urbańczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, p. 232; S. Weinfurter, *Heinrich II…*, p. 219; G. Althoff, *Die Ottonen…*, p. 115; A. Pleszczyński, *Niemcy wobec pierwszej monarchii…*, pp. 236 ff.; L. Körntgen, *Heinrich II. – König der Konflikte…*, p. 174.

It seems, however, that this was a symbolic demonstration of the restoration of order between the ruler and his vassal, with the vassal acting here in the role of the sword-bearer. It carried neither positive nor negative connotations for Bolesław. This event can also be compared to another Merseburg congress, which took place in 1135. During that assembly, the Polish duke Bolesław III Wrymouth paid homage to Emperor Lothair, and according to the *Magdeburg Annals*, after placing his hands in the emperor's, he was made a knight of the emperor - that is, a vassal (*miles eius efflicitur*). As the emperor proceeded to the church, Bolesław carried a sword before him.[24]

When considering the attempted assassination of Bolesław the Brave, one should also reflect on another possible cause. It may have lain in Henry II's ambitions to eliminate a rival for control over a specific territory. In this context, it concerned both *ius directe* and *ius utile*. This authority extended primarily over the lands inhabited by the Slavic population of the Elbe region, and later also over Bohemia. During the Congress of Gniezno in 1000, Bolesław the Brave was said to have received from Emperor Otto III either a crown, or at least consent for his coronation.[25] Because of this, he felt equal to other lords of the Empire, including the Duke of Bavaria, the future King Henry II. For this reason, there may have been a perceived need for the physical elimination of the Polish ruler through an assassination attempt. Bolesław the Brave's political ambitions conflicted with the territorial integrity of the Empire. He would have ruled over part of the Slavic lands encompassed by the boundaries of the German marches. For this reason, according to Thietmar, Henry II could not agree to grant Meissen to Bolesław, because, as the chronicler claimed, it would have been against the interests of the Empire.

Returning to the assassination attempt on Bolesław the Brave himself, it must be noted that it is not known who personally orchestrated it. Thietmar reduced the entire situation to an attack by an anonymous armed mob that struck the Polish retinue in front of the gate. The observation that the attack took place in the suburb of Meissen therefore seems justified.[26] The attackers could have been men loyal to the king, but also other nobles of the Empire who attended the congress and were hostile to Bolesław the Brave. From this group, however, one can exclude the men of Henry of Schweinfurt,

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[24] *Annales Magdeburgenses*, ed. G.H. Pertz, in: MGH, Scriptores 16, Hannover 1859, p. 185: „Bolizlaus vero post sacramenta in die sancto manibus applicatis miles eius eflicitur, et cesari ad ecelesiam processuro, gladium illius ante ipsum portavit"; cf. S. Rosik, *Bolesław Krzywousty*, Wrocław 2013, pp. 232-236.

[25] This issue has often been discussed in Polish scholarly literature. The so-called "secular coronation," carried out by the emperor rather than by representatives of the Polish clergy, was also accepted by J. Fried, *Otton III i Bolesław Chrobry*, Warszawa 2000, pp. 131 ff.

[26] A. Pleszczyński, *Niemcy wobec pierwszej monarchii…*, p. 194.

and Bernard I of Billung, for thanks to them, nothing serious happened to Bolesław the Brave.

Thietmar clearly wrote about whom Bolesław held responsible for the assassination attempt. However, Bolesław's subsequent actions also indicate who had lost the duke's trust due to their alignment with Henry II's camp, or perhaps even for contributing to the assassination attempt. The first political move of Bolesław the Brave after the Congress of Merseburg was the, already mentioned, burning of Strehla and, importantly, the capture of its inhabitants, and their enslavement. This raises the question of whose hands the stronghold of Strehla was in at that time. It seems that the answer must be sought in the relations between the Piast duke and representatives of the Ekkeharding family.

For Thietmar, the key figure in this context was Gunzelin. As Margrave of Meissen, he stood faithfully at the side of the new king. In 1003, continuing his actions against Henry II, Bolesław the Brave invaded Meissen, which was under Gunzelin's rule. Thietmar claimed that this occurred after Gunzelin refused to support Bolesław in his war against the German ruler. The envoys who brought Bolesław the news of Gunzelin's refusal were imprisoned by the Polish ruler.

Bolesław's next step was a military expedition to Meissen. In this way, it seems that the Polish duke sought to verify Gunzelin's stance. When the Piast forces arrived at Meissen in 1003, Bolesław demanded that Gunzelin surrender the stronghold to him, citing some prior agreement between them. As already mentioned, fears of losing the king's favour, the fiefs he had received, and apprehension regarding Henry II's men present in Meissen, led Gunzelin to refuse Bolesław's demand.[27]

During the campaign of 1003, Thietmar mentioned for the first time that the stronghold of Strehla was spared by the Polish ruler at this stage of the fighting because it was the dowry of his daughter, Regelinda. This is the first information provided by the chronicler about her marriage. In 1003, therefore, Herman was Bolesław the Brave's son-in-law (and possibly also his ally), while Gunzelin had become his enemy. Following the chronology of events in Thietmar's chronicle, it must be assumed that the marriage of Herman and Regelinda took place before Gunzelin's negative response regarding the surrender of Meissen and the continuation of the alliance with Bolesław the Brave against Henry II.

Unfortunately, it is impossible to determine the precise moment and circumstances under which Herman came into possession of the stronghold at

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[27] Thietmar V, 36 (22); S. Zakrzewski, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, p. 201; A.F. Grabski, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, pp. 76-77; R. Holtzmann, *Geschichte der sächsischen Kaiserzeit…*, p. 405; J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, p. 116.

Strehla. It is not excluded that this occurred after a complaint he submitted to Henry II. Since the stronghold of Stehla later became Regelinda's dowry, it must previously have belonged to the allodial, rather than feudal, estates of Ekkehard I. Herman formally inherited them from him. In 1002, because of the military actions of Bolesław the Brave and Gunzelin, Ekkehard I's eldest son lost control over them. According to the law, however, he could appeal to the king for the return of the stronghold. This likely took place during the Congress of Merseburg in 1002.

The destruction of Strehla by Bolesław the Brave presents us with an alternative. One must choose between Bolesław's self-destructive actions or an attack on a stronghold held by an enemy of the Polish ruler. In the first case, one would have to assume that Bolesław destroyed a stronghold he himself possessed and took into captivity the people who had become his subjects in the first half of that year. Assuming the other possibility, the Polish ruler burned a stronghold occupied by his opponents. Who, then, was his opponent at the time? Was it Herman? The assumption that he managed to occupy Strehla, later destroyed by Bolesław, before Bolesław departed from Merseburg, has no basis.

Strehla, like Meissen, most likely remained from 1002 in the hands of the reigning margrave, Gunzelin. Unfavourable agreements binding him to the Polish ruler, whose enforcement threatened the loss of his authority, fiefs, and even imprisonment, which eventually occurred in 1009,[28] also place him among those who might have had an interest in carrying out an assassination attempt on Bolesław the Brave.

Since Gunzelin was the son of Günther, the Count of Merseburg who died in 987,[29] he may have retained influence among its inhabitants. Potentially, this could have helped him in organizing an assassination attempt. Unfortunately, there is no clear evidence of this. The unstable position and fate of Gunzelin and his nephew Herman in the subsequent years of the Polish-German conflict do not make it any easier to draw further conclusions on the matter under discussion.

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[28] S. Zakrzewski, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, p. 257; A.F. Grabski, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, p. 100; R. Holtzmann, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Markgrafen Gunzelin…*, pp. 123-124; *idem*, *Geschichte der sächsischen Kaiserzeit…*, p. 412; J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, p. 131; S. Weinfurter, *Heinrich II…*, p. 217; G. Rupp, *Die Ekkehardiner…*, pp. 104-107.

[29] G. Rupp, *Die Ekkehardiner…*, pp. 47-49.

ABSTRACT

The article addresses the issue of the assassination attempt on Bolesław the Brave. It took place during the court congress in Merseburg in July 1002. Among those suspected of planning the attempt, the German king Henry II was usually considered. The involvement of Herman, son of Ekkehard I, or Ezyk (Esiko), Count of Merseburg, was also considered. However, they were not the only ones who could be suspected of wanting to eliminate Bolesław the Brave. This group should probably also include the Polish ruler's brother-in-law, Gunzelin - the brother of Ekkehard I and son of the former Count of Merseburg, Günther. Gunzelin's potential involvement in the assassination can be explained by his desire to break the unfavourable agreements concluded with the Polish duke before the Congress of Merseburg. Fulfilling these agreements threatened Gunzelin with the loss of all the benefits he had received from Henry II.

Keywords: Bolesław the Brave, Henry II, the assembly in Merseburg 1002, assassination attempt

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Solium eius aureum imperator Oto direxit regi Botisclavo... Adémar de Chabannes, Boleslas le Vaillant et le trône d'or de Charlemagne

Introduction

Le récit des actions entreprises par Otton III et des missions de Saint Adalbert de Prague et de Saint Bruno de Querfurt en Europe du Centre-Est dans le chapitre 31 du troisième livre de la *Chronique* composée vers 1028 par Adémar de Chabannes (mort en 1034),[1] moine à l'abbaye Saint Cybard d'Angoulême puis à l'abbaye Saint-Martial de Limoges, est sans conteste l'une des sources concernant l'histoire de cette région autour de l'an mil qui pose le plus de problèmes aux historiens. En effet, ce passage a longtemps été considéré comme une interpolation du XII^e^ siècle: pour cette raison, mais aussi eu égard à la présence de nombreuses erreurs et confusions, sa crédibilité et sa valeur en tant que source historique ont longtemps été remises en question.[2] Depuis quelques décennies, on peut cependant remarquer un net regain d'intérêt pour ce texte, en particulier dans le cadre de la discussion sur les débuts de l'histoire de la Pologne et de la Hongrie. L'un des éléments du récit d'Adémar attirant le plus l'attention des chercheurs est indubitablement la mention du *solium* (ici: trône) en or de

[1] *Ademari Cabanensis opera omnia, Pars 1. Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, éd. R. Landes and G. Pon, *Corpus Christianorum: Continuatio Mediaevalis*, t. 129, Turnhout 1999, p. 151-154.

[2] Voir par exemple Pascale Bourgain, « Introduction », dans *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*.

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Charlemagne offert à Boleslas le Vaillant par Otton III en échange de reliques de Saint Adalbert de Prague:

> « Solium eius aureum imperator Oto direxit regi Botisclavo pro reliquiis sancti Adalberti martiris. Rex autem Botisclavus, accepto dono, misit imperatori brachium de corpore eiusdem sancti, et imperator gaudens illut excepit, et in honore Sancti Adalberti martiris basilicam Aquisgrani construxit mirificam, et ancillarum Dei congregationem ibi disposuit. Aliud quoque monasterium Romae construxit in honore ipisus martiris ».[3]

Il convient de souligner ici que le motif du trône d'or de Charlemagne n'apparait ni dans le récit de l'entrevue de Gniezno figurant dans la Chronique du *Gallus Anonymus*[4] ni dans les sources provenant des pays d'Empire et relatant la redécouverte du tombeau de Charlemagne à Aix-la-Chapelle par Otton III en l'an mil.[5] Plusieurs témoignages textuels ainsi que certaines oeuvres d'art haut-médiévales suggèrent cependant que ce motif n'a pas été inventé *ex nihilo* par le chroniqueur aquitain.

1. Témoignages textuels

Parmi les sources écrites mentionnant la possession d'un trône d'or par Charlemagne, la *Chronique* d'Adémar de Chabannes occupe naturellement une place privilégiée. En effet, outre le passage concernant le don du trône d'or de Charlemenagne à Boleslas le Vaillant par Otton III, un objet semblable est mentionné par le chroniqueur aquitain dans son récit de l'inhumation de Charlemagne à la fin du second livre de l'œuvre:

> « Corpus eius aromatizatum et in sede aurea sedens positus est in curvatura sepulchri, ense aureo accinctus, evangelium aureum tenens in manibus et genibus, reclinatis humeris in cathedra et capite honeste erecto, ligato cathena aurea ad diadema. Et in diademate lignum crucis positus est. Et repleverunt sepulchrum eius aromatibus, pigmentis,

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[3] Adémar de Chabannes, *Chronicon…*, p. 154.

[4] *Gesta principum Polonorum/The deeds of the princes of the Poles*, éd. P.W. Knoll, F. Schaer, Budapest-New York 2003, p. 36.

[5] *Die Chronik des Bischofs Thietmar von Merseburg und ihre Korveier Überarbeitung*, MGH, Scriptores rerum Germanicarum n.s. 9, éd. R. Holtzmann, Berlin 1935, p. 184-187; *Chronicon Novaliciense*, MGH, Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi 21, éd. G.H. Pertz, Hannover 1846, p. 55-56; *Annales Hildesheimses*, MGH, Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi 8, éd. G. Waitz, Hannover 1878, p. 28; *Lamperti monachi Hersfeldensis opera*, MGH, Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi 38, éd. O. Holder-Egger, Hannover-Leipzig 1894, p. 48.

> balsamo et musco et thesauris. Vestitum est corpus eius indumentis imperialibus, et sudario sub diademate facies eius operta est. Sceptrum aureum et scutum aureum, quod Leo papa consecraverat, ante eum posita, et sigillatum est sepulchrum eius. »[6]

Cette phrase fournit donc une description assez précise de la position dans laquelle est inhumé Charlemagne ainsi que des objets qui l'accompagnent. Adémar affirme ainsi que le souverain franc fut enterré assis *in sede aurea*, c'est-à-dire dans un siège en or, doré ou ayant la couleur de l'or,[7] lequel était placé sous une voûte (*curvatura*) du tombeau. La relation de l'ouverture du tombeau de Charlemagne propose une description relativement proche de celle de l'inhumation :

> « Quibus diebus Oto imperator per somnum monitus est ut levaret corpus Caroli Magni imperatoris, quod Aquis humatus erat; sed, vetustate obliterante, ignorabatur locus certus ubi quiescebat. Et peracto triduano jejunio, inventus est eo loco quem per visum cognoverat imperator, sedens in aurea cathedra intra arcuatam speluncam infra basilicam Marie, coronatum corona ex auro et gemmis, tenens sceptrum et ensem ex auro purissimo, et ipsum corpus incorruptum inventum est. Quod levatum populis demonstratum est. Quidam vero canonicorum ejusdem loci Adalbertus, cum enormi et procero corpore esset, coronam Caroli quasi pro mensura capiti suo circumponens, inventus est strictiori vertice, coronam amplitudine sua vincentem circulum capitis. Crus proprium etiam ad cruris mensuram regis dimetiens, inventus est brevior, et ipsum ejus crus protinus divina virtute confractum est; qui supervivens annis XL, semper debilis permansit. Corpus vero Caroli condictum in dextro membro basilicę ipsius, retro altare sancti Johannis Baptiste, et cripta aurea super illud mirifica est fabricata, multis que signis et miraculis clarescere coepit. Non tamen sollempnitas de ipso agitur, nisi communi more anniversarium defunctorum. Solium ejus aureum imperator Oto direxit regi Botisclavo pro reliquiis sancti Adalberti martiris. »[8]

Le motif de l'enterrement de Charlemagne en position assise figure également dans la *Chronique de Novalaise* :

> « Non enim iacebat, ut mors est aliorum defunctorum corpora, sed in quandam cathedram ceu vivus residebat. Coronam auream erat coronatus, sceptrum cum mantonibus indutis tenens in manibus, a quibus

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6 *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon…*, p. 111.

7 « Aureus », dans F. Gaffiot, *Dictionnaire illustré latin-français*, Paris 1934, p. 192.

8 *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon…*, p. 154

iam ipse ungule perforando processerant. Erat autem supra se tugurium ex calce et marmoribus valde compositum. »[9]

L'analyse comparative des descriptions de la sépulture de Charlemagne dans la *Chronique* d'Adémar de Chabannes et la Chronique de Novalaise permet de remarquer la présence de nombreux éléments en commun, mais aussi d'un certain nombre de différences:

	Inhumation de Charlemagne dans la *Chronique* d'Adémar de Chabannes	**Ouverture du tombeau de Charlemagne dans la *Chronique* d'Adémar de Chabannes**	**Ouverture du tombeau de Charlemagne dans la Chronique de Novalaise**
Description architecturale du tombeau	Pourvu de voûtes (*curvatura*)	Caveau/caverne voûtée (*intra arcuatam speluncam*)	Baldaquin/ciborium de calcaire et de marbre (*tugurium ex calce et marmoribus*)
Enterré en position assise	Oui	Oui	Oui
Trône doré ou en or	Oui Oui	Oui Oui	Oui Non précisé
Diadème ou couronne doré(e) ou en or	Oui Non précisé	Oui Oui	Oui Oui
Chainette dorée ou en or	Oui Oui	Non -	Non -
Sceptre doré ou en or	Oui Oui	Oui Oui	Oui Non précisé
Evangile doré ou en or	Oui Oui	Non -	Non -
Epée dorée ou en or	Oui Oui	Oui Oui	Non -
Bouclier doré ou en or	Oui Oui	Non -	Non -
Autres	Vêtements impériaux	-	Gants

L'examen du tableau ci-dessus permet tout d'abord de constater que les deux descriptions de la sépulture de Charlemagne dans la *Chronique* d'Adémar de Chabannes présentent plusieurs divergences entre elles, à savoir l'aspect

[9] *Chronicon Novaliciense…*, p. 56

de la couronne du souverain mais aussi la présence ou non d'un bouclier ainsi que de l'Évangile et la disposition des différents objets dans le tombeau. La relation de l'ouverture du tombeau dans la *Chronique de Novalaise* mentionne seulement la présence d'une couronne, d'un sceptre et de gants et sa description de l'architecture des lieux diffère assez sensiblement de celle fournie par le chroniqueur aquitain. En revanche, les deux descriptions de la sépulture de Charlemagne figurant dans la *Chronique* d'Adémar de Chabannes et celle proposée par la *Chronique de Novalaise* rapportent toutes les trois que le souverain défunt fut enterré en position assise. Il convient par ailleurs de souligner que le meuble sur lequel fut déposé le corps de Charlemagne est désigné par le mot *cathedra* (cathèdre, mais aussi siège à dossier ou chaise[10]) dans les trois passages étudiés, bien que les deux descriptions figurant dans la *Chronique* d'Adémar de Chabannes utilisent aussi respectivement les termes de *sedes* et de *solium*. La *Chronique de Novalaise* ne donne pas cependant pas d'informations précises sur cet objet, puisque celui-ci y est seulement mentionné comme *quamdam cathedram* (une certaine chaise/cathèdre).

Les deux descriptions de la sépulture de Charlemagne figurant dans la *Chronique* d'Adémar de Chabannes sont quant à elles plus disertes sur ce point : ainsi, l'adjectif *aureus* accompagne trois des quatres mentions du « trône » de Charlemagne. En outre, la seule référence à cet objet ne comportant pas l'adjectif *aureus* indique que le souverain fut installé *reclinatis humeris in cathedra*, c'est-à-dire avec les épaules appuyés contre le trône, ce qui permet de conclure que selon le chroniqueur aquitain, cet objet était pourvu d'un dossier. En revanche, l'information selon laquelle Charlemagne fut enterré « en tenant un Évangile en or/doré/ayant la couleur de l'or dans ses mains et [sur] ses genoux (*evangelium aureum tenens in manibus et genibus*) ne permet pas de déterminer si ce trône comportait ou non des accoudoirs.

Le trône d'or de Charlemagne apparait également dans une œuvre fort différente de la *Chronique* d'Adémar de Chabannes. Cette oeuvre, dont la première version apparait dès la seconde moitié du XI^e^ siècle, est ainsi un poème épique rédigé en langue vernaculaire, plus précisément dans l'ancien dialecte anglo-normand de la langue d'oïl : en effet, il s'agit de la *Chanson de Roland*, telle qu'elle est préservée dans le manuscrit dit d'Oxford,[11] qui date du début du XII^e^ siècle. Le contexte dans lequel le trône d'or de Charlemagne apparait est également très différent de celui dans lequel cet objet est présent dans l'œuvre du chroniqueur aquitain, puisque l'auteur de la *Chanson de Roland* mentionne le trône juste avant le début de sa relation de l'entretien entre Charlemagne et ses chevaliers, qui se trouvent alors dans un grand verger de la ville de Cordoue, et les envoyés du roi Sarrasin Marsile. L'auteur commence ainsi par nommer les

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10 « Cathedra », dans F. Gaffiot, *Dictionnaire illustré latin-français*, Paris 1934, p. 274.

11 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Digby 23.

Francs présents ainsi que les activités auxquelles ils se livrent avant de décrire Charlemagne; le passage concernant ce dernier débute par les vers suivants :

> « Desuz un pin, delez un eglenter,
> Un faldestoed i out, fait tut d'or mer
> Là siet li reis ki doulce France tient ».[12]

Dans le cadre de nos investigations sur le trône d'or de Charlemagne, le vers le plus important est naturellement le vers central, qui nous informe que le souverain est assis dans « *un faldestoed* […] *fait tut d'or mer* », ce que Joseph Bédier traduit par « un trône […], tout d'or pur ».[13] Contrairement à l'adjectif latin *aureus* utilisé par Adémar de Chabannes pour décrire le trône de Charlemagne, les mots « *fait tut d'or mer* » indiquent en effet clairement que cet objet est entièrement fabriqué en or pur, l'adjectif *mer,* parfois orthographié *mier,* pouvant signifier « pur », « simple », « entier », « complet ».[14]

La question du matériau étant désormais résolue, il convient à présent de s'interroger sur l'aspect du trône d'or de Charlemagne d'après l'auteur de la *Chanson de Roland*. Dans ce passage, l'auteur ne donne hélas pas d'autres informations que le fait que cet objet soit en or et les autres occurences du mot *faldestoed*[15] ainsi que de ses variantes orthographiques *faldestoet*[16] et *faldestod*[17] dans le texte ne s'avèrent pas plus riches en renseignements. En effet, ces cinq occurences qui, font toutes référence, à des trônes appartenant à des souverains sarrasins, sont elles aussi assez avares en informations: deux d'entre elles ne donnent aucun renseignement sur la matérialité des trônes,[18] deux autres rapportent que le trône est d'« *olifant* »,[19] c'est-à-dire en ivoire[20] alors que la dernière mentionne uniquement les soieries recouvrant le trône.[21]

L'analyse du mot *faldestoed* se révèle un peu plus fructueuse. En effet, ce terme est en réalité l'une des plus anciennes variantes du mot *faldestoel,* pour lequel Frédéric Godefroy recense pas moins de vingt-six formes alternatives

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12 *La Chanson de Roland: publiée d'après le manuscrit d'Oxford,* éd. et trad. en français moderne par J. Bédier, Paris 1922, p. 10.

13 *La Chanson de Roland*…, p. 11.

14 « Mer », dans F. Godefroy, *Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française et de tous ses dialectes du IX^e^ au XV^e^ siècle*, t. 5, Paris 1888 (Reprint Vaduz 1965), p. 249.

15 *La Chanson de Roland*…, p. 36, 48 et 202.

16 *Ibidem*, p. 32.

17 *Ibidem*, p. 212.

18 *Ibidem*, p. 36 et 212.

19 *Ibidem*, p. 48 : « un faldestoed i out d'un olifant » et 202 : « un faldestoed i unt mis d' olifan ».

20 *Ibidem*, p. 49 et 203.

21 *Ibidem*, p. 32: « Un faldestoed out suz l'umbre d'un pin/Envolupet fut d'un palie alexandrin ».

et derivées (*faldestoed*, *faldestué*, *faldestor*, *faudestoel*, *faudestuel*, *faudetuel*, *faudeteuil*, *faudestuef*, *faudestuet*, *faudestué*, *faudestoes*, *faudesteuf*, *faudestueil*, *faudestueill*, *faulxdestueil*, *faulxdesteuil*, *faucdestuel*, *faulzdestuel*, *faudestac*, *fausdesteur*, *faudestuer*, *faudebsteur*, *fausdestuef*, *faudosteul*, *faulxtuel*, *faudesseur*).[22] Un examen plus approfondi du mot *faldestoel* permet de deviner sa signification originelle: en effet, ce mot d'ancien français dont l'orthographe trahit clairement l'origine germanique, provient de l'ancien bas francique *faldistôl*.[23] L'étymologie de ce mot est assez simple à établir, puisqu'il se compose de *faldi,* qui renvoit à l'action de plier, (all. *falten*, ang. *to fold*) et du susbstantif *stôl,* qui désigne un siège (all. *Stuhl*, ang. s*tool*). Le terme *faldistôl* et son équivalent en langue d'oïl *faldestoel* désignent donc un siège pliant: cette définition figure d'ailleurs également dans la définition du mot *faldestoel* établie par Frédéric Godefroy:

> « pliant de bois ou de métal que l'on pouvait transporter facilement et qui, recouvert d'un coussin et d'une tapisserie, servait de siège, de trône aux souverains, aux évêques, aux seigneurs; il a désigné en suite les chaises en bois, à dossier et à bras recouverts d'étoffes, employées particulièrent pour faire sa toilette, puis les chaises à tout usage, même la chaise de retrait ou chaise percée ».[24]

Tout comme son aspect, l'orthographe du mot *faldestoel* a évolué. Cette évolution combinée va alors donner naissance à plusieurs termes dérivés de ce mot. Le terme *faldestoel* fut ainsi traduit en latin sous les formes *faldistolium* ou *faldistorium*[25]: cette seconde variante fut ensuite traduit en français sous la forme *faldistoire,* qui désigne « un siège à accoudoirs, sans dossier, parfois pliant, réservé à l'évêque et à certains dignitaires de l'Église ».[26] Ainsi que l'examen des variantes du mot *faldestoel* données par Frédéric Godefroy permet de le constater, la première syllabe du mot *faldestoel* fut assez rapidement remplacé par la syllabe *fau-*, tandis que la fin de ce mot évoluait notamment en *-steuil*, *-stué*, *-stueil -stuel* ou encore *-tuel*.[27] La variante *faudestuel* est ainsi attestée dès la seconde moitié du XII[e] siècle sous la plume de Chrétien de Troyes[28] alors que les formes *faudestueill* et *faudestueil* apparaissent au siècle

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[22] « Faldestoel », dans F. Godefroy, *Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française…*, p. 712.

[23] « Fauteuil», dans Centre National de Ressources Textuelles et Lexicales, https://www.cnrtl.fr/definition/fauteuil, consulté le 6 septembre 2025.

[24] « Faldestoel », *ibidem*.

[25] « Faldistoire », dans Centre National de Ressources Textuelles et Lexicales, https://www.cnrtl.fr/definition/faldistoire, consulté le 6 septembre 2025.

[26] *Ibidem*, note précédente.

[27] « Faldestoel », *ibidem*.

[28] « Faldestoel », *ibidem*, et « fauteuil », *ibidem*.

suivant.[29] L'usage de la terminaison en -euil va contribuer à créer le terme *faudesteuil*,[30] qui désigne un « siège parfois pliant, à bras et généralement à dossier, pour une personne, et dont la partie inférieure rappelle la chaise curule ».[31] Durant la seconde moitié du XVI[e] siècle, la supression de la syllabe centrale du mot *faudesteuil*, donne naissance au mot « fauteuil », qui désigne un « siège à dossier, généralement à bras, pour une personne, et dans lequel on est assis confortablement ».[32] Par la suite, le mot fauteuil se diffusa dans un certain nombre de langues européennes, principalement germaniques et slaves, ces dernières en modifiant souvent l'orthographe et la prononciation.

Cette très rapide présentation de l'histoire du mot *faldestoel* et de ses dérivés démontre que ces termes désignent en réalité des objets assez différentes les uns des autres: alors que le *faldestoel* originel était clairement pliable, facilement transportable et dépouvu d'accordoirs et de dossier, ce qui lui conférait un aspect proche de celui de la chaise curule, le *faldistorium* et le faudesteuil demeurent eux aussi le plus souvent pliants mais peuvent être munis d'accoudoirs et de dossiers, ce qui contribue à les rendre plus confortables, mais également moins maniables. Par ailleurs, il convient de souligner que la définition initiale du *faldestoel* ne semble pas compatible avec la description du trône d'or de Charlemagne figurant dans la *Chronique* d'Adémar de Chabannes, puisque le texte du chroniqueur aquitain suggère assez clairement que cet objet possédait un dossier.

2. UN PARALLÈLE INTÉRESSANT: LE « TRÔNE DE DAGOBERT »

Fort heureusement, l'art médiéval nous a légué une œuvre qui présente de nombreuses caractéristiques analogues à celles que les sources textuelles prêtent au trône d'or de Charlemagne et résout l'apparente contradition entre elles. Cette œuvre est d'ailleurs fort bien connue des historiens de l'art et du mobilier, puisqu'il s'agit du célèbre trône dit « de Dagobert », qui fut longtemps conservé à l'abbaye de Saint-Denis mais est désormais abrité par le Cabinet des Monnaies et Médailles de la Bibliothèque Nationale de France.[33]

Cet objet, qui présente d'ailleurs la particularité d'être le seul trône médiéval de bronze connu, a été réalisé en bronze fondu puis doré à la

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[29] *Idem* note précédente.

[30] « Fauteuil », *ibidem*. La forme *faudeteuil* a également subsisté jusqu'au XVII[e] siècle: voir « Faldestoel », *ibidem.*

[31] « Fauteuil », *ibidem.*

[32] *Ibidem*, note précédente.

[33] Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Monnaies et Médailles, numéro d'inventaire 55-651.

Image 1: Le « Trône de Dagobert», (époque carolingienne) Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Cabinet des Monnaies et Médailles, numéro d'inventaire 55-651. Source: Wikimédia Commons

feuille; il mesure 1m04 de haut pour 82 cm de large.[34] Le piètement se compose de quatre pieds figurant chacun un protomé de panthère surmontant une patte de félin. Ces pieds sont reliés entre eux par deux croisillons qui permettent de plier le trône ainsi que par cinq barres horizontales: deux de ces barres se trouvent à la base des pieds, deux autres à leurs sommets et la dernière relie les deux croisillons au niveau de leur centre. Le piètement est surmonté par les accoudoirs qui se composent chacun de deux parties: la partie inférieure des accoudoirs est décorée de rosettes (une partie des rosettes de l'accoudoir droit - si l'on se tient face au trône - est manquante)

[34] Informations tirées de « Trône dit de Dagobert » (Inv.55.651), BNF Médailles et Antiques, consulté le 9 septembre 2025 https://medaillesetantiques.bnf.fr/ws/catalogue/app/collection/record/ark:/12148/c33gbd4qs

alors que la partie supérieure est ornée de rinceaux. Le dossier, relativement étroit est ajouré : actuellement sa décoration se compose principalement de trois cercles, dont le plus grand, qui comportait vraisemblablement une croix, se trouve au centre, alors qu'un cercle plus petit est situé à chaque extremité. Le dossier comporte des vestiges de rinceaux, qui occupaient visiblement autrefois tout l'espace entre les cercles. À l'avant, un système de tringles et de charnières solidarise les deux parties de l'accoudoir entre elles ainsi qu'avec le piètement: l'une des tringles est surmontée une pomme côtelée, tandis que l'autre est surmontée d'une boule ajoutée durant l'une des restaurations du trône, qui en connut au moins trois (au XII^e siècle, à la fin du XIII^e siècle et au XIX^e siècle).[35] À l'arrière, un autre système de tringles et de charnières permet de joindre ensemble le dossier, les deux parties de l'accoudoir et le piètement: ces tringles sont surmontées de représentations de têtes masculines. L'existence de cet ensemble de tringles permet de démonter le trône en plusieurs parties, à savoir le piètement, les parties supérieures et inférieures de chaque accoudoir et le dossier, soit six éléments. Le caractère amovible des éléments constituant le trône permet de le porter beaucoup facilement, ce qui est un atout précieux étant donnés les nombreux déplacements effectués par les souverains haut-médiévaux. En outre, le fait que le dossier soit amovible permettait également de plier le trône avant que les croisillons ne soient munis de rivets durant l'une des phases de restauration.[36] Le « trône de Dagobert » est donc à la fois de couleur dorée dans le siège de Charlemagne dans la *Chronique* d'Adémar de Chabannes et dans la *Chanson de Roland*, mais il est aussi muni d'un dossier ainsi que cela est le cas dans le texte du chroniqueur aquitain et pouvait se plier, tout comme le *faldstoel* de la céèbbre chanson de geste- rappellons d'ailleurs que l'étymologie de ce mot indique précisément cette caractéristique. Le « trône de Dagobert » présente donc toutes les caractéristiques mentionnées dans les sources textuelles analysées plus haut et résout l'apparent paradoxe entre pliabilité et présence d'un dossier ; il convient par ailleurs de souligner que le « trône de Dagobert » est parfois désigné par les termes « faudestueil » ou « faudesteuil » dans certaines publications.[37]

Afin de mieux comprendre dans quelle mesure le « trône de Dagobert » peut contribuer à l'analyse de la tradition concernant le trône d'or de Charlemagne, il convient tout d'abord de s'interroger sur la genèse du trône conservé au Cabinet des Monnaies et des Médailles ainsi que de la tradition l'attribuant au souverain mérovingien. En ce qui concerne la datation du trône, l'hypothèse d'une origine mérovingienne de sa partie

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35 Informations tirées de « Trône dit de Dagobert », *ibidem.*

36 *Ibidem*, note précédente.

37 Jean Hubert, « Le fauteuil du roi Dagobert », *Demareteion* 1/1 (1935), p. 17.

Image 2: Enluminure de dédicace du *Psautier de Lothaire* (v. 850), Londres, British Library, Ms Add 37768 f. 4r. Source: Wikimédia Commons

inférieure (piètement, entretoises et croisillon) est désormais abandonnée au profit d'une réalisation au tournant des VIII^e^ et IX^e^ siècles[38] alors que les hypothèses les plus courantes pour la datation de la partie supérieure (le dossier et les accoudoirs) sont la seconde moitié du IX^e^ siècle et le tournant des VIII^e^ au IX^e^ siècle.[39] Cette seconde hypothèse suggère donc que les deux éléments du trône ont pu être fabriqués à la même époque et être assemblés dès leur création.

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38 « Trône dit de Dagobert », *ibidem*.

39 *Ibidem*, note précédente.

Les éléments en faveur d'une réalisation du « trône de Dagobert » durant l'époque carolingienne sont essentiellement d'ordre stylistique. Ainsi, la ressemblance entre le piètement du trône attribué au souverain mérovingien et celui du trône figurant sur l'enluminure de dédicace du *Psautier de Lothaire*[40] est fréquemment soulignée par les spécialistes.[41]

Sur cette enluminure, l'empereur Lothaire Ier est assis sur un trône dont ne voit que deux pieds. Comme ceux du trône conservé à la Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ces derniers sont de couleur or et ils sont parallèles entre eux, alors que l'extrême majorité des trônes pliants figurant dans l'iconographie médiévale comportent un piètement en forme de X. Ainsi, l'examen des sceaux des rois de France de la dynastie des Capétiens permet de constater que le trône à piètement zoomorphe composé d'un protomé de félin surmontant une patte d'un animal de même type apparait sur le second sceau de Philippe Ier (v. 1080)[42] avant d'être repris par de nombreux souverains capétiens. Cet examen démontre également que seul ce sceau ainsi que celui de Louis VI le Gros,[43] fils et successeur de Philippe Ier, comportent un trône à piètement droit, les sceaux ultérieurs présentant un trône dont le piètement est en forme de X. Par ailleurs, la partie supérieure du piètement du trône de Lothaire figurant dans l'enluminure de dédicace du psautier portant son nom comprend un protomé de panthère alors que la partie inférieure représente une patte de félin, ce qui permet de conclure les pieds du trône de Lothaire figurant dans l'enluminure de dédicace du psautier portant son nom présentent donc des caractéristiques absolument identiques à ceux du « trône de Dagobert ».

En ce qui concerne les autres éléments, il convient de souligner que souverain caroligien tient un long sceptre doré dans la main droite alors que sa main gauche tient une épée, elle aussi dorée. La présence de ces deux éléments constitue ainsi une similitude notable avec les descriptions des objets déposés dans la tombe de Charlemagne au sein de la *Chronique* d'Adémar de Chabannes. Les pieds de l'empereur Lothaire reposent sur un tabouret de couleur dorée; l'assise est peu visible, mais on remarque tout de même l'extremité d'un coussin de couleur rouge portant des points dorés. Le souverain porte une couronne en or, un manteau et des chaussures de même couleur, ainsi que des braies et des houseaux rouges. Le tabouret, la couronne, le manteau, le volumineux fibule fermant ce dernier, et le

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40 Londres, British Library, Ms Add 37768 f. 4r.

41 J. Hubert, « Le fauteuil du roi Dagobert », p. 22 et « Trône dit de Dagobert », *ibidem.*

42 « Sceau type Philippe Ier de France - grand sceau - Roi des Francs - 1080/1108 », https://sigilla.irht.cnrs.fr/5334, consulté le 26 Septembre 2025.

43 « Sigillant: Louis VI de France, roi de France (1108-1137) », https://sigilla.irht.cnrs.fr/45062, consulté le 26 Septembre 2025.

fourreau de l'épée de Lothaire sont par ailleurs ornés de petits motifs géométriques de diverses couleurs dont le but est de représenter des pierres précieuses.

En raison de la présence de l'empereur Lothaire sur le trône figurant sur l'enluminure de dédicace du psautier, il n'est pas possible de comparer tous les éléments de ce trône avec « le trône de Dagobert ». Ainsi, le souverain carolingien cache entièrement un éventuel dossier alors que les pans de son ample manteau descendent assez bas et ne permettent pas de déterminer si le trône est muni ou non d'un mécanisme permettant de le plier. En revanche, l'examen de l'assise permet d'affirmer que le trône visible sur l'enluminure ne comporte vraisemblablement pas d'accoudoirs, ce qui constitue une différence notable avec le « trône de Dagobert ». La présence de cette différence nous conduit donc à affirmer que le trône figurant sur l'enluminure du *Psautier de Lothaire* n'est pas identique au « trône de Dagobert » dans sa forme actuelle, mais le caractère identique du piétement des trônes suppose une influence de l'un des pièteménts sur l'autre ou bien l'existence d'un modèle commun.

Si l'analyse du trône figurant sur l'enluminure de dédicace du *Psautier de Lothaire* confirme que le piètement du « trône de Dagobert » a très certainement été réalisé durant la période carolongienne, cette enluminure ne nous est d'aucune utilité en ce qui concerne la genèse des accoudoirs et du dossier du trône conservé à la Bibliothèque Nationale de France. En revanche, il convient de souligner que les spécialistes mentionnent l'existence de similitudes (rainures parrallèles, formes des rinceaux des accoudoirs) entre le « trône de Dagobert » et les balustrades de la chapelle palatine d'Aix-la-Chapelle.[44]

Les éléments exposés ci-dessus démontrent clairement que le « trône de Dagobert » a très vraisemblablement été réalisé à l'époque carolingienne, ce qui exclut naturellement la possibilité qu'il ait appartenu au souverain mérovingien. Il nous faut donc maintenant retracer brièvement l'histoire de la tradition associant le trône conservé au Cabinet des Monnaies et des Médailles au roi Dagobert I.

La première mention d'une tradition attribuant un trône en or au souverain mérovingien figure dans les *Gesta Dagoberti Regis,* rédigés à Saint-Denis vers 835.[45] En effet, Dagobert I y est décrit comme portant sa couronne et *étant* assis dans un trône en or lors de la relation d'un plaid tenu au palais de Garges le 23 mai 636:

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44 Jean Hubert, « Le fauteuil du roi Dagobert », p. 23 et « Trône dit de Dagobert », *ibidem.*

45 *Gesta Dagoberti I Regis Francorum*, dans : MGH, Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum 2, éd. B. Krusch, Hannover 1889, p. 396-425.

> « *Cumque, ut Francorum regibus moris erat, super solium aurem coronatus resideret, omnibus coram positis, ita exortus est…* ».[46]

L'examen de ce court fragment permet de constater que l'auteur des *Gesta Dagoberti Regis* - parfois identifié à l'abbé de Saint Denis Hilduin ou au futur archevêque de Reims Hincmar - affirme clairement que le souverain mérovingien siégeait dans un trône en or ou du moins de couleur dorée, mais il n'associe pas directement cet objet à l'abbaye de Saint-Denis. En revanche, il rapporte que siéger dans un trône doré lors des plaids « était la coutume des rois des Francs (*Francorum regibus moris erat*) ». Il convient cependant de souligner que cette habitude ne semble mentionnée ni par la source principale des *Gesta Dagoberti Regis*, à savoir la *Chronique du Pseudo-Frédégaire*, ni par l'*Histoire des Francs* de Grégoire de Tours. Ainsi que nous l'avons vu, l'existence de tels trônes est toutefois matériellement attestée au IX^e^ siècle et il est donc possible que l'auteur des *Gesta Dagoberti Regis* ait transposé cet élément provenant de son époque au règne du célèbre souverain mérovingien.

La première source textuelle attribuant le trône autrefois conservé à l'abbaye de Saint-Denis et désormais abrité au Cabinet des Monnaies et des Médailles à Dagobert I a pour sa part été composée environ trois siècles après les *Gesta Dagoberti Regis*, puisqu'il s'agit du *De Administratione* de Suger, abbé de Saint-Denis de 1122 à 1151. Dans cet ouvrage, le biographe du roi de France Louis VI le Gros dresse le bilan de son abbatiat et mentionne ses différentes actions en faveur du patrimoine meuble et immeuble de l'abbaye. À la fin de son récit, il se concentre plus particulièrement sur les objets précieux de l'abbaye et rapporte qu'il a fait rénover le trône de Dagobert I:

> « *Nec minus nobilem gloriosi regis Dagoberti cathedram, in qua, ut perhibere solet antiquitas, reges Francorum suscepto regni imperio ad suscipienda optimatum suorum hominia, primum sedere consueverant, tum pro tanti excellentia officii, tum etiam pro operis ipsius pretio, antiquatam et disruptam refeci fecimus.*»[47]

L'analyse de ce passage du *De administratione* révèle deux différences significatives entre ce texte et la mention du trône utilisé par Dagobert I dans les *Gesta Dagoberti Regis*. La première de ces deux différences est le fait que Suger n'utilise pas l'adjectif *aureus* en référence au trône de Dagobert I: l'absence de cette mention peut suggérer que la dorure appliquée sur cet objet était déjà passablement défraichie à l'époque de Suger, mais cette hypothèse

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46 *Gesta Dagoberti I Regis Francorum…*, p. 416.

47 *Sugeri abbatis sancti Dionysis liber de rebus in administratione sua*, éd. P.J. Migne, Patrologia Latina 186, Paris 1854, col. 1237.

demeure douteuse car immédiatement après le passage concernant le trône de Dagobert I, l'abbé de Saint-Denis mentionne avoir fait redorer un aigle se trouvant au milieu du choeur.[48]

La seconde différence entre les *Gesta Dagoberti Regis* et le *De administratione regis* réside dans l'usage supposé du trône par les rois des Francs. Alors que les *Gesta Dagoberti Regis* décrivent Dagobert I assis dans un trône d'or au cours d'un plaid, Suger insiste sur le fait que les rois des Francs utilisaient essentiellement le trône lors de leur intronisation pour y recevoir les hommages de leurs principaux vassaux. Si l'insistance de l'abbé de Saint-Denis sur ce point est peut-être à mettre en relation avec ses efforts infructueux pour faire de son abbaye le nouveau lieu de couronnement des rois de France,[49] l'association du trône conservé dans le trésor de l'abbaye à Dagobert I témoigne de la volonté de Suger de renforcer les liens existant entre Saint-Denis et le souverain mérovingien, désigné comme fondateur de l'abbaye depuis l'époque carolingienne, afin de rehausser le prestige de son monastère par le truchement de liens avec le pouvoir royal.[50] Suger n'est d'ailleurs pas le seul abbé de Saint-Denis à utiliser la figure de Dagobert I afin d'assurer la position de son abbaye, puisque cette pratique subsiste durant l'abbatiat de son successeur, Eudes de Deuil, qui fait forger environ une douzaine de fausses chartes, dont cinq prétenduement issues par Dagobert I,[51] pour le prieuré dyonisien de la Chapelle-Aude (auj. La Chapelaude, département de l'Allier).[52]

L'analyse de la genèse du trône conservé au Cabinet des Monnaies et Médailles de la Bibliothèque Nationale de France ainsi que de la tradition l'associant à Dagobert I démontre que le trône et la première mention de l'usage d'un trône d'or par ce souverain datent de l'époque carolingienne alors l'association du « trône de Dagobert » avec le roi mérovingien n'apparait qu'au XII^{e} siècle. Il convient donc de s'interroger sur la fonction initiale de ce trône, dont la réalisation précède de trois siècles le texte de Suger. Dans son article sur le « trône de Dagobert », Jean Hubert suggère qu'il a pu servir de trône à Pépin le Bref lors de la consécration de l'autel de la nouvelle église de Saint-Denis en 754 ou bien à son fils Charlemagne à l'occasion de

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48 *Sugeri abbatis sancti Dionysis liber de rebus in administratione sua, ibidem:* « *Aquilam vero in medio chori admirantium tacti frequento dedaureatam reaurari fecimus* ».

49 Rolf Grosse, « Les impostures de l'abbé Suger », *Comptes-rendus des séances de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres* (2022), p. 1237-1239. Voir aussi Jean Hubert, « Le fauteuil du roi Dagobert », p. 24-25.

50 Rolf Grosse, « Les impostures de l'abbé Suger », p. 1248-1250. Voir aussi Jean Hubert, « Le fauteuil du roi Dagobert », p. 25.

51 *Cartulaire (fragments du) de la Chapelle Aude*, éd. M.-A. Chazaud, Moulins 1860, p. 5-13.

52 Cornelius Van De Kieft, *Étude sur le chartrier et la seigneurie du Prieuré de La Chapelle Aude (XIe XIIIe siècle)*, Assen 1960, p. 48-59.

la cérémonie de dédicace de l'église en 775,[53] mais il se montre toutefois plus prudent dans la conclusion de son étude. En effet, Jean Hubert déclare tout d'abord qu'il « ne [s]e reconnai[t] nullement le droit d'affirmer que la légende rapportée par Suger ne mérite aucune créance »[54] et ajoute à propos du trône autrefois conservé à Saint-Denis qu'« il n'est nullement certain que ce fut un trône royal »[55] avant de suggérer qu' « il se pourrait donc que le « Fauteuil de Dagobert » n'eût été fait que pour servir de siège de chœur à l'abbé, comme le suggère M. Levillain,[56] soit à l'évêque particulier du monastère[57] et, en définitive, il faut se résoudre à ignorer sa date exacte ainsi que sa destination primitive ».[58]

Malgré cette mise en garde, il convient de souligner que les historiens de l'art ont continué leurs tentatives pour percer les mystères du « trône de Dagobert ». Ainsi, Isabelle Bardiès-Fonty a suggéré dans une publication récente que ce trône a pu être fabriqué à l'initiative de Charles le Chauve, roi de Francie occidentale de 843 à 877.[59] Si cette datation semble correspondre à celle proposée par les experts, l'hypothèse d'une réalisation du trône durant le règne de Charles le Chauve s'accorde moins facilement avec les témoignages des sources carolingiennes, comme les *Gesta Dagoberti Regis*, qui présente l'usage du trône en or comme une habitude déjà bien ancrée, ou la miniature du *Psautier de Lothaire*, qui représente le frère de Charles assis sur un trône présentant certaines similitudes avec celui conservé au Cabinet des Monnaies et Médailles de la Bibliothèque Nationale de France. Cette apparente contradiction résulte peut-être de l'existence de plusieurs trônes semblables, tandis que le texte des *Gesta Dagoberti Regis* semble suggérer que l'usage d'un trône en or était probablement déjà connu à l'époque des premiers Carolingiens.

CONCLUSION

Bien que surprenante, la mention par le chroniqueur aquitain Adémar de Chabannes d'un trône d'or ayant apartenu à Charlemagne n'est pas un cas isolé. En effet, si les autres sources relatant l'ouverture du tombeau de Charlemagne à Aix-la-Chapelle en l'an mil à l'initiative d'Otton III ne font pas état d'un trône en or - seule la *Chronique de Novalaise* affirme que le défunt

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53 Jean Hubert, « Le fauteuil du roi Dagobert », p. 19-20.

54 *Ibidem*, p. 24.

55 *Ibidem*, note précédente.

56 L. Levillain *Les plus anciennes églises abbatiales de Saint-Denis*, Paris 1909, p. 174-175.

57 *Idem*, « Études sur l'abbaye de Saint-Denis à l'époque mérovingienne », *Bibliothèque de l'époque des chartes* 87 (1926), p. 33-34.

58 Jean Hubert, « Le fauteuil du roi Dagobert », p. 25.

59 I. Bardiès-Fronty, *Le trône de Dagobert*, Paris 2023, p. 46-51.

se trouvait assis dans une *cathedra*, sans plus de précisions -, la *Chanson de Roland* attribue un faudesteuil d'or pur au fils de Pépin le Bref. L'étude du cas d'un autre faudesteuil célèbre, à savoir le « trône de Dagobert », qui fut longtemps la propriété de l'abbaye de Saint-Denis mais est désormais conservé au Cabinet des Monnaies et Médailles de la Bibliothèque Nationale de France, démontre que ce trône n'est pas celui du souverain mérovingien mais date de la période carolingienne. Par ailleurs, la première trace incontestable d'une tradition associant explicitement le trône autrefois conservé à l'abbaye de Saint-Denis à Dagobert I n'apparait qu'au XII^{e} siècle sous la plume de l'abbé de Saint-Denis Suger. En revanche, la mention dans les *Gesta Dagoberti regis*, rédigés vers 835, du fait que Dagobert I siégeait dans un trône en or au plaid de Garges en 636 et que cela était la coutume du roi des Francs, suggère que l'usage d'un trône assez maniable de couleur dorée existait visiblement dès le règne des premiers Carolingiens. En outre, la présence de trônes en or comportant certaines similitudes avec le trône de la Bibliothèque Nationale de France dans l'enluminure du *Psautier de Lothaire* et sur les sceaux de deux souverains capétiens, souligne l'importance de ce type d'objet dans la représentation des souverains de Francie Occidentale. Dans ce contexte, le développement d'une tradition attribuant un trône en or et aisément transportable au plus célèbre des souverains francs, c'est à dire Charlemagne, n'est pas donc pas surprenant et l'analyse des sources matérielles, textuelles et iconographiques suggère que le souverain carolingien a peut-être possédé un trône de ce type, sans qu'il soit possible d'en être certain. Quoiqu'il en soit, nous pouvons donc en conclure que le motif du trône d'or de Charlemagne n'est vraisemblablement pas une invention d'Adémar de Chabannes, au contraire de l'épisode du don de ce trône par Otton III à Boleslas le Vaillant, qui n'apparait que dans l'oeuvre du chroniqueur aquitain et est en contradiction avec le récit figurant dans la *Chronique* du *Gallus Anonymus*.[60]

Abstract

***Solium eius aureum imperator Oto direxit regi Botisclavo…* Adémar de Chabannes, Bolesław the Brave and the golden throne of Charlemagne**

The relation of the deeds undertaken by Otto III and of Saint Adalbert of Prague's and Saint Bruno of Querfurt's missions in Central-Eastern Europe in the third book of the *Chronicle* written by Adémar de Chabannes (died in 1034), is undoubtedly one of the most problematic

[60] *Gesta principum Polonorum…*, p. 36.

sources about the history of the region around the year 1000. Although Adémar's work contains several enigmatic elements, the most disputed information given by the chronicler is clearly its statement that Charlemagne's golden throne was given to Bolesław the Brave by Otton III in exchange for Saint Adalbert of Prague's relics. However, the information about the existence of a golden throne which belonged to Charlemagne is clearly not the result of Adémar of Chabannes' well known tendancy to confabulation. The analysis of written, material and iconographical sources from the 9th to the 11th century proves the existence since the Carolingian Period of a tradition concerning the use of easily transportable thrones of golden color by the rulers of the Franks, and the mentions of Charlemagne's golden throne in Adémar de Chabannes' *Chronicle* and the *Song of Roland* clearly derive from this tradition. The study of Carolingian sources also suggests that rulers from this dynasty may have indeed possessed such thrones and it may also have been the case for Charlemagne. However, the mention of the gift of Charlemagne's golden throne to Bolesław the Brave by Otton III in Adémar de Chabannes' *Chronicle* most likely results from the intervention of the Aquitanian chronicler.

Keywords: Adémar de Chabannes, Charlemagne, Bolesław the Brave, Carolingian period, Kingdom of the Franks

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Bohemia in the Politics of Bolesław the Brave

Polish-Bohemian relations during the reign of Bolesław the Brave are one of the most important issues in the history of the first Piast monarchy. Mieszko I pursued two distinct policies towards Bohemia during his reign.[1] The first, from

[1] G. Labuda, *Studia nad początkami państwa polskiego*, vol. 1, Poznań 1987, p. 165; *Annales Altahenses maiores*, ed. W. Giesebrecht, E.L.B. von Oefele, Monumenta Germaniae Historica [further: MGH], Scriptores rerum Germ. 4, Hannover 1891, pp. 1-91; M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi i ich państwo (od X do połowy XI wieku). Ekspansja terytorialna i jej polityczne uwarunkowania*, Poznań 2008, pp. 166, 250-251, 252, 253, 256, 259, 264-265, 269; Ch. Lübke, *Regesten zur Geschichte der Slaven an Elbe und Oder (vom Jahr 900 an)*, vol. 2, *Regesten 900-983*, Berlin 1985, no. 190; R. Holtzmann, *Geschichte der sächsischen Kaiserzeit*, München 1941, p. 263; T. Manteuffel, *Państwo Mieszka a Europa*, "Kwartalnik Historyczny" 67 (1960) 4, pp. 1027; M. Samp, *Kontakty Mieszka z opozycją antyottońską Henryka Kłótnika. Zarys problematyki*, "Historia Slavorum Occidentis" 4 (2018), pp. 11; *idem*, *Wyprawa niemiecka na państwo piastowskie w 979 roku*, "Scripta Historica" 25 (2019), pp. 11, 13, 14; M. Matla, *Wokół wyboru (nominacji) pierwszych biskupów praskich*, "Historia Slavorum Occidentis" 1 (2016), pp. 40-63; Fr.-R. Erkens, *Fürstliche Opposition in ottonisch-salischer Zeit Überlegungen zum Problem der Krise des frühmittelalterlichen deutschen Reiches*, "Archiv für Kulturgeschichte" 64 (1982) 2, p. 342; H. Zeissberg, *Miseco I (Mieczysław), der erste christliche Beherrscher der Polen*, "Archiv für österreichische Geschichte" 38 (1867) 1, pp. 87; K. Uhlirz, *Jahrbücherdes Deutschen Reiches unter Otto II. und Otto III.*, vol. 1: *Otto II.* 973-983, Leipzig 1902, p. 29; A. Nebe, *Geschichte des Schlosses und der Stadt Allstedt*, "Zeitschrift des Harz-Vereins für Geschichte und Altertumskunde" 20 (1887) 1, pp. 21; C. Ehlers, *Könige, Klöster und der Raum. Die Entwicklung der kirchlichen Topographie Westfalens und Ostsachsens in karolingischer und ottonischer Zeit*, "Westfälische Zeitschrift" 153 (2003), p. 213; M.C. Blaich, *Überlegungen zur Herrscherrepräsentation in ostsächsischen Pfalzen und Domburgen des 10./11. Jahrhunderts*, "Mitteilungen der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Archäologie des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit" 25, 2013, p. 124; J.F. Böhmer, Regesta Imperii [further:

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the conclusion of his marriage with Dobrawa in 965 until her death in 977, was based on an alliance with the state of the first Přemyslids. The second policy, after her death and at the latest from 984 onwards, was directed against the Bohemian state until Mieszko I's death in 992.

After the death of Mieszko I and the unification of power in the hands of Bolesław, most likely already in 992, the policy towards Bohemia softened.[2] This was not a step backward, but rather a continuation of the previous

RI] II, 2 n. 820, Otto II., 980 September 8, Bothfeld; O. Balzer, *Genealogia Piastów*, Kraków 1895, p. 23; K. Jasiński, *Rodowód pierwszych Piastów*, Warszawa 1992, pp. 64, 85; K. Buczek, *Zagadnienie wiarygodności regestu Dagome iudex*, "Studia Źródłoznawcze" 10 (1965), p. 104; H. Ludat, *Piastowie i Ekkehardynowie*, "Przegląd Historyczny" 91 (2000), pp. 181-201; V. Novotný, *České dějiny. Dílu I. část 1, Od nejstarších dob do smrti knížete Oldřicha*, Praha 1912 [further: ČD1], pp. 617-621; Ch. Lübke, *Regesten zur Geschichte der Slaven an Elbe und Oder (vom Jahr 900 an)*, vol. 3, *Regesten 983-1013*, Berlin 1986, no. 231, pp. 58-64; *idem*, *Mocenské faktory na východě otonské říše v době Boleslava II.*, in: *Přemyslovský stát kolem roku 1000: Na paměť knížete Boleslava II. († 7. února 999)*, Praha 2000, p. 213; J. Sobiesiak, *Bolesław II Przemyślida pobożny buntownik i mąż znamienitej damy (†999)*, Kraków 2017, pp. 71, 92-113; *Słownik łaciny średniowiecznej*, ed. M. Plezia, V, 4 (38), Wrocław-Warszawa 1981, col. 487; B. Sternal, W. Braun, *Burgen und Schlösser der Harzregion*, vol. 4, Norderstedt 2013, p. 36; K. Uhlirz, *Rikdag*, in: *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, vol. 28, 1889, pp. 614-615; D. Borawska, *Mieszko I w gronome consanguineorum Ludolfingów*, „Społeczeństwo Polski średniowiecznej" I, Warszawa 1981, p. 29; P. Pranke, *Pierwsi Piastowie w kręgach arystokratycznych Cesarstwa*, „Rocznik Antropologii Historii" 1 (2011) 1-2, pp. 119-141; A. Pleszczyński, *Niemcy wobec pierwszej monarchii piastowskiej (963–1034). Narodziny stereotypu*, Lublin 2008, p. 43; T. Jasiński, *Początki rocznikarstwa w Polsce*, in: *Kościół, kultura, polityka w państwie pierwszych Piastów*, ed. W. Graczyk, J.M. Marszalska, W. Fałkowski, L. Zygner, Warszawa-Ciechanów 2016, pp. 169-185; B. Śliwiński, *Bezprym pierworodny syn pierwszego króla Polski (986-zima/wiosna 1032)*, Kraków 2014, pp. 35-59; S. de Vajay, *Grossfürst Geyza von Ungarn. Familie und Verwandschaft*, "Südostforschungen" 21, 1962, pp. 48, 51; G. Labuda, *Ze stosunków polsko-węgierskich w drugiej połowie X wieku*, in: *Europa – Słowiańszczyzna – Polska. Studia ku uczczeniu profesora Kazimierza Tymienieckiego*, ed. J. Bardach *et al*., Poznań 1970, p. 81; P. Báling, *Az Árpád-ház hatalmi kapcsolatrendszerei. Arpadiana VII*, Budapest 2021, p. 264; M. Bláhová, J. Frolík, N. Profantová, *Velké Dějiny Zemí Koruny České Svazek I. do roku 1197*, Litomyšl 1999 [further: VDZKČ1], pp. 310-311, 313; G. Althoff, *Adels- und Königsfamilien im Spiegel ihrer Memorialüberlieferung*, München 1984, p. 421; G. Rupp, *Die Ekkehardiner, Markgrafen von Meissen, und ihre Beziehungen zum Reich und zu den Piasten*, Frankfurt am Main 1996; J. Sláma, *Český kníže Boleslav II.*, in: *Přemyslovský…*, pp. 21-22; S. Moździoch, *Slezsko v 10. století*, in: *Přemyslovský…*, pp. 21-22, 222; J. Poleski, *Malopolsko v 10. století*, in: *Přemyslovský…*, p. 233; RI II: *Sächsisches Haus (919–1024)*, 2/2: *Otto II. (955) 973-983*, ed. H.L. Mikoletzky, 1950, no. 820; MGH, DD O II, no. 231, pp. 58-64; M. Uhlirz, *Jahrbücher…*, p. 124; RI II,2 n. 787b, Otto II., 979 August, Magdeburg; Thietmar, *Chronik*, ed. R. Holtzmann, MGH, Scriptores rerum Germ. n.s. 9, Hannover 1935 [further: Thietmar], VI, 89; III, 24 (14); III, 5; *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, ed. G.H. Pertz, MGH, Scriptores 3, Hannover 1839, p. 40.

[2] Ch. Lübke, *Regesten*, vol. 3, pp. 91-92; cf. K. Görich, *Eine Wende im Osten: Heinrich II. und Boleslaw Chrobry*, in: *Otto III. — Heinrich II. Eine Wende?*, ed. B. Schneidmüller, S. Weinfurter, Stuttgart 2000, pp. 102, 105; M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, pp. 278-280; J. Sobiesiak, *Bolesław II Przemyślida…*, pp. 79-80, 113-114.

course, all of whose goals had been achieved. In the initial period, and even shortly after the death of Boleslaus II, there are no signs that Bolesław the Brave sought further expansion. When expansion did occur later, it was not a result of continuing Mieszko I's policy, but was a consequence of the deep crisis of the Bohemian state, which became fully apparent after the death of Boleslaus II.[3]

This does not mean that Bolesław the Brave did not pursue a planned Bohemian policy. Everything indicates that his main goal initially became securing international, id est, German and ecclesiastical, approval for incorporating Mieszko I's conquests into the Polish state. Recognition of the Polish annexation by the German authorities and elites encountered no resistance from them, as during the wars, both in 984 and 990, Poland was an ally of Germany (Saxony) and the Saxon dynasty, while the Bohemians at that time remained in a camp hostile to the Ludolfing dynasty.[4] It seems that Boleslaus II, after losing all of Silesia, understood that further cooperation with the Liutizi and continued opposition to the ruling dynasty could lead to further defeats. He decided to change his policy towards Otto III and the Liutizi, as evidenced by his participation in Otto III's expedition against the Liutizi in 992. He also probably hoped that after Mieszko I's death (May 25, 992), he might reach an agreement with his nephew. This was unrealistic, but it is not impossible that the unification of the Polish lands by Bolesław the Brave had not yet fully occurred at that time - and we try to guess the intentions of Boleslaus II the Pious - perhaps he needed Bohemian support, especially since he could not count on German support in this case.

We can assume that the Bohemians, in exchange for regaining Silesia, would gladly have supported Bolesław, son of Mieszko. However, these are only speculations and considerations lacking any source basis. Interestingly, the account in the *Annals of Hildesheim*, detailed enough to inform about the threat to Bolesław from Rus', is silent about any participation in the expedition by Oda and her sons.[5] Was she therefore deprived of power in the Gniezno state along with her sons by this time, id est, the summer of 992? If so, Bolesław's direct participation at this moment in the Saxon expedition against the Liutizi could have led to intervention by the Saxon aristocracy with the emperor, even his intervention in the name of "justice" and in defense of a Saxon aristocrat. Bolesław also had to reckon with Bohemian claims. Therefore, it is very likely that Bolesław the Brave's absence during this expedition was not only due to the threat from Rus'.

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[3] Cf. D. Kalhous, *Boleslav III.: kníže na konci časů?*, in: *Ad vitam et honorem Profesoru Jaroslavu Meznikovi přátelé a žáci k pětasedmdesátým narozeninám*, Brno 2003, pp. 221-229.

[4] See footnote 1.

[5] *Annales hildesheimenses*, p. 69.

The expedition of 992 was the first challenge in Bolesław the Brave's Bohemian policy, who - as later events show - sought to strengthen his rule over Silesia and the Cracow region. It seems that Bolesław primarily decided to patiently wait for upcoming opportunities, including the deepening crisis of the Bohemian state. As we know, in 1000, as a result of the Congress of Gniezno, the Archdiocese of Gniezno was established, incorporating, among others, two new bishoprics - Wrocław and Kraków. I consider this an extraordinary success for Bolesław the Brave (even abstracting from the (geo) political successes of the Polish ruler), because the lands of the Wrocław bishopric were carved out of the Prague bishopric, and the Cracow one out of the Olomouc bishopric. Furthermore, both these territories were additionally removed from the metropolitan jurisdiction of Mainz and attached to - as already noted - Gniezno.[6] This was an extremely complicated and very difficult constitutional-organizational operation;[7] it suffices to recall the difficulties and resistance Otto I encountered in the past when he wanted to establish the Archbishopric of Magdeburg.[8]

What contributed to Bolesław's success? Did the Polish ruler, aiming for this goal, remember the obstacles, even the smallest ones, that the Bohemians might place in his path?

Firstly, the Bohemians, fighting against Polish expansion for many years, and certainly since 990, relied on an alliance with the pagan Liutizi. This meant that in the eyes of contemporary opinion, the Polish side stood on the righteous "Christian" side, while the Bohemians sided with rebellion and paganism. Secondly, the conflict between the Přemyslids and the Slavníks, which to a significant degree turned European opinion against the former, helped Bolesław the Brave. Recent research proves that from the moment he became Bishop of Prague, Adalbert (Vojtěch), a representative of the Slavník dynasty, promoted the cult of Saint Wenceslas (Václav) in internal circles, but

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[6] Thietmar IV, 45-49, pp. 183-189; cf. *Kronika Thietmara*, ed. and transl. M.Z. Jedlicki, Poznań 1953 [further: Jedlicki], pp. 77-80.

[7] G. Labuda, *Der „Akt von Gnesen" vom Jahre 1000. Bericht über die Forschungsvorhaben und -ergebnisse*, „Quaestiones Medii Aevi Novae" 5, 2000, pp. 145-188.

[8] W. Jasiński, *Bulla Jana XIII dla biskupstwa w Miśni z 2 stycznia 968 roku – falsyfikat czy autentyk? Przyczynek do studiów nad początkami Kościołów miśnieńskiego i poznańskiego*, „Roczniki Historyczne" 79 (2013), pp. 7-39; D.A. Sikorski, *O rzekomej fundacji biskupstwa w Miśni 2 stycznia 968 roku*, „Roczniki Historyczne" 80 (2014), pp. 31-56; W. Jasiński, *Jeszcze o autentyczności dokumenty Jana XIII dla biskupstwa miśnieńskiego z 2 stycznia 968 roku*, „Roczniki Historyczne" 80 (2014), pp. 31-56; D.A. Sikorski, *Ponownie o autentyczności dokumentu miśnieńskiego z 968 roku (i metodzie w dyplomatyce)*, „Roczniki Historyczne" 81 (2015), pp. 277-292; W. Jasiński, *W odpowiedzi*, „Roczniki Historyczne" 81 (2015), p. 292; cf. also *idem, Die Bulle Johannes' XIII. für das Bistum Meißen vom 2. Januar 968: echt oder gefälscht? Ein Beitrag zu den Anfängen der Kirchen von Meißen und Posen*, „Archiv für Diplomatik, Schriftgeschichte, Siegel- und Wappenkunde" 60 (2014), pp. 87-115.

also in the circles of the Holy Roman Empire and Italy. Even if we attribute purely non-political goals to him in promoting this cult, regardless, it struck at the honor and reputation of Boleslaus II as the son of the saint's murderer.[9] Most likely, Saint Adalbert was the inspirer, and perhaps even partly the author, of the first *Life of Saint Wenceslas*, the *Crescente fide*, generally written already in the first year of Saint Adalbert's Prague pontificate[10] (after February 19, 982, and before April 983). Also at his initiative, the *Life of Saint Wenceslas* by Gumpold, Bishop of Mantua, was created. This is indirectly evident from Adalbert's itinerary, which also indicates that the Bishop of Prague, before starting to promote the new cult, secured its approval by Emperor Otto II. This was an extremely brilliant move, forcing the Přemyslids, including the sons of Boleslaus I the Cruel, to recognize the new cult. The *Gumpold Legend* was created on the order of Otto II, inspired by Saint Adalbert, and was most likely compiled in May-June 983 in Verona or nearby Mantua, during a great assembly of princes and bishops not only from the Reich.[11] Shortly before the assembly began in Verona, around mid-May 983 - as the authors of *Regesta Imperii* accept - a meeting took place in Pavia between Otto II and his wife with Abbot Majolus of Cluny, Bishop Gerhard of Toul, and Saint Adalbert. The creation of the *Life of Saint Wenceslas* by Bishop Gumpold at this time proves that the matter of this saint's cult must have been constantly discussed in these broad and influential circles of the European elite. This cult later reminded educated circles in Bohemia, Germany, and Italy that Boleslaus II not only opposed - as they knew firsthand - the "legitimate" rulers of Germany, allied with rebels and pagans, or rather worse, apostates, but also - although this was not said aloud - that he was the son of Saint Wenceslas's murderer. Therefore, when Adalbert, a holy man and bishop, had to leave his diocese twice, regardless of the real reasons, people primarily remembered, on the one hand, the sins of the Přemyslids, and on the other, the holiness of the pious bishop.

Boleslaus II committed or allowed the most reckless act in 995. While the Slavníks were strengthening their position in Bohemia - minting their own coin (both Soběslav and Bishop Adalbert did so), drawing increasing revenues from silver mining and trade routes crossing their duchy, maintaining their own sizable retinue - Boleslaus II undoubtedly saw all this as a challenge to his own dynasty. This challenge was all the greater because the Slavníks, both Bishop Adalbert and Soběslav, maintained direct contacts

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[9] W. Jasiński, *Legenda Krystiana - autentyk czy mistyfikacja? Żywot i męczeństwo św. Wacława i św. Ludmiły w świetle analizy historycznej i filologicznej. Studium źródłoznawcze*, Poznań 2020.

[10] *Ibidem*, pp. 106-110, 151-154, 164.

[11] *Ibidem*, p. 108.

with the Liudolfings, even with the imperial family and Emperor Otto III himself. We do not know if they also enjoyed the support of Bolesław the Brave at that time, but this ruler's later contacts with Soběslav and Bishop Adalbert indicate that the ties between the Piasts and the Slavníks must have predated 995. Scholars still debate whether Boleslaus II was responsible for the murder of the Slavníks at Libice in 995 and the liquidation of their duchy. It is obvious that this could not have happened without his consent. This is argued not only by the prince's position in a patrimonial monarchy, but also, if we are to trust the sources, we should believe the account of the contemporary Bruno of Querfurt more than that of the later Cosmas, who, contrary to all facts, consistently built the image of Boleslaus II as a pious prince.

Boleslaus II attacked the Slavníks at Libice at the worst possible moment. At that very time, Soběslav, Bishop Adalbert's own brother, was away on a military campaign against the Liutizi. The timing of Boleslaus II's attack on Libice, the seat of the Slavník family, can be considered opportune because at that moment the Slavník retinue could not defend Libice and was fighting alongside Otto III against the Polabian Slavs. From the perspective of the elites of contemporary Europe, especially those living in Central Europe, Boleslaus II's act completely discredited him in their eyes.[12] A ruler was obliged to protect the family and property of a prince who went to fight pagans. In Otto's eyes, this must have been an unimaginable crime: while Soběslav was providing him support against rebels and pagans, the Bohemian prince massacred his family at that very time. This could only be assessed as an extremely hostile act towards the emperor, and moreover, an act supporting rebels and apostates.

This deed strengthened Bolesław the Brave's position in the struggle for the final status of the lands that Mieszko I had already conquered from the Bohemian monarchy. As we can assume, following the described events, cooperation deepened between Bolesław the Brave and the surviving Slavníks. Soběslav found refuge in Poland, and Adalbert, in the new political situation, chose Poland as the destination for his journey, and primarily as the base for his future Christianizing mission to Prussia.[13]

After Saint Adalbert suffered martyrdom at the hands of the Prussians, Bolesław could proceed to strengthen his state by incorporating his country as Sclavinia into Otto III's political program – *renovatio imperii*. This last goal was not only important ideologically, as it strengthened the authority of the Polan state and elevated its sovereignty to a new level, but also because

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[12] Ch. Lübke, *Regesten*, vol. 3, pp. 91-92; cf. K. Görich, *Eine Wende im Osten…*, pp. 102, 105; M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, pp. 278-280; J. Sobiesiak, *Bolesław II Przemyślida…*, pp. 79-80, 113-114.

[13] See above footnote 1.

within this program, Bolesław envisaged actions amounting to "wresting" Mieszko's conquests, made at the expense of Boleslaus II, from the Bohemian bishoprics subordinate to the Archbishopric of Mainz. I believe that in the literature, the Gniezno Congress is discussed with too little consideration of Polish-Bohemian relations. Its state-ecclesiastical decisions confirmed and sanctioned the conquests from Bohemia, namely the Cracow region and Silesia. The final decision by Otto III in this matter was undoubtedly facilitated by the fact that Boleslaus II the Pious died in early February 999. Although in the eyes of the contemporary European elites and Otto himself he was completely discredited, his death nevertheless gave new momentum to the whole affair; the Gniezno Congress, which opened a new stage in Polish-Bohemian relations, took place a year and a month after his death.

At this point, the question must undoubtedly be asked: how did Bishop Willigis of Mainz consent to carving out new bishoprics from parts of his suffragan sees of Prague and Olomouc and subordinating them to the newly emerging Archdiocese of Gniezno? Did Otto III have to resort to pressuring the archbishop in this case, and did he ultimately manage to wrest Willigis's consent? Written sources are silent on this matter; at first glance, it looks as if it happened without involving the archbishop in these issues. Indirectly, however, we can note certain facts that speak for an active role of Archbishop Willigis in this matter. Otto III, on his pilgrimage from Rome to Gniezno in 1000, on the way from Regensburg, met the Archbishop of Mainz in Kirchburg, most likely near Jena.[14] We do not know if the archbishop joined Otto's pilgrimage, but the fact that the emperor received the archbishop *honorifice* and settled other matters of his favorably proves that there was no longer any point of contention between them. Or perhaps there never had been.

Much, however, indicates that a very serious and unexpected dispute had previously arisen between Willigis and Otto III. Archbishop Willigis had been one of Otto III's closest collaborators since the death of Otto II. Relations between Otto III and Archbishop Willigis were always excellent until an unexpected and serious crisis in November 997, thus already several months after the death of Saint Adalbert. Commentators of *Regesta Imperii* note that during his expedition to Italy at the end of 997, Otto entrusted the management of the affairs of the Reich during his absence to his aunt, Abbess Matilda of Quedlinburg, daughter of Otto I and Adelaide. On this occasion, they note that this decision proves beyond any doubt that Archbishop Willigis had completely lost Otto III's trust, which he had previously possessed, and that with this move, Archbishop Willigis completely disappeared for several years from the circle of Otto III's most trusted collaborators. They add that

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14 RI II, 3: *Die Regesten des Kaiserreiches unter Otto III. 980 (983)–1002*, Wien 1956, no. 1349a.

the cause of this fact remains completely unknown. The authors of *Regesta Imperii* try to point to certain misunderstandings between the emperor and the Archbishop of Mainz, but it is improbable that such questionable differences of opinion led to the emperor losing trust in Willigis. One can assume that Willigis may have betrayed Emperor Otto III when he tried to oppose - we remain only in the realm of conjecture - the taking away of territories (id est, Silesia and the Cracow region) from his two suffragans and the creation from them of two new bishoprics that were to come under the care of the yet-to-be-established Archdiocese of Gniezno.

Perhaps an agreement between the archbishop and the emperor - we are still moving in the realm of hypotheses - was reached soon after, when Willigis, with the consent, or perhaps even on the order, of Otto III, consecrated the new Bishop of Prague, Thiadagus, which took place on July 7, 998. It is difficult to guess whether Boleslaus II himself, healed by Thiadagus, or the emperor himself aimed for this. Thiadagus ultimately proved to be a loyal servant of the Reich, as evidenced by his later disputes with Boleslaus III and Ekkehard's effective interventions in his defense. We do not know the reasons for Boleslaus the Red's disfavor towards Thiadagus, but it is easy to calculate that they occurred in the period from the death of Boleslaus II (February 7, 999) to the death of Ekkehard (April 30, 1002).[15] These are the extreme dates, and within them also falls the year from February 999 to February 1000, when the most intensive political preparations for the Gniezno Congress were underway. Therefore, it cannot be ruled out that the disputes between Prince Boleslaus the Red and the Prague bishop Thiadagus concerned this issue. The bishop of a territory whose ecclesiastical affiliation was planned to be changed had much to say, as we remember from the prehistory of the Archbishopric of Magdeburg, which I wrote about in my articles concerning the authenticity of the papal diploma of January 2, 968, for the Bishopric of Meissen.[16] Such an ordinary bishop could protest against the changes and block the reform program. It is obvious that the Bohemian prince Boleslaus must have pressured Thiadagus to protest, and it cannot be certain that the bishop appointed by Emperor Otto and consecrated by Archbishop Willigis succumbed to this pressure. This could have been (but did not have to be) one of the reasons that led to

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[15] B. Krzemieńska, *Břetislav I. Čechy a střední Evropa v prvé polovině XI. století*, Praha 1999, pp. 18, 20, 25; J. Žemlička, *Rod Přemyslovců na rozhraní 10. a 11. století*, in: *Přemyslovský*, p. 271; J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry*, Warszawa 2014, p. 83; M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, pp. 385-387; J. Sobiesiak, *Przemyślidzi między Henrykiem II a Bolesławem Chrobrym, czyli o okolicznościach, które zapoczątkowały zależność lenną czeskich książąt od władców Rzeszy*, „Historia Slavorum Occidentis" 3 (2019), pp. 48-49.

[16] See above footnote 8.

the expulsion of Thiadagus from Prague at the beginning of Boleslaus III the Red's reign.[17]

Did Bolesław the Brave contribute to solving this problem? Asking this question is unjustified, as we know nothing about this dispute or whether it even concerned Polish-Bohemian matters. Summarizing the period 992-1000 in Polish-Bohemian relations, we can note the absence of any actions by Bolesław the Brave against Bohemia, planning any further annexations of Bohemian territory, or attempts to interfere in Bohemian affairs. The only thing we can suspect are Bolesław's actions that led to the creation of the Archdiocese of Gniezno, which meant the final state-ecclesiastical recognition of the annexation of Mieszko I's conquests from the monarchy of Boleslaus II. In light of these remarks, we must also reject all hypotheses of Czech and German scholars that rely on sources created after 1039, id est, after Bretislaus brought the relics of Saint Adalbert from Gniezno to Prague. Many annalists who reworked old records often inserted Prague instead of Gniezno as the place of Emperor Otto III's plans. These records became the starting point for the most diverse hypotheses, which, in the face of the clear account of Thietmar's *Chronicle* and other reliable sources, are not worth considering.

With the death of Boleslaus II in 999 and Otto III in 1002 (Note: This seems to be an error; Otto III died in 1002), a new stage began in Polish-Bohemian relations. First, a few words should be said about the period 999-1002, when Bolesław the Brave did not lose sight of Bohemian affairs. He pursued his policy through cooperation with Margrave Ekkehard of Meissen, who held this important function after the death of Rikdag. From Thietmar's account, we know that the new ruler of Bohemia and the eldest son of Boleslaus the Pious, Boleslaus III the Red, became a vassal (Lat. *miles*) of the Ekkehard I. Margrave of Meissen.[18] Historians wonder whether this happened because Otto III entrusted Ekkehard with special powers regarding Bohemia, or whether it was on the margrave's own initiative. Due to the lack of sources, this issue cannot be definitively resolved; however, we can assume that Ekkehard was not endowed with any additional competencies, and the situation developed due to local conditions. Ekkehard must have quickly gained significant influence over Boleslaus the Red, as the Bohemian prince, due to the crisis of the entire state, lacked the support of the local aristocracy and knighthood, who were, firstly, dissatisfied with the inability to satisfy their

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[17] V. Novotný, ČD1, p. 668; K. Görich, *Eine Wende…*, pp. 106-107; A. Pleszczyński, *Bolesław Chrobry w Czechach. Realizacja idei Sklawinii czy zwykła ekspansja?*, in: *Polacy w Czechach Czesi w Polsce X–XVIII wiek*, ed. W. Iwańczak, H. Gmiterek, Lublin 2004, pp. 137-139; D. Kalhous, *Boleslav III…*, pp. 221-229; M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, pp. 383-384.

[18] Cf. below footnote 21.

aspirations, and secondly, sought to expand their power relative to the ruler in the face of the weakening princely authority. The latter became increasingly weaker, and additionally faced growing competition from the junior princes: Jaromír and Oldřich.[19] Scholarship holds various views on the wives of Boleslaus II and the mothers of his children Boleslaus III the Red, Jaromír, and Oldřich. In this situation, Boleslaus III the Red fell into increasing dependence on the Margrave of Meissen. Furthermore, Meissen as well as Milsko and Lusatia (which remained under the rule of Ekkehard's brother Gunzelin and his brother-in-law Bolesław the Brave) cut off Bohemia from its potential allies - the Liutizi.

Bolesław the Brave's policy towards Boleslaus the Red during his first reign in Bohemia most likely consisted of weakening Bohemia by supporting Ekkehard, who became for the Polish ruler - as Thietmar writes - a close, equal collaborator (Lat. *amicus*). Ultimately, the alliance of Bolesław the Brave and Margrave Ekkehard of Meissen was directed primarily against Bohemia. Undoubtedly, both allies took joint steps aimed at preventing the strengthening or independence of Bohemia. Ekkehard's younger brother Gunzelin must also have played an important role in this alliance; he - as we accept following Heinrich Ludat - married Emnilda's sister.[20]

This entire system collapsed with the death, first of Emperor Otto III on January 23/24, 1002, and then of Ekkehard on April 30 of the same year. Bolesław the Brave's alliance with the emperor ensured the appropriate rank of the Polish ruler on a macropolitical scale, and regionally guaranteed military cooperation in combating the Liutizi, who were - as Thietmar emphasized - allies of the Bohemian state. Cooperation with Ekkehard, and through him kinship via Gunzelin, allowed the ruler of the Polans to keep Bohemia in check all the time, combat any "revisionist" actions on their part, and moreover, prevented or hindered the Bohemians from establishing direct contacts with the Liutizi. After Otto III's death, the situation was not yet critical for Bolesław the Brave, as quite unexpectedly his closest German ally, Margrave Ekkehard, became one of the most serious candidates for the German throne. The margrave, we assume, enjoyed the unlimited support of the Polish ruler, and his "vassal" Prince Boleslaus the Red must also have supported him, although - as Thietmar informs - he ultimately supported Henry.[21] However, this might only have happened after Ekkehard's death.

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[19] Cf. J.A. Sobiesiak, *Bolesław II…*, pp. 36-38, 207-220.

[20] Cf. above footnote 1.

[21] Thietmar V, 7(5), p. 228; Jedlicki, pp. 97-98; V. Novotný, ČD1, pp. 662, 666-670; B. Krzemieńska, *Břetislav I. Čechy…*, p. 11; J. Sláma, *Český kníže…*, pp. 13-14; M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, pp. 383-389; J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, p. 83.

