

Kozłowski Wojciech

**PRELUDE TO THE ANGEVINS: MARRIAGES OF THE  
ÁRPÁDS AND PIASTS RECONSIDERED (986 - CA. 1250)**

MA Thesis in Medieval Studies

Central European University

Budapest

May 2008

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by

Kozłowski Wojciech

(POLAND)

Thesis submitted to the Department of Medieval Studies,  
Central European University, Budapest, in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
of the Master of Arts degree in Medieval Studies  
Accepted in conformance with the standards of the CEU

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Chair, Examination Committee

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Thesis Supervisor

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Examiner

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I, the undersigned, **Kozłowski Wojciech**, candidate for the MA degree in Medieval Studies declare herewith that the present thesis is exclusively my own work, based on my research and only such external information as properly credited in notes and bibliography. I declare that no unidentified and illegitimate use was made of the work of others, and no part of the thesis infringes on any person's or institution's copyright. I also declare that no part of the thesis has been submitted in this form to any other institution of higher education for an academic degree.

Budapest, 26 May 2008

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Signature

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## Introduction

I arrived in Budapest with a strong desire to study the Hungarian Angevins. My personal interest was to learn “as much as possible” about fourteenth-century Hungary, which should be much easier in its capital city than anywhere else in the world. This challenging goal proved too optimistic for a ten-month research period, especially when starting from ground level, and with no skills in Hungarian. After a number of discussions<sup>1</sup> I decided to limit my study to the early period of Angevin rule in Hungary. The main interest shifted to answering the question: What was the origin of the Angevin-Piast alliance at the beginning of the fourteenth century? The problem, however, of why Charles Robert was ready to support Władysław Łokietek in his struggle to unify the Polish principalities, smoothly transferred my attention to the last Árpáds, mainly Andrew III, who were the first to dispatch troops to Little Poland to help Łokietek. Soon after, I realized that the military presence of Hungary in southern Poland was not exceptional under Leszek the Black, Łokietek’s predecessor in Cracow. My attempts to find a justification for these northern politics of the Árpáds eventually led me to the first half of the thirteenth century and focused my attention on two dynastic Árpád-Piast marriages that took place in that period. They seemed to be an introduction to a long story with its final chapter in Amadeus Ába’s interventions in 1304 and 1311 on behalf of Łokietek, and in the marriage of Charles Robert to Elisabeth, a daughter of Łokietek, in the summer of 1320. During my studies my conviction has grown that an honest scholarly attempt to explain the political origins of the Angevin-Piast alliance demands putting a question to the previous Árpád-Piast coalition. That is how this particular study emerged. I realized that the second half of the thirteenth century saw nearly constant military cooperation between Hungary and Little Poland, first in fights for Halich, then battling the Mongol invasion in 1241; Later, it worked quite well and efficiently. Moreover, the close ties between the two countries not only relied on the brothers-in-arms issue, but developed into a more complicated and intricate net of mutual connections. Culture, economy, and society were crucial factors that played a background role in a political process; they were, however, indispensable in presenting a general explanation of political decisions and events. This reflection grabbed me, a young Polish scholar,

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to express here my special thanks to the Hungarian and Polish scholars who helped me in handling this vast topic: Prof. Gábor Klaniczay, Prof. József Laszlovszky, Prof. Halina Manikowska, Prof. Marianne Sághy, and Dr. Balázs Nagy.

after a few months of “rediscovering” the Hungarian history. This also became a point of frustration, because the time for sitting down and writing a thesis was unforgivably approaching. Large quantities of sources and secondary literature flooded me without mercy.

These were the conditions of the birth of this study. Two factors played a vital role here: a scholarly honesty and time limits. Regarding the honesty, I realized the simple truth that I would not be able to make a proper study to provide an explanation for the Angevin-Piast alliance in a more profound way than had already been done. On the other hand, I was already sure that any half-means and a limited approach would decrease my own contribution to zero and the whole work would look like copying available textbooks in a slightly different manner. Alas, the number of sources and the secondary literature were too much for a few months. It has been an important element of my learning in Budapest to find out that the political field I entered is vast and examined by other scholars hundred of times. This does not mean that there is no more space for my research, however, means absolutely that the work of the previous scholarship cannot be ignored. Moreover, a proper discussion of the topic demands a certain level of skill in the Hungarian language, which – despite my efforts – still lies ahead. For that reason, I could write a study neither on the Angevins and Piasts nor on the Árpáds and Piasts as thoroughly as I had previously intended; the limits of such a work would make it superficial. Thus, the time limit demanded that I reconsider my approach to the subject and make it manageable and scholarly acceptable. Therefore, I ultimately decided to make a study of a “big picture,” which would give me an opportunity to develop my own methodology and limit the drawbacks that derive from my lack of proper skills in Hungarian.

This study attempts to reconsider the Árpád-Piast marriages from c. 986 to c. 1250. This is not, however, a genealogical re-examination. I am looking at this material from the new perspective of prestige and its political consequences. I intend to find out the essential difference between the marriages in the first centuries of political existence of Hungary and Poland, and those that took place in the first half of the thirteenth century. This study contains of four chapters, with their own separate methodology and specific approach. So as not to overburden the “Introduction” with details I will just give a short summary of the style of my research work. I am postponing the methodology discussion for another reason, too. Namely, each chapter



is done in a different way; therefore, I have found it sensible to devote some space to the methodology in the main text.

The first chapter is a kind of dynastic comparison, which tries, from the perspective of dynastic unions, to recognize mutual status, i.e., how each dynasty perceived the other one. This is a search for the style of partnership and general features of such cooperation. These features illustrate the early Hungarian-Polish dynastic relations in their broader political context and they play a role of the background setting for the second chapter. The first chapter relies on a simple yet effective methodology. Genealogical data, available in several publications, has been collected and then compared with ideas expressed in the secondary literature. Because I am dealing with a big picture, I have allowed myself to rely mainly on textbooks and single monographs. I do not intend in the first chapter to rewrite facts, although I have introduced simple corrections, but only to use them to recognize the patterns in the dynastic unions. Another intention is very practical. I have had an opportunity to put together the Hungarian and Polish secondary literature. The interpretation built on these two approaches, which, apparently, seldom confront each other, has been one of my major purposes.

The second chapter is very different; the main argument is embedded in a discussion of numerical data concerning the dynastic horizon of the Árpáds and Piasts. This chapter presents some historical background, but most of it is dedicated to understanding what happened with both dynasties in the period from 1150 to 1250. Again, this is not a political history *sensu stricto*, but a statistical comparison of over eighty marriages that were concluded within the period. The analysis of the dynastic horizon has given some additional information about the political perspectives of these two dynasties and their evolution over time. This investigation plays an important role because it reveals political tendencies in the big picture, sets a good background for the events in the thirteenth century, and discloses parallel changes that affected the Árpáds and Piasts. The sources for the chapter are similar to those used in the first chapter. I have reworked and reordered the genealogical data which was gathered and put in order by the previous scholarship, according to my research questions. I have supplied this chapter with tables and graphics, which are sometimes more informative than dozens of written pages. Here I would like to remark that one might be disappointed that while dealing with a serious amount of the genealogical data I have not referred directly to the acknowledged Polish genealogist of the Piasts,

Kazimierz Jasiński. This has happened due to technical reasons, because I have not had access to his works in Budapest. Moreover, for collecting my data on the Piasts I have used publications which are already based on Jasiński's studies.<sup>2</sup>

The third chapter is mainly a thorough reconsideration of the marriage of Bolesław the Shy of Poland and Kinga<sup>3</sup> of Hungary in 1239. My argument rests partially on the results of the previous chapters, which provide solid dynastic background. In addition, I have used the rich secondary literature that deals with the subject. The idea is similar to the first chapter, i.e., to compare and contrast the Hungarian and Polish opinions on this issue. I have used both approaches, because I found that there is little mutual awareness on both sides. The Polish scholarship tends to underline the Polish reasons for the marriage and neglect the Hungarian party. On the other hand, the Hungarians pay little attention at all to this issue. The third chapter, therefore, plays a kind of reconciliatory role, and by revealing the possible political intentions of both sides, it discloses some incoherence in previous interpretations, and tries to point out factors which up until now have been rather neglected, but could give more reasons for the marriage. I am also discussing two source accounts in an attempt to secure a better understanding of the marriage and its consequences. Thus, the third chapter is a voice in a scholarly debate around the origins of the marriage. This is also an endeavor to set a borderline in 1239 for a "new opening" in Árpád-Piast relations, which soon acquired unprecedented features.

The fourth chapter is less a study and more a logical speculation. It derives from the third chapter and its idea of a watershed in the mutual relations of the Árpáds and Piasts after 1239. This chapter sets out to build a platform between the early reign of Béla IV and Charles Robert of Anjou in the perspective of their northern politics. Therefore, it picks up the question of a notion of a "political tradition" which evolves over time, but due to its durability is able to influence the political horizon and perception of men in power. A description of the Mongol invasion's aftermath in Hungary gives a clue to understanding the further foreign policy of Béla IV, and how this policy affected the relations with Poland far into the future. The fourth chapter is also a specific call for further research, where the two historiographies – Hungarian and Polish – will be discussed and compared in order to shed light on the period

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<sup>2</sup> These works are listed in the first chapter and also mentioned in the main body of the second chapter.

<sup>3</sup> The other version of this name is Kunigunde.

which was not a prelude to the Angevin rule in Hungary (and their Polish relations), but – as I argue – was, de facto, the first chapter of this many faceted story.

The main chronological framework of this study is presented in the first chapter. Therefore, I will just indicate a few basic patterns here. My interest in dynastic marriages demanded going backwards to the first such unions, which took place in the tenth century. Further examination revealed an interesting sequence. The first three marriages took place before 1140 and had specific features. For that reason I have put them into the first chapter. After 1140 was a nearly eighty-year-long gap when there was no Árpád-Piast marriage, but at the same time significant changes in geopolitics took place. This long break was followed by an unprecedented number of marriages within fifty years. Such a sequence of facts has compelled me to treat them separately and examine their practical meaning. I would like to stress here again that I am not writing about the Hungarian-Polish relations in the high Middle Ages. I am just interpreting their mutual marriages and their significance with reference to the political context. Such an approach enables me to introduce a broad chronology, which covers over three centuries. At the same time, however, the chronology does not refer to the life dates of rulers, but rests upon the marital issues. Thus, the chronological framework functions mainly on approximations and avoids exact dates.

In my study, the discussion of previous research proves to be the question of another piece of research. The chronology, which extends from the tenth century and reaches the Angevin period, demands a consideration of a vast amount of secondary literature, which somehow deals with political matters. On the other hand, there is little literature which covers just Hungarian-Polish relations in the Middle Ages. Among the Polish scholars I would name here, in chronological order, Jan Dąbrowski, Stanisław A. Sroka, and Ryszard Grzesik. On the other side, I would point out Endre Kovács, Dániel Bagi and Márta Font.<sup>4</sup> All these scholars, however, have worked on the Hungarian-Polish relations in different periods, and concentrated on various – not always political – problems. Maria Rekettyés has also dedicated a few paragraphs to the literature on the Hungarian-Polish relations, and she revealed its neglect.<sup>5</sup> It is enough to state here that to date I have not found any study which presented a similar

<sup>4</sup> In order to keep this “introduction” free from overloaded footnotes, I have listed some of most relevant works of these scholars in the bibliography. The other scholars, mentioned in the introduction, are also included in the bibliography.

<sup>5</sup> Mária Rekettyés, *Stosunki polityczne i kulturalne polsko-węgierskie za Władysława Jagiellończyka* [Hungarian-Polish Political and Cultural Relations under Władysław Jagiellończyk] (Wrocław: Signum, 1999), 7-11.

methodological approach to Árpád-Piast relations to mine. The limits which I have described above did not allow me to bring in a comprehensive study of the Hungarian secondary literature. Hence, I have used mainly the English-language publications of the most prominent and recent Hungarian scholars like Pál Engel, Z. J. Kosztolnyik, Gyula Kristó, and Jenő Szűcs, and the summarising work of László Kontler, in hope that their opinions will be a good foundation for my argument. Regarding the Polish secondary literature, for the basic factual framework I have turned to the latest general publications of Marek Barański and Stanisław Szczur. Moreover, while discussing the Polish-Ruthenian issues, I have eagerly reached for Bronisław Włodarski's works, and sometimes I have compared them with the publications of Márta Font. The work of Benedykt Zientara on Henry the Bearded has played an important role in decoding the "mystery" of Bolesław the Shy's marriage. The bases for my genealogical studies have been *Piastowie*,<sup>6</sup> a recent lexicon, and *Korai magyar történeti lexikon (9-14 század)*.<sup>7</sup> On the whole, as my study aims to deliver a big picture which reflects trends and tendencies in Árpád-Piast marital relations over three centuries, I have relied in my argument on the efforts of other scholars' work. My choice may be sometimes disputable, but my methodology, I believe, justifies it.

For the same reason, literary sources appear only in the third chapter, yet only when this is genuinely necessary. My fundamental source material has comprised the nuptial unions of two dynasties. They have been examined, reinterpreted, and put into a new light. Hence, this new approach, a thorough reconsideration, and an attempt to merge the Polish and the Hungarian secondary literature on the subject are the most important features of my study. I hope that this approach will prove inspiring for further research because this is also my private "prelude to the Angevins".

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<sup>6</sup> *Piastowie. Leksykon biograficzny* [Piasts. Biographical Lexicon], ed. Stanisław Szczur, Krzysztof Ożóg (Cracow: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1999) (hereafter: *Piastowie*).

<sup>7</sup> *Korai magyar történeti lexikon (9-14 század)* [Lexicon of the Early History of Medieval Hungary (from the Ninth to the Fourteenth Century)], ed. Gyula Kristó (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1994) (hereafter: *Lexikon*).

## Chapter I: Árpáds and Piasts from a Marital Perspective, 986-1140

The main reason for this chapter is to give a general overview on dynastic marriages between Árpáds and Piasts until 1214 and to describe and compare dynastic horizons<sup>8</sup> of these two houses in the period from 1150 to 1250. This is necessary to set the scene for my further argument about Árpád-Piast relations in the thirteenth century. Namely, I think that there was a significant difference in the relations between the two dynasties from the tenth to the twelfth centuries juxtaposed to alliances concluded by the Hungarian kings Andrew II, Béla IV, and their successors, including Charles Robert of Anjou. Moreover, the difference will be better seen after realizing what changes affected Hungary and Poland in the second half of the twelfth century. An analysis of the dynastic horizons, i.e., with whom both houses intermarried for a whole century, will underline the growing gap between the Kingdom of Hungary and the Polish principalities. On the whole, my reasoning is aimed at demonstrating that the marriages of Polish dukes with Béla IV's daughters in the middle of the thirteenth century were a watershed for future political relations and had no precedents in the past. In addition, the events of that particular period paved the way for Angevin-Piast alliance, finally concluded in 1320.

At the beginning, however, I will justify the chronology applied in the two following chapters. I have introduced two periods for discussion. The first one, starting somewhere in the middle of the tenth century and ending in 1214, encompasses Árpád-Piasts dynastic marriages. In 1214 Salomea, a daughter of the Polish Duke Leszek the White, married Coloman, a son of the king of Hungary, Andrew II, and this was already, in my view, a new type of marriage. The period 1150-1250 seems somewhat artificial and is meant to be so. The last interdynastic marriage took place around 1140, which I will discuss later, and in the meantime the last "universal" duke of Poland died in 1138. No more Árpád-Piast marriages were concluded until the one in 1214.<sup>9</sup> These several decades, nevertheless, completely

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<sup>8</sup> Here I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Halina Manikowska (Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw) for drawing my attention to this problem.

<sup>9</sup> Partially due to a Byzantine domination that lasted in Hungary between 1140-1170. See: Ferenc Makk, *The Árpáds and the Comneni; political relations between Hungary and the Byzantium in the 12th century* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1989).

reshaped the basis of Hungarian-Polish relations, to such an extent that I dare to claim that in the middle of the thirteenth century there was a "new opening." The marriage of 1214 was a precedent for those of 1239 and 1256; therefore I decided to establish a final date for my discussion around 1250.

Medieval politics was often related to dynastic marriages. Their significance was never overshadowed by any other means of concluding political arrangements between two parties. Signing treaties and issuing charters revealed the parties' intentions in writing, the very fact of marriage was, however, a proper seal that confirmed good will in practice. By stepping into a marital agreement the parties declared that fate of their houses would be now shared and that they were ready to bear the consequences of this relationship. Even though many medieval marriages lacked an unspoken philosophy of facing fate together, I would argue that this was understood in reality. There was no need to name it, because everyone knew it implicitly.