The events following Ekkehard's murder, in which affairs Bolesław the Brave participated, were presented by Thietmar in a particularly tendentious manner. Only between the lines of his *Chronicle* can we read about events that the Bishop of Merseburg veiled in silence. The Merseburg chronicler's claim that Bolesław the Brave rejoiced at Ekkehard's killing must be considered completely unreliable, as it was a true political disaster for the Polish ruler. From Thietmar's unreliable account emerges the real picture of the situation. Bolesław did not act blindly; maintaining the old alliance with the Ekkehardings, in this case with Gunzelin of Kuckenburg, he tried to secure his and Gunzelin's rule, which they jointly held by right of marrying Dobromir's daughters. Did Bolesław the Brave seek to seize Meissen, as Thietmar attributes to him? Of course, this cannot be completely ruled out, although cooperation with Gunzelin clearly argues against this assertion. It seems implausible that Ekkehard's brother would support Bolesław the Brave if the Polish ruler wanted to "rob" him of the March of Meissen. Bolesław and Gunzelin ultimately achieved their common goal, and Gunzelin succeeded his brother in Meissen. Chrobry also managed at the assembly in Merseburg to force Henry to confirm his rule over Lusatia and Milsko.[22] All these efforts of Bolesław the Brave around Meissen, Milsko, and Lusatia also aimed, in the longer perspective, at ensuring control over Bohemia. Had it not been for the assassination attempt on Bolesław the Brave, the Polish ruler would have successfully overcome the crisis caused by the deaths of Otto III and Ekkehard. His closest ally became Margrave of Meissen, and the lands brought into the Piast's dominion by his wife Emnilda, daughter of Dobromir, remained in the hands of the Polish ruler.[23]

The deepening crisis of princely power in Bohemia drew the Polish ruler into the struggle for the Prague throne. The events of the years 992-1002 rather indicate that Bolesław the Brave was not the initiator of these struggles. In those years, there are no signs suggesting the initiative of the Polan ruler in this regard. As I mentioned several times, Bolesław sought only to maintain the *status quo* between 992 and 1002 and, at most - with great commitment - to obtain all legal-public confirmations of Mieszko I's acquisitions.

The situation, however, developed completely unexpectedly for all parties involved in the power struggle in Bohemia. Indirect evidence even indicates that up to a certain point, Bolesław the Brave was not a participant, and certainly not the initiator, of the struggles for power in Bohemia, although he very quickly joined the side fighting for control over the Czech Duchy. After assuming power and the death of his "protector" Ekkehard, Boleslaus III the Red sought by all means to eliminate his younger brothers

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22 See below footnote 24.

23 H. Ludat, *Piastowie…*, pp. 181-201.

from the succession after Boleslaus II the Pious.[24] Historians express different opinions regarding whether the younger sons possessed their own appanages. Although it is most likely that at the time of their father's death, Jaromír and Oldřich were still unmarried bachelors, according to the most common customs of patrimonial monarchy, they should have received their own appanages by their father's will or the decision of his successor. If this was not the case, then their mother Emma must certainly have possessed her own landed estates (accumulated dowry and dower). In any case, Boleslaus III, as most often happened in such situations in patrimonial monarchies,[25] first tried to eliminate the elder junior, Jaromír, from the struggle for power by having him castrated, and the younger, Oldřich, by ordering him suffocated in a bathhouse. Boleslaus only succeeded in the first undertaking; eventually, he drove the juniors and their mother Emma into exile, who found refuge with Henry II. (Henry IV. Duke of Bavaria) of Ottonian dynasty.

Then events unfolded completely unexpectedly for Boleslaus the Red and, as everything indicates, without Bolesław the Brave's knowledge. Namely, a part of the Bohemian nobles led a rebellion and overthrew Boleslaus the Red,[26] placing on his throne a certain Vladivoj[27] "from Poland", unknown in detail from historical sources. This last statement by Thietmar could superficially suggest that Bolesław the Brave was involved in this coup. Ultimately, this was probably the case, but the Polish prince was not the initiator of this overthrow. From a later account, we learn whom Boleslaus III blamed for the coup; after returning to the Prague throne, despite his earlier assurances of a peaceful settlement of disputes, he carried out a massacre of Bohemian nobles, including personally killing his son-in-law of unknown name, whom Thietmar mentions without giving a name, from the Vršovci family.[28]

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[24] See below footnote 37.

[25] Z. Dalewski, *Dlaczego Bolesław Chrobry chciał koronować się na króla?*, in: *Gnieźnieńskie koronacje królewskie i ich środkowoeuropejskie konteksty*, ed. J. Dobosz, M. Matla, L. Wetesko, Gniezno 2011, pp. 21-41.

[26] B. Krzemieńska, *Břetislav I. Čechy…*, pp. 18, 20, 25; J. Žemlička, *Rod Přemyslovců na rozhraní 10. a 11. století*, in: *Přemyslovský…*, p. 27; J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, p. 83; M. Matla, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, pp. 385-387; J. Sobiesiak, *Przemyślidzi między…*, pp. 48-49.

[27] V. Novotný, ČD1, pp. 672-673; B. Krzemieńska, *Břetislav I. Čechy…*, pp. 28-29; M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, p. 387; J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, p. 83; J. Sobiesiak, *Przemyślidzi między Henrykiem II…*, pp. 49-50.

[28] Thietmar V, 29 (18), pp. 253-255; Jedlicki, pp. 108-109; V. Novotný, ČD1, pp. 677-678; B. Krzemieńska, *Břetislav I. Čechy…*, pp. 33-34; P. Kopal, *Neznámý známý rod. Pokus o genealogii Vršovců*, "Sborník Archivních prací" 51 (2001), p. 6; M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, p. 388; J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, pp. 83-84; J. Sobiesiak, *Przemyślidzi między Henrykiem II…*, pp. 50-51.

There is therefore no doubt that they, and most likely personally Boleslaus III's son-in-law, led the rebels who brought about the fall of Boleslaus III the Red. Since this family was also involved several years earlier in the massacre of the Slavníks, it is completely implausible that the Vršovci acted on Bolesław the Brave's orders. The Vršovci's political plan can be read from the pages of Thietmar's *Chronicle*. They decided to seize actual power in Bohemia by placing a puppet, Vladivoj, at the head. Their position grew as the importance of the Přemyslids declined; seizing at least part of the Libice domain of the Slavníks strengthened their position in the Bohemian state, the ultimate confirmation of which was the marriage of a Vršovci representative to Boleslaus III's daughter.[29] On the one hand, this marriage demonstrated the further decline of the Přemyslids, as their representative was given in marriage to a local aristocrat, not to a representative of another dynasty. This marriage and the position the Vršovci gained through it prompted them to overthrow Boleslaus III. They did not decide to formally seize the Prague throne, but neither did they summon the younger brothers of Boleslaus III back from exile. They undoubtedly consciously refrained from this last step, realizing that the sons of Boleslaus II the Pious would, firstly, not agree to be the Vršovci's "puppets", and secondly, they would return with the "blessing" of the German ruler Henry II, which would significantly strengthen their position in the country. In this situation, the Vršovci decided to invite Vladivoj from Poland to the Prague throne.

We do not know who Vladivoj was, except that he was most likely related to the Přemyslids[30] and that he lived in Poland. In the discussion about Vladivoj's origin, we side with those researchers who favor the view that he was a legitimate Přemyslid from some collateral line, albeit one long deprived of any political significance in Bohemia, as he had lived in Poland for a long time. The fact that he was a Přemyslid is supported by the Vršovci's choice of him, we believe, to be their justification for overthrowing Boleslaus III and - as they probably planned - their "puppet" in exercising real power in Bohemia. His princely origin is also argued by the ease with which he obtained official support from Henry II, who, after Vladivoj's submission, granted him Bohemia as a fief of the Reich.[31]

Of course, the entire coup against Boleslaus III could not have taken place without establishing direct contacts between the opposition, id est,

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[29] J. Žemlička, *Rod Přemyslovců…*, p. 271.

[30] Thietmar V, 23 (15), pp. 247-249; Jedlicki, pp. 105-106; J. Žemlička, *Kniže Vladivoj a přemyslovská consanguinitas (ke skladbě vládnoucího rodu v 10. a začátkem 11. století)*, in: *Na prahu poznání českých dějin Sborník prací k poctě Jiřího Slámy*, Praha 2006, pp. 182-193.

[31] V. Novotný, ČD1, p. 674; B. Krzemieńska, *Břetislav I. Čechy…*, pp. 29-31; M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, p. 387; J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, p. 83; J. Sobiesiak, *Przemyślidzi między…*, p. 50.

the Vršovci, and Vladivoj in Poland. At this point - it is hard to imagine otherwise - the Polish ruler must have been at least partially informed about the matter or at least learned about such steps. We do not know how Vladivoj ended up in Poland, but he or his ancestors might have owned some estates in the territories conquered by Mieszko I, or he might have sided with the latter at some point during the Přemyslid-Piast conflicts. He could also, as often happened, have been an exile who found refuge with the Piasts. Regardless of how it was, one can assume that Bolesław counted on his former subordinate, as the new ruler of Bohemia, being dependent on his support.

Vladivoj, however, most likely surprised everyone by immediately submitting to Henry II and accepting Bohemia from him as a German fief. He was thus - as historians emphasize - the first ruler of Bohemia to hold the country as a vassal of the German king. Most likely, in this way, he tried to strengthen his position both against Bolesław the Brave and against the nobles, including the Vršovci, who had put him on the Prague throne. Submitting completely to Henry II's authority at the initial moment of Bolesław the Brave's war with the German king was a move that undoubtedly weakened the Polish ruler's position in the rivalry with the Reich. We do not know how Vladivoj would have behaved in the face of further military actions, whether he would have provided, as is very likely, armed assistance to Henry II in the fight against Bolesław the Brave. As a vassal, he was obligated to do so. These considerations are moot, however, given Vladivoj's death, which occurred soon after, most likely in January 1003.[32]

Boleslaus III, after losing power, fled to Henry of Schweinfurt, who, disappointed with Henry II's policy, soon stood at the head of the rebels (the so-called Schweinfurt Feud). The rebels enjoyed the military support of Prince Bolesław the Brave. Henry of Schweinfurt, to Boleslaus III the Red's surprise, imprisoned him, but later released him, as some Polish scholars suspect, due to the intervention of the Polish ruler. This is likely, because while Vladivoj had sided with Henry II, and then after Vladivoj's death Jaromír and Oldřich returned to Bohemia, Bohemia certainly sided with the German king in Bolesław the Brave's struggle. Understandably, in this situation, Bolesław the Brave had to strive to change the situation in Bohemia. The only asset he had left (so the Polish ruler probably thought) was to reinstate Boleslaus III on the Prague throne and expel his younger brothers. Perhaps Bolesław the Brave played some role in the first overthrow of Boleslaus the Red, most likely in the second stage of the conspiracy, but now he felt compelled to restore him to power again. Bolesław the Brave's goal was to

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[32] V. Novotný, ČD1, p. 675; B. Krzemieńska, *Břetislav I. Čechy…*, p. 31; M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, p. 387; J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, pp. 83-84; J. Sobiesiak, *Przemyślidzi między…*, p. 50.

change the government in Bohemia to "extricate" the country from among the German king's allies and bring it over to his own camp. The war with Henry was an extraordinary challenge; for the first time since November 979, the Polish state had to face the full might of the Reich, and as it later turned out, also its dangerous allies. Bohemia was important, but the Polish ruler looked at it from the perspective of the war with Germany.

The return of Boleslaus III the Red did not bring stability to Bohemia.[33] Boleslaus the Red proceeded to a frontal confrontation with the opposition, as we wrote, mainly with the Vršovci.[34] For the Bohemian opposition, dire days had come, and in this situation, as we can assume, inviting Bolesław the Brave himself to the throne seemed a lesser threat to the Bohemian elites than patiently enduring persecution from Boleslaus the Red.[35] For Bolesław the Brave, it was obvious that Boleslaus III's continued rule would eventually lead to his renewed expulsion, and Henry II - through the juniors - would draw Bohemia into his sphere of influence.

We believe that the Bohemian opposition's approach to Bolesław the Brave and the invitation to him to take the Bohemian throne, and his acceptance of this offer, seemed to both sides at that moment the most sensible way out of the crisis situation. Thietmar's account leaves no doubt that Bolesław's assumption of the Prague throne did not stem from some grand concept of the Polish prince but was the result of an unexpected development of events.

I believe that Bolesław the Brave definitely wanted to assume the throne in Prague, as it significantly strengthened his position and that of the entire camp of German rebels (*Schweinfurter Fehde*). Some historians, not only Polish but also German, analyzing these events, wondered whether the reinstatement of Boleslaus the Red by his namesake from Poland resulted from the Polish prince taking over the position previously held by Ekkehard, thus as a kind of senior.[36] Of course, this is an unwise supposition because, firstly, we do not know on what basis Ekkehard exercised supervision over Boleslaus III, and secondly, Ekkehard's successor was his brother Gunzelin, and Chrobry held no official (administrative) role in the Reich. Many completely unfounded judgments have also been expressed about the goals of the Polish prince's policy when he took power in Bohemia. Some researchers, including even such an experienced historian as Ludat, believed that

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33 V. Novotný, ČD1, p. 675; B. Krzemieńska, *Břetislav I. Čechy…*, p. 31; M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, p. 387; J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, p. 83; J. Sobiesiak, *Przemyślidzi między…*, p. 50.

34 See above footnote 28.

35 Thietmar V, 30, p. 255; Jedlicki, p. 109.

36 See below footnoote 37.

Bolesław, by taking power in Bohemia, continued Otto III's vision and created a dominion of a vast Sclavinia.[37] This is an obvious absurdity, as Otto III's former "pipe dreams" vanished with his death, and the renewed ideal Roman Empire, in which Sclavinia was to have its place, "evaporated", and now the real Roman (German) Empire was striving with all its might to "crush" the young Polan state. To counter this threat, the Polish ruler had to resort to all means and subordinated all other goals to this policy, including his Bohemian policy. Ultimately, Bolesław the Brave treacherously attacked Boleslaus III the Red, blinded him,[38] and marched on Prague, where he was welcomed "unanimously" by the local elites as the legitimate ruler.[39]

Henry II was ready, undoubtedly due to the internal threat, to accept Chrobry's rule in Prague, on condition that he pay homage for Bohemia: "[Henry II] considered it most advantageous for himself to send envoys to Bolesław with the following proposal: if he agreed to hold the recently occupied land by his [Henry's] grace, as old law required, and to serve him faithfully in every respect, then he would recognize his will in this matter; if not, then he would take up arms against him".[40] Henry undoubtedly made this decision under the pressure of the developing situation, as the fighting with Henry of Schweinfurt and his allies reached its climax, and the king had to ensure the security of his army from the eastern flank.

Bolesław, however, rejected this proposal, confident in his own strength, which he undoubtedly overestimated. As a 12-year-old boy, he witnessed the defeat of Otto II's troops marching on Greater Poland in November 979, where they suffered a humiliating defeat. Bolesław the Brave's military campaigns, launched after Ekkehard's death, likely bolstered his confidence, as they largely proceeded according to his designs, barring minor exceptions. The son of Mieszko I and Dobrawa could count not only on the potential of the Polish and Bohemian states (including Moravia) but also on the support of the opposition, especially Henry of Schweinfurt, Ernest Duke of Swabia,

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[37] H. Ludat, *Piastowie i Ekkehardynowie…*, pp. 181-201.

[38] V. Novotný, ČD1, pp. 678-679; B. Krzemieńska, *Břetislav I. Čechy…*, p. 34; A. Pleszczyński, *Bolesław Chrobry w Czechach…*, pp. 137-138; J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, pp. 83-84; M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, pp. 387-388; J. Sobiesiak, *Przemyślidzi między Henrykiem II…*, p. 51.

[39] Thietmar V, 30, p. 255; Jedlicki, p. 109; V. Novotný, ČD1, pp. 679-680; B. Krzemieńska, *Břetislav I. Čechy…*, pp. 34-35; H. Ludat, *Średniowieczne cesarstwo a pierwsze państwo piastowskie*, in: *Słowianie - Niemcy - Europa*, Marburg-Poznań 2000, pp. 20-21; A. Pleszczyński, *Bolesław Chrobry w Czechach…*, pp. 135-136; M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, pp. 388-396; J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, p. 84; J. Sobiesiak, *Przemyślidzi między…*, pp. 51-52.

[40] Thietmar V, 31 (19), pp. 255-256; Jedlicki, pp. 109-110; V. Novotný, ČD1, p. 682; B. Krzemieńska, *Břetislav I. Čechy…*, pp. 38-39; M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, pp. 396-397; J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, pp. 83-84; J. Sobiesiak, *Przemyślidzi między…*, p. 51.

and even Henry II's own brother, namely Bruno Bishop of Augsburg. However, it turned out that the rebels - despite receiving armed reinforcements from Bolesław - suffered defeat after defeat, and Bolesław, attacking, also had no luck. Gunzelin, as Margrave of Meissen, refused support, which most likely prompted the Polish ruler to limit his actions to plundering raids on the Elbe region, mainly in the land of the Glomacze. Bolesław's occupation of Bohemia helped the remnants of the rebels, who, under the leadership of the king's brother Bruno, sought refuge there. The beginning of military operations towards Bohemia was interrupted by the army of Count Siegfried, which saw no chance of continuing resistance.

The demise of Henry of Schweinfurt's rebellion in 1003 had little impact on Bolesław the Brave's status as ruler of Bohemia. From Thietmar's account, we can guess Henry II's plan to suppress Henry of Schweinfurt's rebellion and deal with his ally Bolesław the Brave. Henry II intended first to strike against Henry of Schweinfurt and his German allies, while simultaneously preparing, initially diplomatically and later with small military steps, to open the way first to Bohemia, and only then to Poland. From this perspective, establishing cooperation with the Liutizi, with whom an official alliance was concluded at Easter 1003 in Quedlinburg, proved very important. Henry took the first step directed against Bolesław, as the Liutizi, and earlier the Veleti, had remained unceasing enemies of the young Polan state and Germany (Saxony). At this moment, for the first time, a Christian ruler of Germany decided to conclude an alliance with the Liutizi against Poland. From a tactical point of view, this was an excellent move by Henry II. The following year, Henry attacked Milsko, the gateway to Poland, but - as Thietmar at least writes - due to heavy snowfall, the expedition did not succeed and was limited only to devastating the country. After Henry of Schweinfurt's submission in early 1004 and his imprisonment in Giebichenstein Castle, Henry II decided to postpone the main expedition against Bolesław the Brave until matters in Italy were settled and then until Bohemia was subdued. This was Henry II's second excellent move, as he realized that without controlling Bohemia, an expedition against Poland could end in failure.

Although Henry II tried to mislead the Polish ruler by simulating an attack on Poland,[41] when he marched on Prague with a detachment of Bohemians commanded by Prince Jaromír, Bolesław the Brave was not taken by surprise. The Polish ruler was prepared to repel the attack; he awaited the German troops in Prague, not on the border of Greater Poland (exempli gratia, in Krosno). Bolesław correctly guessed the direction of the attack

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[41] V. Novotný, ČD1, pp. 687-693; B. Krzemieńska, *Břetislav I. Čechy…*, pp. 43-52; M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, pp. 397-398; J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, pp. 90-93; J. Sobiesiak, *Przemyślidzi między…*, p. 55.

by Henry II's troops and the accompanying Jaromír. At the most critical point in the Miriquidui forest, "he occupied a certain hill with archers, thus blocking all access".[42] As is known, an elite detachment of German armored knights broke through this obstacle and advanced further into Bohemia. Bolesław was prepared for such a situation, as the fortress of Žatec blocked the Germans' further path, which Bolesław had garrisoned with a Polish garrison as a precaution.

Up to this point, Bolesław could hope that Henry II's expedition would not succeed. On the way was also Hněvín, which surrendered without a fight, and Žatec. Then something happened that ultimately explains Bolesław's crushing defeat. Namely, the Polish garrison in Žatec was massacred by the Bohemian inhabitants,[43], although - as further reading of Thietmar shows - some Bohemians still sided with Bolesław the Brave, the overwhelming majority violently turned against the Polish prince; similarly behaved the garrison of Vyšehrad, located in the immediate vicinity of Prague. Here there was no massacre of a Polish garrison, as there was none in this fortress; the inhabitants of the fortress, upon hearing the bells tolling, rushed to storm the Prague castle, where the Polish prince and the former prince of Libice - Soběslav - were staying.

At this point, the question must be asked: why did the Bohemians under Bolesław the Brave's rule not remain loyal to him and enthusiastically (though not all) sided with Jaromír?[44] Before attempting to answer several questions, it is necessary to note a certain doubt. The first is Cosmas's information that the fortress at Vyšehrad, in the immediate vicinity of the Prague fortress (4.2 km), was continuously garrisoned by Jaromír's troops. I think this is impossible, and the only truth is that an uprising broke out there against Bolesław upon news of the approaching troops of Jaromír, elite German and Bohemian forces from among those who had earlier sided with the Bohemian prince. On the basis of these events, the legend arose of a fortress held all along by Jaromír, thus during the reigns of Boleslaus III the Red and Bolesław the Brave. Its origin can be considered probable, whereas the maintenance of such a Jaromír enclave in the immediate vicinity of the main fortress, first under Bohemian Boleslaus and then under Polish Bolesław, must be considered senseless due to the small distance between both places.

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42 Thietmar VI, 10, pp. 285-286; Jedlicki, pp. 123-124.

43 A. Pleszczyński, *Przestrzeń i polityka. Studium rezydencji władcy wcześniejszego średniowiecza. Przykład czeskiego Wyszehradu*, Lublin 2000, p. 79.

44 V. Novotný, ČD1, pp. 679-680; B. Krzemieńska, *Břetislav I. Čechy…*, pp. 34-35; H. Ludat, *Średniowieczne cesarstwo…*, pp. 20-21; A. Pleszczyński, *Bolesław Chrobry w Czechach…*, pp. 133-146; M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, pp. 388-396; J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, p. 84; J. Sobiesiak, *Przemyślidzi między…*, pp. 51-52.

Also unclear is Thietmar's narrative about an unnamed fortress (Hněvín, most likely today's Brüx/Most[45]), which Jaromír voluntarily handed over to the German king; of course, this should be understood as handing over the stronghold to the German ruler, which had first gone over to Jaromír's side, not a fortress that had remained in his hands all along.

The question arises, why did Bolesław the Brave fail to gain the trust of the political elites in Bohemia, who had invited him to the Prague throne just a year earlier? This is all the more surprising as Bolesław was an unrivalled master at winning over foreign elites, as evidenced by his cooperation with Saxon nobles and other subjects of the Reich. Why, in the case of Bohemia, did his talent seem not to work? The secret lies, as previous researchers have indicated,[46] with Soběslav, the last prince and ruler of the Libice state. He most likely stood at the head of the group of nobles on whom the Polish prince based his power. This must have aroused fears among many Bohemian nobles, and especially among the most important Bohemian family, the Vršovci, who, based on much evidence, are considered the family primarily responsible for the massacre of the Slavníks and the liquidation of their state. We do not know in detail the role Soběslav played in Bolesław the Brave's system of rule in Bohemia; we do not know if there was a temporary restitution of the Libice state, or if revenge was taken on the murderers of the Slavníks. However, Thietmar writes that Bolesław took revenge on the Bavarians and all his subjects,[47] and Marzena Matla assumes that this referred to Bohemian subjects, of course those who - as once under Boleslaus II the Pious - wanted to continue political cooperation with Bavaria. That Soběslav protected Bolesław's escape from the Prague fortress leaves no doubt that he considered him his most trusted collaborator and ally in governing Bohemia.[48]

Bolesław the Brave, as mentioned, was an extraordinarily talented ruler, an excellent diplomat, and certainly did not base his rule in Bohemia solely on Soběslav and his closest collaborators; many of them, remember that after the 995 expedition he came to Poland most likely with his entire retinue, must have returned to Bohemia in 1003. However, Bolesław did not intend to rely only on Soběslav Slavník and his circle. Much indicates that the Polish ruler tried to win over the Bohemian clergy, especially in Prague. This is indirectly evidenced by Cosmas's later note from 1025 about the death of King Bolesław on June 17. This is one of only two preserved notes concerning Bolesław the Brave's

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45 Thietmar VI, 10, pp. 285-286; Jedlicki, p. 124.

46 M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, p. 389.

47 *Ibidem*, p. 398.

48 Ch. Lübke, *Regesten*, III, pp. 91-92; cf. K. Görich, *Eine Wende im Osten…*, pp. 102, 105; M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, pp. 278-280; J. Sobiesiak, *Bolesław II Przemyślida…*, pp. 79-80, 113-114.

death with a specific date; it must have been recorded contemporaneously and, significantly, it accurately states Bolesław's current status: *rex*. The *Lüneburg Necrology* calls Bolesław the Brave a prince. Everything indicates that Cosmas was not quite sure to whom this note referred, which he found - it couldn't be otherwise - in one of the books with necrological notes of the Prague chapter. It follows that in the Prague chapter, during the reign of Oldřich, they closely followed the fate of Bolesław the Brave, knew about his coronation, most likely on April 18 or 23, 1025, knew the exact date of his death, and considered it necessary to record this fact. This could only happen in one case, namely if Bolesław was an important benefactor of the Prague chapter, and he could only have become one in the years 1003-1004. Manifesting religious feelings and supporting the Prague clergy in the difficult political situation in Bohemia at that time was undoubtedly a sensible move. However, much also indicates that in this case too, it was not without promoting the cult of Saint Adalbert, and even the cult of his entire family, namely Slavník and his wife Střezislava. Most likely at that time, notes about Saint Adalbert and his family were also entered into the lost *Prague Annals*, from where they eventually reached Cracow.[49]

That Soběslav and his circle were a serious obstacle to reaching an understanding with the Bohemian nobility, most likely led by the mortal enemies of the Slavníks, namely the Vršovci, is proven by the example of Moravia. This region, occupied by Bolesław the Brave, most likely like Bohemia in 1003, probably remained faithfully with the Polish ruler until the end of his life, and only under the reign of Mieszko II, whether in 1029 or 1031, was it finally seized by the Bohemians. The Moravian elites, as evidenced by the fate of the wars between Henry II and Bolesław the Brave, militarily supported the Polish ruler with commitment.[50] In this country, the Vršovci-Slavník antagonism probably played no role, although recent research proves that in this country too, the Vršovci, at least from the mid-12th century, played an important role and survived all the "massacres" of their family, including the later, largest one in 1108, without losses.[51]

Jaromír, assuming the Prague throne[52] in 1004, as everything indicates, and something contemporary historiography hasn't paid much attention

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[49] T. Jasiński, *Początki polskiej annalistyki*, in: *Nihil superfluum esse. Studia z dziejów średniowiecza ofiarowane Profesor Jadwidze Krzyżaniakowej*, ed. J. Strzelczyk, J. Dobosz, Z. Górczak, Poznań 2000, p. 137 ff.

[50] Cf. B. Krzemieńska, *Břetislav I. Čechy…*, pp. 66-87.

[51] Cf. J. Wroniszewski, *Ród Rawiczów w wiekach średnich*, in: *Genealogia: studia nad wspólnotami krewniaczymi i terytorialnymi w Polsce średniowiecznej na tle porównawczym*, ed. J. Hertel, J. Wroniszewski, Toruń 1987, pp. 75, 89; P. Kopal, *Neznámý…*, p. 49; T. Jasiński, *Wokół początków Warszawy*, Poznań 2022, pp. 107-112.

[52] V. Novotný, ČD1, pp. 693-699; B. Krzemieńska, *Břetislav I. Čechy…*, pp. 53-54; M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, pp. 405-406; J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, pp. 93-94; J. Sobiesiak, *Przemyślidzi między…*, pp. 55-56.

to, harbored far-reaching plans regarding Bolesław the Brave's dominion. We learn of them when we look more closely at Jaromír's subsequent steps in the years 1004-1007. Namely, the Bohemian ruler was not content with merely occupying the Prague throne and faithfully fulfilling his armed vassal duties during Henry II's numerous military actions against Bolesław the Brave, but - something too little attention has been paid to so far - he tried along with former allies, the Liutizi, to take the initiative in actions against the Polish state[53]. First we see Jaromír as Henry II's ally in the expedition against the Milceni, to their main fortress in Bautzen. Milsko was an important route from Germany to Bolesław the Brave's state; it was also an important stronghold of Polish rule, and moreover - as we mentioned above - it was an important point between Bohemia and the Liutizi. This time - despite Gunzelin's mysterious and incomprehensible order to us, who came to Bolesław's aid - the German and Bohemian troops captured the fortress in Bautzen.

In 1005, Henry set out against Bolesław, having secured the support not only of Duke Henry of Bavaria but also of Jaromír[54] and the Liutizi; after some perturbations, he reached Poznań with his allies by the end of September via a very rapid march. This was a total defeat for Bolesław, who was partially rescued from peril by Saxon aristocrats favorable to him. Peace was concluded,[55] the terms of which are unknown, but which most likely formally ceded to the Germans Milsko and Lusatia, already lost earlier by Bolesław, and probably Pomerania to the Liutizi. This peace brought no benefits to Bohemia, apart from a general shift in forces, and especially the useful transfer of Milsko and Lusatia to Henry II.

As we know from later reports by Thietmar, the situation that arose after this peace was very unwelcome to Jaromír and his allies the Liutizi, including the Wolinians. They sent, most likely jointly (!), an embassy all the way to Regensburg, where the German king was spending Easter (April 6),[56] and there tried to force Henry II to intervene in Poland under threat of abandoning the alliance with the German ruler. This is an extraordinary step, testifying to the dissatisfaction of the Liutizi, and above all Jaromír, with the provisions of the Poznań peace of 1005. It seems that the initiator of this embassy, if only because it arrived in Bavaria bordering Bohemia, was Jaromír himself, and not the Wolinians, who most likely

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53 V. Novotný, ČD1, p. 697; B. Krzemieńska, *Břetislav I. Čechy…*, p. 54; M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, pp. 405-406; J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, p. 100; J. Sobiesiak, *Przemyślidzi między…*, p. 57.

54 See above footnoote 22.

55 M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, pp. 404-407.

56 Thietmar VI, 33 (24), pp. 303-304; Jedlicki, pp. 135-136.

merely agreed to join the complaints and requests of the Bohemian prince. The guilt of Bolesław according to this embassy, recorded by the Merseburg chronicler, was presented rather strangely: "that Bolesław is plotting various malicious plans against him" [id est, Henry II] "and is inciting them" [id est, the Wolinians and Jaromír] "with words and money to carry them out".[57] Even if we accept these accusations as true, they threatened neither Henry nor his allies, namely Jaromír and the Wolinians, in any way. Winning over the Wolinians or Jaromír by Bolesław, even through bribery, must be considered completely unrealistic. These were "tales", probably mainly Jaromír's,[58] intended to force Henry to break the peace, because: "if the king continued to live at peace with him" [id est, Bolesław] "and granted him his favor, he could certainly not count on their loyalty".[59] It is clearly visible that Jaromír was trying by all means to force Henry II to organize an expedition against Bolesław. The Bohemian prince, after Henry II's great military victories over Bolesław in Prague, Budyšin, and especially in Poznań in 1004-1005, was convinced that another expedition against Bolesław would end in a great defeat for Bolesław. The composition of the embassy proves that he imagined that, similar to 1005, Henry II would participate in the new expedition, and from the northwest and southwest Bolesław would be attacked by the Liutizi and Jaromír. Such seems to have been Jaromír's plan, and the result was to be the devastation of Bolesław's state, and on the return journey, the Bohemian troops most likely counted on attaching Silesia to Bohemia. This is, of course, conjecture, but Jaromír's determination, evident in his embassy's efforts, argues for its truthfulness.

Jaromír's excellent plan came to nothing, as the Saxon aristocracy was very reluctant to go to war again with Bolesław, and moreover, Bolesław forestalled the German side, and everything ended with Bolesław conquering Lusatia, the land of the Selpoli, and capturing Bautzen. The Saxon troops under the command of Archbishop Tagino of Magdeburg, among whom the chronicler Thietmar himself was present, considered themselves too weak to pursue Bolesław. The conflict ended before the Bohemians and Wolinians even had time to join the fighting.[60]

Jaromír's hopes were not fulfilled by the expedition of 1010 either, which, due to the illness of Henry II and Archbishop Tagino, was limited to sending only a small part of the German troops and all Bohemian reinforcements under Jaromír's command to - significantly - devastate Silesia, including the land of the Dadosesani. This invasion brought despair and misery

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57 *Ibidem*.

58 *E.g.*, V. Novotný, ČD1, p. 697; M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, p. 407.

59 Thietmar VI, 33 (24), pp. 303-304; Jedlicki, pp. 135-136.

60 Cf. M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, pp. 404-407.

to the local population but also testified to the impotence of the invaders, unable to capture any of the fortresses whose garrisons remained faithfully loyal to the Polish ruler. The expedition planned for 1012 did not take place, and on the Saturday before Easter, Jaromír was overthrown by Oldřich.[61] The change of ruler in Bohemia occurred, with a high degree of certainty, not without the efforts and knowledge of Henry II, who exploited Jaromír's overzealousness towards a Bavarian embassy traveling through Bohemia to Bolesław the Brave. We believe that Jaromír set himself above Henry II, considered these Bavarian envoys enemies, and assumed that Henry II would view them similarly, and zealously decided to punish them. Henry II might have considered that Jaromír had exceeded his authority by punishing the Bavarian envoys, and the German king might have thought that only he could decide whether these men were guilty or not, and if so, to what extent, and whether and how they should be punished. Scholars have also considered the conjecture that perhaps Bolesław the Brave stood behind the revolt, but this view must be rejected, as the overthrown Jaromír first went to Bolesław the Brave, and the Bohemian prince best knew whom he owed his dethronement to.[62] The Bohemian nobility, dissatisfied with participating in numerous obligatory expeditions against Poland, which only sometimes brought plunder but more often disease, death, or disability, probably also contributed to the change of power.

Oldřich witnessed the conclusion of the Polish-German peace in Merseburg in 1013; although it normalized relations between the Reich and Poland only briefly, at such a moment the role of Bohemia as a desirable ally weakened in German circles.

In 1014, Bolesław the Brave sent his son Mieszko with an armed escort[63] to - as at least Thietmar writes - win over Oldřich as an ally against Emperor Henry II. Oldřich listened to Mieszko's embassy, who appealed to the kinship ties binding them and pointed to the common struggle against Henry II. The Bohemian prince did not agree to his proposal and let him leave. Not long after Mieszko and his companions left Bohemia, they were attacked by Bohemians already on territory under Polish control, and Bolesław's son fell into Bohemian captivity. This was a great naivety on the part of the Polish ruler, as barely two years had passed since this prince, thanks to Henry, had assumed power in Bohemia. His brother Jaromír was in Germany, who,

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[61] V. Novotný, ČD1, pp. 699-701; B. Krzemieńska, *Břetislav I. Čechy…*, pp. 56-59; M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, pp. 407-410; J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, pp. 104-105; J. Sobiesiak, *Przemyślidzi między…*, pp. 57-58.

[62] M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, pp. 407-410.

[63] V. Novotný, ČD1, pp. 705-706; B. Krzemieńska, *Břetislav I. Čechy…*, pp. 61-62; M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, pp. 413-415; J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry…*, pp. 109-113; J. Sobiesiak, *Przemyślidzi między…*, p. 59.

in case of Oldřich's treachery, could count on the emperor's support, meaning the emperor could depose Oldřich and reinstate Jaromír on the throne. Mieszko was handed over by Oldřich to the German Emperor Henry II in exchange for benefits that the German emperor was to obtain for the Bohemian monarch from Bolesław the Brave. Mieszko II remained in German captivity for some time. Bolesław the Brave's son regained his freedom from Henry II thanks to: the support of the Saxon aristocracy, his vassal dependence on Henry II, and his marriage to Richeza, niece of the last emperor Otto III.

If not for Henry II's determination, who twice categorically demanded that he be handed over his vassal and especially forbade his killing, it is unknown how this reckless move by the Polish ruler would have ended. From Thietmar's *Chronicle* it appears that Oldřich wanted to demand a valuable equivalent from Bolesław for Mieszko's freedom. Was it, for example, Moravia? On the occasion of this dispute, we learn that Oldřich had once been a prisoner of Bolesław the Brave; it is difficult to assign this captivity to any precise period. Oldřich's tardiness in handing over the prisoner to the emperor, and above all conducting negotiations with Mieszko before his imprisonment, aroused suspicions at Henry II's court about the Bohemian prince's reliability as an ally.

Oldřich smoothly explained all this away, and in 1015 he participated in the emperor's great expedition against Poland, which from the first moments proceeded unsuccessfully for the attackers. The Saxon troops led by Duke Bernard together with the Liutizi failed to join Henry's main forces and turned back home. Similarly, Oldřich failed to reach the imperial forces from the south, so he limited himself to capturing the fortress *Businc* near today's Zgorzelec and proclaiming himself a great victor upon returning to Prague. The imperial troops fought with varying success, and during the retreat were several times severely "battered". The expedition ended in a great defeat. Henry II's expedition against Poland in 1017 also ended in defeat. Many military clashes of this war took place in Moravia and Bohemia. First, Moravian troops of Bolesław the Brave annihilated a large Bavarian detachment; then Mieszko II attacked with 10 legions into almost defenseless Bohemia, as Oldřich had gone earlier with the army to Henry to attack Silesia with the main forces. Henry II, having reached Głogów with Oldřich and the Liutizi, then marched against the fortress at Niemcza, where they became embroiled in unfortunate siege warfare. Both the Bohemians and the Liutizi stormed Niemcza in vain, suffering heavy losses. During the siege, Moravian troops of Bolesław invaded Bohemia and left the country with considerable plunder. Henry II finally decided to retreat; German and Bohemian troops suffered many losses during this difficult march, but Bolesław's troops, which attacked Bohemia this time, also fell into an ambush and suffered significant losses.[64] On January 30, 1018, Bolesław made peace with

[64] M. Matla-Kozłowska, *Pierwsi Przemyślidzi…*, pp. 411-420.

Henry II, which finally restored Bolesław's rule over Milsko and Lusatia, and moreover enabled him to marry Oda, sister of Margrave Herman of Meissen. The situation between Poland and Germany returned to its former state before Ekkehard's death in 1002. These possessions and the concluded alliances with the Ekkehardings, including the marriage to Oda, guaranteed the Polish state, at least in the near future, a certain control over Bohemia, especially hindering Bohemian contacts with the Liutizi and with the small part of the Saxon aristocracy hostile to the Polish ruler.

Summarizing, it should be noted that Bolesław the Brave's policy differed in many places from that of his father, Mieszko I. The first historical ruler of Poland, after using Bohemia to defeat the Veleti (Wolinians) and open the way to an alliance with the Reich, sought by all means to occupy the Transcarpathian and Sudeten lands of the Přemyslids. This ultimately ended successfully with the occupation of Silesia in 990 or 991.

His son Bolesław, with great tact, brought this policy to its final resolution, namely the incorporation of Mieszko's conquests into the Polish state within the ecclesiastical organization. Later, however, it is difficult to speak of a considered policy by Bolesław the Brave towards Bohemia. He reacted too hastily to the assassination attempt on his life, most likely instigated by Henry II, which, given the Polish ruler's subsequent obstinacy, condemned the Polish state to 16 years of struggle, with interruptions, against the full might of the Reich, supported by Bohemia and the Liutizi. This exhausted the strength of the young state, which a few years after Bolesław's death fell into a deep crisis. Perhaps unnecessarily, Bolesław the Brave did not accept Henry II's offer in 1003 to rule Bohemia as a vassal of the Reich. Although this may have been only a temporary offer, it was better than immediate war, ending with the humiliating invasion of Henry's troops into the heart of the Polan country. Later, Bolesław no longer pursued any long-term, considered Bohemian policy, but only adjusted it, or rather responded to current challenges arising from the threat during the war with the Reich. Bolesław failed, although it was extremely difficult, to win over the Bohemian elites during his brief reign in Bohemia in 1003-1004. In later times, sending his son Mieszko to Prince Oldřich proved a rather unwise move, which only thanks to a fortunate turn of events did not have tragic consequences for the Polish ruler. It must be admitted that after initial defeats, the last armed expeditions of Henry II, in which the Bohemians also participated, namely in 1015 and 1017, turned out to be a great military success for the Polish ruler, which allowed Bolesław to win back the pre-war *status quo*. Ultimately, Bolesław's struggles and his anti-Bohemian policy brought the Polish state Moravia, whose elites remained faithfully with Bolesław during the war with Henry II.

ABSTRACT

The article analyses Bolesław the Brave's policy towards Bohemia between 992 and 1018, placing it within the broader framework of long-term Polish-Bohemian relations and the changing imperial and ecclesiastical context of Central Europe. It argues that Bolesław's primary objective was not territorial expansion at the expense of the Přemyslid state, but rather the international and ecclesiastical recognition of the conquests previously achieved by Mieszko I, especially in Silesia and the Cracow region. A crucial role in this process was played by the internal crisis of the Bohemian polity after 995, the conflict between the Přemyslids and the Slavníks, and the activity of Saint Adalbert, all of which facilitated Polish diplomatic efforts. The article interprets the Congress of Gniezno as the decisive moment of state-ecclesiastical sanction of these acquisitions and demonstrates that Bolesław's brief rule in Prague in 1003-1004 resulted from extraordinary political circumstances rather than from a coherent program of domination over Bohemia. The concluding section highlights the limited success of Bolesław's policy in winning over the Bohemian elites and the long-term consequences of the conflict with the Empire.

Keywords: Bolesław the Brave, Polish-Bohemian relations, Congress of Gniezno, ecclesiastical organization, Medieval Central Europe

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Cosmas and Bolesław I the Brave[1]

Book One of the *Chronicle of the Czechs*, written between 1120 and 1122 by Cosmas, the canon of the St Vitus Chapter in Prague, contains an entry dated 17 June 1025 reporting the death of King Bolesław (*obiit rex Bolezlaus*).[2] This terse entry may have puzzled readers. Book One features three figures named Boleslav, all as dukes of Bohemia, none of whom had received royal anointing. In the early twelfth century, it thus might not have been evident that the author was referring to Bolesław the Brave, ruler of the Polans. This raises doubts as to whether the note may have been added to Book One posthumously, possibly when the *Chronicle* was being copied, or by one of the Continuators.

It is no secret that Cosmas regarded the Polish neighbours as God's punishment[3] - literally as "uncircumcised rabble" (*inde Polonie nequam trapi incircumcisis*)[4] - and was convinced of the superiority of the Czechs. Why, however, did he erase from history Bolesław the Brave - a figure who, at

[1] The study was prepared at the Institute of History, Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University as part of the project GACR GA21-07769S (Kosmas a jeho svět/Cosmas of Prague and his World) and is based on the monograph Das offene Geschichtswerk. Cosmas von Prag und seine Leserschaft.

[2] *Cosmae Pragensis Chronica Boemorum*, ed. B. Bretholz, W. Weinberger, Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores rerum Germanicarum n.s. 2, Berlin 1923 [further: *Chronica Boemorum*], I, 41, p. 76.

[3] B. Krzemieńska, *Polska i Polacy w opinii czeskiego kronikarza Kosmasa*, "Zeszyty naukowe Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, Nauki humanistyczno-społeczne" 1/15 (1960), pp. 75-95.

[4] *Chronica Boemorum* III, 20, p. 185.

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the beginning of the eleventh century, was an influential co-architect of Central European affairs, and for a brief period a ruler of the Czechs (Bohemians) shamefully driven out of Prague Castle?

Cosmas made no attempt to present himself as an accurate reporter on Piast affairs, which prompts the question of what he knew and what he contrived. Social and political circumstances - comprehensible in the early twelfth century - emerge from the chapter in which Cosmas describes the campaign of Duke Bretislaus I beginning with the conquest of Cracow, where he reportedly seized immense treasures, followed by the occupation of Gniezno and the transfer the relics of St Adalbert to Prague Castle.[5] The *Chronicle* also includes Adalbert's brother Radim (Gaudentius), who became bishop of the Gniezno church[6] - a detail that reveals Cosmas's fairly sound knowledge of events around the year 1000.

The painful focal point of Czech memory was not the legendary year 1000, but rather Mieszko's son, Bolesław the Brave, whom Cosmas found so reprehensible that he even disgraced his mother, Doubravka of the Premyslid dynasty.[7] Yet without Bolesław, Cosmas could not recount what had happened in Gniezno in the year 1000. For the same reason, he had to omit the story of the first Kingdom of Poland, whose tragic fall would have invited moral reflection.[8]

What did Cosmas choose to recount from the stories of the early Piast dukes? Under the year 977, readers found mention of a Polish duke marrying Doubravka - described as a woman of questionable virtue, who, despite marrying at an advanced age, was foolish enough to wear a bridle myrtle wreath.[9] For the year 999, Cosmas identified the duke as Mieszko, noting that 'there was no man more treacherous' (*non fuit alter dolosior homo*)[10] and claiming that he had captive Czechs massacred in Cracow. He was then said to have deceitfully reconciled with the duke of Bohemia Boleslaus, only to lure him to his court in Cracow and revoke all guarantees (*pax, fides, ius hospitale*), depriving him of sight and liberty.[11] Mieszko reportedly sowed discord among the Czechs, bribed the emperor into imprisoning Boleslaus's son and heir Oldrich (Udalrich),[12] and seized Prague Castle - whence he was expelled two years later by Saint

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5 *Ibidem*, II, 2-5, pp. 83-90.

6 *Ibidem*, I, 34, p. 60.

7 *Ibidem*, I, 27, p. 49.

8 G. Labuda, *Mieszko II król polski (1025-1034). Czasy przełomu w dziejach państwa polskiego*, Poznań 2008.

9 *Chronica Boemorum* I, 27, p. 49.

10 *Ibidem*, I, 34, p. 60.

11 *Ibidem*, I, 34, pp. 60-61.

12 *Ibidem*, I, 35, pp. 63-64.

Wenceslas.[13] In 1022, Christians were allegedly persecuted in Poland,[14] and under the date 17 June 1025, the death of King Bolesław was recorded.[15]

The Czech reader may have been satisfied - and perhaps even amused - by the image of half-naked Poles fleeing Prague Castle, so frightened that the mere rustle of the wind and the echo of the cliffs added to their panic.[16] Elsewhere in the *Chronicle*, however, Cosmas emphasised that Duke Mieszko's heinous acts had not been forgotten[17] and that they were only avenged by Duke Bretislaus's campaign to Gniezno in 1039.[18] To narrate events in a desirable way, Cosmas omitted or adapted key details to fit the twelfth-century reality. Above all, he fashioned a single culprit - Duke Mieszko. In other words, the *Chronicle of the Czechs* is of limited reliability as a source for the fate of the first Piast Monarchy, but it provides remarkable insight into its author and the circumstances surrounding the creation of his work.

Causa scribendi

To begin with, it is worth recalling that the *Chronicle* traces the history of the Czechs from the biblical flood and the confusion of tongues to the beginning of the rule of Duke Sobeslaus in 1125.[19] It consists of three books, for the first two of which Cosmas wrote prefaces. In the note (*schedula*) attached to Book One, Cosmas informed Master Gervasius that he had recorded the fortunes of the Czechs. He asked the addressee to review the plain, unadorned entries, to erase what was inappropriate, and to inform the author whether he should continue or rather lay down his quill.[20] Cosmas also lamented his own lack of education in the prologue to the abbot of Břevnov Clement, whom he asked for an opinion on Books One and Two. These were, in Cosmas's own words, amateurish attempts that were unsophisticated in style and childish in their reasoning.[21]

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13 *Ibidem*, I, 36, pp. 64-65.

14 *Ibidem*, I, 40, p. 75.

15 *Ibidem*, I, 41, p. 76.

16 P. Kopal, *„I kdyby snad byl toho dne drahého otce pochoval, byl by se jistě musil smáti". Humor a smích* v *Kosmově kronice*, in: *Evropa a Čechy na konci středověku. Sborník příspěvků věnovaných Františku Šmahelovi*, ed. E. Doležalová, R. Novotný, P. Soukup, Praha 2004, pp. 369-381.

17 *Chronica Boemorum*, II, 2, pp. 82-83.

18 B. Krzemieńska, *Boj knížete Břetislava I. o upevnění českého státu (1039-1041)*, Praha 1979, Rozpravy ČSAV řada společenských věd 89.5, pp. 6-14.

19 D. Třeštík, *Kosmova kronika. Studie k počátkům českého dějepisectví a politického myšlení*, Praha 1968, pp. 33-64.

20 *Chronica Boemorum* I, pp. 2-4.

21 *Ibidem*, II, pp. 80-81.

In the third preface - sometimes regarded as an introductory letter for the *Chronicle*, comprising three parts - Cosmas warns the provost of Mělník Severus against the follies of old age. He declares that, despite his diligent search, he has found nothing more ridiculous than his own little work (*opusculum*). Nevertheless, he might have been referring only to the first two books. Concerning their contents, Cosmas remarks that Severus will undoubtedly find amusement in his clumsy Latin efforts and he adds that he would prefer no one else to lay eyes on these senile trifles of his.[22]

Were we to take Cosmas at his word, he regarded the *Chronicle* as little more than leisurely reading for himself and his friends. His verbose apologies, woven in polished Latin, for lacking both the intellect and the education required for such an undertaking, reveal a conscious attempt to adhere to the conventions of a genre that demanded that authors begin their work by invoking the topos of modesty.[23]

It would be a mistake, however, to exclude the prefaces from further consideration. They concur, above all, that the *Chronicle* was not commissioned by the ducal court but arose from thoroughly private motives. In his letter to Master Gervasius, Cosmas indicated that he wished to complement Book One - which encompassed the deeds of the Bohemians (*Boemorum gesta*) from mythical beginnings until the reign of Duke Bretislaus I.[24] From the preface addressed to the abbot of Břevnov Clement, it follows that Cosmas intended to conclude his narrative with the election of Duke Bretislaus II - i.e. the year 1092,[25] which indicates that, from the outset, he adhered to a clear authorial plan: a two-book *Chronicle*.

The *Chronicle of the Czechs*, however, does not end in the year 1092. Cosmas complemented the two books with a third - this time without a dedication but with an apology (*apologia*) for capturing only a few brief glimpses of his present and for leaving any more detailed account to his continuators. With evident reluctance, he admitted that his silence was deliberate upon the accession of Duke Bretislaus the Younger. He considered it wiser to refrain from commenting on current affairs, fearing that truth breeds hatred and he himself might suffer harm; yet by straying from the truth, he added, he would risk being accused of flattery and falsehood.[26]

The apology in the preamble to Book Three confirms that Cosmas had initially conceived the *Chronicle* in the shape of the first two books and had

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[22] *Ibidem*, I, pp. 1-2.

[23] G. Althoff, *Causa scribendi und Darstellungsabsicht. Die Lebensbeschreibungen der Königin Mathilde und andere Beispiele*, in: *Litterae Medii Aevi. Festschrift Johanne Authenrieth*, ed. M. Borgolte, H. Spilling, Sigmaringen 1988, pp. 117-133.

[24] *Chronica Boemorum* I, p. 4.

[25] *Ibidem*, II, pp. 80-81.

[26] *Ibidem*, III, pp. 159-160.

not intended to cross the boundary set by the year 1092. For reasons to which he alluded only cautiously - ostensibly so that no one might reproach him for omitting living persons - he proceeded with work on Book Three, which was nonetheless to be completed by future continuators (*Quapropter posteris lacius explananda eorum relinquimus facta*).[27] At the end of Book Three, Cosmas reiterated that his clumsy babble amounted to no more than rough material (*materia*), awaiting refinement by scholars properly trained in France.[28]

In the apology, Cosmas confided that he feared misunderstanding, human hatred and pettiness, and that he might suffer harm. He named no one; yet through cautious hints, he may have implied that the *Chronicle* had not been received with universal sympathy. It is plausible that still during his lifetime, the first two books reached beyond his circle of friends to individuals who may have taken offence at their contents. Whom, however, did he fear between the years 1120 and 1125, and why?

The Sons of King Vratislaus

Discontent may well have ruled in the courts of the powerful clan known as the Vrshovici, whose interventions in public life rivalled the authority of ducal power. Cosmas considered their conduct to be shameless; in Book One, he placed into the mouth of Duke Jaromir an indictment in which the Vrshovici are branded as domestic villains and the wicked sons of ignoble fathers. By their innate cunning, they had allegedly incited conflict among the ruling Premyslids; even Saint Adalbert is said to have foretold that, for their crimes, they would be punished threefold.[29]

According to Cosmas, the unscrupulous Vrshovici did not even refrain from publicly humiliating the duke,[30] and if he deemed it necessary to exercise greater caution in Book Three, he may have faced their threats. Or perhaps not. It remains uncertain whether the elders were aware that he was composing the *Chronicle*, or whether they were capable of grasping its importance. The Vrshovici seem to be excluded from the circle of suspects by Book Three itself, as Cosmas there denounced their arrogance and scheming without restraint, and held them partially responsible for the murder of Duke Bretislaus II in 1100.[31] At the same time, however, he acknowledged that Bretislaus's successor, Borivoy II, had loyal allies among the Vrshovici,[32] and he

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27 *Ibidem*, III, p. 160.
28 *Ibidem*, III, 59, pp. 238.
29 *Ibidem*, I, 42, p. 79.
30 *Ibidem*, I, 34, pp. 61-62.
31 *Ibidem*, III, 13, p. 175.
32 *Ibidem*, III, 19, p. 184.

described the execution of the leading figure of the noble family, Mutina,[33] along with the subsequent slaughter of family members, children included,[34] in a tone of emotion and with language that borders on hagiography.[35]

The hateful and malevolent clan of the Vrshovici (*gens invisa, generatio mala*)[36] may have troubled Cosmas, but the list of those offended could well have been considerably longer. With a degree of displeasure, the *Chronicle* may have been read within the St Vitus Chapter, which Cosmas mentioned only occasionally - and not always favourably.[37] It is worth recalling, however, that the *Chronicle* was composed (*composita est*) in troubled times. Cosmas dated the beginning of his endeavour to the reign of the Holy Roman Emperor Henry V, the pontificate of Pope Calixtus II, the rule of Duke Vladislaus I, and the episcopate of the bishop of Prague Hermann.[38] Since Hermann died on 17 September 1122[39] and Calixtus ascended the Holy See on 9 February 1119, Cosmas must have begun his work sometime between the spring of 1119 and - considering the deposition of Borivoy II by his brother Vladislaus - more likely between 16 August 1120[40] and the summer of 1122. And what moved Cosmas, in his advanced age - as he himself claims to have celebrated his eightieth birthday in 1125[41] - to assume his place at the writing desk?

A clue may be hidden in Book One. According to Cosmas, the emperor, allegedly bribed by the Polish duke Mieszko, imprisoned the Premyslid Oldrich (Udalrich) - prompting Cosmas to lament that such events were hardly surprising. For in his own time (*nostris temporibus*), one Vacek, born beneath the peasant's wheel - that is, a social upstart - brought the Holy Roman King Henry into Bohemia on a 'golden chain', whereupon the king deprived the just and truth-loving Borivoy II of his liberty as if he were some common rogue. Cosmas also promised his readers that he would elaborate on this episode more thoroughly in the appropriate place.[42] He thus referred to Book Three and the coup of 1110, which elevated Borivoy's younger brother Vladislaus to the ducal throne in Prague.[43] This mention of contemporary

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[33] *Ibidem*, III, 23, pp. 191-192.

[34] *Ibidem*, III, 24, pp. 192-193.

[35] P. Kopal, *Kosmovi ďáblové. Vršovsko-přemyslovský antagonismus ve světle biblických a legendárních citátů, motivů a symbolů*, "Mediaevalia Historica Bohemica" 8 (2001), pp. 7-41.

[36] *Chronica Boemorum* I, 34, p. 61.

[37] *Ibidem*, II, 51, pp. 158-159.

[38] *Ibidem*, I, p. 4.

[39] *Ibidem*, III, 49, p. 221.

[40] *Ibidem*, III, 46, p. 219.

[41] M. Wihoda, *Kosmas, XII-wieczna Kronika Czechów jako dzieło otwarte*, Warszawa 2025, pp. 69-81.

[42] *Chronica Boemorum* I, 35, pp. 63-64.

[43] *Ibidem*, III, 32, pp. 202-203.

affairs, exceptional within the *Chronicle's* usual frame, leads us back to causes rooted in the waning years of the eleventh century - to decades governed by the sons and nephews of Duke, from 1085/1086 King, Vratislaus. The first among them, Bretislaus II, ascended the ducal throne on 14 September 1092.

In Book Three, we read that, at Easter 1099, Duke Bretislaus II accepted an invitation from Emperor Henry IV to attend the imperial court diet in Regensburg, where he was to present the bishop of Prague Hermann. Upon his arrival, Bretislaus lavished the emperor and the courtiers with generous gifts and, in return, was received with honours that granted him the opportunity to submit a special request: he asked the emperor to inform the Czechs (Bohemians) that, as a duke, he would be succeeded by his half-brother Borivoy.[44]

Cosmas, referring to 'gifts' (*donaria*), evidently alluded to a bribe, and the emperor's consent stood at odds with both the Czechs' right freely to elect their duke and the fundamental principle of agnatic seniority, according to which the Prague throne was to be claimed by the eldest descendant of the mythical Premysl the Ploughman.[45] The reason why both principles were rejected was explained by Cosmas in the chapter dedicated to the last will of Duke Bretislaus II. Remarkably, the testament did not mention Borivoy at all; instead, the underage son of the dying duke was to be entrusted with a hunting horn and a spear.[46]

Cosmas made do with little, and his readers likely understood the hints without difficulty - yet today, we cannot proceed without further commentary. The spear symbolised rule over the people, and the horn connoted the right to the ducal chamber, meaning lands and revenues.[47] If our reading of the text is correct, Bretislaus II deliberately chose Borivoy II - portrayed by Cosmas as a good-natured simpleton (*vir bonus et simplex*)[48] - as a harmless guardian who would one day voluntarily yield the Prague throne to his heirs.

Imperial approval carried considerable weight, but Duke Bretislaus II did not underestimate domestic affairs either. In 1097, he delivered a harsh lesson to his cousin Oldrich (Udalrich) of Brno, whom he had arrested and imprisoned in Kłodzko, a northern borderland outpost.[49] Unfortunately, Cosmas once again wrote with a sparing quill, but it appears that Oldrich Udalrich

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[44] *Ibidem*, III, 8, pp. 168-169.

[45] *Ibidem*, II, 13, pp. 101-102.

[46] *Ibidem*, III, 13, p. 174.

[47] P. Charvát, *„Dejte mému synáčkovi loveckou trubku a kopí". Co vlastně odkázal umírající Břetislav svému dědici*, "Acta historica et museologica Universitatis Silesianae Opaviensis" 5 (2000), pp. 167-169.

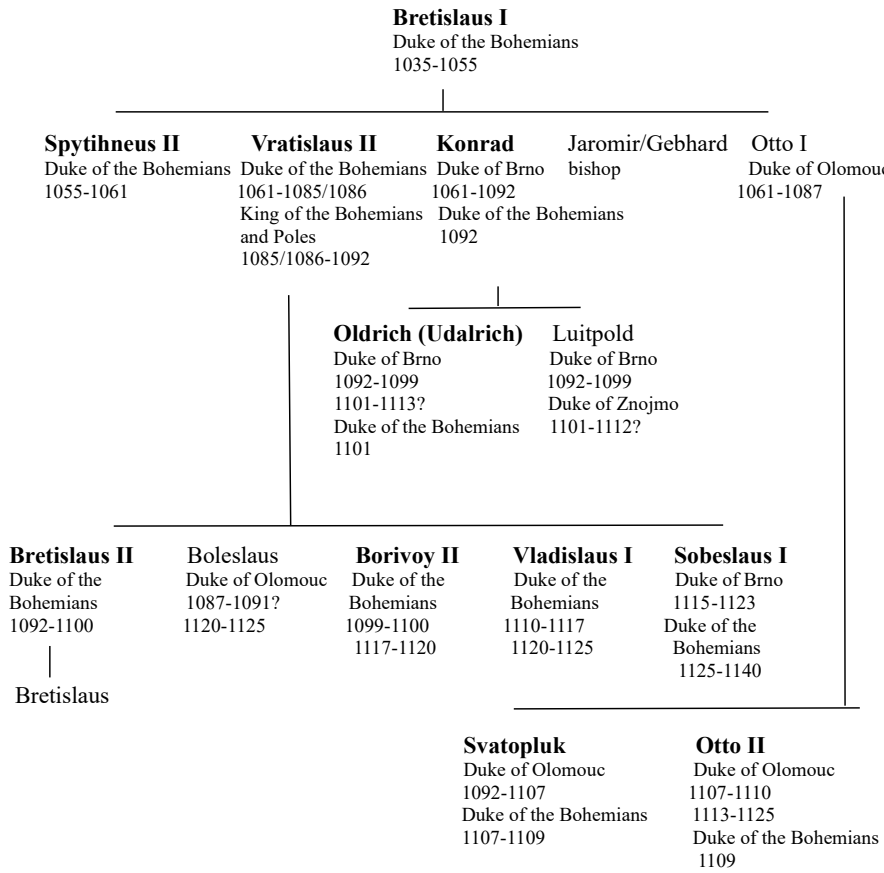
[48] *Chronica Boemorum* III, 19, p. 184.

[49] *Ibidem*, III, 5, pp. 165-166.

was older than Borivoy II and thus held superior succession rights - and the events of the summer of 1099 can be understood no differently.[50]

Bretislaus II summoned an army for a campaign in Moravia, where he had Podivín Castle rebuilt and promptly transferred it to the bishop of Prague. On the Hungarian border, he arranged a meeting with King Coloman. To mutual satisfaction, they exchanged oaths of peace and friendship. On his return journey, he stopped in Brno, reportedly incensed *(valde irratus*) at his cousins Oldrich (Udalrich) and Luitpold. Both allegedly found safety in flight and took refuge on the Moravian-Austrian frontier, from where they informed the duke that they renounced their castles and all their rights.[51]

Premyslid Dukes of Cosmas's Time



[50] J. Žemlička, *Čechy v době knížecí 1034-1198*, Praha 2007[2], pp. 121-146.

[51] *Chronica Boemorum* III, 9, pp. 169-170.

Cosmas did not explain why Oldrich (Udalrich) and Luitpold had fallen out of favour with Duke Bretislaus II. In the same chapter, however, he praised the Olomouc Premyslids Svatopluk and Otto for their obedience and loyalty to the Prague senior (*multum obedientes duci erant et fideles*). Therefore, the root of the conflict may have been the question of succession. In the summer of 1100, Bretislaus stationed loyal troops in southern Moravia under the command of his brother Borivoy. In order to prevent the Brno Premyslids from seeking allies beyond the border, he secured the goodwill not only of the Hungarian king but also of Bolesław the Wrymouth, heir to the Piast dominions,[52] and Leopold III the Good, Margrave of Austria.[53]

The hastily concluded agreements suggest that Bretislaus II upon his return from Regensburg encountered resistance from Czech nobles.[54] According to Cosmas, he was warned that a conspiracy was being prepared. Our reporter also knew the name of the murderer and described his ignominious death: during his flight, he supposedly fell into a hollow, where he, allegedly by unfortunate accident, slit open his belly with his own sword. Cosmas remained silent about the instigators, although popular opinion blamed the Vrshovici family. Only at the end of the chapter did the chronicler lament that Justice had turned her back on the Czechs, for they had knowingly violated the principle of agnatic seniority.[55]

We should also not overlook the fact that Borivoy II, who had come swiftly fromiMoravia, was proclaimed Duke of the Bohemians only three days after the death of Bretislaus II. The hastily conducted enthronement at Prague Castle on Christmas Day 1100 indicates above all a lack of trust in the promises of the nobility. The unrest among the elders drew the attention of Duke Oldrich (Udalrich), who seized Brno in January 1101. Through generous promises and, reportedly, money, he gained the confidence of Emperor Henry IV and, with his knowledge, was able to recruit volunteers in the Bavarian Danube region for a campaign into Bohemia.[56]

Cosmas acknowledged that, according to the prevailing custom and the principle of agnatic seniority, the Czechs should have been ruled by Oldrich (Udalrich). Yet since he allegedly asserted his hereditary claim too late, the Czechs accepted Borivoy II as their duke (*confirmatus est in solio*). Nevertheless, in the summer of 1101, Oldrich (Udalrich) seized the strategic land gate on the Moravian-Bohemian frontier, hoping that the lords would

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52 *Ibidem*, III, 9, p. 170.

53 *Ibidem*, III, 12, pp. 172-173.

54 J. Žemlička, *Poslední lov knížete Břetislava. K událostem ve Zbečně před Vánocemi roku 1100*, in: *Ad vitam et honorem. Profesoru Jaroslavu Mezníkovi přátelé a žáci k pětasedmdesátým narozeninám*, ed. T. Borovský, L. Jan, M. Wihoda, Brno 2003, pp. 231-246.

55 *Chronica Boemorum* III, 13, pp. 173-176.

56 *Ibidem*, III, 15, p. 176.

support him. The elders of the land, however, and the rest of the kin - including the Olomouc Premyslids - remained loyal to Borivoy. As it turned out, a tarnished reputation together with an honourable obligation to reimburse their allies' expenses excluded the Brno Premyslids from further contest for the Prague throne.[57]

The further course of events may well have been followed by Oldrich (Udalrich) with some bitterness, because public affairs were increasingly influenced by his Olomouc cousin and former protégé of the Brno dukes, Svatopluk.[58] In 1101, he supported Borivoy II,[59] but three years later, he parted ways with the Prague court on bad terms. At the same time, independently of Cosmas, Czech affairs were being commented on from the Polish side by Gallus Anonymus. The Polish account thus offers a contrasting reflection.[60]

Both observers, Cosmas and Gallus Anonymus, agree that the Premyslids became entangled in the dispute between the sons of Duke Władysław Herman of Poland. Initially, Borivoy II allowed himself to be bribed by Duke Zbigniew and, together with the Moravians, attacked the dominion of his half-brother, Bolesław III Wrymouth.[61] However, after accepting a tribute, he withdrew to Bohemia without informing the duke of Olomouc - an opportunity that was seized by Bolesław to plunder northern Moravia.[62] The indignant Svatopluk then persuaded a number of Czech elders, through promises and bribes, that he would be a better ruler.[63] In the autumn of 1105, he marched into Bohemia, but after fruitless negotiations with the garrison of Prague Castle, he was forced to order a retreat to Moravia.[64]

The final weeks of 1105 may have reminded many of something once seen before. Following the rebellion of the Brno dukes in 1101, Borivoy II had withstood a second attempt at a coup; at Prague Castle, they might have assumed that his Olomouc challenger would be condemned to languish in obscurity, much like the duke of Brno Oldrich (Udalrich). Nevertheless, Svatopluk refused to accept defeat. Before the end of the year, he turned to the duke of Poland Bolesław III Wrymouth, offering friendship in exchange

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57 *Ibidem*, p. 178.

58 *Ibidem*, II, 43, p. 148.

59 *Ibidem*, III, 15, p. 178.

60 B. Krzemieńska, *Češi a Poláci* v *mínění svých nejstarších kronikářů*, in: *Tisíc let* československé *vzájemnosti. Materiály* z *vědecké konference, pořádané na Hradci u Opavy ve dnech 9.-10. září 1965*, vol. 1, Opava 1966, pp. 53-70.

61 *Galli Anonymi Cronicae et Gesta ducum sive principum Polonorum*, ed. K. Maleczyński, Monumenta Poloniae Historica n.s. 2, Kraków 1952, II, 24, p. 91.

62 *Ibidem*, II, 25-26, pp. 92-93.

63 *Chronica Boemorum* III, 16, pp. 178-179.

64 *Ibidem*, III, 17, pp. 179-181.

for the promise that Bolesław would support Czech exiles and, in the event of a campaign against Prague, secure Hungarian reinforcements.[65] At the same time, Svatopluk was conducting negotiations with Czech elders and his relatives. He found a receptive listener in his cousin Vladislaus, who had renounced his loyalty and fraternal affection towards the elder Borivoy (*fidelitatem et fraternitam suam*).[66]

Borivoy II resisted the intrigues until the spring of 1107, when - under pressure from the nobility - he vacated Prague Castle. The ducal throne was ascended by Svatopluk, which Cosmas condemned with the remark that the state of Czech affairs could bring joy only to Pannonian ill-wishers or Polish rag-pickers.[67] Yet the *Chronicle of the Czechs* makes it clear that the Holy Roman King Henry V also intervened in Premyslid matters. Since his dispute with his father, Emperor Henry IV, in 1105, he had been indebted to the deposed duke.[68] He immediately summoned Svatopluk to appear before him; upon arrival, he had him imprisoned and ordered the Czechs to accept Borivoy as their lord. However, when Borivoy's retinue was scattered at the border,[69] he pardoned Svatopluk without remorse in exchange for a promise of 10,000 marks of silver.[70]

Cosmas was outraged that Svatopluk had had ordered the looting of church treasures and that the bishop Hermann had been forced to provide the duke with a loan. Discontent, however, was growing among the elders as well. Since Svatopluk had managed to gather only two-thirds of the ransom, he was obliged to earn the remainder in the service of King Henry V, dragging Czech nobles into costly and perilous ventures. In the late summer of 1108, he supported the imperial invasion into Hungary[71] and renounced his alliance with the duke of Poland Bolesław III Wrymouth.[72] The Hungarian retaliation struck Moravia. When Borivoy, aided by the Poles, seized eastern Bohemia,[73] Svatopluk began to suspect the nobility of treason[74] and his wrath swept away family clan of the Vrshovici. Not even children were

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65 *Galli Anonymi Cronicae…*, III,16, pp. 142-143.

66 *Chronica Boemorum* III, 19, pp. 183-185.

67 *Ibidem*, III, 20, p. 185.

68 *Ottonis episcopi Frisingensis Chronica sive Historia de duabus civitatibus*, ed. A. Hofmeister, MGH, Scriptores rerum Germ. in usum scholarum 45, Hannover 1912, VII, 9, pp. 319-321.

69 *Chronica Boemorum* III, 20, p. 186.

70 *Ibidem*, III, 21, pp. 187-188.

71 *Ibidem*, III, 22, pp. 188-189.

72 *Galli Anonymi Cronicae…*, III, 16, pp. 142-143.

73 *Chronica Boemorum* III, 22, p. 189.

74 P. Kopal, *Neznámý známý rod. Pokus o genealogii Vršovců*, "Sborník archivních prací" 51 (2001), pp. 3-83.

spared from the slaughter.[75] As a result, a blood feud was brought upon him and carried out on 21 September 1109.[76]

Violent death was a rare guest in ducal Bohemia,[77] and two assassinations within a decade - first of Bretislaus II and then of Svatopluk - invited reflection. It was in connection with the ensuing events that Cosmas made his biting remark that the servant of servants - meaning the social upstart Vacek, who had risen to become an influential adviser at court - had bribed the lord of lords, the Holy Roman King Henry V, who ordered the just duke Borivoy II to be imprisoned as a scoundrel and a liar.[78]

If we introduce further names into our tale, it becomes clear why Cosmas may have been troubled by the fact that, following Svatopluk's death, the Holy Roman King Henry V appointed Svatopluk's brother Otto as duke. Otto was promptly accepted by the people, despite the Czechs having sworn an oath to proclaim Vladislaus as duke upon Svatopluk's death.[79] Moreover, Prague Castle - an indispensable site for legitimising the election - was occupied in December 1109 by the exiled Borivoy II.[80]

Cosmas did not rejoice even at the pragmatic alliance concluded at the end of 1109 between Otto II of Olomouc and Vladislaus I, which they formed with the intent of ridding themselves of Borivoy II. The public sphere was dominated by family clans,[81] and it was precisely the interests of the Czech elders that elevated Vladislaus to the head of ducal Bohemia. Otto, promised co-rule in Bohemia, contented himself with Olomouc. Allegedly five hundred marks sufficed for the Holy Roman King Henry V to lead Borivoy away in chains.[82] Once again, it was said to be confidants from among the nobility who persuaded the dukes that each was plotting against the other. In May 1110, Vladislaus and Otto reluctantly exchanged oaths (*datis et acceptis inter se sacramentis*).[83] Ten weeks later, however, Otto was arrested - purportedly so that he might come to his senses and realise that Moravia and its governors had been and forever should be subject to the senior duke.[84]

By capturing Otto of Olomouc in the summer of 1110, the duke Vladislaus I put an end to a conflict that might have seriously undermined the internal unity of the Premyslid dominions. Yet he did not earn Cosmas's gratitude

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75 *Chronica Boemorum* III, 24, pp. 192-193.
76 *Ibidem*, III, 27, pp. 195-197; *Galli Anonymi Cronicae…*, III, 2-15, pp. 129-142.
77 J. Žemlička, *Přemyslovci. Jak* žili, *vládli a umírali*, Praha 2005, pp. 74-101.
78 *Chronica Boemorum* I, 35, p. 63.
79 *Ibidem*, III, 27, pp. 196-197.
80 *Ibidem*, III, 28, p. 198.
81 *Ibidem*, III, 29, p. 198.
82 *Ibidem*, III, 32, p. 202.
83 *Ibidem*, III, 33, p. 204.
84 *Ibidem*, III, 34, p. 205.

- perhaps because he had lent his ear to the social upstart Vacek and entrusted tax collection to the Jew Jakub Apella.[85] Cosmas also mentioned the intervention of Queen Svatava, who persuaded Vladislaus to reconcile with his brother Sobeslaus.[86] Only in passing did Cosmas note that the son of Duke Bretislaus II had come of age, without devoting a single line to his succession rights.[87] He maintained a cold distance even in the chapter concerning Otto II's return to Olomouc. Why Otto was released in December 1113 and under what conditions he was granted the administration of part of Moravia, Cosmas simply kept to himself.[88]

Vladislaus I earned Cosmas's recognition only twice. In 1115, he ceded southern Moravia to Sobeslaus out of brotherly affection and invited both Sobeslaus and Otto II of Olomouc to an important meeting with the duke of Poland Bolesław III Wrymouth.[89] Two years later, he allegedly remembered the sidelined Borivoy II, and when his brother apologised (*satisfaciens sibi*) and acknowledged his primacy (*submittens dominio*), Vladislaus reinstated him on the Prague ducal throne.[90] Why he had done so, Cosmas - as usual - did not explain and dismissed Borivoy's subsequent deposition in August 1120 with a cryptic warning that whoever was wise would rather avoid the truth.[91] The instigator of this final overthrow was purportedly Borivoy's brother and co-ruler, Vladislaus.[92]

At roughly the same time, Cosmas completed Book One. He apparently began working on Book Two and, likely with little joy, pondered how to grasp the present, which was heading towards another dramatic crossroads. After Christmas 1124, Vladislaus I, gravely ill, had himself transported to Vyšehrad, where the duke of Olomouc Otto II arrived in January 1125. With the support of the duchess Richeza - whose sister Sophia was his wife[93] - Otto hoped for the promised succession. However, most of the nobility (*Boemii primi et secundi ordinis*) seemed to favour Duke Sobeslaus, who had a powerful and, above all, persuasive advocate in the old Queen Svatava. When the bishop Otto of Bamberg refused to grant the dying man absolution until he showed favour to Sobeslaus, Vladislaus declared his brother the future duke of the Bohemians.[94]

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85 *Ibidem*, III, 57, pp. 231-232.
86 *Ibidem*, III, 37, pp. 209.
87 *Ibidem*, III, 38, p. 210.
88 *Ibidem*, III, 39, p. 212.
89 *Ibidem*, III, 41, pp. 213-214.
90 *Ibidem*, III, 43, pp. 217-218.
91 *Ibidem*, III, 46, p. 219.
92 *Ibidem*, III, 43, p. 218.
93 *Ibidem*, III, 58, p. 234.
94 *Ibidem*, pp. 233-236.

Sobeslaus I, the last surviving son of King Vratislaus, was installed on the Prague ducal throne in mid-April 1125. Cosmas heard that the betrayed Otto II took leave of Prague with a menacing oath: either he would be defeated and punished by death, or he would prevail. Therefore, he sent word to Sobeslaus, urging him not to be angry with his Olomouc cousin and to leave his fate in God's hands.[95] The well-intentioned advice went unheeded. Shortly before his death, Cosmas likely sensed that reconciliation would not be possible.

In retrospect, one cannot help but pay Cosmas a compliment for his candour. In the preface to Book Three, he warned the readers that he would record only a little of the present but that he would rather recount a dream. In the subsequent chapters, covering the years 1092-1125, he only rarely described causes and, true to his promise, earnestly implored the muse to be sparing with words.[96] In the conclusion, he abandoned the narrative thread altogether, blending private recollections with observations on the weather and with moral reflections[97] - which brings us back to the beginning of our inquiry: the question of whom Cosmas feared.

THE LONG SHADOW OF QUEEN SVATAVA

It is worth recalling that Cosmas began to work on Book One of his *Chronicle* between 1120 and 1122 and that he denounced in it the overthrow of Duke Borivoy II in 1110. However, this denunciation may have in fact referred to events that took place a decade later. In his entry for the year 1120, Cosmas called upon the Muse to be wise and fall silent, noting that on 16 August, Borivoy was stripped of his rule over Bohemia.[98] In the next chapter, he included a brief report stating that Duke Vladislaus I had refortified Donín and Podivín Castles.[99]

Cosmas followed the rise and fall of Duke Borivoy II with sympathy, even absolving him of violating the succession order in 1100.[100] Duke Vladislaus I, in contrast, was portrayed in the *Chronicle* as a man without qualities - willing to strike agreements with anyone and on any terms, regardless of prior commitments. Yet in Cosmas's world, he was not the originator of wrongdoing. Rather, he appeared as a tool, as in 1111, when he recalled his brother Sobeslaus from exile and entrusted him with the prosperous region of Žatec

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95 *Ibidem*, III, 60, pp. 238-239.

96 *Ibidem*, III, 46, p. 219.

97 V. Hrubý, *Na okraj nového vydání Kosmovy kroniky*, "Časopis Matice moravské" 49 (1925), pp. 371-384, here pp. 375-384.

98 *Chronica Boemorum* III, 46, p. 219.

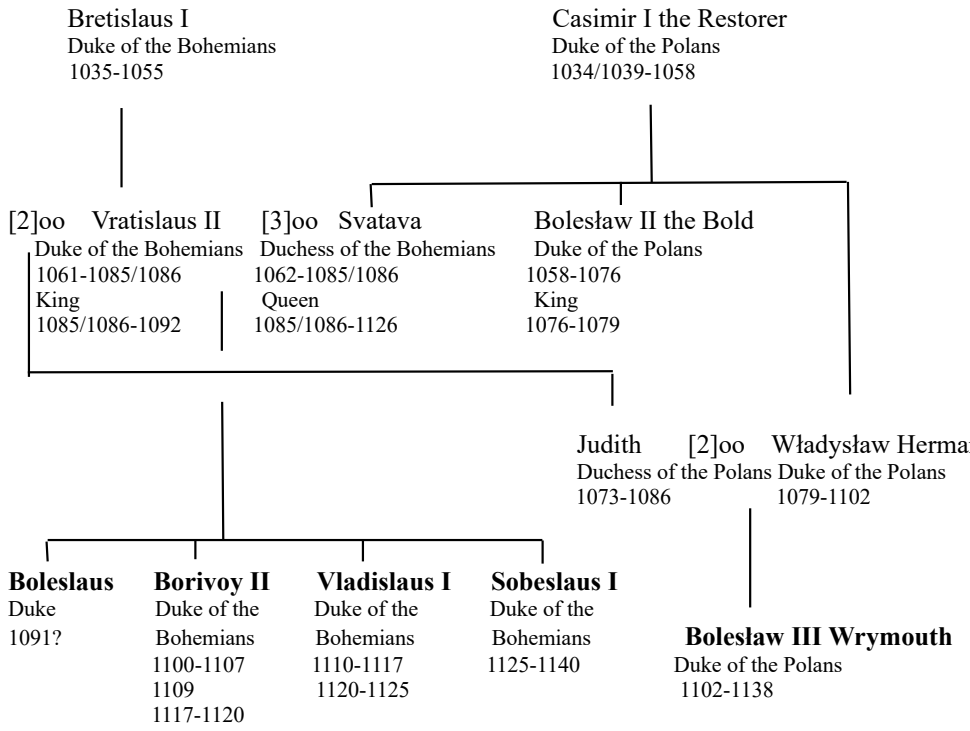
99 *Ibidem*, III, 47, p. 220.

100 *Ibidem*, III, 15, p. 178.

and its surroundings. According to the *Chronicle*, this was made possible through the intercession of the social upstart, court palatine Vacek, through the mediation of the bishop of Prague Hermann, and owing to the efforts of Queen Svatava.[101]

Cosmas allowed Queen Svatava to re-enter the narrative once more, in the spring of 1125, to persuade her dying son Vladislaus that the rule over Bohemia should not pass to Otto of Olomouc, but rather to Sobeslaus. The lengthy speech that Cosmas placed in the queen's mouth was rendered with such urgency that it verged on blackmail. Vladislaus allegedly fell into a panic, and when the bishop Otto of Bamberg - who had stopped in Prague on his way from Pomerania and heard Vladislaus's confession - refused to grant him absolution unless he promised clemency to his brother, Vladislaus declared Sobeslaus his successor.[102]

The Premyslid-Piast Dynastic Relations around 1100



101 *Ibidem*, III, 37, p. 209.
102 *Ibidem*, III, 58, pp. 233-236r

Cosmas swore in his *Chronicle* that Sobeslaus was beloved by the Czechs of both the first and second estates (*primi et secundi ordinis*), while Otto II of Olomouc had but few supporters. Nevertheless, the very fact that Vladislaus - apparently a pious man who had chosen to be buried in the monastery of the reformed Benedictines in Kladruby[103] (thus outside the traditional dynastic necropolises of Prague Castle or Vyšehrad) - was denied the last rites, suggests that Sobeslaus I's ascent to power was driven by the ruthless pressure of Queen Svatava. If so, it cannot be excluded that the queen, although unnamed by Cosmas, may also have played a role in the deposition of Duke Borivoy II in August 1120.[104]

Queen Svatava was widowed in January 1092. From Cosmas's remarks it is evident that she retained considerable influence at the Prague court for the next thirty years, likely until her death on 1 September 1126. Only twice - under the rule of her stepson Bretislaus II (1092-1100) and Duke Svatopluk (1107-1109) - was she relegated to her proper bounds. Coincidentally, both were assassinated, which may have been mere chance. Yet it should not escape our attention that Cosmas harboured a sincere aversion to the Piasts and that he composed his *Chronicle* during a period in which Svatava - herself an aunt of the duke of Poland Bolesław III Wrymouth, a great-granddaughter of Bolesław I the Brave, and a great-great-granddaughter of the oft-cursed Duke Mieszko - was actively engaged in public affairs. It may well have been Svatava and her baleful influence that Cosmas had in mind when he wrote of the 'Maidens' War', in which women were subordinated to Czech men,[105] or when he praised Duke Spytihneus II for ordering his own mother, the 'foreigner' Judith, to leave the country.[106]

It should be emphasised that the interpretation suggested here remains speculative. The *Chronicle* has survived only in later copies, and distinguishing Cosmas's authorial redaction from subsequent interpolations is extremely difficult. Nevertheless, Cosmas's enumeration of the merits of Duke Spytihneus II is so peculiar that one cannot help but question why he was included among exemplary rulers. What is equally striking is the motif of the Maidens' War, which was forcibly inserted into the *Chronicle* without any discernible normative or legitimising message. Whereas the dynastic myth defended the primacy of the ruling house,[107] and the Lucan War defined the relationship between the duke and the tribal elders,[108] the Maidens' War ends - per-

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103 *Ibidem*, III, 58, p. 236.