Some general features of a dynastic marriage must necessarily be discussed in order to gather all of them in one place for later reference. Marriage in medieval society should be seen as a serious issue for several reasons.<sup>10</sup> Firstly, according to Christian teachings a couple once married was supposed to live life together. Putting aside exceptions which could happen in practice and not from denying this basic idea, parties had to take into consideration in advance the fact that a marriage could last for years and decades. Separating from a wife could happen, of course, but in the case of dynastical marriages it immediately evoked political repercussions. Therefore, I would claim that concluding a marriage was understood as more than gaining immediate profit; it was also seen to include the construction of a solid basis for long lasting cooperation. In a sense it was a clear signal of political option that was chosen by those who made the marriage contract. Furthermore, a marriage was an *expressis verbis* declaration of a will to cooperate and, hence, it created extraordinary space for

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<sup>10</sup> Some readings concerning problems of a medieval marriage: D. L. D'Avray, *Medieval marriage: symbolism and society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Georges Duby, *Medieval marriage: two models from twelfth-century France* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991); Neil Cartlidge, *Medieval marriage: literary approaches, 1100-1300*. (Rochester, NY : D. S. Brewer, 1997); Shulamith Shahar, *The fourth estate : a history of women in the Middle Ages*. (London: Routledge, 1993). An approach of an anthropologists: Jack Goody, *The oriental, the ancient, and the primitive: systems of marriage and the family in the pre-industrial societies of Eurasia*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) and idem, *The development of the family and marriage in Europe*. (Cambridge [Cambridgeshire]: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

diplomatic and political undertakings. At the same time, all the by-standers would receive clear information that from now on the contracted pair should be seen somewhat as a team. A dynastic marriage was closely lined to prestige, however. Wide-ranging and honorable marital connections were greatly appreciated because they inevitably enhanced the status of a dynasty among other European houses. Subsequently, this usually broadened the sphere of political influence and resulted in both diplomatic and economic profits. On the other hand, a dynastic marriage had its own serious consequences, and its long lasting perspective was not necessarily the most solemn one. Namely, a marriage, once concluded, acted as a “give-me-a-reason” device. Depending on the political situation, it could equip one party with many claims against the other that could involve particular territories, land estates, regions or even thrones. Moreover, a marriage normally meant offspring, who in one circumstances would be very desirable but could be problematic in another conditions. Hungarian-Polish relations seen through their marriages were never free from any of these considerations.

According to Oswald Balzer, there were five marriages between Árpáds and Piasts before 1214.<sup>11</sup> Two of them were concluded in the tenth century, one in the eleventh century, and the remaining two in the first half of the twelfth century. Jan Dąbrowski suggested a sixth marriage, and argued that a son of St. Stephen, St. Emeric, married an anonymous daughter of Mieszko II, king of Poland.<sup>12</sup> This would make altogether six royal marriages compared to the five that took place between 1214 and 1320.<sup>13</sup> These numbers for the first period can no longer be maintained. According to recent scholarly works, there only three Árpád-Piast marriages were concluded before 1214.

1. Bolesław I, son of Mieszko I and an anonymous woman, probably a daughter of Géza I, concluded c. 986.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Oswald Balzer, *Genealogia Piastów* [Genealogy of Piasts] (Cracow: Wydawnictwo Avalon, 2005) (hereafter: Balzer, *Genealogia*), 978. This book was first published in 1895 and now reproduced without changes in the content. However, over a century of historical and genealogical research made noticeable contribution to Balzer's text. All these efforts have been summarized by Jan Tęgowski in an introductory chapter to the second edition (idem, 5-28.) Balzer's book is generally considered reliable. Nevertheless, in case of Árpád-Piast marriages I am referring to works indicated by Jan Tęgowski.

<sup>12</sup> Jan Dąbrowski, “Polskie małżeństwo św. Emeryka” [The Polish Marriage of St. Emeric,] *Przegląd Powszechny* 187 (1930): 65-69. This idea was disputed which I explain soon.

<sup>13</sup> Balzer, *Genealogia*, 979.

<sup>14</sup> Here the Hungarian genealogical tables are in accord with the Polish perspective.

2. Anonymous daughter of Mieszko II<sup>15</sup> and King Béla I, chronology unknown.<sup>16</sup>
3. Mieszko the Old, a son of Bolesław III the Wrymouth and Gertrúd (Erzsébet, Elisabeth), a daughter of Béla II, concluded before 1140.<sup>17</sup>

According to this chronology, there was a single dynastic marriage every century, i.e., in the tenth and following centuries. Between the first and the second there was apparently about a fifty-year long break, whereas the second and the third were about a hundred years apart. Thus, from the numerical point of view, the thirteenth century significantly changed the statistics. Nonetheless, this is less a matter of numbers and more a matter of intentions.

In the tenth century Hungary and Poland were diligently establishing their foundations and fighting for the status states among the European powers. To a great extent the histories of both nations went on chronologically in parallel. Moreover, the idea of the early medieval Central European state was based on expansion and wealth gained as war booty.<sup>18</sup> This naturally incited conflicts and made the whole region remarkably hot. Alliances were changing and war's ups and downs affected all local

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<sup>15</sup> This seems to be a good place to make a little correction that apparently spread within Hungarian historiography. Namely, the Hungarian genealogical tables made by Gyula Kristó and Pál Engel (see: *Lexikon*, 61-65), and e.g., Gyula Kristó, *Die Arpadendynastie. Die Geschichte Ungarns von 895 bis 1301* (1993) (hereafter: Kristó, *Die Arpadendynastie*), Stammtafel II 287, have given a name Richeza to the Polish princess who married Béla I, at that time a future king of Hungary. On the other hand, Balzer argued that her name is unknown for there is no source evidence, and Richeza was definitely her mother's name. Therefore, claiming that the princess's was named after her mother is simply speculative (idem, *Genealogia*, 165-166, 978). Modern Polish historiography supports the Balzer's view. See, e.g., *Piastowie*, 54.

<sup>16</sup> I will get back to it little bit later.

<sup>17</sup> The three other marriages have been rejected by modern historiography, both Polish and Hungarian. Oswald Balzer's hypothesis that a Polish princess, Adelheida, was married to Géza, the prince of Hungary, and she could be the mother of St. Stephen (Balzer, *Genealogia*, 62-71), was immediately rejected by Stosław Łaguna (idem, "Rodowód Piastów" [The Origins of Piasts] *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 11 (1897), 745-788) and his argumentation was subsequently widely accepted (see Balzer, *Genealogia*, 15). Jan Dąbrowski's suggestion regarding St. Emeric's Polish marriage has been recently convincingly refuted by Ryszard Grzesik – idem, "Adelajda, rzekoma księżniczka polska na tronie węgierskim" [Adelheid, the Alleged Polish Princess on the Hungarian Throne] *Kobieta w kulturze średniowiecznej Europy. Prace ofiarowane profesor Alicji Karłowskiej-Kamzowej* [Woman in the European Medieval Culture. Studies Presented to Professor Alicja Karłowska-Kamzowa] (Poznań: Poznańskie Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk, 1995), 47-53. Finally, the supposed marriage of Judith, a daughter of Bolesław III the Wrymouth, and Géza II, a son of Béla II, c. 1136 was eventually dropped. Andrzej Marzec claims that it happened according to the will of both sides (see *Piastowie*, 98).

<sup>18</sup> Marek Kazimierz Barański, *Dynastia Piastów w Polsce* [The Piast Dynasty in Poland] (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2006) (hereafter: Barański, *Dynastia*), 106. See also: *The neighbours of Poland in the 10th century*, Ed. Przemysław Urbańczyk, (Warsaw: Polska Akademia Nauk. Instytut Archeologii i Etnologii, ca. 2000).



rulers. To a certain degree, however, these fluctuations had some basic frameworks. In most cases both Hungary and Poland had to neutralize an expansionist politics of the Holy Roman Empire and Bohemia, which was under strong German pressure. Therefore, generally speaking, I suggest that these Western countries could have become a common menace to Hungary and Poland. There is no need here to go into details. It is enough to conclude that in the tenth century there was not much difference in political strategies and in the status between these two states. The examination of following examples will reveal partner-style cooperation between the Piasts and the Árpáds and their comparable prestige. This will allow me later to present changes that appeared in the twelfth century.

The fate of the first marriage depicts this point clearly. Specifically, Bolesław I initially married a daughter of the margrave of Meissen. He was soon separated from her, however, and then took a Hungarian wife. Balzer supposed that the death of Margrave Rygdag and, consequently, the introduction of a new ruling family in Meissen, gave Mieszko I, the father of Bolesław I, a good reason to cancel the first marriage, because it was no longer politically profitable.<sup>19</sup> The second marriage of Bolesław I with an unknown Hungarian princess did not survive long, allegedly only two years. Following Balzer's argumentation, I would argue that this change was also due to political inefficiency, even though a son was born to Bolesław I. Interestingly, Balzer does not give any reasons for the cancellation of the marriage.<sup>20</sup> Neither did Stanisław Sroka, who simply declared that the reasons are not known.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, Marek Barański did not draw much attention to this marriage, concluding that the spouses split up very soon.<sup>22</sup> I would still agree with the explanation given by Gyula Kristó, who claimed that Bolesław I expected his marriage to result in support from Hungary against Bohemians, but he received none.<sup>23</sup> Maybe it was not Bolesław I

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<sup>19</sup> Balzer, *Genealogia*, 80.

<sup>20</sup> Ibidem, 81.

<sup>21</sup> *Piastowie*, 25.

<sup>22</sup> Barański, *Dynastia*, 61. Aleksander Gieysztor did not mention the marriage at all. See: idem, "Ukształtowanie się państwa polskiego od połowy IX w." [The Development of the Polish State from the Middle of the Tenth Century] *Historia Polski* [History of Poland], vol. 1, Ed. Henryk Łowmiański, (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1957), 165. Roman Grodecki, on the other hand, did not give any explanation, except for suggesting, that the Hungarian-Polish relations somehow dissolved: idem, "Dzieje Polski do r. 1194" [The History of Poland until 1194] *Dzieje Polski średniowiecznej* [The History of Medieval Poland], vol. 1 (Cracow: Platan, 1995) 77-78.

<sup>23</sup> Kristó, *Die Arpadendynastie*, 58. Györg Györffy argued similarly (idem, *König Stephan der Heilige*, 1988, 86-87). He also maintained that later, during the German-Polish war 1003-1018, Hungary stepped into the imperial camp. This, however, did not last long and he saw in Bezprim, a son of Bolesław I and the Hungarian princess, a man of reconciliation (ibidem, 167-169). Also Jerzy

himself but his father, Mieszko I, who was still in charge, but disappointment sounds credible. Around 987 the Polish duke fought the Bohemians and was victorious.<sup>24</sup> As a result he subjected Silesia and Little Poland with Cracow to his authority. Progressing along these lines, I suggest that Mieszko hoped to make friends with the Hungarians before entering into conflict with Bohemia. In such a case Bohemia could have been attacked from opposite sides. Furthermore, good relations with Hungary were crucial for Mieszko, because he knew that after a successful campaign his domain would reach the Hungarian border. Thus, Poland and Hungary became neighbors in 989-990,<sup>25</sup> i.e., surely after the dismissal of the Hungarian princess.

This case gives some clue to the character of the Hungarian-Polish relations in the tenth century. Firstly, the Piasts did not consider the Árpád house as prestigious. There is no account which mentions a Hungarian-Polish conflict due to the divorce. Seemingly, the Árpáds did not feel very offended.<sup>26</sup> Secondly, Piasts treated the Árpáds as partners with whom they could conduct common politics. But their importance was limited, thus a lack of cooperation compelled the Piasts to reconsider the alliance, which from Mieszko's perspective had been concluded for very real reasons.<sup>27</sup> Thirdly, even a first-born son did not prevent Bolesław I from sending his Hungarian wife back home. That additionally underlines the Piasts' very practical approach to their marital policy. Fourthly, Mieszko marched against Cracow and Bohemia without Hungarian reinforcements but with German acceptance. He

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Strzelczyk was convinced that the marriage was aimed against Bohemia; idem, *Mieszko Pierwszy* [Mieszko the First] (Poznań: Wydawnictwo WBP, 1999), 165-166.

<sup>24</sup> Tadeusz Manteuffel, *The Formation of the Polish State. The Period of Ducal Rule, 963-1194* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1982), 54.

<sup>25</sup> Barański, *Dynastia*, 55.

<sup>26</sup> But they could. Gallus Anonymous told a story about Bolesław I entering Kiev after its submission. According to Gallus, Bolesław I wanted to marry one of sisters of Jarosław of Kiev. The Ruthenian ruler refused and his decision was taken as an insult. Therefore, Bolesław I took her only once by force, while staying in Kiev, in order to pay back insult for insult. "When they asked the reason for this, he laughed gleefully and explained: 'Just as my sword pierces the Golden Gate [of Kiev – WK] of the city at this hour, so on the night to come the sister of this most cowardly king, whose hand had earlier been refused me, will be ravished. And she will not be joined to Bolesław as his lawful wife, but as his concubine and on one occasion only, that with this act the insult done to our people may be avenged, and shame and disgrace be brought upon the Ruthenians.' So said Bolesław, and what he said he did" – *Gesta Principum Polonorum. The Deeds of the Princes of the Poles*, Ed. Frank Schaer, (Budapest. New York: Central European University Press, 2003) (hereafter: *Gallus*), 43. See also Barański, *Dynastia*, 91-92.

<sup>27</sup> On the other hand, the Hungarians were genuinely interested in close and peaceful relations with Poland. I think that the peacekeeping policy of Géza, who focused mainly on consolidating his power in his realm, pushed him to conclude a marriage that aimed for long-lasting results. See: Kristó, *Die Arpadendynastie*, 58; Pál Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen* (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2001) (hereafter: Engel, *The Realm*), 26.

managed to achieve his political goals without Hungarian troops. On the whole, Hungary and Poland could live their lives separately, yet successfully.

The second quarter of the eleventh century was very demanding for Hungary and Poland. Emeric, a son of King Stephen and designated to inherit the crown of Hungary, died unexpectedly in 1031. The obvious heir would have been Stephen's cousin, Vazul, but the king decided differently. As a result, Vazul was blinded and his three sons fled to Poland.<sup>28</sup> In the meantime, the Polish King Mieszko II was forced to leave his country due to invasion led by Bezprim, Mieszko's older brother by a Hungarian princess, supported by the Ruthenians in 1031.<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, Bezprim was soon murdered and Mieszko II returned and set out to restore peace in a country in revolt. The fact of marriage between Béla, a son of Vazul, and a daughter of Mieszko II is generally accepted by historiography. Nonetheless, the devil is in the details. Following Balzer's convincing analysis, the date of this marriage should be put somewhere between 1039 and 1042.<sup>30</sup> The genealogical tables of *Lexikon* follow a similar pattern, by showing that both sons of Béla were born c. 1040.<sup>31</sup> On the other hand, Gyula Kristó made a more careful calculation and inserted the dates of birth of the sons "before 1048," i.e., before Béla finally returned to Hungary.<sup>32</sup> To make matters worse, I have to mention here that the 1030s in Poland were a difficult time, when the central administration ceased to exist and a significant part of the country rebelled and was submerged in civil war. Casimir, who ascended the Polish throne after Mieszko II's death in 1034, was expelled early in 1038 and took refuge in Hungary. Barański indicates that this was the only place which was not hostile towards Poland at the time, yet Casimir was arrested there by King Stephen, and released soon after the king's death.<sup>33</sup> It appears plausible to me that, although there was no open Hungarian-Polish conflict, Stephen did not like the fact that claimants to the Hungarian throne found shelter in Poland and married (or were about to marry) into the Piast family. Casimir managed to return to Cracow with German troops, probably in 1041.<sup>34</sup> Thus, I can hardly imagine the existence of a Polish state between 1038 and 1041. It would have been even more delicate to organize a dynastic

<sup>28</sup> Engel, *The Realm*, 28-29.

<sup>29</sup> Barański, *Dynastia*, 98.

<sup>30</sup> Balzer, *Genealogia*, 167.

<sup>31</sup> *Lexikon*, 62.

<sup>32</sup> Kristó, *Die Arpadendynastie*, Stammtafel II, 286-87. Pál Engel claims that Béla returned to Hungary "not long after Andrew's election to the kingship," which happened in 1046 (idem, *The Realm*, 30).

<sup>33</sup> Barański, *Dynastia*, 139.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*, 140.

marriage under such difficult conditions. Therefore, I would argue that the marriage in question happened around 1041-1042,<sup>35</sup> when Casimir restored his authority in Cracow and for the time being could look forward to further political development.

This discussion of the context of the second dynastic marriage had its reasons. Firstly, this marriage took place under very specific conditions. Casimir was just about to rebuild his country from the ashes and restore internal and external peace. He was not in the position of a powerful ruler, as Mieszko I was. Conversely, Béla was not the King of Hungary yet, and there were doubts if he ever would be.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, this marriage could not be perceived as comparable with the one of 986, but – intriguingly – both sides maintained a characteristic balance of power, even maybe with a slight advantage for the Polish duke. For that reason, I would strongly emphasize that in this case also the Hungarian party was of equal or even inferior status and a practical partnership was fully sustained. Secondly, Casimir's return to Cracow transferred the center of the Polish administration from Gniezno to the main stronghold in Little Poland. From then on, I believe, Hungarians considered Poland as a state with a capital in Cracow. This had mainly a geographical justification; however, future events show that the Hungarians were essentially interested in establishing good political contacts with someone in control of Cracow. This was later the case of Bolesław III the Wrymouth.