104 *Ibidem*, III, 46, p. 219.

105 *Ibidem*, I, 9, pp. 19-21.

106 *Ibidem*, III, 14, pp. 103-104.

107 D. Třeštík, *Kosmovo pojetí přemyslovské pověsti*, "Český lid" 52 (1965), pp. 305-314.

108 J. Banaszkiewicz, *Entre la description historiographique et le schéma structurel. L' image de la communauté tribale: l'exemple des Lučane dans la Chronica Bohemorum de Kosmas vers 1125*,

haps too simply for Cosmas's style - with the victory of men over women.[109] It is also surprising that the episode of the Maidens' War was inserted into a thematically unrelated chapter, between the founding of Prague Castle and the death of the first duke of the Czechs, the legendary ploughman Premysl.[110] This may prove that Cosmas did not originally include the Maidens' War in Book One. He might have revised the initial concept under pressure, possibly in response to objections from Queen Svatava or her confidants. In that case, the alleged expulsion of Duchess Judith and the defeat of the Czech Amazons might have served as a subtle lesson to readers about the proper place of women in the public sphere.

Summary

Was the Maidens' War inserted into the first book retrospectively? Perhaps so. Nevertheless, the more pertinent question is why Cosmas deemed it appropriate to remain silent about the deeds of Bolesław I the Brave. First of all, it is worth noting that, despite all uncertainties, it can be considered established that Cosmas was addressing his contemporaries. These may have recalled both real and alleged wrongs committed against the Czechs by Bolesław the Brave. Yet around 1120, public attention appears to have shifted towards disputes among the Premyslid dukes. In other words, Cosmas was seeking answers to questions of contemporary relevance, selecting from the past only what suited his purpose or could be adapted to fit a narrative in which he defended timeless values and presented evidence that the politically active community of the Czechs (*gens Bohemanorum*) was bound by a charismatic oath taken in mythical times, and that the public sphere was defined by law, in the formulation of which both the descendants of the ploughman Premysl and the nobility took equal part.[111]

Cosmas also identified the culprit: Duke Vratislaus II, who from 1085/1086 bore the royal title. Both implicitly and explicitly, Vratislaus was a tyrant who placed personal gain above ancient traditions and, through his reckless acceptance of royal anointment, deprived the Czechs of the favour of their patron saints, St Wenceslas and St Adalbert.[112]

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in: *L'Historiographie médiévale en Europe: actes du colloque organisé par la Fondation européenne de la science au Centre de recherches historiques et juridiques de l'Université Paris I du 29 mars au 1er avril 1989*, ed. J.-P. Genet, Paris 1991, pp. 165-175.

109 M. Golema, *Kosmova a Dalimilova „dívčí válka" ako metafora indoeurópskej vojny funkcií*, "Studia mythologica Slavica" 8 (2005), pp. 137-155.

110 *Chronica Boemorum* I, 9, pp. 19-21.

111 M. Wihoda, *The Making of Medieval Central Europe. Power and Political Prerequisites for the First Westernization, 791-1122*, New York-London 2024, pp. 275-280.

112 M. Wihoda, *První česká království*, Praha 2015, pp. 17-29.

Vratislaus, shaped by the firm strokes of Cosmas's quill, was intended to be a cautionary example of a ruler who bequeathed to his successors a society depleted both materially and morally, and fractured from within. The shameful legacy, however, was perpetuated for another thirty years by Queen Svatava. For reasons that can only be surmised, Cosmas could not speak openly. It may have been for this very reason that, in the mythical layer of the *Chronicle*, he allowed men to triumph over women, introduced the fictional Duke Mieszko into the narrative - perhaps because the half-Premyslid Bolesław I the Brave might have invited dangerously direct comparisons with the then-reigning Dukes of Bohemia Borivoy II, Vladislaus I and Sobeslaus I - and praised Duke Spytihneus II for expelling his own mother from the land. The readers - by which he meant his circle of friends - were left to interpret these allusions as they saw fit.

ABSTRACT

The study explores the harsh stance of Cosmas of Prague against the Poles in his *Chronicle of the Czechs* (Bohemians). It argues that his account was shaped less by historical fidelity and more by the urgent political questions of his own time. Cosmas appears to have selectively drawn from the past, choosing episodes that could be conveniently adapted to suit his rhetorical and ideological aims. Around 1120, when he began writing his *Chronicle*, Czech society was in the throes of dynastic conflict among Premyslid dukes. Cosmas attributed these internal divisions to Svatava, the widow of Duke (from 1085/1086 King) Vratislaus, who was the daughter of the duke of Poland Casimir the Restorer. Unable to direct his criticism overtly against her, Cosmas embedded his disapproval within historical episodes drawn from the turn of the twelfth century.

Keywords: Cosmas, Piasts, Premyslid, narrative strategy

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In the circle of medieval legend of the "golden age" of Poland's origins: Bolesław the Great, King of Poland and ruler of... the Saxons

This year's celebrations of the millennium of Bolesław Chrobry's coronation in Poland have provided an opportunity for many public debates, including, of course, academic ones, not only on the history but also on the legend of this ruler and its influence on the formation of national community and identity over the centuries. In this sphere of mythologised collective ideas about the origins of Poland, the image of Bolesław Chrobry marking the borders of his monarchy in the West by driving a row of boundary posts into the bottom of the Saale River, a tributary of the Elbe in the heart of Germany, has held a prominent place since the Middle Ages. At the beginning of the 19th century, a monumental visualisation of this scene was created in a painting by Józef Peszka (fig. 1), which, like its prototype, a drawing by Franciszek Smuglewicz (fig. 2) from the end of the 18th century inspired by Adam Naruszewicz's study of Polish history,[1] became a permanent feature of the historical discourse of the 19th and 20th centuries.[2]

[1] See, *e.g.*, A. Bernatowicz, *Smuglewicz Franciszek*, in: *Słownik artystów polskich i obcych w Polsce działających (zmarłych przed 1966 r.). Malarze, rzeźbiarze, graficy*, vol. 11, ed. U. Makowska, Warszawa 2023, pp. 343 f.

[2] M. Rudaś-Grodzka, *Słupy Bolesława*, in: *Atlas Polskiego Romantyzmu/Obszar4/Słupy Bolesława*, https://nplp.pl/artykul1/slupy-boleslawa/(accessed: 12.11.2025); P. Migdalski, *Pomnik pierwszego polskiego słupa granicznego w nadodrzańskim Czelinie jako miejsce pamięci*, in: *III Nadodrzańskie spotkania z historią 2015. Konferencja Naukowa, Mieszkowice, 17 kwietnia 2015 r.*, ed. A. Chludziński,

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It is easy to see the similarity between these artistic visions and the now classic Polish translation of Gallus Anonymous's chronicle from the early 12th century, by Roman Grodecki (d. 1964), in which the aforementioned motif of marking the border on the Saale River appeared for the first time in written history, specifically in the narrative about the 'golden age' of Bolesław Chrobry:

"He subdued the unruly Saxons with such force that he marked the borders of Poland in the middle of their land with iron stakes [driven] into the River Saale"[3]

"Indomitos vero tanta virtuti Saxones edomuit, quod in flumine Sale in medio terre eorum **meta ferrea** fines Polonie terminavit".[4]

As can be seen, the phrase *meta ferrea* ("iron border") from the above quotation became the basis for creating, in the historical tradition mentioned above, a canonical image of a row of posts marking the linear border of Bolesław's dominion running along the Saale River. It is worth adding that this interpretation of the motif known from Gallus Anonymous's narrative was already established by Jan Długosz in the second half of the 15th century. In his monumental *Annales Seu Cronicae Incliti Regni Poloniae*, the border of Bolesław Chrobry's empire was marked by the Saale River in the west and the Dnieper River in the east,[5] which corresponds well with Gallus's account of the Polish ruler's domination of Rus after the capture of the capital city of Kiev, located on this river.

Returning to the topic of the Saxons, it remains to be said that the treatment of the Saale River as the linear border of Bolesław Chrobry's monarchy, established since the late Middle Ages, meant that the Saxon lands were divided into two parts, and thus Bolesław appears as the conqueror of (only) one of them. Of course, in the times of Jan Długosz, and even more so later, Poland's borders, which had shifted so far west, could indeed seem exceptionally impressive in terms of their extent. The aforementioned chronicler compared Bolesław, on account of his conquests, to the legendary forefather of the Poles, Lech, the founder of the Lechite empire bordering

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Pruszcz Gdański-Mieszkowice 2015, pp. 193-214; A. Kalin, *Mit Ziem Odzyskanych w literaturze. Postkolonialny przypadek Ziemi Lubuskiej*, Gorzów Wielkopolski 2019, esp. pp. 276 ff.

[3] Cf. "Nieposkromionych zaś Sasów z taką mocą poskromił, że w środku ich ziemi żelaznymi słupami [wbitymi] w rzece Sali oznaczył granice Polski" - transl. R. Grodecki in: Gall Anonim, *Kronika polska*, transl. R. Grodecki, introduction and comment. M. Plezia, Wrocław 2003, I, 6.

[4] *Galli Anonymi cronicae et gesta ducum sive principum Polonorum*, ed. K. Maleczyński, Monumenta Poloniae Historica n.s. 2, Cracoviae 1952 [further: Gallus], I, 6.

[5] *Ioannis Dlugossi Annales Seu Cronicae Incliti Regni Poloniae*, Book 3-4, ed. and comment. Z. Kozłowska-Budkowa, K. Pieradzka, D. Turkowska *et al*., Varsaviae 1970, III, under the year 1070 (p. 100). Cf. *e.g.* A. Krawiec, *Slavia – Sclavania – Słowiańska Ziemia. Słowiańszczyzna w geografii kreacyjnej łacińskiej Europy w średniowieczu*, Poznań 2022, p. 103.

Fig. 1. Bolesław I the Brave orders to hammer the border posts at the confluence of the Elbe and Saale rivers - author Józef Peszka (1767-1831), property of National Museum in Warsaw, deposited at the Museum of the Origins of the Polish State in Gniezno

Fig. 2. Bolesław Chrobry marking the borders of his kingdom at the confluence of the Saale and Elbe rivers - copperplate engraving from 1791, based on a drawing by Franciszek Smuglewicz

the ancient Roman Empire.[6] It is therefore all the more worth emphasising that Jan Długosz's interpretation was influenced by a certain minimalism in his assessment of the western reach of Bolesław's monarchy in relation to Gallus's vision, probably inspired by an anachronistic view of the map of Europe in his time, which was later repeated by Grodecki in his translation of the chronicle.

All this is due to the specific choice of meaning of the phrase: *meta ferrea* - 'iron border'. The idea of representing it in the form of a row of posts is an extension of a concept already known from the chronicle of Master Vincent, called Kadłubek, who, nearly a century later, took up Gallus's account of Chrobry's conquests and specified the meaning of the word *meta* as a column or post marking a border, which is philologically entirely justified.[7] However, in this interpretation, we are dealing with a different way of marking the border than drawing it linearly along the river lined with a row of posts. Firstly, it should be emphasised that in the interpretation of Gallus's text discussed here, we are dealing with a single pole or column (*meta*) marking the border, and secondly, that Bolesław was to place it in the middle of the Saxon country, marked by its river axis. In this way, the occupation of the centre of the country was clearly marked, which means that the whole country is under the rule of the conqueror, as signified by this column.[8]

According to Gallus Anonymous, Bolesław Chrobry conquered Rus in a similar manner, namely by capturing Kiev.[9] It is worth recalling here the legendary story of him leaving a mark with his sword on the Golden Gate - which in fact did not yet exist at that time - which the chronicler, in a play on symbols, associated with Chrobry's taking as his concubine the daughter of Vladimir the Great, the already deceased ruler of Kiev: her fate became an allegorical representation of the takeover of the entire country.[10] In short,

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[6] *Ioannis Dlugossii Annales…*, Book 1-2, ed. and comment. J. Dąbrowski, W. Semkowicz-Zaremba, K. Pieradzka, B. Modelska-Strzelecka, Varsaviae 1964, II, under the year 1025 (pp. 263 f.).

[7] *Magistri Vincentii dicti Kadłubek Chronica Polonorum*, ed. Marian Plezia, Monumenta Poloniae Historica n.s. 9, Kraków 1994, II, 12: *columna ferrea*.

[8] This interpretation of Master Vincent's message as an elaboration of Gallus's account was pointed out nearly forty years ago by J. Banaszkiewicz, *Jedność porządku przestrzennego, społecznego i tradycji początków ludu (Uwagi o urządzeniu wspólnoty plemienno-państwowej u Słowian)*, "Przegląd Historyczny" 77 (1986), 3, p. 464.

[9] Gallus I, 7; cf. *e.g.*, J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry*, Poznań 1999, pp. 178 ff.; K. Kollinger, *Polityka wschodnia Bolesława Chrobrego (992–1025)*, Wrocław 2014, pp. 302 ff.; A. Pleszczyński, *Bolesław Chrobry*, Warszawa 2025, s. 330 ff.

[10] Gallus I, 7; cf. *Die Chronik des Bischofs Thietmar von Merseburg*, ed. R. Holtzmann, MGH, Scriptores rerum Germanicarum n.s. 9, Berlin 1935 [further: Thietmar], VIII, 31-33. For an analysis of the source passage see: J. Banaszkiewicz, *Bolesław i Peredsława. Uwagi o uroczystości stanowienia władcy w związku z wejściem Chrobrego do Kijowa*, "Kwartalnik Historyczny" 97 (1990),

in Gallus's view - as also indicated by the reception of his message about *meta ferrea* in the Saale in the chronicle of Master Vincent - the extent of the borders of Bolesław Chrobry's multi-ethnic monarchy was most likely defined in the east and west by emphasising the spectacular conquest of the centre of the country lying on the outskirts of this realm.[11]

Given this extension of the legendary borders of Bolesław's monarchy to the west, it is perhaps not surprising that Gallus Anonymous reports that Poland had as many as two metropolitans at that times.[12] This claim has been the subject of considerable attention in a long-standing scholarly debate, with researchers seeking to establish its basis in the reality of church institutions during the era of the early Piasts.[13] Meanwhile, the portrayal of Bolesław in Gallus's literary world as lord of the Saxon land naturally places, within this legendary vision, the Metropolis of Magdeburg - located among the Saxons - within his monarchy (this is, of course, a hypothetical interpretation of the chronicler's highly enigmatic remark).

However, even if Master Vincent's interpretation of how the border in the Saxon lands was determined is considered too far-fetched (which, let us emphasise, seems less reasonable than a linear treatment of the border at Saale) Bolesław remains the conqueror of at least part of the Saxon lands. What is more, in Gallus's imagined world, he also conquered them in a sense in the north, specifically due to his successful attempts, in the chronicler's opinion, to subjugate the Old Prussians militarily. According to Gallus, they were the descendants of those Saxons who escaped Charlemagne's conquest

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pp. 3-35; L.P. Słupecki, *Realpolitik, Sexual Abuse. German Wife and Beautifull Russian Concubine. Boleslav the Great in Kiev in 108*, in: *Ostmitteleuropäische Fruedensschlüsse zwischen Mittelalter und Gegenwart, Zum 65. Geburtstag von Christian Lübke*, ed. M. Hardt, M. Wołoszyn, Dresden 2021 (= Forschungen zur Geschichte und Kultur des östlichen Mitteleuropa 58), pp. 30-41, and above, footnote 9.

[11] S. Rosik, *Żelazem znaczona granica i starodawna wolność Polski. Wokół Gallowej wizji złotego wieku Bolesława Wielkiego*, in: *Hortus miediaevalis. Studia ofiarowane Profesorowi Wojciechowi Fałkowskiemu w siedemdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin*, ed. W. Długokęcki *et al*., Wrocław 2022, pp. 35-45.

[12] Gallus II, 11.

[13] Conjectures on this subject have even suggested the existence in Poland of a second metropolitan see, alongside Gniezno, for the Cyril and Methodius rite, or pointed to the presence in Poland of St Bruno of Querfurt (or another person) as a second archbishop alongside the Metropolitan of Gniezno. In connection with Bolesław's rule over the lands west of the Oder or in Moravia, which were subject to metropolises other than Gniezno, the Archbishop of Magdeburg or the Archbishop of Mainz was suggested as this second archbishop (for an account of this discussion, see, *e.g.*, J. Dobosz, *Monarcha i możni wobec Kościoła w Polsce do początku XIII wieku*, Poznań 2002, pp. 77 f.; D.A. Sikorski, *Kościół w Polsce za Mieszka I i Bolesława Chrobrego. Rozważania nad granicami poznania historycznego*, Poznań 2011, pp. 515 ff.). The story by Gallus Anonymous therefore favours this third option, but on a different basis - in the legend proclaiming Bolesław's rule over the land of the Saxons, one must take into account that Magdeburg was under the direct control of the Polish monarch.

and found new homes.[14] In light of this information, Bolesław Chrobry emerges as the continuator of Charlemagne's work in such a spectacular dimension as the rule over the wild, untamed tribe of the Saxons.[15] This is, in a sense, his historical mission, strictly part of it, assigned to him in Gallus's historiosophy within the Roman order represented by Emperor Otto III, who in 1000[16] arrived in Gniezno and at the tomb of St Adalbert, the patron saint of Poland, confirmed the place of its ruler in the circle of Christian monarchies centred around Rome, as well as his royal dignity.[17]

In Gallus's narrative, Poland has been a kingdom since the dawn of its history[18] - or perhaps it would be better to say 'since time immemorial times' in the worldview of that time - and therefore, from this perspective, Otto III's gestures during his visit in Gniezno, such as placing a diadem on Bolesław's forehead to elevate him above other nobles, as well as bestowing upon him the spear of St Maurice,[19] appear as the realisation of the historiosophical ideas guiding Gallus's work. He created the Piast dynasty as the "natural rulers" (*domini naturales*) of the kingdom,[20] and this status of their statehood was realised and confirmed on the international stage by the elevation of Bolesław by the imperial majesty himself. This should be particularly emphasised in view of the fact that Gallus did not mention the coronation of this ruler in 1025, which was combined with anointing, and let us remember that at the imperial court under the Salian dynasty, starting with Conrad II, it was treated as usurpation.[21] Therefore, without delving into what knowledge the chronicler may have had on this matter, given the silence of the sources, we must focus on his emphasis on the emperor's recognition of Chrobry's royal dignity.

Of course, Gallus's account of the events in Gniezno in the year 1000 contains some elements that are obviously fictitious, but its underlying idea of emphasising the royal prerogatives of Bolesław Chrobry seems to accurately reflect the meaning of the historical events described. It should be remembered that the royal title, Latin *rex*, was not strictly associated with coronation at that time,

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14 Gall II, 42, cf. D.A.[dam] Sikorski, *Galla Anonima wiadomości o Prusach. Próba weryfikacji wybranych hipotez*, "Kwartalnik Historyczny" 110 (2003), 2, pp. 9-16.

15 S. Rosik, *Bolesław Krzywousty*, Wrocław 2013, p. 171.

16 We do not know the date from Gallus Anonymous, but it is solidly justified by the chronicler contemporary to the events, Thietmar of Merseburg (d. 1018), see: Thietmar IV, 45.

17 Gallus I, 6.

18 *Ibidem*.

19 *Ibidem*.

20 *Ibidem*, II, 16.

21 See: *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, ed. M. Giese, MGH, Scriptores rerum Germ. in usum schol. 72, Hannover 2004, under the year 1025 (pp. 578 f.); Wipo, *Gesta Chunradi imperatoris*, MGH, Scriptores rerum Germ. in usum schol. 61: *Die Werke Wipos*, ed. H. Bresslau, Hannover-Leipzig 1915, 9 (pp. 31 f.).

and in the case of the native environment of the first Piasts, its corresponding meaning was hidden under the Slavic title 'książę' (in Polish today: prince or duke) and was rooted in pre-Christian tradition at that time.[22] It is therefore difficult to speak of any terminological precision in defining the power of the first Piasts in contemporary Latin sources (not only narrative, but also on coins[23]), and it is not surprising that the same person is referred to as *rex*, *dux*, *princeps*, or even *iudex*;[24] all of them corresponded to the Slavic 'książę/kniaź' in its original - in fact, also 'royal' - meaning, more often defining aspects of the power exercised than the royal or princely rank.

For their own subjects, Bolesław, like his father Mieszko I, was therefore *de facto* king. This situation changed when they acted on the stage of the empire, as here their status was defined in relation to the king of the East Franks (Germany) and at the same time the emperor in one person. The relations established with the aristocracy of the empire made the first Piasts, like the rulers of Bohemia, for example, members of the empire's elite, although it is difficult to speak of strict membership in the circle of these *principes*. This was due to Poland's external location in relation to the empire and, hence, the relatively weaker ties of the first Piasts with its rulers.[25] According to Thietmar of Merse-

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[22] It should be remembered here that the Slavic title of 'książę', a prince, already 'degraded' in the times of Gallus Anonymus in relation to "król", a king - anointed and crowned - in the times of the first Piasts, probably still sounded like 'knędz'/'księdz' and had its equivalent in the East Slavic 'kniaź', Lithuanian 'kunigas', Nordic 'konung', German 'König' or English 'king' (the root "kn" was of key etymological importance), and thus in royal titles in use since "barbarian" times. See, *e.g.*, K. Modzelewski, *Wielki krewniak, wielki wojownik, wielki sąsiad. Król w oczach współplemieńców*, in: *Monarchia w średniowieczu. Władza nad ludźmi, władza nad terytorium. Studia ofiarowane Profesorowi Henrykowi Samsonowiczowi*, ed. J. Pysiak, A. Pieniądz-Skrzypczak, M.R. Pauk, Warszawa-Kraków 2002, pp. 47-71.

[23] S. Suchodolski, *Rex Bolizlavus – tzw. Królewskie monety Bolesława Chrobrego*, in: *Heraldyka i okolice*, ed. A. Rachuba *et al*., Warszawa 2002, pp. 285-295.

[24] The titles *marchio* and *comes* (referring to Mieszko I) stand out here, seen strictly from the perspective of the Ottonian Roman Empire; cf. *Annales necrologici Fuldenses*, ed. G. Waitz, in: MGH, Scriptores 13, Hannoverae 1881, under the year 992 (p. 206).

[25] It is also worth mentioning here the relations of the first Piasts with the papacy, emphasising their subjectivity as Christian monarchs. In the case of Mieszko I, his submission of his own statehood to the protection of the Holy See around 990 should be emphasised (in the document known from the register as the *Dagome iudex* - edition and elaboration B. Kürbis, *Dagome iudex - studium krytyczne*, in: *Początki państwa polskiego. Księga tysiąclecia*, t. 1: *Organizacja polityczna*, ed. K. Tymieniecki, Poznań 1962, pp. 363-424; see also: D.A. Sikorski, *Kościół w Polsce…*, pp. 209-275; P. Nowak, *Dagome iudex w Zbiorze kanonów kardynała Deusdedita*, "Studia Źródłoznawcze" 51 (2013), pp. 75-94; *Polonia Pontificia*, ed. W. Könighaus, Regesta Pontificum Romanorum, Göttingen 2014, pp. 13 f.), and in the case of Bolesław Chrobry, his payment of the so-called St Peter's penny, cf. Thietmar VI, 92 (similar to the rulers of England, for example - cf. Thietmar VII, 36); see also: *Epistola Brunonis ad Henricum regem*, ed. J. Karwasińska, in: Monumenta Poloniae Historica n.s. 4/3, Warszawa 1973, p. 103: here, Bolesław is referred to as a *tributarius* of St Peter.

burg, Mieszko I was a tributary of Otto I, and Bolesław was to have a similar status until Otto III elevated him to the rank of 'lord' (*dominus*).[26]

The account of Bolesław's elevation resonates well with the events described by Gallus Anonymous in Gniezno during Otto III's pilgrimage. The motif of Otto III presenting St Maurice's spear to Bolesław - which, at the current stage of academic debate, seems quite probable - indicates that the Polish ruler gained a status accurately depicted in a miniature from Liuthar's Gospel Book from around 1000, namely the figures of two monarchs bowing to Otto III seated on the throne.[27] Their attribute is precisely the holy spear. They also wear diadems on their heads, which also corresponds well with Gallus's account of Otto placing such an insignia on the head of the Polish ruler. Without entering into further debate on this miniature (fig. 3),[28] it is worth emphasisingithat the mere possession of the Holy Lance emphasised Bolesław's royal prerogatives,[29] regardless of his position on his possible coronation by the emperor.

Although it is difficult to rule out the possibility that Otto III did so, it is worth remembering that Gallus wrote his work at a time when the emperors ruling in Germany crowned neighbouring rulers (*e.g.*, the Czech and Obodrite rulers), and thus one must take into account the possibility that the chronicler introduced the theme of this coronation by the emperor in reference to the practice known to him from his own epoch. Some doubt must therefore remain as to whether Otto actually placed the diadem on

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26 Thietmar V, 90. It is difficult to ascertain what this *dominus* would mean exactly. However, the general classification of the Piasts as tributaries does not change the fact that they could become vassals of German rulers from certain territories, although the 'textbook' belief that Bolesław took over Milsko and Lusatia in 1002 on this basis is not confirmed by sources, and it is more likely that he ruled these lands without any obligations. The only mention of his homage to Henry II and the beneficium he received at that time refers to the year 1013, but it is also unknown what the scope of this beneficium was (maybe Meissen, which Henry refused to give him in 1002 - cf. Thietmar V, 18). In the case of the Peace of Bautzen (1018), contrary to some historiography, it should be clearly emphasised that there was not even an opportunity to conclude a feudal agreement at that time. Ultimately, it is worth abandoning the 20th-century scholarly model that overemphasises feudal arrangements in explaining the empire's relations with its neighbours at that time.

27 See fig. 3 (Aachener Domschatzkammer; https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Liuthar-Evangeliar.jpg).

28 Let us just mention that there is some debate as to whether these two figures with spears and diadems are Bolesław Chrobry and the Hungarian Saint Stephen I. See esp. J. Fried, *Otton III i Bolesław Chrobry*, Warszawa 2000.

29 On the Holy Lance see, *e.g.*, Z. Dalewski, *Die Heilige Lanze und die polnischen Insignien*, in: *Europas Mitte um 1000. Beiträge zur Geschichte, Kunst und Archäologie*, ed. A. Wieczorek, H.-M. Hinz, Stuttgart 2000, pp. 907-911; M. Dulinicz, *Lancea sacra - wędrówka idei i przedmiotów*, in: *Wędrówki rzeczy i idei w średniowieczu*, red. S. Moździoch, Wrocław 2004 (= Spotkania Bytomskie 5), pp. 61-84.

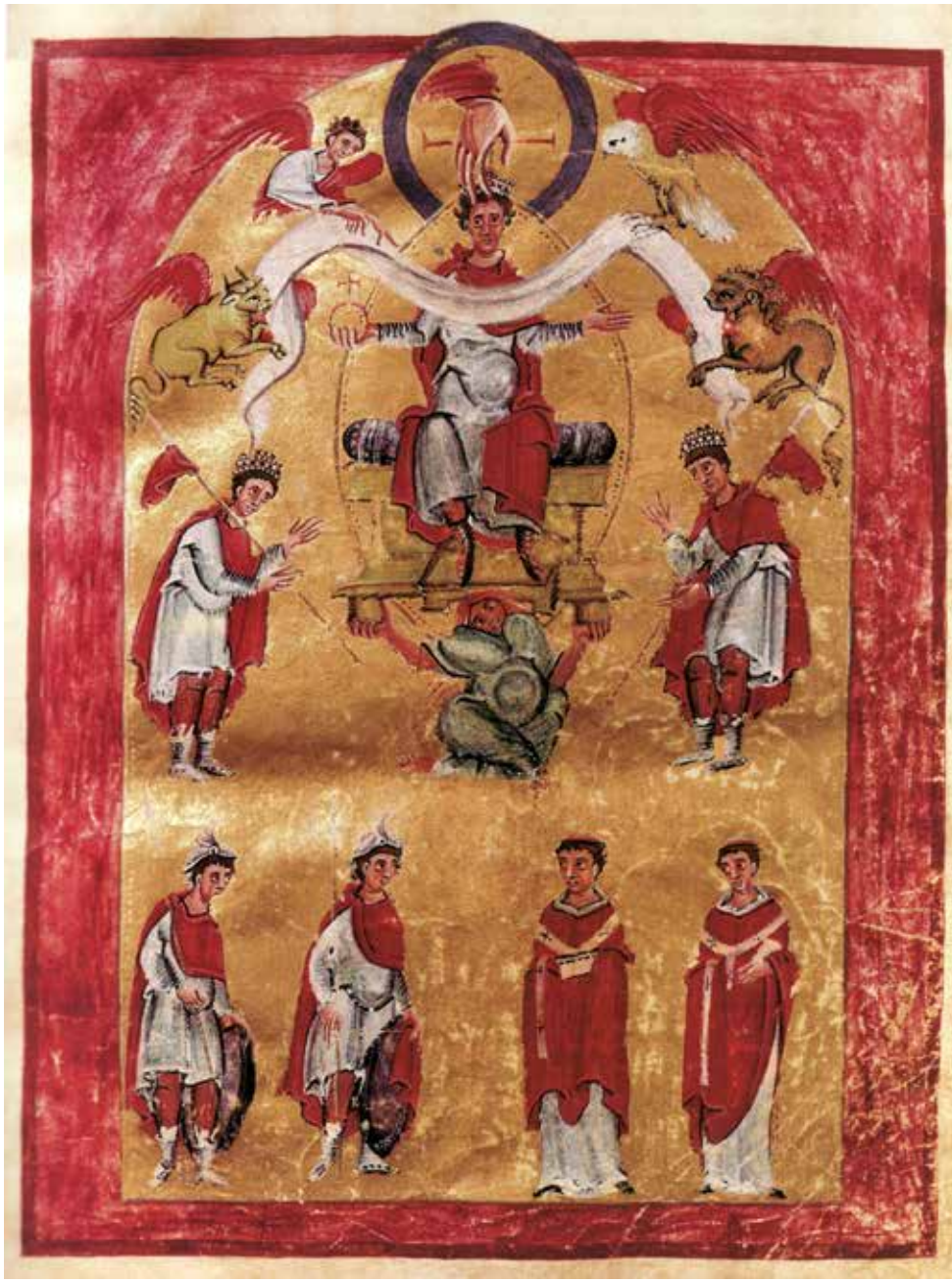

Fig. 3. Otto III (miniature from the Liuthar Gospel Book, ca. 1000)

Bolesław's head in Gniezno,[30] but what is crucial in this case is the fact that the chronicler points to the imperial affirmation of the royal dignity of the Polish ruler, obviously within the framework of the international order with Rome at its centre. Therefore, there is no room in Gallus's narrative for the second coronation of the Polish ruler, which is otherwise much more reliably attested by sources and rightly celebrated this year under the banner of the millennium.

Importantly, the coronation of 1025 was accompanied by anointing, clearly referring to the Carolingian tradition, which is associated today in Slavic languages with the term for king (*cf.*, Polish 'król'), most likely referring to the name of Charlemagne. It is worth remembering that shortly after this event, the French chronicler Ademar of Chabanes recorded a story that Otto III gave Bolesław the throne (*solium*) from the tomb of Charlemagne,[31] so this Carolingian tone justifying Bolesław's royal dignity was present in the memory of the time. However, Gallus Anonymous preferred to refer directly to the imperial circle during the reign of Otto III to legitimise it. Perhaps - although this is a hypothesis based on the silence of the sources - he wanted to avoid the controversies associated with the coronation of 1025. Either way, he did not overlook the importance of Charlemagne in creating the image of the 'golden age' of Bolesław the 'Great'.[32]

It is precisely Bolesław Chrobry's rule over the Saxons, mentioned by Gallus Anonymous as well as his conquest of the Old Prussians (formerly "Saxons")[33] in order to convert them to Christianity, that perfectly illustrates the Polish ruler as the continuator of Charlemagne's work. His dynastic policy is also of considerable importance in this case: the chronicler emphasises that Bolesław arranged the marriage of his son Mieszko to "the sister of Emperor Otto III" - Rycheza, in fact the daughter of Otto III's sister - whose successor to the Polish throne was 'Kazimierz, or Charles' (sic!). This Kazimierz already enjoys the epithet of the Restorer, specifically the restorer of Poland - the monarchy and the Church after their fall in the 1030s, and,

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[30] An attempt to strengthen the argument that Bolesław was indeed crowned by the emperor in 1000, based on a reference to this event in his epitaph in Gniezno Cathedral (see, *e.g.*, E. Skibiński, *Epitafium Bolesława Chrobrego. Wydanie i analiza*, in: *Studia epigraficzne*, vol. 5, ed. J. Zdrenka, Zielona Góra 2013, pp. 43-56), is problematic in that the dating of this verse work is uncertain, with the prevailing view being that it was written in the 12th century, *i.e.*, at the time when Gallus Anonymous was writing, and that he may even have influenced the content of the epitaph with his work.

[31] *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. P. Bourgain in collaboration with R.A. Landes and G. Pon, Turnhout 1999, p. 154.

[32] These are direct quotations from the work of Gallus Anonymus (I, 6): after the death of Bolesław, called "magnus", the golden age was to turn into a leaden one.

[33] See above, footnote 14.

importantly, his middle name refers to Charlemagne, whose blood was said to flow in his veins through his mother. Gallus does not say this explicitly, but the very name *Carolus* (Charles) given to Kazimierz has unambiguous connotations and indicates the connection between the Piast tradition and the Carolingian heritage.

It is worth mentioning here that the marriage alliance between the Piasts and the imperial House of Liudolfings in 1013, which also descended from the Carolingians, certainly had prestige value at the coronation of Bolesław Chrobry in 1025. By accepting the anointing without seeking the approval of the empire's ruler,[34] he also gave a clear sign that he was going beyond the role that Otto III had assigned him a quarter of a century earlier within the Roman world. Three stages of armed confrontation with Henry II between 1002 and 1018, as well as various agreements and dynastic alliances, changed the actual position of the Polish ruler in relation to the emperor.[35] Bolesław's conquests in Rus, especially in 1018, and even his establishment of contacts with Constantinople,[36] were also important for strengthening his international and domestic position.

Returning to Gallus Anonymous's narrative in this context, it should first be noted that this chronicler - unlike Bolesław Chrobry in 1025 - recognised the need for the emperor to legitimise royal power. Gallus can therefore be seen as an advocate of 'rendering unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's',[37] but these prerogatives are not as significant in the chronicler's work as they were in the time of Otto III. Guided by political realism, the young emperor appreciated Bolesław's power and political aspirations, but saw his place within the empire as the head of one of its provinces. Meanwhile, in the world presented in Gallus's chronicle, the emperor, by crowning Bolesław, does not force him into the framework of the empire.

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[34] Incidentally, there is no source-based evidence to suggest that Bolesław sought the Pope's consent in this matter (although much ink was spilled in scholarship to promote this view); the discussion on this issue, see, *e.g.*, J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław…*, p. 196; A. Pleszczyński, *Bolesław…*, pp. 357.

[35] It is worth noting here the manner in which peace was concluded in 1018, namely by envoys and on land belonging to Bolesław, and thus without humbling himself before Henry, which was a severe blow to the emperor's prestige. After all, Bolesław's failure to appear at his court to explain his alleged treachery constituted a *casus belli* in 1015. See: S. Rosik, *Niemcza (1017) - Bautzen (1018). Does history "write" winners? (in the circle of Thietmar of Merseburg's chronicle)*, "Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka" 73 [Special issue] (2018), pp. 29-54.

[36] See: Thietmar VIII, 33 (according to the Dresden manuscript).

[37] It is worth recalling here that Gallus also points to the possibility of Poland paying tribute to the emperor, but only for the purposes of defending the Roman Church (the Holy See). The emperor's actions could not, however, violate the 'ancient liberty of Poland' (*antiqua libertas Poloniae*) and, for example, interfere in the internal affairs of the kingdom, such as the succession to the throne or the adjudication of dynastic conflicts over power (cf. Gallus III, 2 and 15).

Gallus's legend thus promotes a specific world order in which Rome has the right to bestow crowns, and in which the cooperation of the Piasts with the empire is important. The ideal of a king, embodied in Bolesław the 'Great' (i.e. Chrobry/the Brave, of course), is linked to the task of expanding the monarchy and promoting Christianity. Charlemagne was the prime example here, in accordance with the consonance of the Slavic royal title - *e.g.*, Polish "król" (king) - with his name. And so, Bolesław, as created by Gallus Anonymous, continues Charlemagne's work, which is particularly evident in his rule over the Saxons and the Prussians, who (legendary) originated from them, whom he also converts. The chronicler included these themes in a broad panorama of conquests:

"Did not he conquer Moravia and Bohemia and win the seat of the duchy in Prague (…), was it not he who time and again defeated the Hungarians in battle and made himself master of all their lands as far as the Danube? The indomitable Saxons were not a match for his valour: hence in the middle of their country an iron boundary sign in the River Saale marked Poland's boundaries. (…) [W]hen Selencia, Pomorania, and Prussia persisted in their perfidy he crushed them, and when they converted, he strengthened them in their faith, indeed he established through the pope many churches and bishops there".[38]

Bolesław was thus to permanently conquer not only the Saxons, but also Rus with Kiev, then the 'barbarian lands' in the north up to the Baltic Sea - Prussia, Pomerania, 'Selencia' - the Hungarian possessions up to the Danube. One can see echoes of some real events in this momentum of conquests,[39] but the "truth of the legend" was not only to amplify some crumbs of history. After all, the 'Golden Age' is a model for present and future generations, not strictly fact-based literature. Gallus's legend thus became the inspiration for subsequent mythologised visions of the origins of the Poles, which continue to stir the minds of people to this day.

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[38] Cf. *Gesta Principum Polonorum. The deeds of the princes of the Poles*, ed. and transl. P.W. Knoll, F. Schaer, Budapest-New York 2003, I, 6; cf. Gallus I, 6.

[39] Thus, the reference to the Saale River in defining the border can be associated with Bolesław's military expedition to the Magdeburg vicinity (1007; cf. Thietmar VI, 33), while the southern border based on the Danube can be associated with his sovereignty over Moravia, and perhaps also the area of present-day Slovakia (taken from Hungary), not to mention the temporary occupation of Prague (1003-1004), or Kiev (1018). Bolesław inherited Pomerania from his father, and according to Gallus Anonymous (I, 6) he invaded "Selencia" (Liutici?) and Old Prussians, so this Baltic direction of expansion could also be justified. Indeed, the momentum of these conquests could have provided some inspiration for Gallus's legend, which, however, does not take into account the short-lived nature of most of these territorial gains. See, *e.g.*, J. Strzelczyk, *Bolesław…*, *passim*; P. Urbańczyk, *Bolesław Chrobry - lew ryczący*, Toruń 2017; A. Pleszczyński, *Bolesław…*, *passim*.

Abstract

The legend of Bolesław Chrobry's golden age, created in Gallus Anonymous's chronicle at the beginning of the 12th century, presents him as a king who enjoyed the recognition of the Roman Empire (specifically Emperor Otto III) and at the same time realised the ideal of a ruler in the form of Charlemagne, a clear example of which is Chrobry's alleged rule over the Saxons. In this way, the chronicler - departing from the historical realities of Bolesław Chrobry's coronation in 1025 - created an image of events promoting the idea of Poland as a kingdom in accordance with the system of values and political goals identified as optimal for implementation in the times of Bolesław Krzywousty. In the following centuries, Gallus's image of Bolesław Chrobry's conquests became the basis for further legends (including the Lechite empire).

Keywords: Bolesław Chrobry/the Brave, Gallus Anonymous, origins of Poland, Pillars of Bolesław Chrobry

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II. Current Research

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Between Ritual and Narrative. The Exercising of Authority in Dalmatian Medieval Chronicles

As the anonymous author known as the Priest of Duklja wrote: *When the bans and župans of that land heard that Bello, the grandson of King Radoslav, had arrived, they rejoiced, and so did most of the people of the Slavic land. People began to come to him from all sides, especially the inhabitants of the district of Tribunja, who came, and with great reverence escorted him to Tribunja. Then the bans came to Tribunja; together with the župans and centurions they received him with honour, and on the day of the Lord's Ascension, they established him as king*.[1] In this short passage lies the story of a series of symbolic actions that appear to have a ritual dimension. It was a fictional ritual though. No King Bello ever ruled in Tribunja, nor was led into the city in a kind of *adventus regis* to be elevated to kingship by the magnates - the bans, župans, and centurions (and even if this description reflects a narrative coronation, it too is invented).

[1] *Ljetopis popa Dukljanina*, ed. V. Mošin, Zagreb 1950 [further: *Ljetopis*], p. 71: "Inter haec audientes bani et iupani terrae advenisse Bellum, nepotem Radaslavi regis, laetati sunt, et maxime populus terrae Sclavorum; caeperunt undique ad eum confluere, inprimis habitatores regionis Tribuniae, venientes cum magno honore, duxerunt illum in Tribuniam. Postea bani venientes in Tribuniam, cum iupanis et setnicis susceperunt illum honorifice et in die Ascensionis Domini constituerunt illum regem".

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In the Priest of Duklja's account, fiction constituted the main substance of the work; yet this does not mean that the description should be dismissed as meaningless. The question of the relationship between a ritual and its description (or ritual action reflected in associated iconography) remains a subject of debate, and has generated a rich body of scholarship.[2] The map is not the territory, yet historians rely on sources that reflect reality only imperfectly.

In this article, I would like to show how descriptions of symbolic actions resembling rituals, which appear in medieval chronicles produced in Dalmatia, served primarily narrative functions. For the chroniclers, the description of such actions functioned as a puzzle that could be deployed whenever the author wished to give a situation appropriate legal weight, draw attention to a precedent or tradition, or present the actions of the figures he described in a particular light (favourable or unfavourable). In doing so, I would like to refer to the concept of "Spielregeln der Politik", or "rules of the political power game", whose significance in the context of ritual studies was popularised by Gerd Althoff (though he was not the first to write about Spielregeln in this context). Approaching ritual as an element of the struggle for power and the exercise of authority - whether through actions and gestures in space, or through those expressed only in text or image - makes it possible to bypass what research on ritual has identified as the "textuality trap".[3]

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[2] Above all, it concerns the debate between Gerd Althoff, who presented a functionalist approach to ritual, and his critic Philippe Buc, who rejected the category of ritual as one imposed by the perspective of modern scholars: G. Althoff, *Die Macht der Rituale. Symbolik und Herrschaft im Mittelalter*, Darmstadt 2003; *idem*, *Spielregeln der Politik im Mittelalter. Kommunikation in Frieden und Fehde* [*Rules of politics in the Middle Ages. Communication in times of peace and conflict*], Darmstadt 1997; P. Buc, *The Dangers of Ritual. Between Early Medieval Texts and Social Scientific Theory*, Princeton-Oxford 2001; P. Buc, *The Monster and the Critics: a Ritual Reply*, "Early Medieval Europe" 15 (2007), 4, pp. 441-452.

[3] For an overview of the discussion: D. Zupka, *Ritual and Symbolic Communication in Medieval Hungary under the* Árpád *Dynasty (1000-1301)*, Leiden-Boston 2016, pp. 15-34; G. Althoff, *Demonstration und Inszenierung. Spielregeln der Kommunikation in mittelalterlicher* Öffentlichkeit, in: *idem*, *Spielregeln der Politik im Mittelalter. Kommunikation in Frieden und Fehde,* Darmstadt 1997, pp. 229-257; G. Althoff, *Fussfälle: Realität und Fiktionalität einer rituellen Kommunikationsform*, in: *Eine Epoche im Umbruch. Volkssprachige Literalitat 1200–1300*, ed. Ch. Bertelsmeier-Kierst *et al*., Tübingen 2003, pp. 111-122 [G. Althoff, *Demonstration and Staging: Rules of Communication in the Medieval Public Sphere*, in: *idem*, *Rules of Politics in the Middle Ages: Communication in Peace and Feud*, Darmstadt 1997, pp. 229-257; G. Althoff, *Pitfall: Reality and Fictionality of a Ritual Form of Communication, in An Era in Transition: Vernacular Literacy 1200–1300*], pp. 111-122. As an example of the complex analysis of a literary text from the perspective of ritual studies: Z. Dalewski, *Rytuał i polityka. Opowieść Galla Anonima o konflikcie Bolesława Krzywoustego ze* Zbigniewem, Warszawa 2005; Z. Dalewski, *Ritual and Politics. Writing the History of a Dynastic Conflict in Medieval Poland*, Leiden-Boston 2008; Z. Dalewski, *Vivat princeps in eternum! Sacrality of Ducal Power in Poland in the Earlier Middle Ages*, in: *Monotheistic Kingship. The Medieval Variants*, ed. A. Al-Azmeh, J.M. Bak, Budapest 2004, pp. 215-230.

By analysing how chroniclers describe symbolic acts - rituals, ceremonies, or political performances - I aim to consider their significance for the pragmatics of the text. The inherent ambiguity of 'rules of the game', rituals, customs, celebrations, and even legal norms, means that what one encounters in the sources is less a direct record of events than our own framing of heterogeneous phenomena. This framing is usually shaped by, or set in contrast to, the chronicler's perspective. The chronicler provides an interpretation rather than a neutral account, positioning himself not merely as an observer but as a participant in the social game. Moreover, as I will argue in the second part, he may at times fabricate this game entirely - drawing on his imagination or on the traditions available to him (written sources, collective memory) - and tailoring his depiction of the symbolic act to its intended function. Crucially, this function is not social in the sense of reflecting actual social practice, but narrative, operating within the logic and aims of the text itself.

This article examines two chronicles that differ profoundly in form, modes of description, and aims. The first - the *History of the Bishops of Salona and Split*, the work of Thomas, the Archdeacon of Split, from the mid-13th century[4] is the most erudite chronicle known from the Dalmatian area, depicting the history of the city of Split and the history of the local Church from the ancient times,[5] whereas the second, the *Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja*, an anonymous Latin work from the late 12th or early 14th century (according to the two most popular hypotheses), depicts the history of a fictional Slavic Kingdom and contains the idea of the symbiosis of the Slavs and the Latins, mostly in a form of simple entries.[6] While Thomas, a highly educated, well-informed clergyman, perfectly understood the nuances of behind-the-scenes games of power and prestige, the anonymous author, known as the Priest

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[4] The quotes are from the edition: *Thomae archidiaconi Spalatensis Historia Salonitanorum Atque Spalatinorum Pontificum. Archdeacon Thomas of Split History of the Bishops of Salona and Split*, Latin text: O. Perić, ed. D. Karbić, M. Matijević Sokol, J.R. Sweeney, Budapest-New York 2006 [further: *Historia Salonitana*].

[5] About Thomas the Archdeacon, see: N. Budak, *'Circles of Identity: The Narratives of Thomas of Split and Domnius de Cranchis of Brač'*, in *Historiography and Identity V: The Emergence of New Peoples and Polities in Europe, 1000-1300*, ed. W. Pohl, V. Wieser, F. Borri, Turnhout 2023, pp. 321-336; M. Matijević Sokol, *Toma Arhiđakon Splićanin (1200.-1268.). Nacrt za jedan portret*, "Povijesni prilozi" 14 (1996), pp. 117-135; M. Matijević Sokol, *Toma Arhiđakon i njegovo djelo*, Split 2002; N. Ivić, *Domišljanje prošlosti: kako je trinaestostoljetni splitski arhiđakon Toma napravio svoju salonitansku historiju*, Zagreb 1992, pp. 90-105.

[6] See the prefaces and commentaries in the printed editions of the text: *Gesta regum Sclavorum,* vol. 1, ed. D. Kunčer, Beograd-Ostrog 2009; *Letopis Popa Dukljanina*, ed. F. Šišić, Beograd-Zagreb 1928; *Ljetopis popa Duklanina*, ed. V. Mošin, Zagreb 1950; *Ljetopis popa Dukljanina. Uvod, prijevod i komentar*, ed. S. Mijušković, Beograd 1988. For an overview and bibliography: W. Kowalski, *The Kings of the Slavs. The Image of a Ruler in the Latin Text of The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja*, Leiden-Boston 2021.

of Duklja, whose work consists for the most part of short and simple genealogical entries (similar to the yearbook, though without reference to a specific dates), wrote only a few more elaborate descriptions of symbolic actions, generally refraining from personal or erudite remarks.

In the *History of the Bishops of Salona and Split,* one can find numerous descriptions of symbolic actions. Some of them are hard to categorize. One such description, akin to an observation of an anthropologist, is the account of the alleged behaviour of the Curetes-Croats during a lunar eclipse. Thomas wrote that: *when the moon undergoes an eclipse, they* [the Curetes, or Croats] *imagine that it is being gnawed and devoured by spirits, and they beat all the bronze vessels that they have in their houses, as if by the din they could come to the aid of the struggling moon by driving the demons away,*[7] and it is still unclear as to how much of this account could have been Thomas' observation and how much a reference to Greek myths known to him from the writings of Roman authors.[8]

Medieval social communication was filled with demonstrative situations, and from our perspective could be perceived as part of a rite or ritual. From time to time, Thomas merely alludes to such activities without elaborating on the details. On one occasion he described the cleaning of an old Roman temple and its consecration into a Christian church by the first archbishop residing in Split,[9] another time he mentioned a demolition of the houses of murderers condemned to exile[10] - the activity defined by law and there-

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[7] *Historia Salonitana*, pp. 36-37: "Etenim quando luna ecclipsin patitur, putantes eam a spiritibus corrodi et consumi, omnia eramenta domorum pulsant, quasi per strepitum fugatis demonibus credunt lune succurrere laboranti".

[8] K. Kužić, '*Gdje je i kad Toma Arhiđakon doživio hrvatska vjerovanja vezana za pomrčinu mjeseca – doprinos interdisciplinarnoj metodi istraživanja*', "Zbornik Odsjeka za povijesne znanosti Zavoda za povijesne i društvene znanosti Hrvatske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti" 22 (2004), pp. 27-33 [*Where and when did Thomas the Archdeacon experience Croatian beliefs related to the lunar eclipse - a contribution to the interdisciplinary research method'*].

[9] *Historia Salonitana*, pp. 54-55: *He [archbishop John] cleansed the Temple of Jove, a building that had been raised so as to tower above others within the imperial palace, of the deceit of its false idols, and fitted it with doors and locks. Then he announced a ceremony of dedication, and a great crowd of people gathered from every side. Thus, he turned that famous temple into a church, consecrating it with great devotion to the honor of God and the glorious Virgin Mary, to the jubilation of all who had assembled. And in it he established clergy to perform the daily rites of divine service* ["Videns ergo populum in divini cultus amore succrescere statim aggredi cepit opus laudabile et templum Iovis, quod in ipso augustali edificio excelsioribus fuerat structuris erectum, ab ydolorum mundavit figmentis ianuas in eo serasque constituens. Tunc solempnitate dedicationis indicta magnus undique populus coadunatus est. Fecit ergo ex phano illo ecclesiam consecrans eam in magna devotione et tripudio omnium, qui convenerant, ad honorem Dei et gloriose Virginis Marie. Clerum autem ibi statuit, qui divini cultus obsequia diebus singulis exerceret"].

[10] *Ibidem*, pp. 214-215: *By the end of the day, Duimus son of Draža and his two sons lay in the street, like despised pigs. Similarly, one of the sons of Vitalis, Domitius by name, and many others were wounded by rocks or by weapons. After many days, however, the younger son of Duimus*

fore a formal procedure, but one that was embedded in traditional law and which also seems to have an older conventional meaning.

Among his accounts on the exercise of power and governance, the most important category - which Thomas, for personal reasons, also regarded as highly significant - comprises descriptions of rituals associated with the ecclesiastical hierarchy in Split, particularly with the office of the archbishop itself. In the *History of the Bishops of Salona and Split* one can find many descriptions that explain the mechanisms for the election of ecclesiastical officials and the principles of their formal confirmation and consecration. A case in point is the detailed account of the election of the new Archbishop of Split, to which Thomas himself was elected (although he ultimately did not assume the office). This elaborate and carefully rendered description serves to underscore the solemnity of the occasion and to highlight the considerable trust and esteem Thomas commanded among the local clergy:

> And since no little discord was being created, Prodan, who was first in rank among the priests, stood up and began to address the assembly in friendly tones. He advised that after calling on the aid of the Holy Spirit they should all agree on one thing: that rather than following the discordant desires of diverse wills they should be guided by the document containing the sacred canons and proceed unanimously and harmoniously to hold a just and canonical election. So, a hymn was sung with solemn voices and devout hearts, and all agreed that the election should be held canonically. Then three trustworthy elder members of the chapter were elected, who took an oath and were entrusted with the task of ascertaining the choice of each individual, setting these things down in writing, and afterwards proclaiming this in the presence of all. And so, it was done. The three retired to the chamber and summoned the canons, who were twenty in number, one by one, and had them take an oath on the Holy Gospels. They then bade them first set aside such feelings by which the human heart is often hindered from speaking the truth; then, without love, hate, jealousy, or temporal advantage they were to state whom they held to be most suitable to be elevated to archbishop, and after naming him, to choose him.[11]

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and the son of Vitalis survived. Then the community assembled and sentenced the murderers to be expelled from the city and their houses to be leveled to the ground ["Itaque die ipsa iacuerunt more porcorum despicati in platea Duimus Drasce cum duobus filiis suis. Eodem modo unus de filiis Vitalis, nomine Domitius, et multi alii saxo vel ferro vulnerati sunt. Post multos tamen dies supervixit filius Duimi iunior et filius Vitalis. Tunc congregata communitas iudicavit expelli de civitate homicidas illos domibus illorum ad solum destructis"].

[11] *Ibidem*, pp. 324-325: "Et cum non modica fieret perturbatio, surgens Prodanus, qui erat inter presbyteros primus, benigno cepit concilium sermone alloqui monens, quatenus auxilio Sancti Spiritus implorato, universorum in hoc resideret assensus, ut non diversarum

It may be questioned to what extent these activities are of a formal, legal, and canonical nature, to what extent they constitute an element of the liturgy, and to what extant they should therefore be counted as ritual acts.

Within this context-the arena of "power games" among the clergy of Split and, more broadly, Dalmatia - it is particularly noteworthy when Thomas challenges situations that can be regarded as both formal and ceremonial.[12] Throughout his work, he frequently reveals his personal sympathies and antipathies, especially when he is directly involved in the political process or holds a strong view on a particular matter.

One such situation concerns the Latin rite in the Slavic language and the Glagolitic church hierarchy, which Thomas despised and furiously attacked, anachronistically labelling their followers as Arians. Describing the expedition of a certain priest, Ulf, and the Slav clergyman, Cededa, to Rome, and their meeting with the Pope, Thomas did not miss the opportunity to show the naivety and stupidity of the Slav clergy. The Pope is surprised by Cededa's appearance, he had a beard and resembled the Orthodox clergy. The Pope cuts a few hairs from Cededa's beard and orders him to be shaved, which was itself humiliating: *Right there and then the venerable pontiff cut a few hairs of the man's beard with his own hand, and then ordered those standing by to shave him according to ecclesiastical custom. [...] Then the pope replied to them after having taken counsel. "Understand, my sons, that what the Goths ardently seek, I recall often having heard, but because the inventors of such writing were Arians, I, like my predecessors, would not venture to give them permission to treat divine things in their own language".*[13] Cededa does not know Latin, so he does not understand that the Pope forbade the liturgy to be conducted in the Slavic language. However, Ulf, who accompanies the priest, deceitfully

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sequentes discidia voluntatum, sed sacrorum canonum previo documento ad electionem iuste et canonice celebrandam unanimiter et concorditer procedatur. Et ymno solempni voce ac devoto corde cantato consenserunt omnes, ut electio canonica fieret. Tunc electi sunt tres de senioribus capituli fide digni, quibus dato sacramento commissum est, ut perscrutatis voluntatibus singulorum in scriptis eas redigerent et post hec in conventu omnium publicarent. Sic et factum est. Nam predicti tres cameram ingresi convocaverunt singilatim canonicos, qui erant numero viginti et dantes eis ad sancta Dei evangelia iuramentum iusserunt, ut postponentes eas affectiones, quibus ad veritatem dicendam sepe humanus animus prepeditur, et sine amore et odio vel invidia seu temporali comodo exprimerent, quem magis scirent ydoneum in archiepiscopum assumi et eundem eligerent nominantes".

12 See: M. Matijević Sokol, *Toma Arhiđakon i crkvena organizacija u Saloni*, "Zbornik Odsjeka za povijest znanosti" 15 (1988), pp. 11-26.

13 *Historia Salonitana*, pp. 82-83: "Illico autem venerandus pontifex propria manu paucos pilos de barba illius precidit et mox astantibus, ut eum ecclesiastico more raderent, iussit. (…) Igitur dominus papa, consilio habito, taliter eis respondit: «Scitote, filii, quia hec, que petere Gothi student, sepenumero audisse me recolo, sed propter Arrianos, inventores litterature huiusmodi, dare eis licentiam in sua lingua tractare divina, sicut predecessores mei, sic et ego nullatenus audeo".

explains the situation to him, saying: '*The lord pope has such great power that whoever has had any hairs of his beard removed by the pope's hand immediately becomes a bishop.*' Thomas comments on this mockingly with the words: *When the foolish old man heard this, he was filled with great joy.*[14]

The chronicler frequently assumes the role of an advisor, indicating how a symbolic procedure or public performance ought to be conducted for a given action to be meaningful and for the negotiations of the Spielregeln to succeed, and explaining why they fail when these rules are violated. I have termed this category the "failed ceremony". This phenomenon is especially apparent in his accounts of the numerous conflicts within the ecclesiastical elite of Dalmatia. Below, I will present five illustrative examples:

On one occasion the Bishop of Zadar, Micha, wanted to become Archbishop of Split. Archdeacon Dobre promised to help him with this plan and speak in his favour at a collectively celebrated Mass. The bishop arrived in Split, but the archdeacon said nothing, the bishop departed enraged. The conflict moves to the level of the church hierarchy.[15]

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14 *Ibidem*, pp. 82-83: *Afterwards Cededa questioned Wolf: "Tell me, what good has it done us to have approached the lord pope in person?" To this, Wolf answered "What you have been longing for ardently you have attained by means of my efforts." Cededa asked, "What is that?" Wolf said, "The pope has ordained you a bishop." Cededa asked, "How so?" Wolf answered, "The lord pope has such great power that whoever has had any hairs of his beard removed by the pope's hand immediately becomes a bishop." When the foolish old man heard this, he was filled with great joy* ["Tunc Cededa Ulfum presbiterum requisivit dicens: «Dic mihi, quid utilitatis nobis contulit domini pape adisse presentiam?» Cui Ulfus respondit: «Quod ardenti animo desiderasti me laborante adeptus es.» Ad hec Cededa: «Quid»? inquit. Ulfus dixit: «Quia te papa pontificem ordinavit.» Cededa ait: «Quo modo?» Ulfus respondit: «Tante potestatis est dominus papa, ut cuicumque aliquos pilos de barba manu sua dempserit, continuo episcopus fiat.» Hoc audiens fatuus senex magno repletus est gaudio"].

15 *Ibidem*, pp. 100-103: *At that time Bishop Micha, son of Caloprestancius, headed the church of Zadar. But Archdeacon Dobre had promised him the archbishopric of Split. […] He fixed a date on which the bishop should come to Split to sing mass, and while doing so urged them not to allow their church to remain bereft of a pastor for such a long time. And the archdeacon promised that when these words were delivered, he would be the first to speak in favor of electing the bishop. But what boots it to recount the outcome? The bishop came, celebrated mass, and delivered his exhortation, and the archdeacon who had promised to speak out in favor of the bishop's election said nothing! On seeing that he had been made a fool of by the archdeacon, the bishop departed in a fury, announcing that he intended to withdraw the submission that Zadar owed to the metropolitan of Split and to exempt himself completely from its jurisdiction* ["Eo itaque tempore Micha episcopus, Caloprestantii filius, preerat ecclesie Iaderensi. Huic promittebat Dabro archidiaconus archiepiscopatum ecclesie Spalatensis. (…) Statuit namque diem, qua Spalatum veniens missam caneret, admonitionem faceret, ne tanto tempore sinerent suam ecclesiam pastore viduatam manere. Et inter hec verba pollicitus est archidiaconus primam se vocem electionis de persona episcopi emissurum. Quid plura? Venit episcopus, missam cecinit, admonitionem fecit, sed is, qui se in ipsius electionem proclamaturum promiserat, nichil dixit. Videns autem episcopus ab archidiacono sibi fore delusum, vehementer indignatus recessit proponens debitam subiectionem Spalatine metropoli subtrahere et ab ipsius iurisdictione se omnino eximere"].

In another account of a failed public completion of the ceremony, Dessa is to be consecrated Bishop of Trogir. His consecration is prepared by Archbishop Gaudius, but only one other bishop, the Bishop of Croatia, arrived to complete the consecration. The Archbishop wants to proceed, but Dessa points out to the assembled people that he considers the consecration invalid. Consequently, the Pope decided to punish the Archbishop and the Bishop of Croatia, but does not punish Dessa, who protested his own consecration.[16]

In the next example, it becomes clear how the failure to fulfil the conditions of the ceremony resulted from a less-than-transparent selection process, ultimately leading to conflict within the Dalmatian clergy: The canons of Split elected Nicholas as bishop of Nin, but the archbishop chose the Archpriest Grupče. The archbishop decides to consecrate him, not in Split, but in Vrana, accompanied by only one bishop. The result is a long-standing conflict between Nicholas and Grupče.[17]

In this context, three cases are particularly noteworthy in which the archiepiscopal throne of Split was a subject of dispute. According to Thomas, the investiture in these instances properly belonged to the pope; however, custom dictated that the newly elected archbishop travel to Constantinople to swear an oath to the emperor, who, at the particular times described by Thomas,

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16 *Ibidem*, pp. 104-105: *Once it happened that Dessa, son of Macarellus, was to be consecrated bishop of Trogir. But the archbishop invited only the bishop of Croatia to celebrate the consecration with him. When the bishop arrived and saw that the archbishop was proceeding against canonical laws, he stopped him, saying, "An archbishop cannot bestow the gift of consecration upon a bishop-elect together with only one other bishop." Gaudius was so innocent, or rather so hasty, as to say, "To me, the pallium takes the place of another [a second] bishop." Then the bishop of Croatia, an intelligent and careful man who wished to avoid compromising his office, ascended the pulpit and before the whole people made it clear that he was complying in this process not by choice but under pressure and because he had been compelled by his metropolitan* ["Factum est autem, ut Desa Macarelli Traguriensi foret ecclesie in episcopum consecrandus. Vocavit ergo archiepiscopus ad consecrationem concelebrandam secum dumtaxat episcopum Chroatensem. Qui veniens et videns processum archiepiscopi contra canonicas institutiones fieri prohibuit eum dicens: «Non debet archiepiscopus cum uno episcopo solummodo electo consecrationis munus impendere.» Gaudius vero tante simplicitatis, immo temeritatis erat, ut diceret: «Quia pallium michi est loco alterius episcopi.» Tunc episcopus Chroatensis, utpote vir discretus et cautus, volens honoris sui evitare periculum, ascendit in ambonem et coram omni populo protestatus est, quod non voluntarius, sed invitus et coactus metropolitano suo in hac parte parebat"].

17 *Ibidem*, pp. 156-157: *But the canons of Split took Nicholas' side and rejected Grupče. Consequently, Bernard decided not to consecrate Grupče in the metropolitan church, as was the custom, but to go to Vrana and consecrate him there in the church of the Templars, together with another named Mikus, the bishop-elect of Knin. From this sprang up a great contention between Nicholas, Nin's bishop-elect, and Grupče, its consecrated bishop…* ["Sed quia canonici Spalatenses adversabantur ei, partem Nicolay foventes, non in ecclesia metropoli, ut mos est, eundem voluit Gruptium consecrare, sed pergens Vranam aput ecclesiam templariorum consecravit eum cum altero electo Tiniensi, nomine Micuso. Qua de re magna fuit suborta contentio inter Nicolaum electum et Gruptium Nonensem episcopum…"].

held authority over Dalmatia. In one example Maximus usurped the office of Archbishop of Split and consecrates himself bishop only with the consent of the emperor in Constantinople, who was in control of Dalmatia at the time described, and omits the Pope (Gregory the Great) altogether: *Then Maximus, burning with the fire of ambition, panted impatiently after the archbishopric, and at last he was elected, not, it is said, without the stigma of simony. He did not, as was customary, go to the Holy See to be consecrated, but sent word first to the emperors in Constantinople and gained their good will. All the same, they instructed him that he should present himself before the pope. But, aware of the irregularity of his election, Maximus did not go to the pope, and nor did he seek the consent of the papal apocrisiary. Instead, recklessly rushing ahead, he had himself consecrated as archbishop there where he was.*[18] As a result, Maximus, deemed a schismatic, was forced to relinquish his office. The lesson Thomas imparts in this case is clear.

The balance between the papal and the imperial courts can also be seen in the difference in the conduct of the two archbishops of Split from the 12th century: Gerald and Rainer. Gerald refused to swear fealty to the emperor in Constantinople:

> Therefore, the citizens of Split decided to ask Archbishop Gerald to set out for the royal city and pledge fealty to the emperor in his own name and on behalf of the citizens of Split. The archbishop was unwilling to comply because of the papal injunction, but the people pressed him almost to the point of violence. So the venerable Gerald turned to Pope Alexander to ask his advice as to what he should do in this matter. The pope, sympathizing over this unwarranted vexation, appointed him head of the church of Siponto, although he still retained the administration of the church of Split.[19]

Surprisingly, despite papal support, Gerald's failure to fulfil his obligations to the secular authority provoked such discontent among the populace

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[18] *Ibidem*, pp. 30-31: „Maximus autem ambitionis ardore succensus ad pontificatum impatienter anelabat et tandem non sine symoniaca labe dicitur fuisse electus. Hic non, ut erat consuetudinis, ad sedem apostolicam consecrandus accessit, sed misit prius et ab imperatoribus Constantinopolitanis favorem obtinuit. Qui tamen preceperunt eidem, ut domini pape se conspectui presentaret. Sed ipse conscius electionis iniuste non accessit ad papam nec requisivit consensum responsalis eius, sed temeritate precipiti fecit se ibidem in archiepiscopum consecrari".

[19] *Ibidem*, pp. 114-115: "Quam ob rem Spalatini cives ceperunt rogare Girardum archiepiscopum, ut ad urbem regiam proficiscens fidem pro se et pro civibus imperatorie celsitudini iureiurando firmaret. Sed cum nollet acquiescere propter papale mandatum civesque instando quasi vim facerent, venerabilis Girardus ad Alexandrum papam se contulit, petens ab eo consilium, quid super facto huiusmodi sibi foret agendum. Dominus vero papa ipsius indebite molestationi compatiens, prefecit eum ecclesie Sypontine retenta nichilominus administratione ecclesie Spalatine".

that he too was forced to relinquish the archiepiscopal throne. Gerald likely hesitated to travel to Constantinople due to religious divisions, a decision that did not find approval among the residents of Split, who lived at the intersection of Latin and Greek Christianity. In the following passage, Thomas illustrates the proper conduct by presenting the example of another archbishop, Rainer, thereby effectively concluding the narrative with a moral lesson:

> When they arrived at the city, the archbishop [Rainer] was received with great jubilation by the clergy and the people. […] And so, the people of Split urged Archbishop Rainer to proceed to Constantinople and to visit the imperial court. He assented with pleasure, and taking with him a number of the important men of Split he set out for Constantinople. When he had entered into the emperor's presence he greeted him with deep respect on behalf of his fellow citizens, and was received with great honor by the emperor; as long as he remained there he was lavishly and honorably provided for at the expense of the court. And when he sought permission from the emperor to return, the emperor gave him gifts both many and precious.[20]

The themes concerning disputes within the ecclesiastical elite are completely absent from the second work mentioned above, the *Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja*, which indirectly testifies against the hypothesis that it was written mainly from the perspective of the ecclesiastical circles of Bar. What the two chronicles nonetheless have in common is a number of descriptions of symbolic activities related to the lay power, especially the execution of the royal authority.

In Thomas the Archdeacon's work one can also find a description of the election of the first *podestà*, exercising power in the so-called Latin order of government.[21] Thomas describes the ritual activities both in Ancona, where the new *podest*à was sought, and on the spot, after his arrival in the city of Split. These include the handing over of the hand of the elected *podest*à Gargano literally into the hands of the envoys from Split: *A great assembly was called, and envoys went with Gargano to the public palace. When they entered the court, the archdeacon made*

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[20] *Ibidem*, pp. 124-125: "Cum autem pervenissent ad civitatem, cum magno tripudio cleri populique susceptus est [Raynerus]. (…) Itaque Spalatenses rogaverunt Raynerium archiepiscopum, ut pergeret Constantinopolim ad imperialem curiam visitandam. Qui gratanti animo acquiescens assotiatis sibi aliquot de nobilibus civitatis Constantinopolim profectus est. Ingressusque ad Emanuhelem imperatorem ipsumque ex parte suorum civium multum reverenter salutans valde honorifice ab imperatore susceptus est et quamdiu ibi mansit, satis venerabiliter impensis ex curia affluenter exhibitis procuratus est. Cum autem redeundi licentiam a principe postulasset, donavit ei munera pretiosa satis et non pauca".

[21] M. Matijević Sokol, *Regimen Latinorum Tome Arhiđakona u teoriji i praksi*, "Historijski zbornik" 52 (1999), pp. 17-32.

a speech explaining the proceedings of their mission and the choice that they had made of Gargano, and requested on behalf of his fellow citizens that they appoint him with their goodwill and support to rule the city of Split. Then the podestà of Ancona rose and spoke at length, expressing thanks repeatedly that the Spalatins had bestowed upon them such great honor. Then taking Gargano's hand, he placed him in the hands of the envoys, commending him again and again.[22] The whole process of the selection of the podesta consisted of a meticulous search, deliberation, and negotiation, which Thomas also describes. He also provides a detailed account of the podestà's entry into the city, which, to some extent, echoes other descriptions of the transfer or confirmation of civic authority: *[Split] populace rushed forth to the harbor, and soon there was a great crowd of men and women, young and old, desiring to see the man whom they had been awaiting with great longing. When he debarked from the ship he was received by the entire throng of clergy and people with great jubilation and signs of honor. (...) After he himself had taken the oath of office, he had the entire populace, nobles as well as commoners, bound by an oath that they would obey and follow his orders in all regards*.[23]

Similar episodes of the transfer of power over Split and demonstrations of subordination were often preceded by formal discussions. This is also true for the royal entries into the city, which is described several times in Tomas the Archdeacon's chronicle. There are several extended episodes of the royal entry in his text. Thomas describes the entry of the Hungarian kings to Split: Coloman in 1105, King Andrew II in 1217 and twice Béla IV in 1242 and some years later, and the entry of German king Conrad IV in 1252. Each of the descriptions of the individual entries is rich in interesting details of the ceremonial and the manner in which the royal *adventus* was arranged.[24]

Thomas could not have seen the entry of King Coloman with his own eyes. At stake was the submission of the city to the King of Hungary.

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[22] *Historia Salonitana*, pp. 224-225: "Et facto grandi conventu iverunt nuntii cum Gargano ad palatium publicum. Et intrantes curiam, peroravit archidiaconus processum legationis et electionis, quam fecerant de Gargano, petens ex parte suorum civium, ut cum eorum benivolentia et favore dirigant eum ad regimen civitatis Spalatine. Tunc potestas Anconitana surgens prolixe contionatus est grates multiplices referens, quod tantum honoris a Spalatensibus eis foret impensum. Et accipiens Garganum per manum posuit eum ad manus nuntiorum ipsum multipliciter recommendans".

[23] *Ibidem*, pp. 226-227: "Ut autem rumor in civitate perstrepuit, quod potestas advenisset, mox tota civitas prorupit ad portum factusque est concursus utriusque sexus et etatis videre cupientium, quem longo desiderio fuerant prestolati. Egressus autem de navi ab universa cleri populique frequentia in magno tripudio et honoris obsequio susceptus est. (…) Post hec autem surgens Garganus, ut erat eloquens vir, multum lepide contionatus est. Et prestito sui regiminis iuramento, fecit universam multitudinem tam nobilium quam popularium vinculo sacramenti astringi, ut essent suis preceptis obedientes per omnia et sequaces".

[24] All the cases of the royal *adventūs* to Split were described in detail by Dušan Zupka in his monograph on ritual and symbolic communication in medieval Hungary: *Ritual and Symbolic Communication…*, pp. 117-138.

The city had previously been besieged, so the royal entry was the culmination of peace negotiations. In this case, the archbishop acted as the representative of the urban community, negotiating on Split's behalf the terms of the city's surrender. The negotiations resulted in the drafting of a document signed by both parties, although it was sworn only by the king's representatives. It was only on the following day that the people of Split took their oath, according to social rank, from the elite down to the commoners. These were the conditions for the king's entry into the city. The entry itself does not seem to have been particularly festive, as the monarch - despite receiving gifts - left Split later that same day:

> The Spalatins took counsel among themselves and sent Archbishop Crescentius to King Coloman, asking the king for peace. The archbishop was graciously received, and King Coloman agreed to all the terms that the Spalatins stipulated in the peace agreement. Then a document was drawn up detailing all that was granted and agreed to between the two sides, and the king together with his nobles swore to uphold all its articles faithfully. The next day the Spalatins swore an oath, first those from the leading families, then those from lesser ones, then all the common people, that they would remain forever subject and loyal to King Coloman and his issue and to the kingdom of Hungary. Then the king entered the city and was received with all honor by the clergy and people. And on the same day, after being generously provisioned by the community, and after drawing up and handing down charters of privilege and immunity, he departed.[25]

In contrast, the account of King Conrad's[26] entry into the city was modelled as a different, and failed ceremony (or "bad *adventus*" as Dušan Zupka put it[27]), as he is boycotted by the clergy of Split due to his father Frederick II's conflict with Pope Innocent IV, which ended with the Emperor's excommunication, extended to Frederick's descendants. Although Conrad enters the city, the Archbishop, who in earlier account played the crucial role

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[25] *Historia Salonitana*, pp. 96-97: "Tunc Spalatenses, inter se facto consilio, miserunt Crescentium archiepiscopum ad regem Colomannum pacem postulantes ab eo. Quem ille benigne suscipiens, annuit omnibus petitionibus, quas Spalatenses fecerant pro pacis federe componendo. Facta igitur conscriptione omnium, que hinc inde fuerant ex beneplacito stabilita, iuravit rex cum suis principibus, omnia firmiter observare. Postera vero die iuraverunt Spalatenses, primo quidem maiores, deinde iuniores, postea vulgus omne, ut Colomanno regi et eius posteris, ac regno Hungarie subiecti et fideles omni tempore permanerent. Tunc rex civitatem ingressus, valde honorifice a clero et populo susceptus est. Et ea die procuratione affluenter a comuni suscepta confectisque ac traditis emunitatis privilegiis, profectus est".

[26] Conrad IV, King of the Romans and of Sicily, son of Frederick II.

[27] D. Zupka, *Ritual and Symbolic Communication…*, pp. 130-137.

during the similar event, as well as Archdeacon and the ecclesiastical elite demonstratively ignore this fact, closing the doors of the churches and leaving the city for the duration of the king's stay[28]:

> So when Conrad put to shore at the harbor of the city of Split, Archbishop Roger, on perceiving that he wanted to enter the city, had the doors to the churches closed and all the holy ceremonies interrupted. He himself, in the company of Archdeacon Thomas and some other elders, withdrew in haste from the city to the surrounding villages and remained there for as long as the king was in residence in the city.[29]

A completely different role was played by the clergy in the description of the entry of Andrew II and Béla IV,[30] in both the church circles played an important role in the ceremony. The entry of Andrew II was preceded by a procession that advanced beyond the city walls; upon seeing it, the king covered the remaining distance on foot, walking among the assembled bishops, and surrounded by a cheering crowd singing the *laudes regiae*:[31]

> All the citizens and foreigners and the whole crowd of his army marched out in procession to meet the lord king, loudly sounding his praises. Then all the clergy robed in silk vestments over their surplices, proceeded with crosses and censers as far as the Pistura Square, chanting together in a manner worthy of the king's majesty. Upon seeing the solemn assemblage in procession, the illustrious king at once dismounted from his horse. Surrounded by a large company of his magnates, he went on foot, flanked on either side by the assembled bishops, to the church of Saint Domnius.[32]

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[28] D. Zupka, *Ritual and Symbolic Communication…*, pp. 132-133.

[29] *Historia Salonitana*, pp. 362-364: "…cum idem Coradus ad portum Spalatine civitatis applicuisset, Rogerius archiepiscopus ipsum sentiens, quod vellet ingredi civitatem, fecit claudi ecclesias, et ab omnibus cessare divinis. Ipse autem festinanter foras egrediens cum Thoma archidiacono et cum quibusdam de senioribus secessit ad villas ibique tamdiu demoratus est, quamdiu rex ipse in civitate resedit".

[30] D. Zupka, *Ritual and Symbolic Communication…*, p. 42.

[31] Importance of this element of the *adventus* is discussed in D. Zupka, *Ritual and Symbolic Communication…*, pp. 46-49.

[32] *Historia Salonitana*, pp. 160-161: "Exierunt autem processionaliter obviam domino regi universi cives, omnesque forenses totaque turba sui exercitus, laudes ei altis vocibus concrepantes. Deinde clerus omnis olosericis super comptas induti vestibus cum crucibus et thuribulis procedentes usque posturium, prout regie magnificentie dignum erat pariter, concinnebant. Ipse vero illustris rex, viso processionis cetu solempni, statim descendit de equo, magnaque suorum principum vallatus caterva, tenentibus eum hinc inde episcopis, qui convenerant, pedes usque ad ecclesiam sancti Domnii processit". See: D. Zupka, *Ritual and Symbolic Communication…*, pp. 126-129.

A similar form of celebrations characterized the entry of Béla IV, during which - as the chronicler emphasized - the king appeared wearing his royal insignia, and stayed a day in a palace, and *the citizens flocked to him constantly.*[33]

What is lacking in Thomas's work, however, is a detailed description of the coronation of any of the Hungarian or the Croatian rulers he mentioned. The crowning or anointing of Hungarian kings was mentioned by Thomas the Archdeacon only occasionally. He wrote that Archbishop Bernard took part in the coronation *vivente rege* of the young King Ladislaus III, son of King Emeric.[34] He also mentions that the same archbishop did not want to take part in the anointing of King Andrew II, who was in conflict with Ladislaus, because the archbishop did not know that Ladislaus III had already died in Vienna, where he had fled from his uncle.[35]

It might be slightly surprising that the coronation that Thomas describes in more detail was that of the Serbian king Stefan Nemanjić, known as Stefan the First-Crowned. It seems that the main reason why Thomas the Archdeacon considered this coronation important was that the Serbian ruler had asked for the crown in Rome. Hence, sending envoys to Pope Honorius III is perhaps the most significant detail of this account: *At that time Stephen, the lord of Serbia or Rascia, who was called the grand župan, sent high-ranking envoys to the Holy See to ask for a royal crown from Pope Honorius. The supreme pontiff dispatched his legate a latere, who upon arrival crowned Stephen and instituted him as the first king of his land.*[36]

This account directs us to another extensive narrative source from medieval Dalmatia, the *Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja*. The name Honorius also appeared there in a description of a coronation, perhaps the most obscure one, which has become encrusted with attempts at scholarly interpretation. The chronicle, as mentioned before, is not so detailed in its descriptions of rituals or ceremonies. Neither is characterised by the erudition displayed

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33 *Ibidem*, pp. 364-367: *He [Béla IV] entered the city with great pomp, wearing the royal insignia as king, and was received with great joy by clergy and people. He remained that day and night at the palace of Nicholas son of Duimus, and the citizens flocked to him constantly. They were received by him and listened to most graciously, and he showed himself most approachable and benevolent* ["Tunc ascendens galeam venit ad portum civitatis Spalatensis ingressusque in eam cum multa ambitione, sicut rex regalia gerens insignia, magna cleri et populi exultatione susceptus est. Mansitque die illa et nocte in palatio Nicolai Duimi, cives vero ad ipsum frequenter accedentes valde benigne suscipiebantur et audiebantur ab ipso affabilem se ac serenum eis plurimum exhibendo"].

34 *Historia Salonitana*, pp. 141-142.

35 *Ibidem*, pp. 142-145.

36 *Ibidem*, pp. 162-163: "Eodem tempore Staphanus dominus Servie sive Rasie, qui mega iupanus appelabatur, missis apochrisariis ad Romanam sedem, impetravit ab Honorio summo pontifice coronam regni. Direxit namque legatum a letere suo, qui veniens coronavit eum primumque regem constituit terre sue".

by Thomas the Archdeacon. It is noteworthy in that it in some way the analysis of *the c*hronicle alleviates the problem of the vicious circle of textuality noted above-that is, the tension between reality and text, between ritual and its description. This is because the *Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja* recounts fabricated history, and is thus a description of fiction. The symbolic actions or ceremonies are shaped, to a significant extent, by the imagination of the anonymous Priest of Duklja, in order to align with the pragmatic function of the text itself. This does not mean that the *Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja* is abundant in narrative detail; the majority of the text consists of modest entries, resembling simple genealogies of rulers (*rodoslov*). In the entire text, which mentions dozens of kings, most of them fictional, there are only a few such accounts in which some symbolic or ceremonial actions are mentioned.

The most important of such descriptions is the account on King Svetopelek and the assembly he called on the plain of Dalma. As described by the Priest of Duklja, missionary Constantine was passing through the fictional kingdom of Svetopelek. The king, influenced by Constantine's teachings, decided to be baptised. This ended persecutions of Christians in the kingdom. The previously persecuted Latin-speaking community, inhabitants of cities on the Adriatic Coast, descended from the mountains. The king allowed them to rebuild their cities. He also wishes to draw the boundaries of his kingdom. To do this, he summoned old and wise men asking them to tell him what the boundaries of the realm are.[37] No one was able to remember this, so the king sent envoys to Constantinople on the one hand and Rome on the other. From Rome came Cardinal Honorius and the group of bishops, emperor sent two of his envoys too. Svetopelek then gathered a great assembly, known in historiography as the synod of Dalma.[38]

Dalma is located in the symbolic centre of Dalmatia.[39] During this assembly, imperial and papal privileges were read out loud. Matters of faith were debated, but the final days are dedicated to establishing secular authority and demarcating borders. There is also a coronation and anointing

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[37] *Ljetopis*, pp. 50-51: The king also decided that during his reign the estates and borders of all the provinces and districts of his kingdom should again be reminded and described, so that all the people of each province and each district would know and distinguish their estates and borders. Therefore he gathered all the wise men of his kingdom, informing them of this decision, but there was no one who could give the king a clear answer.