The decisions of the early 1040s had an important impact on Hungarian-Polish relations in the next several decades. My intention, however, is not to describe these relations in the second half of the twelfth century in detail, but to draw attention to few single matters, which additionally justify the early medieval Hungarian-Polish partnership. Basically, political conditions allowed Poland to compete with the Holy Roman Empire and Ruthenia to get a firm hold on Hungarian affairs. Andrew I, a brother of Béla I, and Andrew's son – Solomon, received support interchangeably either from Ruthenia or the Holy Roman Empire. Both of them were kings in their time and they both had to find a *modus vivendi* with the "Polish party," i.e., Béla I with his sons. The point is that the Andrew's party always sought help from the West

<sup>35</sup> See also a thorough discussion on the chronology of this marriage by Gerard Labuda, who also tended to date it for the time of Casimir: idem, *Mieszko II król Polski (1025-1034). Czasy przełomu w dziejach państwa polskiego* [Mieszko II King of Poland (1025-1034). The Turning Period in the History of the Polish State] (Cracow: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 1992), 174-183.

<sup>36</sup> The political winds of change blew in favour of Vazul's sons even in 1045. See: Kristó, *Die Arpadendynastie*, 86-89; Engel, *The Realm*, 29; László Kontler, *A history of Hungary : millennium in Central Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002) (hereafter: Kontler, *A History*), 60.

or from the Ruthenian dukes, whereas the Béla's party traditionally turned to the North. The marriage of Béla I itself was not the only reason for that. Béla I was baptized in Poland<sup>37</sup> and stayed there at least a few years. His sons, Géza and Ladislav, were born in Poland and spent their childhoods there.<sup>38</sup> Numerous interventions on behalf of Béla I<sup>39</sup> and his family were generally successful and considerably helped Béla I, Géza I, and Ladislav I to obtain the Hungarian throne. Consequently, using modern political terminology, I would say that Poles had "their" three Hungarian kings. Moreover, one of them was remembered as a saintly ruler and was later canonized. They ruled altogether nearly twenty-five years. Poland "specialized" in such Hungarian interventions. Coloman sought help there, too.<sup>40</sup> At the beginning of the twelfth century Álmos, a younger brother of Coloman, received troops against the latter.<sup>41</sup> On the other hand, the Hungarian military used to provide help to the Polish rulers against their subjects if they revolted.<sup>42</sup>

The Hungarian-Polish relations under Bolesław III the Wrymouth are often explained only with political references. I would like to underline here geopolitical matters, which apparently were crucial. Barański concluded that during fights for the Hungarian throne in the turn of twelfth century, the specific net of alliances in Central Europe was developed and hence used to reappear continuously. The Hungarian-Polish alliance was then generally aimed against the Empire and served both parties to maintain sovereignty. Bohemians searched for a best place among the emperor's vassals and constantly stuck to a German camp.<sup>43</sup> I agree with this opinion making, however, some additions. Márta Font stated:

<sup>37</sup> Márta Font, *Coloman the Learned, king of Hungary* (Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 2001) (hereafter: Font, *Coloman*) 11. See also: Kristó, *Die Arpadendynastie*, 92.

<sup>38</sup> Gallus Anonymus put the following into the mouth of the Polish king Bolesław II: "I was this person's [i.e. Ladislav – WK] guardian in Poland ... I raised him, I installed him as king in Hungary" – *Gallus*, 99. Márta Font accepted this account (idem, *Coloman*, 12).

<sup>39</sup> According to the picturesque description of Z. J. Kosztolnyik, Béla I could even have asked for support "just in case" and would have been granted. "Bela fled the country for the court of his Polish father-in-law [Bolesław II was not his father-in-law – WK], and returned to Hungary with three Polish army divisions ... Probably, what happened was that Bela went to Poland to stay away from politics at home; he did not want to get involved in the new Hungaro-German political situation that must have been very much in flux at this time. And yet, he wished to be prepared for any possible German reaction and political-military development in Hungary. Upon his return home, Bela remained in his own territory, the princely-one-third, with the Polish forces under his direct command." – Z. J. Kosztolnyik, *Five Eleventh-Century Hungarian Kings: Their policies and their Relations with Rome* (Boulder: East European Quarterly, 1981) (hereafter: Kosztolnyik, *Five*), 76.

<sup>40</sup> Font, *Coloman*, 16.

<sup>41</sup> Ibidem, 22-23. See also Kristó, *Die Arpadendynastie*, 114.

<sup>42</sup> Kristó, *Die Arpadendynastie*, 109, 114.

<sup>43</sup> Barański, *Dynastia*, 149.

The history of Hungary and Poland in the beginning of the twelfth century seems to have similarities. In the turn of this century there were also two brothers who fought for power. Here, Coloman and Álmos; there, Bolesław and Zbigniew. ... Coloman's family always had good relations with Poland, his grandmother was Polish and his father was born in Poland. In Álmos and Coloman's discord the sympathy of the Polish rulers did not appear unambiguously. Coloman, aspiring to power against Álmos in 1095, got asylum in Poland, but once Álmos also got help and so could capture Abaújvár. Bolesław and Coloman's good relations were probably based when they met personally. Bolesław's sympathy extended to Coloman's descendents as well.<sup>44</sup>

Stanisław Szczur pointed out that close relations between Bolesław III and Coloman were not only due to the Bohemians. Bolesław III looked for an intercessor in his contacts with Ruthenians. In this case Coloman, whose second wife was a daughter of the grand duke of Kiev, could have been very supportive.<sup>45</sup> I would add two other things. Firstly, both sides acted here as equal partners. Possibly the Polish party was more militarily involved, especially in the second half of the eleventh century, but the balance of power and political status was still preserved, although Hungary was permanently a kingdom, whereas Poland lost its royal dignity. The Polish principality, united under the command of a single duke, could still have been seen as a serious partner. In my opinion, next decades of the twelfth century witnessed a drastic change in this outlook. I will turn to that immediately. Secondly, in the beginning of the twelfth century the Hungarians established good relations with Bolesław III, yet not with Zbigniew. Despite the fact that Zbigniew was appointed as overlord and had superior power over Bolesław III, Hungary cooperated constantly with Bolesław III and even sent troops to support him against his older brother. The reasons for that are plentiful. The first is that Zbigniew was in the Germans' camp with all its negative consequences for Hungary. I would, however, underline another issue, namely, Bolesław III from the very beginning, i.e., 1102, was ruling southern Poland – Little Poland and Silesia.<sup>46</sup> As ruler of Cracow, his way to Hungary stood open because he was *de facto* the neighbor of the Árpáds' domain. Zbigniew governed the North, so, apparently, geography played a vital role here.

The third dynastic marriage, between Mieszko the Old, the third son of Bolesław III, and Elisabeth, a daughter of Béla II, was concluded before 1140,

<sup>44</sup> Font, *Coloman*, 72-73.

<sup>45</sup> Stanisław Szczur, *Historia Polski. Średniowiecze* (History of Poland. Middle Ages) (Cracow: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2006) (hereafter: Szczur, *Historia*), 124.

<sup>46</sup> Barański, *Dynastia*, 189.

supposedly between 1136 and 1138.<sup>47</sup> This marriage was a result of reconciliation between the Hungarian and Polish rulers, who came into conflict at the beginning of the 1130s due to another fight for the Hungarian throne.<sup>48</sup> Bolesław III supported Boris against Béla II and eventually lost. In tough political circumstances the Polish ruler had to make peace with Hungarians. For Krzysztof Ożóg the marriage was clear evidence of an attempt to establish friendly relations.<sup>49</sup> Barański, on the other hand, confused Álmos with Béla II, but suggested that the marriage of Mieszko the Old was basically to secure Béla II from his older brother, Władysław.<sup>50</sup> Interestingly, according to the Polish annuals quoted by Andrzej Marzec,<sup>51</sup> originally there was a plan for a double marriage, i.e., Judith, a daughter of Bolesław III, was meant to marry the oldest son of Béla II – Géza II. Marzec believes that the engagement took place, but both children were too small and the ceremony was postponed. In the meantime the idea was dropped and the marriage was cancelled.<sup>52</sup> I think this happened after 1141 when the architects of this double-marriage concept had already died.

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<sup>47</sup> *Piastowie*, 107.

<sup>48</sup> The scenario of this Polish intervention looked very similar to the previous ones. Some malcontents, unhappy with the ascension of Béla II to the throne, called for Boris and asked Bolesław III to support him (Kristó, *Die Arpadendynastie*, 138). Barański explains that Bolesław had no option at the time and being politically constrained he had to go to war for Boris. Barański also concludes that Boris was not popular with the Hungarian nobility and had few followers (Barański, *Dynastia*, 189). Kosztolnyik argued the opposite – idem., *From Coloman the Learned to Béla III, 1095-1196: Hungarian Domestic Policies and their Impact upon Foreign Affairs*. (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1987) (hereafter: Kosztolnyik, *From*) 102-106. He draws an interesting picture of Hungarian nobility, divided in two camps, who were doing the real politics in the kingdom. Therefore, Boris had plenty of supporters, who only abandoned him later and joined Béla II and his retinue. Moreover, then they dispatched an envoy to Bolesław III, asking him to give up Boris' case and withdraw. He did not, but what is the most intriguing here is how the Polish duke was perceived. Kosztolnyik wrote: "They [the barons – WK] had dispatched a delegation not to Boris, but to the commander of the Polish and Ruthenian troops who supported Boris, to let the commander know that they: the barons, had favoured their king who alone held the right to the Crown ... they had warned him that they would regard him as a traitor, too, to their country's just case" (Kosztolnyik, *From*, 104). This seems to mean that for the barons the Polish duke was within his rights to support a candidate for the throne as long as they wished it, and marching with an army into the kingdom was not considered an act of war. Once they changed their minds, they expected the same from Bolesław III. This gives, in my opinion, a taste of the specific attitude that Hungarians expressed towards their northern neighbor.

<sup>49</sup> *Piastowie*, 107.

<sup>50</sup> Barański, *Dynastia*, 218, 220. According to the last will of Bolesław III, Władysław was supposed to take charge of the whole country, which, however, was destined to be divided into princely districts, ascribed to the every male descendant of Bolesław III. Barański claims that Władysław, as a senior ruler, would have had too much power and could have encroached on his brothers' autonomy. Thus, the marriage of Mieszko the Old was meant to prevent this.

<sup>51</sup> *Piastowie*, 98.

<sup>52</sup> It is interesting that Kristó did not mention a word about these Hungarian-Polish negotiations and Elisabeth was omitted in a display on the genealogical tables in his book. See: Kristó, *Die Arpadendynastie*, 138-140, Stammtafel III 288-89.

The marriage of Mieszko the Old, however neglected by general textbooks, buttresses my fundamental argument that for first two hundred years of common history, Hungary and Poland acted as equal political partners. Furthermore, unlike in the thirteenth century, the status of the Piasts and Árpáds was comparable, nevertheless, what I want to stress here is that Poland functioned for a hundred years as an active contributor to Hungarian domestic affairs, and – what is more – was a successful king-maker.

In addition, in order to make my whole argument stronger, I will develop the issue of the double marriage concluded by Bolesław III and Béla II in c. 1136. The oldest son of Béla II, and therefore an heir to the Hungarian crown, was about to marry one of the Bolesław's daughters. At the same time, Mieszko the Old, the third son of Bolesław III and an heir to Great Poland,<sup>53</sup> and – according to the last will of his father – the future senior duke of Poland, married Elisabeth, one of Béla's two daughters. The second daughter was offered to Henry, a son of the German king Konrad III, in 1139. This marriage, however, did not take place.<sup>54</sup> Around a hundred thirty years later, in 1269-1270, the famous double marriage between the House of Anjou and Árpád was concluded.

Some historians automatically treat a double royal marriage as a pact of succession. Undoubtedly, that was how Angevins perceived the alliance of 1270 and eventually they won the Hungarian crown for themselves. Comparing these two attempts at double marriage (concluded or not) is useful, because it is a material demonstration of relationship building among the highest royal families. The notion of succession that seems to have emerged during the Bolesław III's and Béla II's negotiations c. 1136 is a final demonstration that these dynasties were rather close to each other at that time and respected and perceived themselves as equals.

This, however, changed soon. During the second half of the twelfth century both states drifted apart. Whereas Hungary was rising in power, Poland pulled back to more local politics.<sup>55</sup> This can be seen clearly by examining the dynastic horizons of these two countries, which will be the subject of the chapter II.

<sup>53</sup> Or at least an heir of western Great Poland with Poznań. See: Barański, *Dynastia*, 219.

<sup>54</sup> Kristó, *Die Arpadendynastie*, 139-140.

<sup>55</sup> The death of Bolesław III, in 1138, was a turning point in the Polish medieval history. According to his last will the Polish duchy was divided into smaller districts (principalities). This political move was above all aimed to introduce a system that would secure a share of power for each of Bolesław's sons and prevent them from fighting with each other immediately after the father's death. The seniorial system, as it has been later called by historians, measured out of the regions of Poland a central district



At the beginning of this chapter I set out to demonstrate the main features of the dynastic relations between the Piasts and Árpáds until the death of Bolesław III. During my research, the following statements have found justification. Firstly, the Piast and the Árpáds perceived each other as of similar status. The marriages of that time show patterns, which suggest that relations with the Hungarians had little prestige for the Piasts, but were useful and possibly beneficial. Both dynasties could run their politics separately, yet successfully. This was mainly the case of marriage in the tenth century, but it did not much change in the eleventh century. The marriage of an unnamed daughter of Mieszko II to Béla I happened around 1041-1042 under very specific political conditions, when Casimir I, a brother of the bride, was just restoring his power in Poland and Béla I was in exile at the Casimir's court. Therefore, in this case, too, the balance of power was sustained. Such a cooperation of comparable powers was strengthened by a common threat, i.e. the expansion of the Holy Roman Empire and Bohemia, which was under imperial influence. Close political ties further developed in the second half of the eleventh century, when Poland was very active in fights for the throne in Hungary. There was also a geographical factor that had an impact on Hungarian-Polish relations. As the example of Bolesław III revealed, for the Árpáds the natural political partner was the one who ruled Cracow, because his domain was directly adjacent to the Hungarian border. The prospective double marriage of 1136-38 that could possibly indicate a succession pact is the final argument for my reasoning. Such a pact, however, was never acted on, but its traces emphasize the practical equality of the Piasts and the Árpáds.

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(the land of Cracow and the Gdańsk Pomerania) and other districts (Great Poland, Mazovia, Silesia, the land of Sandomierz) and each of them was supposed to be inherited by a son of Boleslaw and, subsequently, his future heirs. The central district was meant to be ruled by the oldest son (later, the oldest representative of the Piast dynasty) and he was expected to supervise his younger brothers/relatives and to oversee interests of the whole Poland.

## Chapter II: Dynastic horizons of the Árpáds and Piasts, 1150-1250

A discussion of the dynastic horizons of Árpáds and Piasts should be preceded by short presentations of the general development that affected Hungary and Poland before the beginning of the thirteenth century. Outlining these features will allow better understanding of the material I will present below. Patterns of dynastic interests embedded in both royal houses – especially the scale and range of dynastic marriages – will be easier to understand once some background data is presented.

At the turn of the twelfth century in Hungary finally consolidated the kingdom after several decades of wavering conditions. The long reigns of Ladislas I (1077-1095) and Coloman (1095-1116) resulted in the unification of the legal system and securing a privileged position for the Roman Church. Hungary confirmed its will for an independent existence and, subsequently, initiated expansion towards the Dalmatian coast – a clear sign of solid integrity. Croatia and Dalmatia were annexed in 1091.<sup>56</sup> László Kontler has nicely presented the further development of Hungary in the twelfth century.<sup>57</sup> I will summarize it in a few sentences. The Kingdom of Hungary experienced a significant developmental leap over the twelfth century. This was due to the acquisition of Western models and living standards. The Roman Church won extra privileges, its domains spread throughout the country and many monastic foundations took place.<sup>58</sup> This was accompanied by intellectual and cultural development that naturally enhanced the organizational levels of state administration, and had a serious impact on social, tax and legal systems. Pál Engel pointed out the importance of Western immigration that started in the middle of the twelfth century. A good number of Walloons, Saxons, and other Germans came, mainly to the under-

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<sup>56</sup> This date could be, however, moved forward to 1102, when Coloman crowned himself king of Croatia and from then on he called himself *rex Hungariae, Croatiae et Dalmatiae*. See: Engel, *The Realm*, 35-36. Similar chronology: John V. A. Fine, Jr. *The Early Medieval Balkans. A Critical Survey from the Sixth to the Late Twelfth Century* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991) (hereafter: Fine, *The Early*), 234.

<sup>57</sup> Kontler, *A History*, 72-75.

<sup>58</sup> Throughout the twelfth century newly formed orders – Premonstratentians and Cistercians – settled in Hungary, and made great contributions to the general development of the country. Hospitallers and Templars also arrived at this time. See: Kristó, *Die Arpadendynastie*, 168. For further reading see also: Louis J. Lekai, *The Cistercians. Ideals and Reality* (Kent: The Kent State University Press, 1989); Ciszterciek [The Cistercians] (Budapest: Mikes Kiadó, 1997); Ferenc L. Hervay, *Repertorium Historicum Ordinis Cisterciensis in Hungaria* (Roma: 1984).

populated northern parts of the kingdom, and established their settlements there emulating the urban organization of their places of origin.<sup>59</sup>

This unprecedented prosperity of Hungary was immediately reflected in politics. Kontler distinguishes three main aspects of Hungarian foreign policy in the twelfth century: an expansion towards Dalmatia and building proper relations with two bordering empires – the Holy Roman Empire and Byzantium.<sup>60</sup> I would add here a rising interest in the south Ruthenian affairs that engaged the Hungarian kings, especially at the turn of the thirteenth century. For most of the twelfth century, however, southern and southwestern matters dominated Hungarian politics. The north, for the time being, lost its practical attractiveness for Hungary. This would, I think, explain the nearly hundred-year-long break in royal marriages, which I have presented above. Here I would point out that the marriage of 1214 was mainly due to revived Hungarian interest in Ruthenia, and specifically in this sense was concluded with the Polish party “by chance.” The marriage of Bolesław the Shy to Kinga in 1239 was a very different story.

My general impression is, however, that whereas Poland, from the tenth to the first half of the twelfth century, could afford a significant expansion program (Lusatian Mark, Meissen, Moravia, Pomerania, and western Ruthenia, Silesia), Hungary did the opposite – after the battle of Augsburg in 955 the country was mainly preoccupied with securing its survival between two larger empires. In this sense, the decline of Polish power over the twelfth century was counterbalanced by the simultaneous growth of Hungary. Thus, after the death of Stephen I (1038) any expansion was limited by domestic quarrels, which lasted nearly until the end of the eleventh century. At that time Hungary, to a certain degree, managed to restore internal peace, and immediately undertook a program of domination in the region. For that reason also the reign of Béla III (1172-1196) is claimed as the most prosperous and powerful period in the whole Árpádan era.<sup>61</sup> Previously, however, the continuing tensions on the Byzantine-Hungarian line, especially concerning the Serbian territories, resulted in numerable military conflicts.<sup>62</sup> This stormy relationship pushed Hungarians into the Serbs and made the Hungarians communicate with the Normans in Italy, who were endangered by the vast political ambitions of the Byzantine

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<sup>59</sup> Engel, *The Realm*, 61.

<sup>60</sup> Kontler, *A History*, 74.

<sup>61</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>62</sup> For short but telling introduction to this matter see: Fine, *The Early*, 234-247.

emperor Manuel Comnenos (1143-1180). This alliance prevented the emperor from invading Italy and forced him to focus on Balkan affairs. Before his death Hungary suffered several military losses and, consequently, allowed Byzantium to interfere in its domestic politics. Manuel hosted expelled candidates to the Hungarian throne, similarly to the Piasts in the previous century. Moreover, the emperor directly imposed King Stephen IV, who ruled for a short time. Nevertheless, the repeatedly beaten Hungary did not have to submit to Byzantium. Hence, I would argue that its political power was preserved, which John Fine concluded as follows:

Over next twenty years [c. 1150-1170 – WK], however, there were to be ten Byzantine campaigns against Hungary. As a result of them Manuel was able to keep the Hungarian advance into the Balkans under control but it was at the expense of his goals against the Normans in Italy.<sup>63</sup>

Later, however, Manuel introduced a new political strategy. Namely, he agreed with Stephen III that Béla, a possible successor to the Hungarian throne in case Stephen III had died childless, would inherit Hungary. In addition, Manuel officially engaged Béla to his daughter Maria, perceiving him as a future heir to Byzantium as well. Béla eventually did not become an emperor, because a long-awaited son was born to Manuel. Nonetheless, after Stephen III had passed away, Béla was escorted by the Byzantine troops to the Hungarian border and, subsequently, he was accompanied by Hungarians, who accepted him as a ruler without much protest.<sup>64</sup>

Poland, in contrast, lost its former significance by the turn of the thirteenth century. From the political point of view, which is critical here, the Polish state was transformed from a unified and centrally governed duchy/kingdom<sup>65</sup> to a group of autonomous principalities which were ruled by a growing number of Piasts. Such a division into smaller political entities was not extraordinary in that time and similar processes happened in the Holy Roman Empire and Ruthenia. The very fact that the Grand Duchy of Kiev lost its leading role due to such internal partitions resulted in emergence of the Halich and Lodomer principalities, which shortly became very seductive for both Hungary and Poland. During the first decades after the death of Bolesław III (1138) the central administration was sustained and the districts/duchies,

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<sup>63</sup> Fine, *The Early*, 238.

<sup>64</sup> Ibidem, 243. Gyula Kristó saw the ascension of Béla to the Hungarian throne as difficult but, he admitted there is no direct source evidence concerning Géza's, his plausible opponent, claims to throne. Kristó, *Die Arpadendynastie*, 150-151.

<sup>65</sup> From the middle of the tenth century until 1138 there were only three Polish kings: Bolesław I the Brave, Mieszko II, and Bolesław II. Other rulers, including Bolesław III the Wrymouth, were recognized as dukes of Poland.

despite some difficulties, did not evolve into independent principalities.<sup>66</sup> The hereditary system that Bolesław III introduced in his so-called “last will” was soon violated, however, when Władisław, the oldest son (senior) of Bolesław III, was expelled, and the second heir, Bolesław Kędzierzawy (the Curled Hair), took his place and ruled over his brothers for nearly thirty years, according to his father’s wish. Bolesław’s death in 1173 left Poland unified, yet on the verge of eruption. His younger brothers soon clashed. The mentality within dynasty also changed and principalities became perceived as hereditary domains.<sup>67</sup> Consequently, Poland lost even its formal unity. From 1181 Mieszko the Old and Casimir the Just held the superior power. Such tensions enabled, e.g., Silesia to win *de facto* autonomy. Thus, the late twelfth century witnessed a further disintegration of the principalities, partially due to the growing number of male heirs and partially due to clashes among them. There were also some centrifugal forces that speeded up the process of multiplying duchies. Firstly, a single duke wanted to maintain his domain and enlarge it.<sup>68</sup> Also, local elites were deeply interested in further divisions because they saw their chance for social promotion by gathering around their own duke. Any central administration was disliked, for it bore profits mainly to the elites of the “capital” land, which in practice was the land of Cracow.<sup>69</sup> Nevertheless, the idea of Polish unity did not disappear. All dukes remembered that once Poland was one entity, a kingdom, and many of them focused their political ambitions on securing power over Cracow. A residence in Cracow was always considered a step towards overlordship and an attempt to call oneself *primus inter pares*. Hence, whereas Hungary was waging war with Byzantium, establishing overseas alliances with the Normans, and building up its position of a regional Balkan superpower, Poland’s ambitions had to be confined to very local initiatives.

Summarizing the main political events and developments in the second half of the twelfth century has revealed this big picture. Now I will compare and contrast these parallel political evolutions with the dynastic horizons of the Árpáds and the Piasts, which, I think, strongly differentiated these houses until the middle of the thirteenth century.

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<sup>66</sup> Barański, *Dynastia*, 232.

<sup>67</sup> Ibidem, 233.

<sup>68</sup> Ibidem, 302.

<sup>69</sup> Ibidem, 296.

## Methodological remarks

The following discussion relies on a database, which I have created using already published genealogical material. For the Polish figures I used mainly *Piastowie. Leksykon biograficzny*, which summarizes the up-to-date status of scholarly research.<sup>70</sup> I collected the data concerning the Árpáds from the genealogical tables published in *Lexikon*.<sup>71</sup> For any uncertain figures I also referred to the genealogical tables available in the last volume of the *Lexikon des Mittelalters*.<sup>72</sup> My main goal was to gather all the marriages that were concluded (thus, engagement alone was not enough) within both dynasties in roughly the period 1150 to 1250. I believe that such a database reveals some interesting trends in the marital policy of both houses and will allow me to put the marriages of 1239 and 1256 in their appropriate contexts.

Nevertheless, before getting to results of my survey, I describe the methodology I have applied. Firstly, the term “marriage” should be elaborated here by a small addition to its natural understanding. In case of the Piasts who married other members of the dynasty, for the sake of statistical convenience and in order to keep the same standards for all figures in the database, a Piast-Piast marriage meant statistically two separate marriages, because it expressed a dynastic horizon of two parties, no matter that both of them originated from the same dynasty. Similarly, all Hungarian-Polish marriages were counted twice in order to support two different perspectives, the Piasts’ and the Árpáds’. Secondly, I introduced several terms to describe the database. The term “direction” is crucial for the whole research. This term gives a general impression of the marital objectives, i.e., what sort of political units were addressees of the dynastic efforts of the Piasts and the Árpáds. The “direction” was treated here somewhat superficially, but I found it necessary to obtain useful statistical data. “Empire” embraces all relations with the German-speaking and formal subjects of the Holy Roman Empire. “Byzantium” refers to all relations that concerned Hungarian Balkan-Byzantium politics.<sup>73</sup> “Ruthenia” took a broad meaning

<sup>70</sup> For clear reference I am giving here again the full bibliographic description of this work: *Piastowie. Leksykon biograficzny* [Piasts. Biographic Lexicon], ed. Stanisław Szczur, Krzysztof Ozóg (Cracow: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1999).

<sup>71</sup> *Lexikon*, 61-65.

<sup>72</sup> *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, ed. Robert Auty ... et al. (Munich: Artemis-Verlag, 1991-1999), vol. 9.

<sup>73</sup> While I was finishing this study, Manikowska pointed out that the category “Byzantium” should not be treated equally with the category “Empire” and marriages, which took place after the Fourth Crusade should get their own category “Crusade”. This category would include the marriages with the rulers, who emerged after the Byzantium proper was conquered by Latins. I agree that this

likewise. I distinguished the “Empire,” however, from the term “Bohemia,” because this was a neighboring state and therefore it played a special role in the politics of Hungary and Poland. For the same reason, during the more detailed interpretation of the data, I decided to dismember the “empire” into smaller entities to recognize the leading trends.

The whole database comprises eighty-five marriages, which happened approximately in the period 1150 to 1250. The choice criteria were based on the following factors: First, I set up a universal chronology. The starting point was the death of Bolesław III the Wrymouth in 1138, and the end point was 1256, i.e., the marriage of Bolesław the Pious with the Hungarian princess, Jolanta. The reasons for this chronology were discussed at the beginning of the previous chapter. This was, however, not enough for approaching the data accurately; therefore, I also created relative chronology, which was essentially based on a system of generations. I defined five parallel generations of the Piasts and the Árpáds, which formed the core of my interpretation.

A generation was constructed on the following basis: I distinguished a ‘zero’ generation that included two main figures – Bolesław III, duke of Poland and Béla II, king of Hungary. Although there was a twenty-year-long break between them,<sup>74</sup> the marriages of their children took place in the 1130s at earliest. This was the case of the children of Béla II and of the children Bolesław III, which, however, were born from his second marriage to Salomea. His descendants from the first marriage – Wladislas I and Ryksa – I have included to the ‘zero’ generation because the former was three years older than Béla II (b. 1108), and the latter (b. 1116) was between Béla II and Bolesław the Curled Hair (b. 1121/22), the oldest son of Bolesław III by his wife Salomea. Thus, I considered here two main factors supporting this particular order: 1) the level of descent in reference to the ‘zero’ generation; and 2) the relative closeness of dates of birth. Other factors, like the dates of marriages, cannot be used here because some people married several times over decades or some of them were engaged in their early years (and married later). It would be problematic, therefore, to consider all the exceptions and specific cases that appeared over a century of dynastic

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categorization has a strong justification and I am grateful for this suggestion. I would argue, however, that in the very case of this study, where I am mainly looking for a big picture, and I have differentiated between the Northern and the Balkan politics of Hungary, the category “Byzantium” plays a role of the indicator of the geopolitical sphere of the Hungarian interests. I absolutely agree that in a more detailed study such a generalization cannot be accepted.

<sup>74</sup> Bolesław III was born in 1086, while Béla II was born in 1108.

marriages. I am completely aware that my statistical analysis, applied to human behavior, has suffered several drawbacks. Statistical data, nevertheless, is useful to track trends and reveal the big picture of a given process. The first marriages included in the database were contracted in 1136-1138, whereas the last ones took place in 1259 (in the Piasts' case) and in 1264 (in the Árpáds' case). I violated a universal chronology a little by ignoring the marriage of Kinga and Přemysl Otokar II in 1261. The reason is that Kinga was a daughter of Anna and a granddaughter of Béla IV, i.e., according to my relative chronology, I should have assigned her to the sixth generation, which at this stage was not a part of my research.



## Analysis of the data

My basic aim in this discussion is to reconstruct the dynastic horizons of the Árpáds and the Piasts. Secondly, I will compare both houses within a generation in a search for both common and distinctive features. Thirdly, I am summarizing the data in total to get a big picture of the whole period. Finally, I will introduce the term of “prestigious marriage” and make a comparison to see which of the two dynasties married more prominently.

Legend	
c.	circa
?	no data
<1200	before
1200<	after
1208?	dubious
1222/25	between
1271↓	death

## GENERATION I

Range of births: **1121-1138**. Range of marriages: **1136-1161**.

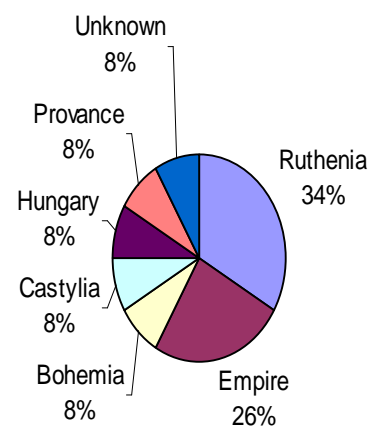
Name	Life dates	Marriage partner	Father/Dynasty	Date of marriage	Direction
Bolesław I the Tall	1127-1201	Zwienisława	Ruthenian duke	?	Ruthenia
		Krystyna	dynasty of lower wealth in Empire	?	Empire
Ryksa	1126-1156	Alfons VII, king of Castile		1152	Castile
		Raimund II Berenger, duke of Provance		1161	Provance
Bolesław the Curly Haired	1121/22-1173	Wierzchosława	Wszewołod, duke of Novgorod	1136	Ruthenia
		Mary	?	c. 1160	?
Mieszko the Old	1122/25-1202	Elisabeth	Béla II Árpád	1136-38	Hungary
		Eudoksja	Izasław Monomach, grand duke of Kiev	1150-54	Ruthenia
Dobroniega Ludgarda	1128/35-1160	Dytryk	son of margrave of Meissen	end c. 1150	Empire Meissen
Judith	1130/35-1171/75	Otto	Albrecht the Bear, mrg. of Brandenburg	1148	Empire Brandenburg
Agnes	1137-1182<	Mścisław	Izasław Monomach, grand duke of Kiev	<1151	Ruthenia
Casimir the Just	1138-1194	Helen	Conrad II Přemyslid, duke of Znojmo	1161<	Bohemia

## Árpáds

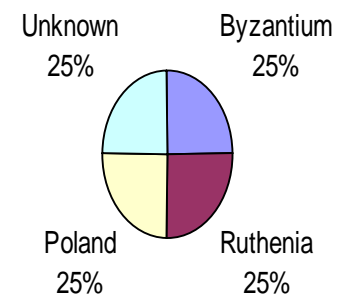
Name	Life Dates	Marriage partner	Father/Dynasty	Date of marriage	Direction
Géza II	1130-1162	Eufrosina	Mścisław Monomach, grand duke of Kiev	c. 1146	Ruthenia
Ladislav II	1131-1163	?			
Stephen IV	1133-1165	Mary	princess from Byzantium	?	Byzantium
Elisabeth	?	Mieszko the Old	Bolesław III the Wrymouth of Poland	1136-1138	Poland

**Figure 1. Table showing dynastic marriages in the first generation.**

# Piasts I generation 12 marriages



# Árpáds I generation 4 marriages



The first generation comprised twelve people, eight Piasts and four Árpáds. All the Piasts, except for Bolesław the Tall and Ryksa, were the descendants of Bolesław III from his second marriage to Salomea, a daughter of Henry of Berg. Bolesław the Tall was the oldest son of Wladislas I, i.e., of the first-born son of Bolesław III. Ryksa was Bolesław the Tall's sister. On the Árpád side, only children of Béla II who got married are part of this study. The number of Piasts had three times as many marriages as the Árpáds. The diagram "Piasts I Generation" shows that their marital policy at that time presented an interesting variety of choices. Two-thirds of the Piasts' marriages linked them to their closest neighbors. This reveals their regionally centered spectrum. Nevertheless, these numbers change significantly if I remove very prestigious marriages of Ryksa. She was a distant relative of the emperor and therefore, an inviting party. Probably she left Poland in 1146 with her father, who was forced to seek refuge at the imperial court. There the emperor engaged her to the king of Castile. Hence, omitting Ryksa's spouses, the Piasts' dynastic horizon is confined to only neighboring countries, mainly Ruthenia (40%) and the Holy Roman Empire (30%). Two of the marriages arranged by the emperor were concluded, however, with possible political partners whose domains were located near the Piast territories. This fact underlines importance of east-west relations. At the same time, the Árpáds evidently married their north-south neighbors. Taking into consideration that in Hungary the period from 1140 to 1170 was a time of Byzantine domination,<sup>75</sup> apparently only a Polish marriage was free of Byzantine influence. I would imagine, however, that the Ruthenian direction was meant to counterbalance a growing pressure from the south. There is no doubt that marriage to a Byzantine princess was a part of the imperial policy towards Hungary. Not going into details, the available data strongly suggest that in the first generation both dynasties were content to enter into marital contracts with their immediate neighbors. In conclusion, I would argue that there was not much difference between the dynastic horizons of the Árpáds and the Piasts.