[38] *Ibidem*, pp. 48-57.

[39] L. Steindorff, *Die Synode auf der Planities Dalmae. Reichsteilung und Kirchenorganisation im Bild der Chronik des Priesters von Dioclea*, "Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung" 93 (1985), pp. 279-324; L. Steindorff, *Tumačenje riječi 'Dalmatia' u srednjovjekovnoj historiografiji. Istovremeno o saboru na 'Planities Dalmae'*, in: *Etnogeneza Hrvata*, ed. N. Budak, Zagreb1995, pp. 148-159.

of the king by the hand of cardinal Honorius, sent from Rome: *At the end of the rally of the twelfth day, the king was consecrated with the hands of vicar Honorius, cardinals and bishops, and crowned in accordance with the custom of Roman kings*.[40] It is not the most detailed description of the coronation. However, at least two issues raise questions. The role of Cardinal Honorius consecrating the king, echoes Thomas's statement regarding the coronation of the Serbian King Stefan by the legate of the Pope Honorius III. Moreover, the issue of the customs of Roman kings (*est rex atque coronatus more Romanorum regum*) also provoked controversy, suggesting the idea that this refers to a coronation preceding the coronation of Holy Roman Emperors in Rome.

We also read that after his death Svetopelek was buried in the church of St. Mary in Dioclitia. His son, Svetolik, was also to be crowned there, and it is underlined that from this time onwards every king is to be chosen and consecrated (*eligerentur and ordinarentur*) in Dioclitia. The coronation and anointing of Svetolik also took place with the important participation of the clergy:

> Then the people gathered together and lamented him [Svetopelek], weeping. And in the same church in which he was buried, they elevated his son Svetolik [Svetolicus]; and there he was consecrated and crowned by the archbishop and bishops. Hence, from that day, the custom originated that all the kings of this earth should be elected and ordained in the same church [St. Mary's church in Dioclea].[41]

Yet, the priest of Duklja was not consistent, as later in the text he chose other places as the symbolic centre of the kingdom he described. This is evident in another account of a ruler's rise to royal power - namely the passage cited at the beginning of his paper, concerning Pavlimir Bello, a ruler who came from exile in Rome; in the text of the Priest of Duklja he is also one of the founders of Dubrovnik.[42] Although the Priest of Duklja was again

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40 *Ljetopis*, p. 52: "Finita synodo XII[a] die, per manus Honorii vicarii et cardinalium atque episcopum coronatus est rex atque coronatus more romanorum regum".

41 *Ibidem*, pp. 56-57: "Tunc congregantes se populi lamentaverunt illum flentes. Et in eadem ecclesia in qua sepultus est, elevaverunt filium eius Svetolicum; ibique consecratus et coronatus est ab archiepiscopo et episcopis. Ex illa denique die mos adolevit, ut in eadem ecclesia eligerentur et ordinarentur omnes reges huius terrae".

42 About King Pavlimir see: I. Benyovsky Latin, *Grad i zaleđe u narativnim vrelima: konstruiranje tradicije o ranosrednjovjekovnim doseljenjima u Dubrovnik iz slavenskog zaleđa*, "Acta Histriae" 25 (2017), pp. 473-510; T. Živković, *The Legend of Pavlimir Bello*, in: *Forging Unity. The South Slavs between East and West 550-1150*, Belgrade 2008, pp. 205-225; T. Živković, *On the Foundation of Ragusa: The Tradition vs. Facts*, "Historical Review" 14 (2007), pp. 9-25; L. Kunčević, *Mit o Dubrovniku. Diskursi identiteta renesansnog grad*, Zagreb-Dubrovnik 2015;

laconic in this passage, one could note that the mechanism that led Pavlimir to the throne is quite different. The place of the alleged coronation (although the text does not explicitly mention any crowning of Pavlimir) is not Dalma, nor Dioclitia, but Tribunja. The manner in which the king is chosen is also completely distinct. In fact, Pavlimir is led to the city of Tribunja by the people of the region, and a reader might suspect that the Priest of Duklja describes, concisely, the royal *adventus* here. Pavlimir is then approved by the bans and the mighty of the realm. What is striking, however, is the absence of any reference to the participation of the clergy in this process.[43]

The sites of coronation and royal elevation constitute a symbolic landscape within the work of the Priest of Duklja. In crafting his narrative, the chronicler drew upon a variety of traditions: those associated with Split and Croatia, with Dubrovnik and Travunija, and finally with Duklja and the city of Bar. The dynastic continuity that he sought to demonstrate stands in marked contrast to the shifting borders and centres of the kingdom he described.

It is likewise important to observe the moralizing intent clearly discernible in the previously discussed work of Thomas the Archdeacon, who provides accounts of failed rituals, typically in connection with figures intended to serve as examples. In the *Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja*, such an account appears only once, in reference to King Bodin, who proclaimed himself emperor. At this time Bodin decorated his head with a diadem and ordered that he was to be called emperor. When the Greek emperor heard about that, he became enraged and gathered a strong army against Bodin.[44] This act of usurpation shortly after brought about Bodin's downfall (There fell the Bulgarian emperor Bodin; he was captured and by order of the emperor taken to the city of Antioch).[45]

Both Thomas the Archdeacon and the Priest of Duklja thus employed descriptions of ritual or symbolic action as a means of valourising the events

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L. Kunčević, *The Oldest Foundation Myth of Ragusa: The Epidaurian Tradition*, "Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU" 10 (2004), pp. 21-31; W. Kowalski, *Rupture. Integration. Renewal. The Gathering in Dalma and the Creation of a Political Community in The Chronicle of the Priest of Dioclea*, "Slavia Meridionalis" 19 (2019), pp. 1-28.

[43] Both accounts, of Svetopelek's coronation and Pavlimir's ascension to the throne, open up the field for comparative research. The examples from Bohemia show that the ceremony could change over time. In Kosmas' chronicle, during the ceremony of the accession of Břetislav I to the ducal throne, it was Bretyslav's uncle, Jaromir who accompanied the ruler and addressed the people. Less than a century later, it is the Bishop of Prague and the clergy who played the leading role in the ceremony.

[44] *Ljetopis*, p. 95: "Praeterae Bodinus imposuit diadema capiti suo et iussit se vocari imperatorem. Imperator Graecorum hoc audiens iratus et congregans validam multitudinem, misit [eam] ad [de]bellandum Bodinum".

[45] *Ibidem*, p. 95: "Cecidit ibi Bodinus Bulgarinorum imperator et captus est a Graecis iussuque imperatoris relegatus est in exilium in Antiochiam civitatem".

they recounted. In the History of the Bishops of Salona and Split, the - ritual whether successful or unsuccessful - often serves to seal the outcome of a specific conflict concerning investiture or authority, whether between Split and its overlords or within the circles of the clergy and the archiepiscopal court. The situation differs in the Priest of Duklja's work, where matters of ceremony and the rituals associated with it usually appeared in the context of coronations, thereby constructing symbolic centres within the world depicted by the chronicler. In both instances, however, the inclusion of such descriptions primarily aims to show the complexity of the narrative situation, delineating the parties to conflict or settlement and revealing the differing interests of the groups described. Through these means, both medieval authors were able to support their main storyline: in Thomas's case, one shaped by personal involvement and written from the perspective of a citizen of Split, and in the case of the Priest of Duklja, a narrative of unifying diverse communities under the authority of selected rulers of his fictional kingdom.

ABSTRACT

This article examines the narrative use of ritualized and symbolic actions in medieval Dalmatian chronicles as instruments for exercising and representing authority. Focusing on two markedly different works: the History of the Bishops of Salona and Split by Thomas the Archdeacon and the anonymous *Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja*. It argues that descriptions of rituals function primarily as narrative devices rather than faithful records of social practice. Drawing on the concept of Spielregeln der Politik ("rules of the political game") the study approaches ritual as a flexible element within struggles for power, allowing chroniclers to legitimize authority, highlight norms or traditions or discredit opponents. In both texts, ritual emerges not as a mirror of historical reality but as a narrative strategy shaped by the chronicler's perspective and narrative strategy.

Keywords: Medieval Croatia and Dalmatia, Priest of Duklja, Thomas the Archdeacon, ritual and narrative in the Middle Ages, *Historia Salonitana*

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The Duchy and Dukes of Racibórz from the end of the 13th century to the beginning of the 16th century. From the history of Upper Silesia, Poland, and Czech

As a result of the collapse of the Polish state in the second half of the 12th century, independent principalities emerged, in which power was taken over by representatives of the emerging Piast dynasty. In these circumstances, the Duchy of Racibórz was also formed, as one of those whose origins lay in dynastic conflicts caused by the ambitions of individual princes. Its beginnings date back to 1172-1173, when, as a result of the war between the sons of Władysław II the Exile, the Silesian princes Bolesław Wysoki, and Mieszko Plątonogi (vel Laskonogi), the latter, the younger of the two, won a small domain for himself, comprising the castellanies of Racibórz, and Cieszyn. As a result of another conflict between the brothers in 1177-1179, won by Mieszko, his duchy was enlarged, thanks to the new ruler of Kraków, Casimir Sprawiedliwy. Wanting to have the victorious prince on his side, he gave him two castellanies; Oświęcim, and Bytom, which had previously been part of the Kraków region.[1] In 1202, after a victorious war with his nephew

[1] Most historians accept this sequence of events, as well as the dates given, see: R. Grodecki, *Dzieje polityczne Śląska do roku 1290*, in: *Historia Śląska od najdawniejszych czasów do r. 1400*, ed. S. Kutrzeba, vol. 1, Kraków 1933, pp. 177-178; W. Korta, *Historia Śląska do 1763 roku*, Warszawa 2003, p. 76; R. Żerelik, *Dzieje Śląska do 1526 roku*, in: *Historia Śląska*, ed. M. Czapliński, Wrocław 2002, p. 48; J. Bieniak, *Powstanie księstwa opolsko-raciborskiego*

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Henry (Henryk) Brodaty, Mieszko of Racibórz annexed the Opole region, thus giving his duchy its final shape. In historiography, these latter events are considered to mark the beginning of the Duchy of Opole (Opole-Racibórz).[2]

Within these borders - covering the lands of Racibórz, Cieszyn, Bytom, Oświęcim, and Opole - apart from minor changes, the duchy survived for almost 80 years. Until the death of Mieszko Plątonogi in 1211, the capital of the duchy was Racibórz, although the ruler himself resided in Krakow for the last year of his life. However, after his son Kazimierz (d. 1229 or 1230) took the throne, Opole became the main ducal seat. The situation was similar when Kazimierz's older son, Mieszko Otyły (d. 1246), ruled. His successor, his younger brother Władysław, initially resided in Opole, but in 1258-1260 he moved to Racibórz, which once again became the administrative center of the duchy and remained so until its division into districts. Interestingly, the change of the prince's residence did not result in a change of the name of the duchy, which throughout the 13th century was referred to as the Duchy of Opole, and the princes ruling there were titled Princes of Opole (*ducatus Opoliensis*).[3]

The lands that were part of the Duchy of Opole later became the core of Upper Silesia (*Silesia superior*), although the name itself was not coined until the 15th century. In the 13th century, the title of Silesian dukes was used by the rulers of the Wrocław part, Henry Brodaty and his successors. It was not until the mid-14th century (after the Silesian dukes were subjugated by the Czech king John of Luxembourg) that a process gradually began which, after several decades, led not only to the descendants of Mieszko Plątonogi adopting the title of "Silesian", but above all to the reacquisition of the lands of the former Duchy of Opole (Opole-Racibórz) to the name Silesia.[4]

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jak wyraz przekształcania się Polski w dzielnicowa poliarchię, in: *Sacra Silentii provincia. 800 lat powstania dziedzicznego księstwa opolskiego (1202-2002)*, ed. A, Pobóg-Lenartowicz, Opole 2003, p. 65. The connection of the castellanies was dated differently: N. Mika, *Mieszko, syn Władysława II Wygnańca, książę raciborski i pan Krakowa – dzielnicowy władca Polski*, Racibórz 2006, pp. 99-102: 1180 y.; J. Rajman, *Pogranicze śląsko-małopolskie w średniowieczu*, Kraków 1998, pp. 176-177: a. 1195 y.

[2] B. Zientara, *Henryk Brodaty i jego czasy*, Warszawa 2006, pp. 124-125; N. Mika, *Mieszko syn Władysława II Wygnańca,* pp. 138-142.

[3] M.L. Wójcik, *Dokumenty i kancelarie książąt opolsko-raciborskich do początku XIV wieku*, Wrocław 2011, pp. 33-57; J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne raciborscy (1290/1291-1521*), Kraków 2022, pp. 7-8; *idem*, *Na pograniczu Czech i Polski. O księstwie i książętach raciborskich w późnym średniowieczu,* in: *Wielokulturowość średniowiecza. Ludzie i idee*, ed. J. Sperka, Wrocław 2024 (= VII Kongres Mediewistów Polskich 1), p. 79.

[4] W. Semkowicz, *Historyczno-geograficzne podstawy Śląska*, in: *Historia Śląska od najdawniejszych czasów…*, vol. 1, pp. 25-27; R. Grodecki, *Dzieje polityczne Śląska do roku 1290…*, p. 287; J. Rajman, *Terytorium opolsko-raciborskie w prowincji wrocławskiej i kształtowanie się pojęcia Górny* Śląsk *w* średniowieczu, "Roczniki Historyczne" 64 (1998), pp. 19, 23; R. Żerelik, *Dzieje Śląska do 1526 roku…*, pp. 16-17.

During the reign of Władysław I (1246-1281/1282), the Duchy of Opole experienced rapid economic development. The ruler carried out intensive colonization, establishing new villages and towns, as well as transforming existing settlements from Polish law to German law.[5] After his death, however, the duchy was divided, and over the course of several years, first three, and then four, duchies were formed, in which his sons (and Duchess Euphemia of Greater Poland) took power, thus starting new Piast lines. Kazimierz received the area with Bytom and Koźle, Bolesław received the Opole area, while the eldest of the brothers, Mieszko, who was in charge of the youngest, Przemysław, took over the Racibórz, Cieszyn, and Oświęcim parts.[6]

After ten years, the joint rule of Mieszko and Przemysław ended, and as a result of the division, the older brother took over the Cieszyn and Oświęcim regions, while the younger brother took over Racibórz. This happened after May 10, 1290, when Mieszko still held the title of Duke of Racibórz, and before January 7, 1291, when he formed an alliance with the Czech ruler Wenceslaus II and acted independently.[7] Prince Przemysław, on the other hand, was first recorded having the title of Racibórz - *dux Opoliensis dominus in Ratibor* - on November 10, 1290.[8] Soon, his title took on a shortened form, limited only to Racibórz (*dux Ratiboriensis*).[9]

The Duchy of Racibórz consisted of territories stretching from Racibórz, through Wodzisław, Rybnik, Żory, Mikołów, Pszczyna, to Mysłowice and later Bieruń, covering an area of approximately 2,400 km². To the south, it bordered the Duchy of Cieszyn, and soon also the Duchy of Oświęcim, which was separated from the former in 1314/1315, to the south-west - with the Opava region, and later the Duchy of Opava, to the north - with

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[5] W. Dominiak, *Ostatni władca Górnego Śląska. Władysław I, pan na Opolu i Raciborzu (1225–1281)*, Racibórz 2009, pp. 125-175; J. Rajman, *Pogranicze…*, pp. 107-114.

[6] R. Grodecki, *Dzieje polityczne Śląska do roku 1290…*, p. 287; K. Jasiński, *Rodowód Piastów śląskich. Piastowie wrocławscy, legnicko-brzescy, świdniccy, ziębiccy, głogowscy, żagańscy, oleśniccy, opolscy, cieszyński i oświęcimscy*, Kraków 2007, pp. 510-511, 515-524.

[7] *Codex diplomaticus Silesiae* [henceforth: CDS], vol. 1-36, ed. C. Grünhagen, H. Markgraf *et al*., Breslau 1856-1936, vol. 7, no. 2134, 2170; *Lehns- und Besitzurkunden Schlesiens und seiner einzelnen Fürstenthümer im Mittelalter* [henceforth: LBS], vol. 1-2, ed. C. Grünhagen, H. Markgraf, Leipzig 1881-1883, vol. 2, pp. 300-302, no. 3; *Schlesisches Urkundenbuch* [henceforth: SU], vol. 5-6, ed. W. Irgang, Köln-München 1993-1998, vol. 5, no. 442, vol. 6, no. 3; M.L. Wójcik, *Uwagi w sprawie daty podziału ziemi raciborskiej po śmierci Władysława, księcia opolskiego (zm. 1281), w świetle najstarszych dokumentów jego synów, Mieszka i Przemysława*, „Studia i Materiały z Dziejów Śląska" 24 (1999), pp. 14-21; *idem*, *Dokumenty i kancelarie…*, pp. 162-163.

[8] SU, vol. 5, ed. W. Irgang, Köln 1993, no. 512.

[9] Prince Przemysław appears for the first time with only the title of Racibórz in a document dated August 1, 1293. – CDS, vol. 1, ed. W. Wattenbach, Breslau 1857, p. 20, no. 21.

the Duchy of Bytom-Koziel[10]. The eastern border was based on the Przemsza River, which separated it from the Duchy of Kraków and later from the Kingdom of Poland. In terms of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, the Duchy of Racibórz was subject to two bishoprics, Wrocław (Racibórz, Rybnik, Wodzisław, Żory) and Kraków (Mikołów, Pszczyna, Mysłowice).[11] The princes of Racibórz first lost their independence in 1292, when Przemysław submitted to the Czech ruler Wenceslaus II.[12] However, they ultimately lost it on February 19, 1327, when Leszek, together with other Upper Silesian princes, paid homage in Opava to John of Luxembourg, King of Bohemia and Poland.[13] In 1348, the Duchy of Racibórz, along with other vassal duchies of Silesia, was incorporated into the Kingdom of Bohemia by Charles IV of Luxembourg.[14]

The Racibórz branch of the Piast dynasty, founded by Przemysław (d. 1306), proved to be short-lived, the male line dying out in the second generation with his son Leszek (d. 1336).[15] However, as a result of earlier decisions made by this prince (appointing his brother-in-law as his successor) and, above all, the verdict of King John of Luxembourg issued on January 14, 1337, in Wrocław, the Duchy of Racibórz passed into the hands of a descendant of a collateral line of the Czech Přemyslids, Nicholas II, Duke of Opava. He was the son of Nicholas I and grandson of King Přemysl Ottokar II of Bohemia. Nicholas II of Opava was also the husband of Duchess Anna of Racibórz, Leszek's sister. When granting the duchy, John of Luxembourg applied feudal law, German law, and not Polish law,

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10 I. Panic, *Historia osadnictwa w księstwie opolskim we wczesnym średniowieczu*, Katowice 1992, p. 140; J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, p. 21; *idem*, *Na pograniczu Czech i Polski…*, p. 81.

11 About the border between the dioceses of Kraków and Wrocław: B. Kumor, *Granice (Archi)diecezji krakowskiej (1000-1939)*, "Prawo kanoniczne. Kwartalnik prawno-historyczny" 6 (1963), p. 538.

12 Information about paying tribute is recorded *Kronika zbrasławska* (*Petra* Žitavského *kronika zbraslavská*, ed. J. Emler, in: *Fontes rerum Bohemicarum*, vol. 4, Praga 1884, p. 54). Historians are divided in their assessments, with some accepting the account of the paying of homage (O. Balzer, *Królestwo Polskie 1295-1370*, Kraków 2005, p. 254; B. Nowacki, *Czeskie roszczenia do korony w Polsce w latach 1290-1335*, Poznań 1987, pp. 59-60; A. Barciak, *Czechy a ziemie południowej Polski w XIII oraz w początkach XIV wieku. Polityczno-ideologiczne problemy ekspansji czeskiej na ziemie południowej Polski*, Katowice 1992, p. 115), and some, undermining the credibility of the source, question it (J. Dąbrowski, *Dzieje polityczne Śląska w latach 1290-1402*, in: *Historia Śląska…*, pp. 338-339; K. Jasiński, *Przemysław (Przemysł) zm. 1306*, in: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, vol. 28 (1984-1985), p. 736; N. Mika, G. Wawoczny, *Książęta opolsko-raciborscy. Wybrane postacie*, Racibórz 2000, p. 32).

13 LBS, vol. 2, ed. C. Grünhagen, H. Markgraf, Leipzig 1883, pp. 379-380, no. 1; B. Nowacki, *Czeskie roszczenia…*, pp. 98-99.

14 LBS, vol. 1, pp. 8-13, no. 4, 5; J. Dąbrowski, *Dzieje polityczne Śląska…*, pp. 477-481.

15 K. Jasiński, *Rodowód Piastów* śląskich…, pp. 522-523; J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 38, 46-47.

as demanded by the princes of Opole, which was clearly stated in the court ruling and written document.[16]

Six generations of representatives of the Opava Přemyslid dynasty ruled the Duchy of Racibórz for almost 200 years. However, only the first of the princes, Nicholas II (d. 1365), exercised power in the Duchy of Opava and Racibórz. His successor, his eldest son John I (d. 1380), after several years of independent rule, had to agree to a division in 1377, when his brothers reached working age. In accordance with earlier agreements, John I took over the entire Duchy of Racibórz, as it belonged to him after the death of Anna of Racibórz, while the Duchy of Opava was divided among his brothers. As a result, John I and Nicholas III received Karniów (today Krnov), Bruntal with the Fürstenwalde castle, Głubczyce, Zuckmantel (today Zlaté Hory) and the Edelštejn castle, while Wenceslaus and Przemek received the Opava region itself. Then there was a division between John I and Nicholas III. The latter received Głubczyce and Edelštejn Castle and started the Głubczyce line of the Přemyslids.[17] John, on the other hand, took over Karniów, Bruntal, and Fürstenwalde Castle. These territories, combined with the Duchy of Racibórz, remained in the hands of his heirs until 1483. Although John I and his successors never again possessed Opava, they continued to emphasize this dynastic heritage in their titles, calling themselves Dukes of Opava and Racibórz (duces Oppavie et Ratiborie).[18]

As early as during the reign of John I, disintegration tendencies became apparent in the Duchy of Racibórz. Needing ready money, the prince sold the districts of Pszczyna and Mikołów to Władysław Opolczyk in 1375, and in 1377/1378 he pledged the town of Żory to the princes of Cieszyn, Przemysław Noszak, and Bolesław.[19] His successor, John II the Iron, regained these losses, but in 1384/1385 he sold the Karniów district to Władysław Opolczyk. He bought back part of the territory - the Bruntál district - in 1390, but the rest of the Karniów lands remained in the hands of Opolczyk, who sold them to Jodok, Margrave of Moravia. After the latter's death, Karniów

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[16] LBS, vol. 2, pp. 380-386, no. 2, 3; *Korunní archiv český. Sbírka státních listin Koruny* české *z doby od r. 1306 do r. 1378*, ed. H. Jireček, Praga 1896, no. 146; *Regesta diplomatica nec non epistolaria Bohemiae et Moraviae*, vol. 4, ed. J. Emler, Praga 1892, no. 386; J. Dąbrowski, *Dzieje polityczne…*, pp. 424-426; J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 63-64.

[17] CDS, vol. 6, ed. W. Wattenbach, C. Grünhagen, Breslau 1865, pp. 195-201, no. 14-16; *Regesten zur Geschichte des Herzogthums Troppau (1061-1464)*, ed. F. Kopetzky, "Archiv für österreichische Geschichte" 45 (1871), no. 384; P. Kouřil, D. Prix, M. Wihoda, *Hrady* českého *Slezska*, Brno-Opava 2000, p. 509; M. Čapský, *Vévoda Přemek Opavský (1366-1433). Ve službách posledních Lucemburků*, Brno-Opava 2005, pp. 55-60; J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 91-92; *idem*, *Na pograniczu Czech i Polski…*, pp. 82-83.

[18] J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 9, 92-94, 125-128, 186-187, 211-212, 255-256, 288, 342-344.

[19] LBS, vol. 2, pp. 388-390, no. 8, 9; J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 95-96.

became the property of the Czech Crown. The Karniów lands only returned to the hands of John II the Iron, Duke of Racibórz, in 1422, as a grant from King Sigismund of Luxembourg.[20]

The territorial unity of the Duchy of Racibórz was finally lost on October 15, 1437, when the grandsons of John I and sons of John II the Iron (d. 1424) divided it up. The elder Nicholas V (d. 1452) took over the eastern part of the duchy, including Wodzisław, Rybnik, Żory, and the Karniów region with Karniów and Bruntal. The younger Wenceslaus II (d. 1456) received the western part with the wealthy Racibórz. Pszczyna (along with Mikołów and Bieruń), and its attachments remained in the hands of their mother Helena Korybutówna (d. 1449), widow of John the Iron, who had a dowry (a so-called life annuity) registered there.[21] After her death, the Pszczyna district was taken over by Nicholas V, but soon it again became a territory that was bequeathed to his subsequent wives, Margaret of Ligota (d. 1450/1451), and Barbara Rokenberg (d. 1464-1468).[22]

The sons of John II the Iron founded new branches of the Přemyslid dynasty: Nicholas V founded the Karniów-Rybnik branch, and Wenceslaus II founded the Racibórz branch. The Karniów-Rybnik line died out with the sons of Nicholas V, John III the Elder of Karniów (d. 1483), and Wenceslaus III of Rybnik (d. 1478).[23] Most of the lands belonging to both princes were confiscated by King Matthias Corvinus for their support of the Jagiellonian dynasty during the war for the Bohemian crown. This happened in 1474 with the lands of Wenceslaus III in Pszczyna and John

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[20] CDS, vol. 6, p. 15, no. 70; LBS, vol. 2, pp. 495-496, 502-503, no. 30, 37; *Zemské desky krnovské. Svazek I (1403-1522)*, ed. D. Prix, Opava 2008, p. 256-257, no. 395; V. Štěpán, *Moravský markrabě Jošt (1354-1411)*, Brno 2002, pp. 212, 291; J. Sperka, *Władysław książę opolski, wieluński, kujawski, dobrzyński, pan Rusi, palatyn Węgier i namiestnik Polski (1326/1330 - 8 lub 18 maja 1401)*, Kraków 2016, pp. 214-215; *idem*, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 134-138.

[21] Národní knihovna České republiky, Praha, Copiarius monasteri ad S. Venceslaum. Diplomatarius Silesiacarum, signature 6 XVI 8, pp. 605v.-609 = CDS, vol. 6, pp. 59-61, no. 195; P. Kouřil, D. Prix, M. Wihoda, *Hrady…*, pp. 520-521; M. Čapský, *Poklady slezských knížat – rodové jmění i nástroj každodenní sebeprezentace*, in: *Confinia Silesiae (K* životnímu *jubileu Rudolfa* Žáčka*)*, Opava 2008 (= Acta Historica Universitatis Silesianae Opaviensis 1), pp. 322-323; J. Sperka, *Z Litwy na Górny Śląsk. Helena Korybutówna księżna raciborska i pani na Pszczynie. Helena Korybutówna księżna raciborska i pani na Pszczynie*, in: *Fontes historiae examinare. Studia ofiarowane Profesorowi Rościsławowi Żerelikowi w sześćdziesięciopięciolecie urodzin*, ed. L. Harc, F. Wolański, Wrocław 2021, pp. 142-149; *idem*, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 188-190, 208, 210-211, 213-214.

[22] J. Sperka, *Księstwo karniowsko-rybnickie i jego losy do początku XV wieku*, „Średniowiecze Polskie i Powszechne" 12 (16) (2020), pp. 99-101; *idem*, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 194, 201-205.

[23] F. Chocholatý, *Genealogie opavských Přemyslovců 1255-1525*, „Listy Genealogické a Heraldické Společnosti v Praze. Acta Genealogica ac Heraldica" 6 (1978), pp. 150-151; M. Starý, *Opavští Přemyslovci. Genealogie posledních generací českého královského rodu*, Opava 2021, pp. 128, 133; J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 243, 255.

the Old in Karniów. After the latter's death in 1483, the king also took over the remaining Wodzisław lands.[24] Cooperation with the Jagiellonian dynasty did not bring benefits to the pro-Polish princes of Racibórz, but the Kingdom of Poland was also unable to look after its interests and bring these lands under its control, as it did at that time with the Duchy of Oświęcim (1457) and later with the Duchy of Zator (1494).

Of the territories seized by King Matthias Corvinus, only the land of Karniów returned to the hands of the Przemyślids of Racibórz. The sister of John III the Elder and Wenceslaus III, Barbara (d. 1512), wife of John IV of Oświęcim, took over independent rule there in 1490/1491 after the king's death (d. 1490), only to soon share it with her son-in-law George Šelmberk. He (together with his father) received it from King Władysław Jagiellończyk; she also ruled in Wodzisław on similar terms.[25] However, her half-sister Margaret (d. 1508), wife of Kazimierz, Duke of Oświęcim and Zator, managed to briefly take over Żory, pledged in 1473 by Wenceslaus III to Jakub of Dębno, Chancellor and Starost of Kraków, but soon sold it to her cousin, John IV the Younger of Racibórz. However, her attempts to take back the Pszczyna district from Kazimierz II of Cieszyn ended in failure.[26]

The Przemyślid dynasty of Racibórz was continued by Wenceslaus II's son, John IV the Younger (d. 1493). He annexed the aforementioned Żory and Rybnik to his duchy. He had three sons with Magdalena, Princess of Opole. However, the premature deaths of two of them, Nicholas VI and John, in 1506, and the disability of the youngest, Valentine, made it impossible to extend the dynasty.[27] Valentin's death in 1521 (November 13) closed the circle of history that began at the end of the 13th century with the separation of the Duchy of Racibórz from the large political entity that was the Duchy of Opole.[28] The Duchy of Racibórz was once again merged with the Duchy of Opole after John II Dobry, Duke of Opole, took power in Racibórz as a result of earlier succession agreements.

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[24] J. Sperka, *Księstwo karniowsko-rybnickie…*, pp. 104-106, 111-113; *idem*, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 243-244, 254-255.

[25] D. Prix, *Manžel své paní. Kníže Jan Osvětimský na Krnovsku*, in: *Historia amica mea. Sborník příspěvků k poctě profesorky Ireny Korbelářové*, ed. I. Matejko-Peterka, Opava 2023, pp. 75-86; J. Sperka, *Księstwo karniowsko-rybnickie…*, pp. 113-114; *idem*, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 265-269.

[26] J. Sperka, *Księstwo karniowsko-rybnickie…*, pp. 107-111; *idem*, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 273-274.

[27] F. Chocholatý, *Genealogie opavských Přemyslovců…*, pp. 152; M. Starý, *Opavští Přemyslovci…*, pp. 141, 148-149, 151; J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 282-312, 324-330.

[28] N. Mika, *Ostatni Przemyślida - książę Walentyn Garbaty*, in: *Czechy i Polska między Wschodem i Zachodem - średniowiecze i wczesna epoka nowożytna*, ed. T. Ciesielski, W. Iwańczak, Warszawa-Bellerive-sur-Allier 2016, pp. 62-64; J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 336-341.

Over the course of 230 years, the princes of Racibórz played a key role not only among the rulers of Silesia, later vassals of the Czech Crown of Saint Wenceslaus, but also on the Polish-Silesian border, acting as a link between the kings of Bohemia and Poland. Of the eight generations, two Piasts and six Přemyslids, Prince Nicholas II of Opava and Racibórz, a close associate first of King John of Luxembourg and then of his successor, Emperor Charles IV, undoubtedly achieved the greatest political significance.[29] His son John I did not achieve such successes, even though his career at the imperial court initially looked promising, but unfortunately, he ended up squandering the ducal domain.[30] No less important than Nicholas II was his grandson, John II the Iron, a trusted confidant of the Czech king Wenceslaus IV, chamberlain of his court, starost of Kłodzko and Ząbkowice, but also intricately connected politically through family ties with the Polish king Władysław Jagiełło. However, his very difficult character stood in the way of his complete success, as he was quick-tempered and sometimes even cruel (among other things, he took part in the assassination of members of Wenceslaus IV's royal council in 1397 at Karlštejn Castle).[31] His sons and grandsons, who ruled small principalities, had an increasingly weak political position, although some of them stood out from other Silesian princes. Nicholas V of Karniów and Rybnik was certainly famous for his pugnacity and bravery, boasting victories over the Hussite armies at Rybnik (1433) and the capture of Siewierz from the Bishop of Kraków, Zbigniew Oleśnicki (1443/1444). He was also highly respected among the princes, which meant that he often acted as a mediator in princely agreements (*e.g.*, in 1445, he carried out the division of the Duchy of Oświęcim).[32] Unfortunately, his son, Wenceslaus III of Rybnik, was just a common, disliked troublemaker, which is reflected in his nickname - "Głupi" (Stupid) - and was emphasized by King

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[29] F. Kopetzky, *Zur Geschichte und Genealogie der Přemyslidischen Herzoge von Troppau*, "Archiv für österreichische Geschichte" 41 (1869), pp. 20-33; P. Kouřil, D. Prix, M. Wihoda, *Hrady…*, pp. 465-475; M. Starý, *Opavští Přemyslovci…*, pp. 31-36; J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 60-86.

[30] F. Kopetzky, *Zur Geschichte und Genealogie der Přemyslidischen…*, pp. 33-37; P. Kouřil, D. Prix, M. Wihoda, *Hrady…*, pp. 475-476; M. Starý, *Opavští Přemyslovci…*, pp. 45-48; J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 88-102.

[31] J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 104-160; H. Miketová, *Muž se* špatnou *pověstí. Iitinerář vévody Jana II. Opavského a Ratibořského*, in: *Historie 2008. Sborník prací ze 14. Celostátní studentské vědecké konference konané 5. a 6. března 2009 v Hradci Králové*, Hradec Králově 2009, pp. 37-56; M. Starý, *Opavští Přemyslovci…*, pp. 64-68.

[32] J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 178-198, about the Battle of Rybnik, see also M. Mika, *Górny Śląsk w dobie wojen husyckich. Przemyślidzi opawscy i raciborscy a rewolucja husycka*, Kraków 2015, pp. 101-109; about the battles of Siewierz: Z. Noga, *Sprzedaż terytorium siewierskiego biskupowi i kapitule krakowskiej w 1443 roku*, "Rocznik Naukowo-Dydaktyczny WSP w Krakowie" (1987), Historia 12, pp. 93-104.

Maciej Krowin when he confiscated his land in Pszczyna (1474), but also later (1477) by King Władysław Jagiellończyk, who transferred this land to Hynk the Elder of Podiebrad. Jan Długosz, a contemporary historian of the prince, also did not spare him criticism.[33]

When examining the life expectancy of the princes and princesses of Racibórz, it should be noted that it did not differ significantly from the average life expectancy of other monarchs of that time. However, a progressive decline can be observed in subsequent generations, especially among men. The first of the Racibórz princes from the Piast dynasty, Przemysław, who was in poor health, lived to be about 40 years old, and his son Leszek did not live much longer, dying at the age of 44.[34] Of the princes of Racibórz, but already from the new Přemyslid dynasty, Nicholas II enjoyed the longest life, dying at around 77 years of age. His sons lived shorter lives: John I died just before his 50th birthday, although his brother Przemek of Opava lived to be almost 68. In the next generation, John II the Iron died at the age of 62, and his younger brother Nicholas IV lived to be only 38. The fourth generation was already much weaker. Nicholas V of Rybnik died at the age of 40, struck down by the plague, but his brother Wenceslaus II did not survive him by much, barely reaching the age of 40. The generation of their sons lived even shorter lives. John III the Elder died at around 40, his younger brother Wenceslaus III barely made it past 30, and their cousin John the Younger was around 44 at the time of his death. The Přemyslid dynasty of Racibórz reached complete decline in the last generation, as Nicholas VI died at the age of about 24, his younger brother John was not much older at the time of his death, and the last, Valentine, afflicted with many diseases, passed away at the age of 32-33. Life expectancy was better for princesses. Those who became nuns lived the longest. Not exposed to the effects and complications of childbirth, they lived to a ripe old age. As far as we know, the record holder was Agnieszka, daughter of Nicholas II, a Dominican nun from Racibórz, who was about 80 years old at the time of her death. Her sister Eufemia lived past the age of 50, and Eufemia, daughter of Przemysław, lived to be 60. Those princesses who married usually lived much shorter lives, between 45 and 55 years.[35]

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33 E. Zivier, *Geschichte des Fürstentums Pless*, vol. 1, Kattowitz 1906, pp. 187-188, 198-199; *Joannis Dlugossii Annales seu cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae*, vol. 12, Cracoviae 2005, p. 356; *Jana Długosza Roczniki czyli Kroniki sławnego Królestwa Polskiego*, vol. 12, Warszawa 2006, p. 372; J. Sperka, *Tragiczne losy księcia rybnickiego Wacława III (zm. 1478). Epizod z dziejów rywalizacji między Jagiellonami a Maciejem Korwinem o koronę czeską*, "Studia z Dziejów Średniowiecza" 20 (2020), pp. 260-270; *idem*, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 248, 255.

34 K. Jasiński, *Rodowód Piastów* śląskich…, pp. 522-523, 539.

35 J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 11-12; *idem*, *Na pograniczu Czech i Polski…*, p. 87.

When analyzing the marriages of the princes of Racibórz, the Piasts, and the Přemyslids, it should be emphasized that initially, marriages with Mazovian and Silesian princes dominated. This was the case with Przemysław and Leszek, but above all with Nicholas II, who, wanting to join the ranks of the Silesian princes as soon as possible, found his next three wives among the Silesian rulers. Anna, daughter of Przemysław, came from the Racibórz line, Jadwiga, daughter of Konrad I, came from the Oleśnica line, and Juta, daughter of Bolesław Pierworodny, came from the Niemodlin line. In turn, Nicholas II married his daughter Eufemia to the Mazovian prince Siemowit III.[36] His son, John I of Racibórz, followed in his footsteps and married Anna, a Silesian princess from the Głogów-Żagań line, daughter of Henry V the Iron. This gave him a brother-in-law in the person of the Polish king Casimir the Great, whose wife was Jadwiga, Anna's sister.[37] In the 14th century, there were also marriages with representatives of the ruling Luxembourg dynasty - Agnes, daughter of Nicholas II (and Anna of Racibórz), married John Henry of Luxembourg, Margrave of Moravia, and with the Czech nobility (Anna, daughter of Juta of Niemodlin, married Peter of Šternberk) and the elites of the German Empire (Anna, daughter of Anna of Racibórz, married Burchard, Count of Hardeck and Burgrave of Magdeburg).[38]

In my opinion, the most interesting marriages of the Přemyslids of Racibórz took place in the 15th century. In 1407, John II the Iron married the Lithuanian princess Helena Korybutówna; King Władysław Jagiełło was the inspiration behind this, which was in line with his matrimonial policy of uniting representatives of the Gediminid dynasty and the Polish magnates with the borderland princes of Silesia.[39] In turn, the sons of John the Iron married representatives of the Polish nobility and Krakow bourgeoisie: in 1445, Wenceslaus II married Małgorzata, daughter of Wincenty of Szamotuły, castellan of Międzyrzecz and starost of Ruthenia (formerly wife of Kazimierz II, Duke of Mazovia), who brought him a huge dowry, estates in Greater Poland and Crown Ruthenia. The daughters of this princely couple later married representatives of the Greater Poland nobility: Katarzyna married Włodek of Danaborz, castellan and

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36 K. Jasiński, *Rodowód Piastów mazowieckich*, Poznań-Wrocław 1998, pp. 64-66, 72-111, 242; *idem*, *Rodowód Piastów śląskich…*, pp. 431-433, 540-541, 554; M. Starý, *Opavští Přemyslovci…*, pp. 34-35, 43-45; J. Grabowski, *Poczet książąt i księżnych mazowieckich*, Kraków 2019, p. 12; J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, s. 78-81.

37 K. Jasiński, *Rodowód Piastów śląskich…*, pp. 388-390; J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, s. 90, 98.

38 J. Mezník, *Lucemburská Morava 1310-1423*, Praha1999, pp. 55, 166; M. Starý, *Opavští Přemyslovci…*, pp. 48-49; J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 81-82.

39 J. Tęgowski, *Pierwsze pokolenia Giedyminowiczów*, Poznań-Wrocław 1999, pp. 106, 113-114; J. Sperka, *Z Litwy na Górny* Śląsk…, pp. 139-143; *idem*, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 116, 151, 162-163.

starost of Nakło, and Helena married Jan Ostroróg, a humanist, diplomat, official, and most likely the author of the memorandum On the Repair of the Commonwealth.[40] However, Wenceslaus II's grandson and John IV the Younger's son, Nicholas VI, married Anna, daughter of Zbigniew of Tęczyn, chamberlain of Kraków, in 1506. She brought him a large dowry (10,000 florins bequeathed to the town of Pleszew in Greater Poland).[41] The marriages arranged by Nicholas V of Karniów-Rybnik (brother of Wenceslaus II) were also very interesting. He first committed a misalliance and, undoubtedly out of love, married Małgorzata of Ligota in 1440, the widow of his knight and vassal, Hanusz Klema of Ligota. After her death in 1451, he remarried, this time to Barbara Rokenberg, a townswoman from Krakow, twice widowed after the Krakow patricians Wilhelm Willand and Jerzy Orient.[42]

Looking at the life expectancy of the spouses of the princes of Racibórz, three stand out: Helena Korybutówna, a Lithuanian woman who lived to be over 60, and her mother-in-law, Anna Żagańska, who died between the ages of 55 and 60. Anna Tęczyńska, who was married to Nicholas VI for only a few months, also enjoyed a long life, living to around 62 years of age. However, Małgorzata Szamotulska (d. 1464) was around 40-42 years old at the time of her death, her contemporary Barbara Rokenberg died at around 50, while Magdalena Opolska (d. 1501) passed away at around 37. In general, therefore, the wives of the rulers of Racibórz lived longer than their husbands (except for Nicholas II).[43]

It is worth noting that the princes of Racibórz from the Přemyslid dynasty married at a mature age, around 30-35 years old. However, they were all "outclassed" by John the Iron, who married very late by medieval standards, at almost 45 years of age. These late marriages, combined with a short average life expectancy, meant that marriages lasted from a few to a dozen or so years. John

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40 K. Jasiński, *Rodowód Piastów mazowieckich…*, pp. 128-130; J. Grabowski, *Poczet książąt i księżnych mazowieckich…*, p. 221; W. Brzeziński, *Koligacje małżeńskie możnowładztwa wielkopolskiego w drugiej połowie XIV i pierwszej połowie XV wieku*, Wrocław 2012, pp. 152-153, 186; *idem*, *Życie szlachcianki w późnośredniowiecznej Wielkopolsce. Magnificae et generosae. Zagadnienia demograficzne i majątkowe*, Bydgoszcz 2021, pp. 479-480, 560-562; J. Sperka, *Koligacje rodzinne Przemyślidów opawskich linii raciborskiej z możnowładztwem Królestwa Polskiego do początku w XVI wieku* "Średniowiecze Polskie i Powszechne" 11 (15) (2019), pp. 186-210; *idem*, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 219, 224-227, 314-317, 320-321.

41 J. Kurtyka, *Latyfundium Tęczyńskie. Dobra i właściciele (XIV-XVII wiek)*, Kraków 1999, p. 175; A. Kozak, *Tęczyńska, właśc. z Tęczyńskich Anna z Pleszewa, h. Topór (ok. 1488 - między 1550-1552),* in: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* 53 (2021), pp. 352-353; J. Sperka, *Koligacje rodzinne Przemyślidów…*, p. 211; *idem*, *Książęta i księżne…*, p. 329.

42 J. Sperka, *Małżeństwa Mikołaja V księcia opawsko-raciborskiego pana na Rybniku (zm. 1452 r.),* in: *Silesia-Polonia-Europa*, ed. J. Sperka, Katowice-Bielsko-Biała 2019, pp. 251-257; *idem*, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 193, 200-201; M. Starý, *Opavští Přemyslovci…*, pp. 99-100.

43 J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, p. 12; *idem*, *Na pograniczu Czech i Polski…*, p. 87.

I remained in a relationship the longest, spending 19 years with Anna, followed by his son, John the Iron, who enjoyed family happiness with Helena for 17 years, while Nicholas II, the grandfather and father of the aforementioned, lived with Anna of Racibórz for about 12 years. The shortest marriages were those of Nicholas V with his second wife Barbara Rokenberg - one and a half years - and Nicholas VI with Anna Tęczyńska, spending only a few months with her. Several princes of Racibórz never married (Nicholas IV, brothers Wenceslaus III and John III the Elder, brothers John VI and Valentine). This was less true of princesses, as only Constance (d. 1351) and Anna (d. after 1478) remained unmarried. Four princesses became nuns: Euphemia, daughter of Przemysław, who joined the Dominican Sisters in Racibórz, and the daughters of Nicholas II, Agnes and Elizabeth, who also became Dominican Sisters in Racibórz, and Anna, who was given to the Poor Clares in Opava.[44]

For most of the princes and princesses of Racibórz, descended from the Piasts and Přemyslids, Racibórz was their burial place. Initially, the Dominican church of Saint James served as a necropolis, where Przemysław and Leszek were laid to rest (no archaeological research has been conducted there to date). Later, the Dominican Church of the Holy Spirit became the final resting place for the princely family. The tradition began with the burial of Princess Eufemia, prioress of the convent, who died in a halo of sanctity in 1359. John I and his successors (with some exceptions, of course) were laid to rest here, the last being Prince Walentyn. The deceased were buried in the chapel of Saint Dominic, which was demolished at the beginning of the 19th century, or in the presbytery, where burials took place from the second half of the 15th century.[45] The monastery temples in Opava were also places of eternal rest: the Franciscan church of the Holy Spirit, which also served as a princely necropolis, where Nicholas II and his third wife, Juta of Niemodlin, were buried, and the Poor Clares church of Saint Catherine, where his daughter Anna was laid to rest.[46] Wenceslaus III of Rybnik, who died in captivity in Kłodzko, was most likely buried in one of the local churches.[47] Two duchesses of Racibórz, Małgorzata Barbara Rokenberg and her daughter Małgorzata (Machna), were laid to rest in Krakow, most likely

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[44] J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 12, 50-54, 80-82; *idem*, *Posagi i wiana księżnych raciborskich od końca XIII do początku XVI wieku*, w: *Historia amica mea…*, pp. 45-56.

[45] K. Kozłowska, *Knížecí nekropole v klášterním kostele sv. Ducha sester Dominikánek (v současnosti muzeum) w Ratiboři*, "Vlastivědné listy" 29 (2003), 1, pp. 1-3; M. Starý, *Opavští Přemyslovci…*, pp. 153-155; M. Čapský, *Zlomený meč. Valentin Hrabatý, poslední z opavských Přemyslovců*, "Dejiny a současnost" 2 (Přemyslovské dědictví) 2006, pp. 34-36; J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 13-14.

[46] D. Prix, *První zlatý věk města*, in: *Opava. Historie-kultura-lidé*, ed. K. Müller, R. Žáček, Praha 2006, pp. 356-357; M. Starý, *Opavští Přemyslovci…*, pp. 34, 41-43.

[47] J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, p. 255; *idem*, *Na pograniczu Czech i Polski…*, p. 91.

in Saint Mary's Basilica.[48] Barbara, Duchess of Oświęcim, was probably laid to rest in one of the churches in Karniów. Other Racibórz princesses who were married found their final resting place in churches under the authority of their husbands, in Mazovia, Moravia, or Germany.[49]

In the case of names given to the princes of Racibórz, especially in relation to the Přemyslids, a cultivation of dynastic tradition can be observed. Mikołaj (Nicholas), Wacław (Wenceslaus), and Jan (John) appeared in virtually every generation. The reception of these names by families who entered into family ties with the Přemyslids (*e.g.*, the Danaborscy and Ostorogowie families) is also evident. Among daughters, the most popular name was Margaret. There are also patterns that can be observed among the wives of the Přemyslids, who introduced names characteristic of their families, such as Helena, Barbara, and Magdalena.[50] The Přemyslids of Racibórz rarely had nicknames or epithets; we know of only five such cases. Even during his lifetime, John II was referred to as Iron (*dictus ferreus*), Wenceslaus III was called Foolish (*fatuus*), while John III and John IV were referred to as Old and Young, respectively. The last of the Přemyslids on the Racibórz throne, Valentine, was given the nickname Garbaty (Hunchback) in historiography, reflecting his physical characteristics, although he was not referred to as such in contemporary sources.[51]

As I mentioned previously, the Přemyslids ruling in the Duchy of Racibórz used the titles of Dukes of Opava and Racibórz (*duces Oppavie et Ratiborie*), adding, depending on the documents issued, the designation of the lord of a given territory or town, *e.g.*, Rybnik, Karniów, Pszczyna (*dominus Ribnik, dominus Karniov, dominus Plsczina*). Representatives of the first three generations - Nicholas II, John I, John II the Iron - used large horse seals, referring to the style of royal seals in Bohemia. However, the symbolism of the acquired Duchy of Racibórz - the Piast eagle - already appeared on them. Ultimately, the fourth generation of the Přemyslids adopted the Piast eagle on an equal footing with their coat of arms, a vertically divided red and white shield. From that moment on, the seals featured the coat of arms of the Přemyslids - a shield divided into two parts - and the Piasts - the Piast

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48 K. Jasiński, *Rodowód Piastów* śląskich…, pp. 655-656; M. Starý, *Opavští Přemyslovci…*, pp. 131-132; J. Rajman, *Krakowskie konteksty Przemyślidów, książąt opawsko-raciborskich*, in: *Opavští Přemyslovci v dějinách a kultuře. Opawscy Przemyślidzi w dziejach i kulturze*, ed. B. Czechowicz, I. Matejko-Peterka, B. Kloch, J. Sperka, Opava-Katowice 2022, pp. 36, 46 (here, the author is more inclined to believe that Margaret was buried in Saint Catherine's Church in Kazimierz); J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 205, 278

49 J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 14, 104, 238, 248, 282, 336 (see list of sources).

50 *Ibidem*, pp. 14, 378-379 (genealogical chart).

51 *Ibidem*, pp. 14, 104, 238, 248, 282, 336 (see list of sources); *idem*, *Na pograniczu Czech i Polski…*, pp. 91-92.

eagle. On the one hand, this was a way of emphasizing the memory and tradition of their dynastic roots, and on the other, an adaptation of the symbolism of the Piast Duchy of Racibórz.[52]

As I mentioned earlier, the territory of the Duchy of Racibórz was divided between the dioceses of Kraków and Wrocław, while the land of Karniów was subject to the Bishopric of Olomouc. There was one collegiate church in the duchy, established in 1288 by Bishop Thomas II of Wrocław at the Chapel of Saint Thomas in Racibórz Castle, and then moved in 1416 to the parish church of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the town of Racibórz.[53] There were several monasteries in the Duchy of Racibórz (and the Karniów enclave) founded as early as the 13th century. These were: the Dominicans in Racibórz, the Cistercians in Rudy, the Franciscans in Wodzisław and Karniów, and the Holy Sepulchre Order in Racibórz; only the Dominican monastery in Racibórz was established at the beginning of the 14th century.[54] Historians associate John IV the Younger and his wife Magdalena of Opole with bringing the Observant Franciscans (Bernardines) to Racibórz in 1491. However, the monastery was destroyed in a fire in 1519 and was not rebuilt.[55]

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52 I. Pietrzyk, *Kancelaria i dokument Przemyślidów opawskich w XIV-XV wieku*, Katowice 2008, pp. 65-67, 103-114; *eadem*, *„Tomu na swiedomie peczet nassy tomto listu rozkazali ysme przywiesyti". O wzajemnej relacji pomiędzy pieczęciami a dokumentami Przemyślidów opawskich linii raciborskiej*, in: *Opavští Přemyslovci v dějinách a kultuře…*, pp. 184-196; I. Matejko-Peterka, *Tarcze, orły i bawole rogi. Wokół pieczęci opawskich Przemyślidów*, in: *Opavští Přemyslovci v dějinách a kultuře…*, pp. 149-181; J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 9, 68-69, 92-94, 125-128, 186, 211-212, 227, 240, 255-256, 288, 304, 342-344.

53 E. Chojecka, J. Gorzelik, I. Kozina, B. Szczypka-Gwiazda, *Sztuka Górnego Śląska od* średniowiecza *do końca XX wieku*, Katowice 2004, p. 39; G. Wawoczny, *Kaplica zamkowa w Raciborzu. Perła gotyku i pomnik dziejowy*, Racibórz 2016, pp. 47-73; J. Sperka, *Translacja i uposażenie kolegiaty w Raciborzu w 1416 roku. Przyczynek do dziejów Kościoła na Górnym* Śląsku *w* średniowieczu, "Średniowiecze Polskie i Powszechne" 14 (18) (2022), pp. 185-194.

54 S. Rybant, Średniowieczne *opactwo cystersów w Rudach*, Wrocław 1977; G. Wąs, *Zakony mendykanckie na* Śląsku *w* średniowieczu, in: *Materiały z konferencji „Kościół na* Śląsku *w okresie* średniowiecza", ed. K. Matwijowski, Wrocław 1998 (= "Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka" 53 (1998), 3-4), pp. 419-420, 422; A. Barciak, *Mendykanci w* średniowiecznym *Raciborzu*, in: *Klasztor w mieście* średniowiecznym *i nowożytnym*, ed. M. Derwich, A. Pobóg-Lenartowicz, Wrocław-Opole 2000, pp. 495-502; N. Mika, *Bożogrobcy raciborscy w* średniowieczu, in: *Klasztor w mieście…*, pp. 419-425; G. Kublin, *Proces fundacji dominikanów w Raciborzu*, "Studia Teologiczno-Historyczne Śląska Opolskiego" 36 (2016), 1, pp. 189-215; D. Prix, P. Kaniová, F. Kolař, *Gotický klášter minoritů v Krnově – novější zjištění*, in: *Krnovsko. Proměny regionálnich identit od středověku po současnost. Ziemia karniowska. Przemiany tożsamości regionalnej od* średniowiecza *do współczesności*, ed. H. Komárková, P. Kozák, Opava 2023, pp. 19-51.

55 G. Wąs, Śląskie *klasztory franciszkanów obserwantów w XV wieku*, in: *Studia z dziejów Europy Zachodniej i Śląska*, ed. R. Żerelik, Wrocław 1995, p. 100; *eadem*, *Klasztory franciszkańskie w miastach* śląskich *i górnołużyckich XIII-XVI wiek*, Wrocław 2000, pp. 120-121; B. Czechowicz, *Książęcy mecenat artystyczny na* Śląsku *u schyłku* średniowiecza, Warszawa 2005, pp. 437-438.

There were several towns in the area of the late medieval Duchy of Racibórz and Opava acquisitions. Large: Racibórz (approx. 3,000-3,200 inhabitants - larger than Opole with approx. 2,300 inhabitants), medium-sized: Karniów (approx. 2,000 inhabitants), Bruntal and Żory (approx. 1,300 inhabitants each), Wodzisław (approx. 800-1000 inhabitants), and small: Pszczyna (approx. 480 inhabitants), Rybnik (approx. 300 inhabitants), Mikołów (approx. 300 inhabitants), Bieruń (approx. 280 inhabitants) and Mysłowice (approx. 280 inhabitants). There were several ducal castles in the duchy: the significant ones in Racibórz, Cvilín near Karniów, Vartnov, Fürstenwalde (near Bruntal), the medium-sized ones in Rybnik and Pszczyna, as well as small ones in Wodzisław, Mikołów, and Żory.[56] The most important castle in Racibórz, built in the 13th century, was rebuilt in the 1470s and 1480s by John IV the Younger. Its interior was also thoroughly changed, as evidenced by the preserved stove tiles, whose iconography focuses on scenes from court life (*e.g.*, a couple of lovers under a tree) and knightly culture (*e.g.*, the image of Saint George); other tiles depict Saint Christopher, Saint Michael the Archangel, and Saint Catherine. Historians link the construction work to the arrival of the prince's wife, Magdalena of Opole, at the castle.[57]

The princes of Racibórz were also patrons and benefactors of the arts. At the end of the 13th century, Przemysław built Saint Thomas Chapel at the castle in Racibórz, which soon became the seat of the chapter. He also contributed to the reconstruction of the parish church of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Racibórz after the town fire in 1300, and to the continuation of the construction of the parish church of Saint Philip and Saint James in Żory according to the new model of the so-called reduced Gothic style. The prince also initiated the construction of the church and convent of the Dominican Sisters of the Holy Spirit in Racibórz. These foundations were completed by his son Leszek.[58] In turn, Nicholas II founded a hospital with a chapel dedicated to Saint Nicholas in his native Opava Duchy, and rebuilt the Church and Monastery of the Holy Spirit, which he chose as the ducal necropolis.

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[56] J. Rajman, *Pogranicze…*, pp. 123-124; J. Sperka, *Dzieje gospodarcze Górnego Śląska w* średniowieczu, in: *Historia Górnego Śląska. Polityka, gospodarka i kultura europejskiego regionu*, ed. J. Bahlcke, D. Gawrecki, R. Kaczmarek, Gliwice 2011, p. 301.

[57] B. Czechowicz, *Fundacje artystyczne książąt raciborskich u schyłku średniowiecza*, in: *Sztuka Górnego Śląska na przecięciu dróg europejskich i regionalnych. Materiały z V Seminarium Sztuki Górnośląskiej odbytego w dniach 14-15 listopada 1997 r. w Katowicach*, ed. E. Chojecka, Katowice 1999, pp. 15-18; *idem*, *Książęcy mecenat…*, pp. 427-430.

[58] M. Kutzner, *Studium nad kulturą artystyczną Raciborza*, in: *Szkice z dziejów Raciborza*, ed. M. Suboczowa, Katowice 1967, pp. 379-382; B. Nowak, *Najstarsze uposażenie dominikanek raciborskich*, "Studia i materiały z dziejów Śląska" 23 (1998), pp. 66-68; D. Prix, *Dlouhý presbytář kostela v Žárech. K sakrální architektuře moravsko-slezského pomezí kolem roku 1300*, Opava 2011, pp. 243-244, 278-285; J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 30-32, 42-45.

The prince also continued the construction of the Dominican monastery in Opava, founded by his father, participating in the erection and decoration of the basilica church of Saint Wacław.[59] Historians associate the patronage of John II Iron with the reconstruction of the church in Staré Město (near Bruntál) and the painting of its walls[60]. His wife, Helena (probably continuing her husband's work), led to the reconstruction of the castle in Pszczyna, and then founded a chapel dedicated to the Holy Cross in that town.[61] Their sons: Wenceslaus II founded a parish church in Jaworów near Lviv, and his brother Nicholas V most likely rebuilt the parish church of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Rybnik.[62] John IV, Wenceslaus's son, was probably - together with his wife Magdalena - the founder of the Gothic monstrance, commissioned during his lifetime but completed in 1495. This outstanding work of sacred art was intended for the Collegiate Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Racibórz and was made of silver and gilded. The ideological and iconographic concept was God's protection over the founder's family; in addition to the Risen Christ, the monument depicted the figure of Mary shown in rays of light, holding a chalice and a sceptre. Historians have not been able to determine conclusively where this work was made. Among the various opinions (Prague, Nysa, Wrocław, Basel), Bogusław Czechowicz's hypothesis, pointing to Krakow, has recently gained traction. The monstrance was lost in 1945 after the Soviet army entered the city.[63] The piety of the last princes of Racibórz, especially Magdalena and her sons, was probably also connected with the Racibórz gradual (a liturgical book containing Mass chants) dating from the beginning of the 16th century. Until 1945, it was kept in the library of the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Racibórz, but after

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59 D. Prix, *První zlatý věk města*, in: *Opava. Historie-kultura-lidé*, ed. K. Müller, R. Žáček, Praha 2006, pp. 352-354, 357, 364; J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 73-76.

60 D. Prix, *Gotická přestavba kostela Panny Marie ve Starém Meste u Bruntalu*, "Umění Art" 47 (1999), 1-2, pp. 10-14 (he dated the reconstruction to the years 1414-1419), while B. Czechowicz, *Książęcy mecenat…*, pp. 457-459 (for the period after 1419).

61 E. Zivier, *Geschichte des Fürstentums Pless…*, p. 89; L. Musioł, *Pszczyna. Monografia historyczna*, Katowice 1936, pp. 291-292; B. Czechowicz, *Książęcy mecenat…*, p. 432; J. Sperka, *Z Litwy na Górny Śląsk…*, p. 147.

62 J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 218, 193.

63 E. Hintze, K. Masner, *Goldschmiedearbeiten Schlesiens: eine Auswahl von Goldschmiedearbeiten schlesischer Herkunft oder aus schesischem Besitz*, Breslau 1911, p. 132; M. Kutzner, *Studium nad kulturą artystyczną Raciborza…*, p. 390; E. Ćwiklińska, *Późnogotyckie kustodium z Raciborza a śląskie tworzywa szlachetne*, in: *Między Wrocławiem a Krakowem. Sztuka gotycka na Górnym Śląsku*, Katowice 1995, pp. 57-72; P. Newerla, *Raciborska monstrancja z 1495 roku*, "Ziemia Raciborska" (2006), pp. 57-69; B. Czechowicz, *Fundacje artystyczne książąt raciborskich…*, s. 24-30; *idem*, *Książęcy mecenat…*, s. 432-435; *idem*, *Idea i państwo. Korona Królestwa Czech w latach 1457-1547*, vol. 4, *Król i stany*, part 2, *Książęta i szlachta, Książęta i hrabiowie*, Wrocław 2020, pp. 54-55; the remaining literature on the subject in these works.

the war it went missing; recently, however, two pages of the work have been recovered. Although the gradual is associated with the Dominicans, who initiated the work, the princely coats of arms accompanying its miniatures indicate a connection with the Racibórz dynasty.[64] However, the museum in Racibórz, located in a former Dominican convent, houses the tombstone of John IV and Magdalena, which is, unfortunately, significantly damaged. It is a tombstone made of gray marble. It was funded around 1495 by Duchess Magdalena and her sons, Nicholas VI, John, and Valentine.[65]

In summary, it should be noted that the Duchy of Racibórz in the late Middle Ages was a model example of a multicultural duchy, where Polish influences mixed with Czech and German ones. A striking example of this ethnic mosaic was the most important temple in Racibórz, the parish church of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Undoubtedly dominated by the German element, from the first half of the 15th century it had a Polish Chapel, supported by generous donations from successive princes of Racibórz.[66] The knights of the duchy, on the other hand, were former Polish knights, mixed with Czech and German immigrants. They were not very wealthy, with only small allodial estates, which were occasionally enlarged by ducal grants, given to them under feudal law. On the other hand, the ruling princes, especially the Opava (Czech) Přemyslids, were rulers who in the 15th century were closer to the royal court in Krakow than in Prague. These sympathies were undoubtedly the result not only of good political relations, but also of family ties with King Władysław Jagiełło and the Polish elite. They influenced the attitude of the Přemyslids of Racibórz towards Poland, especially during the war for the Bohemian crown after the death of King George of Poděbrady. However, the weak support given to the Racibórz supporters (Wenceslaus III and John III the Elder) - as I mentioned before - turned against them, and the Duchy of Racibórz was not legally bound to the Kingdom of Poland and remained within the borders of the Czech Crown.[67]

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64 M. Kutzner, *Studium nad kulturą artystyczną Raciborza…*, p. 388; B. Czechowicz, *Książęcy mecenat…*, pp. 438-439; *idem*, *„Mesco dux et fundator vocatus qui hunc librim tibi christe". Kilka uwag o późnogotyckim graduale z klasztoru Dominikanów w Raciborzu*, in: *Św. Jacek Odrowąż i dominikanie na Śląsku*, ed. A. Barciak, Katowice 2008, pp. 315-320.

65 B. Czechowicz, *Późnogotycki nagrobek pary książęcej w dawnym kościele dominikanek w Raciborzu*, "Opolski Rocznik Muzealny" 10 (1992), pp. 31-54; *idem*, *Nagrobki późnogotyckie na* Śląsku, Wrocław 2003, pp. 157-160, fig. 47; *idem*, *Książęcy mecenat…*, pp. 435-437.

66 A. Weltzel, *Geschichte der Stadt Ratibor*, Ratibor 1861, pp. 338-339, 351-352; J. Sperka, *Książęta i księżne…*, pp. 193, 309, 339; *idem*, *Na pograniczu Czech i Polski…*, pp. 98-99.

67 J. Sperka, *Raciborscy sojusznicy Kazimierza Jagiellończyka. Przyczynek do relacji między książętami górnośląskimi a Królestwem Polskim w 2 połowie XV w.*, in: *Hortus Mediaevalis. Studia ofiarowane Profesorowi Wojciechowi Fałkowskiemu w siedemdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin*, ed. W. Długokęcki, K. Jasiński, S. Rosik, Wrocław 2022, pp. 313-329; *idem*, *Na pograniczu Czech i Polski…*, pp. 98-99.

Abstract

This article outlines the history of the Duchy of Racibórz in the late Middle Ages, its origins, area, and territorial changes from the end of the 13th century (when it was established as a result of the disintegration of the Duchy of Opole) to the beginning of the 16th century. It was one of the duchies located in Upper Silesia, a kind of link between the Kingdom of Poland and the Kingdom of Bohemia. It also analyses the princes and princesses of Racibórz from the Piast and Přemyslid dynasties through the prism of genealogical connections, political and economic achievements, foundations, and social and biological conditions (including life expectancy).

Keywords: Piasts, Opava Přemyslids, Racibórz, Opava, dynastic genealogy, Upper Silesia, Silesian duchies, fragmentation of Poland

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Hamburg im 15. Jahrhundert nach der Chronik Adam Tratzigers (und das Ms. Catharinen 74)

Aus Hamburg haben sich aus dem 15. Jahrhundert nur kleinere historiographische Werke erhalten, oft als Fragmente oder zu einzelnen Ereignissen wie der Bericht des Bürgermeisters Herman Langenbek über den Aufstand des Jahres 1483.[1] Eine erste Gesamtgeschichte Hamburgs von der Karolingerzeit bis zur Reformation stammt von Bernd Gyseke, einem Schreiber bei der Bierprobe in Hamburg, aus den frühen 1540er Jahren.[2] Ein Manuskript dieser Chronik verbrannte 1842 in der Bibliothek des Staatsarchivs Hamburg, doch konnte Johann Martin Lappenberg ein später entdecktes Kopenhagener Manuskript für die erste Edition nutzen. Weil sich Gyseke allerdings für die Zeit vor 1483 vor allem auf die *Chronik der nordelbischen Sassen, der Dietmarschen, Stormarn unde Holsten* stützt,[3] verbunden mit Ausschnitten aus der *Wandalia* des Hamburger Syndikus und Domherrn Albert Krantz,[4] beschränkte sich

[1] Vgl. die Texte in: *Hamburgische Chroniken in niedersächsischer Sprache*, hg. v. J.M. Lappenberg, Hamburg 1861; Langenbeks Bericht ebd., S. 340–375. – Eine etwas andere Fassung sollte parallel als Jürgen Sarnowsky, *Civic Insurrection in 15th Century Hamburg – the Perspective of Adam Tratziger's Chronicle*, in der Festschrift für Jarosław Wenta erscheinen.

[2] Zu ihm s. die Einleitung in *Hamburgische Chroniken…*, S. XLV–XLIX; der Text ist in verkürzter Form ediert ebd., S. 1–192.

[3] Ediert als: *Die Chronik der nordelbischen Sassen*, hg. v. J.M. Lappenberg, Quellensammlung der Schleswig-Holstein-Lauenburgischen Gesellschaft für Vaterländische Geschichte 3, Kiel 1865.

[4] Zu ihm s. J. Sarnowsky, Art. *Krantz, Albert*, in: *Hanselexikon*, URL: https://www.hansischergeschichtsverein.de/lexikon?buchstabe=k#anzeige (Einsicht 15/1/2024); S. Rau, Art. *Krantz, Albert*, in: *Hamburgische Biografie. Personenlexikon*, Bd. 1, hg. v. F. Kopitzsch, D. Brietzke, Hamburg 2001, S. 167–168; die einzige Edition ist immer noch: Albert Krantz, *Wandalia*, Coloniae 1519.

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Lappenberg in seiner Ausgabe für die Jahre 840 bis 1483 auf wenige, nicht chronologisch geordnete Auszüge,[5] gefolgt von Listen von Ratsherren und Bürgermeistern.

Bernd Gyseke hatte möglicherweise Mitautoren. Ein Claus Krüger nennt sich, in einem Nachtrag, in den Nachrichten zu 1534-1536 auf der ersten Seite der Handschrift, und Stephan Kempe, Autor eines Berichts über die Anfänge der Reformation in Hamburg,[6] könnte auch an Gysekes Chronik mitgewirkt haben. Claus Krüger war wahrscheinlich der spätere Oberalte des St. Katharinen-Kirchspiels (1554-1568), Stephan Kempe war Prediger an der Katharinenkirche.[7] Gysekes enge Beziehungen zum Katharinen-Kirchspiel führten offenbar nicht dazu, dass seine Chronik dort erhalten blieb; sie ist jedenfalls unter den acht historiographischen Handschriften des Bestands nicht vertreten. Dort findet sich hingegen das nächste größere Werk zur Hamburger Geschichte, die Chronik Adam Tratzigers, als Ms. Catharinen 74.[8]

Adam Tratziger, in Nürnberg geboren, studierte Recht an der Universität Leipzig, hielt Vorlesungen über Zivilrecht in Frankfurt an der Oder und schloss dort als Doktor beider Rechte ab. Schon 1546 wurde er Professor an der Rostocker Universität und stand gleichzeitig im Dienst der städtischen Autoritäten. Schließlich übernahm er 1553 die Aufgaben eines zweiten Syndikus in Hamburg und stieg 1555 zum ersten Syndikus auf. Schon 1558 wechselte er dann in die Dienste des Herzogs von Holstein.[9] Tratziger konnte für sein Werk auf den Dokumenten in der städtischen Kanzlei aufbauen, in der er tätig war. Er zog aber ebenso ältere historiographische Werke wie die von Albert Krantz oder die dem Franziskaner-Lesemeister Detmar zugeschriebene lübische Chronik heran. Tratziger begann mit einigen Überlegungen zum Hamburger Gebiet in der Zeit der Römer, seine eigentliche Darstellung setzt aber wie bei Gyseke mit der Karolingerzeit ein und ist bis in die Zeit Karls V. geführt.

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[5] *Hamburgische Chroniken*…, S. 1–9; hier bedürfte es einer vollständigen Edition.

[6] Ediert ebd., S. 479–592.

[7] Dazu die Hinweise von Lappenberg, ebd., s. XLVII.

[8] Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg, Cod. Catharinen 74 [künftig. Cath. 74], in Pergament über Pappe eingebundener Papierband von i, 177 Blättern, mit einem ExLibris von St. Catharinen, Ränder etwas bestoßen, Schnitt nachgedunkelt, Einband etwas beschädigt; mehrere Hände, die zum Teil mitten im Text wechseln. – Die Edition stammt wiederum von Lappenberg: *Adam Tratzigers Hamburgische Chronik*, hg. v. J.M. Lappenberg, Hamburg 1865.

[9] Zu seiner Biographie s. W. Becker, Art. *Tratziger, Adam*, in: *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 38 (1894), S. 501–504, online: https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd124644783.html#adbcontent (Einsicht 15/1/2024); S. Rau, Art. *Krantz, Albert*, in: *Hamburgische Biografie*…, S. 315–316; dies., *Hamburg, die Hanse und Nordeuropa in der Chronik Adam Tratzigers. Zur Rolle der Hanse in der Geschichtsschreibung der Hansestädte*, in: *Das Bild der Hanse in der städtischen Geschichtsschreibung des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit*, hg. v. V. Henn, J. Sarnowsky, Trier 2010 (= Hansische Studien 20), S. 24.

Susanne Rau hat die These vertreten, dass Tratzigers Chronik wesentlich in Eile geschrieben sei.[10] Darauf deutet auch das abrupte Ende der Darstellung im Jahr 1555. Die letzten Worte des Textes lauten (nach MS. Catharinen 74): *[…] Also blieb die sache in ruehe bestehen bisz aufs geentiktes sieben und funffstigeste jhar, in welchen ich diese jahrbucher durch gnedige vorleihunge des ewigen almechtigen Gottes beschlossen. Der vorley uns hinfurthan zeitlich unnde ewiglich seine genade und segen. Amen.*[11] Danach beendete Tratziger sein Werk noch während seiner Arbeit als Syndikus in Hamburg. Geht man davon aus, dass er erst nach Antritt seiner ersten Stelle in Hamburg mit dem Schreiben begann, entstand die Chronik in weniger als vier Jahren. Sie erfreute sich bald hoher Beliebtheit, bis heute haben sich rund hundert Abschriften erhalten.

In den meisten Manuskripten findet sich nach der zitierten Stelle noch eine genaue Datierung des Endes der Arbeit an der Chronik in lateinischer Sprache: *Absolutum est hoc opus Hamburgi Anno MDCLVII die XXIX Decembris*.[12] Diese Ergänzung fehlt – wie bei anderen Handschriften – im Ms. Catharinen 74, das aber sonst nur geringe Unterschiede zur von Johann Martin Lappenberg edierten Fassung aufweist. Der Textbestand ist weitgehend identisch, ebenso die Einteilung in Kapitel. Deutlich anders sind nur die Schreibweisen, zumal Lappenberg sie stark normiert hat;[13] die Zitate werden daher hier nach Ms. Catharinen 74 wiedergegeben. Die Manuskriptfassung hat zudem gelegentlich kleinere Auslassungen, teilweise Abweichungen bei Datierungen wie zu 1449/50.[14] Das könnte auf Fehler des Schreibers zurückgehen, könnte aber auch eine etwas andere Manuskripttradition nahelegen.

Trotz der geringen Unterschiede soll daher in diesem Beitrag ein Vergleich zwischen der Lappenbergischen Edition der Tratziger Chronik und dem Ms. Catharinen 74 versucht werden, und zwar am Beispiel der Geschichte Hamburgs im 15. Jahrhundert. Die innere Entwicklung der Stadt war vor allem durch die drei großen Aufstände der Jahre 1410, 1458 und

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[10] So S. Rau, *Hamburg…*, S. 24.

[11] Cath. 74, fol. 175v; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 297.

[12] *Tratzigers Chronik…*, ebd.

[13] Dazu s. die Einleitung, *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. LXXX: „Ueber die Sprache Tratzigers habe ich unter S. 333 einige Bemerkungen gemacht. Ich bin ihr möglichst gefolgt, wenn ich gleich die zahllosen Ungleichartigkeiten des Schreibers zu vermeiden mich bestrebt habe. Die Verdopplung derselben Consonanten, wie sie in den Handschriften nicht selten vorkommt, und ähnliche unnöthige Ueberladungen der Schreibung habe ich weggeschnitten, was jedoch aus der oben erwähnten Ursache nicht ganz gleichmäßig konnte durchgeführt werden." – Lappenberg stützte sich vor allem auf die Handschrift der Stadtbibliothek in Lüneburg (443 S. und genealogische Tafeln), in der er eigenhändige Korrekturen Tratzigers nachweisen konnte, ebd., S. LXIV und S. LXXIX–LXXX.

[14] So sind die erneuten Anfänge von Seeräuberei aus Ostfriesland in der Edition auf 1450 datiert, *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 183, im Manuskript auf 1449, Cath. 74, fol. 107v.

1483 geprägt.[15] Die Aufstände hatten verschiedene Ursachen und Träger, aber es gab zumindest ein gemeinsames Element: Alle drei Aufstände wurden durch eine Übereinkunft zwischen dem Rat und den Aufständischen beendet, durch einen „Rezess".

Der Ausgleich von 1410 zwischen Bürgermeistern, Ratsherren und Aufrührern stieß bei den anderen Hansestädten auf wenig Begeisterung. Er erschien als eine Schwächung oder sogar Entmachtung des Rats, die, wie bei Braunschweig nach 1374, sogar zum (zeitweiligen) Ausschluss aus der Hanse führen konnte. Hamburg profitierte 1410 davon, dass Lübeck seit 1408 durch seine „Verfassungskrise", den Konflikt zwischen Altem und Neuem Rat,[16] nicht handlungsfähig war und sich keine klare Stellvertretung abzeichnete. 1416 kam es jedoch zu einer Einigung, und die Hansestädte berieten über Maßnahmen gegen Aufrührer und die von Aufständen geprägten Städte, so dass Hamburg den ersten Rezess 1417 widerrufen musste.[17] Der Rezess von 1410 wurde jedoch im Rezess von 1458 erneuert, und die Rezesse wurden in der Folge Teil der städtischen Verfassung. Der „lange Rezess" von 1529 markierte die Einführung der Reformation in Hamburg.[18] Der fried-

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[15] Zu Hamburg im Spätmittelalter s. H. Reincke, *Hamburg am Vorabend der Reformation. Aus dem Nachlaß*, hg. v. E. von Lehe, Hamburg 1966 (= Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte Hamburgs 8); P. Gabrielsson, *Die Zeit der Hanse 1300–1517*, in: *Hamburg. Geschichte der Stadt und ihrer Bewohner*, hg. v. W. Jochmann, H.-D. Loose, Bd. 1: *Von den Anfängen bis zur Reichsgründung*, Hamburg 1982, S. 101–190; R. Postel, *Die Reformation in Hamburg: 1517–1528*, Gütersloh 1986, hier bes. S. 42–50; J. Sarnowsky, *Die politische Entwicklung und die sozialen Strukturen Hamburgs im Spätmittelalter*, in: *Die Kunst des Mittelalters in Hamburg, Aufsätze zur Kulturgeschichte*, hg. v. V. Plagemann, Hamburg 1999, S. 97–108 und 343–44. – Für die Aufstände und „Rezesse" s. K. Koppmann, *Der erste hamburgische Rezeß, vereinbart im Jahre 1410, wieder aufgehoben im Jahre 1417*, „Hansische Geschichtsblätter" 6 (1887), S. 7–28; H. Feldtmann, *Der zweite Rezeß vom Jahre 1458*, „Zeitschrift des Vereins für Hamburgische Geschichte" 27 (1926), S. 141–196 (mit Edition); H. Raape, *Der Hamburger Aufstand im Jahre 1483*, „Zeitschrift des Vereins für Hamburgische Geschichte" 45 (1959), S. 1–64; K.-J. Lorenzen-Schmidt, *Von „bösen" und „frommen" Leuten. Der Hamburger Aufstand von 1483*, in: *Das andere Hamburg: freiheitliche Bestrebungen in der Hansestadt seit dem Spätmittelalter*, hg. v. J. Berlin, Köln 1981, S. 24–35; G. Theuerkauf, *Hamburg 1483 und 1685. Zwei Aufstände im sozialgeschichtlichen Vergleich*, in: *Das alte Hamburg (1500–1848/49)*, hg. v. A. Herzig, Hamburg 1989 (= Hamburger Beiträge zur Öffentlichen Wissenschaft 5), S. 73–96.

[16] Vgl. R. Ettlin, *Die lübische Verfassungskrise (1408–1416) im Spiegel der Chronistik*, in: *Wahrnehmung und Realität, Vorstellungswelten des 12. bis 17. Jahrhunderts*, hg. v. J. Sarnowsky, Göttingen 2018 (= Nova Mediaevalia, Quellen und Studien zum europäischen Mittelalter 17), S. 69–84; E. Hoffmann, *Lübeck im Hoch- und Spätmittelalter: Die große Zeit Lübecks*, in: *Lübeckische Geschichte*, hg. v. A. Grassmann, Lübeck 2008 [4. Aufl.], S. 81–328; R.A. Rotz, *The Lubeck Uprising of 1408, and the Decline of the Hanseatic League*, „Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society" 121 (1977), 1, S. 1–45; C. Wehrmann, *Der Aufstand in Lübeck bis zur Rückkehr des alten Raths 1408–1416*, „Hansische Geschichtsblätter" (1878/1879), S. 103–56.

[17] K. Koppmann, *Der erste hamburgische Rezeß…*, S. 24–28.

[18] Vgl. u.a. R. Postel, *Die Reformation…*, S. 15, 298; H.W. Eckardt, *460 Jahre „Langer Rezeß": 1529 Beginn der bürgerlichen Mitregierung in Hamburg*, „Hamburg macht Schule" 1 (1989), 4, S. 28–29.

liche Ausgang der Aufstände war nicht absehbar, für die städtische Oberschicht markierten sie zweifellos tiefe Einschnitte. Es stellt sich die Frage, wie Tratziger, der als Syndikus dazu gehörte, sich zu den Ereignissen des 15. Jahrhunderts positionierte und ob sich im Ms. Catharinen 74 Abweichungen zum Bild in der edierten Version ergeben. Das soll anhand der Berichte über die drei Aufstände untersucht werden.

Der Aufstand von 1410

Tratziger stellt den ersten Aufstand in den Kontext verschiedener Konflikte. Nach dem Beginn der lübischen „Verfassungskrise" und einem Vermittlungsversuch durch den Hamburger Rat, den er auf Bitten König Ruprechts unternommen habe, schildert er Unruhen in Rostock und Wismar sowie Kämpfe in Ostfriesland.[19] Im April 1410 bestimmte der Hansetag in Hamburg, dass der Hamburger Rat Lübeck während der „Verfassungskrise" vertreten sollte.[20] Kurz danach begannen die Unruhen.

Auslöser war die Klage Herzog Johanns III. von Sachsen-Lauenburg beim Rat, einer der Hamburger Bürger, Heine Brant, hätte ihn angegriffen und beleidigt, wohl aufgrund von Schulden des Herzogs. In der Folge wurde Heine Brant vom Rat vorgeladen, mit dem Brief des Herzogs konfrontiert und schließlich im *Winserturm*, einem der Stadttürme Hamburgs, inhaftiert.[21] Nach Tratziger entstand dadurch zwischen dem Rat und den Bürgern ein *grosser wieder wille*. Die Bürger hätten, so stellt er es dar, darauf verwiesen, dass der Rat ihnen schon 1404[22] – das Manuskript hat fälschlich 1406 – das Recht zugestanden hätte, dass kein Bürger ohne gerichtliches Verfahren inhaftiert werden dürfe (*keinen burger ohne ordentliche irkentnusse des rechtens mit gefengnusse zu beschweren*) – obwohl sich vor dem dafür relevanten ersten Absatz des Rezesses von 1410 kein Beleg für dieses Privileg findet.[23] Die Bürger sahen nach Tratziger folglich in der Inhaftierung Brants einen Bruch der Versprechen des Rats und wandten sich an den ältesten Bürgermeister,

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[19] Cath. 74, fol. 75v–76r; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 127–128 (1409).

[20] S. die Dokumente in *Die Recesse und andere Akten der Hansetage*, 1. Abt.: 1256–1430, hg. v. K. Koppmann, Bd. 5, Leipzig 1880, S. 545–555.