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<sup>75</sup> I would like to express my gratitude here to Professor József Laszlovszky, who drew my attention to this period and called it the era of Byzantine domination.

## GENERATION II

Range of births: **1145-1159**. Range of marriages: **1157-1189**.

### Piasts

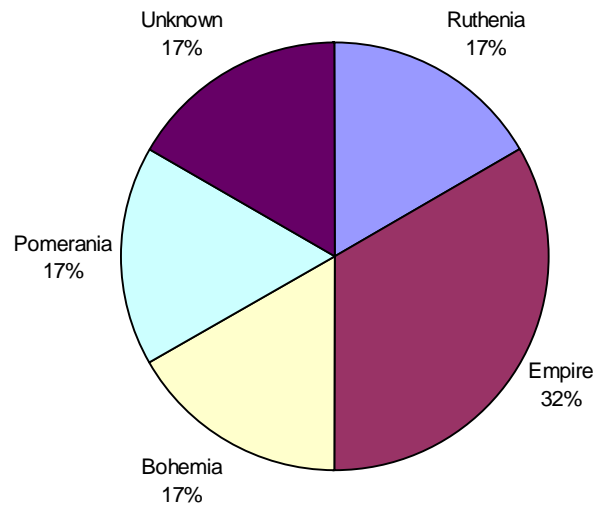
Name	Life dates	Marriage partner	Father/Dynasty	Date of marriage	Direction	
Odon	1145-1194	Wyszczława	Jarosław Ośmiomysł, duke of Halich	c. 1180	Ruthenia	
Wierzchosława-Ludmiła	<1152-1223	Frederick I of Bitsch	Mathew I, duke of Lotharingia	c. 1166	Empire	Lotharingia
Judith	<1154-1201	Bernard III of Anhalt	Albrecht the Bear, mrg. Of Brandenburg	c. 1173-1177	Empire	Brandenburg
Elisabeth	c. 1152-1209	Sobiesław II, duke of Olomunc	Přemyslids	c. 1173/4	Bohemia	
Bolesław	1159-1195	Dobrosława	Pomerania: Dymin or West Pomerania	1180/1 or 1187/9	Pomerania	
Mieszko I Płatonogi	<1146-1211	Ludmiła	?		?	

### Árpáds

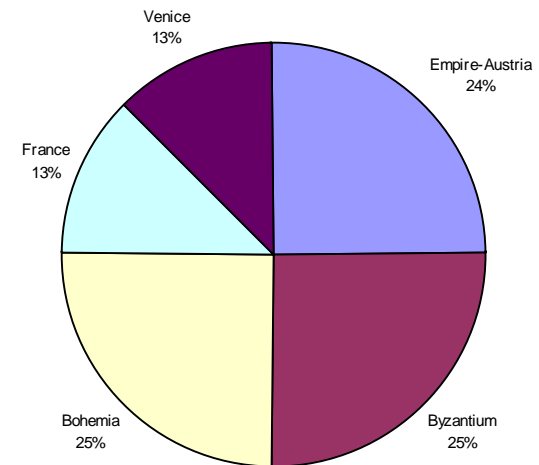
Name	Life Dates	Marriage partner	Father/Dynasty	Date of marriage	Direction	
Stephen III	1147-1172	Agnes	Henry II Babenberg of Austria	1166	Empire	Austria
Béla III	1148-1196	Anna Chatillon	Konstanze, duchess of Antioch	1170	Byzantium	Antioch
		Margaret Capet	Louis VII, king of France	1186	France	
Géza	1150-1210	?	princess from Byzantium	?	Byzantium	
Elisabeth	1189↓	Frederick, duke of Bohemia	Přemyslids	c. 1157	Bohemia	
Odola	?	Świętopełk	Wladislas II, king of Bohemia	1164	Bohemia	
Ilona	1199↓	Leopold V, duke of Austria	Babenberg	1174	Empire	Austria
Mary	?	Nicolaus	Michiele Vitale II, Venetian doge	1167	Venice	

**Figure 2. Table showing dynastic marriages in the second generation.**

Piasts  
II generation  
6 marriages



Árpáds  
II generation  
8 marriages



The second generation embraced six Piasts (five of them were children of Mieszko the Old of Great Poland, and one, Mieszko I Płatonogi, originated from Silesia) and seven Árpáds (all children of Géza II, except for Mary who was a daughter of Wladislas II). The marital politics of Mieszko the Old continued the patterns of the previous generation. He married his children to the closest neighbors to his Great Poland domain – Brandenburg and Pomerania. His relations with Bohemia and Halich could also be understood as a part of his Little Poland politics, where he was partly successful in attempting to secure his power. This regionally centered spectrum was interrupted only once through a marriage with the family of the Lotharingian dukes. Mieszko the Old secured his domain by marriages to the north, west, southwest and southeast. No data about the marriage of Mieszko I Płatonogi suggests that this was not a prestigious relationship. The general pattern of the Piasts' nuptial horizon, therefore, emulated the first generation, unlike the Árpáds, who effectively attempted to step into broader European politics. Statistically, the only direction that repeated after the first generation was Byzantium; however, in political matters these marriages are hardly comparable. The dynastic interests shifted from the northern and northeastern borders to the northwest: the Babenbergs and Přemyslids. These two directions reflected also a regionally centered spectrum like the Piasts, but with marriage-contracting partners who were more esteemed. Furthermore, whereas Mieszko the Old's dynastic range reached as far as the court of the Lotharinian dukes, Béla III first attempted to enter the English court but finally received a daughter of the king of France. This significantly expanded the dynastic horizon of the Hungarian house. A marriage to a Venetian doge revealed growing Hungarian interests in the Dalmatian coast. Thus, the Árpáds' marriage policy in the second generation crossed the Adriatic Sea and leaped over the empire. The second generation of both dynasties differentiated them. Whereas the Piasts were slowly focusing on the regional context, the Árpáds successfully attempted a more ambitious nuptial policy. The Dalmatian issue compelled them to get closer to Venice, but penetration of the Italian peninsula had started earlier with anti-Byzantine politics in correspondence with Normans.

### GENERATION III

Range of births: **1157-1187**. Range of marriages: **1173-1235**.

#### Piasts

Name	Life dates	Marriage partner	Father/Dynasty	Date of marriage	Direction	
Adelajda Zbysława	1157/66-1213<	Dypold II	Přemyslids	1175-80	Bohemia	
Casimir	1178/79-1230	Wiola	tsar Kolojan of Bulgaria (dubious!!)	1217-1220	Bulgaria ??	
Henry the Bearded	1165/70-1238	Hedwig	Bertold VI of Andechs	1186-1190	Empire	Bavaria
Wladislas Laskonogi	1161/66-1231	Łucja	Jaromir, duke of Rugia	1186	Pomerania	
Salomea	1162/64-?	Racibor	Bogusław I, duke of West Pomerania	1173-76	Pomerania	
Anastazja	<1164-1240	Bogusław I, duke of West Pomerania		1181	Pomerania	
Wladislas Odonic	c. 1190-1239	Jadwiga	Mściwoj I, procurator of Gdańsk Pomerania or Świętopełk, duke of Moravia of Přemyslids	1218-20	Pomerania	Bohemia
Leszek the White	c. 1186-1227	Grzymisława	Ingwar, duke of Łuck	1208?	Ruthenia	
Conrad	c. 1187-1247	Agafia	Światosław, duke of Přemysl	1208?	Ruthenia	

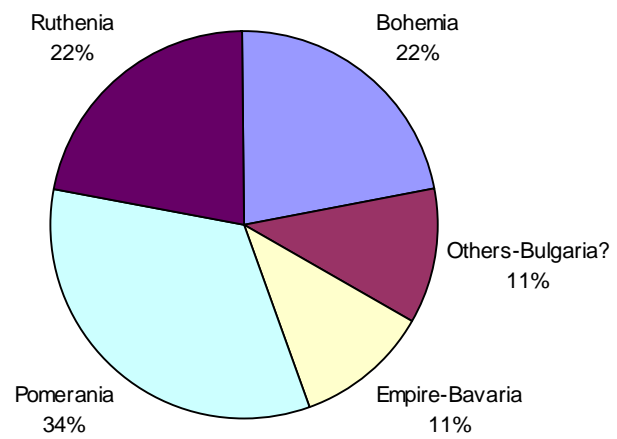
#### Árpáds

Name	Life dates	Marriage partner	Father/Dynasty	Date of marriage	Direction	
Emeric	1174-1204	Konstanzee	Alfons II, king of Aragon	1198-1200	Aragon	
Margaret	1175-1229	Issakios Angelos	emperor of Byzantium	1185	Byzantium	Byzantium
		Boniface of Montferrato	king of Thessaloniki	1204	Byzantium	Thessaloniki
		Nicolaus	a knight of the Saint Omer Order	1210	Flandres	
Andrew II	1173-1235	Gertrud	Bertold IV, duke of Istria and Kraina	c. 1200	Empire	Austria
		Jolanta	Pierre Courtenay, the Latin Emperor	1215	Byzantium	Latin
		Beatrix Este	Azzo IV of Este	1235	Ferrara	
Constanz	1240↓	Přemysl I Ottokar	king of Bohemia	1198	Bohemia	

**Figure 3. Table showing dynastic marriages in the third generation.**

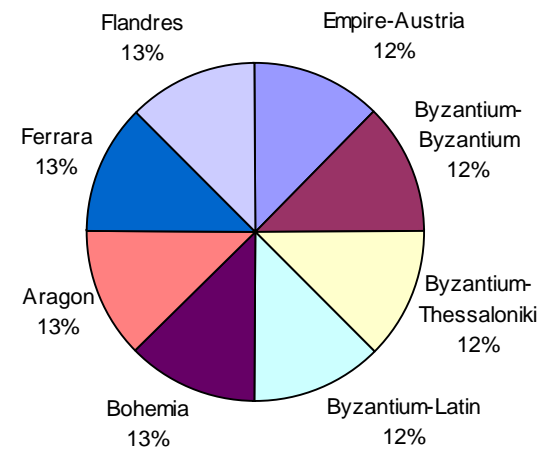


Piasts  
III generation  
9 marriages



CEU 8

Árpáds  
III generation  
8 marriages



The third generation comprised nine Piasts and four Árpáds. The Piasts already originated from various Polish principalities. This was the result of the increasing disintegration of the larger entities of their ancestors. Four Piasts came from Great Poland, three from Silesia, one from Little Poland, and one from Mazovia. All the Árpáds included in this generation were children of King Béla III. The analysis of the marriages of the Piasts gives the impression that nothing has changed in comparison with the prior generations. Constant marriage affiliations existed with Ruthenia and Bohemia (both have equal percentages here as in the second generation) and Pomerania. Depending on which interpretation will be followed, however, the number of Pomeranian marriages could have risen to four and, if that were so, the number of Bohemian couples would fall to one. Whatever was done, it does not change the general notion that the Piasts were unwilling to cross their regional horizon and look for marriage partners somewhere further in Europe. This is, I think, a clear reflection of their politics. The growing dismemberment of Poland and repeated internal clashes among the Piasts shaped their politics to a great extent. None of them yet represented a power attractive to prominent European houses. Moreover, the permanent desire of individuals to check their Piast opponents forced them to enter less prestigious but more practical local alliances, which proved helpful in dynastic quarrels. To a certain degree, such contests were increasingly focused on single strongholds and plots of land rather than whole principalities. Nonetheless, more serious fights did not cease. The marriage of Henry the Bearded to Hedwig of Andechs should be considered here as a specific feature of the duchy of Silesia. Henry was a grandson of Wladislas I of Silesia, who was forced to take refuge in the empire after his younger brothers rebelled in 1146. Sons of Wladislas I, Bolesław I the Tall (the father of Henry the Bearded), and Mieszko I Piłtonogi, regained Silesia in 1163, but they never gave up their close relations with the imperial court. Henry the Bearded successfully continued this tradition.<sup>76</sup> The only “exotic” marriage in the third Piast generation was, seemingly, the one with a Bulgarian princess, which is, however, a much disputed issue.<sup>77</sup> Thus, I will not draw too many conclusions from it.

<sup>76</sup> It would be interesting, I think, to make a further study of dynastic horizons of particular Piast families. At first sight some features come out which might be elaborated. For instance, the Great Poland branch paid much attention to Pomerania, the Little Poland and Masovian branches tended to turn to Ruthenia, and Silesian dukes concentrated more on the West.

<sup>77</sup> Jerzy Rajman stated that all we know for sure about the wife of Casimir of Silesia is her name – Wiola. Information about her Bulgarian roots comes from Jan Długosz, but in Rajman’s opinion this does not make much sense. There was no reason for this marriage, he argues – see, *Piastowie*, 715-716.

Four Árpáds in the third generation married almost as many times as did nine Piasts. About 60% of their marriages could be still considered as regional, but their variety, especially towards Byzantium, shows that Hungary was carrying out active and flexible politics, which were adjusting immediately to historical development. The Byzantium region was particularly important for Hungary because it was the most powerful opponent in Balkans and apparently the marital policy of Hungary was used to appease it. The nuptial horizon broadened even further, in comparison with the second generation, since it reached the Iberian Peninsula, put a foothold in northern Italy and even touched northeastern France. Simultaneously, Ruthenia and Poland completely disappeared as Hungarian connubial targets. Furthermore, Bohemia, which was a double marriage contractor in the second generation, this time was chosen only once, but from the very top – Přemysl I Otokar, the king of Bohemia, married Konstanze. The turn of the thirteenth century found Hungary running active marital politics that had already resulted in close relations with the influential European dynasties. This was also the time when Hungarian foreign policy “remembered” the North. The next generation re-entered the Polish and Ruthenian region. There is no doubt, however, that between the first and the fourth generations the Árpáds developed their dynastic horizon to an unprecedented scale, whereas the Piasts did not progress at all in this matter.

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To the contrary, Stanisław Sroka repeats without hesitation from Długosz that Wiola was a daughter of Tsar Kolojan – see, *Piastowie*, 721.

## GENERATION IV

Range of births: **1196-1220**. Range of marriages: **1214-1257**.

### Piasts

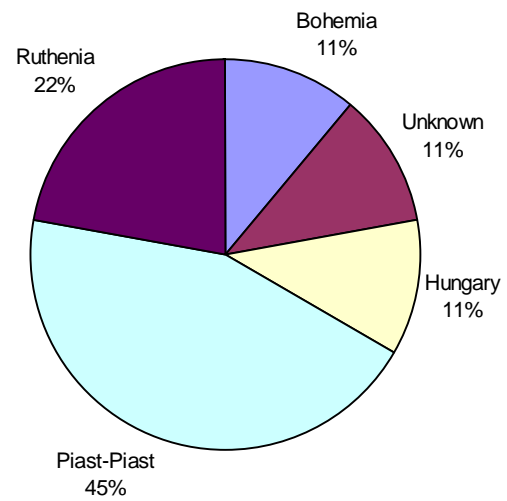
Name	Life dates	Marriage partner	Father/Dynasty	Date of marriage	Direction
Salomea	1211-1268	Coloman	Andrew II Árpád, king of Hungary	1214	Hungary
Bolesław I	1208-1248	Gertrud	Henry II the Pious of Silesia	c. 1234	Piast-Piast
		Anastasia	Alexander, duke of Belz	1247	Ruthenia
Siemowit I	c. 1215-1262	Perejasława	Danil, duke of Halich	c. 1248	Ruthenia
Casimir I	c. 1211-1267	Hedwig	?		?
		Konstanze	Henry II the Pious of Silesia	c. 1234	Piast-Piast
		Eufrosina	Casimir I of Opole & Racibórz	c. 1257	Piast-Piast
Mieszko II the Obese	c. 1220-1246	Judith	Conrad, duke of Mazovia	<1239	Piast-Piast
Henry II the Pious	1196/1207-1241	Anna	Přemysl Otakar I, king of Bohemia	1214-18	Bohemia

### Árpáds

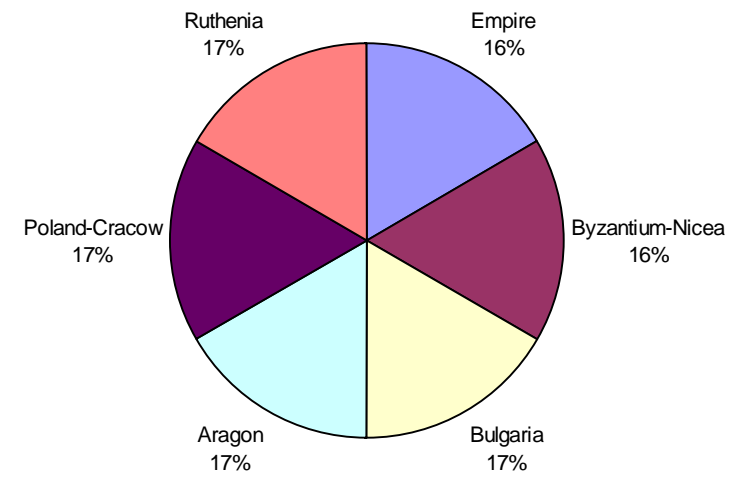
Name	Life dates	Marriage partner	Father/Dynasty	Date of marriage	Direction
Mary	1203/4-1237/8	Ivan II Asen, tsar of Bulgaria		1221	Bulgaria
Béla IV	1206-1270	Mary	Theodoros Laskaris, emperor of Nicea	1220	Byzantium   Nicea
Elisabeth	1207-1231	Louis IV, duke of Thuringien		1221	Empire
Coloman	1208-1241	Salomea	Leszek the White, duke of Cracow	1214	Poland   Cracow
Andrew	1210-1234	Mary	Mścisław, duke of Novgorod and Halich	1226/7	Ruthenia
Jolanta	1219-1251	Jacob I, king of Aragon		1235	Aragon

**Figure 4. Table showing dynastic marriages in the fourth generation.**

Piasts  
IV generation  
9 marriages



Árpáds  
IV generation  
6 marriages



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The fourth generation embraced six Piasts and six Árpáds. Geographically the Piasts originated from Mazovia (three), Silesia (two), and Little Poland (one), and all of them were born at the beginning of the thirteenth century. They were grand- or great-grandchildren of Bolesław III the Wrymouth and lived in a Poland that was already very different from that of Bolesław III. This generation also introduced the Piast-Piast marriages, which reappeared on even a greater scale in the fifth generation. Such marriages were the effect of the further dismemberment of Poland and were plain evidence of the growing decline of the Piasts' political horizons. 45% of the marriages in this generation occurred within the Polish dynasty. Consequently, this meant that nearly half of the dynastic "manpower" was used not to expand the house's influence outside but played on a very local political scene. Thus, the Piasts' domestic politics gained the upper hand in juxtaposition with their foreign policy. Moreover, such internal alliances were, I think, more efficient for them to secure their own domains against other claimants than any outside relations. Following the tradition which had derived from at least the first generation, some of marriages were concluded with Ruthenian dukes of regional importance and with Bohemia. Nevertheless, the latter relation was extraordinary for Piasts because a father of the bride was Přemysl Otakar I, the king of Bohemia. Such a prominent marriage happened, however, within the Silesian branch, which had distinguished itself before for its wider and more prestigious marital horizon. Another high-status marriage happened in 1214, when Coloman, a son of Andrew II, the king of Hungary, received Salomea, a daughter of Leszek the White, the Duke of Cracow. I will discuss this marriage in the next chapter in more detail. Here I will only state that this relation was, in my view, merely due to the Ruthenian politics of Andrew II, i.e., a reawakened Hungarian northern politics pushed the Árpáds into the Piasts' arms. In this case, the Hungarian dynasty emulated its Byzantine politics of soothing and weakening rivals by marrying them. Moreover, behind this marriage stood the powerful idea of creating a new kingdom east to Poland, member of the Árpád dynasty. Therefore, it seemed worth fighting for.

Six Árpáds in the fourth generation were children of Andrew II with the exception of Stephen, who was born much later than his siblings, actually after the death of his father. Therefore, he was taken from the Hungarian court to Italy by his mother and did not play a political role in the country. Moreover, he probably married after 1250, which gave me a clear reason to omit his case from my statistics. Stephen

was, nevertheless, the father of Andrew III, a future king of Hungary, but this issue concerns events in the second half of the thirteenth century. Returning to the Stephen's older siblings, I want to stress that continuity (in comparison with the third generation) was sustained in only two directions – Byzantium and Kingdom of Aragon. These are, I think, examples of permanent dynastic and political interest that seemed profitable for all the actors involved. In the second and third generations the Árpáds were anxious to marry Babenbergs, who ruled over Austria. The fourth, and later the fifth, generations experienced a “connubial shift” to the North and to the West, in search of powerful political partners behind the Babenberg domains. This was surely the case in the fifth generation, when the Austrian house died out and a question of inheritance subsequently emerged. Bulgaria became a completely new nuptial ‘region’ of the Árpáadian attention. Entering these relations was, however, in accordance with the Balkan politics of the previous century, and with the fall of Byzantium after the fourth crusade Hungary expressed even more eagerness to dominate its southern neighbors. I have mentioned the Árpáadian flexibility towards Byzantium in the third generation, but I want to recall this issue again here. After the reign of Béla III, the Kingdom of Hungary attained an authoritative position in the region and it could run its politics by means of power. The idea of expansion was there, and marriages clearly depicted the directions where the vital concern of Hungary lay. Rediscovery of the North is evidence of that. I think that the Polish and the Ruthenian marriages concluded after eighty years of total indifference played a crucial role in the Árpáds’ northern expansion. This expansion, launched under Béla III, lasted for the next two hundred years and was automatically inherited by the Angevins in the fourteenth century. The Árpáds’ longing to subordinate Serbia and Bulgaria led them to continuously marry Byzantine princesses. According to this statistical analysis, I would strongly argue that an analogical desire to dominate/incorporate southwestern Ruthenia (Halich land) led the Árpáds to similar connubial contracts not only with Ruthenian dukes but also with the Piasts, especially those ruling in Cracow. I think, however, that the Árpáds for some time were not aware of the significant role of the Piasts in Lodomeria and Halich, but this issue will be discussed in the following chapter.

### GENERATION V

Range of births: 1220-1243. Range of marriages: 1234-1264.

#### Piasts

Name	Life dates	Marriage partner	Father/Dynasty	Date of marriage	Direction
Judith	1222/6-1257/65	Mieszko II the Obese, duke of Opole & Racibórz		1238/39	Piast-Piast
		Henry III the White	Henry II the Pious of Silesia	1252	Piast-Piast
Eudoksja	1224-1248>	Dytryk I of Brenna & Wettyn		?	Empire
Bolesław the Shy	1226-1279	Kinga	Béla IV, king of Hungary	1239	Hungary
Přemysl I	1220/1-1257	Elisabeth	Henry II the Pious of Silesia	1244	Piast-Piast
Bolesław the Pious	1224/7-1279	Jolanta	Béla IV, king of Hungary	1256	Hungary
Gertrud	1218/20-1244/47	Bolesław I	Conrad, duke of Mazovia	c. 1234	Piast-Piast
Salomea	1225/35-1267/71	Conrad	Henry II the Pious of Silesia	1249	Piast-Piast
Eufemia	<1239-1289	Wladislas I, duke of Opole		1251	Piast-Piast
Wladislas	c. 1225-1281/2	Eufemia	Wladislas Odonic, duke of Great Poland	1251	Piast-Piast
Bolesław II Rogatka	1220/5-1278	Hedwig	Henry I of Anhalt	1242	Empire
		Eufemia	Sambor, duke of Tczew	1259	Pomerania
Elisabeth	1224/32-1265	Přemysl I, duke of Poznań	Henry II the Pious of Silesia	1244	Piast-Piast
Konstanze	1227-1253/7	Casimir I, duke of Mazovia	Conrad, duke of Mazovia	c. 1234	Piast-Piast
Henry III the White	1227/30-1266	Judith	Conrad, duke of Mazovia	1252	Piast-Piast
Conrad I	1228/31-1273/4	Salomea	Wladislas Odonic, duke of Great Poland	c. 1250	Piast-Piast

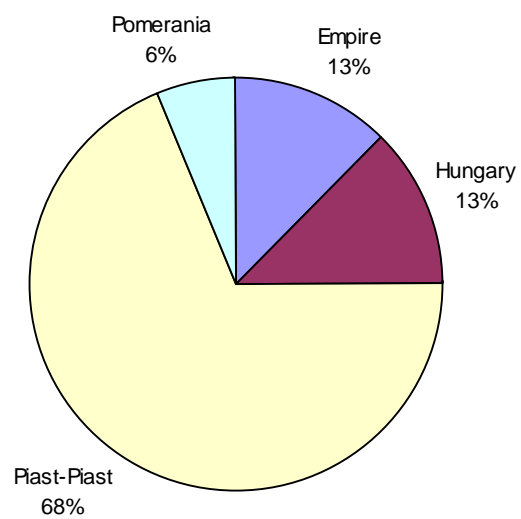
#### Árpáds

Name	Life dates	Marriage partner	Father/Dynasty	Date of marriage	Direction
Kinga	1224-1292	Bolesław the Shy	Leszek the White, duke of Cracow	1239	Poland
Anna	1226-1270	Rościszlaw, duke of Czernigov		1243	Ruthenia Cracow
Elisabeth	1271	Henry XIII of Lower Bavaria		c. 1245	Empire
Jolanta	1298	Bolesław the Pious, duke of Kalisz	Wladislas Odonic, duke of Great Poland	1256	Poland Bavaria
Konstanze	?	Lev, duke of Halich	Danil, duke of Halich	c. 1251	Ruthenia Great Poland
Stephen V	1239-1272	Elisabeth	Seihan, duke of Cumans	?	Cumans
Béla	1243-1269	Kinga, duchess of Brandenburg		1264	Empire Brandenburg

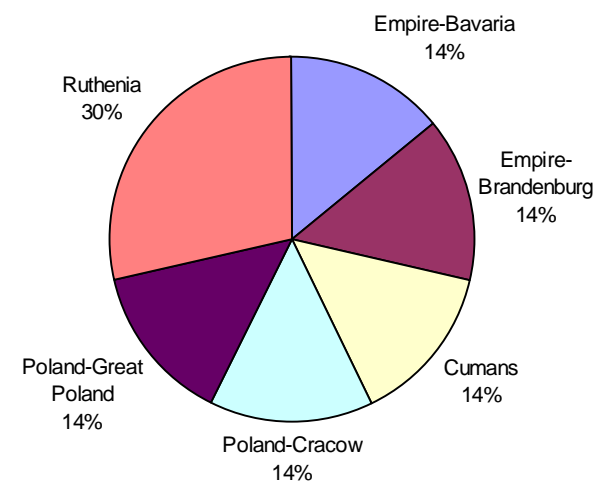
Figure 5. Table showing dynastic marriages in the fifth generation.



Piasts  
V generation  
16 marriages



Árpáds  
V generation  
7 marriages

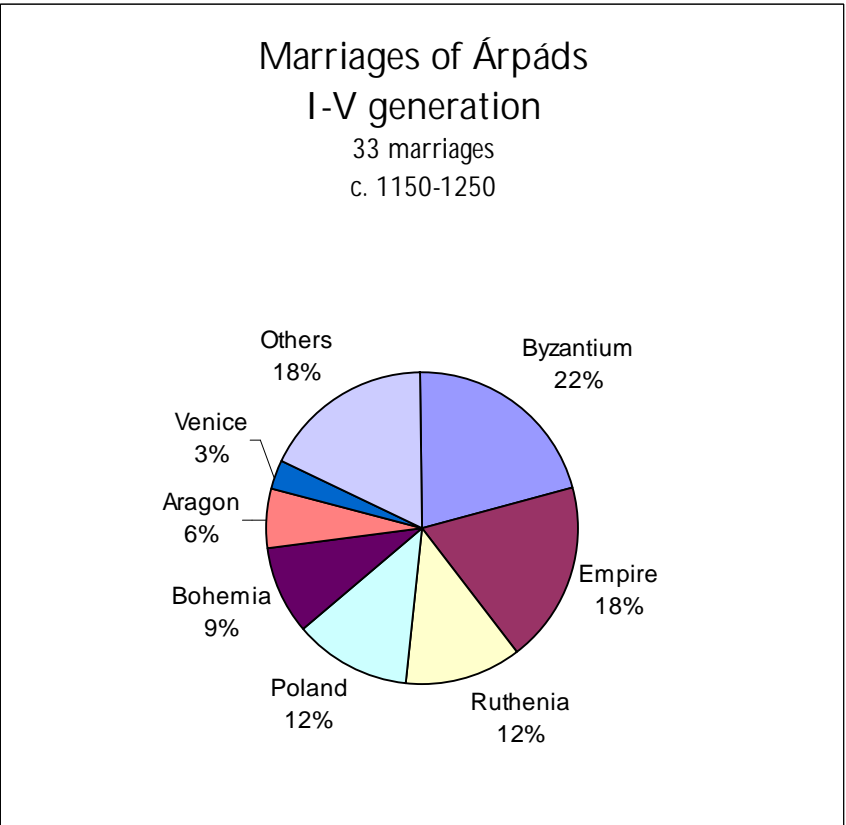
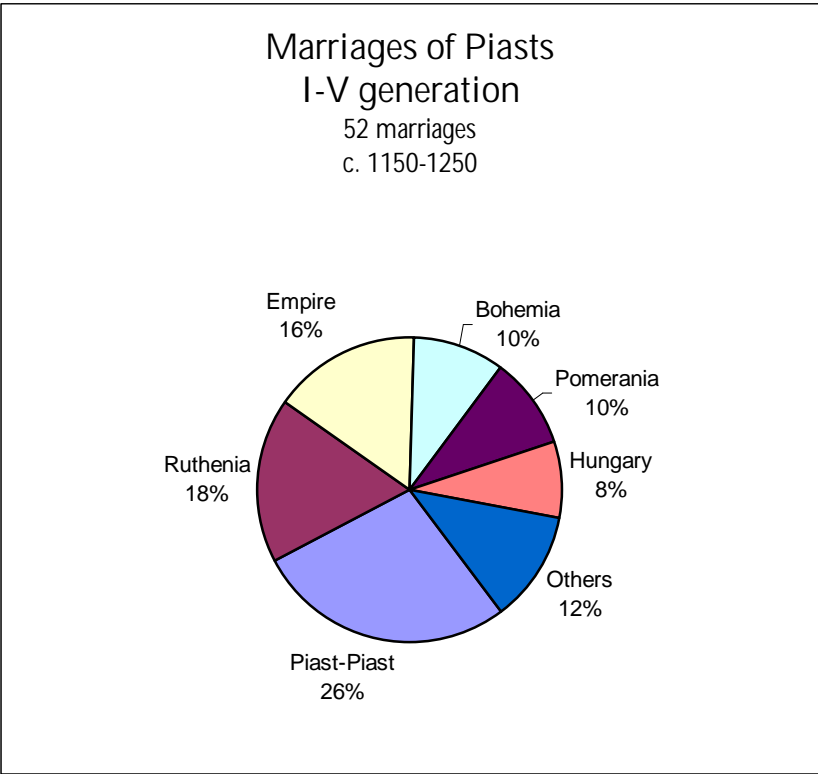


The fifth generation included fourteen Piasts (four from Great Poland, one from Little Poland, two from Mazovia, and seven from Silesia) and seven Árpáds (all children of Béla IV). These twenty people were born between 1220 and 1243, and lived contemporary to the events which I have previously called the “new opening” in the Piast-Árpád relations. I will discuss it further below. Regarding the Piasts, the Piast-Piast type of marriage gained more statistical importance, yet two-thirds of all marriages in this generation happened among Piast relatives. The reason for the increase of such relations is similar to that in the fourth generation, but on a greater scale. The majority of the Piasts were fully engaged in local and domestic Polish politics, constructing intra-dynastic alliances. Other nuptial partners remained traditional – bordering imperial lords and one of the Pomeranian dukes. In this milieu, the two Hungarian marriages to royal daughters were extraordinary. To demonstrate it, it is enough to show the following numbers. For all thirty-nine marriages that took place before 1239 only two (5%) were with royal daughters – the marriages of Mieszko the Old (the first generation) and Henry II the Pious (the fourth generation). Even counting a marriage of 1214 with a royal son would give less than 8%. I argue, therefore, that for the Piasts of the thirteenth century, entering such relations was politically very beneficial and prestigious. Furthermore, it was totally unlike the period before 1140, which was dominated by partnerships with a slight advantage to the Piasts.

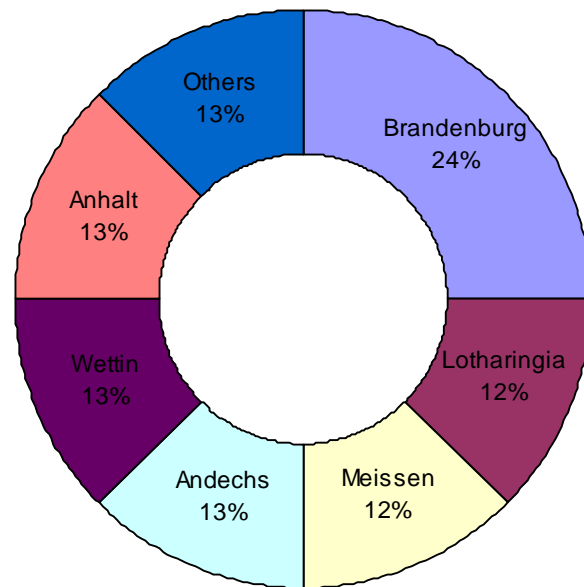
At the same time, the Árpáds continued their northern politics. I have already mentioned a shift in their politics toward the empire. In the fifth generation another thing is striking, however. For the first time there was no marriage with Byzantium. Béla IV was preoccupied with the Northern politics and the numbers show that 60% of all marriages were related to Halich and Poland. Moreover, there was a single marriage to a Cuman, which was connected to a great extent to internal Hungarian politics. All of these give an impression that Hungary in the fifth generation dropped its European-wide contacts and replaced them with less prestigious ones. This would partially be an accurate conclusion; however, it had plain political reasons, which will be discussed in the next chapter. For the sake of honesty I need to add here that under Béla IV marriages took place with the Bohemian king and, later at Béla IV's deathbed, with the Kingdom of Naples. Thus, it would be improper to claim that the Árpáds withdrew completely from a European dynastic policy. This somewhat

deceiving picture of the middle thirteenth century in my statistics originates from the chronology, which I described previously and applied here.