[21] Cath. 74, fol. 76r–v; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 129; sein Bericht wurde oft für die neueren Darstellungen des Aufstands von 1410 herangezogen.

[22] Cath. 74, fol. 76v, hat hier fälschlich 1406.

[23] Alte Ausgabe in J.Ch. Lünig, *Das Teutsche Reichs-Archiv*, Bd. 14, *Partis Specialis Continuatio* IV, 2, Leipzig 1714, S. 942–946, hier S. 943; eine neuere deutsche Übersetzung in: R. Nehlsen, *Hamburgische Geschichte nach Quellen und Urkunden*, Bd. 1, Hamburg 1897, S. 171–76, hier S. 171 (ohne Nachweise); Tratziger erwähnt dieses Privileg schon in seinem Bericht zu 1404, Cath. 74, fol. 72v; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 122 (mit dem Hinweis, dies sei die Ursache des Aufstands von 1410 gewesen); kritisch dazu K. Koppmann, *Der erste hamburgische Rezeß…*, S. 7–8.

Kerstian Miles. Dieser berief den Rat ein, um über die Forderung nach Freilassung Brants zu beraten. Dieser wurde aus dem Turm geholt und musste sich erneut dem Rat sowie den Bürgern stellen. Schließlich wurde er bis zu einer gerichtlichen Entscheidung freigelassen.

Am nächsten Tag organisierten sich die Bürger nach dem Vorbild Lübecks nach den vier Kirchspielen. Aus St. Petri, St. Nikolai, St. Jakobi und St. Katharinen wurden jeweils 15 der angesehensten Bürger ausgewählt, aus diesen wurde ein Rat der 60 gebildet. Tratziger bietet dazu eine Liste der von den Kirchspielen gewählten Vertreter, ebenso eine Übersicht über die Bürgermeister und Ratsherren des Jahres 1410.[24] Die 60 seien noch am selben Tag zum Rat gegangen. Dort sei der Brief des Herzogs verlesen worden, und man habe Zeugen angehört, um die Vorwürfe zu klären. Letztlich waren es dann die Bürger, die entschieden, dass die Vorwürfe, die zur Verhaftung Heine Brants geführt hatten, ungerechtfertigt waren. Die Entscheidung gegen ihn wurde daher zurückgenommen.

Wie in Lübeck löste sich der Rat der 60 nach dem ersten Erfolg aber nicht auf. Vielmehr legte man dem Rat nun eine Liste von Forderungen vor, die er erfüllen sollte. Tratziger sieht diese Entwicklung aus seiner späteren Perspektive kritisch. Einige der Artikel seien angenehm und nützlich gewesen (in der Edition: „gerechtfertigt und nützlich"), andere aber belastend und nachteilig (*unther denen waehren etliche gefellig und nutzlich, eines theils aber beschwerlich und nachteyligk*).[25] Am schädlichsten war nach Tratziger die Forderung, die Mitglieder des Alten Rats von Lübeck, die nach 1408 mit ihren Familien in Hamburg Zuflucht gefunden hatten, aus der Stadt und ihrem Territorium auszuweisen. Künftig sollte Hamburg auch den Neuen Rat Lübecks unterstützen. Tratziger scheint anzudeuten, dass der Hamburger Rat infolge der daraufhin getroffenen Entscheidung durch den römischen König Ruprecht unter Reichsacht gestellt wurde – wie sie im Januar 1410 über den Neuen Rat zu Lübeck verhängt wurde[26] –, aber der Rat hätte der Forderung aus Angst zugestimmt. Auch habe man gefordert, den Ratsherrn Gert Quickborn, der sich den Aufständischen widersetzt hatte, aus dem Rat auszuschließen – diese Forderung findet sich allerdings nicht in den 20 Artikeln des Rezesses. Tratziger geht auch auf die anderem Artikel des Rezesses nicht weiter ein, die erhebliche Einschränkungen für den Rat beinhalteten. So sollte der Rat der 60 über Klagen gegen den Rat entscheiden, und der Rat

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24 Cath. 74, fol. 77r–v; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 130–32; vgl. dazu die Bemerkungen Lappenbergs, S. 130, Anm. 2; die gleichen Listen auch in der Edition des Rezesses bei J.Ch. Lünig, *Das Teutsche Reichs-Archiv…*, S. 942–43.

25 Cath. 74, fol. 78r; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 133; anstelle des *gefellig* der Handschrift bietet die Edition *billig*, d.h., „angenehm" ist durch „gerechtfertigt" ersetzt.

26 R. Ettlin, *Die lübische Verfassungskrise…*, S. 71.

brauchte die Zustimmung der Bürger, wenn er Krieg führen, Steuern erheben oder auf Rechte der Stadt verzichten wollte. Kein Bürger sollte nicht ohne entsprechendes Urteil inhaftiert werden, und der Rat sollte die Bürger gegen alle Ansprüche oder Anklagen von außen verteidigen.[27]

Für die folgenden Jahre berichtet Tratziger vor allem über allgemeine Ereignisse, besonders über die Teilnahme Hamburgs an den hansischen Tagfahrten und über die Versuche, die „lübische Verfassungskrise" zu beenden. So sandte Hamburg 1412 drei Ratssendeboten zum Hansetag nach Lüneburg, auf dem der Konflikt zwischen Altem und Neuem ein zentrales Thema war, wobei sich Hamburg für den Neuen Rat einsetzte. Tratziger berichtet, Rat und Bürger Hamburgs hätten zudem einen Brief an die Gemeinde Lüneburgs geschickt, in dem sie unter anderem den Verdacht äußerten, die Hansestädte würden die Stadt Lübeck verderben wollen (*wie der gemeinen Ansehe stedten furnehemen wehre, die stadt Lubegk zu vorderben*).[28] Daraufhin entsandte der Hansetag zwei Delegierte, Albrecht Dodorp aus Danzig und Claws Voge aus Stralsund, nach Hamburg. Sie hatten nach Tratziger den Auftrag, nachzufragen, ob Hamburg sich weiterhin an Ehre und Recht halten, in der Hanse bleiben und den Auftrag für seine Sendeboten, die zwischendurch aus Lüneburg abgezogen waren, erneuern wolle. Auch wurde Hamburg gefragt, ob es sich zum Schaden der Hanse mit anderen Städte verbunden hätte. Hamburg hätte dies verneint, aber die ersten drei Fragen bejaht.[29] Tratziger vermerkt lapidar, die Hamburger hätten sich danach mit ihrer Unterstützung des Neuen Rats von Lübeck zurückgehalten (*von der zeit an theten sich die von Hamburgh des newen rates und der gemeine zu Luebegk gemeinschafft etwes meszigen*).[30]

Dennoch ging Hamburg 1414 noch einmal ein enges Bündnis mit dem Neuen Rat ein, auf drei Jahre, und versprach den Lübeckern Unterstützung.[31] Tratziger berichtet danach von der letzten Phase der „Verfassungskrise". Im Juni 1416 kehrte der Alte Rat nach Lübeck zurück. Nach Tratziger trug der Hamburger Bürgermeister Johan Luneborg öffentlich die Vereinbarung

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[27] Die 20 Artikel in J.Ch. Lünig, *Das Teutsche Reichs-Archiv…*, S. 942–46; R. Nehlsen, *Hamburgische Geschichte…*, S. 171–76.

[28] Cath. 74, fol. 80r–v; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 137. Der Brief von vier Bürgern im Namen der Gemeinde von Hamburg betrifft vor allem einen Streit zwischen dem Lüneburger Bürger Rolef Munter und dem früheren Münzmeister von Hamburg, Werner Schulenburg, weniger die Situation in Lübeck, *Die Recesse und anderen Akten der Hansetage*, Abt. 1: 1256–1430, Bd. 6, hg. v. K. Koppmann, Leipzig 1889, 72, S. 74–75; cf. K. Koppmann, *Der erste hamburgische Rezeß…*, S. 22–23.

[29] Tratziger folgt wahrscheinlich dem Bericht im Rezess des Lüneburger Hansetags, vgl. *Die Recesse und anderen Akten…*, Bd. 1, 6, 68B, §§18–19, S. 67–68.

[30] Cath. 74, fol. 81r; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 138.

[31] S. *Die Recesse und anderen Akten …*, Abt. 1, Bd. 6, 139, S. 117, datiert auf den 9.–14. April 1415.

zwischen den Parteien vor.[32] Tratziger verschweigt jedoch, dass Hamburg im Folgenden nur knapp an einer Verhansung vorbeikam. Nach dem Ende der „Verfassungskrise" und einem Waffenstillstand im Konflikt zwischen Holstein und König Erik von Dänemark[33] – die Ereignisse bis zum Erfolg Lübecks und Hamburgs gegen die Herzöge von Sachsen-Lauenburg 1420 fehlen, wohl aus Versehen, im Ms. Catharinen 74 – konnten sich die Hansestädte wieder auf die inneren Probleme konzentrieren. Der Hamburger Rezess von 1410 hatte in der Sicht der anderen Hansestädte den Rat geschwächt. Im Dezember 1417 kamen Vertreter der Städte nach Hamburg, um die volle Wiederherstellung der Rechte des Rats zu fordern. Schließlich wurde der Rezess von 1410 aufgehoben, Gert Quickborn kehrte in den Rat zurück.[34] Tratzigers Schweigen über das Ende des ersten Rezesses – auch in der edierten Fassung – wird wohl kein Zufall sein, denn er hatte sicher Zugang zur Überlieferung über die Verhandlungen von 1417. Er wollte möglicherweise die 1458 erneuerten Artikel nicht zu sehr ins schlechte Licht rücken.

Der Aufstand von 1458

Während der Aufstand von 1410 vor allem eine Sache der einflussreicheren Bürger gewesen war, beteiligten sich 1458 auch Handwerker. Als der Hamburger Rat im Konflikt zwischen der Stadt Lüneburg und den geistlichen Eigentümern vermitteln wollte,[35] warfen ihm die Bürger vor, ihre Interessen nicht hinreichend berücksichtigt zu haben. Auf einer Versammlung der Ämter in St. Nikolai im Herbst 1458 verlangten die Handwerker eine Erneuerung des Rezesses von 1410. Für eine kurze Zeit wurden vier Bürger, darunter zwei der Anführer des Aufstands, Mitglieder des Rats. Schließlich vermittelten die Kaufleute zwischen dem Rat und den Bürgern. Ein zweiter, noch längerer Rezess wurde verabschiedet. Die Bürger erhielten grundlegende Rechte, die Steuern auf Grundbesitz wurden begrenzt und die Bürger

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32 Cath. 74, fol. 83r; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 142; teilweise basierend auf dem Bericht von Hermann Korner, vgl. *Die Chronica Novella des Hermann Korner*, hg. v. J. Schwalm, Göttingen 1895, S. 119, 395–397.

33 Auch in *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 146–47. – Cath. 74, fol. 85v–86r, hat hier eine größere Auslassung: Es fehlen die Berichte über den Waffenstillstand von 1417, über den Hansetag von 1418 sowie über den Erfolg Lübecks und Hamburgs gegen den Herzog von Sachsen-Lauenburg; der Text setzt erst wieder mit der Fürstenversammlung in Perleberg 1420 ein, die den Friedensschluss zwischen den Städten und dem Herzog vermittelte.

34 Zu den Ereignissen s. *Die Recesse und anderen Akten…*, Abt. 1, Bd. 6, 509, §§1–13, 34–38, S. 496–98, 501; K. Koppmann, *Der erste hamburgische Rezeß…*, S. 24–28.

35 Dazu s. B.-U. Hergemöller, *„Pfaffenkriege" im spätmittelalterlichen Hanseraum*, 2 Bde., Köln-Wien 1988, Bd. 1, hier S. 112–193; S. Springensguth, *Tod im Turm. Die Rolle persönlicher und sozialer Beziehungen in Konflikten des Mittelalters am Beispiel des Lüneburger Prälatenkriegs*, Godesberg 2007.

sollten an wichtigen politischen Entscheidungen beteiligt werden, während der Rat weiterhin für die Kontrolle der Ämter und die Kommunikation zwischen den Bürgern und den Kirchspielen zuständig war.[36]

Tratziger erwähnt diesen Aufstand mit keinem Wort, auch im Ms. Catharinen 74 fehlt jeder Hinweis. Zu 1458 wird vielmehr nur über einen Konflikt mit dem Land Hadeln berichtet, das die Herzöge von Sachsen-Lauenburg an Hamburg verpfändet hatten. Dabei ging es um die Abgaben Hadelns an Hamburg. Schließlich gelang es Herzog Adolf VIII. von Schleswig, einen Ausgleich zu finden.[37] Über den Aufstand von 1458 findet sich allerdings ebenfalls nichts in den Rezessen der Hansetage oder der Regionaltage der wendischen Städte,[38] so dass Tratziger darauf nicht zurückgreifen konnte. Andererseits sollten ihm als Syndikus zumindest die Texte der Rezesse zugänglich gewesen sein.[39] Die Auslassung des Aufstands könnte sich aus der relativen Eile erklären, in der die Chronik entstand; vielleicht erfolgte sie auch absichtlich, um inneren Unruhen nicht zu breiten Raum zu geben.

Der Aufstand von 1483

Tratziger widmet dagegen dem Aufstand von 1483 eine ausführlichere Darstellung, vor allem gestützt auf den Bericht von Albert Krantz in seinen *Wandalia*.[40] Wie Krantz beginnt er mit der Beobachtung, dass der Aufstand vor allem aufgrund des Exports von Getreide nach Island entstand, von dem einige besonders profitierten, während die armen Leute unter Hunger und Not litten. Tratziger spricht – anders als vorher – ausdrücklich von einer *gefehrliche[n] enporung zu Hamburg*.[41] Wie Krantz berichtet er aber zuerst vom

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[36] J. Sarnowsky, *Die politische Entwicklung…*, S. 105; Text des Rezesses in H. Feldtmann, *Der zweite Rezeß…*, S. 152–163.

[37] Cath. 74, fol. 110v–111r; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 189–190; vgl. J.M. Lappenberg, *Ueber ältere Geschichte und Rechte des Landes Hadeln*, Lüneburg 1829, S. 27, 30, 32, 49–55.

[38] Es gibt zumindest keinen Hinweis darauf in *Hanserecesse*, Abt. 2: 1431–1476, Bd. 4, hg. v. G. Freiherr von der Ropp, Leipzig 1883, zu den Jahren 1451–1460.

[39] H. Feldtmann, *Der zweite Rezeß…*, S. 141, zählt 28 Handschriften des Rezessrd von 1458, von denen zumindest fünf im Staatsarchiv der Freien und Hansestadt Hamburg liegen, drei davon (H2, J2, L2) stammen aus der Mitte des 16. Jahrhunderts, d.h. aus der Zeit von Tratziger (heute finden sich Sammlungen von Rezessen unter den Signaturen: StAHH 111-1_92695, 111-1_92696 und 111-1_92748); zudem gibt es auch andere Rezesssammlungen in der Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek (J3, K1a, L1). Alte Edition in: J.Ch. Lünig, *Das Teutsche Reichs-Archiv…*, 14, S. 949–51.

[40] Es scheint, als ob Tratziger den detaillierteren Bericht des Bürgermeisters Hermann Langenbeck nicht kannte, s. H. Raape, *Der Hamburger Aufstand…*, S. 1–2; zu Krantz s. A. Krantz, *Wandalia…*, lib. XIII, cap. 28–37.

[41] Cath. 74, fol. 130r; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, p. 220; dieser Ausdruck findet sich so nicht bei Krantz.

Aufruhr um das Frauenkloster zu Harvestehude.[42] Der Administrator des Erzbistums Hamburg-Bremen, Bischof Heinrich III. von Münster, wollte Harvestehude reformieren und entsandte dazu mehrere Äbte und Prälaten, die um Unterstützung durch den Rat baten. Als sie mit zwei Ratsherren das Kloster erreichten, trafen sie auf eine Menge von Männern, Frauen und Kindern, die die Bremer Abgesandten beschimpften und verfluchten. Als die Situation eskalierte, zogen sich die Geistlichen zurück, während die beiden Ratsherren die Menge zu beruhigen suchten, indem sie erklärten, dass nichts ohne ihre Zustimmung geschehen würde.[43]

Am nächsten Tag kamen die Bürger, von denen viele Familienmitglieder im Kloster hatten, zum Rathaus und forderten, die Visitation des Klosters zu verhindern. Sie behaupteten, das Kloster unterstände gar nicht dem Erzbischof, sondern dem Abt des Zisterzienserklosters in Reinfeld, wäre also ein Konvent von Zisterzienserinnen.[44] Schließlich heizte sich die Stimmung so auf, dass sich die Kleriker sogar Todesdrohungen gegenübersahen (*es wehre so ghar seltsam nicht, ob man schon etzlichen paffenn denn halsz ent zwey schluge*).[45] Nach Tratziger hob der Rat hervor, man habe die Ratsherren nur auf Wunsch des Administrators entsandt. Der Rat bat die Menge um Zeit, damit die Geistlichen unbelästigt abreisen könnten, und das wurde gewährt. Als die Nonnen dann den Abt von Reinfeld ins Kloster holten, kam er, aber war nach Anhörung des Falls nicht bereit, sich der Sache anzunehmen. So musste er abreisen, ohne dass man ihm dankte oder die Reisekosten erstattete.[46] Nach Verhandlungen, die Tratziger allerdings nicht erwähnt, übernahm die Stadt faktisch die Kontrolle über das Kloster. Anfang 1483 wurde mit Anna Kale die Tochter eines Hamburger Bürgers zur Äbtissin gewählt.[47]

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[42] Zum Kloster und den Ereignissen s. S. Urbanski, *Die Geschichte des Klosters Harvestehude – In Valle Virginum*, Münster 2001 [2. Aufl.] (= Veröffentlichungen des Hamburger Arbeitskreises für Regionalgeschichte 10), besonders S. 37–41; dies., A. Reiche, *Immer Ärger mit den Nonnen. Zur Geschichte des Klosters Harvestehude bei Hamburg*, hg. v. Amt für Schule Hamburg, Hamburg 1995.

[43] Cath. 74, fol. 130v; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 221; so auch bei Krantz und Langenbek, aber dies widerspricht dem Brief des Administrators von 1482 Dezember 4, in dem er sich die Visitation und die Entscheidung über das Kloster vorbehielt, S. Urbanski, *Die Geschichte…*, S. 42.

[44] Das hätte keinen großen Unterschied in der Lebensform bedeutet, wenn das Kloster nicht in die Ordensstrukturen eingebunden war; S. Urbanski, *Die Geschichte…*, S. 42. Für diese Behauptung nennt Langenbek den Tuchhändler D. Meinse, *Des Bürgermeisters Herman Langebek Bericht über den Aufstand zu Hamburg vom Jahre 1483*, in: *Hamburgische Chroniken…*, S. 340–375, hier S. 342.

[45] In Cath. 74, fol. 130v; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 221, ist das klarer als bei Krantz formuliert.

[46] Cath. 74, fol. 131r; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 222.

[47] S. Urbanski, *Die Geschichte…*, S. 42; Tratziger erwähnt dies nicht, sondern geht unmittelbar zum eigentlichen Aufstand von 1483 über.

Tratziger kommentiert die Ereignisse: *Dieszes vordrosz den gemeinen manne*.[48] Die Bürger seien immer kritischer gegenüber dem Rat geworden. Schließlich stand einer der Böttcher auf – die Böttcher waren von dem stagnierenden Brauereigewerbe abhängig –, Hinrik van Loe (*Hinrich von Lohe*),[49] und behauptete gegenüber einer Versammlung, dass viele Ochsen und Schweine über die Elbe getrieben worden seien, während die armen Leute Not litten. In der Sicht Tratzigers hatte van Loe die Absicht, zu zeigen, dass der Rat korrupt sei und hohe Preise verursache, ohne für hinreichende Reserven an Lebensmitteln zu sorgen, sondern nur auf den eigenen Vorteil bedacht sei. Als einer der Bürger Getreide ausführte, machte er auch den Rat verantwortlich und setzte seine *aufrursche reden* fort, bis er Anfang Mai auf Befehl des Rates inhaftiert und in den Turm gesperrt wurde.[50]

Nach Tratziger wollte der Rat den Eindruck vermeiden, nichts gegen den Export von Getreide zu unternehmen, und rief die Bürger im Rathaus zusammen, um ihre Meinung zu erfragen. Die Bürger berieten sich und antworteten, dass der Export beschränkt werden solle, wenn die Preise steigen. Sonst sollte es keine Einschränkungen geben. Angesichts der aktuellen Lage wurde daher der Getreideexport verboten, Verstöße wurden mit harten Strafen belegt. Aber, wie Tratziger schreibt, der *gemeine man* habe den Zusagen des Rates nicht vertraut und angenommen, der Export würde unter dem Deckmantel der Verbote weitergehen (*aber der gemeine man wer damit nich friedlich, lieszen sich beduncken, das viel dinges unter den huetlin gespilet wurdt*),[51] so dass Misstrauen und Ablehnung gegenüber dem Rat täglich gewachsen sei.

In der Zwischenzeit blieb Hinrik van Loe als Anstifter des Aufruhrs im Gefängnis. Seine Anhänger beschlossen daher, ihn gewaltsam zu befreien. Sie warteten, bis einer der Bürgermeister und einer der Ratsherren mit den *reitende[n] diener[n]* aus der Stadt waren,[52] die Hamburg schützten. Sie versuchten, den ältesten Bürgermeister zu finden, und als sie ihn nicht erreichten, trafen sie auf einen anderen, von dem sie nach Tratziger nachdrücklich (*mit grosser ungesteummichkeit*) die Freilassung von Hinrik van Loe forderten.[53] Schließ-

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48 Cath. 74, fol. 131r; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 222.

49 Sein Name auch in A. Krantz, *Wandalia…*, lib XIII, cap. 31; zu ihm s. H. Raape, *Der Hamburger Aufstand…*, S. 19–20.

50 Cath. 74, fol. 131v; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 223.

51 Cath. 74, fol. 132r; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 223; vgl. A. Krantz, *Wandalia…*, lib. XIII, cap. 30; zum wirtschaftlichen Hintergrund vgl. H. Raape, *Der Hamburger Aufstand…*, S. 5–7.

52 Cath. 74, fol. 132r; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 224; der Bürgermeister, der die Stadt verließ, war Hermann Langenbek, der Ratsherr Henning Buring; sie reisten zum wendischen Städtetag in Lübeck im Mai 1483, wo sie über den Aufstand berichteten, s. H. Raape, *Der Hamburger Aufstand…*, S. 25.

53 Der jüngste Bürgermeister war Nikolaus de Swaren, der älteste Johan Meiger, der dritte Bürgermeister, der noch in der Stadt war, war Johan Huge, *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 224, Anm. 1.

lich fanden sie auch den ältesten Bürgermeister Johan Meiger und zwangen ihn, mit ihnen zum Gefängnis zu gehen. Propst und Dekan des Hamburger Domkapitels versuchten zu vermitteln, erfuhren aber nur Klagen, Flüche und Drohungen und mussten schließlich in ein benachbartes Haus fliehen. Auf dem Weg zum Gefängnis wurde der jüngste Bürgermeister, Nikolaus de Swaren, so gegen das Ohr geschlagen, so dass das Blut über sein Gesicht lief (*bekam einen ohrschlach, das ihm das blodt uber das angesichte herab rahnn*).[54] Nach Tratziger hätten ihm die Aufrührer sogar verboten, das Blut abzuwischen. Die Schlösser wurden gewaltsam aufgebrochen, Hinrik van Loe wurde aus dem Gefängnis befreit. Nikolaus von Swaren musste van Loe zu seinem Haus zu begleiten und mehrfach gezwungen, ihm die Hand zu geben und so seinen Respekt zu erweisen, bevor man ihn erlaubte, zu gehen, und er die Stadt verließ.[55]

Nach der Freilassung van Loes eskalierte der Konflikt weiter. Am 9. Mai versammelten sich die Ratsherren im Chor von St. Nikolai, die Bürger im Kirchenschiff. Hinrik van Loe verlas vor dem Rat etliche Artikel und fragte dann die Bürger, ob sie ihn damit beauftragt hätten. Wie Tratziger kritisch vermerkt, riefen viele in den hinteren Reihen „Ja", obwohl sie nicht verstanden hatten, was gesagt worden war.[56] Der Rat verwies darauf, dass ein Bürgermeister und ein Ratsherr nicht in der Stadt seien und man ihre Rückkehr abwarten wolle. Dies wurde von den Bürgern akzeptiert. Als dann die beiden Ratssendeboten aus Lübeck zurück waren, einigte sich der Rat darauf, die meisten der Artikel anzunehmen. Am Tag vor Pfingsten, dem 17. Mai, wurden die Artikel öffentlich verlesen.

Wie Tratziger ergänzt, behielten die Bürger während des Aufstands die Schlüssel der Stadt und organisierten die Nachtwachen, weil sie ein Eingreifen von außen befürchteten.[57] Nach ihm planten die Aufständischen, die Regierung der Stadt zu übernehmen und den Besitz der Reichen einzuziehen. Der größte Teil des Rates und führende Bürger sollten ermordet werden (man habe *den meren theil des rhats und der furnemesten burger […] vom leben zum thott bringen* wollen), während des traditionellen Fests am Vorabend von St. Johannes dem Täufer (Juni 23), zu dem die Führungsschichten zusammenkamen.[58] Um ihre

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[54] Cath. 74, fol. 132v; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 224.

[55] Lappenberg in *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 225, Anm. 1, scheint das mit Johan Huge zu verbinden, der sich in der Kathedrale versteckt hatte, aber die Notiz bezieht sich klar auf den jüngsten Bürgermeister, Nikolaus de Swaren.

[56] Cath. 74, fol. 133v (mit einem Versehen in der folgenden Aussage des Rats, dass *ein burger [!] und rhatspersone ncht anheimsch* sei); *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 226; ähnlich bei A. Krantz, *Wandalia…*, lib. XIII, cap. 32; vgl. H. Raape, *Der Hamburger Aufstand…*, S. 28.

[57] Dabei folgt Cath. 74, fol. 134r; bzw. *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 226, Krantz, macht aber das Argument stärker.

[58] Cath. 74, fol. 134r; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 227. Nach Lappenberg, ebd., S. 227, Anm. 1, hatte das Fest auch danach noch eine lange Tradition, es wurde an einer der Mühlen an der Alster bei Fuhlsbüttel gefeiert. A. Krantz, *Wandalia…*, lib. XIII, cap. 33, ist weniger klar.

wahren Absichten zu verschleiern, erfanden die Aufrührer eine äußere Bedrohung. Der am Anfang des Aufstands am Kopf verletzte Bürgermeister habe in Lübeck Truppen gesammelt und wolle Hamburg Juni 24 angreifen. Es sei notwendig, sich darauf vorzubreiten. Diese Informationen wurden unter den Bürgern verbreitet. Wie Tratziger berichtet, habe darauf ein ehrenwerter Bürger gesagt, dass man die Bürgermeister informieren müsse. Die Aufrührer gaben dann vor, sie hätten dies von einem der Bürgermeister gehört. Als sich einige Bürger an den Bürgermeister wandten, erfuhren sie, dass ihm davon nichts bekannt sei.

Nach Tratziger lud der Rat daraufhin den Mann vor, der angeblich mit dem Bürgermeister gesprochen habe.[59] Als ihn der Bürgermeister fragte, ob er ihm etwas gesagt habe, musste der Aufrührer gestehen, dass das nicht geschehen sei. Auch musste er zugeben, dass er keinen Brief aus Lübeck bekommen habe, der den Angriff angekündigt hätte, ja, dass er überhaupt nicht lesen könne; sein Sohn habe den Brief gelesen. Nachdem seine Lügen offenbar geworden waren, brachte man ihn ins Gefängnis. Die anderen Aufständischen schwiegen gegenüber den Bürgern zu den Ereignissen, waren aber insgeheim verärgert (*obwol solliches seine auffruhrische mit genossen heimlich sehr ubel vordrosz*).[60]

Die Situation blieb unklar, und es kursierten Gerüchte. So hieß es, vier Schiffe mit Getreide würden aus der Stör nach Westen aus der Elbe segeln. Dies führte zu einer größeren Operation, doch das einzige Schiff, das man fand, war durch einen Storm aus der Weser in die Elbe verschlagen worden. Man verdächtigte den Rat, er habe dem aus Hamburg stammenden Schiffer einen besonderen Pass gegeben, damit er Getreide exportieren könne, doch erwies sich das als falsch. Der Schiffer durfte fortsegeln, nachdem er geschworen hatte, dass er sein Getreide nicht an der Elbe geladen hatte. Die weitergehenden, radikalen Pläne der Verschwörer ließen sich nicht umsetzen, denn *der rhat und die furnemesten burger hatten die sache in guter auffachtung*.[61]

Danach entstand durch Unvorsichtigkeit ein Feuer auf dem Brook, aber die Aufrührer verdächtigten den Rat und die reichen (*vermugentlichen*) Bürger, das Feuer gelegt zu haben. Am 11. Juli kamen die Aufständischen unter Hinrik van Loe zum Rat mit weiteren Artikeln, die die Beziehungen zu Flandern, Holland und Friesland betrafen, doch verwies der Rat darauf, dass das nicht in seiner Kompetenz liege. Dann forderten die Aufrührer, bestimmte

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59 Langenbek benennt ihn als Cort Riquerdes, wie van Lo ein Brauer vom Rödingsmarkt, s. H. Raape, *Der Hamburger Aufstand…*, S. 31.

60 Cath. 74, fol. 134v–135r; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 228. A. Krantz, *Wandalia…*, lib. XIII, cap. 33, fügt hinzu, dass die Aufrührer geplant hätten, ihren Kumpan zu befreien.

61 Cath. 74, fol. 135r; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 229, hier *[…] hetten ire sachen […]*, also ihre Angelegenheiten, nicht das Geschehen.

Bürger vor Gericht zu bringen,[62] doch fanden sich keine Ankläger. Schließlich hielten die Rebellen zwei Bürgermeister auf, die vom Rathaus kamen, und forderten die Freilassung ihres inhaftierten Mitstreiters. Als dies verweigert wurde, wurde der Verwalter der Schlüssel gezwungen, den Turm zu öffnen. Der Gefangene wurde dann zu den Gerichtsherren (*richtherren*) gebracht. Obwohl unter Druck, entschieden die diese nicht über die Freilassung, sondern behielten den Gefangenen bis zur nächsten Zusammenkunft des Rats bei sich.[63]

Am folgenden Tag, dem 18. Juli, ließ der Rat durch die für die Versammlungen zuständigen Ratsherren (*morgensprachsherren*) die Meister der Ämter befragen, wie der Rat mit den Bürger handeln solle. Auch ließ man erkunden, ob die Aufrührer etwas planten. Als dies nicht der Fall zu sein schien, ließ der Rat die Bürger im Rathaus zusammenkommen, darunter auch *der emporung hauptman und reidlein fuhrer*, also Hinrik van Loe.[64] Die Tür war verschlossen, doch sammelte sich der *gemeine poeffel* (Pöbel), wie ihn Tratziger nennt,[65] bald vor dem Rathaus, unter Leitung eines Schiffszimmermanns, und versuchte zweimal, gewaltsam einzudringen. Dies wurde von den Bürgern verhindert, die die Anderen hinausdrängten. Danach versuchte der Schiffszimmermann, die Alarmglocken zu läuten, kam aber nicht auf den Kirchturm von St. Nikolai. Später wurde er auf Befehl des Rats inhaftiert, ebenso wie auch ein zweiter Aufrührer, der seinerseits versucht hatte, die Glocke von St. Petri zu läuten.[66] Tratziger nennt interessanterweise nur den Namen Hinrik van Loes, nicht aber die der meisten anderen Aufrührer, für die man auf den Bericht des Bürgermeisters Langenbek oder von Albert Krantz zurückgreifen muss.

Nach Tratziger rieten die Bürger dem Rat, dass sie zusammen auf den Hopfenmarkt herausgehen sollten, um ihre Bereitschaft zu demonstrieren, den Rat mit ihren Leben zu verteidigen (*der rhat soltte zwischen ihnen auff dem Hopffenmarck gehen, auff das man sahe, wo die sachen hin ausz wolten, sie wolten ihr leib und leben bey dem rhat lassen*).[67] Einige der Anhänger des Schiffszimmermanns verließen die Stadt, andere bewaffneten sich mit Äxten, Beilen und Hämmern, um die Gefangenen zu befreien. Sie zogen sich aber zurück, als sie die Versammlung der Bürger sahen. Nach Tratziger fragte

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62 Nach den anderen Quellen war dieser Bürger Hans Schröder, ein Goldschmied mit engen Beziehungen zum Rat, auch ein zweiter Bürger, Hermen Meier, sollte angeklagt werden, H. Raape, *Der Hamburger Aufstand*…, S. 36.

63 Cath. 74, fol. 135v–136r; *Tratzigers Chronik*…, S. 229–230.

64 Cath. 74, fol. 136v; *Tratzigers Chronik*…, S. 230; die Bürger hatten ihre Waffen mitgebracht, vgl. H. Raape, *Der Hamburger Aufstand*…, S. 36.

65 Cath. 74, fol. 136v; *Tratzigers Chronik*…, S. 230.

66 Zu den Namen des Schiffszimmermanns und des zweiten Aufrührers s. u. zu Anm. 68.

67 Cath. 74, fol. 136v; *Tratzigers Chronik*…, S. 230–31, ergänzt an vierter Stelle das Wort *mitten*.

der Rat die Bürger, was mit den gefangenen Aufrührern geschehen solle. Diese antworteten, dass über sie nach dem Recht geurteilt werden solle. Der Anführer des Aufstands, Hinrik van Loe, solle aber nach Erneuerung seines Bürgereids amnestiert werden, weil er während des Angriffs im Rathaus gewesen war. Dies wurde so angenommen. Bald darauf wurden die beiden Gefangenen zum Tode verurteilt und nahe bei der Petrikirche hingerichtet – Cod. Catharinen 74 nennt an dieser Stelle als Randnotiz ihre Namen: *Clawes von Kynen* und *Rypke Hoken*.[68] Wie Tratziger zufrieden feststellt, war damit der Aufstand endgültig zu Ende (*damith wart dieser auffruhr entlich gestillet*).[69]

Die anderen Chronisten bieten einige Ergänzungen. Langenbek ist der einzige „Zeitzeuge", der allerdings seine Rolle deutlich überzeichnet. Er stellt sich – für die Zeit nach seiner Rückkehr vom wendischen Regionaltag – als führenden Akteur dar. So habe er bei der Versammlung auf dem Rödingsmarkt am 18. Juli die Initiative ergriffen. In einer Rede habe er ein gemäßigtes Vorgehen gegen die Aufrührer gefordert, um die Konflikte in der Stadt zu beenden. Es sollten nur jene bestraft werden, die am Angriff auf das Rathaus teilhatten.[70]

Tratziger berichtet Einiges zum Schicksal der anderen Aufrührer. Einige, die in andere Städte geflüchtet waren, seien dort gefangen und verurteilt worden, der Mann, der den Bürgermeister Nikolaus de Swaren geschlagen hatte, sei später als Dieb hingerichtet worden.[71] Tratziger erwähnt nicht, dass einige der Aufständischen später begnadigt wurden und Urfehde leisteten, also versprachen, Hamburg nicht weiter zu schaden, und er weiß nichts von den diplomatischen Bemühungen, die Flüchtigen einzufangen.[72]

Etwas genauer geht Tratziger auf das Schicksal Hinriks van Loe ein. Als dieser noch Anführer des Aufstands gewesen sei, sei ein Adliger mit dem Namen *Heinrich Freitag* zum Markt am Fest des hl. Vitus (Juni 15) zusammen mit seiner Frau nach Hamburg gekommen. Freitag fand heraus, dass van Loe sein Höriger gewesen war (*wahr derselbige Heinrich vom Lohe unter ime geboren, das ehr ihn fur seinen eigenen man hielt*).[73] Daraufhin wandte er sich im Vertrauen an ihn und bot ihm an, sich freizukaufen, um eine öffentliches Aufsehen zu vermeiden. Das habe van Loe zornig gemacht, und er habe Freitag

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[68] Cath. 74, fol. 137r, von anderer Hand am Rand nachgetragen. Die Namen erscheinen in den anderen Quellen als Clas van Kymmen und Rype Kenkel, H. Raape, *Der Hamburger Aufstand…*, S. 36.

[69] Cath. 74, fol. 137v; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 231.

[70] S. H. Raape, *Der Hamburger Aufstand…*, S. 37; zu A. Krantz vgl. seine *Wandalia…*, lib. XIII, cap. 37.

[71] Cath. 74, fol. 137v; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 232; nach Langenbek handelte es sich um den Böttcher Hans Meier, ebd., Anm. 2.

[72] Vgl. H. Raape, *Der Hamburger Aufstand…*, S. 39–40.

[73] Cath. 74, fol. 137v; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 232.

in seiner Unterkunft mit vielen seiner Anhänger aufgesucht, ihn angegangen und beleidigt. In der Folge sei Freitag aus der Stadt nach Harburg gegangen.

Danach sei seine Frau angegriffen worden, die in der Stadt geblieben sei, und diese hätte van Loe ihrerseits öffentlich einen Hörigen ohne legitime Geburt genannt (als *einen thewern man, der den rhat und gantze stadt wil regieren, und hat vergessen, das ehr ein leibeigen kerl und darzu unehrlich geboren ist*).[74] Schließlich seien van Loes Leute auf unziemliche Weise über Freitags Frau hergefallen und hätten sie weggeführt, um sie gefangen nehmen zu lassen. Dazu hätten sie den älteren Bürgermeister gesucht, aber nicht gefunden. Dann sei es aber dem jüngeren Bürgermeister (nach anderen Quellen Herman Langenbek) gelungen, die Frau über Nacht gegen seine Zusage freizubekommen, dass sie sich am nächsten Tag stellen würde; sie konnte im Haus des Baumeisters – nach Cod. Catharinen 74 des Bürgermeisters – übernachten.[75] Obwohl van Loe eine harte Bestrafung forderte, wurde schließlich mit Hilfe zweier Ratsherren ein Ausgleich gefunden. Van Loe und die Frau Freitags sollten einander vergeben und sich die Hände schütteln. Schließlich konnte die Frau die Stadt verlassen.[76]

Nach dem Ende des Aufstands hätten Freitag und seine adligen Freunde viele Briefe an den Rat gesandt, in denen sie eine Bestrafung van Loes wegen seiner Angriffe auf Freitag und seine Frau forderten. Nach Tratziger habe sich van Loe schließlich vor dem Rat wegen der Verletzung der Freiheit und Sicherheit des Marktes verantworten müssen, sei schuldig gesprochen und enthauptet worden. Tratziger erwähnt nicht, dass sich der Rat zunächst in Sachen einer Verurteilung van Loes sehr zurückhielt, weil er neue städtische Unruhen befürchtete. Doch dann schalteten sich auch die Bischöfe von Minden und Hildesheim, der Herzog von Braunschweig-Lüneburg, der Graf von Hoya und andere ein, so dass der Rat schließlich gezwungen war, zu handeln.[77]

Bei Tratziger fehlen auch die Bemühungen des Rates, die gemäßigten Aufrührer für sich zu gewinnen, in dem er die zu Pfingsten verlesenen Artikel teilweise übernahm. Nachdem die Treue zum Rat Juli 18 durch Eide der Aufständischen erneuert worden war, verabschiedete der Rat am nächsten Tag einen dritten Rezess, der die Rezesse von 1410 und 1458 mit von Hinrik van Loe vorgetragenen Forderungen und Beschlüssen nach dem Ende des Aufstands verbunden wurden.[78] Das Schweigen Tratzigers in diesem

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74 Cath. 74, fol. 138r; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 233, mit *nicht ehlich* statt *unehrlich*.

75 Cath. 74, fol. 138v; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 233.

76 Ebd., vgl. H. Raape, *Der Hamburger Aufstand…*, S. 43–45.

77 H. Raape, *Der Hamburger Aufstand…*, S. 44.

78 Ebd., S. 46–47; es gibt keine moderne Edition der Rezesse, vgl. immer noch J.Ch. Lünig, *Das Teutsche Reichs-Archiv…*, 14, S. 957–65.

Zusammenhang muss überraschen, denn der dritte Rezess war in seiner Zeit noch in Kraft. Tratziger beendet seinen Report zum Jahr 1483 mit dem Bericht über die Hinrichtung eines weiteren Verschwörers und der Bemerkung, dass die führenden Aufrührer nun ihre verdiente Belohnung erhalten hätten (*[…] das also die auffrurische reidlein fuhrer und auffwigler allenthalben ihren vordienthen lohen empfangen*).[79]

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Der Vergleich zwischen Cod. Catharinen 74 und der von Lappenberg edierten Fassung hat – zumindest für die hier herangezogenen Stellen – keine wesentlichen Unterschiede erbracht. In den meisten Fällen resultieren die Differenzen aus offenkundigen Versehen, wenn etwa mehrere Absätze zu den Ereignissen zwischen 1417 und 1420 fehlen,[80] das Datum eines Privilegs falsch angegeben ist,[81] irrtümlich ein abwesender Bürgermeister zu einem „Bürger" wird[82] oder die Frau von Heinrich Freitag im Haus des Bürgermeisters statt dem des Baumeisters übernachtet.[83] Auch die kleineren Bedeutungsverschiebungen wie in der positiven Bewertung einiger Artikel von 1410 (*gefellig* statt *billig*),[84] im Bericht über die erfolgreiche Abwehr von Plänen der Verschwörer durch die Bürger (die *die sache* statt *ire sachen* unter Kontrolle hielten)[85] oder in der Charakterisierung des Aufrührers van Loe als *unehrlich* statt *nicht ehlich*[86] bieten nur Nuancen und dürften eher zufällig sein. Eine interessante Ergänzung, wenn auch am Rand von anderer Hand, sind die Namen zweier Aufrührer, die in der edierten Version fehlen.[87] Auch wenn Cod. Catharinen 74 das Produkt verschiedener Schreiber ist, die sich bei der Erstellung der Handschrift abwechselten, scheint die Überlieferung insgesamt relativ einheitlich zu sein.

Doch was lässt sich über das von Tratziger entworfene Bild der drei Hamburger Aufstände des 15. Jahrhunderts sagen? Zunächst überrascht, dass er bei seiner Darstellung trotz seiner Stellung als Syndikus, d.h. mit Zugang zu den Materialien in der Kanzlei des Rats, nicht aus dem Vollen schöpfte, sondern etliche Lücken ließ oder nicht füllen konnte, vielleicht auch vor dem Hintergrund der „Eile", in der Tratzigers Chronik entstand.

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79 Cath 74, fol. 139r; *Tratzigers Chronik…*, S. 233.
80 Bei Anm. 37.
81 Vgl. Anm. 22.
82 Anm. 56.
83 Zu Anm. 75.
84 S. Anm. 25.
85 Vgl. Anm. 61.
86 Anm. 74.
87 Wie Anm. 68.

Eindeutig ist dagegen, dass Tratziger fast durchgängig aus der Perspektive des Rates schreibt und diesen nur gelegentlich kritisch darstellt. So stellt er zu 1410 fest, der Rat habe den Artikeln zum Neuen Rat nur aus Furcht zugestimmt, obwohl sie so die Befehle König Ruprechts missachtet hätten, und zu 1483 werden Bürgermeister und Ratsherren so dargestellt, als wenn sie einer Konfrontation mit den Aufständischen ausgewichen seien. So erklärten sie bereits beim Reformversuch in Harvestehude, man habe die Ratsmitglieder nur auf Anforderung des Administrators des Bremer Erzbistums entsandt;[88] und angesichts der Getreideknappheit sollte jeder Eindruck vermieden werden, der Rat habe sich an den Getreideexporten beteiligt oder sie gebilligt.[89] Dabei wird der Rat – anders als bei Langenbek, aber ähnlich wie bei Krantz – als kollektiv handelndes Gremium präsentiert, das auch den Aufstand gemeinschaftlich beendet.[90]

Insgesamt wirkt Tratzigers Bericht über die Aufstände im Hamburg des 15. Jahrhunderts recht distanziert, Dies mag sich aus dem zeitlichen Abstand von bis zu 150 Jahren erklären, vielleicht auch aus der Tatsache, dass Hamburg nicht seine Heimatstadt war und er nur wenige Jahre hier verbrachte. Dennoch wird deutlich, dass er den Aufständen von 1410 und 1483 – der von 1458 fehlt – ablehnend gegenüberstand. So spricht er zu 1483 von einer *gefehrliche[n] enporung*, und zur Hinrichtung der Anführer des Aufstands heißt es, sie hätten *ihren vordienthen lohen empfangen*.[91] Entsprechend erfahren die drei Rezesse nur geringe Aufmerksamkeit, trotz ihrer Bedeutung für die Verfassungsentwicklung der Stadt.[92] Zum Rezess von 1410 urteilt Tratziger abwägend, von den Artikel seien *etliche gefellig und nutzlich, eines theils aber beschwerlich und nachteyligk* gewesen,[93] ohne – mit zwei Ausnahmen – näher auf die Inhalte einzugehen. Die Rezesse von 1458 und 1483 sind gar nicht erst erwähnt, obwohl zu 1483 von den Artikeln die Rede ist, die Hinrik van Loe in St. Nikolai verlesen hatte und die im Anschluss vom Rat nach der Rückkehr seiner Sendeboten aus Lübeck zum größeren Teil angenommen wurden.[94] Als Syndikus hatte er Zugang zu den Texten, er hat also offenbar bewusst auf die Wiedergabe der einzelnen Artikel verzichtet. Ebenso fehlt ein Hinweis auf die Rücknahme des ersten Rezesses 1417, wie auch die anderen Ereignisse zum Teil verkürzt dargestellt sind. So übernahm der Rat

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88 Bei Anm. 45.

89 Zu. bei Anm. 51.

90 Anm. 64–69.

91 Wie Anm. 41 und 79.

92 Dazu (insbesondere zum „Langen Rezess" von 1529) s. R. Postel, *Reformation und Gegenreformation*, in: *Hamburg. Geschichte der Stadt und ihrer Bewohner*, hg. v. W. Jochmann, H.-D. Loose, Bd. 1: *Von den Anfängen bis zur Reichsgründung*, Hamburg 1982, S. 193–200.

93 Anm. 25.

94 Wie zu Anm. 56.

– anders bei Tratziger dargestellt – am letzten Tag des Aufstands von 1483 selbst die Initiative, unterstützt von den Bürgern, die sich bereits bewaffnet hatten.[95]

Dennoch hat Tratzigers Chronik als erste große Stadtgeschichte Hamburgs von seinen Ursprüngen bis ins 16. Jahrhundert einen bleibenden Wert. Die lange Wertschätzung seines Werks spiegelt sich nicht zuletzt in der umfangreichen Überlieferung und dem daraus zu erschließenden Interesse. Tratziger verzichtet wohl bewusst auf eine umfassende Darstellung – wie seine Behandlung der Aufstände des 15. Jahrhundert deutlich macht –, sondern beschränkt sich auf für ihn in längerer Perspektive wesentliche Aspekte. So findet bei ihm die Geschichte der Hanse breiteren Raum als in der früheren Chronistik der Hansestädte,[96] auch wenn dies aus Hamburger Perspektive geschieht,[97] und seine Darstellung nimmt gewissermaßen die künftige Rolle Hamburgs als führende norddeutsche Stadt noch vor Lübeck vorweg. Mit Cod. Catharinen 74 stand so auch den Bewohnern des Katharinen-Kirchspiels dieser Überblick über die frühe Geschichte Hamburgs zur Verfügung.

Abstract

Hamburg in the 15th century according to Adam Tratziger's chronicle (and Ms. Catharinen 74)

This article examines Adam Tratziger's chronicle (based on Lappenberg's edition and Ms. Catharinen 74) as a key historiographical source for Hamburg in the 15th century, focusing particularly on the city's three major uprisings of 1410, 1458, and 1483. Tratziger, a legal scholar and city syndicus, wrote his chronicle in the mid-16th century, drawing on official city records as well as earlier historiographical works by Albert Krantz and others. Despite his access to extensive sources, Tratziger's account is selective: he devotes detailed attention to the uprisings of 1410 and 1483, while omitting or minimizing the 1458 revolt, and provides only limited discussion of the accompanying recesses (Rezesse) that shaped Hamburg's constitutional development. The article highlights how Tratziger presents these events primarily from the perspective of the city council, emphasizing collective decision-making and the council's management of civic unrest, while maintaining a cautious, often critical stance toward the actions of both the council and the citizenry. Comparisons with the later Lappenberg edition reveal minor textual differences, usually stemming from copyist errors or editorial standardization, rather than substantive divergences. Tratziger's

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95 Zu den Ereignissen vgl. wiederum H. Raape, *Der Hamburger Aufstand*…, S. 37.

96 Dazu vgl. allgemein *Das Bild der Hanse*… (s. Anm. 9).

97 S. Rau, *Hamburg, die Hanse*…, S. 28–31.

chronicle, produced in a relatively short time, became widely disseminated, with nearly a hundred surviving copies, reflecting its enduring value as Hamburg's first comprehensive city history. The study underscores how Tratziger's selective narrative, his treatment of civic authority, and the prioritization of Hanseatic and legal perspectives offer insights into both the political culture of 15th-century Hamburg and the historiographical practices of early modern city chroniclers.

Keywords: Hamburg, Adam Tratziger, urban developmnent, Rezess agreements

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National conflicts in the Czech-Polish Franciscan Province (until 1517)

The first antagonisms of a somewhat "national" nature in the Czech-Polish Franciscan province were, in fact, primarily between Germans and Slavs; they arose not among peasants and townsfolk, but in castles and monasteries, among the political and cultural elites of Czech and Polish societies sometimes referred to as the "political nation".[1] Benedykt Zientara, the author of these observations, also stated that the first descriptions of "bad Germans" in Polish historical sources were of robber barons and local Franciscans marauding in Lower Silesia (in the second half of the 13th century).[2]

[1] S. Gawlas, *Społeczny zasięg polskiej świadomości narodowej w późnym średniowieczu: analiza mechanizmów zjawiska*, "Przegląd Historyczny" 72 (1981), 4, pp. 652-656, 658-660; further, *idem*, *Pytania o tożsamość średniowiecznych Polaków w świetle współczesnych dyskusji humanistyki*, in: *Symboliczne i realne podstawy tożsamości społecznej w średniowieczu*, ed. S. Gawlas, P. Żmudzki, Warszawa 2017, pp. 15-82. H. Samsonowicz, *„My Polacy", czyli o początkach polskiej świadomości narodowej*, in: *Historia vero testis temporum. Księga jubileuszowa poświęcona Profesorowi Krzysztofowi Baczkowskiemu w 70. rocznicę urodzin*, ed. J. Smołucha, A. Waśko, T. Graff, P.F. Nowakowski, Kraków 2008, pp. 617-628.

[2] B. Zientara, *Konflikty narodowościowe na pograniczu niemiecko-słowiańskim w XIII-XIV w. i ich zasięg społeczny*, "Przegląd Historyczny" 59, (1968), 2, pp. 205-206, 210. Noteworthy among more recent studies on ethnic relations in Poland is an article showing the perception of Germans in the light of the 13th-century Kraków miraculas (G. Pac, *Niemcy w trzynastowiecznych miraculach krakowskich*, in: *Monarchia, społeczeństwo, tożsamość. Studia z dziejów średniowiecza*, ed. K. Gołąbek *et al*., Warszawa 2019, pp. 431-451.

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An attempt to determine the ethnic origin of the Silesian monasteries of the Polish-Czech Dominican province has already been made by Jerzy Kłoczowski.[3] Importantly, he also addressed how national relations influenced disputes within the province and attempts at secession by Silesian Dominican monasteries.[4]

The problem of national conflicts among Czech and Polish Franciscans has been investigated and assessed only in relation to the Observant branch of the Franciscan Order.[5] In the case of Conventual Franciscans, one is restricted to texts that are now outdated[6] or synthetic.[7] However, this article is only an introduction to the issues referred to in the title.

The establishment in 1238-39 of the province of the Franciscan Order, probably initially bearing only the name "Provincia Poloniae",[8] marked the birth of an organism comprising two unequal parts. Politically, Czech was then already a centralised state, while Poland was divided into districts. So too in the organisational advancement of the Franciscan Order, Czech and Moravia clearly outdid Poland in terms of numbers of both monasteries and monks. For these reasons, as well as due to seniority, the new province's capital was established in Prague. In terms of nationality, it comprised two different Slavic nations whose sense of national identity was still only crystallising (with Czech clearly leading in this

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[3] J. Kłoczowski, *Dominikanie polscy na Śląsku w XIII–XIV w.*, Lublin 1956, pp. 135-144.

[4] *Ibidem*, pp. 191-202.

[5] L. Teichmann, *Nationale Wirren in mittelalterlichen Observantenklöstern*, "Archiv für schlesische Kirchengeschichte" 5 (1940), pp. 64-95, though this work clearly reflects the nationalist attitude of its era; P. Hlaváček, *Národnosti a jazykové rozpory v českém vikariátě františkánů-observantů na přelomu 15. a 16 století (Příěvek k nacionálnímu partikularismu ve středoevropském prostoru)*, in: *In omnibus caritas. K poctě devadesátých narozenin prof. ThDr. Jaroslava Kadlece*, Praha 2002 (= Sborník Katolické Fakulty Univerzity Karlovy 4), pp. 187-198; *idem*, *Češti františkáni na přelomu středověku a novověku*, Praha 2005, pp. 48-77.

[6] Z. Smejkal, *K dějinám národnostních sporů u českých františkánů (1256-1517)*, Loštice 1939, pp. 2-7; Cz. C. Baran, *Sprawy narodowościowe u franciszkanów śląskich*, Warszawa 1954. Cf. the critical review of the last of these works by J. Mitkowski in "Nasza Przeszłość" 6 (1957), pp. 391-398.

[7] K. Kantak, *Franciszkanie polscy*, vol. 1, Kraków 1937, *passim*; J. Kłoczowski, *Bracia Mniejsi w Polsce średniowiecznej*, in: *Franciszkanie w Polsce średniowiecznej*, part 1, *Franciszkanie na ziemiach polskich*, ed. J. Kłoczowski, Lublin 1983, pp. 36-47, 55-56.

[8] T. Szafrański, *Klasztory franciszkańskie na Śląsku w XIII w. i ich przynależność organizacyjna*, "Roczniki Humanistyczne" 7, (1958), pp. 174-177; W. Irgang, *Zur Frage der polnischen Franziskanerprovinz im Schlesien im 13. Jahrhundert*, "Archiv für schlesische Kirchengeschichte" 43, (1985), pp. 251-261; *idem*, *Beiträge zur Silesia Franciscana im 13. Jahrhundert*, "Archiv für schlesische Kirchengeschichte" 47/48 (1990), pp. 237-244.

regard)[9] and which featured a significant German element, especially in the cities.[10]

During the reign of the Minister Provincial Bogusław (1247-1251), the inscription on the provincial seal, "Sigillum provinciae Poloniae et Bohemiae (Seal of the province of Poland and Bohemia)", was changed.[11] This was evidently due to the increase in number of Minorite monasteries in the Kingdom of Bohemia having led to a natural dominance by Czech monks and their growing importance to the organisational affairs of the province. This matter nonetheless became the source of numerous later Polish-Czech conflicts over the precedence of both parts of the province. Meanwhile, during the 1256 chapter in Hradec Kralové, a Czech Minister Provincial was elected - Daniel, called "Slavata" (1256-60). Brother Daniel restored the inscription on the seal "placing the name of Bohemia before that of Poland", according to the chronicler Jan Fürstenhain,[12]

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[9] From among the abundant literature, let us mention only: B. Zientara, *Konflikty narodowościowe…*, pp. 197-212; R. Heck, *Uwagi o rozwoju polskiej i czeskiej świadomości narodowej w średniowieczu*, in: *Studia nad rozwojem narodowym Polaków, Czechów i Słowaków*, ed. R. Heck, Wrocław 1976, pp. 5-24; G. Labuda, *O paralelach rozwoju świadomości narodowej i historycznej w Polsce i w Czechosłowacji*, "Roczniki Historyczne" 46 (1980), p. 110; F. Graus, *Die Bildung eines Nationalbewusstseinns im mittelalterlichen Böhmen (Die vorhussitische Zeit)*, "Historica" 13 (1966), pp. 5-49. Of the most recent publications, it is worth citing the extremely valuable dissertation by A. Barciak, *Czechy a ziemie południowej Polski w XIII oraz w początkach XIV wieku. Polityczno-ideologiczne problemy ekspansji czeskiej na ziemie południowej Polski*, Katowice 1992, pp. 126-145; *idem*, *Problemy świadomości narodowej w stosunkach czesko-polskich w średniowieczu*, in: *Czechy i Polska na szlakach ich kulturalnego rozwoju*, ed. J. Wyrozumski, Kraków 1998, pp. 43-52; H. Samsonowicz, *„My Polacy…*, pp. 617-628; and a broad and critical review of the subject by S. Gawlas, *Stan badań nad polską świadomością narodową w średniowieczu*, in: *Państwo - naród - stany w świadomości wieków średnich*, ed. A. Gieysztor, S. Gawlas, Warszawa 1990, pp. 149-194.

[10] The breakdown of cities by nationality in Bohemia and Moravia is illustrated by F. Šmahel, *Husitská revoluce*, vol. 1, *Doba vymknutá z kloubů*, Praha 1995 [2nd ed.], pp. 337-352 and map 3 therein.

[11] *Kronika Fürstenhaina*, in: K. Kantak, *Franciszkanie polscy…*, vol. 1, Kraków 1937, p. 414: *Idem iste Bohuslaus considerans quod conventuum numerus in Bohemia multiplicaretur, mutavit inscriptionem sigilli sic: Sigillum provinciae Bohemiae et Poloniae*. Similarly, *Fragmenty kroniki Jana Ludwika Impekhovena dotyczące prowincji czesko-polskiej dla lat 1225-1515*, ed. J. Kłoczowski, in: *Franciszkanie w Polsce średniowiecznej*, parts 2 and 3, *Franciszkanie na ziemiach polskich*, ed. J. Kłoczowski, Lublin 1982, p. 437.

[12] *Kronika Fürstenhaina…*, p. 415: *Iste* [Daniel] *mutavit sigillum praeponens Bohemiam Poloniae sic: Sigillum provinciae Bohemiae et Poloniae*. Similarly, *Cronicon Boemicorum*, ed L. Dušek in: *Franciszkanie w Polsce średniowiecznej*, parts 2 and 3, *Franciszkanie na ziemiach polskich*, ed. J. Kłoczowski, Lublin 1982, p. 360; *Fragmenty kroniki Jana Ludwika Impekhovena…*, p. 438. There is an interesting note in the chronicle of Stephan Christ: Moravska Zemska Knihovna v Brno, Mn. 60: *Manuale P. magistri Stephani Christ Ord. Minorum S. P. N. Francisci Conventualium…* (1733), p. 14: *Fr. Daniel, adhuc magis favendo nationalitati, denuo mutavit sigillum et scripsit se provincialem Bohemiae et Poloniae, Bohemiam praeferendo Polonis. Occasione huius inceperunt factiones Inter fratrem Bohemos*

raising dissatisfaction on the Polish side. The first chapter of St Bonaventure, the new minister general of the Franciscans, held in Narbonne (1260) stripped Daniel of the Ministry and introduced a new administrative division, assigning the Custodies of Wrocław, Złotoryja, and Prussia to the province of Saxony.[13] To calm this storm, in 1262 at the latest, the general of the order sent a visitator to Czech and Poland in the person of Brother Alan. To familiarise himself with life in the province, he summoned the Czechs and Moravians to Prague and the Poles to Wrocław. As a result, in the following year, at the general chapter in Pisa (1263), it was decided to punish the Czech-Polish province by dismissing the then-Minister Provincial Idzi-Giles (1260-1263), prohibiting the independent election of a Minister Provincial and depriving him of a vote at the general chapter. At that time, the custody of Moravia was transferred from the province to the province of Austria, and the ephemeral custody of Budziszyn [Germ., Bautzen] (covering only the monasteries in Budziszyn and Zgorzelec) was joined with the province of Saxony.[14] The reasons for these repressions can be found in local Slavic-German nationality-based conflicts,[15] which were particularly visible in Silesia but also not entirely absent in the Czech lands, judging by the letters of Queen Kunigunda of Hungary.[16] In addition, two more Ministers Provincial were imposed by the general chapter: Piotr Basztyn (1263-1266), and Gamfred (1266-1269).[17] The aforementioned Czech-Polish rivalry within the province should also be taken into account. It is also impossible to reject Jerzy Kłoczowski's suggestion that, because

et Polonos irremediabiles, quae durabant usque ad annum 1517, ubi ad invicem erant et permanserunt separati. According to A. Neumann, *Die Chroniken der mährischen Minoriten*, Olmütz 1936 (duplicate typescript), pp. 10-11; J.L. Impekhoven's chronicle, through its Polish sources of knowledge about the history of the province, represents anti-Czech tendencies (including in its collection of records of mutual conflicts), in contrast to the *Cronicon Boemicorum* of the so-called Benesz Minoryta (actually the Minoryta Anonimus)!

[13] L. Wadding, *Annales Ordinis Minorum seu historia trium ordinum a S. Francisco institutorum*, vol. 4, Quaracchi 1931, p. 148.

[14] *Kronika Fürstenhaina…*, p. 415; *Fragmenty kroniki Jana Ludwika Impekhovena…*, p. 438. T. Szafrański, *Klasztory…*, pp. 179-180 presumes that the monasteries of this custody had already belonged to the province of Saxony (before 1253). However, there is no convincing evidence for this.

[15] K. Kantak, *Franciszkanie polscy…*, pp. 36-37; Cz. C. Baran, *Sprawy…*, pp. 83-89, especially pp. 88-89.

[16] *Regesta diplomatica nec non epistolaria Bohemiae et Moraviae* [further: RBM], vol. 2, ed. J. Emler, Praha 1882, vol. 2, no. 2504, 2505. F. Palacký, *Über Formelbücher zunächst in Bezug auf böhmische Geschichte*, vol. 1-2, Praha 1842-1847, no. 54, 55. Cf. J.B. Novak, *Kritika listáře královny Kunhuty*, in: *Sborník prací historických k šedesátým narozeninám J. Golla*, ed. J. Bidlo, G. Friedrich, K. Krofta, Praha 1906, pp. 124-152; *Listy královny Kunhuty králi Přemyslovi*, ed. B. Mendl, Praha 1928.

[17] *Kronika Fürstenhaina…*, pp. 415-416; *Fragmenty kroniki Jana Ludwika Impekhovena…*, p. 438.

local dukes were protectors of individual monasteries, those monasteries were inclined to represent the political interests of said dukes.[18]

At the general chapter in Paris (1266), the province managed to recover the Custodies of Moravia and Budziszyn (Bautzen).[19] It can be surmised that the intervention of Ottokar II of Bohemia, then at the peak of his political significance, skilfully employed anti-German slogans with some of the Polish dukes while also exposing the national interests shared by Czechs and Poles.[20]

Gamfred's ministry provincial, is associated with Slavic Minorites having the use of their mother tongue suppressed and being deported to German monasteries (as described by Queen Kunigunda), causing a revolt by some of the brotherhood in 1268.[21] *Fratres Bohemi et Poloni potiores ac plures (The Bohemian and Polish brothers are more important and numerous)* deposed the Minister Provincial and appointed a provincial vicar in his place in the person of Jakub Diedonis (Deodatis?).[22] At the general chapter in Assisi (1269), Deodatus (1269-1270) was appointed Minister Provincial, but the province was severely punished for this insubordination: the custody of Kraków was incorporated into the province of Hungary, and the custody of Budziszyn (Bautzen) was incorporated into the province of Saxony.[23] This development in the internal organisation of the Order of Friars Minor

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[18] J. Kłoczowski, *Bonawentura jako generał zakonu (1257-1274) a czesko-polska (polsko-czeska) prowincja franciszkanów*, in: *Św. Bonawentura. Życie i myśl*, ed. S.C. Napiórkowski, E.I. Zieliński, Niepokalanów-Warszawa 1976, pp. 442-451; *idem*, *Bracia Mniejsi w Polsce średniowiecznej*, in: *Franciszkanie w Polsce średniowiecznej*, part 1, *Franciszkanie na ziemiach polskich*, ed. J. Kłoczowski, Lublin 1983, p. 40.

[19] *Kronika Fürstenhaina…*, p. 416; *Fragmenty kroniki Jana Ludwika Impekhovena…*, p. 438.

[20] This is eloquently evidenced by his letters: to the Bishop of Kraków, Prandota (*Kodeks dyplomatyczny katedry krakowskiej św. Wacława*, vol. 1, ed. F. Piekosiński, Kraków 1874, no. 44), and especially the so-called manifesto of the king of Czech to the Poles (*Przyczynki źródłowe do ostatnich lat panowania Ottokara II*, ed. B. Ulanowski, in: *Scriptores rerum Polonicarum*, vol. 12, Kraków 1888, pp. 11-13, no. 9). B. Ulanowski, *Zur Authentizitäts-Frage Ottokars II. Proklamation an die polnischen Fürsten vom Jahre 1278*, "Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens" 21 (1887), pp. 394-396); M. Pośpiech, *Problem autentyczności manifestu Przemysła Ottokara II do książąt polskich*, "Studia Historyczne" 15, (1972), 4, pp. 537-549. Cf. the polemic by A. Barciak, *W sprawie polityki Przemysła Otokara II wobec Polski*, "Przegląd Historyczny" 65 (1974), 3, pp. 545-550. For more on the manifestations of national ideas in the policy of this ruler, see A. Barciak, *Ideologia polityczna monarchii Przemysła Otokara II. Studium z dziejów czeskiej polityki zagranicznej w drugiej połowie XIII wieku*, Katowice 1982, pp. 74-90.

[21] RBM, vol. 2, no. 2509, 2510.

[22] *Kronika Fürstenhaina…*, p. 416; *Fragmenty kroniki Jana Ludwika Impekhovena…*, pp. 438-439.

[23] *Kronika Fürstenhaina…*, p. 416; *Fragmenty kroniki Jana Ludwika Impekhovena…*, pp. 438-439. Was the custody of Budziszyn (Bautzen) abolished at that time and incorporated into Złotoryja, as H. Wajs writes (*Zmiana przynależności prowincjalnej kustodii wrocławskiej i złotoryjskiej franciszkanów w drugiej połowie XIII wieku*, "Przegląd Historyczny" 74 (1983), 2, p. 261)?

may have been somewhat influenced by Duke Bolesław the Chaste with his wife Kinga, who at that time were in a close anti-Czech alliance with Hungary, in whose interest the Franciscan houses of the Duchy of Kraków and Sandomierz were incorporated into the province of Hungary.[24] The custody of Kraków was returned to the Czech province by a decision of the general chapter of 1272,[25] which may have been the result (and a brief result, as it turned out, after the death of King Władysław) of a tenuous peace between Czech and Hungary and their Polish coalition partners.[26] Unfortunately, the Czech-Polish province then irretrievably lost the custodies of Wrocław and Złotoryja, as confirmed by the next religious chapter in Lyon (1274).[27] This further bolsters the claim about growing Czech-German national tensions in Bohemia after 1273.[28] At the general chapter in Strasbourg (1282), the province's right to choose its provincial minister was restored, and the post was awarded to a Czech closely associated with Queen Kunegunda - the lector Czesław (1282-1286)[29] - previously a leader of Czechs' opposition to claims by the Germans.[30] His term in office coincided with the great dispute of 1282-87 between Thomas II, bishop of Wrocław, and Wrocław's Duke Henry IV Probus. The Friars Minor of the custodies of Wrocław and Złotoryja sided with the excommunicated ruler, while monks from the Czech Republic and Poland, including the custody of Opole, sided with the bishop.[31] Minister Provincial Czesław undoubtedly supported the metropolitan Minister Provincial of Gniezno, Jakub Świnka, in his fight against the Duke of Wrocław and the "German" Franciscans. However, their efforts to regain the custodies of Wrocław and Złotoryja failed.[32]

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[24] K. Kantak, *Franciszkanie polscy…*, p. 38.

[25] This was held in either Pisa or Lyon.

[26] B. Włodarski, *Polska i Czechy w drugiej połowie XIII i początkach XIV wieku (1250-1306)*, Lviv 1931, pp. 61-66; N. Mika, *Walka o spadek po Babenbergach 1246-1278*, Racibórz 2008, p. 77.

[27] *Kronika Fürstenhaina…*, p. 416; *Cronicon Boemicorum…*, p. 364; *Fragmenty kroniki Jana Ludwika Impekhovena…*, p. 439.

[28] A. Barciak, *Ideologia polityczna…*, pp. 79-82.

[29] *Kronika Fürstenhaina…*, p. 417; *Fragmenty kroniki Jana Ludwika Impekhovena…*, p. 440. During the provincial chapter in Olomouc in 1286, with the consent of the entire province, Czesław was suspended as Minister Provincial until the next general chapter. It is not known whether this is connected with his unsuccessful campaign to unite the custodies of Wrocław and Budziszyn (Bautzen).

[30] On Czesław's relationship with the Czech Queen, who was close to the Franciscans, see: RBM, vol. 2, No. 2509, 2510; A. Barciak, *Ideologia polityczna…*, pp. 102-103.

[31] This conflict has already been written on extensively. Among others, by Cz. C. Baran, *Sprawy…*, pp. 104-127, while from the Franciscan point of view it was shown in a new light in H. Wajs, *Zmiana…*, pp. 262-267.

[32] *Urkundenbuch der Kustodien Goldberg und Breslau*, ed. Ch. Reisch, Düsseldorf 1917 (= Monumenta Germaniae Franciscana 1), no. 71, 79.

The next provincial was the Pole, Teodoric (1287-1295), elected at the chapter in Stary Sącz. Interestingly, there were no conflicts to be heard of within the province at that time, but it was a period of very fierce rivalry over Kraków and other Polish lands between Wenceslaus II and Władysław Łokietek, who was closely associated with the Franciscans.[33] Z. Smejkal has assumed that Czesław's suspension at the provincial chapter in Olomouc (1286) and his dismissal from the ministry provincial at the general chapter in Montpellier (1287) was the work of Polish opposition within the Order.[34] It is significant, however, that the bishop of Prague, Tobiasz of Bechyně, sent a request for prayer for the Czech king Wenceslaus II and the entire Kingdom of Bohemia to the chapter in Sącz (8 September, 1287).[35]

After Theodoric, several more Ministers Provincial were Czechs. During the times of Herman of Pilsen (1304-1316), the chapter that was called for September 28, 1308 in Kraków was not held because of a war for Kraków at the time, most likely between Władysław Łokietek and Mikołaj, Duke of Opava.[36] After the death of the next Minister Provincial, Tobias Moravian (1316-18), the vicar of the province at the time, the custos of Prague, Nicholas, called for an assembly of the chapter in Nowy Sącz (1318). At this chapter there was a "terrible rebellion, but it was calmed down by the visitators".[37]

During the deliberations of the chapter of Nowy Sącz, just mentioned, Marcin of Mlade Boleslavi (1318-32) was elected as Minister Provincial. During his tenure there was another dispute within the province - but this time supranational, doctrinal, personal, and related to the revolt by the general of the Franciscan Order, Michael of Cesena, against Pope John XXII.[38]

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[33] This is evidenced by the help the Kraków Minorites gave to the duke of Kuyavia when the city of Kraków was captured by the army of Henry IV Probus in 1289.

[34] Z. Smejkal, *K dějinám národnostních sporu…*, p. 3.

[35] *Kronika Fürstenhaina…*, p. 417; *Cronicon Boemicorum…*, p. 369; *Fragmenty kroniki Jana Ludwika Impekhovena…*, p. 440. *Formulář biskupa Tobiáše z Bechyně*, ed. J.B. Novak, Praha 1903 (= Historický Archiv 22), no. 174.

[36] G. Labuda, *Franciszkanie polscy w źródłach narracyjnych prowincji polsko-czeskiej w średniowieczu*, in: *Franciszkanie w Polsce średniowiecznej*, parts 2 and 3, *Franciszkanie na ziemiach polskich*, ed. J. Kłoczowski, Lublin 1982, pp. 41-44.

[37] *Kronika Fürstenhaina…*, p. 419; *Fragmenty kroniki Jana Ludwika Impekhovena…*, pp. 441-442. Cf. *Chronica fratris Nicolai Glassberger Ordinis Minorum Observantium*, Quaracchi 1887 (= Analecta Franciscana 2), p. 104. Z. Smejkal, *K dějinám národnostních sporů…*, p. 3, writes erroneously that it was held in Sandomierz.

[38] *Kronika Fürstenhaina…*, pp. 419-420; *Fragmenty kroniki Jana Ludwika Impekhovena…*, p. 443. C. Biernacki, *Speculum Minorum, in quo primigenia religio Ordinis Minorum Conventualium… inspicitur*, Cracoviae 1688, pp. 247-248; K. Kantak, *Franciszkanie polscy…*, p. 114. The crisis's doctrinal and political grounds related to the suspension of the general of the Order, Michael of Cesena, has been presented in broad terms by H. Holzapfel, *Handbuch der Geschichte des Franziskanerordens*, Freiburg im Br. 1909, pp. 66-80.

A later Minister Provincial - Piotr Polak (1341-1346) - entered into a dispute with the custodes of Prague and Litoměřice, who were supported by other custodes from Moravia and Hradec Kralové.[39] The reason for the revolt was that the Minister allegedly exceeded his remit in removing many guardians from office, causing the monasteries affected by these decisions not to want to obey the Minister. For this reason, the general requested that Pope Clement VI suspend the statutes of Benedict XII regarding the election of custodes and guardians.[40] To alleviate the situation as quickly as possible, the head of the Order, General Fortanerius Vasali, thus sent his two commissioners to the meeting of the chapter in Kraków (September 29, 1345): Berthold Rose (Rosa), a lector at Regensburg, and Wacław, a lector at Nuremberg. The custodes of Kraków, Gniezno, and Opole came to the meeting, but no one from Czech came, *propter diversa pericula et verba frivola (because of various dangers and frivolous words)* issuing from the Poles. This matter had to be deferred to the next chapter. However, exaggerated accounts by modern monastic chroniclers hold that the decisions taken at the chapter in Kraków caused great mistrust and anger that allegedly lasted on both sides for more than twenty years. It even came to the Czechs demanding the province be divided. Minister Provincial Piotr made one more attempt to calm the mood and, being already ill himself (he died on May 26, 1346), prudently appointed Franciszek, a lector of the Prague monastery, as his vicar of the province.[41]

What can be said about the subsequent 14th-century Ministers Provincial is that most were from the Kingdom of Bohemia, or are of indeterminate nationality due to a lack of source information. However, the election of a Pole as the head of the province in the person of guardian of Kraków, Piotr of Kraków (1392-1408), brought renewed conflicts. In the atmosphere of a prolonged schism in the Church and growing unrest towards the end of Wenceslaus IV's reign, there was also considerable upheaval in the Czech-Polish Franciscan province. The custos of Prague, Jarosław of Beneszów, opposed Piotr, and probably stood against him for the ministry provincial and managed to attract numerous Czechs with him. The Minister Provincial of Cologne, Franciszek, came as a visitor, convening a meeting of the chapter in Kłodzko (1393)[42] but apart from Jarosław's supporters no one else attend-

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[39] *Kronika Fürstenhaina…*, p. 422; *Fragmenty kroniki Jana Ludwika Impekhovena…*, pp. 443-444.

[40] This fragment of the discussed dispute is mentioned only in *Chronica fratris Nicolai Glassberger…*, p. 182.

[41] *Kronika Fürstenhaina…*, p. 422; *Cronicon Boemicorum…*, p. 379; *Fragmenty kroniki Jana Ludwika Impekhovena…*, pp. 443-444; Moravska Zemska Knihovna v Brně, Mn. 60, pp. 14-15. K. Kantak, *Franciszkanie polscy…*, p. 116; G. Labuda, *Franciszkanie polscy w źródłach narracyjnych…*, pp. 26-27.

[42] It is not known on what basis Z. Smejkal, *K dějinám národnostních sporu…*, p. 4, claims that it was held in Oława.

ed. It is true that the monks who gathered in Kłodzko chose Jarosław as Minister Provincial, but all this caused great animosity between the two nations of the province and resulted in many complaints to the general of the Order. These included that Jarosław had arbitrarily changed the superiors of many monasteries. As a result, General Henryk Altieri (1387-1405) had him excommunicated and appointed Piotr of Kraków as his vicar. The next meeting of the chapter in Bytom (1395) brought a calming of the situation, because the supporters of both sides who attended jointly appointed the current vicar, Piotr of Kraków, as Minister Provincial. The choice was approved by the Minister General and was followed by a few years of peace among the Czech-Polish Friars Minor.[43] At that time, Popes Innocent VII (1405) and Gregory XII (1407) suspended from duty all Minsters Provincial who had held office for more than ten years. The Czechs accepted this reluctantly, especially Friars Maurycy Berska[44] and Paweł Donat, lectors from Prague. However, Piotr fulfilled the papal will and at the chapter in Hradec Kralové (June 4, 1408), despite his re-election, handed his office to Michał of Gniezno (1408-12).[45]

By the mid-14th century in Czech there was already a notably rapid increase in national awareness, which reached its apogee during the fighting of the Hussite revolution.[46] However, the Hussite radicalism that went hand in hand with this turned against all institutions of the Catholic Church, including (or perhaps above all?) the monasteries, among which the Mendicant monasteries had long aroused the undisguised distaste of native reformers.[47] As Gerard Labuda vividly put it, since 1415, the smoke of the pyre on which Jan Hus and Hieronim of Prague had been put to the flame in Konstanz had hung over the Franciscan monasteries of Czech.[48] At the same time, the centre of gravity of the provincial administration clearly shifted

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[43] *Kronika Fürstenhaina…*, p. 423; *Fragmenty kroniki Jana Ludwika Impekhovena…*, pp. 444-445; Moravska Zemska Knihovna v Brně, Mn. 60, p. 15. K. Kantak, *Franciszkanie polscy…*, pp. 118-119; A. Neumann, *Z dějin českých klášterů do válek husitských*, Praha 1936, p. 77.

[44] He is most likely to be identical with Mařik, i.e. Maurycy/Maurice, the honorary papal vicar and envoy of Wenceslaus IV to the cardinals convening the ecumenical council in Pisa. J. Kadlec, *Franciszkanie na ziemiach czeskich w okresie przedhusyckim oraz ich Studium Generalne*, in: *Franciszkanie w Polsce średniowiecznej*, part 1: *Franciszkanie na ziemiach polskich*, ed. J. Kłoczowski, Lublin 1983, p. 273.

[45] *Fragmenty kroniki Jana Ludwika Impekhovena…*, p. 445.

[46] S. Bylina, *Idee uniwersalne a czeska świadomość narodowa w późnym średniowieczu*, in: *Państwo - naród stany w świadomości wieków średnich*, ed. A. Gieysztor, S. Gawlas, Warszawa 1990, pp. 77-99; F. Šmahel, *Idea národa v husitských Čechách*, Praha 2000, *passim*.

[47] F. Šmahel, *"Intra et extra muros". Społeczna rola franciszkanów obserwantów i klarysek na ziemiach czeskich od połowy XIV do końca XV wieku*, in: *Franciszkanie w Polsce średniowiecznej*, part 1. *Franciszkanie na ziemiach polskich*, ed. J. Kłoczowski, Lublin 1983, pp. 286-292.

[48] G. Labuda, *Franciszkanie polscy w źródłach narracyjnych…*, p. 29.

from Bohemia to Poland (Kraków), with which Moravia (Brno) competed with occasional success. This was, of course, primarily the result of the Hussite wars, which had significant consequences for the Order and completely annihilated ten of the 26 Bohemian-Moravian monasteries, while leaving the other monasteries in ruins or with just a few monks impoverished to the edge of existence.[49]

The situation of the Czech Minorites at that time is best illustrated by the fate of another Minister Provincial, Świętomir of Karniów (1412-1428), who, in constant flight from the Hussites, wandered between various monasteries, ending his life in Karniów on May 6, 1428. In this situation, at the meeting of the Kraków chapter (1428), Jan Kmita, a doctor of theology from a Polish knightly magnate family, was elected and headed the Polish-Czech province until 1442.[50]

The general synod in Basel and the dispute with Pope Eugene IV (1431-1447) that led to schism between the Church and the Order of Friars Minor coincided with Jan Kmita's administration of the province. This dispute also had its consequences in Poland and Czech. Most of the Polish and Czech monasteries sided with the council, while the Moravians and some Polish monks supported the pope, which led to numerous conflicts, primarily between the Czech and Moravian monasteries. One of the scenes of this conflict was the provincial chapter in Kraków in 1441, during which Jakub the lector in Karniów was elected custos of Prague.[51] However, his people were not accepted by the Czech monasteries. Vincent, the guardian from Jindřichův Hradec, did not even receive him in his monastery and later apprehended him and took him to Vranov castle near Znojmo.[52] Then, Franciszek, probably the custos of Prague at the time, and obedient to the Czechs (which the chroniclers have not failed to emphasise), also began to slander Jakub of Karniów in his letters to Jan Kmita. Complaints that Jakub had refused to visit his custody while custos of Prague had a measurable effect, as they led the Minister Provincial to entrust Nicholas of Hradec Kralové with two custodies at once - Prague and Litoměřice.[53] In the following

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[49] According to F. Šmahel, *"Intra et extra muros*, pp. 293-297 and the list on pp. 321-322, the house in Litomierzyce should undoubtedly be added to the tally of destroyed monasteries.

[50] *Kronika Fürstenhaina…*, p. 424; *Fragmenty kroniki Jana Ludwika Impekhovena…*, p. 445. Moravska Zemska Knihovna v Brně, Mn. 60, p. 15.

[51] *Kronika Fürstenhaina…*, p. 424; *Fragmenty kroniki Jana Ludwika Impekhovena…*, p. 446.

[52] *Kronika Fürstenhaina…*, p. 424; these events are described in more detail by J.L. Impekhoven (*Fragmenty kroniki Jana Ludwika Impekhovena…*, p. 446) and S. Christ (Moravska Zemska Knihovna v Brně, Mn. 60, p. 15).

[53] This is written about least in *Kronika Fürstenhaina…*, p. 424. Considerably more information is provided by Impekhoven (*Fragmenty kroniki Jana Ludwika Impekhovena…*, p. 446) and S. Christ (Moravska Zemska Knihovna v Brně, Mn. 60, p. 15).

year (1442), the Kraków lector, Gotszalk, who was supported by the custos of Kraków, Andrzej Strzelec, went to the general of the order unbeknownst to the Minister Provincial and secured Jan Kmita's removal from office. Andrzej Strzelec was appointed vicar of the province charged with leading the chapter. The chapter met in 1442 in Kraków. Kmita resigned and handed the seal of the province into the care of Mikołaj Doliwa of Kraków and Mikołaj of Hradec Kralové, who were appointed for this purpose as definitors. However, the majority of chapter members again voted for Kmita. His seal was returned and his office restored. Kmita, however, wisely nominated Andrzej Strzelec as his vicar. Strzelec (who was with the supporters of the pope) and his adherents set the next chapter for Opole, expecting that it would be easier to hold their election there. However, Mikołaj Doliwa and Mikołaj of Hradec Kralové, together with the supporters of the Basel Council, opposed this by imprisoning Strzelec. However, he managed to instruct the chapter to elect Mikołaj of Karniów, called Stryczek, as Minister Provincial. Stryczek received the approval of the general chapter in Padua (June 8, 1443) and the Minister General, Antoni Rusconi (1443-49). Jan of Tuln, the Minister Provincial of Austria and at the same time the vicar of the Czech-Polish province, was sent by the general, but could do little. The conciliarists did not lay down their arms. Wincenty of Jindrziho Hradec was delegated to Basel, where the council approved Jan Kmita as Minister Provincial with the option to resign.[54] Dual power in the province had become a reality! Mikołaj Doliwa soon took over the office after Jan Kmit, and as of 1444 was the Minister Provincial of the supporters of Basel. He had the support of Bishop Oleśnicki, and took advantage of this by persecuting some among the opposition, arresting and imprisoning his brothers. His position seemed so strong that, in an attempt to win him over, the General of the Order was ready to agree to the division of the province (1445).[55] However, Doliwa did not intend to leave the conciliarists, which led to Rusconi placing a curse on him. Finally, when the Polish king Casimir IV Jagiellon (1445-92) swore allegiance to Nicholas V (1447), the schism in the province was also ended. During the legation of John Baptist Enricis in Kraków (1448), the Friars Minor also swore fealty to the new pope.[56] This state of affairs was undoubtedly due to the strong position of Bishop Oleśnicki, who addressed a letter to the General himself, demanding either Doliwa's confirmation or

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[54] *Kronika Fürstenhaina…*, p. 425; *Fragmenty kroniki Jana Ludwika Impekhovena…*, pp. 446-447; Moravska Zemska Knihovna v Brně, Mn. 60, pp. 15-16.

[55] *Fragmenty kroniki Jana Ludwika Impekhovena…*, p. 446; Moravska Zemska Knihovna v Brně, Mn. 60, p. 16.

[56] On the attitudes of Polish bishops towards the Council of Basel and the schism of 1439-1447, see the latest work by T. Graff, *Episkopat monarchii jagiellońskiej w dobie soborów powszechnych XV wieku*, Kraków 2008, pp. 221-309.

a new election. The schism in the Czech-Polish province of the Franciscans was finally ended at the chapter in Olomouc in 1456, when the two parts of the province were united under the administration of the Minister Provincial Nicholas of Karniów, who was elected by all the brothers.[57]

The following decades, under the tenure of Andrzej (1467-1470), and Marcin of Lviv (1470-87), brought relative peace in the province. New disputes arose only in 1488 during the chapter in Kraków. The majority then chose a Moravian custos, Stefan. This choice nonetheless brought protests from the Czechs, and Marcin of Kraków (1487-1494) was elected, though later chroniclers accused him of gaining office through simony. After his death, he was succeeded by Martin of Prague (1495-1503), a doctor of theology and vicar of Czech. However, he quickly turned out to be a very greedy, vain, and violent man.[58] During the chapter in Głogów in 1499, he pacified the opposition when "he expelled good monks and forced them to seek help from the general". The commissioner of the vicar general, after many hardships, and with the help of the Polish king Alexander Jagiellon, and his brother Cardinal Frederick, captured him only in 1503 and imprisoned him for life in the Minorite monastery in Brno, where he committed suicide in 1515.[59]

This was the beginning of the end for the joint Czech-Polish province of the Franciscans, which culminated in the murder of Minister Provincial Alberto Fantini (1514-16) by his confreres from Kraków. In 1515, the Pope detached the custody of Moravia and the Upper Silesian monasteries from it to join them to the province of Austria, and in 1517 the monastic province was finally divided into two separate provinces, one Czech and one Polish, each being granted a provincial seal - the object of so many conflicts in the first decades of the existence of the joint province of the Minorites.[60]

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[57] *Kronika Fürstenhaina…*, p. 425; *Fragmenty kroniki Jana Ludwika Impekhovena…*, p. 446; Moravska Zemska Knihovna v Brno, Mn. 60, pp. 16-17. K. Kantak, *Franciszkanie polscy…*, pp. 139-143; Z. Smejkal, *K dějinám národnostních sporu…*, pp. 5-6.

[58] K. Kantak, *Franciszkanie polscy…*, pp. 145-146; Z. Smejkal, *K dějinám národnostních sporu…*, p. 7. One such scandalous episode was described by T. Gałuszka OP, *Nieznany spór z ok. 1500 roku pomiędzy krakowskimi mendykantami. Przyczynek do badań nad stosunkami między zakonnymi w okresie średniowiecza*, in: *Mendykanci w średniowiecznym Krakowie*, ed. K. Ożog, T. Gałuszka, A. Zajchowska, Kraków 2008, pp. 467-483. *Chronica fratris Nicolai Glassberger…*, pp. 519-520, spoke about this in a similarly negative tone.

[59] *Fragmenty kroniki Jana Ludwika Impekhovena…*, p. 447; Moravska Zemska Knihovna v Brně, Mn. 60, p. 17.

[60] K. Kantak, *Franciszkanie polscy…*, pp. 149-151. C. Biernacki, *Speculum Minorum…*, p. 274.

Abstract

The article analyses the origins, course and consequences of ethnic conflicts in the Czech-Polish province of the Franciscans from the 13th to the early 16th century. The author shows that these tensions were not a marginal or exclusively social phenomenon, but were deeply rooted in the structures of the political and ecclesiastical elites and in organisational rivalry within the Order of Friars Minor. From the moment the joint province was established (1238-1239), there was an imbalance between its Czech and Polish parts, resulting from the organisational superiority of Bohemia, which led to disputes over primacy, the filling of offices and the symbols of power (the inscription on the province's seal). In the following centuries, these conflicts took various forms: from personal and administrative disputes, through national tensions (Czech-Polish and Slavic-German), to doctrinal divisions related to major crises in the Church, such as the dispute between the Pope and the Council of Basel or the Hussite Revolution. The Hussite Wars led to the collapse of monastic life in Bohemia and the shift of the centre of the province to Poland, which further deepened the antagonisms. The growing conflicts and scandals ultimately led to the break-up of the joint province: in 1515, the first territorial separations took place, and in 1517, a formal division into separate Czech and Polish provinces ended its nearly three centuries of shared history.

Keywords: Poland, Bohemia, Franciscan Order, national conflicts, national identity

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Diversity and religious tolerance out of necessity in the Jagiellonian monarchies: Bohemia and Poland[1]

Religious tolerance is a theme that is complex and difficult to interpret.[2] Today, the Czech Kingdom of the end of the fifteenth century is largely perceived as a place of widespread religious tolerance where Utraquist and Catholic faiths coexisted side-by-side. Yet, the path to the coexistence was not straightforward. Consequently, it was not a matter of religious tolerance in modern sense, but tolerance out of necessity.[3] Utraquist and Catholic pulpits were continuously voicing accusations of heresy against each other. Preachers of one denomination

[1] We would like to extend our gratitude to Dr William Edmundson for proofreading this paper.

[2] For general comments see P. Zagorin, *How the Idea of Religious Toleration Came to the West*, Princeton 2005. For the late Middle Ages see the groundbreaking volume of conference proceedings: *Toleranz im Mittelalter*, ed. A. Patschovsky, H. Zimmermann, Sigmaringen 1998.

[3] F. Šmahel, *Pax eterna et interna. Vom Heiligen Krieg zur Erzwungene Toleranz im husitischen Böhmen (1419-1485)*, in: *Toleranz im Mittelalter…*, pp. 221-273.

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considered the followers and adherents of the other patiently tolerated denomination false Christians who were to be brought to the true religion.

Similarly, the Kingdom of Poland in the late Middle Ages was seen not only as a multinational monarchy, but also as a state where a number of Christian and non-Christian communities lived side-by-side, and their coexistence was secured by the king, the nobility and - under some conditions - even the seniors of the Catholic Church.[4] Ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity constituted a distinguishing feature of the Polish-Lithuanian monarchy under the Jagiellonian dynasty. In the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Ruthenians constituted approximately 80 percent of the Duchy's population, and the Eastern rite, apart from the language, was a key component of their collective identity. At the end of the fourteenth century, Muslim Tatars and also Karaites began to settle in the Grand Duchy, and Jewish settlements developed dynamically in Volodymyr and Halych-Ruthenia.[5] The latter were granted wide autonomy and full freedom of religious worship. Even the Muslim Tatars received boyar privileges and served aa light cavalry units in the Lithuanian army. In the era of Turkish expansion in the Balkans and the dominant ideology of the holy war against Islam, such a tolerant attitude towards Muslims was unusual. Traveling through Lithuania in 1413, Gilbert de Lannoy, the diplomat envoy of Burgundian Prince Philip III the Good, reported on the city of Trakai and the surrounding villages Trakai inhabited by Tartars, who "are simple Saracens and have nothing in common with the faith of Jesus Christ". In his report, he wrote with surprise about Germans, Lithuanians, Ruthenians and Jews living side by side in peace.[6]

Since the early Piast rulers, the Polish monarchy started to be populated by the Jews whose number grew significantly in the late Middle Ages, and who were granted autonomy and freedom of worship in the thirteenth and fourteenth century. The incorporation of Halych and Volodymyr Ruthenia by King Casimir the Great on 1340s brought a large number

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[4] A opular and seminal overview of the religious toleration in early modern Poland was offered by J. Tazbir, *The State without Stakes. Polish Religious Toleration in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century*, transl. A.T. Jordan, Warsaw 1973; *idem*, *Reformacja, kontrreformacja, tolerancja*, Wrocław 1997. See also T. Kempa, *Religious Relations and the Issue of Religious Tolerance in Poland and Lithuania in the 16th and 17th Century*, "Sarmatia Europaea" 1 (2010), pp. 31-66; P. Kras, *The Religious Policy of Sigismund I and Sigismund II Augustus in the Reformation Period: status quaestionis*, "Acta Historica Universitatis Klaipedensis" 29 (2014), pp. 53-74.

[5] J. Drabina, *Wierzenia, religie, wspólnoty wyznaniowe w średniowiecznej Polsce i na Litwie i ich koegzystencja*, Kraków 1994; J. Strzelczyk, *Ku Rzeczpospolitej wielu narodów i wyznań. Katolicy i prawosławni w późnośredniowiecznej Polsce*, "Średniowiecze Polskie i Powszechne" 1 (1996), pp. 153-176.

[6] *Guillebert de Lannoy et ses voyages en 1413, 1414 et 1421*, ed. J. Lelewel, Bruxelles 1844, pp. 42-43; *Guillebert de Lannoy, Cesty a poselstva*, ed. J. Svátek, M. Nejedlý, O. Marin, P. Soukup, Praha 2009, p. 151.

of the Eastern Orthodox population into the Polish Kingdom. Yet the Kingdom of Poland under the rule of Ladislaus Jagiellon (1386-1434) and his sons Ladislaus III (1434-1444) and Casimir IV (1447-1492) can be hardly conceived as the place of religious tolerance. There was no toleration for dissidents from the Roman Church who regarded as heretics and social outcasts were exposed to repression by ecclesiastical and secular authorities. Papal inquisitors installed in Poland in 1318 to persecute Waldensians were offered full support of the Polish king and cooperated with royal officials in the extirpation of heretics. Though granted royal protection and religious autonomy the Jews lived under close surveillance and were subjugated to segregation laws.[7] Despite restrictions some individuals made careers in the royal service being promoted to the positions of king's money-lenders and tenants of salt mines and land estates. The Eastern Orthodox Ruthenians enjoyed freedom of worship and maintained their ecclesiastical structures but were politically marginalised. Until the middle of the sixteenth century Eastern Orthodox boyars were banned from higher positions in the royal administration available only to Catholics.[8] The late medieval source materials reflect the inferior status of non-Catholics in the Jagiellonian monarchy, but at the same time, in contrast to Western European countries, they show there was no state-sponsored campaign of religious violence against any minority communities.

Still, everything in this context depends on the approach of historians. Those who emphasise religious tolerance are able to detect its reflection in virtually all sources on the coexistence of Catholics, schismatics, or pagans. Similarly, one can understand many ordinances against the Orthodox and pagans as an expression of religious disciplining of non-believers by the Catholic majority. On the one hand, Polish Catholic rulers tolerated various non-believers in the Kingdom of Poland out of political necessity. On the other hand, it was also aware of its superiority and religious exclusivity. The privileged position of the Roman Church was secured by the Polish legislation and the political role of Catholic bishops in the state administration. In the Middle Ages Roman Catholicism was not only a dominant denomination but it was also granted a special status. Polish rulers were required by coronation oaths to spread Catholic faith, protect the Church and look

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[7] H. Haumann, *A History of East European Jews,* transl. J. Patterson, Budapest 2002, pp. 3-10. On the rise of Jewish settlement in early modern Poland, see R. Grodecki, *Polska piastowska: Pisma pośmiertne*, ed. J. Wyrozumski, Warszawa 1969, pp. 595-702; H. Samsonowicz, *The Jewish Population in Poland during the Middle Ages*, "Dialectics and Humanism: Polish Philosophical Quarterly" 16 (1989), pp. 35-42. H. Zaremska, *Żydzi w średniowiecznej Polsce. Gmina krakowska*, Warszawa 2011.

[8] A. Mironowicz, *Kościół prawosławny w państwie Piastów i Jagiellonów*, Białystok 2003, pp. 145-170.

after its material prosperity.[9] In a consequence they were obliged to hunt down dissidents from the Catholic orthodoxy and repress disobedience to the Church authorities. Only Catholic bishops acted as advisors to the Polish king and staffed the royal council, and in the last quarter of the fifteenth century became members of the upper chamber of the Polish parliament. Neither the Orthodox bishops nor the leaders of any Protestant denominations were ever granted the same political privileges.

Nonetheless, not all is always up to the historians. What sometimes matters is the wording of the authors of contemporary sources in how they treat the religious situation in the Kingdom of Poland. Let's start with a medieval example used by Tůma Přeloučský, judge of the Unity of Brethren. He was member of the faith group that was not tolerated in the Czech Kingdom. The Brethren were made equal by royal and estates decrees to the Waldensians or Picardians. Tůma used the example to explain to Wilhelm II von Pernstein how the King and estates treated the followers of other denominations in neighbouring Poland. Tůma pleaded with William for help when, in 1509, after the issuance of a stringent St Jacob's mandate by King Ladislaus Jagiellon, whereby the monarch, in cooperation with the estates, ordered the closure of all Brethren churches, banned secret gatherings of followers of the sect, appealed to expel all Brethren from Bohemia and Moravia, and encouraged their persecution as the worst heretics.[10] He pleaded for help not merely on the country estates owned by William, where the Brethren lived freely for the time being, but also throughout the country. Tůma asked William, as a powerful nobleman and member of aristocracy, to convince King Ladislaus that the Brethren were indispensable for the country, and that they posed no threat to the society or the crown. In his argument, he referred to the tolerance of schismatics, in the speech on the "Bulgarians" and of the "Racs", probably meaning the Thracians, i.e. the Greeks, in Ladislaus' Kingdom of Hungary: "Yet His Grace has not people of the same faith,

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[9] In the Polish *ordines coronandi*, in the oath of taking the sword, the king declared to use the sword to protect the Roman Church against all its enemies: „*Accinge gladio tuo super femur tuum potentissime, ut in hoc per eundem vim equitatis exerceas, molem iniquitatis potenter destruas et sanctam Dei ecclesiam eiusque fideles propugnes atque protegas, nec minus sub fide falsos quam Christiani nomini hostes execres et destruas*". *Ordines coronandi regis Poloniae*, ed. S. Kutrzeba, "Archiwum Komisji Historycznej" 11 (1910), pp. 158-159. The identical oath was also taken by the kings of France. *Ordines coronationis Franciae*, vol. 2: *Texts and Ordines for the Coronations of Frankish and French Kings and Queens in the Middle Ages*, ed. R.A. Jackson, Philadelphia 2000, p. 586. See also K. Ożóg, *Król w refleksji uczonych polskich XV wieku*, in: *Król w Polsce XIV i XV wieku*, ed. A. Marzec, M. Wilamowski, Kraków 2006, pp. 8-11; W. Szymborski, *Władysław Jagiełło – władca idealny czy święty*, in: *Sprawiedliwość - tradycja i współczesność*, ed. P. Nowakowski, J. Smołucha, W. Szymborski, Kraków 2006, pp. 53-71.

[10] *Archiv český čili staré pisemné památky české i moravské, sebrané z archivu domácich i cizích*, ed. F. Palacký, vol. 6, Praha 1872, pp. 391-393.

for He has the Racs, Bulgarians and others who are not unanimous in their faith with the Romans, yet He tolerates them, if they remain only His Grace's subjects and they maintain peace, do not fight for faith and do not wage war. Likewise, His Grace tolerates us and the Czechs in our beliefs, so there are no wars over them, and priests should not have His Grace to do so, because they have written in their rights, that lesser evil is to be allowed for greater one, for it has come from God that the Christianity is divided into several branches, and each praises its own and reproves alien, and whoever wants to oppress them from their faith, immediately sets for battle so as not to be oppressed."[11]

Tůma argued that the same applied to the Brethren. They, too, lived in peace in the land, did not wage wars, and the only sword they had by their side was that of spiritual warfare. The King was to thus tolerate them in the same way as he tolerated non-Catholic worshipers in Hungary. He was not to listen to either Catholic or Utraquist clergy, whom he called "fellow brethren." For it were they who had persuaded the King to speak so sharply against the Brethren. At the same time, Tůma invoked God and begged him to give Catholics and Utraquists the wisdom of the pagans, the Turks and the Tatars, who shed less innocent blood and were more tolerant of non-believers than Catholics, who, with their cruel and non-Christian conduct called upon themselves God' revenge. He told a related parable that was purportedly told by Czech and Moravian mercenaries hired by the Polish King during the wars with the Teutonic Knights: "Do forgive an amusing allegory that used to be said to the Czech and Polish nobles and other people who were mercenaries under His Grace the old King when he had an argument with them about their faith."[12] The context suggests that the conversation might have taken place sometime during the reign of Casimir IV, perhaps during the Thirteen Years' War. The parable was a fable with a fox and its cubs in the lead role: "There was a fox with cubs. When she ran away from them, they began to quarrel, which one is the prettiest. And she said unto them: Dear daughters, drop the quarrel, when ye be with the furrier on a perch he shall know which is most beautiful; and that which is the most beautiful he shall set before, and which is ugliest he shall place in the back. Also, when God comes to judge, he will just recognise and judge who had good faith and who had bad. And he shall let that who hath good faith with good works shall go into heaven, and he shall send that who hath bad faith with evil works to hell. And thus they ended their quarrel over faith."[13]

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11 *Ibidem*, vol. 16, p. 38.
12 *Ibidem*, p. 39.
13 *Ibidem*, pp. 39-40.

Tůma considered the exemplum to be a proof of religious tolerance in Poland. He tried to interpret it by suggesting that the Polish King was aware that every denomination has its advantages and disadvantages, and one cannot decide which is better or worse. God may be the only judge on this. He judges by good and bad deeds, and not by the one's denominational affiliation. Tůma had probably never been in Poland and certainly was not among the mercenaries hired by King Casimir. Yet the fable about the fox cubs and furriers served him as a welcome parable from the land reigned by the father of King Ladislaus. Tůma's parable comes across as highly tolerant of the Polish Kingdom of the second half of the fifteenth century. Still, its interpretation might prove misleading for it may have been removed from reality. Drawing from the existing sources, the following section offers a comparison of several aspects of religious life to show how the religious situation in Poland differed from that in Bohemia. It will also suggest why wholly sovereign and mutually incompatible forms of religious tolerance out of necessity prevailed in each country.

Tůma's favourable comments reflect a rather widespread opinion of the Hussite elites on the religious toleration in Poland and Lithuania under the reign of Jagiellonian kings. Such opinion contributed to the popularity of the Jagiellons and made them desired candidates to the Czech throne. In the early period of the Hussite revolution the founder of the Jagiellonian dynasty, King Ladislaus Jagiello was invited by the Utraquist party to take the Czech crown. For the Hussite seniors it did not matter that the Polish king accepted the condemnation of Jan Hus and the anti-Hussite regulations of the Council of Constance and Pope Martin V. In 1438 Jagiello's younger son Casimir was invited to the Czech throne after the death of Sigismund of Luxembourg though the support for his candidature proved fable and his military campaign ended up in failure. Finally, in 1471 Jagiello's grandson, Ladislaus Jagiellon, effectively was crowned king of Bohemia thanks to the support of the Utraquist party. Presenting the candidacy of Casimir Jagiellon's eldest son at the Sejm in Kutná Hora on 22 May 1471, the representative of the Polish king, Dobiesław Kurozwęcki, emphasized the close ties connecting the two Slavic nations, Czech and Polish, as well as the tolerant policy of the Jagiellonian rulers, which ensured peace and stability. Such arguments were welcomed by Utraquist nobles who elected Ladislaus king of Bohemia trusting that he would restore public order and religious peace in the society disturbed by religious controversies. His election strengthened the alliance with the Kingdom of Poland and its monarch Casimir IV, who had collaborated with King George of Poděbrady in the conflict against King Matthias Corvinus. Political and military calculations were of primary importance for the Czech leaders though the fame of King Casimir IV as a tolerant monarch ruling a multireligious society contributed to the growing popularity of his oldest son in Bohemia.

As just mentioned, Polish kings, like all medieval rulers, functioned in a strictly defined legal and religious context. First of all, they were expected to comply with canon law which described their obligations towards the Roman Church and guidelines how they should perform their royal duties. Treatises and narrative sources constructed and promoted the image of an ideal Christian king whose piety and obedience to the Church were presented as elementary royal virtues.[14] Furthermore, the prosperity of their kingdom was directly associated with their service to the Catholic Church which claimed religious monopoly and did not accept any concessions to non-Catholic confessions.[15] Intolerance was a principle of the Roman Church in the Middle Ages and the persecution of heresy took a central place in the Church response to religious dissidence. Thus the laws of the Polish kings served to implement such strategy of the Roman Church which took hostile approach towards Orthodox schismatics, Jews, Muslims and first of all to heretics, religious dissidents from its midst. A number of normative sources from the Kingdom of Poland since the end of the fourteenth century offer evidence of intolerance of all denominations other than Catholicism. That corresponds with the initial intentions of Ladislaus Jagiellon's policy after his accession to the Polish throne: to support Catholics and restrict the rights of the Orthodox Church, which part of his family and, chiefly, the Lithuanian boyars were linked to. The King's intolerant policy was particularly manifested in the decree he issued in Vilnius in 1387.[16] It demanded that all Lithuanians of both genders were to be brought, peacefully or violently, to Catholicism in Lithuania and Ruthenia. The King also forbade marriages between male Lithuanians and female Ruthenians, and respectively between male Ruthenians and female Lithuanians. The royal decree also imposed a ban on building new Orthodox churches. The situation was, however, more complicated that the prescriptions of the 1387 decree demonstrate. Under the rule of Ladislaus's grandfather Gedyminas and his father Algirdas, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania dynamically expanded southward from its original domain along the eastern Baltic seashore, encompassing vast territories of Ruthenia, populated by almost exclusively by Eastern Orthodox population. By the time of Jogailo's ascension to the throne pagan Lithuanians constituted no more than 10% of the entire population of the Grand Duchy controlling much larger and far more developed Ruthenian society. To rule such a mixed country Lithuanian grand dukes learnt to respect linguistic and religious diversity of Ruthenians. A number of Gedymin's sons and grandsons married Ruthenian princesses, converted to Eastern Orthodoxy and adopted their lives

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14 K. Ożóg, *Król…*, pp. 7-47.

15 U. Borkowska, *Dynastia Jagiellonów w Polsce*, Warszawa 2011, pp. 390-392.

16 D. Baronas, S.C. Rowell, *The Conversion of Lithuania: From Pagan Barbarians to Late Medieval Christians*, Vilnius 2015, pp. 261-326.

to Ruthenian standards. The traditions of toleration which had been pioneered in Lithuania made a significant impact on Ladislaus Jagiello and his successors who worked to implements some of its elements in the Polish Kingdom.

The synodal statute of Archbishop Nicholas Trąba of Gniezno dated 1420 was quite identical, although Eastern Orthodox Ruthenians were still allowed to build new churches with the consent of the respective bishops. Furthermore, the synodal decree banned the Orthodox from performing their services in Catholic churches and serve the sacraments to Catholics. Correspondingly, Catholic clergy were not to serve the sacraments to the Orthodox.[17] It became self-evident that participation in religious ceremonies performed by clergy of other denominations was forbidden.[18] In practical life, however, problems of religious coexistence kept no doubt arising daily. They could not be resolved by repressive decrees only. Church dignitaries were particularly exasperated by bi-denominational marriages, which proved difficult to eradicate. In 1452, even the Pope Nicholas V opposed the persistent practice, not only by forbidding such marriages, but also ordering them to be declared invalid.[19]

The policy of the Polish monarchs towards Eastern Orthodox Ruthenians followed the guidelines of the Holy See which treated them as schismatics and called for their conversion by any means. The Catholic Church did not recognise the baptism of Orthodox Ruthenians and required converts from Eastern Orthodoxy to be baptised for a second time. Such approach demonstrated deep hostility towards Eastern Orthodoxy and at the same time hindered the operations of Catholic missionaries in Ruthenia. That is why during the Council of Constance King Ladislaus Jagiello took steps to convince the Church seniors that the baptism in Orthodox rite should be considered valid in order to facilitate the promotion of Catholic faith among Ruthenians. Furthermore, the Orthodox Ruthenians administered Eucharist under two kinds which made them close to the Hussites. This liturgical similarity alerted some Polish bishops. In 1435 Bishop Zbigniew Oleśnicki of Cracow wrote a letter to the Council of Basel warning against the cooperation of Ruthenian schismatics and Czech Hussites which would pose a serious threat to Polish Catholics[20].

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[17] In practice, however, it was most certainly the case, as is evidenced by the Franciscan Observants addressed to Pope Sixtus IV in 1475: *Codex diplomaticus ecclesiae cathedralis necnon Dioeceseos Vilnensis*, ed. J. Fijałek, W. Semkowicz, vol. 1, Kraków 1932, pp. 340-341.

[18] *Statuty wieluńsko-kaliskie Mikołaja Trąby z r. 1420*, ed. B. Ulanowski, J. Fijałek, A. Vetulani, Kraków 1951, pp. 96-97.

[19] See letter Pope Nicholas V sent to Bishop Matthias of Vilnius, *Codex diplomaticus ecclesiae cathedralis necnon Dioeceseos Vilnensis*, vol. 1, pp. 237-239.

[20] *Codex epistolaris saeculi decimi quinti*, ed. A. Lewicki, vol. 1/1, Kraków 1891, pp. 79-80; P. Kras, *Husyci w piętnastowiecznej Polsce*, Lublin 1998, p. 257.

The Jagiellonian dynasty and their court for projects of union between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church has been regarded as a manifestation of a tolerant attitude towards Orthodoxy. Unlike the initiatives put forward by the Holy See, which demanded that the Orthodox recognize the Pope as the head of the Church and tried to impose Catholic rituals, the Jagiellonian rulers were closer to the model of union based on consensus and preserving the traditions of both Churches. Ladislaus Jagiello took the initiative for the union by sending the Orthodox Metropolitan of Kiev, Gregory Camblak, to the Council of Constance in 1418.[21] Unfortunately, his project of union of churches, which assumed the preservation of separate liturgical traditions, did not meet with much interest. Despite this, the founder of the Jagiellonian dynasty was proudly remembered as an advocate of religious dialogue and a ruler who respected the heritage of the Eastern Church. Two decades later (1439), at the Council of Florence, a union between the Churches was concluded on terms dictated by the papacy, which to achieve its goals took advantage of the difficult situation of the Byzantine Empire fighting for survival against the Turks. The Florentine union was not met with enthusiasm by the people of Byzantium and was rejected by a large part of the clergy and faithful who "preferred Turkish captivity to papal captivity".[22] Also in the Jagiellonian monarchy, the union concluded in Florence was not accepted by the Orthodox clergy. A more lasting project of unification of the Latin and Eastern Churches was implemented by the grandson of King Sigismund I, Sigismund III Vasa, leading to the conclusion of the Union of Brest in 1596, in which Orthodox believers were guaranteed the preservation of their own rituals and language.[23]

A comparison with the situation in contemporary Bohemia shows that there was no similar practice. Not a single state church, Catholic and Utraquist, had normatively regulated married life and banned religiously mixed marriages. They were entered into not only in the cities, but also among the nobility, including the squires.[24] Freedom and normatively unregulated freedom also applied to the ways of administering the sacraments. In the post-Compacts period, i.e. after 1435/1436, they were recognised as the sacrament of both faiths groups. From the perspective of ecclesiastical law, Catholic and Utraquist clergy were to administer the sacraments to both denominations. That also applied to the administration of the sacrament

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[21] A. Mironowicz, *Unie kościelne na ziemiach polskich i ich konsekwencje*, "Studia Podlaskie" 19 (2011), pp. 3-37.

[22] J. Grzywaczewski, *Unia florencka*, "Teologiczne Studia Siedleckie" 19 (2022), pp. 57-58.

[23] H. Dylągowa, *Dzieje Unii Brzeskiej (1569-1918)*, Warszawa-Olsztyn 1996.

[24] R. Novotný, *Konfesionalizace před konfesionalizací? Víra a společnost* v *husitské epoše*, in: *Heresis seminaria. Pojmy a koncepty v bádání o husitství*, ed. P. Soukup, P. Rychterová, Praha 2013, pp. 233-266.

of the altar under one or both kinds, according to the wishes of the faithful. In practice, controversies sometimes erupted inevitably in the cities and the aristocratic country estates, when some clergy refused to administer sacraments to members of other faiths groups.[25] Controversies also arose when restrictions were imposed in Catholic and Utraquist cities on adopting city law or joining a guild.[26] Yet no one ever wanted anyone to convert and renounce their original faith. Similarly, sources from the second half of the fifteenth century document the existence of the so-called *bi-credentes* – persons. They sometimes attended services in Catholic and occasionally in Utraquist church. In their wills, they remembered both Utraquist and Catholic clergy and monasteries.

Nonetheless, the situation in the Kingdom of Poland was probably more complex than it may seem from the royal or archbishop's decrees. Since the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, legal norms offer documentary evidence of a kind of tolerance out of necessity rather than intolerance. The oldest evidence comes from a letter from the Grand Duke of Lithuania, Vytautas, which he had addressed to the Lithuanian dukes. Vytautas wrote that no one was to be forced to convert. On the contrary, everyone was to remain with the denomination they had once professed. He repeated that in 1415, when he literally wrote in a privilege that he did not wish for the Orthodox faith to decline, Orthodox churches to disappear, and lose their former income and revenues.[27] His declaration reflected a long tradition of tolerance adopted by his ancestors who had learnt to respect the religion of the Ruthenian subjects and even being pagans looked after the welfare of the Orthodox Church.

In addition to religious life, tolerance and/or intolerance in Poland and Lithuania also interfered in exclusively political matters. Articles on the Polish-Lithuanian Union, issued in Horodło in 1413, explicitly stated that all public offices in both countries could be held exclusively by Catholics.[28] The situation remained unchanged after 1434, when Prince Sigismund Kestutovych granted new privileges to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, even though they otherwise proclaimed religious equality of the two denominations.[29]

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[25] On the coexistence in the 1440s-1460s see R. Urbánek, *Věk poděbradský*, vol. 3, Praha 1930 (= České dějiny 3/3). For a later period a good overview is offered by J. Macek, *Víra a zbožnost Jagellonského věku*, Praha 2001.

[26] The restriction on guilds membership imposed on the Catholics in the Old and New Town from the 1450s is most manifest. *Archiv český…*, vol. 14, pp. 459-460, 464, 472, 476, 484.

[27] J. Strzelczyk, *Ku Rzeczpospolitej wielu narodów i wyznań…*, p. 170.

[28] *Akta unii Polski z Litwą*, ed. S. Kutrzeba, W. Semkowicz, Kraków 1932, pp. 50-54, 60-71.

[29] W. Czermak, *Sprawa równouprawnienia schizmatyków i katolików na Litwie (1432-1563)*, "Rozprawy Akademii Umiejętności. Wydział historyczno- filozoficzny" 44 (1903), pp. 374-393; G. Błaszczyk, *Dzieje stosunków polsko–litewskich*, vol. 2: *Od Krewa do Lublina*, Poznań 2007, pp. 683-684.

Theoretically Orthodox boyars were excluded from participating in the administration of the country, though some of them were appointed to high offices and took seats in the council of the grand dukes.[30] On the contrary, in the Czech and Moravian context, no sources seem to offer evidence of political discrimination of followers of one or the other denomination recognised by the Prague Compactata. During the reign of the Utraquist King George of Poděbrady (1458-1471) and that of the Catholic rulers Ladislaus (1471-1516) and Louis Jagiellon (1516-1526), both Catholics and Utraquists served in public offices. An exception was the period when George of Poděbrady was in a curse, and when he had to face crusade and, particularly, Matthias Corvinus. Supported by the Czech Catholic nobility, Matthias struggled to seize the Czech throne. Yet, the political equality was determined by the fact that both nobles and knights participated in public administration. The balance was a political necessity, given that Catholics prevailed among the nobility and Utraquists among the knights. Any attempt to prevent one or the other group from participating in public administration would have ignited fierce struggle that none of the sovereigns could afford. The attempts at a (albeit quite limited) Catholic restoration in the first decades of Ladislaus' reign in Bohemia did not alter the status quo.[31]

In contrast to the Czech Kingdom, sources show that, since the beginning of the fifteenth century, the Catholic Church was being favoured at the expense of other religious groups in the Kingdom of Poland. On accession to the Polish throne first as co-ruler with Queen Hedwig or later as an elected king, Jagiełło envisaged that all his lands would be Catholicised. Everyday practice showed, however, that despite his determined effort to favour the Germans and Jews when founding new towns and villages, his vision proved impossible to implement.[32] In Lithuania and Ruthenia, the religious composition of the population

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[30] L. Korczak, *Litewska rada wielkoksiążęca w XV wieku*, Kraków 1998.

[31] For a comprehensive overview see J. Macek, *Jagellonský věk v českých zemích (1471-1526)*, vol. 2: *Šlechta*, Praha 1994. For the end of the Jagiellonian era see J. Válka, *Tolerance,* či *koexistence? K povaze soužití různých náboženských vyznání* v českých *zemích* v 15. *až 17. století*, "Studia Comeniana et historica" 18 (1988), pp. 75-96; P. Maťa, *Vorkonfessionelles,* überkonfessionelles, *transkonfessionelles Christentum. Prolegomena zu einer Untersuchung der Konfessionalität des böhmischen und mährischen Hochadels zwischen Hussitismus und Zwangkatholisierung*, in: *Konfessionelle Pluralität als Herausforderung. Koexistenz und Konflikt in Spätmittelalter und Frühen Neuzeit. Winfried Eberhard zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. J. Bahlcke, K. Lambrecht, H.-Ch. Maner, Leipzig 2006, pp. 307-331.

[32] T.M. Trajdos, *Kościół katolicki na ziemiach ruskich Korony i Litwy za panowania Władysława II Jagiełły (1386-1434)*, Wrocław 1983; *idem*, *Polityka króla Władysława II Jagiełły wobec kościoła katolickiego na ziemiach ruskych Królestwa Polskiego i Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego*, "Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Prace Historyczne" 141 (2014), pp. 315-337; A. Janeczek, *Polska ekspansja osadnicza w ziemi lwowskiej z XIV-XVI w.*, "Przegląd Historyczny" 69 (1978), pp. 597-622; *idem*, *Exceptis schismaticis. Upośledzenie Rusinów w przywilejach prawa niemieckiego Władysława Jagiełły*, "Przegląd Historyczny" 75 (1984), pp. 527-541.

both in cities and countryside remained practically unchanged. Yet, the state of affairs within nobility, particularly among the Lithuanians, was different. Wishing to pursue their political careers and secure appointments to high offices, some of them considered conversion to Catholicism though the scale of such acts was limited in number and mostly to the lowest strata of boyars. Conversions among Lithuanian nobles were thus driven by political necessity rather than religious conviction. In Bohemia, in the second half of the fifteenth century, there were occasional conversions within the ranks of the Utraquist nobility. Yet the reasons were rather individual. They did not significantly alter the religious composition of the Czech nobility.[33]

In terms of theological reflection on religious tolerance, the differences between the Czech and Polish Jagiellonian context are also quite clear. It was particularly characteristic of the Kingdom of Poland where, given the nature of the Polish–Lithuanian union, theologians experienced coexistence of two large religious populations. Until the end of the fifteenth century they hardly ever reflected the Catholic and the Orthodox Christian denominational dualism. It is all the more striking given that, even during the reign of Ladislaus Jagiellon, theologians from the University of Cracow who represented the Polish king at the Council of Constance promoted the idea of tolerant attitude towards pagans and criticised the conversion of heathen Prussians by naked force as conducted in by the Teutonic Knights. The most vocal proponents of this idea were Paulus Vladimiri and Andrzej Łaskarzyc who before and during the Council of Constance produced treatises arguing that it was not possible to expropriate the pagans from their land. The two Cracow scholars challenged the dominant concept of the holy war against the infidels which legitimized the conquest of their territories and their conversion to Christianity. Paulus Vladimiri inferred such rights of the pagans arguing that, unlike Christians, they were not principally governed by divine law, but exclusively by natural law. Only when their conduct violated natural law, either the Pope or the emperor had the right to oppose them. Vladimiri promoted an original idea of *ius gentium*, common to all human beings, which guaranteed personal freedom and property rights of every man regardless of his/her religion. As a consequence he considered activities of Christian missionaries the only acceptable form of promoting Christian faith and rejected any violence to be applied to this end. Conversion was treated as a personal decision, a change of mind and heart, which should always remain free and unconstrained by any pressure. Thus Vladimiri argued that it was entirely up to the pagans to convert and no one was to be punished for not adopting Christianity. The only exception, according

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[33] R. Novotný, *Die Konfessionalität des böhmischen und mährischen Adels in der Zeit der Regierung Sigismunds von Luxemburg*, in: *Kaiser Sigismund (1368-1437). Zur Herrschaftspraxis eines europäischen Monarchen*, ed. K. Hruza, A. Kaar, Wien-Köln-Weimar 2012, pp. 57-74.

to the Cracow master, were instances when the pagans blocked missionary preachers free operations on their territories. It was then permissible to attack the pagans militarily and impose missionary activity by force.[34] Let us stress that Vladimiri's doctrine of *ius gentium* was developed in the confrontation with the crusading ideology of the Teutonic Knights, and effectively - as it turned out later - undermined violence as a legitimate method of spreading Christianity.

The ideas of Cracow scholars gave a strong stimulus to the debate on religious freedom and tolerance. Yet, the tolerance as promoted by the university-trained theologians had its limits. By no means did it involve schismatics and heretics. The only exception was the question put to the members of the Council of Constance, namely whether it was permissible to use, in a just war, the help of schismatics, pagans and even heretics. This question was by no means new, as it already appears in the interpretations of the holy war by Stanislaus of Skarbimierz. Polish theologians and jurists answered in the affirmative: holy war to defend the faith against its enemies, holy war against those who engage in un-Christian conduct took precedence over Church ordinances concerning the coexistence of Catholics with schismatics, pagans and heretics.

To understand the attitude among the members of the Kraków university towards the pagans as an expression of religious tolerance seems out of place, as is to consider the permission to the Christians to fight in the holy war alongside schismatics and pagans against enemies to be an sign of tolerance. In fact, it is an expression of downright theological pragmatism and political philosophy of the time. Polish theologians and jurists associated their thoughts exclusively with the military conflict of the Kingdom of Poland and the King of Poland with the Teutonic Knights. It may be assumed that their critique also targeted Western European knights who volunteered to join the Teutonic Knights in their military operations against Poland.[35] In reality, however, legal sovereignty of the pagans as proclaimed by the Polish university masters was merely part of the Polish political propaganda and diplomatic game that aimed to reduce the international support for the Teutonic Knights. At the same time, it aimed to secure the exclusive right of the most Christian King of Poland to spread Christianity in Lithuania, Samogitia and Ruthenia without any violence.

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[34] K. Ożóg, *Intellektuelle im Dienst des Staates - das Beispiel Polens im späten Mittelalter"*, in: *Das Reich und Polen. Parallelen, Interaktionen und Formen der Akkulturation im hohen und späten Mittelalter*, ed. Th. Wünsch, Ostfildern 2003, pp. 301-321; *idem*, *Udział Andrzeja* Łaskarzyca *w sprawach i sporach polsko-krzyżackich do soboru w Konstancji*, in: *Polska i jej sąsiedzi w późnym średniowieczu*, ed. K. Ożóg, S. Szczur, Kraków 2000, pp. 159-186; W. Świeboda, *Innowiercy w opiniach prawnych uczonych polskich w XV wieku. Poganie, żydzi, muzułmanie*, Kraków 2013, pp. 191-203.

[35] See W. Paravicini, *Die Preußenreisen des europäischen Adels*, Sigmaringen 1989-1995.

If so, we may ask whether it is righteous to speak about tolerance or rather about a pragmatic strategy of the Polish diplomacy to challenge the dominant narrative of the Teutonic Knights and to promote the policy of the Polish monarch who worked hard to expand the Catholic doctrine on his territories. Actually, Polish diplomats neither advocated tolerance in a modern meaning of this term nor did they favoured the idea of legal protection to be extended to all denominations. The problem was not to tolerate or to repress representatives of non-Catholic denominations but how to enforce Catholicism considered the only true faith. The peaceful existence of non-Catholic groups was granted temporarily as the expected perspective envisaged their conversion to Catholicism in future. Tolerance towards pagans, so vigorously discussed at the Council of Constance, became fast a purely academic topic without any practical applications. Lithuanians were officially christianised in the Catholic rite in 1387 following the baptism of their ruler Jogaila (Jagiełło) who a year earlier had been converted himself from paganism to Christianity. Samogitians who were the last pagans along the Baltic coast and the target of crusading expeditions of the Teutonic Knights abandoned paganism during the Council of Constance and the arrival of delegation to the Council in 1417 clearly demonstrated that there were no more pagans to be converted by the Teutonic Knights. The Christian Samogitians praised the Polish king who in contrast to the missionaries with the black cross on their mantels had brought them to the true faith by arguments and the example of his own life The Christian Samogitians speaking to the international community gathered at Constance provided a strong prove of the effective conversions achieved without violence. At the same time they publicly rebuked false claims of the Teutonic Knights who were presented as blood-thirsty predators with no respect to human life of Christian values. Thus scholastic arguments for toleration applied in the works of Paulus Vladimiri and Stanislaus of Skarbimierz were strengthened by the testimonies of former pagans and fresh Christians from Samogitia. Their conversion demonstrated the superiority and efficacy of the evangelical methods of spreading Christianity by the Polish king and gave a fatal blow to the crusading doctrine of the Teutonic Knights.[36]

Later, when Christianisation of Lithuania and Ruthenia was theoretically completed, though the remnants of paganism in the north-eastern parts of the Poland and Lithuania remained strong and visible, Cracow theologians and jurists lost interest in the problem of the rights of infidels. It looks that tolerance did not bother them any longer and the problem

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[36] P. Kras, *The Conversion of Pagans and the Concept of 'ius gentium' in the Writings of Cracow Professors in the First Half of the Fifteenth Century - an Overview*, "Bažnyčios Istorijos Studijos" 6 (2013), pp. 23-54.

was absent in the agenda presented by them at the Council of Basel. For the Polish king and his diplomats, Cracow professors including, the protection of pagans against violence and forceful conversion was first of all a political issue which had its particular significance during the dramatic conflict with the Teutonic Knights in the first quarter of the fifteenth century. Thus, the concept of *ius gentium* served as a diplomatic weapon in the armoury of Polish diplomacy and - we may add - fulfilled its role quite effectively. An examination of the approach of Polish theologians and jurists to the tolerance of infidels, ought to take into account the fact that, during the reign of Casimir IV, the Cracow masters turned their argument around: at that point they defended the King's refusal to take part in the crusade against the Turks suggesting that the Polish monarch had to expend all military forces on the Christianisation of Lithuania. There is no more rejection of violence treated as a legitimate instrument of Christianisation of the pagans. Equally, there is no one to emphasise voluntary nature of the conversion and the conciliatory nature of missionaries' operations. On the contrary, the violent promotion of Christian doctrine became the main reason why the Polish King did not to take part in the crusade against the Turks.

Casimir IV did not deny the crusading idea to fight the Muslim Turks who posed a serious threat to Latin Christendom. Like other European monarchs he was shocked by the fall of Constantinople in 1453 and initially supported the idea to organise a crusade to fight the Turks and prevent their further expansion in the Balkans. Despite his declarations neither he himself joined any crusade nor did he send his troops to fight within the anti-Turkish coalition organised by Popes Calixtus III or Pius II. Officially, he abstained from such expeditions because he did not wish to disperse his forces needed to protect the territories of his Lithuanian state threatened by the expansion of the Ottoman Empire in the Black Sea area and frequent incursions of Tartars. Actually, Casimir IV's désintéressement reflected his strained relationships with the popes who preferred to side with the Teutonic Knights and blocked his dynastic plans towards Bohemia and Hungary. That's why, on the one hand the Polish king spoke with one voice with other Christian monarchs complaining about the Turkish threat for Christendom and calling for an anti-Turkish crusade.[37] But on the other, having different priorities, he turned a blind eye on the Turkish conquests and was satisfied to maintain

[37] J. Smołucha, *East-Central Europe and the Idea of Crusade in the Second Half of the Fifteenth Century*, in: *Holy War in Late Medieval and Early Modern East-Central Europe*, ed. J. Smołucha, J. Jefferson, A. Wadas, Kraków 2017, pp. 109-122; K. Baczkowski, *Próby włączenia państw jagiellońskich do koalicji antytureckiej papieża Aleksandra VI na przełomie XV/XVI wieku*, "Nasza Przeszłość" 81 (1994), pp. 5-50.

a peaceful *status quo* along his southern borders, even at the cost of offering costly gifts to the sultan and Tartar khan.[38]

Casimir's position towards the Orthodox population did not change in relation to the policy of his father Ladislaus Jagiello. Orthodox Christians remained second-class citizens in the Polish-Lithuanian state, which helped maintain the privileged position of the Lithuanian elite. The legal status of Orthodox Ruthenians was impaired compared to Catholic Lithuanians, who could fully benefit from the privileges of the Polish nobility and had full access to all offices. This legal impairment also concerned the Orthodox Church, which retained its own structures, places of worship and liturgy, but whose clergy did not have equal rights with the Catholic clergy. As Grand Duke of Lithuania, Casimir IV functioned as a protector and benefactor of the Orthodox Church. He had the right to appoint bishops (vladykas), monastery superiors (archimandrites), as well as the initiative to build new churches and care for the maintenance of old ones.[39] However, his concern for the Orthodox Church had nothing to do with his involvement in the development and material well-being of the Catholic Church. It is worth emphasizing, however, that despite his declaration of supporting Catholic missionaries aimed at converting schismatics to the Catholic faith, the king did little in this matter. Even his invitation to John of Capistrano in 1451, in which he presented to the charismatic Italian preacher the prospect of converting Orthodox Ruthenians to Catholicism, turned out to be only a rhetorical turn, and the ruler himself did nothing to implement this idea.[40] The tolerant attitude of the Jagiellonian monarchs was also visible in their attitude towards the Jews whose settlement in Poland grew rapidly in the fifteenth century. The Jews in the Kingdom of Poland were subject to the regulations included in the Statute of Kalisz originally issued in 1264 for Greater Poland and extended to the entire Polish kingdom by Casimir the Great. By its provisions Jews were granted autonomy and protection from the ruler. These regulations have been widely regarded as strong evidence of religious tolerance in Poland though almost the same laws protecting Jews functioned in the neighbouring

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38 I. Czamańska, *Mołdawia i Wołoszczyzna wobec Polski, Węgier i Turcji w XIV i XV wieku*, Poznań 1996.

39 A. Mironowicz, *Kościół prawosławny…*, pp. 188-207.

40 *The Correspondence of John of Capistrano. Letters Related to the History of Poland and Silesia (1451-1456)*, ed. P. Kras, H. Manikowska, M. Starzyński, A. Zajchowska-Bołtromiuk, Lublin-Warsaw 2018, pp. 116-121; M. Starzyński, *The Circulation of King Casimir IV Jagelon's Letter to John of Capistrano from 7 September 1451*, in: *John of Capistrano and the Cracow Brethren*, in: *The Grand Tour of John of Capistrano in Central and Eastern Europe (1451-1456). The Transfer of Ideas and the Strategies of Communication in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. P. Kras, J.D. Mixson, Lublin-Warsaw 2018, pp. 293-302.

countries (Austria, Bohemia).[41] The regulations alone would remain a dead letter if the Jagiellonian rulers did not actively work to prevent anti-Jewish riots and pogroms. When in 1407, rumours spread among Cracow burghers blaming the Jews for kidnapping a Christian child and in a consequence inciting the attack on the Jewish district, King Ladislaus Jagiello ordered the perpetrators to be caught and the looted goods returned to the Jews.[42] Later, his son, Casimir IV Jagiellon, came to the defence of the Jews and in 1453, shortly before the arrival in Poland of the charismatic Franciscan preacher John of Capistrano, he confirmed to the Jews of Cracow privileges guaranteeing their safety and protection from the ruler and his officials. Despite criticism and pressure from Cardinal Zbigniew Oleśnicki and Capistrano himself, Jagiełło's son firmly defended his privileges and rejected accusations of disregarding God's laws. Probably thanks to King Casimir IV's attitude, Capistrano's stay in Cracow, which lasted almost nine months, did not cause any anti-Jewish riots. The grateful memory of Casimir Jagiellon remained alive among Polish Jews, who prayed for his health and prosperity.[43]

The attitude towards religious dissidents remains another marker in the discussion about the nature of tolerance in Poland during the reign of the Jagiellon dynasty. The medieval political theology made Christian rulers responsible to defend the Church and fight its enemies. The latter were seen primarily as heretics who rejected the teachings of the Church and publicly spread their errors. The coronation oath taken by Polish, but also Czech rulers included a provision that obliged those receiving royal consecration to combat heresy. The inquisitorial procedure developed at the turn of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries detailed the tasks of ecclesiastical and secular authorities in the fight against heresy. In Poland, anti-heretical regulations remained a dead letter until the condemnation of Jan Hus by the Council of Constance and the emergence of his supporters on the Polish territories. Ladislaus Jagiello, who supported the reforms of the Council of Constance, accepted the condemnation of Jan Hus, but he was reluctant to join Sigismund of Luxembourg's anti-Hussite crusades. The conciliar and papal condemnation of Hussites made open support for the Czech Hussites impossible, as it exposed the Polish king to charges of defending heretics and church penalties. However, contrary to papal prohibitions, Poles maintained constant contacts with the Czechs, traded with them,

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41 J. Wyrozumski, *Żydzi w Polsce średniowiecznej*, in: *Żydzi w dawnej Rzeczypospolitej*, ed. A. Link-Lenczowski, T. Polański, Wrocław 1991, pp. 129-135; H. Zaremska, *Żydzi w średniowiecznej Polsce*, pp. 143-71; M. Horn, *Jewish Jurisdiction's Dependence on Royal Power in Poland and Lithuania up to 1548*, "Acta Poloniae Historica" 76 (1997), pp. 5-17.

42 H. Zaremska, *Żydzi w średniowiecznej Polsce…*, pp. 456-477.

43 *Ibidem*, pp. 160-164.

and even joined the Hussite troops, mainly looking for a chance to earn money and train their knightly skills. The Polish monarch turned a blind eye to these contacts and, despite repeated pressure from the pope, did little to limit them. Moreover, he himself did not avoid contacts with Hussite leaders, whose delegates were often guests at the royal court. Jagiełło's neutral and sometimes quite friendly attitude towards Czech dissidents inspired the Czech Parliament to offer him the crown of Saint Wenceslaus. Respecting dynastic legitimism and not risking an open conflict with King Sigismund Luxembourg, the Polish monarch did not accept the proposal. However, as an experienced politician, Jagiello did not hesitate to get close to the Czechs in order to check the actions of Luxembourg. Playing the Hussite card in his diplomacy, the Polish ruler sent the Czech Hussites with an offer of the crown to the Grand Duke of Lithuania, Vytautas, who did not hesitate to accept it. In the following years, Jagiełło and Vytautas actively participated in Hussite affairs, on the one hand distancing themselves from the Czech heresy, and on the other, more or less openly supporting the actions of their relative, Prince Sigismund Korybutovych.[44]

Despite church prohibitions prohibiting contacts with heretics, which the papacy constantly reminded, Ladislaus Jagiello was ready to enter into a tactical military alliance with the Hussites, the blade of which was directed against the Teutonic Order. Such an alliance was concluded in 1432 in Pabianice with part of the Hussite troops, the so-called Orphans (orphans of Hetman Jan Žižka) led by Jan Čapek of Sán. It made it possible to organize a joint military expedition the following year, which devastated the lands of the Teutonic Knights. The expedition itself did not bring any spectacular successes, but it proved Jagiełło's pragmatism, which did not hesitate to ally with heretics to achieve the strategic goals of his policy. There was a view among the Jagiello's advisors, which was justified by Paulus Vladimiri in his writings, that heretics were the Teutonic Knights who violated God's law, destroyed churches and persecuted the Christian population.

The policy of Ladislaus Jagiello, independent of the papacy and favourable to the Czechs, continued by his younger son Casimir IV, brought the Jagiellons recognition among the Czech Hussites, paving the way for them to the Czech crown. Jagiello's grandson, bearing his first name Ladislaus, owed his elevation to the Czech throne to the support of the national Hussite camp, which saw him not only as a representative of a member of a respectable dynasty capable of opposing the Habsburgs, but also as a ruler capable of ensuring internal peace and international stability for the Kingdom of Bohemia. The condition for Ladislaus' coronation in 1471 was the acceptance of the Prague Compactata, according to which the right to receive Communion under both kinds was

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[44] J. Grygiel, *Życie i działalność Zygmunta Korybutowicza. Studium z dziejów stosunków polsko-czeskich w pierwszej połowie XV wieku*, Wrocław 1986, pp. 74-77; P. Kras, *Husyci…*, pp. 53-55.

guaranteed to lay people in the Bohemia. Ladislaus accepted these conditions in Cracow and later confirmed them after arriving in Prague.

Ladislaus launched his reign with a general amnesty that included imprisoned members of the Unity of Brethren. His conciliatory policy, however, was to be short-lived. As early as in 1473, he restored the older anti-Picardian, i.e. anti-Brethren decrees. In practice, though, it was more of a matter of resolving religious disputes through disputations, over which the estates community reserved its supreme oversight.[45] The Unity of Brethren, when left with no choice but to defend its bare existence, had to reformulate its fundamental theological ideas promptly and under pressure. The Brethren also had to define their attitude to secular power. In the early years of Ladislaus' reign, however, the Brethren posed a very marginal challenge to his religious policy. The King was far more concerned about the Utraquist majority that relied on the knights and royal cities. As early as in the second half of the 1470s it became clear that, despite his Lithuanian experience, Ladislaus did not intend to unconditionally accept religious tolerance practiced by all estates. At the end of the 1470s, with the support of the people of Prague and Kuttenberg, the King began to deliberately move towards preferring Catholicism.[46] Yet, he found himself in sharp contrast with the ideas of the estates community that identified with the Compacts of Jihlava intending to maintain the status quo that predated ascension of Ladislaus to the Czech throne. Thus, in opposition to the monarch in 1481 and 1482, the estates clearly articulated their demands.[47] After an unsuccessful attempt at a royalist coup in Prague in 1483,[48] all three estates, including the key cities, forced the monarch to accept the Religious Peace of Kuttenberg that granted individual freedom of religion to all inhabitants of the Kingdom.[49] Importantly, both the Utraquist and Catholic Churches accepted thus conceived religious peace. Throughout the Jagiellonian period, the estates sought peaceful coexistence of the two denominations. They were appealing on the priests

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[45] *Akty Jednoty bratské*, ed. J. Bidlo, vol. 1, Brno 1915, p. 135.

[46] F. Šmahel, *Pražské povstání 1483*, "Pražský sborník historický" 19 (1986), pp. 48-55.

[47] *Archiv český…*, vol. 4, pp. 504-505.

[48] For a concise overview of the Prague revolt in 1483 see F. Šmahel, *Epilog husitské revoluce. Pražské povstání 1483*, "Acta reformacionem Bohemicam illustrancia" 1 (1978), pp. 45-127.

[49] On the consequences of the Religious Peace of Kuttenberg see W. Eberhard, *Konfessionsbildung und Stände in Böhmen 1478-1530*, München-Wien 1981, pp. 46-60; *idem*, *Entstehungsbedingungen für öffentliche Toleranz am Beispiel des Kuttenberger Religionsfriedens von 1485*, "Communio viatorum" 29 (1986), pp. 129-154; *idem*, *Zu den politischen und ideologischen Bedingungen öffentlicher Toleranz. Der Kuttenberger Religionsfrieden (1485)*, "Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Prace Historyczne" 100 (1992), pp. 101-118. An uncritical view of the Religious Peace of Kuttenberg in Czech historiography is represented, by A. Skýbová, *K politickým otázkám dvojvěří v* českém *království v době předbělohorské*, "Husitský Tábor" 4 (1981), pp. 145-157; R. Kalivoda, *Husitství a jeho vyústění* v *době předbělohorské a pobělohorské*, "Studia Comeniana et Historica" 13 (1983), no. 25, pp. 3-45.

of one denomination not to accuse of heresy members and clergy of the other faith group. The King subscribed to the reconciliation that represented the true religious tolerance of the two denominations. In later years Ladislaus focused all his initiatives in religious affairs at suppressing the existence of the Unity of Brethren. He sought allies not only among the Catholics, but also among the Utraquist estates. Though they outwardly ratified the anti-Brethren mandates issued by the King (1503, 1508), in practice they ignored the implementation of the harsh anti-heretic ordinances. They conceived their estates as independent territories into which the King's power did not actually extend.[50]

At the end of the fifteenth century, only members of the Unity of Brethren spoke out against the Compacts tolerance out of necessity that was newly sanctioned by the Religious Peace of Kuttenberg. Its theologically trained spokesmen, as represented by Prokop of Jindřichův Hradec, Jan Klenovský and Tůma Přeloučský, and later Lukas of Prague and Laurence Krasonický, did not intend to accept that their ecclesial community had not been included in the Religious Peace. It ranked them among the non-tolerated religious sects that were referred to in derogatory terms Picardians or Waldensians. To defend their existence, the Unity of Brethren advanced the idea of unconditional religious tolerance, of unrestricted freedom of conscience of the individual. Their demands were not limited to the religious freedom of the Brethren minority but were of a universal nature. Prokop from Jindřichův Hradec, a highly active member of the so-called Narrow Council - the highest body of the Unity of Brethren, expressed the Brethren ideas most firmly after 1498 in the treatise *Why people should not be forced to believe* [*Proč lidé k víře mocí nucení býti nemají*].[51] Prokop argued that people were not to be forced into their faith by violence, for God never does so and awards people full freedom. The only permitted way to adopt another faith was to be teaching, and not secular power in the hands of the Church.

Nonetheless, the Czech society was not quite prepared for such freedom. The Religious Peace of Kuttenberg that granted freedom to the two faith groups - the Catholics and the Utraquists - was its ultimate limit. There was to be no place in the Kingdom for those whose religious ideas could not be pigeonholed in one or the other denomination. The society was to deem the members of the Unity of Brethren to be heretics, even though their roots lay in the Czech Reformation. Despite such limitation of religious tolerance, the conditions prevailing in Bohemia after 1485 represented

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[50] On persecution of the Brethren in the early sixteenth century see J.T. Müller, *Dějiny Jednoty bratrské*, transl. F.M. Bartoš, vol. 1, Praha 1923, pp. 204-212.

[51] The treatise was published by A. Molnár, *Neznámý spis Prokopa z Jindřichova Hradce*, "Husitský Tábor" 6-7 (1983-1984), pp. 423-448. For dating see M. Nodl, *Utrakvismus a Jednota bratrská na rozcestí. Dobový kontext náboženské konverze Jana Augusty*, "Marginalia Historica" 4 (2001), pp. 139-140.

a period anomaly that far exceeded the degree of practice of religious tolerance in the Kingdom of Poland during the reigns of Ladislaus Jagiellon and his sons. The Polish context may seem to have been the place of several denominations that coexisted side-by-side. Yet it can hardly be identified as the world of a reflected religious tolerance that granted equal rights and freedoms to all denominations. The incursions towards tolerance and respect for the rights of pagans made by Polish theologians and jurists at the Council of Constance were unorthodox at the time and went far beyond the contemporary limits of Christian conception of faith. In reality, however, they were essentially an expression of political pragmatism. In the subsequent years, they thus found no continuation leading to the religious tolerance of non-Catholic denominations whose followers lived in the Polish-Lithuanian Union. On the other hand, it is characteristic that, in the second half of the fifteenth century, there is no evidence of repressive measures in the Kingdom of Poland which would have placed schismatics, Karaites or even pagans in the position of prosecuted heretics, as was then customary treatment of the Unity of Brethren in Bohemia. In contrast to the royal and estates power in Bohemia, their counterparts in Poland did not feel threatened by the followers of other denominations. Therefore, they did not take any measures that might be deemed to be religiously intolerant. Quite on the contrary, the Religious Peace of Kuttenberg, reached by the Catholic and Utraquist estates in agreement with the monarch, sought to suppress all deviations of a religious nature. The intention was to "forever" preserve the fragile agreement reached by the officially rubberstamped denominations that were tolerating each other out of necessity.

The fifteenth-century traditions of religious pluralism in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Kingdom of Poland proved to be a valuable experience in the era of religious upheaval and wars in the sixteenth century. Visitors from Western Europe who came to the Jagiellonian monarchy, and later to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth under the rule of the first elected kings, were impressed by the peaceful coexistence of many religious communities existing here. Among the uncompromising defenders of Catholic orthodoxy, among others: papal legates, the religious pluralism of the Polish-Lithuanian state aroused reluctance and was the subject of sharp criticism. In the Roman Curia, the Polish-Lithuanian state was considered an "asylum for heretics" who came here from all over Europe.[52] In turn, for radical religious groups, the confessional pluralism of the Poland was a blessing, and the tolerance prevailing here encouraged them to settle. In the work *On the State of Religion* published in 1605, Edwin Sandys, Archbishop of Canterbury and a famous traveller, drew

[52] Quoted after R. Mackenney, *Sixteenth Century Europe: Expansion and Conflict*, New York 1993, p. 12.

attention to "the great multitude of religions swarming in Poland." In his eyes, there were so many different religious groups (Christian and non-Christian) in the sixteenth-century Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth that everyone could find there the denomination that best suited them. For this reason - as he wrote - "it was proverbially said that if someone lost his religion, let him look for it in Poland and he would surely find it. If not, he will be able to assume that she has disappeared from the world."[53] His contemporary Lithuanian Karaim Isaac from Trakai contrasted the tolerance prevailing in the Polish-Lithuanian state with religious persecution in other European countries. He pointed to England, where "great atrocities were committed; punishing with severe death all priests of the papal faith, all followers and supporters of this religion. He also noted similar phenomena in Spain and France, "where the followers of Martin Luther's teachings are murdered so cruelly that the hairs on the head of anyone who hears about it stand on end." He proudly emphasized, referring to Poland, that "similar conduct has never taken place in this country."[54]

Unlike Western Europe, which was shaken by religious controversies and upheavals in the sixteenth century, where, according to the principle of *cuius regio eius religio*, there was an attempt to impose on the subjects the religion of the rulers, under the rule of the Jagiellonian dynasty, as well as the first elected kings, the principle of respect for religious differences prevailed. Polish and Lithuanian rulers were alien to religious fanaticism and the desire to impose their faith on their subjects, which characterized the actions of many European monarchs, regardless of whether they sided with Catholicism or Protestantism. Although King Sigismund I issued strict anti-heretical laws intended to stop the spread of Lutheran ideas, they remained a dead letter.[55] They were more a declaration of his attachment to Catholic traditions than a desire to impose the Catholic faith on dissidents. When the papal nuncio encouraged him to punish supporters of the Reformation with death, Sigismund replied that he preferred to be the king of sheep and goats.[56]

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53 P. Kras, *The Development of Religious Toleration in Poland. From the Medieval Period to the Reformation*, in: *Religion and Peace. Historical Aspects*, ed. Y. Friedmann, London-New York 2017, pp. 159-183.

54 P. Fijałkowski, *Dzieje Żydów w Polsce. Wybór tekstów źródłowych XI-XVIII wiek*, Warszawa 1993, pp. 78-79.

55 W. Kriegseissen, *Stosunki wyznaniowe w relacjach państwo-kościół między reformacją a oświeceniem (Rzesza Niemiecka, Niderlandy północne, Rzeczpospolita polsko-litewska*, Warszawa 2010, pp. 432-434 and 440-445; P. Kras, *Od represji do kompromisu, Edykty antyprotestanckie Zygmunta I i Zygmunta II Augusta*, in: *Jagiellonowie i ich świat. Dynastia królewska w drugiej połowie XV i w XVI wieku*, ed. B. Czwojdrak, J. Sperka, P. Węcowski, Kraków 2016, pp. 353-378; M. Ptaszyński, *Czy reformacja Polsce była luterańska? O polemikach antyluterańskich w Polsce w pierwszej połowie XVI wieku*, "Odrodzenie i reformacja w Polsce" 63 (2019), pp. 5-62.

56 *Acta nuntiaturae Polonae*, vol. 2: *Zacharias Ferreri (1519-1521) et nuntii minores (1522-1553)*, ed. H.D. Wojtyska, Rome 1992, no. 44, p. 106-116.

As a supporter of the Irenic philosophy of the humanist prince, Erasmus of Rotterdam, Jagiełło's grandson deplored the fighting between Protestants and Catholics and called for the restoration of religious peace by an general council. During his reign, there was no organized persecution of dissenters in Poland and no supporter of the Reformation was killed for his views, even though some of them had to leave his kingdom.[57]

Jagiełło's grandson did not see any major problem in the secularization of the Teutonic Order in Prussia. This Protestant principality, established in 1525 under the rule of Albert Hohenzollern, in which churches were converted into congregations and Catholics were deprived of any rights, was the fief of a Catholic ruler who declared his allegiance to the Holy See and spoke with hostility about the "Lutheran heresy." In response to the critical words towards Sigismund I the Old coming from the Holy See, Andrzej Krzycki, royal secretary and one of the leading Polish humanists, emphasized that the establishment of the Lutheran state in Prussia in no way threatened the Catholic Church in Polish lands, long inhabited by various people. religious groups: Orthodox, Jews, Armenians and Tatars.

The tolerant policy of Sigismund I was continued by his son Sigismund II Augustus. Despite pressure from papal nuncios and some Catholic bishops, Jagiełło's great-grandson did not decide to intervene in any way to stop the development of the Polish Reformation and - as he himself declared - he did not want to be the king of consciences. Under the influence of nobility sympathizing with the Reformation, in 1552 he suspended and ten years later cancelled the execution of church court judgments by secular courts, putting an end to the possibility of legal persecution of dissidents. In the years 1555-1557, Sigismund II Augustus issued edicts ensuring religious freedom for Lutherans in Prussian cities: Gdańsk, Elbląg and Toruń,[58] and in 1564 he condemned the execution of a group of Jews from Sochaczew charged with the profanation of the Eucharist.[59]

Religious tolerance, introduced during the reign of Sigismund II Augustus, was guided by the interest of the state and the rights of its citizens, i.e. representatives of the nobility. Freedom of religion supported by the majority of the nobility, regardless of their religious sympathies,

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[57] N. Nowakowska, *Sigismund of Poland and Martin Luther. The Reformation before Confessionalization,* Oxford 2018, pp. 210-32; see also P. Kras, *Casus Gutfora, czyli o polskich zwolennikach wczesnej reformacji i ich procesach. Uwagi źródłoznawcze w związku z książką Natalii Nowakowskiej o królu Zygmuncie Starym i Marcinie Lutrze*, "Odrodzenie i reformacja w Polsce" 64 (2020), pp. 123-155.

[58] G. Schramm, *Polska w dziejach Europy Środkowej. Studia*, transl. E. Płomińska-Krawiec, Poznań 2010, pp. 127-56; J. Małłek, *Dwie części Prus. Studia z dziejów Prus Książęcych i Prus Królewskich w XVI i XVII wieku*, Olsztyn 1987, pp. 175-177.

[59] H. Węgrzynek, *"Czarna legenda" Żydów. Procesy o rzekome mordy rytualne w dawnej Polsce*, Warszawa 1995, pp. 34-45.

did not extend to other social groups. It was undoubtedly tolerance out of necessity, which was intended to ensure religious peace and public order in the multi-religious Polish-Lithuanian state, which from 1569 operated under the name of the Republic of Poland. The act of the Warsaw Confederation adopted by the Sejm in January 1573 sanctioned the de jure religious tolerance introduced in the Polish-Lithuanian state. It was the first general statute in Europe guaranteeing religious freedom for those divided in faith, which preceded the famous Edict of Nantes by a quarter of a century. In the Act of the Warsaw Confederation, which was an integral part of the documentation related to the preparation of the first free election, the choice of faith was considered a private matter for members of the nobility, and the imposition of religion was prohibited under the threat of severe penalties. The provisions of the Warsaw Confederation guaranteeing freedom of religion have become one of the key rights of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. They were incorporated into the so-called Henrician Articles, the sui generis constitution of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, sworn in first by the first elected king, Henry Valois, and later by each newly elected king of Poland.[60]

ABSTRACT

The article addresses the coexistence of various religious groups in the kingdoms of Bohemia and Poland before the outbreak of the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation. The authors provide a comprehensive overview of the development of toleration toward religious communities operating outside Latin Christianity, focusing on the role played by the Jagiellonian kings ruling the two countries in the implementation of religious tolerance. On the one hand, the rise of Hussitism and the outbreak of a full-scale revolution in Bohemia in the second decade of the fifteen century created a unique situation when the legitimate heir to the Czech throne, Sigismund of Luxembourg, was overthrown, the role of the papacy was challenged, and Roman Catholic were confronted by supporters of the Bohemian Reformation. During the Hussite Wars, Bohemia was divided between adherents of the Roman Church and Hussitism, and the Basel Compacts of 1433 only briefly put an end to the bloody fighting and established a truce between the feuding camps. Finally the Peace Treaty of Kuttenberg in 1485, ending the religious revolt against the policy

60 This study forms part of the Czech Science Foundation project "Pagans and Christians: Christianisation in the Bohemian and Polish Kingdoms in the Middle Ages" (GAČR 22–18972K), carried out at the Institute of Philosophy of the Czech Academy of Sciences. The article is also produced within the Weave-UNISONO grant No 2021/03/Y/HS3/00052 under the title" Pagans and Christians. Christianisation in the Bohemian and Polish Kingdoms in the Middle Ages", financed by the National Science Centre, Poland, and carried out by the Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce.

of King Ladislaus Jagiellon, enforced tolerance, which respected the rights of Utraquists and ensured the peaceful coexistence of various religious communities. In the Kingdom of Poland, which did not experience the rapid changes brought about by the Hussite Revolution in Bohemia, the development of religious tolerance was evolutionary. In the multi-ethnic and multi-religious federation of Poland and Lithuania tolerance became a necessity, and during the fifteenth century, despite the privileged position of the Roman Church, a mechanism for the coexistence of different faiths emerged, supported by the Jagiellonian rulers. The traditions of religious pluralism in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, gradually adopted by the Jagiellons in the Kingdom of Poland, gave stimulus to the mechanism of coexistence of various religious groups, which facilitated the peaceful development of the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century.

Key words: tolerance, Hussites, Reformation, Jews, Poland, Bohemia

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Games, Gamblers, and Gambling in Late-Medieval Polish Homiletics Based on the Collection *Sermones sapientiales* Authored by Stanisław of Skarbimierz (c. 1360-1431)

1. Introduction

Games in culture are a component of human activity that has been continuously visible in various areas for millennia, both on an individual and on a broader, social, level.[1] In the convincing opinion of American cultural anthropologists, an excerpt from which is quoted below, different games have, throughout history, satisfied those human needs [and continue to do so today] that go beyond the purely biological sphere, relating only to survival, although in many cases they are still more or less closely linked to it. John M. Roberts, Malcolm J. Arth, and Robert R. Bush argue that games constitute *sui generis* "models of various cultural activities. Many games of physical skill simulate combat or hunting, as in boxing and competitive trap shooting. Games of strategy may

[1] According to the definition which we adopt for the purpose of this essay, "a game is a recreational activity characterised by organised play, competition, two or more sides, criteria for determining the winner, and agreed-upon rules." See J.M. Roberts, M.J. Arth, R.R. Bush, *Games in Culture*, "American Anthropologist" 61 (1959), p. 597. On definitions of games, their typology, and functions see also E.M. Avedon, B. Sutton-Smith, *The Study of Games*, New York-London-Sydney-Toronto 1971; A. Spanos, *Games of History. Games and Gaming as Historical Sources*, The Routledge Guides to Using Historical Sources, London and New York 2021, pp. 5-13.

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simulate chase, hunt, or war activities, as in backgammon, fox and geese, or chess. The relationship between games of chance and divinity (ultimately a religious activity) is well known. […] If games are expressive models, they should be related to other aspects of culture and to the variables which figure in expressive or projective mechanisms. More specifically, games of strategy which are models of social interaction should be related to the complexity of the social system; games of chance which are models of interaction with the supernatural should be linked with other expressive views of the supernatural; and there is a possibility that games of physical skill may be related to aspects of the natural environment."[2]

The fact that the study of games embedded in the social and cultural contexts of historical processes is of unquestionable importance for understanding and gaining a better understanding of the past can be inferred, for example, from the historical practice of assigning multiple roles and functions to games. In the long term perspective, this was usually a dynamic process, characterised by a certain degree of variability, in the course of which, at different stages of human development, games acquired different meanings and uses, and were subject to greater or lesser transformations.[3] For cultural historians, games therefore constitute - both in themselves, and as one component of a particular culture that functions with their participation - a valuable subject of historical research.[4] The study of game culture in its broadest sense can lead to a broadening of contemporary knowledge of many social behaviours and attitudes of both past and contemporary human collectives. Examining this aspect of the phenomenon discussed here from an anthropological-historical perspective, the Norwegian historian Apostolos Spanos has referred to games as 'cultural mirrors' that can be used as 'study lenses' for learning about a particular culture. Among the many examples that this researcher gave in his seminal study of games in culture, in order to justify his choice of the above formulations, let us mention just one such connection, namely between the culture of ancient societies and games of chance. In a passage devoted to this type of games, Spanos aptly recommended that any attempt to become successful in using them as a historical source requires one to focus

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[2] J.M. Roberts, M.J. Arth, R.R. Bush, *Games…*, pp. 599-600.

[3] On medieval games, their functions, and medieval gaming culture in general see P. Milliman, *Games and Pastimes*, in: *Handbook of Medieval Culture*, vol. 1, ed. A. Classen, Berlin-Boston 2015; R. Bubczyk, *Sports and Games*, in: *A Cultural History of Leisure*, vol. 2, ed. P. Milliman, London-New York-Oxford 2024.

[4] An excellent example of the successful application of this appreciative approach of game researchers in the study of medieval church culture, mainly in relation to religious communities, is the recently published collection of essays entitled *Religiosus ludens. Das Spiel als kulturelles Phänomen in mittelalterlichen Klöstern und Orden*, ed. J. Sonntag, Berlin-Boston 2013 (= Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte 122).

not only on the particulars within their typology, but also [or, perhaps, even in the first instance] on "the evaluation of these games by the authorities and the groups of cultural and intellectual power. Games of chance were in various periods banned or evaluated as vicious or even nefarious, mainly due to their close relation to gambling."[5]

Focusing on this type of games is particularly relevant in the light of the topic we have taken up, since it was primarily these that appeared in the late medieval sermons which we intend to analyse in the course of this discussion. For this reason, we will return to both games of chance and the related thread of gambling in a separate thought below. First, however, let us devote some attention to the genre within historical sources for the study of medieval culture we have chosen to analyse, *i.e.*, the sermon, highlighting its remarkable usefulness in this regard.[6] The choice of a collection of sermons known as *Sermones sapientiales*, by Stanisław of Skarbimierz, also needs to be justified before we analyse their content in relation to the games.[7]

2. Medieval Preaching and Its Significance for the Study of Medieval Culture

In the light of the scholarly findings of modern sermon studies,[8] it is difficult to overestimate the importance of preaching speeches in the study of many areas

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[5] A. Spanos, *Games…*, pp. 39-62 [quotation on p. 44].

[6] For the purposes of this article, we adopt the broad definition of the term sermon, proposed by K. Panuś. According to this researcher, "under this name should also be understood such literary forms as homily, exhortation, speech, panegyric, as well as treatise, etc. […]." The historian of preaching further quoted here emphasised that "the term sermo was used to denote […] a rhetorical-persuasive utterance, constructed according to the accepted principles of *artis praedicandi*, sometimes written down as a *textus* of the delivered speech; it could be a transcript of a script of the speech to be delivered, or written down after the delivery, an elaborate transcript of the speech." See *idem*, *Zarys historii kaznodziejstwa w Kościele katolickim*, Kraków 1999, pp. 191-228 [*ibidem* the typology of sermons].

[7] We base this essay on the following, critical edition of the sermons on wisdom, see: Stanisław ze Skarbimierza, *Sermones sapientiales*, ed. B. Chmielowska, Warszawa 1979, fasc. 1-3 (= Textus et Studia IV).

[8] Among the great number of scholarly works on medieval and early modern sermons and preaching that have appeared in print in congressional languages over the last few decades, the following should be singled out as particularly important: G.R. Owst, *Preaching in Medieval England. An Introduction to Sermon Manuscripts of the Period c. 1350-1450*, Cambridge 1926; D.L. D'Avray, *The Preaching of the Friars. Sermons Diffused from Paris Before 1300*, Oxford 1985; L. Taylor, *Soldiers of Christ. Preaching in Late Medieval and Reformation France*, Oxford 1992; *De l'homélie au sermon: histoire de la prédication médiévale*, ed. J. Hamesse, X. Hermand, Turnhout 1993; L.J. Bataillon, *La prédication au XIII siêcle en France et Italie*, Aldershot 1993; *The Sermon*, ed. B.M. Kienzle, *Typologie Des Sources Du Moyen Âge Occidenta*l, Fasc. 81-83, Turhout 2000; N.B-A. Debby, *Renaissance Florence in the Rhetoric of Two Popular Preachers: Giovanni Dominici*

of medieval culture. In the present essay, we are charting a relatively narrow field of research - focusing only on the narrative message contained in this type of source in relation to areas of human activity associated with ludic (play) activity. These days it is perhaps a truism to say that the content of sermons provides great material for the study of many other manifestations of medieval customs, traditions, and beyond.[9] Indeed, the analysis of the content layer of the sermons opens up the possibility of exploring many other themes and research problems within medieval imagery and related human practices, and attitudes towards various categories of culture, such as time and space, or eschatological issues, which can also be grasped in relation to lower social strata, groups that are usually more difficult for researchers to reach due to the scarcity of relevant sources.[10]

The mainstream study of medieval preaching also includes the scientific interests of some Polish scholars, while continuing activity and significant achievements in this area can be attributed to at least several generations of historians of vernacular culture, literature, and language.[11] Although

(1356-1419) and Bernardino da Siena (1380-1444), Turnhout 2001 (= Late Medieval and Early Modern Studies 4); *Preacher, Sermon, and Audience in the Middle Ages*, ed. C. Muessig, Leiden-Boston-Köln 2002; S. Wenzel, *Latin Sermon Collections from Later Medieval England. Orthodox Preaching in the Age of Wyclif*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature, Cambridge 2005; *idem*, *Medieval Artes Praedicandi: A Synthesis of Scholastic Sermon Structure*, Toronto-Buffalo-London 2015 (Medieval Academy Books 114); *Constructing the Medieval Sermon*, ed. R. Andersson, Turnhout 2007 (= Sermo: Studies on Patristic, Medieval, and Reformation Sermons and Preaching 6).

[9] Very informative works on medieval customs based on source material of this type include, for example, the following: M. Kowalczyk, *Wróżby, czary i zabobony w średniowiecznych rękopisach Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej*, "Biuletyn Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej" 29 (1979), no. 1/2, pp. 5-18; *eadem*, *Tańce i zabawy w świetle rękopisów średniowiecznych Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej*, "Biuletyn Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej" 34/35 (1984/1985), pp. 71-89; M. Olszewski, *Świat zabobonów w średniowieczu. Studium Kazania o zabobonach Stanisława ze Skarbimierza*, Warszawa 2002.

[10] Considering the usefulness of sermons as sources in medieval studies, A. Krawiec quoted in this regard the view of A. Guriewich, according to whom, "in order to be able to exert an adequate influence on their audiences, […] the authors [of sermons] had to appeal to the values and ideas shared by an uneducated public. Thanks to their mass and normative character, however, sermons were able to influence these perceptions to a particular degree", see A. Krawiec, *Kazania*, in: *Vademecum historyka mediewisty*, ed. J. Nikodem, D.A. Sikorski, Warszawa 2012, pp. 326-329. Cf. S. Bylina, *Kazania w Polsce średniowiecznej*, "Kieleckie Studia Historyczne" 10 (1992), pp. 10-35.

[11] The most important works in the field of Polish sermon studies include, above all, the following: A. Brückner, *Źródła do dziejów literatury i oświaty w Polsce. Kazania średniowieczne*, part 1, "Biblioteka Warszawska" 52 (1892), pp. 445-471; *idem*, *Kazania średniowieczne*, part 2, "Rozprawy Wydziału Filologicznego Akademii Umiejętności" 24 (1895), pp. 1 (317)-74 (390); *idem*, *Kazania średniowieczne*, part 3, "Rozprawy Wydziału Filologicznego Akademii Umiejętności" 25 (1896), pp. 1 (115)-91 (205); M. Kowalczyk, *Krakowskie mowy uniwersyteckie z pierwszej połowy XV wieku*, Wrocław-Kraków 1970; J. Wolny, *Kaznodziejstwo*, in: *Dzieje teologii katolickiej w Polsce*, ed. M. Rechowicz, vol. 1, *Średniowiecze*, Lublin 1974, pp. 273-308; *idem*, *Uwagi nad kaznodziejstwem*

research into ppp.reaching in medieval Poland is constantly progressing, it is not an easy area of study, if only because of the problems resulting from the poor condition of many of the oldest sermons, preserved so far only in manuscript form, which sometimes makes their edition in print significantly difficult or even impossible.[12] The sermons of Stanisław of Skarbimierz luckily diverge from this infamous rule - for they are among the best critically edited and published sources of this kind.