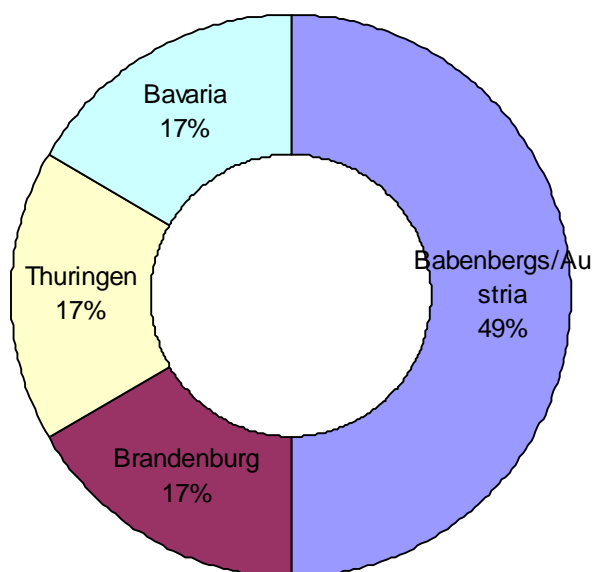
**SUMMARY**



# Empire for Piasts I-V generation 8 marriages



# Empire for Árpáds I-V generation 6 marriages



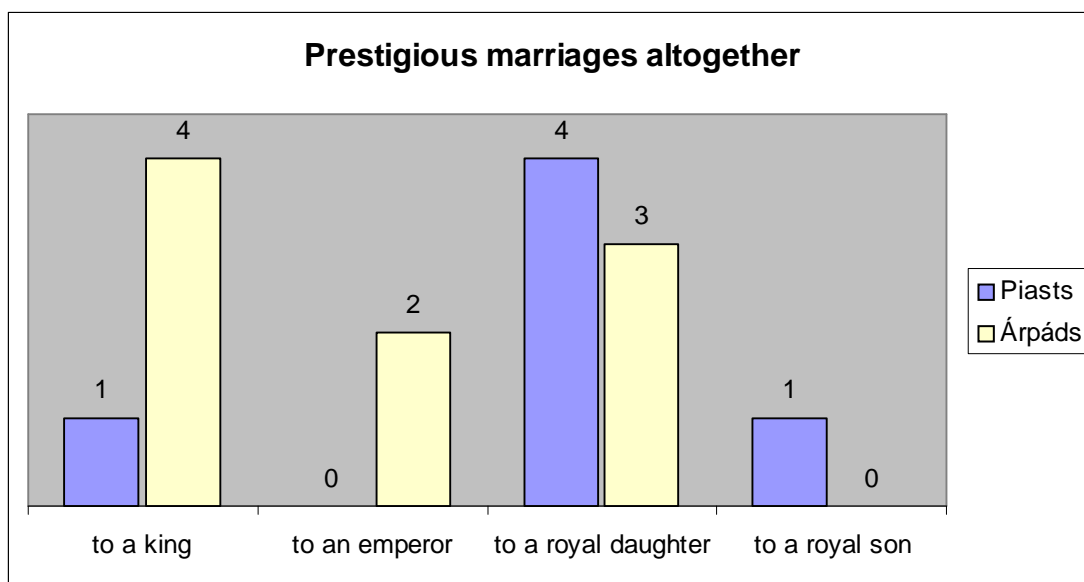
Summarizing this discussion of five generations, I emphasize a simultaneous process of an Árpád rise in power and a gradual Piast decline. This process was noticeably reflected in the dynastic horizons of both houses. The Piasts had the widest horizon in the first generation, which at that time exceeded the Hungarian one. This was, however, no longer the case in the later generations. Whereas the Piasts confined themselves to regional politics, the Árpáds reached the Western borders of Europe and managed to prolong connections with it for two generations. A number of marriages with the post-Fourth-Crusade Byzantine emperors reflected the vigorous Hungarian politics in the Balkans, while connections with the northern Italian cities betrayed their ambitions along the Adriatic Sea. In the fourth generation the first Piast-Piast marriages occurred – a lucid symbol of a shrinking political and dynastic horizon. Thus, when Bolesław I received the hand of Gertrud in the first Piast-Piast marriage c. 1234, Jolanta was just about to marry Jacob I, the king of Aragon. The Piasts throughout nearly all five generations married bordering dukes and territorial lords. To the contrary, the Árpáds were marrying not only their immediate neighbors but also powers, which were crucial for their expansionist politics. All these statistical results, I think, reveal another important feature. Namely, the Piasts were actually unable to run such an expansionist political program which would put them in confrontation with rival powers which were controlled by the high-status royal European dynasties. Thus, their dynastic horizon was adjusted to the sort of politics, which they were in fact doing. On the contrary, step-by-step the Árpáds were entering a serious contest with Byzantium for the Balkans and a struggle for Dalmatia with Venice, not to mention attempts to control Austria. Such ambitious politics encroached on the vital interests of “big” European houses and, consequently, opened their courts to the Árpáds. The more successful the Hungarians were, the easier it became to broaden their dynastic horizon. As a result, by the middle of the thirteenth century, both spectra, the Piasts’ and the Árpáadian, were no longer comparable. Besides, a periodic change in Hungarian politics in the fifth generation automatically reshaped the dynastic horizon. The important issue to note here is, however, that for the Piasts there were few other options but to marry Ruthenians, while for the Árpáds it was a matter of choice. They decided to turn to the North and drop Byzantium for the first time, which they could afford. This is, I think, an important difference between political and dynastic horizons of the Piasts and the Árpáds.

### 'Prestigious marriages' comparison

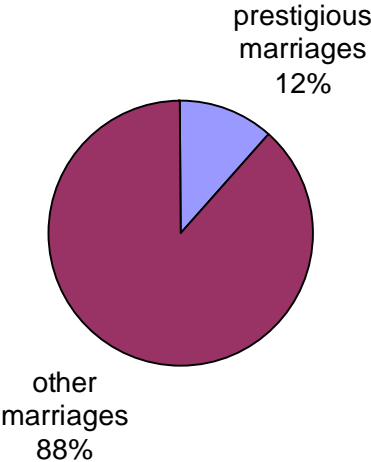
Finally, I would like to make the last distinction between these two houses with the help of my database. I introduced the term “prestigious marriage” as the opposite of “other marriages.” This artificial terminology is meant to facilitate an evaluation of the social/royal status of the Piasts and Árpáds. The evaluation cannot be used for comparison and drawing some conclusions. No matter how disputable this evaluation might be, I want to illustrate some findings and to give better support for the demonstration above. The most important here was to apply the same questionnaire to both dynasties. Hence, I decided that a “prestigious marriage” would be with a royal family – a king or an emperor himself or with his children of either sex. Then, I counted all the marriages that met this condition and made a comparison. There were altogether six “prestigious marriages” amid the Piasts (12% of all) and nine within the Árpáds' dynasty (27%). These numbers give a taste of the gap that developed between the two dynasties over a century. This summary would be even more telling, if I removed from the statistics all thirteenth-century Piast-Árpád marriages. In that case, the total for the Árpáds would stay the same but for the Piasts it would fall to only three (6%). Furthermore, if I omitted a marriage of Ryksa that was arranged by the emperor while she was staying at his court, only two would be left (4%). Therefore, I conclude that the Árpáds needed a very good reason to agree to a dynastic marriage with the Piasts in the middle of the thirteenth century because the status of the dynasties was very different.

	Piasts	Árpáds		Piasts
			prestigious marriages	6
to a king	1	4	other marriages	46
to an emperor	0	2		Árpáds
to a royal daughter	4	3	prestigious marriages	9
to a royal son	1	0	other marriages	24
total	6	9		
%	12%	27%		

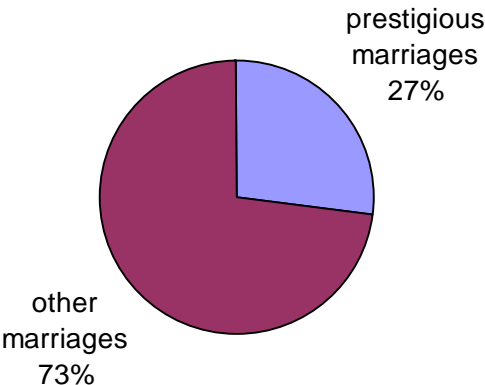
**Figure 6. Tables showing the “prestigious marriage” comparison**



PIASTS  
52 marriages



Árpáds  
33 marriages





## Conclusion

The first part of this chapter demonstrated the political context of the period of 1150-1250, which generally witnessed a growing power of Hungary, and a gradual decline of Poland. The main goal of the chapter was, however, to compare and contrast these parallel political evolutions with the dynastic horizons of the Árpáds and Piasts.

The period of 1150-1250 brought a gradual change in the status and perspectives of these two dynasties. As the statistical analysis showed, the dynastic horizon of both houses, i.e., with whom they had married, varied significantly and consequently, progressing along the generations. Whereas the Árpáds became a dynasty of wide European relations, the Piasts submerged into more and more short-distance dealings with a shrinking international perspective. In addition, due to the progressive dismemberment of Poland, the Piasts lost their dynastic attractiveness to the royal courts, including the Árpáds. An eighty-year break in dynastic marriages with the Piasts gives a clue that Northern politics for some time were of little importance for the Árpáds. The statistical analysis buttressed with the historical context shows that the Hungarian dynasty was eager to marry parties, which contemporarily played an essential role in their politics. Therefore, I can state that not only was there a striking gap between the Piasts' and the Árpáds' dynastic perspectives in the middle of the thirteenth century, but also Hungarian Northern politics at the turn of the thirteenth century took shape as a result of the Árpáds' choice and a changed direction for their further expansion. Hence, the marriages with Ruthenia and the one with Poland in 1214 were effects of this renewed northern policy. According to the statistical data, the two following marriages of 1239 and 1256 were extraordinary for the Piasts, who scarcely managed to marry into any nuclear royal family for a whole century, and suddenly they received two royal daughters as spouses. The partnership of the early Middle Ages, interrupted for eight decades, seemed to reemerge, but undoubtedly in very different circumstances. The Piasts and the Árpáds were no longer of equal status.

## Chapter III: The Marriage of 1239 and Its Political Context

The previous two chapters explained the marital policy of the Árpáds and Piasts in its political context. They also demonstrated that until the mid-twelfth century both Hungary and Poland retained the similar political status and could be perceived as regional partners. These conditions changed, however, after the death of Bolesław III in 1138. Poland submerged into internal divisions which considerably decreased its power and political effectiveness. Soon, after a few decades, there were several independent or semi-independent principalities in the former Kingdom of Poland that often fought each other and were reluctant to recognize each other's authority. At the same time, Hungary got involved in Balkan politics and came under strong pressure from Byzantium. Later, however, the kingdom managed to escape the Byzantine domination and with the reign of Béla III (1172-1196), Hungary sailed into the political "high seas" and remained there for at least three centuries. Chapter II showed that the prestige and status of both houses in the beginning of the thirteenth century were significantly different and, whereas the Árpáds could claim a truly European dynastic perspective, the Piasts were plainly confined to regional, if not local, politics.

This chapter deals with two questions: What was the reason for the marriage between Salomea, a daughter of the duke of Cracow, Leszek the White, to Coloman, a son of Andrew II, in 1214?<sup>78</sup> What was the reason for another marriage that took place in 1239 between Bolesław the Shy and Kinga, a daughter of Béla IV? In this chapter I will argue that these two marriages took place in different circumstances and are hardly comparable. Moreover, the major part of this chapter will be dedicated to answering the second question, because it has caused many troubles for historians. Therefore, in search of an answer I will present a list of contemporary approaches, in order to formulate my own interpretation. Revealing the reasons for the marriage of 1239 is highly relevant, for this was, I think, a watershed in the mutual relations of the Árpáds and the Piasts. Thus, the marriage of Salomea and Coloman has to be discussed here to give a proper background for the second union. I will argue that, as the first marriage was a result of practical political reasoning of the time, the second one had more obscure justification and, perhaps, a rather strategic perspective. Once I

<sup>78</sup> This marriage was in fact celebrated in 1218, but both parties had decided on it four years earlier and only some political disturbances postponed the event.

have shown this, the second part of the thirteenth century in the region and the Hungarian-Polish alliance can be seen in a different light. If the alliance was a strategic pact at the turn of the fourteenth century meant to last for decades, then the future close relations between the Piasts and Angevins would get an additional, yet considerable, buttress.

To begin with, I will summarize the history of the Hungarian-Polish rivalry for Halich. The progressive decomposition of Kievan Ruthenia in the second half of the twelfth century, a process very similar to what had happened in Poland, made the Grand Duchy of Kiev gradually lose its power. Therefore, smaller duchies that were formerly under Kievan domination set off on the road to independence. The most important ones in southwestern Ruthenia were Halich and Włodzimierz (Lodomer). The prevailing political disturbance there encouraged the Piasts, especially these who ruled in Cracow, to make attempts to either seize both principalities or at least establish loyal dukes there. Casimir the Just won Włodzimierz for his close relative, Roman, in 1182. Five years later Casimir secured Halich for Roman, too, because its former duke died.<sup>79</sup> Then, however, Hungary entered the political scene. This was not, of course, the first time. Hungary had been interested in its northern neighbor periodically over the whole twelfth century. Nevertheless, a turning point occurred in 1188, when Béla III dispatched a well-equipped army to take Halich and was successful. Then, he imposed a son of the deceased duke to rule, but soon changed his mind and assigned Halich to his own son, Andrew. The royal son governed Halich only for two years, but after becoming king, he put great deal of effort and wealth into securing Ruthenia for Hungary.<sup>80</sup> The events of 1188 were a trigger point of long-lasting political competition between the Árpáds and the Piasts. According to Bronisław Włodarski,<sup>81</sup> an acknowledged expert on Hungarian-Polish-Ruthenian relations, who is often quoted by the leading Hungarian historian in the field, Márta

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<sup>79</sup> Barański, *Piastowie*, 286.

<sup>80</sup> Engel, *The Realm*, 54. See also: Barański, *Piastowie*, 287. Kosztolnyik expresses a negative opinion about all of Andrew II's Ruthenian politics saying: "The monarch also behaved in a similarly irresponsible manner toward Mistislav and Danilo in Halich. As is evident from the record, the good will displayed by Mistislav would have enabled Andrew II to handle the Halich question more convincingly, and tactfully, through personal negotiations. Instead of leading expensive, countless, and time-consuming military expeditions against Halich, Andrew II ought to have gained information beforehand about the religious, political, social, and diplomatic conditions that prevailed in that territory. Evidently, the Hungarian king must have had little use for organized military intelligence" – idem, *Hungary*, 99.

<sup>81</sup> Bronisław Włodarski, *Polska i Ruś 1194-1340* [Poland and Ruthenia 1194-1340.] (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1966) (hereafter: Włodarski, *Polska i Ruś*).

Font,<sup>82</sup> beginning with Leszek the White (1202/5-1227), dukes of Cracow paid much attention to their Ruthenian neighbors.<sup>83</sup> This was partly for economic reasons, because Little Poland, with Cracow, served as a crossroads on trade routes from the East to the West.<sup>84</sup> Therefore, control over Halich meant additional and significant income.

Hungary returned to an active Ruthenian policy somewhere in the beginning of Andrew II's reign in 1205. Earlier, for nearly a decade, Hungary was preoccupied with other issues concerning the Balkans, Byzantium, and the Fourth Crusade. In the meantime, Leszek the White supported Roman in obtaining Halich. As a result, Leszek found a useful political partner.<sup>85</sup> Roman soon established diplomatic relations with Andrew II, however, and sometime between 30 November 1204 and 16 June 1205 they swore mutual friendship and agreed that in case of a death, the one remaining would take care of the children of the deceased.<sup>86</sup> Roman perished in the battle of Zawichost in Poland on his expedition against Leszek the White,<sup>87</sup> hence Andrew II followed the pact and took the four-year old Daniel under his protection, but he declared himself King of Lodomer and Halich.<sup>88</sup> Such decisions brought Hungarian-Polish relations on the verge of war. The conflict was temporarily postponed due to diplomatic negotiations. According to Włodarski, a significant number of the Little Poland's nobility was strongly opposed to any military conflict with Hungary because of close economic ties, which would have been endangered had a war broken out.<sup>89</sup> Barański, on the other hand, argues that neither side went to

<sup>82</sup> Márta Font, *Árpád-házi királyok és Rurikida fejedelmek* [The Árpadian Kings and the Ruriks Dukes.] (Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 2005) (hereafter: Font, *Árpád-házi*).