3. Stanisław of Skarbimierz and his *Sermones sapientiales*

The biography of Stanisław of Skarbimierz is relatively well-known, and there is no need to refer to it in detail here. However, the great importance of this figure in the history of late-medieval Poland needs to be underlined. Living at the turn of the 14th and 15th centuries, the author of *Sermones sapientiales* belonged to a small group of leading representatives of the country's intellectual elite, which is confirmed not only by his impressive writing legacy, but also by the fact that he was heavily involved in the rebuilding of the University of Cracow, and later held the post of the university's first rector. The reigning dynasty's recognition of this intellectual's high

uniwersyteckim w Krakowie w XV wieku, in: *Święty Jan Kanty w sześćsetną rocznicę urodzin 1390-1990*, ed. R.M. Zawadzki, Kraków 1991, pp. 25-54; R.M. Zawadzki, *Spuścizna pisarska Stanisława ze Skarbimierza. Studium źródłoznawcze*, Kraków 1979; B. Chmielowska, *Ars praedicandi Stanisława ze Skarbimierza*, in: *Retoryka w XV stuleciu. Studia nad tradycjami, teorią i praktyką retoryki piętnastowiecznej*, ed. M. Frankowska-Terlecka, Wrocław-Łódź 1988, pp. 132-135; K. Panuś, *Kaznodziejstwo w katedrze krakowskiej*, part 1, Kraków 1995; *idem*, *Historia kaznodziejstwa*, Kraków 2007 [*Kaznodziejstwo w okresie średniowiecza*, pp. 89-194]; *idem*, *Kazania w kulturze polskiej. Edycje kolekcji tematycznych*, "Polonia Sacra" 25 (2021), 4 (66), pp. 171-190; K. Bracha, *Teolog-intelektualista i duszpasterz w społeczeństwie średniowiecznym*, in: *Kolory i struktury średniowiecza*, ed. W. Fałkowski, Warszawa 2004, pp. 136-154; *idem*, *Nauczanie kaznodziejskie w Polsce późnego średniowiecza. Sermones dominicales et festivales z tzw. kolekcji Piotra z Miłosławia*, Kielce 2007; *idem*, *Kolekcje kaznodziejskie w Polsce późnego średniowiecza*, in: *Średniowiecze w rozjaśnieniu*, ed. K. Skupieński, Warszawa 2010, pp. 27-50; *Kaznodziejstwo średniowieczne – Polska na tle Europy. Teksty, atrybucje, audytorium*, ed. K. Bracha, A. Dąbrówka, Warszawa 2014; K. Bracha, *Is it Worth Publishing Anthologies of Sermons? On the Margins Kazania w kulturze polskiej. Edycje Kolekcji Tematycznych [Sermons in Polish Culture. Editions of Thematic Collections], ed. Kazimierz Panuś, vols. 1–3, Wydawnictwo UNUM, Kraków 2014, pp. 1849,,,* Res Historica" 47 (2019), pp. 333-348.; *idem*, *Exempla w nauczaniu ad status w świetle kolekcji kazań Macieja z Grochowa z rękopisu Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej z początku XV wieku*, "Archiwa, Biblioteki i Muzea Kościelne" 124 (2025), pp. 33-74; Z. Kałuża, *O poetach i poezji w 'Kazaniach sapiencjalnych' Skarbimierczyka. Studium źródłowe*, "Przegląd Tomistyczny" 10 (2004), pp. 33-86; K. Bracha, M. Leńczuk, *Słowo-pismo-sacrum. Cztery studia z dziejów kultury religijnej w Polsce późnego średniowiecza*, Warszawa 2020 (= Studia Staropolskie. Series Nova 49/105); L. Grzybowska, *Kazania de tempore i de sanctis Mikołaja z Błonia. Zarys monografii*, Warszawa 2020 (= Studia Staropolskie. Series Nova 50/106).

[12] A. Krawiec, *Kazania…*, pp. 327, 329.

competence in law (he became *doctor decretorum* during his studies at the University of Prague) is evidenced, among other things, by his being entrusted with important tasks in royal diplomacy. Stanisław of Skarbimierz more than once supported Poland as a legal authority in the dispute with the state of the Teutonic Order. In the hierarchy of ecclesiastical offices, the learned preacher held, among others, the prestigious position of canon of Cracow Cathedral and proxy of the Bishop of Cracow (*vicarius in spiritualibus*). He was also an educator of academic youth and a cathedral sermonist, where he delivered sermons addressed primarily to priests.[13]

The *Sermones sapientiales* constitute the largest collection in the rich writing legacy of Stanisław of Skarbimierz, comprising a total of five hundred and twenty-three works grouped in eighteen collections. The collection in question was written in the years 1405-1416 (or 1405-1417). At the thematic level, the sermons on wisdom were largely varied and generally dealt with a wide variety of issues, which can be separated into several groups. Some of the pastoral texts by the Cracow-based intellectual discussed current problems existing within the Church (such as the Western schism, or the heresy of Jan Hus, for example), while others focused on doctrinal matters, and even political issues concerning the state and its functioning on the international stage. In most sermons, however, their author primarily considered various aspects of Christian morality, considering it in the social context of the environment in which he lived and worked: the university, the academic community, and the clergy, mainly of the capital town of Cracow. It is in this group of sermons that scholars of culture can find the most interesting content. All of the sermons included in the *Sermones sapientiales* collection have a common denominator: the key word of the title, "wisdom", understood by the author as a virtue to be followed in life, both private and public. It is precisely because of this authorial intention to make wisdom the central point of reference that words which Stanisław of Skarbimierz drew from the wisdom books of the Old Testament appear at the beginning of each of these sermons as *verba thematis (*theme words).[14] The Cracow-based preacher often referred to ancient and medieval classics in his sermons, which testifies to his great erudition. In conclusion, the *Sermones sapientiales* are, both by virtue of their wide thematic scope and their large potential

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[13] B. Chmielowska in the preface to: Stanisław ze Skarbimierza, *Sermones sapientiales…*, pp. 9-24; on the stages of Stanisław of Skarbimierz's work in connection with his public activity, and on the library of this Cracow-based preacher see R.M. Zawadzki, *Spuścizna…*, pp. 106-164; *idem*, *Stanisław ze Skarbimierza*, in: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, vol. 42, Warszawa 2003-2004; M. Korolko, *Stanisław ze Skarbimierza. Mowy wybrane o mądrości*, Kraków 2000, pp. 12-19; K. Panuś, *Wielcy mówcy katedry na Wawelu*, Kraków 2002, pp. 11-20; R. Skrzyniarz, *Stanisław ze Skarbimierza*, in: *Encyklopedia Katolicka*, vol. 18, Lublin 2013, col. 800-801.

[14] R.M. Zawadzki, *Spuścizna…*, pp. 63-128; M. Korolko, *Stanisław…*, pp. 16-22.

and actual audience (which was due, for example, to the authority Stanisław of Skarbimierz enjoyed even during his lifetime, and the opinion-forming nature of the environment in which he preached his sermons), a valuable historical source, which we will use to explore the attitude of this spiritual master towards the issue of games and gamers.

4. References to Games, Gamblers, and Gaming Included in *Sermones sapientiales* by Stanisław of Skarbimierz

In order to begin our analysis, we will now examine the passages of these sermons contained in the collection *Sermones sapientiales*, whose author directly refers to games and gamblers. In the critical edition of the *Sermones sapientiales*, we can identify and distinguish seven examples comprising such themes. Given that the collection in question consists of a total of 113 sermons, it is easy to notice that the motif of games was not dominant in the Cracow preacher's reflections. On the contrary, such practices tended to remain on the margins of this intellectual's preaching reflections, whose thematic scope was otherwise very broad. Nevertheless, the very fact that the preacher referred to games and gamblers, even if it was not a frequent practice, indicates that he was aware of the important role played by certain entertainments in his contemporary culture. From the point of view of researchers into the cultural history of medieval games, these are valuable clues to follow, as they provide a starting point for attempting to find answers to questions about the significance of the games motif in late medieval Polish homiletics, and consequently about the attitudes towards them among the people forming a Christian community. By examining attitudes of this kind, it is possible to broaden our knowledge of what we believe to have been the important place of games in the culture of the era under discussion. In the analysis that follows, we will try to explain why the Polish preacher used the trope of games in some of his sermons, as well as to establish the reasons for the attitudes he himself adopted towards the phenomenon in question, and thus demonstrate that at least some of the social leisure pursuits practised in the Middle Ages went far beyond the sphere of entertainment.

Given the semantics of the words used by Stanisław of Skarbimierz to describe games and those who played them, we should divide the sermons analysed here into three groups. The first of these includes three speeches. In their content, the general Latin term *ludi* appears twice, which could have been used therein in its primary meaning of "games", while in one of these three sermons the author additionally mentioned *lusores*, or respectively, it seems, "gamblers". However, the above expressions are not unambiguous and we cannot exclude the possibility that the preacher used the words *ludi*

and *lusores* in the broader sense of "play" and, accordingly, "participants in play". The context of the quoted sermons does not allow us to settle this question definitively.[15]

In his sermon promoting the benefits of loving good people and seeking their company, and on how useful it is to associate with saints (*Iste sermo tractat de societate bonorum amanda et sequenda et quam sit utilis sanctorum societas*), Stanisław of Skarbimierz included, among other things, a passage in which he pointed out the disastrous consequences of choosing bad companions. According to our preacher, this kind of unsuitable environment tempts and attracts one with games (play?), accompanied by laughter, joking, and recklessness. Such an environment seems attractive because it captivates with friendship, seduces with fraternity, dazzles with promises, and deceives with consent to evil. Thus, according to the author of the sermon, belonging to such a group leads to an immersion in moral relativism, or even a reversal and revaluation of concepts, as a result of which everything that is unjust begins to appear as just.[16]

The Latin expression *ludi* also appears in the sermon entitled *Sermo de stoliditate pro terrenis insudentium et de lenociniis melodiae* [A sermon on the stupidity of those who toil for earthly things and on the flattery of melody]. In it, the author warns against participating in games (play?) and in unspecified jokes, while explaining what the bad influence of the latter on the faithful is. According to Stanisław of Skarbimierz, all jokes trigger lust in people, and young boys are particularly vulnerable to their evil influence, due to the "blindness of age". The preacher adds that jokes and games (play?) are harmful not only to boys, but sometimes also to men, as games (play?) or jokes give rise to detraction, reproach, fornication, quarrels, discord, and enmity; also, adultery, and even murder. Sometimes, acts of incest and falling into promiscuity occur during ludic behaviour too. Games or play are therefore cited in the lecture in question as activities standing in direct relation to attitudes and practices that are not only contrary to Christian teaching on morality, but also lead to serious crimes.[17]

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[15] A. Jougan, *Słownik kościelny łacińsko-polski*, Warszawa 1992, entries: *ludo, ludus, lusor*; J. Sondel, *Słownik łaciński-polski dla prawników i historyków*, Kraków 1997, entries: *ludo, ludus, lusor*; *Słownik łacińsko-polski*, ed. M. Plezia, Warszawa 2007 [2nd ed.], vol. 3, entries: *ludo, ludus, lusor.*

[16] *Mala enim societas, quae malum suscipit, in malitia abstinatum facit, si quem vero bonum accipit, ungit in primordio, tepidum facit in medio et maleficiatum prodit in termino. Mala societas ludo attrahit, risu emollit, ioco dissolvit, consilio corrumpit, levitate avertit, amicitia illaqueat, fraternitate seducit, promissis excaecat, consensu in malum infatuat. Mala societas impedit verum, suggerit falsum, de iniusto iustum facit*, see Stanisław ze Skarbimierza, *De societate bonorum amanda et sequenda et quam sit utilis sanctorum societas*, in: *Sermones…*, part 2, no. XL, pp. 7-17.

[17] *Fuge ludos et iocos, est enim omnis iocus fomes libidinis. Unde et Venus dicitur esse iocosa. Per quod patet, quod periculosus est iuvenum iocus ad invicem, quoniam propter caecitatem aetatis et inclinationem facile ad malum iocando multa flagitia sine timore commitunt. Item nedum iocus et ludus nocet*

The third of the sermons containing a reference to gaming practice, was entitled *Sermo de curando bono nomine, ad quod conservandum quattuor principaliter requiruntur, et utrum aliquo casu laxa conscientia stricte praeponatur*. [A sermon on caring for a good name, for the preservation of which four things are principally required, and whether, in any case, a slack conscience is preferable to a strict one]. In this speech dedicated to priests' care for their good name, its author calls upon his listeners to consistently imitate the saints in their attitudes and actions, and to persevere in the truth, not accepting any compromise, especially in matters important for Christian morality. Stanisław of Skarbimierz exhorts his listeners to reflect deeply on what really constitutes good and what really constitutes evil. Giving examples of behaviours that fall within the definition of the latter concept, the preacher points to, among others, those motivated by immediate benefit. Among these, the clerical scholar includes cases in which flatterers seeking various benefits for themselves support the candidature of those priests for bishops, deans, parish priests, and other ecclesiastical offices who should never hold them because they are ignorant, flatterers, gamblers (*lusores*), liars, and idlers.[18]

The next three sermons by Stanisław of Skarbimierz, out of the seven of his speeches in the collection of *Sermones sapientiales* that are of interest to us, contain game-related expressions that allow us to define them more precisely than those mentioned above. Because of this, it will be easier to identify the reasons for their inclusion in the narrative construction of the sermons and to explain more simply the context in which they were placed there.

The exhortation on the exercise of the priestly office and the abuse of one's own position by priests and clerics [*Hic tractatur de officio et abusu*

pueris, sed interdum viris. Ex ludo enim aut ioco oriuntur detractiones, vituperia, fornicationes, lites, inimicitiae, rixae, discordiae, adulteria et homicidia et quandoque incestus et stupra, see Stanisław ze Skarbimierza, *Sermo de stoliditate pro terrenis insudentium et de lenociniis melodiae*, in: *ibidem*, part 3, no. XCVI, pp. 155-163.

[18] *Si estis filii christianorum, ostendite opera sanctorum (…). Numquid enim arguit sanctitatem et fidem christianam viduas opprimere, pupillos calumniari, sancta loca poluere, bona ecclesiarum distrahere et suis usibus adaptare, iura ecclesiastica violare, Deum non timere, hominem non vereri, iustum opprimere, vicissim supplantare, verum supprimere, falsitatem colorare, iustitiam aut vendere aut non facere, aut non curare et quandoque se illi opponere, numquam vel raro verum dicere aut fidem tenere, quasi omnia simulatorie agere, in consiliis non, quae placent Deo, sed homini, proferre, nolle de malo argui, bonos non curare, malos amare, adulteros veracibus praeferre, confessores super rapinis, super male ablatis vel distractis ad ecclesiam vel alias spectantibus, caecos et surdos, idiotas, pusillanimes, qui "quasi arundo facile vento agitantur", aut adulatores et mulcentes et nullatenus remordentes vitia, eligere, episcopos, decanos, plebanos et alios praelatos ecclesiasticos ignaros, bibulos, lusores, mendaces, vanos et fatuos, prodigos et luxuriae deditos, ad sedes promovere et magistros animarum facere, qui non sunt digni, ut essent magistri iumentorum*, see Stanisław ze Skarbimierza, *Sermo de curando bono nomine, ad quod conservandum quattuor principaliter requiruntur, et utrum aliquo casu laxa conscientia stricte praeponatur*, in: *ibidem*, no. LXXXV, pp. 51-69.

praedicatorum et clericorum] is a reminder to priests of the moral duties incumbent on them, and of the virtues they should demonstrate in the service of God and of people: "Et vos diaconi, subdiaconi et clerici audite disciplinam. Ecce regula vestra est: castitas, sobrietas, patientia, mansuetudo, humilitas, prudentia, iustitia, temperantia, fortitudo, scientia et aliarum virtutum moralium intellectualium et theologicalium, ut est fides, spes et caritas, venustas". The author contrasts this part of his argument with the pessimistic diagnosis of the state of the priesthood of his day which he makes later in his informative speech, ascribing the cause of this worrying phenomenon to the relaxed discipline prevailing among the clergy. This in turn translates into numerous abuses on their part, which occur in part because such priests, instead of upholding the highest moral standards, become similar in sin to those they are supposed to correct. As a result, some priests become debauchees, others become gamblers (*aleatores*), while others become drunkards or indulge in hunting. The author goes on to remind his audience that, according to canon law, such persons should be removed from their offices unless they abandon their sinful practices and do penance. The Cracow-based scholar therefore urges his listeners to adhere to the moral principles that apply to people of their kind. Otherwise, a question arises that was posed years ago by St Bernard, which the sermonist referred to: does the cleric who tries to resemble a knight in his life become a knight, or does he, as a result of these attempts, manage to become neither one nor the other?[19]

Considering our topic, the most important thing about this sermon is the appearance in the collection of speeches on wisdom of the Latin expression *aleator*, which most likely meant - as will be argued below - a person gambling with dice games. This gaming-related Latin expression was used by the sermonist in two more homilies included in the collection under discussion here. Let us look at these threads and the contexts in which they appeared. For reasons that will be discussed in detail below, we propose to translate the word as "gambler", as above.

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[19] *Cur id, nisi quia qualis populus, talis sacerdos? Cur, nisi quia corruit in plateis veritas, nec est aut vix est, qui dicat eam, omnes declinantur, simul inutiles facti sunt, non est qui faciat bonum, non est usque ad unum* (…). *Alii quippe sunt fornicatores notorii et hi ipso iure, nisi abiecerint mulierculas, ab ingressu ecclesiae sunt suspensi. LXXXI distinctione: si qui sunt presbyteri; alii aleatores et bibuli et hi, nisi monisi, resipuerint, deponuntur; alii venatores famosi, et hi inter peccatores publicos sunt computandi* (…). *Accipite igitur clerici et maxime praelati armaturam adversus insidias diaboli! Omnes viri ecclesiastici in suo ordine vivant, ut postquam resurrexerint, extra ordinem non ponantur. Miror enim, ait Bernardus, cuius ordinis sunt illi clerici, qui in congregatione temporalium se habent ut laici, in apparatu nobili ut nobiles, in acquisitione redituum ut clerici; si non laborant ut laici neque neque pugnant ut milites, et cum utriusque ordinis esse cupiunt utramque deserunt utramque confudunt*, see Stanisław ze Skarbimierza, *Hic tractatur de officio et abusu praedicatorum et clericorum*, in: *ibidem* part 1, no. IV, pp. 59-75.

The sermon entitled *Sermo de diligendo lumine sapientiae et necessitate ipsius ad regendum ac corrigendum praelatorum* was addressed by Stanisław of Skarbimierz to the senior clergy - prelates. The author focused on their conduct, criticising vices, and calling on them to live wisely and set a good example, as was required from spiritual leaders. He then asked his listeners to consider whether their lives were blameless, whether they were concerned first and foremost with the salvation of souls, whether they were more preoccupied with souls than with income, and whether they were more concerned with the correction of their subjects or with tithes. Finally, he wanted them to check whether they had chosen experienced helpers, not ignorant ones, not jokers, gamblers (*aleatores*), drunkards, adulterers, or criminals, and whether, in the face of the enemies of God's Church, they consistently defended its cause.[20]

In the above invocation, the sermonist expressed concern about the moral qualifications of both the prelates and their assistants, implying that the latter might be unsuitable for the positions they held in the Church. The term *aleatores* used in the above passage indicates those indulging in gambling. Judging by the context, such men appear in the text as evil characters, next to other individuals of doubtful moral values, namely jokers, drunkards, adulterers, or even criminals, who were still allowed to serve the Church as men of the cloth due to the negligence of their superiors.

The author returns to the thread of gamblers among the clergy in the sermon entitled *Sermo de perversitate sacerdotis* [On the perversity of priests]. In this sermon, as in the example mentioned above, the preacher addresses priests as leaders of God's community of the faithful. Stanisław of Skarbimierz focuses on sensitising his listeners to beware of the danger of becoming like lay people in their attitudes and actions, by imitating them in situations where the latter lead sinful lives. The preacher then asks whether his listeners really pay enough attention to the proclamation of God's truth and to the maintenance of an uncompromising moral attitude, or whether, like secular sinners, they pay more attention to worldly goods?

Applying sophisticated rhetorical devices, the author goes on to paint a picture in the imagination of the addressees of this discourse and as a warning to them of a man who, by virtue of his priestly function,

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[20] *Dirigere debet autem praelatus in viam salutis, tum irreprehensibiliter vivendo, nam alias quomodo salus ovium speranda sit, si is, qui tueri debuit a morsibus luporum, exemplo pravitatis subditorum mentes dilaniat et discerpit.* (…) *Nunc ergo aetatem habetis, vosmet ipsos interrogate, si estis irreprehensibiles, si usque ad sanguinem salutem animarum zelandes, si plus solliciti de animabus quam censibus, si plus de subditorum emenda quam lana, si assumpsistis in ministros gnaros, non idiotas, non lusores, non aleatores, non bibulos, non adulteros aut criminosos, si adversus inimicos Dei ecclesiae constanter iustitiam ecclesie defensastis*?, see Stanisław ze Skarbimierza, *Sermo de diligendo lumine sapientiae et necessitate ipsius ad regendum ac corrigendum praelatorum*, in: *ibidem*, part 1, no. XXV, pp. 257-272.

should be a teacher and spiritual guide to others, but who instead remains attached to this world by the numerous ties of sin which he shares with the laity, and thus follows a path towards eternal damnation. At this point in the exhortation cited here, the characteristics of such a doubtful priest and teacher are presented. Here he appears in the role of priest as a common man, a drunkard, a lover of harlots, an idiot, a simpleton, and a gambler (*aleator*), whose conduct consequently leads to the moral erosion of the entire community of the Church. For such a spiritual leader of problematic quality is - to cite just a few of the comparisons used by our sermonist in this passage of his speech - like a leader without eyes, a teacher without books, or a doctor without schools. Finally, the preacher asks rhetorically whether a person with such poor moral qualifications as those mentioned above should be allowed to carry out pastoral work, or whether it would be better to put a millstone around his neck and drown him in the depths of the sea, or, in a more humane variant, perhaps he should be assigned to herding cattle or pigs instead of being allowed to serve God and the Church?[21]

The third group of Stanisław of Skarbimierz's sermons, containing a theme dedicated to games, and addressed this time to the Cracow

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[21] *Si vero sacerdotes et viri ecclesiastici habent oculum solum ad beneficium ecclesiasticum, quod est bonorum temporalium allatium, habet de ipsis satanas fiduciam, quod si non inferiores populo saltim in ruditate, in stoliditate, in ignorantia, in caecitate, in rigiditate, in mundi concupiscentia sint aequales sicque sicut populus sic sacerdos.* (…) *Vide igitur qui accepisti beneficiorum, a quo accepisti: a Deo vel a Simone Mago? Accepisti beneficium, sed quomo in eo vixisti? Qualiter patrimonium Christi expendisti? An cum Christi pauperibus vel histrionibus et forsan meretricibus?* (…) *Amice, rerum temporalium non animarum, quomodo curam magisterii assumere praesumpsisti, qui quid sanctum sacerdotium aut sacrum evangelium numquam didicisti? (Nempe in magistrum assumi non debet, qui formam discipuli non assumpsit), scire utique debuisti, quod ars artium est regimen animarum.* (…) *Venite igitur omnes et videte angelis et hominibus sacrum spectaculum: En sedet egregie donatus honore magistri aptus adhuc ferulae, pileus authenticat illum, aurum in digitis, sedes in summo. Ecce plebanus factus homo non bene sanus, scortator, bibulous, idiota, rudis, aleator rex positus, princeps, populi dux quoque vocatus. Numquid enim est ridiculo plenum et ostentui expositum ductor sine oculis, magister sine libris, doctor sine scholis, dux sine manibus, pastor sine pedibus, mutus evangelizans, coloboriticus sive claudus regia via incedens, caecus ducatum praebens, idicta scientia illiminans. An dicam pastorem gregis vel idolum, qui legem Christi nescit, nec Deum nisi somniando cognoscit, cuius anima tenebrosa, vita contaminata, persona, etsi apud homines non infamata, apud Deum tamen et sanctos angelos eius despecta. O pastor et idolum, Deo molestus, angelis despectus, daemonibus amatus, hominibus infestus, tibi ipsi malus. Et certe, qui sibi nequam, cui bonus, cui consultius foret, „ut suspenderetur mola asinaria in collo eius et demergeretur in profundum maris", aut quod sues pasceret vel iumenta, ut simpliciter ambulans in lege Dei salvaretur, quam quod se fastuose in magistrum animarum erigit, cito quoque acerbissima gehennae tormenta figura corporis deposita experimento cognoscet. Melius quippe erat si natur non fuisset homo ille, qui nec est sicut simplex et iustus populus, sic sacerdos*, see Stanisław ze Skarbimierza, *Sermo de perversitate sacerdotis*, in: *ibidem*, part 2, no. LIX, pp. 193-199.

University students,[22] includes a speech beginning as follows: *Sermo iste tractat de diversis superstitionibus homium, quae sunt contra fidem et cum hoc quod sola prosperitas exspectanda est a Deo*. As the title suggests, in it the author discusses activities and attitudes that he considers to be superstitious and therefore contrary to Church teaching. In the long list of different practices of sortilege, the preacher includes, among other things, playing at dice (*ludus taxillorum*). In one passage Stanisław of Skarbimierz mentioned those dice players, who pretending to want to abandon this pernicious practice, confess their sin to a confessor and promise to renounce it. However, they do not keep their word - after receiving the holy communion, they quickly return to the game. To make matters worse, they deceitfully explain their sin to the confessor and to God, claiming that the declaration made in the confessional concerned only the church premises, and not the inn. The Cracow-based preacher strongly condemns this type of attitude and considers it nothing but a lie, ineffective in the face of God's omniscience, adding that God's wisdom and knowledge "knows words, knows minds, and will bring about the due punishment." [23]

All the sermon passages quoted above contained references to games or gambling of an unambiguously negative nature - these activities being, without exception, the subject of harsh criticism by the priest. Ludic themes were woven by Stanisław of Skarbimierz into those places of the preacher's pastoral reflections in which he condemned human attitudes and practices (evident among both clergy and laity) as sinful, and contrary to Christian morality. This raises the question of the reason for this attitude of the preaching author towards the games and the people who participated in them.

Why did precisely the preacher in question stigmatise games, and for what reason did he attack gamers? What circumstances influenced such an intransigent attitude towards games? Before we undertake to consider possible answers to these questions, let us clarify which games the author wrote about in his sermons. For this is crucial to a proper understanding of his intentions. Let us recall that, alongside the rather general and ambiguous

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[22] M. Olszewski, *Świat zabobonów w średnowieczu. Studium kazania O zabobonach Stanisława ze Skarbimierza*, Warszawa 2002, pp. 104-106.

[23] *Quidam faciunt ludum taxillorum exosum cum ramis. Nonnulli etiam lusores, quod Deum aut sacerdotem eius decipiant, quod dum coram confessoribus ludis taxillorum abrenuntiant, absolvuntur, tandem postquam communicant corpori Christi, redeunt ad ludos suae damnationis, dicere non pavescunt: ego promisi confessori, quod nolo ludere in ecclesia, sed non abrenuntiavi in taberna. Insensati, cito veniet Dei sapientia, quae verba notat, mentes agnoscit et poenam debitam et fligi mandabit, ut qui stultus fuit in culpa, sit prudens in poena*, see Stanisław ze Skarbimierza, *Sermo iste tractat de diversis superstitionibus hominum, quae sunt contra fidem et cum hoc quod sola prosperitas exspectanda est a Deo*, in: *Sermones…*, part 2, no. XLVII, p. 88. A full review of this sermon in Latin and Polish translation can be found in M. Olszewski, *Świat…*, pp. 180-191.

terms *ludus* and *lusor*, which could have meant "games" or "play", Stanisław of Skarbimierz included in his reflections on wisdom the expressions *alea* and *aleator*, as well as *ludus taxillorum*. The canon of Cracow Cathedral was thus evoking, at least in most of the above examples, games of chance. In other words, they were games in which the players' subsequent moves, and consequently the outcome, were determined by blind chance (fate), with dice being the instrument used for this purpose. As a rule, games of chance were used for gambling, *i.e.*, the game involved predetermined stakes - objects or money - which fell into the hands of the winner.

5. Games from Antiquity to the Middle Ages, their functions, and attitudes towards them

In order to answer the above questions concerning Stanisław of Skarbimierz's attitude towards games, let us look at the socio-cultural contexts in which they appeared in the history of culture. As noted in the introduction to this essay, the first traces of ludic practices can be found at a very early stage of human development - even in prehistoric times. Archaeologists associate knucklebones (Gr. *astragaloi*), or bones derived from the metatarsals of animals, with them. Even at that time, such ludic paraphernalia may not only have been used for games, but may also have played at least two other roles: as tools for calculus, and as objects connected with magical, possibly fortune-telling, practices. Researchers investigating the history of games of chance and the history of gambling agree that the latter involved using the results of a dice throws to interpret the "will of the gods" or to discover what was beyond rational cognition.[24] Gerda Reith puts forward the interesting, and unsubstantiated, thesis that in ancient times there was no such concept as "chance". Any seemingly chance occurrence was regarded as a sacred sign from the gods, a kind of message from the other world. Traces of such practices can be seen in the oldest mythologies: Greek, Scandinavian, or Hindu beliefs. It is there that the researcher traces the origins of gambling in the belief that gambling practices involving the throwing of various objects, of which dice (knucklebones) became the most popular over time, had an impact on the causality of contact with the "transcendent". In this way, by attempting to read the will of the gods through the throwing of lots, decisions about the future were made. Next, "in the process

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[24] G. Reith, *Homo Aleator: a sociological study of gambling in western society*, [PhD Thesis, University of Glasgow] 1996. p. 16; cf. J. Banaszkiewicz, *Rodulf, król Herulów, który grał (Paweł Diakon, Historia Longobardów, I, 20)*, in: *E scientia et amicitia*: *studia poświęcone profesorowi Edwardowi Potkowskiemu w sześćdziesięciopięciolecie urodzin i czterdziestolecie pracy naukowej*, ed. M. Drzewiecki *et al.*, Warszawa 1999, pp. 12-31.

of divining the future, interested parties could entertain themselves by betting on the outcome of rituals - in a sense, attempting to pre-empt the will of the gods".[25] Thus, as David Schwartz aptly put it, the casting of lots gradually evolved from "sacred ritual" to "profane amusement-dice".[26]

Gambling in ancient times was widespread, and various forms of it were also practised outside Europe, in the Americas and Asia (in addition to India, also in China, the Korean Peninsula, and Japan).[27] In the Mediterranean basin, within the civilisations of the Middle East, as well as in the cultures of ancient Greece, and Rome, dice were used simultaneously for fortune-telling, games of chance and also games of skill (*e.g.*, throwing a certain number of dice at the same time and trying to catch them all). In ancient Greece, two types of dice were used in games. In addition to *astragaloi*, cubic dice, called *kuboi* or *kybeia*, also appeared. In Rome, knucklebones (known in Latin as *tali*) were replaced by cubic dice (*tesserae*) for practical reasons - it was better to throw them in such a way that the element of randomness in the game was even greater. The Roman civilisation brought the spread of board games alongside dice games (the oldest board games are known from ancient Mesopotamia, discovered in royal tombs in Ur from around 3000 BC). Some, such as *ludus lantrunculorum*, were devoid of the element of randomness, while others, such as *ludus duodecim scriptorum*, were played with counters and dice, thus combining the intellectual and random nature of such pastimes. Latin sources usually applied to board games the generic term of *tabula*.[28] Both *tabula* and dice were very popular pastimes in ancient Rome, ways of spending leisure time - they were played in almost every segment of Roman society. Taverns commonly had gaming tables specially designed for this purpose - so called *tabula lusoria*. Dice games above all, but also some tabula games, as well as horse racing and gladiatorial combat - gambling was practised with all these pastimes. Gamblers were called *aleatores* and were regarded, despite the extraordinary popularity of such practices, as people who should not be trusted. In the stereotypical view, gambling appeared to be irrational in itself, out of the control of reason. Critics of gambling accused the practice of being nothing more than a reckless reliance on chance, which could

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[25] G. Reith, *Homo…*, p. 16; cf. J. Banaszkiewicz, *Rodulf, król Herulów, który grał (Paweł Diakon, Historia Longobardów, I, 20)*, in: *E scientia et amicitia*: *studia poświęcone profesorowi Edwardowi Potkowskiemu w sześćdziesięciopięciolecie urodzin i czterdziestolecie pracy naukowej*, ed. M. Drzewiecki *et al*., Warszawa 1999, pp. 12-31.

[26] D.G. Schwartz, *Roll The Bones: The History of Gambling (Casino Edition)*, [Winchester] 2013, p. 26.

[27] *Ibidem*, pp. 33-44.

[28] *Ibidem*, p. 29; G. Reith, *Homo…*, p. 45. L. Winniczuk, *Ludzie, zwyczaje i obyczaje starożytnej Grecji i Rzymu*, Warszawa 2006, pp. 355-356. For a comprehensive study of the games of *tabula* see H.J.R. Murray, *A History of Board Games Other Than Chess*, London 1952.

lead to disastrous consequences. With this in mind, moralists saw games of *alea* as a denial of all order in favour of chaos, an escape from the rational control of all decisions and actions provided by human reason, and a defiance of socially and culturally established norms - all in pursuit of illusory profit.[29]

Given the subject matter of our essay, it is particularly important to look at the attitudes towards games of followers of the Christian religion. Christianity was born in the Roman empire at a time when attitudes towards various games varied greatly and, particularly with regard to games of chance, were essentially ambivalent. On the one hand, there was no shortage of gambling enthusiasts, who enjoyed gambling with the aid of games of chance, while on the other hand, such games were severely judged for their moral and social harmfulness. It is worth noting that in the early days of the development of the new religion, there was acceptance of activities of some sort of chance, although we do not know whether the first Christians practised games of chance. In the Acts of the Apostles, there is a meaningful reference to the choice of a successor to Judas made by Christ's disciples through the casting of lots. However, this was done after prior prayer and thus, as it were, with God's permission, which is reminiscent of the aforementioned links between magical practices or religions older than Christianity and divination.[30]

This attitude of Christians, at first open to action based on chance, however, changed over time. Even since during the transitional period associated with the collapse of the Western Roman Empire and the advent of the new age, Christian thinkers promoted the view that any attempt to anticipate future events by casting lots was incompatible with the doctrine they preached. Both St Augustine and, later, Boethius, reminded the faithful that there was no room for blind chance in the world of God, for everything that happened, happened by Providence.[31] According to the Christian Church's linear conception of time, man had no right to interfere with it, by which it was meant, among other things, attempts to foretell the future. Thus, man

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29 J.P. Toner, *Leisure and Ancient Rome*, Cambridge 1995, pp. 110-124; L. Winniczuk, *Ludzie…*, pp. 369-372.

30 *Dzieje Apostolskie*, in: *Biblia Jerozolimska*, I, 26, ed. K. Sarzała, Poznań 2006, pp. 1516-1517; *cf.* D.G. Schwartz, *Roll…*, pp. 55-58.

31 G. Reith, *Homo…*, pp. 15-20. Admittedly, St Augustine had an important moment in his life in which he randomly opened a book of St Paul's letters in order that a selected passage of it might thus show him the way to proceed. However, this recourse to fate, as in the case of the random selection of a successor to Judas, was, as Rhiannon Purdie wrote, "providentially favoured" and therefore appropriate. See *idem*, *Dice-games and the Blasphemy of Prediction*, in: *Medieval Futures. Attitudes to the Future in the Middle Ages*, ed. J.A. Burrow, I.P. Wei, Woodbridge 2000, p. 180.

could only live the earthly life given to him and accept God's judgments with humility.[32] Justification for such a critical attitude to attempts at predicting future events can be found in the works of successive generations of Christian authorities: from the aforementioned St Augustine, through St Isidore, Hincmar of Reims, Gratian, John of Salisbury, to Alexander Neckam, to name but a few. However, in such an interpretation of the mutual relations between Providence, humans, and time, some exceptions were allowed. St Thomas Aquinas wrote in his *Summa Theologiae* that the future could be legitimately predicted when there were sequences of cause and effect. In other words, the prediction of the future could be made by experts in their fields, such as astrologers or doctors, who, by examining the cause, had the right to forecast what would happen. Furthermore, one could learn about the future, which was still in line with the Christian doctrine, through prophetic dreams, visions, or epiphanies. Aquinas believed that all other attempts to foretell the future, including casting lots, amounted to "an intrusion of diabolic powers". Other Christian philosophers spoke in a similar vein on this subject.[33] For this reason, all games of chance, the outcome of which depended primarily on chance, were also subject to criticism, which was not only voiced unceasingly by successive generations of numerous moral authorities in the medieval Church, but also in normative acts such as bishops' decrees, conciliar and synodal resolutions (canons), and judgements of ecclesiastical courts.[34]

As the popularity of games of chance and gambling continued to grow over time, which was evidenced not only by numerous written sources, but also by archaeological artefacts from various corners of medieval Europe,[35]

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[32] G. Pàttaro, *Pojmowanie czasu w chrześcijaństwie*, in: *Czas w kulturze*, ed. A. Zajączkowski, Warszawa 1988, pp. 291-330.

[33] J-C. Schmitt, *Appropriating the Future*, in: *Medieval…*, pp. 3-18; I.P. Wei, *Predicting the Future to Judge the Present: Paris Theologians and Attitudes to the Future*, in: *ibidem*, pp. 19-36; E. Conte, L. Mayali, *Introduction*, in: *A Cultural History of Law in the Middle Ages*, London-New York 2019, pp. 2-9.

[34] J. Ashton, *The History of Gambling in England*, London 1968 [1st ed. 1899], pp. 1-14; J. Fijałek, *Życie i obyczaje kleru w Polsce średniowiecznej na podstawie ustawodawstwa synodalnego*, Kraków 1997 [1st ed. 1894], pp. 39-44; R. Bubczyk, *Gry w szachy i kości jako rozrywki duchowieństwa*, "Annales UMCS", Sectio F, Historia 58 (2003), pp. 25-33; *idem*, *'Ludus inhonestus et illicitus'? Chess, Games, and the Church in Medieval Europe*, in: *Games and Gaming in Medieval Literature*, ed. S. Patterson, New York 2015, pp. 23-44; M. Leone, *Christianity and Gambling*, "Centre for Gaming Research Occasional Paper Series" 42 (2018), pp. 1-9; A. Spanos, *Games…*, pp. 120-123.

[35] Examples of the prevalence of games at various sites in medieval Europe include game accessories such as game boards, counters, and dice. On the subject of this type of paraphernalia discovered in burials from the late 6th/early 7th century in the British Isles, there are some examples, see L. Blackmore, I. Blair, S. Hirst, Ch. Scull, *The Prittlewell Princely Burial. Excavations at Priory Crescent, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, 2003*, London 2003, pp. 247-253; on the finds of this

the problems associated with them also piled up, which in turn exacerbated their criticism. In the accusations levelled against games of chance and their players, more and more elaborate arguments were raised. These were not only doctrinal in nature, but also concerned social and economic contexts. St Isidore of Seville was one of the first medieval authorities to reveal such a critical opinion on dice games. In Book XVIII of his famous encyclopaedic work *Etymologiae*, he enumerated, among other things, the reasons why *alea* games were sometimes subject to prohibitions. The author explained to his readers that this was because such games generally led to cheating and perjury, provoked hatred among the players, and caused their financial ruin.[36]

While referring to the work of Isidore, let us quote here one sentence in which that author defined the concept of *alea*. In chapter LX, entitled *De tabula*, the Bishop of Seville wrote: "Alea, id est lusus tabulae, inventa a Graecis in otio Troiani belli a quodam milite Alea nomine, a quo et ars nomen accepit. Tabula luditur pyrgo, calculis tesserisque".[37] Thus, we are faced with a definition whereby the expression *alea* means not the dice game itself, but a board game with dice, which accounted for its random nature. The term alea can also be found in this sense in later sources. A classification of this type was made by Aldhelm, Abbot of Malmesbury Abbey (d. 709), who lived at the turn of the 7th and 8th centuries, in his work *De pedum regulis*, where he wrote, among other things: "aleator calculis et tesseris ludens per aleam" [the alea player playing alea with counters and dice]. The Irish monk Sedulius Scottus (d. before 858) commented similarly on the *alea*. In his work entitled *Grammatici Hibernici Carolini Aevi IV,* the author defined the term alea in these words: "a quodam ludo qui alea vocatur aleae dicuntur ubi sunt duae tabulae et multae tesserae".[38] A clear distinction between *alea* games and dice games (without board and counters) can also be found in sources from the late Middle Ages. In the statutes of the XLIII Synod of Würzburg from 1329, *ludi alearum* are listed in the context of forbidden pastimes

type from medieval Poland see M. Rakoczy, *Średniowieczna plansza do gry z Ostrowa Tumskiego we Wrocławiu*, "Śląskie Sprawozdania Archeologiczne" 57 (2015), pp. 249-260; E. Wielocha, *Kościany przedmiot do gry z cmentarza przy kościele Św. Jakuba Apostoła w Toruniu i analogiczne znaleziska z obszaru Europy Środkowej – problematyka funkcji*, in: *Homo ludens. Zabawy i rozrywki na co dzień i od* święta *w dziejach krajów Europy* Środkowej *i ich sąsiadów,* ed. A. Teterycz-Puzio, W. Bejda, L. Kościelak, Słupsk 2017, pp. 32.

[36] Chapter LXVIII, entitled *De interdictione aleae* reads: *Ab hac arte fraus et mendacium atque periurium numquam abest, postremo et odium et damna rerum; unde et aliquando propter haec scelera interdicta legibus fuit*, see https://www.thelatinlibrary.com/isidore/18.shtml [accessed 27.08.2025], cf. the English translation in *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, ed. S.A. Barney, W.J. Lewis, J.A. Beach, O. Berghof, Cambridge 2006, p. 371.

[37] *Ibidem*.

[38] Both quotations come from the work by M. Bayless, *Entertainment, Pleasure, and Meaning in Early England*, Elements in England in the Early Medieval World, Cambridge 2024, p. 64.

alongside chess and dice games, in turn called *ludi taxillorum* there.[39] Living at the turn of the 14th and 15th centuries, *i.e.*, at the time of Stanisław of Skarbimierz, the Bishop of Langres, the French Cardinal Louis de Bar (d. 1430) issued in 1404 a ban on the games mentioned by name, with the following wording: "ne omnino ludant ad taxillos, ad aleas, ad trinquetum, quod aliter nominatur ad punctum scacarii, neque ad cartas".[40]

The above examples demonstrate that in the Middle Ages the term *alea* was ambiguous and, as far as its scope of meaning was concerned, quite capacious. This group of leisure activities could include board games using dice, as well as - as Martha Bayless has demonstrably shown - also dice games without a board and counters, or even board games of skill (without a random element).[41] Drawing attention to these distinctions and, at the same time, clarifying the meaning of the expression *alea* is, from the point of view of our considerations, extremely important, given that it was used several times by Stanisław of Skarbimierz in his sermons on wisdom. Thus, contrary to the arbitrary translation of the word *alea* as "dice game" appearing in the historical studies devoted to this subject, we should allow for the possibility that the Cracow-based preacher used it in a broader sense, *i.e.*, as a game of chance or as gambling. After all, the game hidden under this name may have been the one which required, apart from dice, a board, and counters. This interpretation of the meaning of the term *alea* used by Stanisław is also supported by the fact that in his speeches he used, by no means interchangeably, two terms: *alea* and *taxillus*, which suggests that he consciously singled out the expression to mean dice games only (*ludus taxillorum*). Given the harsh tone of criticism in which the priest spoke in his sermons about the pastimes he called *alea*, it is less likely, although it cannot be entirely ruled out, that he simply meant games in general when he wrote the word in question.

After this long but important digression, let us return to the main thread of consideration of the catalogue of reasons why games of chance were subjected to sustained criticism in the Middle Ages. Distinguishing these will shed a better light on the reasons for Stanisław of Skarbimierz's stance on the matter. As noted above, among the key arguments against this type

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[39] *Ludus alearum, Cartarum, Schacorum, taxillorum, anulorum et globorum monachis et monialibus prohibemus distric*, see *Synodicon Herbipolense: Geschichte und Statuten der im Bisthum Würzburg gehaltenen Concilien und Dioecesansynoden*, ed. F. Himmelstein, Würzburg 1855, p. 180; Cf. T. Depaulis,*"Breviari del diavolo so" le carte e naibi". How Bernardine of Siena and his Franciscan Followers Saw Playing Cards and Card Games*, in: *Religious Ludens. Das Spiel als kulturelles Phänomen in mittelalterlichen Klöstern und Orden*, ed. J. Sonntag, Berlin-Boston 2013, p. 116.

[40] The quotation comes from the work by T. Depaulis,*"Breviari…*, p.115.

[41] M. Bayless, *Alea, Taefl, and Related Games: Vocabulary and Context*, in: *Latin Learning and English Lore*, vol. 2, ed. K. O'Brien *et al*., Toronto-Buffalo-London 2005, pp. 9-27.

of game, there was a constant discussion of players appealing to the judgments of blind chance, which was perceived as them ignoring the verdicts of Providence. Such attitudes were considered in terms of idolatry. There was also no shortage of commentators, especially those recruited from among the representatives of mendicant orders, who in their criticism of games of chance emphasised their connection with pagan divination.[42]

There were also those who called the game of dice an invention of Satan or a satanic ritual.[43] Consciously avoiding participation in such games became, in the eyes of moralists, one of the virtues characterising the exemplary Christian. In his panegyric *De laude novae militiae* (On the praise of the new military service), in honour of the Knights Templar, St Bernard of Clairvaux (d. 1153) wrote in his characterisation of the Knights of Christ that they abhorred, among other things, games of chance.[44] Another famous Cistercian, Caesarius of Heisterbach (d. 1250), wrote that "God has an aversion to games of chance, because they breed anger, envy, lead to loss of property, and cause players to swear". In the second half of the 13th century, the *Legenda aurea* was written. This collection of biographies of saints of the Church, extremely popular in the Middle Ages, came from the pen of the Archbishop of Genoa and also a popular preacher, Jacobus de Voragine (d. 1298). In it, we find two themes that shed light on his views on gaming. In the Life of St Bernard, the author tells the story of a certain monk who, thanks to an evil spirit, was a gambler - he played dice and lost money. Thanks to the effective intervention of the Cistercian saint, this unfortunate monk gave up his pernicious habit and returned to the path of a virtuous life. In the Life of St Francis, contained in the same collection, there is another example of dice

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42 Such comparisons were not unfounded. In Germanic pagan communities, but also among the Slavs, and the Balts, the practice of divination by casting lots was common. Leszek Słupecki was right when he wrote (referring to Tacitus' observations in Germania and the Scandinavian sagas) about gambling among the Germanic peoples that "in essence it was not entertainment, but a way of finding out who was lucky. (…) Games of this kind were, however, often treated as a prefiguration of reality". See *idem*, *Wróżby i wyrocznie pogańskich Skandynawów*, Kraków 2017, pp. 143-175; cf. R. Bubczyk, *Rex ludens ad tabulam - gry na szachownicy a rzeczywistość (przykłady fabuł kultury rycerskiej)*, in: *Średniowiecze…*, pp. 51-61. On divination among the medieval pre-Christian beliefs of the Slavs see S. Rosik, *The Slavic Religion in the Light of 11th and 12th German Chronicles (Thietmar of Merseburg, Adam of Bremen, Helmold of Bosau). Studies on the Christian Interpretation of Pre-Christian Cults and Beliefs in the Middle Ages*, Leiden-Boston 2020 (= East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 450-1450, 60), pp. 128-133.

43 R. Purdie, *Dice-games…*, pp. 171-182; J-M. Mehl, *Les jeux de dés et de tables et les ordres religieux*, in: *Religiosus…*, pp. 171-186; A. Brown, *Passing the Time. The Role of the Dice in Late Medieval Pardon Letters*, "Speculum" 96 (2021), 3, pp. 700-725.

44 *Scacos et aleas detestantur; abhorrent venationem, nec ludicra illa avium rapina, ut assolet, delectantur*, see Bernard z Clairvaux, *Pochwała nowego rycerstwa*, ed. M. Małecki, transl. I. Kowalska-Nawrocka, Zabrze-Tarnowskie Góry 2012, p. 98.

being used as an instrument of sin. We read there of a gambler-knight who, like a pagan fortune-teller, intended to receive proof of Francis' sanctity by throwing dice.[45]

In addition to Jacobus de Voragine, other Christian moralists also presented in their works reasons why games of this kind were notorious. It was pointed out that *aleatores* invoked the help of God or a saint when, by gambling, they desired material gain. Those who lost, on the other hand, cursed the Creator and the saints. Such an attitude was regarded as blasphemy and mercilessly condemned. Medieval sources of various types show numerous instances of such and other immoral behaviour during the game. These included, for example, (already mentioned by St Isidore) cheating (*e.g.*, shaking the table while throwing the dice, filling one side of the dice with lead in order to obtain the desired result, etc.), as well as many other sinful practices.[46] The author of the 13th-century work *Summa de virtutibus et vitiis*, the French Dominican Guilelmus Peraldus (d. 1271), devoted the entire 15th chapter of his treatise to discussing the relationship of games (without specifying which ones he had in mind, although the context indicates gambling) to over a dozen sins. The resulting list included the major sins and some of those that violate the Decalogue, supplemented by several other acts, also undignified. The author placed greed (*cupiditas*), betrayal (*proditio*), and lack of mercy (*immisericordia*) at the head of this list, followed by: usury (*usuria*), blasphemy (*blasphemia*), contempt for one's own Church (*contemptus Ecclesiae*), invoking the name of God the Father (*afflictio Dei patris*), shocking one's neighbour (*scandalum proximi*), perjury (*periuria*), fraud (*fraudatio*), anger (*ira*), disrespect for a holiday (*fractio solemnitatum*), murder (*homicidium*), and idolatry (*idolatria*). In the context of the last sin, the writer highlighted the notoriety of the game of dice (*taxilli*), which provides a signpost for the player to follow instead of God. According to the author, it was under such circumstances, that the sin of idolatry took place, for "lusor enim ludum Deum suum facit".[47]

The tradition of demonising games of chance, present in moralistic treatises, continued into the following centuries. A native of Normandy, a professor at the Sorbonne in Paris, and a Franciscan monk, Nicolaus Lyranus (d. ca. 1349) wrote critically about dice players in his treatise *Praeceptorium*. The author cited as an example of the sin of blasphemy situations in which,

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[45] *Jacobi a Voragine Legenda aurea vulgo historia Lombardica dicta ad optimorum librorum fidem*, ed. T. Graesse, Lipsiae 1850, pp. 537, 673. For the edition in English see Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, transl. William Caxton, ed. F.S. Ellis, Hastings 2024, pp. 105, 124.

[46] R. Purdie, *Dice-games…*, pp. 173-174.

[47] This essay draws on the following edition of the treatise: *Guilielmi Peraldi Summae Virtutum ac Vitiorum*, vol. 2, Paris 1629, pp. 153-154.

losing at a game of chance, gamblers malign God as if it were the Creator and not Satan who was to blame.[48] Representatives of subsequent generations of the Franciscan religious community spoke in an even harsher tone about games. Placing dice games, as well as card games, among sinful activities in their sermons, some charismatic sermonists went from words to deeds, initiating the lighting of stakes on which gaming paraphernalia was publicly burned (besides the "usual suspects", *i.e.*, dice and cards, gaming boards, chess boards, balls, and even sledges used for winter recreations were destroyed in this way). Such sights, which were undoubtedly spectacular and attracted crowds, feeding people's emotions, were staged by, among others, Bernardino da Siena (d. 1444), his pupils Giovani da Capistrano (d. 1456) and Giacomo della Marca (d. 1476), Michele Carcano (d. 1484), and the Dominican Girolamo Savonarola (d. 1498).[49]

Among the main threads addressed in the theological discourse on the harmfulness of gambling were the economic issues related to the loss of property, both in monetary and material form (the passing of movable and immovable goods from the loser to the winner). The ongoing discussion on this subject, particularly noticeable in period sources from the 12th century onwards, was voiced by successive representatives of scholastic thought, from its main initiator, the General of the Dominican Order, Ramon de Penyafort (d. 1275), through St Thomas, as well as the Franciscans, Alexander of Hales (d. 1245), Peter Olivi (d. 1298), Richard of Middleton (d. 1302), and Bernardino da Siena, to professor of the University of Tübingen, Konrad Summenhart (d. 1502), to name but a few. In the course of the ensuing polemics, it was argued, among other things, whether winnings derived from gambling were fair and legitimate, and whether they could be claimed back if they were considered to be derived from sin. It was also debated as to who should decide on the restitution of gambling property, the secular authorities, or the clergy. Although there was agreement on the immoral nature of gambling, no unified position was reached on the above specific issues relating to the economic dimension of the phenomenon.[50]

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[48] Nicolaus de Lyra, *Praeceptorium, seu Expositio decalog*, Köln 1505, p. 37, available online at https://www.wbc.poznan.pl/dlibra/publication/610230/edition/525879/content [accessed 29.08.2025].

[49] N.B-A. Debby, *Renaissance…*, pp. 28-36; M. Daniluk, *Jan Kapistran*, in: *Encyklopedia Katolicka*, vol. 7, pp. 796-797; J-M. Mehl, *Les jeux de dés et de tables…*, pp. 180-181; A. Rizzi, *Predicatori, confessori mendicanti e gioco alla fine del medioevo*, in: *Religiosus…*, pp. 100-101; A. Spanos, *Games…*, pp. 120-121.

[50] G. Ceccarelli, *Gambling and Economic Thought in the Late Middle Ages*, "Ludica, annali di storia e civiltà del gioco" 12 (2006), pp. 54-63.

The above review of observations, attitudes, and practices related to the problem of games, especially to the games of chance, in the life of medieval man allows us to place the above-quoted statements of Stanisław of Skarbimierz on games and gamblers in a broader, socio-cultural context. The Polish preacher was erudite and familiar with at least some of the works cited here. He certainly had his own views on the subject and, living at a time when gaming tools were burned at the stake, cannot have remained indifferent as regards this controversial issue. Researchers of medieval homiletics, as well as experts in the biography of this preacher, agree on the opinion that he became acquainted with many of the readings that had a key influence on his spiritual and intellectual formation during his studies in Prague. Stanisław of Skarbimierz was heavily influenced by the *Decretum Gratiani*, which was popular in academic circles, as well as by some sermons of the Prague-based preachers, led by Johann Militsch (d. 1374). It was in the intellectual atmosphere of the Prague *studium generale* that Stanisław's views on good and bad priests, so vividly expressed in his speeches on wisdom, took shape. In this collection of sermons, the author referred to numerous ancient and medieval authorities, often making use of quotations from their works. As in the case of many medieval writers, it is not easy to determine the exact path those thoughts took and the transformations they underwent to eventually find their way into Stanisław's preaching texts. Zenon Kałuża has suggested that the Cracovian professor may have known some of them as popular opinions, while quoting some others second-hand, and that he transferred other thoughts onto parchment - as in the case of the sermon on superstitions discussed above - by borrowing directly from another author's work. [51]

Apart from more or less well-founded hypotheses as to the sources of Stanisław of Skarbimierz's inspiration, a contextual analysis of the threads devoted to games and gamblers (gamesters) contained in his sermons on wisdom leads to several certain conclusions. The Cracovian preacher was highly critical of such activities and practices, which he expressed every time he mentioned them in various passages of his talks. He attacked these, in his view, blameworthy deeds above all from the position of a Christian

[51] Some scholars point to the sermons of Johann Militsch as a source of inspiration for Stanisław of Skarbimierz for his sermon on superstitions, see M. Olszewski, *Świat…*, pp. 83-92; cf. W. Brojer, *Między pastwiskiem i akademią. Stanisława ze Skarbimierza kazanie o zabobonach*, in: *Ambona. Teksty o kulturze średniowiecza ofiarowane Stanisławowi Bylinie*, ed. K. Bracha, W. Brojer, Warszawa 2016, pp. 147-191. However, the findings of Zenon Kaluza in this regard were not taken into account, who had previously shown the direct influence on this sermon of the work entitled *Speculum historiale* by Vincent of Beauvais (d. 1264), *idem*, *O poetach i poezji w Kazaniach sapiencjalnych Skarbimierczyka studium źródłowe*, "Przegląd Tomistyczny" 10 (2004), pp. 33-86. Stanisław's peer, the Czech preacher Jan of Holešov (d. 1436), spoke in a very similar tone to Stanisław of Skarbimierz on the subject of games on Christmas Eve, see B. Wojciechowska, *Kościół wobec folkloru w Polsce w XIV i XV wieku*, "Kieleckie Studia Teologiczne" 13 (2014), pp. 151-163.

priest. In his criticism, he thus fitted into the mainstream of the contemporary Church's views on Christian morality, from the point of view of which he considered, among other things, entertainment. As a spiritual leader, representative of the ecclesiastical and intellectual elite, and at the same time a cathedral preacher, Stanisław of Skarbimierz made his observations on games public with a sense of responsibility for the education of the clergy, who were later to disseminate them among lower strata of Polish society. The preacher was certainly aware that for the audience of his sermons, and especially for the academic youth, he was a moral authority. This burden of duty probably prompted him to promote with redoubled vigour, among other things, those attitudes whose antithesis was to engage in games of chance and associated gambling.

The discussion of the problems presented in this essay certainly does not exhaust the catalogue of numerous issues relating to medieval games, to which attention should be paid in future steps. Among the interesting research postulates that require further study is the question of the extent of the social impact of the game themes evoked in Stanisław's sermons. On the other hand, it is worth seeking an answer to the question of to what extent the content of the sermons was influenced by social reality. It seems almost certain that such a dependence took place as it is difficult to suppose that the author would have invented the morally questionable actions he described if such practices had not been known (practised?) in the community to which he addressed his sermons. It is not known with what reaction from the audience the problems posed in the sermons were met. One can therefore attempt to seek at least a partial answer to this question. It is probably a truism to state that both the content, and therefore also the threads including games, as well as the form of the sermon, were carefully adapted by the priest to the profile of the addressees in order to reach them as much as possible.[52] However, the question still remains as to the effectiveness of such endeavours. It is also worth putting forward as a further research postulate additional studies of medieval games through the prism of other sermons not yet studied in this respect. There is no doubt that a scholarly exploration of homiletic texts in search of themes devoted to medieval entertainment can contribute to a more precise definition of their place in the doctrine and practice of the medieval Church. Such an action should indirectly expand existing knowledge of, among other things, different areas within such categories of medieval culture as time or social space. Thus, with the above in mind, all initiatives related to the critical source edition of sermons should be strongly supported.

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[52] Ch. Burger, *Preaching for Members of the University in Latin, for Parishioners in French: Jean Gerson (1363-1429) on 'Blessed are they that mourn'*, in: *Constructing…*, pp. 207-220; J. Wielgosz, *Audytorium kaznodziejów a typologia kazań*, in: *Kaznodziejstwo…*, pp. 171-182.

Abstract

This article focuses on the collection of sermons known as *Sermones sapientiales*, authored by the Polish late-medieval preacher, Stanisław of Skarbimierz (c. 1360-1431), in which content relating to games can be identified. The author of this essay attempts to establish the role and functions which the motifs of medieval games of chance, namely those with the use of dice, played in sermons of one of the most renowned and influential late-medieval Polish priests. The analysis has been conducted from a historical perspective and in the European context. The author explains why the sermonist in question adopted in his homilies a highly critical view of games of chance and of gambling in general. It is argued in this paper that words of criticism towards such games were uttered mainly because of the element of chance included in them, which was in contradiction of the Christian conception of time and prediction. In addition, some social and economic aspects of gambling - discussed in this paper - have also been listed as factors contributing to the ill-fame of this practice.

Keywords: Stanisław of Skarbimierz, medieval sermon, games, gambling, preaching

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Die verschollene Büchersammlung der Bibliothek des Priesterseminars in Płock aus dem 15. Jahrhundert[1]

Die historische Büchersammlung der Bibliothek des Priesterseminars in Płock gehörte vor dem Zweiten Weltkrieg zu den wertvolleren Polens. Bereits Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts wurde sie u. a. von dem Kunsthistoriker und Bibliophilen Mathias Bersohn,[2] und im 20. Jh. vom Erzbischof von Płock Antoni Julian Nowowiejski,[3] von Edward Chwalewik,[4] Maria Hornowska und Halina

[1] Weiterführend zu den verschollenen Inkunabeln aus Plock vgl. die Einleitung zu Jolanta M. Marszalska, Waldemar Graczyk, *The lost collection of incunabula of the Seminary Library in Płock*, Warszawa 2023.

[2] M. Bersohn, *Księgozbiór katedry płockiej*, Warszawa 1899; M. Bersohn, *O iluminowanych rękopisach polskich*, Warszawa 1900.

[3] A.J. Nowowiejski, *Płock. Monografia historyczna*, Płock 1930, S. 471–491.

[4] E. Chwalewik, *Zbiory polskie, archiwa, biblioteki, gabinety, galerie, muzea i inne zbiory pamiątek przeszłości w ojczyźnie i na obczyźnie*, Bd. 2, Warszawa 1927, S. 56–60.

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Zdzitowiecka-Jasieńska,[5] Marian Łodyński,[6] Czesław Deptuła,[7] Adam Vetulani[8] und Edward Potkowski[9] erforscht. In diesen Studien befasste man sich hauptsächlich mit dem Handschriftenbestand, ihrer Thematik und erwähnte dabei auch ihre früheren Besitzer. Die in vielerlei Hinsicht äußerst wertvolle Sammlung an gedruckten Büchern aus dem 15. Jahrhundert blieb hingegen bis 1939 völlig unbekannt.

Die Quelle, auf deren Grundlage die vorliegende Analyse der Inkunabeln aus Płock durchgeführt wurde, ist eine vor dem Zweiten Weltkrieg von Dr. Kazimierz Piekarski,[10] Mitarbeiter der Nationalbibliothek und seit 1931 Leiter der Abteilung für alte Drucke, erstellte Aufzeichnung.

Kazimierz Piekarski besuchte 1937 die Bibliothek des Priesterseminars in Płock, woraus ein Verzeichnis der Druckwerke aus dem 15. Jahrhundert hervorging. Die von Piekarski erstellten Materialien tragen den Titel:

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[5] M. Hornowska, H. Zdzitowiecka-Jasieńska, *Zbiory rękopiśmienne w Polsce średniowiecznej*, Warszawa 1947, S. 291–298.

[6] M. Łodyński, *Materiały do dziejów państwowej polityki bibliotecznej w Księstwie Warszawskim i Królestwie Polskim (1807–1831)*, Wrocław 1958, S. 33, 35, 66–68.

[7] Cz. Deptuła, *Krąg kościelny płocki w połowie XII wieku*, „Roczniki Humanistyczne", 8 (1959), 2, S. 44–52.

[8] A. Vetulani, *Średniowieczne rękopisy Płockiej biblioteki katedralnej*, „Roczniki Humanistyczne" 7 (1963), 3–4, S. 313–443.

[9] E. Potkowski, *Książka rękopiśmienna w kulturze Polski średniowiecznej*, Warszawa 1984, S. 153–157.

[10] Kazimierz Stanisław Kostka Irydion Piekarski (1893–1944), geboren in Târgu Jiu in Rumänien als Sohn von Witold und Klotylda geb. Wróblewski, wurde zunächst bei den Jesuiten in Chyrów bei Dobromil und anschließend am Gymnasium in Lemberg und Stanisławów unterrichtet. Im Jahr 1915 legte er sein Abitur am St.-Anna-Gymnasium in Krakau ab und studierte von 1915 bis 1920 polnische und slawische Philologie an der Jagiellonen-Universität. Von 1917 bis 1920 arbeitete er in der Bibliothek der Akademie der Wissenschaften, anschließend von 1920 bis 1921 in der Bibliothek des Ossoliński-Nationalinstituts in Lemberg, von 1925 bis 1930 in der Abteilung für alte Drucke der Jagiellonen-Bibliothek und übernahm 1931 die Leitung der Abteilung für alte Drucke der Nationalbibliothek. Er war der Initiator der modernen polnischen Buchwissenschaft und der Erforschung der Geschichte alter Bücher unter Berücksichtigung von Marginalien, Exlibris, Provenienzvermerken, Einbänden, Verlagen, Druckern und Auflagen. 1935 wurde er zum Vorsitzenden der Staatlichen Kommission für den Zentralkatalog der Inkunabeln in Polen ernannt. Er begann mit der Erfassung der ältesten Druckwerke auf polnischem Gebiet. Das Ergebnis seiner Arbeiten war die bis 1939 fast vollständige Katalogisierung aller Inkunabeln innerhalb der Grenzen der Zweiten Republik Polen. Auf diese Weise bereitete er das Material für einen zukünftigen Inkunabelkatalog vor. Während des Krieges erkrankte er schwer und starb am 7. Februar 1944 in Łowicz, wo er auf dem örtlichen Pfarrfriedhof beigesetzt wurde. Nach dem Krieg, im März 1948, wurden seine sterblichen Überreste exhumiert und in Krakau beigesetzt. Vgl. S. Konarski, *Piekarski Kazimierz Stanisław Kostka Irydion (1893–1944)*, in: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, Bd. 26/1, H. 108, hg. v. E. Rostworowski, H. Kowalska-Kossobudzka, A. Szklarska-Lohmannowa, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1981, S. 66–69; H. Barycz, *Kazimierz Piekarski*, „Pamiętnik Literacki" 36 (1946), Nr. 304, S. 313–326.

Inkunabeln der Bibliothek des Priesterseminars in Płock. Registr von Kazimierz Piekarski vor dem 1. September 1939, überstand glücklicherweise die Wirren des Krieges.[11] Anhand des Verzeichnisses lässt sich feststellen, dass es sich um eine große und wertvolle Sammlung handelte. Piekarski notierte den Autor und den Titel des Werks und versuchte, die Eigentumseinträge auf den Seiten der einzelnen Bände zu entziffern und eine kurze Beschreibung der Bucheinbände zu anzufertigen. Er gab auch die alten Signaturen der Płocker Drucke aus dem 15. Jahrhundert an. Zu vielen Inkunabeln machte er eigene Anmerkungen, die sich unter anderem auf den Erhaltungszustand des Drucks und fehlende Seiten bezogen, und gab auch Informationen über etwaige gemeinsame Bindung von Wiegendrucken mit Drucken des 16. Jahrhunderts.

Heute stellt sein Verzeichnis den einzigen Hinweis auf den reichhaltigen Bestand der Bibliothek des Priesterseminars in Płock vor dem Zweiten Weltkrieg. Es ist erwähnenswert, dass es eine der wertvollsten Sammlungen alter Bücher in Polen besaß (etwa 80 mittelalterliche handschriftliche Kodizes, 422 Inkunabeln). Diese Sammlung wurde 1941 von den Deutschen nach Königsberg gebracht.[12] Im „Plocker Tageblatt", einer deutschen Zeitung, die in Płock herausgegeben wurde, wurde am 26. August 1941 berichtet, dass die 50.000 Bände umfassende Bibliothek von Płock, darunter 100 Manuskripte und über 300 Inkunabeln, in die Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek in Königsberg gebracht worden sei. Der beispiellose Diebstahl der historischen Büchersammlung wurde als Neuordnung der südpreuíschen Bibliotheken „Aufräumung" der Bibliotheken in Südpreußen und Płock als ein Entdeckungsort alter Zeugnisse deutscher Kultur[13] bezeichnet. Das weitere Schicksal der Sammlung aus Płock ist unbekannt (nur zwei Kodizes kehrten zu ihrem ursprünglichen Besitzer zurück: eine Bibel aus dem 12. Jahrhundert und ein Pontifikale aus dem 13. Jahrhundert). Aufgrund eines Berichts von Michał Spandowski, der 2013 im „Jahrbuch der Nationalbibliothek" veröffentlicht wurde, ist bekannt, dass in den 90er Jahren des 20. Jahrhunderts eine Inkunabel mit dem gleichen Titel, wie er sich im Priesterseminar in Płock befand, für die Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin erworben wurde: *Termini causarum in Romana Curia servari soliti*

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[11] BN/Zakład Starych druków, *Inkunabuły Biblioteki Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku. Rejestracja Kazimierza Piekarskiego sprzed 1 IX 1939 roku*, ohne Signatur.

[12] M. Spandowski, *Polskie zbiory inkunabułów zniszczone, rozproszone i przemieszczone w czasie i w wyniku II wojny światowej*, „Rocznik Biblioteki Narodowej" 44 (2013), S. 19–20; W. Graczyk, J.M. Marszalska, *Księgi rękopiśmienne i stare druki w zbiorach Biblioteki Wyższego Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku. Z dziejów kultury polskich bibliotek kościelnych w dawnych wiekach*, Płock 2010, S. 20–30. S. Sawicka, *Straty wojenne zbiorów polskich w dziedzinie rękopisów iluminowanych*, Warszawa 1952, S. 43.

[13] R. Knapiński, *Iluminacje romańskiej Biblii Płockiej*, Lublin 1992, S. 14.

in causa beneficiali, [Roma, Steph. Plannck], s. a. 4°. ff. 6.[14] Beim Vergleich der Inkunabel aus der Berliner Bibliothek mit der verschollenen Inkunabel aus Płock stellte Spandowski fest, dass das Berliner Exemplar keine Spuren früherer Benutzer aufweist, einen neuen Einband erhalten hat und sich in einem hervorragenden Zustand befindet.[15] Aufgrund der Aufstellung von Piekarski ist bekannt, dass sich das Exemplar aus Płock in einem Sammelband befand, wobei der Provenienzvermerk und der Einband auf der anderen, dem Adligat vorangestellten Stelle des Sammelbandesangebracht waren, und zwar auf der Titel des *Processus iudiciarius*, [Strassburg, Io. Grüninger, ca 1490], 4°.[16] Spandowski schließt daher nicht aus, dass die *Termini causarum* aus dem Block gelöst und mit einem neuen, eigenständigen Einband versehen wurden.[17]

Die Inkunabelsammlung aus Płock umfasste die Bestände vieler bedeutender Sammler aus kirchlichen Kreisen, darunter die des Weihbischofs von Płock, Peter Lubart (1474–1522),[18] der Domherren Nikolaus Bartnicki (gest. 1516),[19] und Albert Stanislaus Brzeski aus Nieborowo (das

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14 BN/Zakład Starych druków, *Inkunabuły Biblioteki Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku. Rejestracja Kazimierza Piekarskiego sprzed 1 IX 1939 roku*, ohne Signatur, Pos. 198.

15 M. Spandowski, *Polskie zbiory inkunabułów zniszczone, rozproszone i przemieszczone w czasie i w wyniku II wojny światowej*, „Rocznik Biblioteki Narodowej" 44 (2013), S. 19–20.

16 BN/Zakład Starych Druków, *Inkunabuły Biblioteki Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku. Rejestracja Kazimierza Piekarskiego sprzed 1 IX 1939 roku*, ohne Signatur, Pos. 200.

17 M. Spandowski, *Polskie zbiory inkunabułów zniszczone, rozproszone i przemieszczone w czasie i w wyniku II wojny światowej*, „Rocznik Biblioteki Narodowej" 44 (2013), S. 20.

18 Professor der Theologie. Er studierte an der Universität Krakau; 1491 erreichte er das Bakkalaureat und wurde 1495 zum Magister promoviert. 1507 reiste er nach Rom, wo er den Doktorgrad und eine Expektanz auf die nächste frei werdende Professur am Collegium Maius in Krakau erwarb. 1510 war er Pfarrer der Annen-Pfarrei in Krakau. Dank der Unterstützung des Bischofs Erasmus Ciolek erhielt er ein Kanonikat am Domstift zu Plock, Am 9. Januar 1514 wurde er zum Weihbischof in Plock und 1523 zum Archidiakon des Domkapitels zu Plock ernannt. Als Weihbischof in Plock nahm er aktiv an der Herausgabe des *Missale Plocense* in Krakau 1520 teil. Während des Aufenthalts des Bischofs Erasmus Ciolek von Plock in Rom 1518–1520 hat er die Diözese verwaltet. Vgl. zu ihm *Hierarchia catholica medii aevi*, Bd. 3, hg. v. C. Eubel, Monsterii 1923, S. 217; Z. Szostkiewicz, *Katalog biskupów obrządku łacińskiego przedrozbiorowej Polski*, Rzym 1954, S. 111; H. Barycz, *Aurifaber (Lubart) Piotr*, in: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, Bd. 1, Kraków 1935, S. 187; T. Żebrowski, *Zarys dziejów diecezji płockiej*, Płock 1976, S. 63; W. Graczyk, *Biblioteka katedralna płocka od średniowiecza do nowożytności*, in: *Biblioteka Wyższego Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku*, hg. v. W. Graczyk, Płock 2003, S. 23; W. Graczyk, *Lubart Piotr (Aurifaber)*, in: *Encyklopedia Katolicka*, t. 11, Lublin 2006, Sp. 11; J. M. Marszalska, *Zaginione piętnastowieczne księgi ze zbiorów sufragana płockiego Piotra Lubarta* (ok. 1470–1530), „Res Historica" 55 (2023), S. 181–190. S.M. Szacherska, *Złoty wiek miasta, lata 1495–1580*, in: *Dzieje Płocka*, Płock 1997, s. 150.

19 Nikolaus Bartnicki, Prälat und Domherr zu Plock. Im Jahre 1493 wurde er Prokurator des Domkapitels, 1496 Domkantor, Generalvikar und Offizial zu Plock (bis 1515). Vom 19.08.1497 bis zum 19.12.1498 verwaltete er das Amt des Administrators der Plocker Diözese nach dem Tod

17. Jh.),[20] des Płocker Bischofs Peter Dunin-Wolski (1530–1590), der eine Bibliothek besaß, die zu den größten privaten Bibliotheksammlungen im frühen Polen gehörte.[21] Des weiteren umfasste sie die Bibliothek desPosener Bischofs Lorenz Goślicki (ca. 1530 – gest. 1607)[22] oder die von Łukasz von Wilkanów (die Hälfte des 15. Jhs – Anfang des 16 Jhs).[23]

Es ist nicht immer bekannt, wie die Bücher nach Płock gelangten, da sie zuvor im Besitz zahlreicher Personen waren, die verschiedene kirchliche und weltliche Ämter und Positionen bekleideten, oft in Gebieten, die weit von Płock und der Diözese Płock entfernt lagen. Dies war beispielsweise bei Bruhard von Krakau der Fall, Kanoniker am St. Florian-Stift in Krakau (Diözese Krakau) [15./16. Jh.], von dem das Werk *Sermones de laudibus sanctorum* [Augsburg, Erh. Ratdolt, 27. Oktober 1489][24] in die Sammlung der Kirche in Płock gelangte. Es ist heute schwer nachzuvollziehen, welchen Weg das

Bischof Peters Chotkowski. Er besaß eine reichhaltige Bibliothek, die zahlreiche Handschriften juristischer Natur beinhaltete. Er vermachte sie vor seinem Tod dem Prälaten Nikolaus von Obodzin, vgl. W. Mąkowski, *Mikołaj Bartnicki (zm. 1516)*, in: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, Bd. 1, Kraków 1935, S. 318–319.

[20] Domherr zu Plock und Domkantor daselbst [XVII w.]. Den Kanonikat zu Plock *fundi* Bąk in Radziwie erhielt er von Bischof Stanislaus Łubieński am 9. Nov. 1636 r., seine feierliche Installation erfolgte am 28. Nov. 1636. Seine Büchersammlung vermachte er 1653 dem Plocker Domkapitel. A.J. Nowowiejski, *Płock. Monografia historyczna*, Płock 1930, S. 481; W. Graczyk, *Stanisław Łubieński, pasterz, polityk i pisarz (1574–1640)*, Tyniec–Kraków 2005, S. 198–199; W. Graczyk, *Biblioteka katedralna płocka od średniowiecza do nowożytności*, in: *Biblioteka Wyższego Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku*, hg. v. W. Graczyk, Płock 2003, S. 29; J.M. Marszalska, *Rozwój zainteresowań naukowych środowiska katedralnego płockiego w świetle zasobu XV – wiecznej książki*, in: *Postęp i zacofanie w kulturze Europy Środkowej*, hg. v. A. Barciak, Katowice–Zabrze 2015, S. 52–64.

[21] Peter Dunin-Wolski, Sohn des Paul, wurde 1574 aufgrund der Nominierung durch König Heinrich Valois Unterkanzler der Krone; zwei Jahre später (1576) ernannte ihn König Stephan Báthory zum Kronkanzler. 1578 erhielt er die Ernennung zum Bischof von Plock. Er war ein Buchliebhaber und begeisterte sich für die spanische Literatur. Vgl. zu ihm W. Graczyk, *Wolski-Dunin Piotr (1530–1590)*, in: *Encyklopedia Katolicka*, Bd. 20, hg. v. E. Gigilewicz, Lublin 2014, Sp. 904; J.M. Marszalska, *Polonica in the book collection of Piotr Dunin Wolski (1531–1590) senator and Bishop of Płock*, "Saeculum Christianum" 27 (2020), S. 17–29.

[22] Domherr zu Plock, zu Kielce, Krakau und Sandomir, Bischof von Kamieniec (1586), Chełm(1590), Przemysl (1591) und schließlich seit 1601 in Posen. D. Maniewska, *Goślicki Wawrzyniec (ok. 1530 – zm. 1607)*, in: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, Bd. 8, Wrocław–Kraków–Warszawa 1959–1960, S. 379–382; E. Ozorowski, *Goślicki Wawrzyniec, h. Grzymała (ok. 1530 – zm. 1607)*, in: *Słownik Polskich Teologów Katolickich*, Bd. 1, hg. v. H.E. Wyczawski, Warszawa 1981, S. 561–563.

[23] Stiftsherr in Warschau, Doktor beider Rechte [poł. XV – pocz. XVI w.] – er stammte aus Wilkanów bei Wyszogród. E. Kobylińska, *Przyczynek do biografii Łukasza z Wilkanowa, doktora obojga praw i teologii (XV/XVI wiek) i dziejów jego księgozbioru*, „Rocznik Biblioteki Narodowej" 51 (2020), S. 243–258; L. Królik, *Kapituła kolegiacka w Warszawie do końca XVIII w.*, Warszawa 1990, S. 193.

[24] BN/Zakład Starych Druków, *Inkunabuły Biblioteki Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku. Rejestracja Kazimierza Piekarskiego sprzed 1 IX 1939 roku*, ohne Signatur, Pos. 128.

erwähnte Buch, das sich im Besitz des Kanonikerss Bruhard befand, zurückgelegt hat, um schließlich in der Sammlung der Bibliothek von Płock aufzugehen. Manchmal kann man Vermutungen anstellen, wie beispielsweise im Fall des Pfarrers in Bremen und Altaristen an der Kirche Mariä Himmelfahrt in Kosten (poln. Kościan) [1603] Paweł Głuchowski, dessen Buch mit dem Titel *Sermones de tempore et de sanctis* [Strassburg, Typ. Iordani=Ge. Husner, 1 IX 1487][25] wahrscheinlich testamentarisch an das Bernhardinerkloster in Kościan gelangte, von wo es wiederum unter unbekannten Umständen an das Bernhardinerkloster in Ratowo in der Diözese Płock weitergereicht wurde, um schließlich seinen Platz in der Seminarbibliothek in Płock zu finden. Ebenso schwer ist es, den Weg des Werks *Sermones ad heremitas,* Brescia, [Iac. Britannicus, 5 I 1486], nachzuvollziehen, das dem bischöflich-ermländischen Güterverwalter und Pfarrer in Heilsberg (poln. Lidzbark Warmiński), Johann Langhannig [Langhannigh][26] gehörte, bevor es in die Sammlung der Bibliothek in Płock einging. Der Besitz des Werks wird durch einen Provenienzvermerk belegt: *Ioannes Langhannigk oeconomus Var*[miensis], *parochus Lidzbergensis, Dom*[inu]*s huius libri est* [XV/XVI].[27]

Es gibt nur wenige Fälle, in denen der Weg, auf dem eine Inkunabel in den Bestand von Płock gelangte, nicht nachvollzogen werden kann. In der Regel stammten die genannten Bücher aus diözesanen Einrichtungen, z. B. aus dem Domkapiteln, von Geistlichen, die mit der Diözese verbunden waren oder aus ihr stammten, sowie aus Klöstern verschiedener Orden innerhalb und außerhalb der Diözese. Es ist erwähnenswert, dass die Bücher den Klöstern von verschiedenen privaten Besitzern vermacht wurden, in der Regel von Geistlichen (Bischöfen, Kanonikern), immer mit der Bitte um Fürbitte für ihre Seele, *oretur pro eo.*

Dank testamentarischer Vermächtnisse wurde die Dombibliothek in Płock im Laufe der vergangenen Jahrhunderte um viele wertvolle Werke aus verschiedenen Wissensgebieten bereichert, mit besonderem Schwerpunkt auf dem Zivil- und Kirchenrecht. Insgesamt umfasste die Sammlung der Dombibliothek in Płock 44 juristische Titel in 49 Bänden. Über bedeutende und wichtige Sammlungen, unter anderem von Piotr Lubart, Suffraganbischof von Płock, von den Stiftsherren Mikołaj Bartnicki und Albert Stanisław Brzeski aus Nieborów, wurde bereits oben berichtet. Einzelne Bücher stammten u. a. vom Kanoniker Jakub Ślaski, von Wawrzyniec Wszerecz (Wszerzec)

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[25] Ebd., Pos. 485.

[26] A. Kopiczko, *Kanonicy Dobromiejscy 1521–1771*, in: *Słownik biograficzny kapituły kolegiackiej w Dobrym Mieście*, Olsztyn 1999, S. 75; A. Kopiczko, *Langhannigk Jan (Langanki, Langhannki)(zm. 29 X 1567)*, in: *Duchowieństwo Katolickie Diecezji Warmińskiej w latach 1525–1821*, Teil 2: *Słownik*, Olsztyn 2000, S. 188.

[27] BN/Zakład Starych Druków, *Inkunabuły Biblioteki Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku. Rejestracja Kazimierza Piekarskiego sprzed 1 IX 1939 roku*, ohne Signatur, Pos. 7.

oder Stanisław Zalewski. Über den Vom Płocker Domherren Jakub Ślaski[28] gelangte die *Lectura super quinque libros decretalium* des Panormitanus in der Basler Ausgabe von Johannes Amerbach aus dem Jahr 1487 in die Dombibliothek. Es wurde darin vermerkt: *Anno 1631 post mortem Rev*[erendi] *Ioannis Ślaski acceptus per me Iacobum* Ślaski.[29] Aus dem Nachlaß des Kanonikers von Płock und Pułtusk, Wawrzyniec Wszerzeczu (gest. 1614)[30] blieb bis zum Zweiten Weltkrieg nur ein einziges Werk in den Sammlungen des Priesterseminars erhalten, und zwar das Werk De antiquitate Iudaica: *De bello Iudaico* von Josephus Flavius in der venezianischen Ausgabe von Octavian Scotus vom 23. Oktober 1486,[31] das nach seinem Tod in die Bibliothek des Dominikanerklosters in Płock und von dort in die Sammlung der Seminarbibliothek gelangte. Dies wird durch eine undatierte Notiz auf einer Seite des Werks bestätigt: *Coventus Plocensis S*[ancti] *Dominici post mortem Rev*[erendi] *D*[omini] *Laurenti Canonici Plocensis*.[32]

Ein Zeichen für die Beteiligung der Płocker Gemeinde am mittelalterlichen philosophisch-theologischen Diskurs zwischen den Thomisten und den Scotisten war das Werk von Petrus Niger *Clypeus Thomistarum contra Scotistas editus, sive Questiones super Arte Vetere Aristotelis,* in der venezianischen Ausgabe von Arnold von Nimwegen aus dem Jahr 1481.[33] Dieses Buch gehörte zuvor dem Płocker Kanoniker Stanisław Zalewski, wie aus dem Eintrag auf der Titelseite hervorgeht: *Sum Magistri Stanislai Zaleszki protunc canonici Plocensis*.[34] Die Sammlung der Dombibliothek in Płock hatte – was besonders hervorzuheben ist – einen ausgeprägten theologisch-juristischen Charakter. Ihre Bedeutung zeigt sich weniger in der Größe des Bestandes als

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28 Er war ein enger Mitarbeiter des Bischofs Stanisalus Łubieński, in dessen Auftrag er zum Mitglied einer dreiköpfigen Kommission (Jakub Ślaski, Andrzej Ubysz i Jan Cielecki) berufen wurde, die ein Inventar der bischöflichen Güter erstellen sollte. In der gleichen Zeit wurde er zum Notas des Plocker Konsistoriums ernannt. W. Graczyk, *Stanisław Łubieński, pasterz, polityk, pisarz (1574–1640)…*, S. 142, 217.

29 BN/Zakład Starych Druków, *Inkunabuły Biblioteki Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku. Rejestracja Kazimierza Piekarskiego sprzed 1 IX 1939 roku*, ohne Signatur, Pos. 446.

30 1579 reiste er zum studienhalber nach Rom, wo er 1582 nach einem dreijährigen Studium den Doktorat beider Rechte erwarb. Er besaß ebenfalls einen Doktor der Medizin. Er war Pönitentiar und Prediger am Dom zu Plock, Historiker und Biograph, vgl. J.M. Marszalska, *Rozwój zainteresowań naukowych środowiska katedralnego płockiego w świetle zasobu XV-wiecznej książki*, in: Postęp i zacofanie w kulturze Europy Środkowej, hg. v. A. Barciak, Katowice–Zabrze 2015, S. 61.

31 BN/Zakład Starych Druków, *Inkunabuły Biblioteki Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku. Rejestracja Kazimierza Piekarskiego sprzed 1 IX 1939 roku*, ohne Signatur, Pos. 350; J.M. Marszalska, *Rozwój zainteresowań naukowych środowiska katedralnego płockiego w świetle zasobu piętnastowiecznej książki…*, S. 61.

32 BN/Zakład Starych Druków, *Inkunabuły Biblioteki Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku. Rejestracja Kazimierza Piekarskiego sprzed 1 IX 1939 roku*, ohne Signatur, Pos. 350.

33 Ebd., Pos. 304.

34 Ebd.

vielmehr an den Autoren, die oft sehr bedeutende und anerkannte Gelehrte und Denker ihrer Zeit waren, an den Themen der Werke, ihrer Auflage und den renommierten europäischen Verlagen, aus denen sie stammten.

Eine weitere wichtige Institution der Diözese Płock war das Domkapitel in Pułtusk. Es muss betont werden, dass Pułtusk seit dem 15. Jahrhundert nach Płock die zweitwichtigste Stadt der Diözese war, in der sich die Bischöfe gerne aufhielten. Ein Zeichen für die hohe kulturelle (und intellektuelle) Stellung der Stadt waren die Bücher, die sich zunächst im Besitz der Domherren befanden, dann durch testamentarische Vermächtnisse in den Bestand der Stiftsbibliothek gelangten und schließlich ihren Platz in der Sammlung des Priesterseminars fanden. Insgesamt stammen elf Titel in 13 Bänden aus dem Kollegiatstift in Pułtusk. Ähnlich wie bei anderen Beständen dieser Art überwogen Bücher mit theologischen und juristischen Themen. Unter den Büchern, die aus dem Stift in Pułtusk nach Płock gelangten, verdient die *Biblia*, [Basel], Nic. Kesler, „24 Kal. Novembris" [9 X] 1487[35] besondere Beachtung. Ursprünglich befand sie sich im Besitz des Doktors der Moraltheologie Mikołaj Rybieński, dann in dem Stanisław Grajewskis, und wurde wahrscheinlich durch ein Testament in den Bestand der Stiftsbibliothek überführt. Dies belegen erneut die erhaltenen Provenienzvermerke, die Kazimierz Piekarski vermerkt hat: 1. *Ex libris Nicolai Rybieński Philosophiae et Theol*[ogiae] *Moralis Doctoris Donatus a M*[agnifico] *D*[omino] *Stanislao Graiewski Phi*[losophi]*ae* […] *A*[nno] *D*[omini] *1651 mense Aprili*; 2. *Pułtusk* [Kolegiata].[36] Ein grundlegendes Werk zum kanonischen Recht in der Sammlung von Płock war der *Liber sextus decretalium* von Papst Bonifatius VIII. mit einer Glosse des bedeutenden mittelalterlichen Kanonisten Johannes Andreae, *Super arboribus consanguinitatis et affinitatis*, zusammen mit den beigefügten *Constitutiones* von Papst Clemens V., die umgangssprachlich nach seinem Namen *Clementinen* genannt werden. Der *Liber sextus Decretalium* enthält auch die *Decretales extravagantes communes selectae* mit einer Glosse von Hieronymus Clavius. Der *Liber sextus decretalium* wurde 1500 in Basel veröffentlicht.[37] Die Zugehörigkeit zum Kapitelsbestand wird durch einen Provenienzvermerk bestätigt: *Pułtusk Kap*[ituła].[38] Kirchenrechtliche Fragen werden auch in dem Werk *Repertorium iuris canonici* behandelt, das 1471/4 in Rom veröffentlicht wurde.[39] Es befand sich im Besitz des Kanonikers Stanisław Kowalkowski aus Pułtusk und ging wahrscheinlich durch ein Testament in den Buchbestand der Stiftskirche über. Auch hier wird die Zugehörigkeit zum ursprünglichen

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35 Ebd., Pos. 400.
36 Ebd.
37 Ebd., Pos. 176.
38 Ebd.
39 Ebd., Pos. 560.

Bestand durch die Provenienzangabe des Buchbesitzers bestätigt: *Ven*[erabilis] *Ca*[pitu]*li Ecc*[lesiae] *Coll*[egiat]*ae Pult*[oviensis] *Regestr*[o] *S*[tanislaus]-*K*[owalkowski]-C[anonicus]- *Pult*[oviensis] m[anu] p[ro]p[ria] [17. Jh.].[40] Es muss betont werden, dass der überwiegende Teil des Bestands aus Pułtusk, der im Laufe der Zeit in die Seminarbibliothek in Płock gelangte, aus Büchern zu juristischen Themen besteht. Dies ist vollkommen verständlich, da Kenntnisse des Kirchenrechts für die Seelsorge unerlässlich waren und die Kanoniker dem Bischof häufig in Fragen der kirchlichen Gerichtsbarkeit beratend zur Seite standen. Diese Bücher sind ein hervorragender Beweis für ihre Bildung und ihre Kenntnisse in Fragen des Kirchen- und Zivilrechts.

Es muss jedoch betont werden, dass relativ viele Bücher aus dem 15. Jahrhundert, die in den Bestand der Seminarbibliothek in Płock gelangten, aus Klöstern stammen. Die Zeit der Ordensauflösungen am Ende des 18. und im 19. Jahrhundert führte dazu, dass die Bücher in den Seminarbibliotheken, darunter auch in der Bibliothek in Płock, einen sicheren Hafen fanden. Die für das Ordensleben schwerwiegendsten Aufhebungen von Klöstern fanden 1864 statt. Auf Grundlage des Erlasses von Zar Alexander II. vom 27. Oktober (8. November) 1864 wurden im Königreich Polen 115 Männerklöster und drei Frauenklöster aufgelöst. In den folgenden Jahren (1865–1866) wurden weitere 14 geschlossen. Insgesamt wurden 132 Ordenshäuser aufgelöst, darunter 129 Männer- und drei Frauenklöster. Auch vier Klöster der unierten Basilianer wurden geschlossen. Die übrigen Klöster, die 20% der Gesamtzahl der vor der Auflösung bestehenden Klöster ausmachten, wurden in sogenannte Etatklöster (25 Männer- und 10 Frauenklöster mit jeweils 14 Personen, nur den Paulinern in Częstochowa wurden 24 Ordensbrüder zugeteilt) und nichtstaatliche Klöster aufgeteilt, d. h. Klöster, die vollständig aufgelöst werden sollten, sobald die Ordensbrüder ausgestorben waren und weniger als acht von ihnen übrig waren.[41] Offiziell wurden als Gründe für die weitreichenden Aufhebungen von Orden die zu geringe Zahl von Ordensbrüdern in den Klöstern, die unsachgemäße Verwaltung des beweglichen Vermögens, der Verfall des Innenlebens und die Unbrauchbarkeit oder sogar Schädlichkeit für die Gesellschaft genannt.[42]

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[40] Ebd.

[41] W. Graczyk, J.M. Marszalska, *Księgi rękopiśmienne i stare druki w zbiorach Biblioteki Wyższego Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku…*, S. 42–43; P.P. Gach, *Kasaty zakonów na ziemiach dawnej Rzeczpospolitej i Śląska 1773–1914*, Lublin 1984, S. 87–113; ders., *Struktury i działalność duszpasterska zakonów męskich na ziemiach dawnej Rzeczpospolitej i Śląska w latach 1773–1914*, Lublin 1999, S. 96–102.

[42] P.P. Gach, *Mienie polskich zakonów i jego losy w XIX wieku*, Rzym 1979, S. 31; W. Graczyk, J.M. Marszalska, *Księgi rękopiśmienne i stare druki w zbiorach Biblioteki Wyższego Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku…*, S. 43.

Auf dem Gebiet der Diözese Płock wurden folgende Klöster aufgelöst: das Augustinerkloster in Ciechanów, das Benediktinerkloster in Pułtusk, die Bernhardinerklöster in Ostrołęka, Przasnysz, Ratowo, Skępe und Strzegocin, das Dominikanerkloster in Płock, das Minoritenkloster in Dobrzyń an der Weichsel, das Kapuzinerkloster in Zakroczym, die Karmeliterklöster in Płońsk und Trutowo, das Kloster der Missionare in Płock und Mława sowie der Reformaten in Płock, Pułtusk, Zaręby Kościelne und Żuromin. Als einziges Kloster blieb das Karmeliterkloster in Obory bestehen.[43] Auf Initiative des Administrators der Diözese Płock, Pfarrer Wincenty Orzeszkowski, wurden die Bücher aus den aufgelösten Klöstern der Diözese in das Priesterseminar gebracht. Es ist nicht genau bekannt, wie viele es waren, da keine Verzeichnisse erhalten geblieben sind.[44] Sie sollten weiterhin dem Diözesanklerus dienen.

Auch diese Bücher aus dem 15. Jahrhundert, die nach der Auflösung der Klöster in den Bestand der Seminarbibliothek gelangten, befanden sich zuvor im Besitz verschiedener Eigentümer, sodass es heute nicht mehr möglich ist, ihren Weg genau nachzuvollziehen. Beispielsweise befand sich auf zwei der drei erhaltenen Inkunabeln aus dem Reformatenkloster in Pułtusk eine Provenienznotiz des Predigers von Maków, Pater Franciszek Grabowski, aus dem Jahr 1655, mit der er die Werke dem Kloster vermachte und um Fürbitte bat, was durch die bekannte Inschrift *oretur pro eo* bestätigt wird. Ausgehend von dem entzifferten Eintrag (vermutlich auf dem Titelblatt) des Werks von Antoninus Florentinus, *Summa theologica* aus dem Jahr 1481, kann man vermuten, dass Franciszek Grabowski sein erster Besitzer war und das Buch 1655 aus nur ihm bekannten Gründen dem Kloster St. Joseph in Pułtusk schenkte. Heute ist es schwer nachzuvollziehen, unter welchen Umständen die *Summa theologica* später in die Sammlung der Benediktiner von Pułtusk gelangte, was durch die letzte von Piekarski überlieferte Inschrift auf dem Titelblatt des Werks von Florentinus bestätigt wird: *Bened*[yktyni] *Pułtusk „Nr 2 F"*.[45] Auch in der Bibel mit einer Postille von Nikolaus von Lira aus dem Jahr 1497 ist eine Stiftung des Predigers aus Maków mit dem gleichen Datum verzeichnet: *1655*. In diesem Fall war Franciszek Grabowski jedoch nicht der erste Besitzer des Buches. Unter dem Datum 1601 war Bartholomäus Dalen als erster Besitzer der Bibel aufgeführt, hier eingetragen als *parochus in [Lidzenau?]*.[46] Es ist nicht bekannt, unter welchen

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[43] W. Graczyk, J.M. Marszalska, *Księgi rękopiśmienne i stare druki w zbiorach Biblioteki Wyższego Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku…*, S. 53.

[44] Ebd.

[45] BN/Zakład Starych Druków, *Inkunabuły Biblioteki Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku. Rejestracja Kazimierza Piekarskiego sprzed 1 IX 1939 roku*, ohne Signatur, Pos. 480; J.M. Marszalska, *Incunabula left by Reformed Friars Minor as Found in the Register of the Collection of the Płock Seminary Library, compiled by Kazimierz Piekarski before 1939*, „Polisch Library", 10/2022, S. 92.

[46] BN/Zakład Starych Druków, *Inkunabuły Biblioteki Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku. Rejestracja Kazimierza Piekarskiego sprzed 1 IX 1939 roku*, ohne Signatur, Pos. 509.

Umständen das Buch in den Besitz von Grabowski gelangte, das der Prediger aus Maków, ebenso wie das Werk von Antoninus Florentinus, 1655 dem Reformatenkloster in Pułtusk schenkte, was folgendermaßen dokumentiert wurde: *Pro Conven*[tu] *Pultoviensi F*[ratrum] *Min*[orum] *Ord*[inis] *S*[ancti] *Fran*[cisci] *Refor*[matorum] *A*[nno] *D*[omini] *1655 donavit Adm*[odum] *R*[evere]*ndus D*[omi]*nus Franciscus Grabowski Concionator Makovien*[sis]. *Oretur pro eo.*[47] Ein sehr interessantes Beispiel für die Wanderung des Werkes sind die Pseudo-Augustinus-Schriften, *Sermones ad heremitas* aus dem Jahr 1486.[48] Das Buch trug Spuren von bis zu sieben Besitzern. Bei den ersten drei Einträgen ist keine genaue

Jahresangabe überliefert. Der erste Besitzer des Werks von Pseudo-Augustinus war Johann Langhannigk, Pfarrer in Heilsberg (1532–1559), bischöflicher Verwalter (1541–1547), Kanoniker in Guttstadt und seit 1560 Domherr in Frauenburg,[49] was folgendermaßen vermerkt wurde: *Ioannes Langhannigk oeconomus Var*[miensis], *parochus Lidzbergensis, Dom*[inu]*s huius libri est* [XV/XVI]. Anschließend befand sich dieses Buch im Besitz des Pfarrers von Tolksdorf Urban Rosenvalt (Rosenwald),[50] was auch ebenfalls vermerkt wurde: *nunc vero Urbanum Rosenvalth possessorem habet*, und etwas später – wie Piekarski vermerkt hat – dem Administrator der Pfarrei Frankenau und Pfarrer in Lautern und Bischofstein – Grzegorz Langwald: *Gregorium Langwald possessorem habet*.[51] Unter näher unbekannten Umständen wurde das Werk des Pseudo-Augustinus 1726 dem Konvent der Reformaten in Pułtusk gestiftet, was (vermutlich) auf dem Titelblatt vermerkt wurde: *Pro conventu Pultoviensi Ord*[inis] *Min*[orum] *S*[ancti] *F*[rancisci] *Reform*[atorum] *ad S*[anctum] *Josephum a*[nno] [1]*726*.[52] Wenig später gehörte es dem

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[47] BN/Zakład Starych Druków, *Inkunabuły Biblioteki Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku. Rejestracja Kazimierza Piekarskiego sprzed 1 IX 1939 roku*, ohne Signatur; J.M. Marszalska, *Incunabula left by Reformed Friars Minor as Found in the Register of the Collection of the Płock Seminary Library…*, S. 92.

[48] BN/Zakład Starych Druków, *Inkunabuły Biblioteki Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku. Rejestracja Kazimierza Piekarskiego sprzed 1 IX 1939 roku*, ohne Signatur, Pos. 7.

[49] A. Kopiczko, *Langhannigk Jan (Langanki, Langhannki) (zm. 29 X 1567)*, in: *Słownik Biograficzny Kapituły Kolegiackiej…*, S. 75; ders., *Langhannigk Jan (Langanki, Langhannki)(zm. 29 X 1567)*, in: *Duchowieństwo Katolickie Diecezji Warmińskiej w latach 1525–1821*, Teil 2: *Słownik*, Olsztyn 2000, S. 188; J.M. Marszalska, *Incunabula left by Reformed Friars Minor as Found in the Register of the Collection of the Płock Seminary Library…*, S. 92–93.

[50] A. Kopiczko, *Rosenwald Urban* ur. w 1539, in: *Duchowieństwo katolickie Diecezji Warmińskiej w latach 1525–1821*, Teil 2: *Słownik…*, S. 274; J.M. Marszalska, *Incunabula left by Reformed Friars Minor as Found in the Register of the Collection of the Płock Seminary Library…*, S. 93.

[51] A. Kopiczko, *Langwald Grzegorz, ur. w 1583*, in: *Duchowieństwo katolickie Diecezji Warmińskiej w latach 1525–1821*, Teil 2: *Słownik…*, S. 189; J.M. Marszalska, *Incunabula left by Reformed Friars Minor as Found in the Register of the Collection of the Płock Seminary Library*, S. 93.

[52] BN/Zakład Starych Druków, *Inkunabuły Biblioteki Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku. Rejestracja Kazimierza Piekarskiego sprzed 1 IX 1939 roku*, ohne Signatur, Pos. 7.

Jesuiten und Dogmatiker Maciej Bartochowski,[53] der die *Sermones ad heremitas* einem näher unbekannten Benutzer geliehen hatte. Dieser wiederum vermerkte aus dankbarer Erinnerung neben seinem dessen ein *Requiescat in pace*. Wer und unter welchen Umständen das Werk des Pseudo-Augustinus dem Reformatenkloster in Zaręby Kościelne geschenkt hat, ist unbekannt. Bekannt ist nur, dass das Buch 1822 in die Klosterbestände aufgenommen wurde, was durch einen Eintrag im Siegelrand bestätigt wird: *Applicatus hic liber pro conventu Zarembensi P*[atrum] *Reformatorum 1822*. Die lange Wanderung des Werks und seine verschiedenen Besitzer haben dabei ihre eigenen Gebrauchsspuren hinterlassen. Der letzte Buchbesitzer (vor seinem Verlust) war das Priesterseminar in Płock. Seine Aufnahme in die Sammlungen des Seminars belegen die erhaltenen Stempel mit Angabe des Aufbewahrungsortes in den Beständen der Seminarbibliothek: *Płock Sem. – V.4.47.* [1. Hälfte des 20. Jhs.].[54]

Ähnlich war es auch bei anderen Ordenshäusern, wo die erhaltenen Provenienzvermerke die wechselvolle Geschichte der Bücher und ihrer Besitzer aufzeigen. So gehörten beispielsweise die Bücher, die nach der Auflösung des Missionshauses in Płock dorthin gelangten, zuvor dem Dominikanerkloster in derselben Stadt. Von den dreizehn Inkunabeln, die aus den Häusern der Missionare in der Diözese Płock (Płock, Mława) stammen, wurden in der Liste von Kazimierz Piekarski fünf aufgeführt, die zuvor aus dem Dominikanerkloster St. Dominikus in Płock stammten. Dies belegen folgende Vermerke: *Idem pro Bibliotheca conventus Plocen*[sis] *S*[ancti] *D*[o] *minici Ord*[inis] *Praed*[icatorum] *A*[nno] *D*[omini] *1603* – im Werk von Balthasar de Porta, *Expositio mysteriorum missae*;[55] *Conventus Plocen*[sis] *S*[ancti] *Dominici liber* – im Werk Bernhards von Clairvaux, *Sermones de tempore et de sanctis et de diversis*;[56] *Conventui Plocen*[si] *S*[ancti] *Dominici tempore P*[atris] *Antonini Prioris Donatus* – im Werk von Johannes Gerson, *Opera*;[57] *Conventus Plocensis a P*[atre] *Aegidio dono accesit* – im Werk von Gregor dem Großen, *Dialogorum libri quattuor*;[58] *Conventus Plocensis S*[ancti] *Dominici* – im Werk von Petrus Lombardus, *Sententiarum libri IV*.[59] Wir können die Umstände rekonstruieren, unter denen die Bücher aus dem aufgelösten Dominikanerkloster

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[53] L. Grzebień, *Bartochowski Maciej, h. Rola (1722–1789)*, in: *Słownik Polskich Teologów Katolickich*, Bd. 1, hg. v. H.E. Wyczawski, Warszawa 1981, S. 115; J.M. Marszalska, *Incunabula left by Reformed Friars Minor as Found in the Register of the Collection of the Płock Seminary Library*, S. 93.

[54] BN/Zakład Starych Druków, *Inkunabuły Biblioteki Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku. Rejestracja Kazimierza Piekarskiego sprzed 1 IX 1939 roku*, ohne Signatur, Pos. 7.

[55] Ebd., Pos. 159

[56] Ebd., Pos. 494.

[57] Ebd., Pos. 479.

[58] Ebd., Pos. 117.

[59] Ebd., Pos. 417.

in Płock in das Haus der Missionare gelangten, die in dieser Stadt ein Priesterseminar leiteten. Die Kirche und das Kloster St. Dominikus bestanden bis 1804, als die Preußen das Kloster auflösten und die Klostergebäude den Protestanten übergaben. Nach der Auflösung des Dominikanerklosters in Płock wurde die Bibliothek des von Missionaren geführten Seminars um die Büchersammlung dieses Klosters erweitert. Damals wurden 96 Bände der Gebrüder Goślicki aus Goślice Wielkie übergeben, und die Nachlässe des Domherren Martin von Płock aus dem 16. Jahrhundert und seines Neffen Lorenz Goślicki, Bischof von Posen. Zu dieser Zeit gelangte auch eine große, 120 Bände umfassende Büchersammlung von P. Cyprian Stefanowski, Prior der Dominikaner von Płock, in die Bibliothek des Priesterseminars.[60]

Was den Inhalt der Bücher betrifft, die infolge der Auflösung nach Płock „zuströmten", so überwogen quantitativ die Bibel und die dazugehörigen Kommentare, gefolgt von im Mittelalter anerkannten Lehrbüchern, die ein Kompendium theologischen Wissens enthielten, oder für die Seelsorge hilfreiche Werke aus dem Bereich der Predigtkunst und der Liturgiewissenschaft.

Bei der Vorstellung des Buchbestands aus dem 15. Jahrhundert aus dem Umfeld von Płock sollte auch auf die Polonica hingewiesen werden. Dies betrifft nicht die polnischen Typographien des 15. Jahrhunderts, da diese in der vorliegenden Studie nicht vorkommen, sondern die aus Polen stammenden Autoren. In dieser Gruppe sind zu nennen die *Statuta provincialia Gnesnensia*, [Germania, typ. ignotus, ca 1500],[61] mit den Statuten der von den Gnesener Metropoliten organisierten Provinzialsynoden. Einer der herausragendsten Vertreter des Krakauer Universitätsmilieus im 15. Jahrhundert war Johannes Głogowczyk (ca. 1445–1507), Philosoph und Astronom, Kanoniker am St. Florian-Stift in Krakau. Bis zum Zweiten Weltkrieg befanden sich zwei seiner Werke in den Sammlungen von Płock: *Exercitium super omnes tractatus Parvorum logicalium Petri Hispani, cum textu*, [Leipzig, Wolfg. Stöckel pro Io. Haller, 1500][62] und *Quaestiones super Analytica posteriora Aristotelis, cum textu et cum titulis quaestionum secundum Ioannem Versorem*, [Leipzig, Wolfg. Stöckel pro Io. Haller 1499].[63] Aus dem gleichen Umfeld stammte der Zisterzienser (später Kartäuser), Philosoph und Theologe Jakob von Paradies (ca. 1380–1464), der 1431 bei einem Disput zwischen mehreren Professoren der

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60 Por. M.M. Grzybowski, *Biblioteka Seminarium Duchownego od 1710 do 1990 roku*, in: *Biblioteka Wyższego Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku…*, S. 76; J.M. Marszalska, W. Graczyk, *Zakony na Mazowszu od XVI do końca XVIII wieku*, in: *Dzieje Mazowsza lata 1527–1794*, Bd. 2, hg. v. J. Tyszkiewicz, Pułtusk 2015, S. 386–387.

61 BN/Zakład Starych Druków, *Inkunabuły Biblioteki Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku. Rejestracja Kazimierza Piekarskiego sprzed 1 IX 1939 roku*, ohne Signatur, Pos. 101.

62 Ebd., Pos. 163.

63 BN/Zakład Starych Druków, *Inkunabuły Biblioteki Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku. Rejestracja Kazimierza Piekarskiego sprzed 1 IX 1939 roku*, (Pł[ock] Sem[inarium] Cim. 4º, 262 adl.)

Krakauer Universität und Vertretern der böhmischen Hussiten über theologische Fragen und die Kirchenreform mitgewirkt hatte. Er nahm auch am Basler Konzil (1442–1443) teil und war ein Befürworter des Konziliarismus – eine Frage, die im 15. Jahrhundert lebhaft diskutiert wurde.[64] Die beiden von ihm erhaltenen Werke befassten sich mit theologischen Fragen. Es handelte sich dabei um folgende Titel: *De arte curandi vitia*, [Leipzig, Mart. Landsberg, ca 1495][65] und *De valore et utilitate missarum pro defunctis celebratarum. – Ioannes de Mechlinia: Determinatio utrum perfecta Dei opera possint impediri daemonis malitia*, [Heidelberg, Henr. Knoblochtzer, 1493].[66] An der polnischen Delegation zum Konzil von Basel nahm auch Nikolaus von Błonie (ca. 1400–1448) teil, Doktor der Dekrete, Professor an der Universität Krakau, Kanoniker in Płock und Warschau, Prediger und vor allem Autor einer Abhandlung über die Sakramente, die im Auftrag von Bischof Stanislaus Ciołek (ca. 1382–1437) für den Posener Klerus verfasst wurde.[67] In den Beständen von Płock wurden drei Exemplare seiner Predigten über Heilige und für die gewöhnliche Zeit des liturgischen Jahres aufbewahrt, die alle in Straßburg veröffentlicht wurden: *Sermones de tempore et de sanctis, sive Viridarius*, [Strassburg, Typ. Iordani=Ge. Husner, 22 XI 1494, 1495];[68] *Sermones de tempore et de sanctis, sive Viridarius*, [Strassburg, Typ. Iordani=Ge. Husner, 23 VIII 1498];[69] *Sermones de tempore et de sanctis, sive Viridarius*, [Strassburg, Typ. Iordani=Ge. Husner, 23 VIII 1498].[70]

Ein im Mittelalter bekannter Prediger, Dekretalist und vor allem Autor einer Chronik der Päpste und Kaiser war Martin von Troppau (ca. 1215–1279).[71] Er hinterließ ein im Mittelalter weit verbreitetes Werk, das eine Konkordanz zu den Dekreten Gratians darstellt, die *Margarita Decreti, seu Tabula Martiniana*, [Strassburg, Typ. Iordani=Ge. Husner, 13 VI 1489], welches in den Sammlungen der Płocker Bibliothek bis 1939 aufbewahrt wurde.[72]

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[64] A. Winiarczyk, *Jakub z Paradyża (ok. 1380–1464)*, in: *Encyklopedia Katolicka*, Bd. 7, hg. v. J. Duchniewski, M. Daniluk, Lublin 1997, Sp. 723–725.

[65] BN/Zakład Starych Druków, *Inkunabuły Biblioteki Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku. Rejestracja Kazimierza Piekarskiego sprzed 1 IX 1939 roku*, ohne Signatur, Pos. 138.

[66] Ebd., Pos. 136.

[67] R. Skrzyniarz, *Mikołaj z Błonia (ok. 1400–1448)*, in: *Encyklopedia Katolicka*, Bd. 12, hg. v. S. Wilk, E. Ziemann, Lublin 2008, Sp. 995.

[68] BN/Zakład Starych Druków, *Inkunabuły Biblioteki Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku. Rejestracja Kazimierza Piekarskiego sprzed 1 IX 1939 roku*, ohne Signatur, Pos. 386.

[69] Ebd., Pos. 492.

[70] Ebd., Pos. 401.

[71] J. Duchniewski, *Marcin Polak, Marcin z Opawy (ok. 1215/1220–1279)*, in: *Encyklopedia Katolicka*, Bd. 11, hg. v. S. Wilk, E. Ziemann, Lublin 2006, Sp. 1243–1244.

[72] BN/Zakład Starych Druków, *Inkunabuły Biblioteki Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku. Rejestracja Kazimierza Piekarskiego sprzed 1 IX 1939 roku*, ohne Signatur, Pos. 391.

Eine Karte der Druckzentren, die wir anhand der verlorenen Inkunabelsammlung aus Płock zeichnen können, umfasst im Wesentlichen sechs europäische Länder, in denen sich die Druckkunst am schnellsten entwickelte und ein sehr hohes Niveau erreichte. Diess waren: das Reich, Italien, die Schweiz (Helvetia), Frankreich und die Niederlande. 170 Inkunabeln stammten aus Deutschland, 120 aus Italien und 44 aus Schweizer Druckereien. Fünf Drucke stammten aus niederländischen und neun aus französischen Druckereien.

Allen Drucken aus dem 15. Jahrhundert, die aus den oben genannten Druckereien stammen, ist gemeinsam, dass sie in lateinischer Sprache gedruckt wurden. Sie stammten aus aus Druckereien, die in insgesamt sechs europäischen Ländern, 33 städtischen Zentren im Reich, in Italien, der Schweiz, in Frankreich und den Niederlanden tätig waren, wobei die dynamischen deutschen und italienischen Zentren deutlich überwogen. Es ist anzumerken, dass in der besprochenen Sammlung keine Drucke aus den ersten Druckzentren auf polnischem Gebiet (Krakau, Danzig, Marieburg, Kulm) bzw. aus Schlesien (Breslau) zu finden sind.

Es lohnt sich ebenfalls, auf die Einbände der Inkunabeln zu achten, die bis 1939 in den Beständen der Bibliothek des Priesterseminars in Płock aufbewahrt wurden und eine wichtige Quelle für die Identifizierung der Buchverzierungstechniken sowie für die Erforschung der charakteristischen Merkmale der Buchbinderwerkstätten dieser Epoche darstellen. Kazimierz Piekarski, der die Inkunabeln aus Płock katalogisierte, verfasste auch kurze Beschreibungen der Inkunabeleinbände. Diese sind jedoch sehr knapp und oberflächlich. Die Einbände wurden von Piekarski datiert, in einigen Fällen mit einem Fragezeichen neben dem von ihm notierten Datum. Eine vollständige Datierung gab er nur dann an, wenn der Einbandstempel mit dem Datum der Einbandherstellung sichtbar war. Piekarski notierte häufig nur eine ungefähre Datierung, z. B. 15. oder 16. Jahrhundert, was darauf hindeutet, dass die Bücher möglicherweise einen viel späteren (vielleicht sekundären) Einband hatten oder dass der erste Einband zerstört worden war. Der genannte Forscher merkte charakteristische Elemente des alten Einbands an und notierte die Farbe des Leders oder des verwendeten Pergaments, die sichtbaren Blindprägungen auf der Lederoberfläche, Klammern oder deren erhaltene Fragmente, Eckknöpfe oder Bindungen. In vielen der von ihm beschriebenen Büchern hinterließ er wertvolle Informationen, aus denen wir erfahren, wo die Werke gebunden worden sein könnten, was er mit der Bezeichnung der Bindungsart, z. B. Danziger, Thorner, Krakauer oder Leipziger Bindung, kennzeichnete. Bei der Beschreibung der Einbände einiger Inkunabeln vermerkte Piekarski lapidar, dass sie aus Pergament bestehen, und gab dabei den vermuteten Herstellungszeitpunkt des Einbands an. Die Beschreibung des Einbands eines Inkunabels ist ein wichtiger Bestandteil

der bibliografischen Beschreibung des gesamten Werks. Dank der Informationen, die Kazimierz Piekarski hinterlassen hat, können wir nicht nur die europäischen Typographien kennenlernen, sondern auch die Buchbinderwerkstätten, in denen die Bücher gebunden wurden. Piekarski fügte dem Verzeichnis auch einige knappe Informationen über das auf der Vorder- oder Rückseite des Einbands eingeprägte Supralibros hinzu, das eine wichtige Informationsquelle über die früheren Besitzer der Wiegendrucke darstellt.

Zusammenfassend ist festzuhalten, dass die Sammlung von Inkunabeln, die bis 1941 in der Seminarbibliothek in Płock aufbewahrt wurde, sowohl hinsichtlich der Autoren, der Themen als auch vor allem der Besitzer der Altdrucke bedeutend und wertvoll war. Sie waren durch ihre Ausbildung und Zugehörigkeit mit einer der ältesten Diözesen Polens verbunden. Die ersten gedruckten Bücher, die sowohl vom Diözesanklerus als auch von Ordensgeistlichen gesammelt wurden, zeugten zweifellos von hohem intellektuellen Niveau der kirchlichen Kreise in Płock, seinen Interessen und Funktionen. Die einst viel gelesenen Seiten mit zahlreichen Randnotizen, die Piekarski entziffert hat, bestätigen, dass diese Bücher im ehemaligen kirchlichen Umfeld „lebten" und ihren Nutzern dienten. Heute wissen wir nur so viel über sie, wie der unermüdliche Kazimierz Piekarski beschrieben hat. Ihr Schicksal ist nach dem Jahr 1941 ungewiss.

ABSTRACT

The lost book collection of the seminary library in Płock from the 15th century

Until World War II, the Seminary Library in Płock had one of the most valuable collections of 15th-century books in Poland. In 1941, these books were taken by the Germans to Königsberg and have not yet been returned to their rightful owner. This unprecedented theft of a historical book collection was called the reorganisation of libraries in South Prussia, and Płock was called the place of discovery of old documents of German culture. The collection included the collections of many prominent bibliophiles from the Płock church circle, such as Piotr Lubart, Piotr Dunin-Wolski, Mikołaj Bartnicki and Łukasz from Wilkanów, as well as works from monasteries of the Płock diocese that were dissolved in the 19th century. Thanks to an inventory compiled before World War II by Kazimierz Piekarski, we know that the lost collection was significant and valuable in terms of the authors of the works, their subject matter and, above all, the owners of the old printed books.

Keywords: Płock, library, incunabula, chapter, monasteries

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III. Book Notices

Andrzej Pleszczyński, *Bolesław Chrobry* [*Bolesław the Brave*], Warszawa 2025, Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 446 pp., Bibliography, Index of Personal Names, Index of Geographical, Political, and Tribal Names, hardback.

The present year marks the thousandth anniversary of both the coronation and the death of Bolesław the Brave, the second historical ruler of Poland in chronological order. This anniversary has been marked by a considerable number of scholarly publications. Among them, particular attention should be drawn to the initiative launched by the Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy (State Publishing Institute) to inaugurate a new series of monographs devoted to all Polish rulers. The biography of Bolesław the Brave is the first volume in this series.

In the book under review, the author seeks to assemble all available sources relating to this historical figure, who left a profound mark on the history of Central and Eastern Europe, and to analyse them from a fresh perspective. Pleszczyński takes into account the fundamentally different pre-Gregorian understanding of royal authority, a factor that has not always been sufficiently recognised in historiography. He also highlights the specific ways in which state power functioned in this early medieval context.

On the basis of these analytical premises, the author presents the figure of Bolesław the Brave, and his political activity, in seven chapters, arranged in broadly chronological order. The first chapter outlines the formative years of the book's protagonist, focusing on his parents and immediate milieu. The next chapter addresses the earliest well-documented episodes of Bolesław's life while he was still under his father's authority, with particular emphasis on his marriages and their political significance. Pleszczyński then turns to the circumstances surrounding Bolesław's accession to power and the removal of his half-brothers from the throne.

The fourth chapter is devoted to the period of close political cooperation between the Polish ruler and Emperor Otto III. The following chapter discusses the breakdown of this alliance under the new German ruler, Henry II, and the ensuing conflicts, the final phase of which is analysed

in the sixth chapter. This section also includes an examination of Poland's relations with Rus during the same period. The final chapter analyses the significance of Bolesław the Brave's coronation, emphasising its external dimension and its importance in relations with the German allies of the Piast dynasty.

It seems likely that the study will make a substantial contribution to reshaping prevailing perceptions of the first king of Poland and to situating historical reflection on his reign more firmly within the broader context of European history.

DAWID PORĘBIAK

Martin Wihoda, *Cosmas*, Prague 2024, Argo, 207 pp., English Summary, Bibliography, Index of Geographical and Personal Names, hardback.

In the presented book, the author undertakes a re-examination of one of the most important sources for the history of Bohemia and medieval Europe: the chronicle of Cosmas, written between 1110 and 1125. Martin Wihoda explicitly proposes a new approach that revises earlier scholarly interpretations of the work of the Prague dean. Particular attention is drawn to his treatment of the chronicle as an "open work". By this, Wihoda understands the need to read the text as a reflection of the realities of the early twelfth century, including the prevailing system of values and the intellectual horizons of its author and of the ecclesiastical and secular elites of Bohemia. Moreover, the openness of interpretation is further reinforced by the absence of a surviving authorial autograph and by the existence of numerous later manuscript copies of the chronicle.

The book is divided into six chapters. The first reviews previous interpretations of the source and scholarly attempts to reconstruct its so-called basic version. Wihoda then turns his attention to the chronicler himself, before devoting the following chapter to the content of the work, its relationship to the time of its composition, the motives behind its writing, and the historiographical traditions upon which it drew. The next chapter addresses the reception and influence of the chronicle, examining its use and adaptation in other medieval Czech texts. The core of the study is brought to a close by a chapter devoted to the spiritual world of the chronicler Cosmas as it emerges from his narrative. The final, sixth chapter adopts a source-critical perspective, presenting the surviving versions of the chronicle preserved in various medieval codices.

The study is of considerable importance for a more nuanced understanding of the history of Bohemia in the period of the early Přemyslids, as well as for research into medieval historiography more broadly.

Jakub Wrochna

Anna McKay, *Female Devotion and Textile Imagery in Medieval English Literature*, Cambridge 2024: D.S. Brewer (= Gender in the Middle Ages, 22), 316 pp., 16 ill., Bibliography, hardback.

This book explores the phenomenon of medieval female Christian religiosity as expressed and practised through textiles produced by devout women, often involved in religious communities. The source material for this study consists of late medieval textiles created in England, as well as contemporary devotional literature, which provided the ideological framework for woven and embroidered imagery.

The author focuses on the fundamental assumption that medieval English women were able to express ideals that were important to them through the representations they created of saints. The book identifies a shared hermeneutics of textile iconography and a related set of devotional practices, which allow McKay to interpret a culture defined as "feminine". She connects certain motifs from late medieval English literature with textile imagery, outlining a constellation of elements of piety, spirituality, and religious exegesis that were particularly significant for women.

The analysis concentrates on four archetypal holy figures depicted on textiles: Eve, the Virgin Mary, St Veronica, and Christ himself. The author emphasises the persistent presence of textile imagery in devotional narratives as a means of interpreting the mystery at the very heart of the Christian faith: the earthly presence of Christ in relation to femininity.

It should be stressed that the book offers valuable methodological guidance on how to recognise and interpret the hermeneutics of textiles, thereby contributing to a better understanding of the position of those marginalised as women within the medieval Church. Paradoxically, as McKay argues, women stood at the very centre of Christian faith and devotional practice.

Oliwia Wysocka

Hospitallers and Others: Military and Social Encounters, ed. Christie Majoros, María Bonet Donato, Julia Pavón Benito, Abingdon-New York 2025, Routledge (= Crusades - Subsidia series), 140 pp., hardback.

This volume brings together eight original essays that explore the military, social, and cultural encounters of the Knights Hospitaller with diverse "others" across the medieval Mediterranean and Europe, emphasising how the Order's extensive geographical reach shaped its institutional identity and interactions.

The collection opens with Christine Isom-Verhaaren's chapter on Umur of Aydin: Holy War Encounters at Smyrna between Turkish Gazis and the Knights Hospitaller of Rhodes in the mid-14th Century, which examines a key moment of military and religious confrontation. Juho Wilskman follows with The Military Conservatism of the Hospitallers during the 14th and early 15th Centuries, analysing continuities in Hospitaller strategic culture. Anthony Luttrell's Hospitaller Lodgings and Auberges on Rhodes after 1309 surveys the material and organisational infrastructures of Hospitaller residence on Rhodes. George Summers' in Charity, Obedience, and Authority in the Late Medieval Hospital: Leonardo Buonafede's Interventions in the Regula Monacharum addresses internal reform and governance within the Order's rule.

In The Mediterranean Acquaintances of the Hospitallers of the English Langue, 1400-1540, Greg O'Malley investigates the social networks of the English Hospitallers across the Mediterranean. Paula Pinto and Joana Lencart's Oriental Mediterranean social encounters as a framework for the Portuguese Hospitallers situates the Portuguese brethren within broader cross-cultural interactions. Maria Bonet and Julia Pavón Benito contribute Hospitallers in a multi-ethnic society. North-eastern Spain (12th-14th centuries), exploring intercultural dynamics in Iberia. The volume concludes with Wilhelm Ljungar's Crisis, Change, and Transformation at the Edge of the World: The Priorate of Dacia after the Fall of Acre (1291-1352), which examines institutional adaptation in the years following the loss of Outremer.

Together, these essays offer fresh perspectives on how the Hospitallers encountered, negotiated, and transformed relationships with military adversaries, local societies, and internal communities, contributing to current scholarship on medieval military orders and cross-cultural interaction.

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Dariusz Dąbrowski, *Kronika halicko-wołyńska (Kronika Romanowiczów) o sztuce. Architektura. T. 1.* [*The Galician-Volhynian Chronicle (The Romanovych Dynasty Chronicle) on Art. Architecture. Vol. 1*], Avalon, Kraków 2023, 328 pp., the glossary of architectural terms appearing in the Chronicle of the Romanovychi (Old Rus version); the glossary of architectural terms appearing in the Chronicle of the Romanovychi (Polish version); bibliography; list of illustrations; personal index; geographical index; summary; paperback.

The subject of the research presented in the monograph is medieval artistic architecture. The study concerns *The Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* (*The Romanovych Dynasty Chronicle*), and its chronological scope includes both the time of the composition of the individual parts of the work and the period of the events described within it, namely the thirteenth century. The analysis is based on the references to architectural structures contained in *The Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* (*The Romanovych Dynasty Chronicle*). The monograph clearly exhibits the characteristics of a source-critical study. The author examines the purpose and manner in which the compilers of the various parts of *The Romanovych Dynasty Chronicle* recorded information concerning specific monuments of architectural art. It is worth emphasizing that the author focuses not only on the representation of architectural objects in *The Romanovych Dynasty Chronicle*, but also conducts an equally thorough analysis of the very source of this representation, devoting considerable attention to the structural and narrative features of *The Romanovych Dynasty Chronicle*.

In the first chapter, the historiography of *The Romanovych Dynasty Chronicle* is analyzed. The manuscripts in which this literary monument has been preserved are presented, followed by an overview of the existing editions and translations of *The Romanovych Dynasty Chronicle*. The chapter also discusses the history of research on this medieval literary work. The author organizes previous scholarly positions, highlighting both the problems inherent in the very nature of the source and the key findings concerning its internal divisions and editorial layers.

The second chapter is devoted to selected issues related to the structure of *The Romanovych Dynasty Chronicle*. This chapter discusses and analyzes various genealogical forms, biblical borrowings and references to liturgical literature, documents from the chancery of individual members of the Romanovych dynasty, as well as poetic works. It also examines topics drawn from folklore, information from witnesses to events, including

eyewitnesses, likely conveyed orally, and elements such as *gesta*, *vitae*, and necrologies contained in *The Romanovych Dynasty Chronicle*. The author additionally emphasizes the role of later amplifications introduced by the Volhynian editors in the final redaction of the text.

The third chapter presents an analysis and commentary on the references to architecture that appear throughout the source. The author discusses successive occurrences of architectural terminology, beginning with the earliest attestations, and focuses primarily on the lexicon and phraseology related to architecture, arranging the material according to its order of appearance in *The Romanovych Dynasty Chronicle*. In addition, the author offers his own reflections on individual architectural references.

The fourth chapter contains a catalogue of the objects mentioned in the source. They are arranged according to thematic categories, including churches, monasteries, elements of ecclesiastical architecture, polychromy and wall paintings, stained glass, sepulchral, commemorative, and symbolic objects, as well as fortifications, houses and manors, and bridges.

After presenting the material in the four chapters, the author includes two glossaries of architectural terms attested in *The Romanovych Dynasty Chronicle*: the first in the Old Rus version, and the second in Polish. The author then provides a set of illustrations. These illustrations encompass a diverse range of visual materials, including plans of foundations and architectural details, graphic reconstructions of buildings (such as churches and cathedrals), as well as photographs of structures, both those taken by the author of the monograph and those sourced from other works.

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Stanisław Sroka, *Ludwik Węgierski* [*Louis of Hungary*], Warszawa 2024, Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 439 pp., Bibliography, Index of Personal Names, Index of Geographical, Political, and Ethnonym Names, hardback.

Louis of Hungary reigned on the Polish throne for only twelve years; nevertheless, his rule constituted an important stage in the formation of the late medieval monarchy. Together with the reign of his daughter Jadwiga, it formed a crucial link between the last ruler of the native Piast dynasty, Casimir the Great, and the Lithuanian Jagiellonian dynasty.

The presented monograph is the second volume in a projected series of more than forty books comprising the collection *Gallery of Polish Rulers*.

The volumes in this series share a uniform graphic design, featuring a coin motif on the cover, as well as a common narrative concept and structural framework. Given the extensive body of source material related to its subject, the book is divided into eleven chapters. The initial chapters are arranged chronologically, while the later ones adopt a thematic approach.

The first chapter presents Louis's family background and childhood. The following section discusses his reign on the Hungarian throne, while the third chapter focuses on his achievements as King of Poland. Subsequent chapters address the issue of the ruler's daughters and then turn to the organisation and functioning of his court. The sixth chapter is devoted to the reforms undertaken by Louis in his vast and diverse realm, followed by a discussion of the significance of his ecclesiastical foundations. Ethnic issues played a major role in the reign of the king of Hungary, Poland, and Croatia, as his dominions were inhabited by a genuine mosaic of peoples. This subject is examined in a separate, eighth chapter of Sroka's study. The following chapter analyses the chroniclers of Louis's time, who recorded not only the ruler's life but also preserved the memory of his death and funeral - topics that form the subject of the tenth part of the book.

The final chapter, somewhat unusually, is devoted to the problem of the historiographical memory of Louis I of Hungary, thus bringing the study to a close with a reflection on the posthumous perception of a monarch of exceptional importance for Central and Eastern Europe.

Oliwia Wysocka

METALS – ORNAMENTS – HISTORY: Contacts of Slavic and Scandinavian Elites in the Viking Age, ed. Władysław Duczko, Ewelina Miśta-Jakubowska, Renata Czech-Błońska, Wrocław 2022, Chronicon, 316 pp., Bibliography, Figures, paperback.

The volume presents the results of a research project entitled *The Relations of the First Piast State with the Scandinavian World as Seen through Silver Deposits*, carried out under the leadership of Professor Władysław Duczko. This project itself constituted a continuation of earlier research conducted under the title *The Origin and Circulation of Silver in Early Medieval Poland Based on Lead Isotope Analyses*. The central aim of the monograph is to demonstrate how studies of the materials used in the production of artefacts associated with early medieval Viking culture can shed light on contacts between Scandinavian and Slavic elites.

The book consists of eight chapters. The first outlines the history and culture of various European civilisations, offering a general overview of the political organisation, cultural characteristics, and geographical setting of Germanic, Slavic, and Scandinavian peoples. The second chapter focuses on hoards, jewellery, and ornaments associated with elite groups within these cultural spheres. The third chapter presents information on hoards discovered by archaeologists, discussing their significance, value, and historical context. The fourth chapter examines techniques used in the manufacture of ornaments, such as soldering, granulation, filigree, polishing, and colouring. It also describes the tools and chemical compounds employed by early medieval craftsmen. The following chapter is devoted to methods of surface analysis applied to archaeological materials, including techniques such as X-ray fluorescence (XRF), as well as issues of appropriate conservation of artefacts prior to analysis. On the basis of these methods, conclusions are drawn concerning the processes involved in the production of ornaments. The sixth chapter is dedicated to analysing the provenance of raw materials from specific regions, primarily within Europe. This is followed by a discussion of methods used to determine the origin of archaeological materials dating to the tenth and eleventh centuries.

The final chapter serves as a synthetic conclusion to the research presented in the volume. The authors argue that competition for political influence was closely linked to economic factors affecting everyday life, including patterns of trade. Each civilisation specialised in particular forms of production and exchange: Scandinavians possessed advanced expertise in metalworking, Arabs were known for coin minting, while the inhabitants of Great Moravia and the Czech Basin specialised in the manufacture of ornaments. These techniques and products subsequently reached the territories of Poland. The authors further note that decorative techniques employed in the Middle Ages often had roots in antiquity and remained in use over long periods. Research on discovered hoards thus not only documents the development of early medieval civilisations but also constitutes an important source of knowledge about the early Piast state. The volume concludes with an appendix, a supplementary discussion of analytical techniques, a bibliography, and a list of illustrations.

PAULINA SUGIER

Military Orders and Crusades: Essays Presented to Helen J. Nicholson, ed. Peter Edbury, Paul Webster, Abingdon-New York 2025, Routledge (= The Military Religious Orders series), 370 pp., hardback.

This volume brings together five articles focusing on women and gendered perspectives in crusading and related contexts. Shaun Tougher analyses the role of Byzantine imperial sisters of the Macedonian dynasty (867-1056). Susan B. Edgington discusses the three wives of Baldwin I of Jerusalem. Hayley Bassett examines the queenships of Melisende and Sybil in the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Jochen Burgtorf turns to the experiences of Margaret of Jerusalem and Beverley during the Third Crusade. The section closes with Kristjan Toomaspoeg's study of relations between military orders and women in medieval Italy.

Part III comprises five articles concerned with England and the military orders. Paul Webster addresses the role of the military orders during the minority of King Henry III. Norman Housley examines an English proposal for a crusade against Ireland in the years c. 1329-1331. Pierre Gaite explores English magnates and their households in the fourteenth century. Bronach C. Kane analyses the Hospitallers in the context of lordship and the Peasants' Revolt. The section concludes with Nicholas McDermott's study of the crimes attributed to Oswald Massingberd, an English Hospitaller on Malta.

Part IV contains three articles devoted to warfare in the Latin East and Europe. Nicholas Morton reconsiders the reputation of the Templar master Gerard of Ridefort through a reassessment of the battle of Cresson. Paul F. Crawford re-examines the career of Renaud of Châtillon by focusing on previously neglected perspectives. Krzysztof Kwiatkowski and Gregory Leighton analyse concepts of holy war within the Prussian branch of the Teutonic Order after the battle of Tannenberg.

Part V brings together six articles centred on archives, records, and sources. Philip D. Handyside examines the Old French 'William of Tyre' preserved in British Library, Henry Yates Thompson MS 12. Elena Bellomo discusses Bonifacio di Calamandrana, Giovanni Villani, and a medical prescription from Cilicia. Philippe Josserand reconstructs the family and social networks of Jacques de Molay. Alan Forey presents Templar letters from the Archivo de la Corona de Aragón. Karl Borchardt analyses evidence for a fourteenth-century Hospitaller magistra at Würzburg. The volume concludes with Barbara Bombi's study of Teutonic-Anglo-Hanseatic diplomatic negotiations during the reign of Henry IV (1399-1413).

The volume concludes with a List of Publications by Helen J. Nicholson, underscoring her extensive influence across the fields represented in this

collection. Overall, this volume offers chronologically and thematically ordered insights into institutional life, gender, warfare, national contexts, and archival discoveries, making it a valuable resource for scholars and advanced students interested in medieval military orders and crusading history.

TOMASZ PEŁECH
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Tomasz Pełech, *Obraz muzułmanów jako „obcych" w Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Iherusalem. Studia nad warsztatem literackim Rajmunda z Aguilers* [*The Image of Muslims in the Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Iherusalem: A Study of Raymond of Aguilers' Literary Techniques*], Wrocław 2025, Chronicon (= Humanitas Historica 2) 330 pp., Bibliography, Index, paperback.

The book examines the image of Muslims as "the Other" in *Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Iherusalem* (*The history of the Franks who captured Jerusalem*) by Raymond of Aguilers, one of the most important narrative sources of the First Crusade. Rather than treating the chronicle primarily as a factual account of events, the author focuses on its literary construction and ideological function, analysing how representations of Muslims were shaped by narrative strategies, rhetorical devices, and theological concepts employed by the Provençal cleric.

Central to the study is the assumption that the depiction of Muslims in Raymond's work cannot be reduced to simple hostility or polemic, but must be understood within a broader framework of medieval concepts of otherness, sacred history, and providential interpretation. The author demonstrates that Muslims appear in the work not merely as military adversaries, but as a necessary component of a divinely ordered narrative, against which the identity of the Christian community of crusaders is defined and legitimised.

The book is structured thematically, with individual chapters devoted to key aspects of Raymond of Aguilers' literary workshop. Particular attention is paid to narrative topoi, biblical models, eschatological motifs, and the language of moral evaluation. The author analyses the ways in which Muslims are characterised through stereotypical imagery, miraculous episodes, and contrasts with the Christian protagonists, while also highlighting moments of narrative ambiguity and complexity. In doing so, the study situates Raymond's oeuvre within the wider tradition of Latin crusade historiography

and medieval ethnographic discourse. A significant contribution of the work lies in its methodological approach, combining literary analysis with close reading of the text and sensitivity to its historical and ideological context. By foregrounding the narrative logic of the source, the author avoids anachronistic judgements and instead reconstructs the mental and cultural frameworks that shaped Raymond's perception of the non-Christian world.

The book makes an important contribution to research on crusade historiography, medieval perceptions of Islam, and the construction of alterity, "other" in Latin narrative sources. It will be of particular value to scholars interested in the First Crusade, medieval literary studies, and the ideological dimensions of historical writing in the High Middle Ages.

Joanna Rosik

On Warfare and the Threefold Path of the Jerusalem Pilgrimage: A Translation of Ralph Niger's De re militari et triplici via peregrinationis Ierosolimitane, John D. Cotts (transl.), Abingdon-New York 2023, Routledge (= Crusade Texts in Translation), 214 pp., paperback.

This volume presents the first English translation of Ralph Niger's late 12th-century reflection on military pilgrimage, composed in response to the call of the Third Crusade. The work is introduced with an overview of Niger's life, extant writings, and the manuscript tradition of *De re militari et triplici via peregrinationis Ierosolimitane*, along with a discussion of its significance as an early critique of crusading. The volume begins with a prologue, followed by four books that systematically explore the theological, moral, and military dimensions of pilgrimage to Jerusalem. In Book I, Niger surveys scriptural precedents for holy war, highlighting the lack of justification for crusading. Book II considers the relationship between earthly and heavenly Jerusalem, advocating spiritual preparation and internal devotion over armed expedition. Book III examines the moral and practical challenges of participating in crusades, offering guidance on penance and personal conduct. Book IV concludes with a meditation on the role of knights and Christian elites, arguing that their service at home could be more beneficial than military campaigns abroad. The volume closes with a comprehensive bibliography of sources and literature consulted by the translator.

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Robert T. Tomczak, *Powstanie i rozwój Konfederacji Szwajcarskiej w średniowieczu* [*The formation and development of the Swiss Confederation in the Middle Ages*], Kraków 2023, Avalon, 208 pp., Calendar, Bibliography, Personal-Place Index, List of Maps, paperback.

The book serves as an introductory study of the medieval and early modern Swiss Confederation, tracing its origins from the settlement of the Helvetii through the formation of the cantonal alliance and the political transformations that shaped Switzerland up to the age of the Reformation. It examines the social structure of the Alpine regions, political tensions with the Habsburg dynasty, the internal development of the cantons, and the emergence of foundational myths that later contributed to Swiss national identity. The work also considers the Confederation's position within the broader framework of European politics, including its role in the Italian Wars, the Reformation, and the Thirty Years' War. In doing so, the author demonstrates how a loose alliance of rural and urban communities gradually came to be recognised as a distinct political entity.

Central to the study is the argument that the Swiss Confederation was formed through a combination of social diversity, territorial conflict, military experience, and evolving political cooperation. The author emphasises that the Confederation's identity was shaped not only by struggles against external powers - most notably the Habsburgs - but also by internal dynamics such as cantonal rivalries, legal traditions, and the development of collective memory. By paying attention to both historical events and the symbolic narratives later attached to them, the book shows how the Swiss constructed their political culture and legitimacy over several centuries.

The structure of the book consists of a Prologue, four chapters, an Epilogue, an Appendix, a Conclusion, a Calendar, a Bibliography, a Personal-Place Index, and a List of Maps.

In the Prologue (pp. 13-36), the author describes the process by which the Celtic Helvetii settled the territory of what is now Switzerland. This section also explains the historical origins of Switzerland's linguistic diversity: three official languages; German, French, Italian, and one local language, Romansh.

Chapter I (pp. 37-58) is devoted to an examination of the social strata that constituted the Swiss Confederation in the thirteenth century. Alongside the nobility and clergy, the author discusses shepherds, lowland peasants, and the urban population, outlining their respective roles within medieval Swiss society. The chapter then presents Rudolf of Habsburg's ascent to the German throne and the beginnings of his dynasty's territorial expansion

into south-western Switzerland. It also addresses the defensive pact concluded by the so-called forest cantons in 1291.

In Chapter II (pp. 59-96), the author analyses the process through which individual cantons and cities gradually liberated themselves from Habsburg authority. Particular attention is given to three decisive battles of the fourteenth century - Morgarten (1315), Sempach (1386), and Näfels (1388) - and their significance for the consolidation of the Swiss Confederation, which by the end of the century comprised eight members. The author also emphasises that the Habsburg dynasty was simultaneously engaged in other political commitments, such as maintaining its rule in Austria and seeking the royal crown of the Holy Roman Empire, circumstances that facilitated the Confederation's emancipation from Habsburg overlordship. The chapter concludes with an overview of the emergence of internal political structures in late medieval Switzerland.

Chapter III (pp. 97-138) focuses on the internal affairs of the cantons that formed part of the Swiss Confederation. Among the examples discussed is the *Sempach Brief*, as well as a civil war that erupted between Zurich and the remaining cantons between 1440 and 1450. The chapter also examines the Burgundian-Swiss conflict, during which Charles the Bold, ruler of Burgundy, was killed. Its final sections discuss the decline of Swiss military significance in the early sixteenth century, particularly during the Italian Wars, when Swiss soldiers proved unable to withstand the growing dominance of firearms. Nevertheless, the author notes that by the beginning of the sixteenth century the Swiss Confederation was already regarded as a distinct political entity – an exceptional situation, given that even in the fifteenth century there was no clear consensus in Europe on how to conceptualise this polity.

In Chapter IV (pp. 139-152), the author turns to the legends and myths that shaped Swiss national identity. Robert T. Tomczak discusses the formation of the legendary figures of William Tell and Arnold von Winkelried, as well as the foundational myth of the Confederation: the meeting of the cantons of Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden on the Rütli meadow in 1291.

The Epilogue (pp. 153-172) presents the history of the Swiss Confederation during the Reformation. The author outlines its influence on internal religious divisions among the cantons, the role of Ulrich Zwingli in shaping these developments, and the conflicts that arose between different parts of Switzerland. Robert T. Tomczak then describes the Confederation during the Thirty Years' War and the various stances adopted by the individual cantons.

In the Appendix (pp. 173-178), the author presents information on Swiss-Polish relations in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania confronted the Teutonic Order,

as well as on later interactions grounded in economic exchange. In the Conclusion (pp. 179-184), Robert T. Tomczak summarises the history of the Swiss Confederation.

KACPER KOŁODZIEJ

Proceedings of the XVI International Numismatic Congress (Warsaw, 11–16 September 2022), vol. 2: *Roman Numismatics*, ed. Aleksander Bursche, Jarosław Bodzek, Anna Zapolska, Turnhout 2025, Brepols (= *Warsaw Studies in Archaeology* 11), 2 vols. (vol. 1: *Coinage*, vol. 2: *Circulation*), list of illustrations, 849 pp., paperback.

The two-volume *Proceedings of the XVI International Numismatic Congress* constitute a comprehensive and methodologically sophisticated record of the largest international forum devoted to numismatic studies, held in Warsaw in 2022. Edited by Aleksander Bursche, Jarosław Bodzek, and Anna Zapolska, the publication reflects both the thematic breadth of contemporary numismatics and the increasing integration of archaeological, historical, and digital approaches within the discipline.

The introductory section outlines the organisational background of the Congress, its hybrid format necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic, and its particular emphasis on fostering scholarly exchange across different academic traditions, including those of Central and Eastern Europe. This contextual framing underscores the global and inclusive character of the event, mirrored in the diversity of contributions assembled in the volumes. Altogether, the *Proceedings of the XVI International Numismatic Congress* comprise a curated selection of nearly 550 scholarly contributions delivered at the Warsaw meeting, with the *Roman Numismatics* section alone offering 84 peer-reviewed chapters divided into 43 on coinage and 41 on circulation.

The first major thematic block is devoted to Celtic and Roman Republican coinage, with a strong focus on production, circulation, and monetisation processes. Several contributions explore regional coinages of the Upper Danube and Gaul, while others examine Republican hoards and patterns of monetary debasement, offering new perspectives on economic behaviour in the late Republic. A distinctive feature of this section is the extensive use of digital methodologies, including 3D scanning, die analysis, image recognition, and deep learning, which collectively demonstrate the transformative impact of digital humanities on numismatic research.

A second block centres on Roman Imperial coinage, addressing questions of minting practices, circulation networks, and monetary policy from the early

Empire through Late Antiquity. Studies of urban and rural contexts, counterfeit and irregular issues, and metallurgical analyses of coin hoards provide a nuanced picture of monetary use across different social and geographical environments. Particular attention is paid to hoard finds from Italy, Gaul, the Iberian Peninsula, and the Danubian provinces, many of which are presented here in preliminary but methodologically transparent reports.

Late Roman and early post-Roman monetary circulation forms another coherent thematic group. Contributions in this section analyse the persistence and transformation of monetary practices in the fifth and sixth centuries, including the reuse and modification of coinage, the circulation of gold issues, and the role of coin hoards in frontier and post-imperial contexts. Case studies from Gaul, the Iberian Peninsula, the Balkans, and the eastern Mediterranean highlight regional diversity while engaging with broader debates on continuity and change in late antique economies.

The volumes also devote substantial attention to numismatics beyond the frontiers of the Roman Empire. Several studies examine Roman coin finds in Barbaricum, including Central and Northern Europe, Scandinavia, and the Baltic region, focusing on mechanisms of inflow, imitation, and local use. These contributions are particularly valuable for historians interested in cross-cultural contacts, exchange networks, and the symbolic functions of coinage outside imperial structures.

Taken as a whole, the *Proceedings of the XVI International Numismatic Congress* offer an authoritative snapshot of current numismatic scholarship, characterised by methodological pluralism, strong empirical foundations, and increasing dialogue with archaeology and history. The publication will serve not only as an essential reference work for numismatists but also as a valuable resource for historians of antiquity and the early Middle Ages interested in monetary circulation, economic practices, and material culture across long chronological and geographical horizons.

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Templariusze. Historia i dziedzictwo [The Templars: History and Legacy], ed. Tomasz Sajko, Kamil Wasilkiewicz, Gniezno-Poznań 2025, Wydawnictwo Rys, 214 pp., paperback.

The collective volume presented here brings together the results of the interdisciplinary conference *Templariusze. Historia i dziedzictwo (The Templars: History and Legacy)*, held on 18-19 October 2024 at the Institute

of European Culture in Gniezno, Adam Mickiewicz University, in Poznań. The book assembles ten contributions by historians, art historians, and scholars of culture, all united by an interest in the history, reception, and legacy of the Order of the Temple, with particular attention to Central Europe and the Polish lands.

The volume opens with an article by Marian Małecki, developed from the inaugural lecture of the conference, which examines the presence of the Templars in Silesia, tracing the interplay between historical reality and later myth-making. Dariusz Garba analyses the symbols of the Templars and their meanings, situating them within the wider semiotics of medieval religious culture. Kamil Wasilkiewicz offers a reassessment of Duke Barnim I's relations with the Templars and the early stages of the Order's activity in Western Pomerania (1234-c. 1248), while Marcin Gomółka revisits the question of the Templars' presence in the Łuków region in the light of a papal bull of Alexander IV from 1 February 1257. Magdalena Satora's contribution turns to the emotional world of the Templars, analysing references to fear and other emotions in French trial records from 1309-1311. Medieval material culture and architecture are addressed by Maciej Małachowicz and Anna Małachowicz, who examine the remains of the Templar commandery at Oleśnica Mała in Lower Silesia. The volume then moves beyond strictly medieval history with Sławomir Majoch's study of the Templar myth in Polish literature, art, and popular culture, highlighting the Order's enduring symbolic power. Two guest contributions broaden the scope of the collection. Piotr Hope engages critically with earlier scholarship on the conventual affiliation of Templars in the Piast lands, Western Pomerania, and the New March, while Bartłomiej Dźwigała surveys the current state of research on Templar liturgy. The book concludes with a report by Tomasz Sajko on the activities of the "Szlak Templariuszy" Association between 2006 and 2025, illustrating the contemporary social and cultural reception of the Templar heritage.

Overall, the volume offers a well-balanced combination of regional case studies, thematic analyses, and reflections on memory and myth. It constitutes a valuable contribution to current scholarship on the Templars, particularly in the context of Central Europe, and will be of interest not only to medievalists, but also to researchers concerned with the *longue durée* of historical memory and cultural reception.

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The Book of Raymond of Aguilers: Historia Francorum qui Ceperunt Iherusalem, James Currie (trans.), Abingdon-New York 2025, Routledge (= Crusade Texts in Translation), 120 pp., hardback.

This volume presents a new English translation of *Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Iherusalem* (*The History of the Franks who Captured Jerusalem*), the eye-witness account of the First Crusade authored by Raymond of Aguilers, chaplain to Count Raymond IV of Toulouse and participant in the expedition to the Holy Land. The work is one of the few contemporary narratives that complement and counterbalance the better-known *Gesta Francorum*, with a particular focus on the Provençal contingent and the leadership dynamics of the crusading forces from the perspective of a close companion of their leader. The translation by James Currie is the first in English to be based on the critical Latin edition prepared by John France, and it is specifically designed to improve accessibility for students and general readers who have previously found the Latin text difficult to approach in full. The volume includes an introduction that discusses the necessity of a new translation, the life and character of Raymond of Aguilers, and the value of his book as a historical source, alongside notes on translation and an index. Raymond's work offers not only a detailed narrative of the army's journey and the capture of Jerusalem in 1099, but also insights into the social dynamics of the Provençal group and the concerns of common crusaders - features that distinguish it from other contemporary chronicles. Its close vantage on crusader leadership and its focus on events such as the discovery of the Holy Lance at Antioch make it an indispensable source for scholars of the First Crusade. Designed for use in undergraduate teaching as well as for specialist researchers, this edition significantly broadens access to a critical primary source in crusade studies.

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The Making of the Eastern Vikings. Rus' and Varangians in the Middle Ages. Medieval identities: Socio-Cultural Space, ed. Sverrir Jakobsson, Thorir Jonsson Hraundal, Daria Segal, Turnhout 2023, Brepols Publishers, 236 pp., 8 ill., 2 b/w tables, Bibliography, Index, hardback.

This publication is a collection of works devoted to the Vikings in Eastern Europe by numerous authors. The eleven contributions included in this volume offer a broad perspective on the Varangian question in both sources and historiography, preceded by an introduction by S. Jakobsson, T. J. Hraundal, and D. Segal.

The volume addresses selected aspects of Norman influence on the history and culture ofRus and examines representations of the Varangians in Western European, Byzantine, Arabic, and Rus sources. Particular attention is given to questions of gender and social roles, including the presence of Rus women in Islamicate geographical literature (T.M. Upham), as well as to Varangians in Arabic sources (T.J. Hraundal) and Byzantine defensive and religious concepts related to the Rus (M. White; I. Garipzanov). Perceptions of the Norse and the Rus in Western Europe are explored by R. Fenster, while D. Segal analyses Scandinavian ethnonyms in medieval Rus chronicles. Several contributions focus on cultural memory, narrative traditions, and individual figures, including studies of Haraldr harðráði and his legendary treasures (F. Androshchuk), missionary narratives along the eastern routes (K.J. Richter), and comparative Byzantine and Old Norse perspectives on the Varangians (R. Scheel). Broader issues of memory, identity, and the legacy of the Varangians are examined by S. Jakobsson, while the volume also addresses the Varangian question in modern historiography, particularly in the Ukrainian context (V. Gunnarsson).

In sum, the publication presents a wide range of problems central to contemporary research on the Varangians and their presence in the territory of Kievan Rus, as well as their historical influence, with particular emphasis on the role of the Northmen in the formation of modern Eastern European societies.

DAWID PORĘBIAK

The Road to Antioch and Jerusalem: The Crusader Pilgrimage of the Monte Cassino Chronicle, Francesca Petrizzo (transl.), Abingdon-New York 2025, Routledge (= Crusade Texts in Translation), 122 pp., paperback.

This volume offers the first English translation of the *Hystoria de via*, commonly known as the *Monte Cassino Chronicle*, one of the few extant eyewitness accounts of the First Crusade emanating from Southern Italy, likely compiled between the 1130s and 1140s. The edition situates the work within the intellectual and devotional world that produced it, with an introduction that analyses its historiographical context, manuscript tradition, and theological outlook. Special emphasis is placed on the work's articulation of crusading as a pilgrimage experience, marked by sustained movement, religious fervour, and an understanding of violence as integral to Christian devotion. The translation strives to balance faithfulness to the medieval Latin text with readability, and is accompanied by full references and commentary to support specialists in crusade studies and medieval pilgrimage literature. As such, the book significantly enriches the corpus of crusader sources available in English and offers fresh perspectives for research on crusade perception and practice beyond the better-known northern Latin chronicles.

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The Second Crusade against the Hussites, ed. Petr Elbel, Pavel Soukup [*et al.*], Prague 2025: Filosofia (Institute of Philosophy of the Czech Academy of Sciences), 319 pp.; English summary; index of persons and places, paperback.

The Second anti-Hussite crusade of 1421 occupies a central place in the history of the Hussite Wars. It was the largest military operation directed against the Hussites, involving the Holy Roman Empire, the Kingdom of Hungary, and Catholic Europe more broadly. Despite careful ideological, organisational, and military preparations, the campaign ended in a complete failure. In this volume, a team of scholars led by Petr Elbel and Pavel Soukup seeks to address both longstanding and newly posed questions concerning the circumstances and course of the campaign, drawing on sources previously unknown or overlooked in earlier scholarship.

The book consists of seven chapters. It opens with Petr Elbel's discussion of the preparations for the crusade, including the role of the prince-electors, the circumstances surrounding the promulgation of the bull *Redemptoris omnium* (*The Redeemer of all*), and the mission of Cardinal Branda da Castiglione, the papal legate in the Empire. In the following chapter, the same author examines the role in the expedition of Sigismund of Luxembourg, focusing in particular on the reasons for the delay in the Roman and Hungarian king's personal involvement, and reconstructing the course of events from the entry of Hungarian troops into Bohemia to the defeats at Kutná Hora and Německý Brod (modern Havlíčkův Brod). Kristýna Luger then analyses the participation of the Silesians and Lusatians in the crusade, highlighting the preparations for the campaign, the role of Conrad of Oleśnica, Bishop of Wrocław, and military operations in eastern Bohemia and northern Moravia. The fourth part of the volume, authored by Štěpánka Grunová, is devoted to the military actions undertaken by Albert V of Austria, including the capture of Jevišovice. The author argues that Austrian involvement was not solely an element of crusading activity, but also motivated by a desire for retaliation against the lords of Kunštát and Jevišovice, who had previously carried out raids into Austrian territories. Alexandra Kaar, in turn, focuses on the role of Sigismund of Luxembourg in mobilising his subjects for participation in the campaign against the Hussites, while Stanislav Bárta examines the financing of the expedition. The volume concludes with a chapter by Tobias Heil, who addresses the issue of wartime communication, using the example of contacts between Nuremberg and the crusading forces, as well as other imperial cities, princes, and members of the nobility.

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The Swan Knight Texts of the Old French Crusade Cycle, Carol Sweetenham (transl.), Abingdon-New York 2025, Routledge (= Crusade Texts in Translation), 492 pp., Index of Names, Index of Places, Bibliography, hardback.

This volume offers the first complete English translation of the six *Swan Knight* texts that open the *Old French Crusade Cycle*, a foundational body of medieval Old French narrative poems (*chansons de geste*) associated with the tradition of the First Crusade. These texts construct an imagined legendary ancestry for Godfrey of Bouillon, the first ruler of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, and serve as a narrative bridge into the better-known epic

accounts of crusading found in the *Chanson d'Antioche*, *Chanson des Chétifs*, and *Chanson de Jérusalem*.

The volume's substantial introduction situates the *Swan Knight* material in its literary and manuscript contexts, discusses its sources and transmission history, and traces its afterlives and cultural reception, including its influence on later legends such as Richard Wagner's *Lohengrin*. A full list of characters and places, along with explanatory notes and summaries, accompanies the translations, enhancing accessibility for readers. The six narratives translated by Carol Sweetenham comprises *La Naissance du Chevalier au Cygne* (in its two versions, *Elioxe* and *Béatrix*), *Le Chevalier au Cygne* itself, *La Fin d'Elias*, *Les Enfances Godefroi*, and *Le Retour de Cornumarant*, the last linking the *Swan Knight* material to the crusade-cycle proper. Through these tales, the Crusade Cycle unfolds a vast medieval panorama of elves, swans, knights, scheming clergy, and Saracen princes across an imaginary geography that stretches from London and Boulogne to Bouillon and Mecca. Designed for both medievalists and students of crusade literature and folklore, this edition opens a crucial gateway to texts that have shaped Western perceptions of crusading and heroic lineage in medieval narrative art.

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The Utrecht Chronicle of the Teutonic Order: A History of the Crusades in the Holy Land, Prussia, and Livonia (Edition and Translation), Rombert Stapel (transl.), Abingdon-New York 2025, Routledge (= The Military Religious Orders), 566 pp., Bibliography, paperback.

This volume presents a diplomatic edition and parallel English translation of the *Utrecht Chronicle of the Teutonic Order* (*Croniken van der Duytscher Oirden*), a latefifteenthcentury Middle Dutch chronicle that has exerted a significant influence on early modern historiography in northeastern Europe. Known in German scholarship as the *Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik* (*Younger Chronicle of the Grand Masters*), the text offers rare insight into the selfimage and historical consciousness of the Teutonic Order following its territorial losses in Prussia in the late fifteenth century. The chronicle's narrative stretches from the Order's purported biblical origins in the Holy Land to its extensive involvement in the Baltic crusades, and concludes with a history of the Utrecht bailiwick. Interwoven throughout are summaries of papal and imperial privileges and indulgences, producing a hybrid work at the crossroads of crusading literature, gesta, and cartulary chronicle genres.

The book opens with an Introduction to the edition and translation that situates the chronicle text within its manuscript tradition and historical context, followed by editorial principles and translators' notes explaining the diplomatic presentation of the text. The Edition and Translation presents the complete Middle Dutch text alongside a modern English rendering, including several passages that have never before been edited. The volume also contains supplementary material such as an appendix and sequential lists of rulers: Grand Masters, Land Masters of Prussia and Livonia, commanders of Utrecht, as well as related ecclesiastical figures, serving as reference tools for readers. A comprehensive Bibliography concludes the work.

This first complete edition and translation into a modern language opens the Utrecht Chronicle to audiences beyond specialists in Middle Dutch, making it an indispensable resource for scholars of crusading, military orders, Baltic history, and medieval chronicles more broadly. The volume is further complemented by a recent study of the chronicle's cultural context, sources, and authorship published in the same series.

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Vir sapiens. Księga dedykowana Profesorowi Krzysztofowi Ożogowi [*Vir sapiens. A Volume Dedicated to Professor Krzysztof Ożóg*], ed. Lidia Korczak, Marek Daniel Kowalski, Stanisław A. Sroka, Kraków 2024, Societas Vistulana, pp. 619, hardback.

The volume Vir sapiens is an extensive Festschrift dedicated to Professor Krzysztof Ożóg, whose scholarly work has profoundly shaped research on medieval intellectual culture, universities, and historiography in Central Europe. The opening section contains a Tabula gratulatoria, an introductory essay by Anna Zajchowska and Maciej Zdanek outlining the academic career of the dedicatee, followed by a comprehensive bibliography of his publications from 1979 to 2023 compiled by Marcin Starzyński.

The first scholarly contribution, by Antoni Barciak, examines the image of Polish rulers and Silesian dukes in Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini's *Historia Bohemica*, highlighting the humanist perspective on Central European political history. Marcin Baster presents an unknown redaction of the earliest statutes of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Kraków, shedding new light on the institutional development of medieval medical studies. Marie Bláhová analyses the material conditions of students in the Přemyslid lands,

focusing on mechanisms of financial support and social mobility. Krzysztof Bracha explores the metaphor of Mary as a book in late medieval Polish preaching, situating it within broader exegetical and homiletic traditions. Wojciech Drelicharz investigates the manuscript transmission of the *Annals of Sędziwój* and the *Chronicle of Gallus Anonymous* used by Bartosz Paprocki, offering important observations on the early modern reception of medieval historiography. Marta Font discusses the border between the Kingdom of Hungary and the principality of Halych in the eleventh and twelfth centuries as a zone of political interaction rather than rigid separation. Tomasz Gałuszka OP revisits the beginnings of the Dominican Order in Poland through a close reading of thirteenth-century foundation documents. Patrycja Gąsiorowska reconstructs the family relations of the Poor Clare, Ludwina Salomea Zamoyska, on the basis of her correspondence.

Tomasz Jasiński addresses the rhythmical structure of the Latin poetry attributed to Gallus Anonymous, proposing new methodological approaches to its analysis. Tomasz Jurek examines the final sections of Jan Długosz's catalogue of the bishops of Poznań, with particular attention to its sources and authorial intentions. Maria Koczerska portrays Długosz as a founder and economic actor, drawing on his correspondence to illuminate lesser-known aspects of his activity. Lidia Korczak analyses the problem of tyranny and tyrannicide in Długosz's portrayal of rulers, placing it within the context of late medieval political thought. Paweł Kras discusses the figure of John of Schwenkenfeld as a holy inquisitor and martyr in historiographical tradition. Andrzej Marzec presents an unknown charter of King Władysław Łokietek recovered from old book bindings, underscoring the value of codicological research for diplomatics. Roman Michałowski investigates the origins and development of the cult of Saint Anna of Silesia. Maciej Mikuła examines the legal writings of Grzegorz of Szamotuły and their role in medieval legal education. Mikołaj Olszewski explores the teaching of ethics at the University of Kraków in the early fifteenth century, highlighting its intellectual foundations. Zenon Piech analyses supralibros with the image of Saint John Cantius, combining perspectives from iconography and the history of the book. Krzysztof Polek reflects on the artistic dimension of medieval portolan charts and their visual language. Jerzy Rajman studies the scheduling of bench court sessions in fourteenth-century Kraków as an element of urban legal culture. Stanisław Rosik focuses on the symbolism of the apostolic image in twelfth-century hagiography.

Jerzy Sperka discusses Mikołów and Pszczyna as centres of ducal administration in medieval Silesia. Stanisław A. Sroka presents selected medieval records from the University of Bologna, illustrating their relevance for the study of academic mobility. Marcin Starzyński considers whether

the *Actus Silvestri* were known in eleventh-century Poland, contributing to debates on the circulation of Roman legends. Krzysztof Stopka analyses the role of Armenian archbishops of Lviv in the Middle Ages, while Janusz Tandecki evaluates selected source editions concerning the Teutonic Order and its state. Dagmara Wójcik-Zega and Włodzimierz Zega examine a sermon by Bartholomew of Jasło on the renewal of the University of Kraków, and Anna Zajchowska-Bołtromiuk studies the homiletic legacy of Henryk Bitterfeld. The volume concludes with Maciej Zdanek's analysis of the testament of Jakub of Zaborów and the foundation of the altar of Saint Lazarus, followed by Leszek Zygner's reconstruction of the itinerary of Bishop Jakub of Kurdwanów.

Taken as a whole, *Vir sapiens* offers a remarkably rich and methodologically diverse collection of studies that not only honour Professor Ożóg's scholarly achievements, but also make a significant contribution to current research on medieval intellectual, institutional, and religious history.

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Zbiór Dokumentów Lublina z zasobów Archiwum Państwowego w Lublinie z lat 1317–1571 [*Collection of Lublin Documents from the Resources of the State Archives in Lublin, 1317-1571*], Lublin 2024, ed. Marcin Pytel, Michał Tomaszek, Uniwersytet Przyrodniczo-Humanistyczny w Siedlcach, Archiwum Państwowe w Lublinie, pp. 530, bibliography, indexes, hardback.

This volume is the first publication to present a complete collection of municipal documents preserved in the State Archives in Lublin from the years 1317 to 1571. The material is arranged thematically: first, legal documents concerning the city's status, followed by records relating to urban society, guilds, and the Hospital of the Holy Spirit. Within each thematic section, the documents are ordered chronologically.

The book is divided into two main parts. The first outlines the genesis of the publication and briefly discusses the history and preservation of the sources over the centuries. It also provides an overview of the types of documents included in the edition. The second part consists of the edited source material itself. Each document is accompanied by concise information on the issuing authority or individual, the place of issue, and the date. The texts are presented in their original language, *i.e.*, Latin, with a Polish translation provided by the editors.

This publication constitutes an invaluable resource for scholars studying the history of Lublin. Its significance, however, extends beyond local history, as it makes a substantial contribution to research on urban life in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, as well as on the functioning of medieval and early modern chancelleries and diplomatic practices.

Jakub Wrochna