<sup>83</sup> Włodarski, *Polska i Ruś*, 9.

<sup>84</sup> Ibidem, 8.

<sup>85</sup> Ibidem, 21.

<sup>86</sup> Ibidem, 25. This is an interesting issue, which I would like to draw attention to. Namely, Włodarski called Andrew a "new" king of Hungary and applied this term to the chronology concerning the pact with Roman of Halich. According to the genealogical tables in *Lexikon* (61-65) done by Gyula Kristó and Ferenc Makk, however, King Emeric died on 30 November 1204. Shortly before his death, King Emeric recalled Andrew from exile and asked him to oversee his little child, Ladislas. The latter was already crowned a king, thus Andrew acted as the regent until, as Kosztolynik supposes, "in early summer" of 1205 (his first issued charter was dated August 1, 1205 – see: Kosztolynik, *Hungary*, 31-32 and 38). It is impossible to move the *terminus ante quem* forward; because this is the source-date for the death of Roman. Włodarski's chronology does not refer to the formally "new" king of Hungary but to the regent of the kingdom. This would also imply that Andrew was vitally interested in Halich, if he turned there immediately after his release from prison and after the death of his brother, Emeric.

<sup>87</sup> Włodarski, *Polska i Ruś*, 29-30.

<sup>88</sup> Ibidem, 33.

<sup>89</sup> Ibidem, 55, 62, 67 and 89.

war because the severe political conditions in Ruthenia demanded mainly cooperation. Fighting each other could not guarantee any progress in Halich.<sup>90</sup>

This is when the reasons for the Spiš pact of 1214, which arranged a marriage between Salomea and Coloman, become clear. A wavering overlordship in Halich held interchangeably by the Poles or the Hungarians forced them to join efforts and by cooperation overcome the hostility of the Ruthenian barons. The very idea of marriage originated from the Cracovian court<sup>91</sup> and was finally accepted after tough negotiations in Spiš. Polish historiography formerly emphasized that after Polish troops defeated the Hungarian governor in Halich in 1213, it was evident from then on that without the Polish consent Hungary would not be able to rule effectively in Halich.<sup>92</sup> Włodarski claimed, however, that the negotiations in Spiš were held due to Little Poland's influential nobility who compelled Leszek the White to seek a consensus with Andrew II. The duke himself was not that much in favor on it.<sup>93</sup> The king of Hungary could see after 1214 that he would be less involved militarily in the Halich question.<sup>94</sup> These opinions differ slightly from each other; therefore, I would conclude that the pact of Spiš was a result of *real politik* conducted by two parties vitally interested in securing their political presence in the region. In the end it did not work *de facto* so smoothly, nevertheless, it seems rational to me that the marriage was intended to play a crucial role in reconciling the contradictory political interests of Hungary and the duchy of Cracow. The nuptial union of Salomea and Coloman reinaugurated dynastic relations between the Piasts and the Árpáds after nearly eight “gaunt and lean” decades. This also set a precedent for a future way of handling the Halich question by both sides. The political project, however, establishing the Kingdom of Halich with a Hungarian king and a Polish queen, worked partially between 1218 and 1221, and thereafter it was dropped. Coloman and Salomea moved to Hungary, and a Ruthenian, Duke Mściśław, received Halich for life from Andrew II. They agreed that afterwards Halich would be handed over to Andrew, the youngest son of the king of Hungary.<sup>95</sup> In 1227 Mściśław fulfilled his promise and at the same time Leszek the White was unexpectedly murdered. Consequently, the Poles lost their

<sup>90</sup> Barański, *Piastowie*, 305.

<sup>91</sup> Balzer, *Genealogia*, 482. Kosztolynik, *Hungary*, 50.

<sup>92</sup> Szczur, *Historia*, 260.

<sup>93</sup> Włodarski, *Polska i Ruś*, 55.

<sup>94</sup> Kosztolynik, *Hungary*, 51.

<sup>95</sup> Włodarski, *Polska i Ruś*, 81.

influence in Ruthenia.<sup>96</sup> Concluding the marriage of Coloman and Salomea, I think, had a practical meaning which proved short-lived. The will for cooperation, despite the connubial ties, was rather limited on both sides, and the political development in Halich outgrew the ruling skills of the young royal couple and their retinue. The marriage, nonetheless, was never annulled and Salomea lived in Hungary with her husband, who governed Croatia and Slovenia, until his death at Muhi in 1241.<sup>97</sup> Thus, despite the fact that the basic reasons for this marriage disappeared almost immediately (in 1221 Coloman was thirteen years old and Salomea ten years old), the marriage itself survived. Therefore, I suppose that the early practical meaning of this union evolved into a more strategic one and in this way showed both parties reasons for maintaining it. I would argue here that emotional or technical obstacles in this case could have been overcome (at least due to the young age of the spouses) had there been a will for that. There was, however, none.

Now comes the challenging question of the marriage of Bolesław the Shy with Kunigunde (Kinga), a daughter of Béla IV, in 1239. The reasons for this marriage are obscure and difficult to explain for modern historiographers.<sup>98</sup> Recently Witold Brzeziński (in his MA Thesis defended at CEU) gave a concise explanation for the marriage.<sup>99</sup> According to footnotes, in his argumentation he relied on Oswald Balzer,<sup>100</sup> on articles from *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* (the Polish Biography Dictionary), and on Bronisław Włodarski,<sup>101</sup> and on sources indicated by this literature. Because Brzeziński's aim was to give a simple explanation for this marriage, I will use his arguments as a starting point for a broader historiographic discussion.

According to her [Kinga's – WK] "Vita" the main initiator of the marriage was Salomea, who stayed in Hungary at that time. She communicated with her mother and sent the child to Poland so that her brother [i.e. the brother of Salomea, Bolesław the Shy – WK] could marry the Hungarian king's daughter. Salomea, undoubtedly, played

<sup>96</sup> Ibidem, 87.

<sup>97</sup> *Piastowie*, 190.

<sup>98</sup> The book of Endre Kovács, which was meant to describe the Hungarian-Polish relations over their history, does not even try to justify three marriages of the thirteenth century. Kovács only lists Salomea, Kinga and Jolanta, emphasizing their religious activities and not giving any political references. See: idem, *Magyarok és lengyelek a történelem sodrában* [Hungarians and Poles in the Historical Stream] (Budapest: Gondolat, 1973), 33.

<sup>99</sup> Witold Brzeziński, "The Piasts' Marriages to the Arpads and Premyslids: Their Role and Importance in the Piasts' Relations with the Bohemian and Hungarian Rulers," (hereafter: Brzeziński, *The Piasts*) MA thesis, Central European University (Budapest, 1994).

<sup>100</sup> This is the standard work of Oswald Balzer, *Genealogia*, which I am also quoting in this study.

<sup>101</sup> Włodarski, *Polska i Ruś* – also quoted here.

considerable role in arranging this union, however, the bishop Vislav and other noblemen of Lesser Poland were primary in bringing about this Hungarian-Lesser Polish union. In one of the charters issued by Boleslav we read that the duke was advised to marry Kinga by the abovementioned men. The relation with the Hungarian ruler strengthened the position of Boleslav the Shameful [I call him Bolesław the Shy – WK] in his struggle with his uncle, Conrad, the Duke of Masovia for Cracow. In turn, regarding the benefits Béla IV could have obtained by marrying his daughter to the Polish duke, I think, one should refer to the previous relations between Béla IV and Boleslav's father. Settled then, the Hungarian-Polish conflicts appeared upon Leszek the White's death. Conrad of Masovia interfered with the struggle for Halich, assisting Roman's son, Daniel, against the Hungarians. ... The establishment of family ties with Boleslav the Shameful, who tended to gain the throne in Cracow, might not only have neutralized the Polish competition but also have secured his aid in the future. Judging from later events ... one may suggest that it was what Béla IV had in mind when marrying his daughter off.<sup>102</sup>

This explanation discloses several weaknesses which should be now more carefully examined. The first issue is to find initiators of this union. Brzeziński followed "Vita sanctae Kyngae", a hagiographic biography composed between 1317 and 1329, which is nowadays considered a valuable source,<sup>103</sup> and he indicated Salomea as an initiator. Brzeziński referred also to a charter in *Kodeks Dyplomatyczny Małopolski* (the Diplomatic Codex of Little Poland) issued in 1257.<sup>104</sup> There Bolesław the Shy declared that he married Kinga as advised by the bishop of Cracow, Wisław, and other barons.<sup>105</sup> Thus, the reliable sources of the period indicate two parallel elements that initiated efforts to unite Kinga and Bolesław. Interestingly, Jan Długosz seems not to have known about them. His explanation of the marriage underlined the hostile activities of Conrad of Mazovia who, after the death of Leszek the White, made a number of attempts to seize Cracow and take control of Bolesław, his brother's only son.<sup>106</sup> Długosz's arguments were ultimately rejected by historians as the chronicler's own creation,<sup>107</sup> but this does not change the fact that for him there was no other option to take into account. I think that two hundred years after the

<sup>102</sup> Brzeziński, *The Piasts*, 60-61.

<sup>103</sup> Ryszard Grzesik, *Polska Piastów i Węgry Arpadów we wzajemnej opinii (do 1320 roku)* [The Piast Poland and the Árpadian Hungary in mutual opinion until 1320], (Warsaw: Slawistyczny Ośrodek Wydawniczy, 2003) (hereafter: Grzesik, *Polska*), 42.

<sup>104</sup> *Kodeks Dyplomatyczny Małopolski* [the Diplomatic Codex of the Little Poland], ed. Franciszek Piekosiński, vol. 2 (Cracow: Akademia Umiejętności, 1886), No. 452.

<sup>105</sup> Balzer accepts this charter – idem, *Genealogia*, 495.

<sup>106</sup> Jan Długosz, *Roczniki czyli Kroniki sławnego Królestwa Polskiego* [The Annals or the Chronicles of the Illustrious Kingdom of Poland] vol. 5-6 (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1973) (hereafter: Długosz, *Roczniki*, V-VI), 354-355.

<sup>107</sup> Długosz, *Roczniki*, V-VI, 354.

marriage, Długosz did not know anything about why Bolesław the Shy and Kinga got married.

As Długosz cannot help much, I turn back to Salomea and Little Poland's nobility. Salomea lived in Hungary for twenty years and returned to Cracow after the Coloman's death in 1241. Thus, she could promote her brother's case at Béla IV's court, but whether it was her idea is impossible to know for sure. Information about Salomea's life is scarce in the period from 1221 to 1241;<sup>108</sup> therefore, nothing certain can be said. It is worth mentioning here that Bolesław was much younger than she, born four years after Salomea settled in Hungary. For that reason, I would expect that before 1241 she barely knew her brother. This, of course, does not exclude her dedication to her dynasty, lobbying Bolesław's case to Béla IV; nevertheless, it shows that she, staying with her husband in western Hungary for two decades, was less informed about the political streams running through Poland, which she had left in the age of seven. Therefore, I do not see her as the main initiator of the marriage.

The attitude of the nobility is another issue. There were many plausible reasons which would have justified their willingness to establish closer political ties with their southern neighbor. From the Polish point of view, as I have presented in the previous chapter, a nuptial union with the Árpáds in the middle of the thirteenth century was politically and prestigiously beneficial. The retinue of Bolesław could perceive such a marriage as the first step to domination in Poland, because their duke could count on his father-in-law in case of domestic conflicts. Brzeziński is right in pointing out that Bolesław gained a great deal against Conrad of Mazovia by marrying into the Árpáds.<sup>109</sup> Theoretically, Bolesław found the most powerful protector in the region and therefore he could look forward to his future reign. Another reason for the political support would be economy. I have already mentioned that Włodarski used economic interests as an explanation for opposition among the nobility against Leszek the White. They did not want to fight the Hungarians, because they were making money with them. This seems possible; however, good source material concerning the Hungarian-Polish trade is available only for the second part of the thirteenth century and later. The oldest known customs offices were located in Chełm (evidence from 1260) and Stary Sącz (erected in 1280). Both of them were

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<sup>108</sup> *Piastowie*, 190.

<sup>109</sup> Brzeziński, *The Piasts*, 60.



organized for the Hungarian-Polish trade route.<sup>110</sup> Probably intensive trade did not emerge out of nothing and such economic relations also existed in the first part of the thirteenth century. Bożena Wyrozumska has referred to archeological excavations and stated that the Carpathian valleys were attractive for exchange even in the Stone Age,<sup>111</sup> thus, the idea of profitable north-south trade is, I think, absolutely justifiable. This statement does not, however, contradict the prevailing notion in Polish historiography that Hungarian-Polish trade truly exploded after the Babenberg's wars and the act of location of Cracow in 1257.<sup>112</sup> In my view, these opinions can exist together. Concluding, the role of the nobility could be significant but whether they came up with such an initiative or not, this cannot be answered yet. Wisław, the Bishop of Cracow, was among these who advised the marriage to Bolesław. The point is here that in 1239 it was Henry the Pious of Silesia who ruled personally in Cracow, while Bolesław was holding Sandomierz under the Henry's suzerainty.<sup>113</sup> Thus, the influence of the nobility should be examined together with an explanation of Bolesław's political status in 1230s and the role of the "monarchy of the Henries."<sup>114</sup>

Brzeziński claimed, in the quotation above, that by marriage Bolesław the Shy strengthened his position against Conrad of Mazovia. He also maintained that Béla IV was foreseeing future developments in Polish politics by giving his daughter to a duke who intended to gain the throne in Cracow. Both suppositions should be reexamined.

After the death of Leszek the White in 1227, Little Poland was handed over by the local nobility, with the consent of Grzymisława, the mother of the one-or-two

<sup>110</sup> Stefan Weymann, *Cła i drogi handlowe w Polsce piastowskiej* [Customs and Trade Routes in the Piasts' Poland,] (Poznań: Poznańskie Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk, 1938), 9.

<sup>111</sup> Bożena Wyrozumska, *Drogi w ziemi krakowskiej do końca XVI wieku* [The Roads of Cracow District until the Final Years of the Sixteenth Century], (Cracow: Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1977), 69.

<sup>112</sup> See, e.g.,: Jan Dąbrowski, "Kraków a Węgry w wiekach średnich" (Cracow and Hungary in the Middle Ages), *Rocznik krakowski* 13 (1911): 190; Krystyna Pieradzka, "Trzy wieki stosunków handlowych pomiędzy Gdańskiem a Węgrami" (Three Centuries of Trade Relations between Gdańsk and Hungary), *Rocznik Gdański* 9-10 (1935-36), 190; and recently: Paweł Żmudzki, *Studium podzielonego Królestwa. Księżę Leszek Czarny* [The Study of the Divided Kingdom. Duke Leszek the Black] (Warsaw: Neriton 2000) (hereafter: Żmudzki, *Studium*), 271.

<sup>113</sup> According to Jerzy Wyrozumski, the first individual charters of Bolesław the Shy were issued in 1239, i.e., this was the final year of such suzerainty – idem, *Dzieje Polski Piastowskiej VII w.-1370* [History of the Piasts' Poland from the Seventh Century to 1370] (Cracow: Fogra, 1999) (hereafter: Wyrozumski, *Dzieje*), 220.

<sup>114</sup> "Monarchia Henryków" in Polish. This is a general term which refers to the state which was created by Henry the Bearded and his son, Henry the Pious, in the first half of the thirteenth century. Sometimes it is combined with a historiographic notion of the "double monarchy" that functioned in Poland under the Henries and Conrad of Mazovia. This idea is used to underline two major figures (the most powerful dukes) in Polish politics of the first half of the thirteenth century who were competing for domination over the country. See: Żmudzki, *Studium*, 32.

year-old Bolesław, to Władysław Laskonogi from Great Poland. He did not stay long, because he had to depart to fight Władysław Odonic in the Laskonogi's home principality. Therefore, again with the approval of the local nobility, Henry the Bearded of Silesia took on the burden of protecting Little Poland from aggressive attempts by Conrad of Mazovia, a brother of the deceased Leszek the White and an uncle of Bolesław the Shy.<sup>115</sup> The conflict between Henry the Bearded and Conrad lasted until the pact of Skaryszew (1232), when both dukes agreed to a compromise, which confirmed to Henry the ducal power in Cracow, granted Sandomierz, an eastern part of Little Poland, to Bolesław the Shy, and gave Henry the right to oversee Bolesław in exchange for some territorial concessions.<sup>116</sup> At the same time, however, the Sandomirian nobility grew in importance and practically gained autonomy. Generally speaking, the first half of the thirteenth century witnessed the development of a new electoral system in Little Poland, which gave significant power into hands of the local nobility.<sup>117</sup> In 1233 Conrad imprisoned Bolesław and his mother, but they were soon released by a member of the Sandomirian nobility,<sup>118</sup> supposedly on the Henry the Bearded's command.<sup>119</sup> This additionally strengthened Henry's status, especially when Bolesław finally resigned from Cracow, his paternal heritage, and accepted only Sandomierz as his principality. Henry died in 1238, but his "monarchy" was smoothly transferred to his son, Henry the Pious. He was immediately recognized in Cracow and even Conrad acted temperately and did not go to war. Benedykt Zientara, the author of the acknowledged study on Henry the Bearded, called Henry the Pious the most powerful duke in his time and underlined that in 1239 Bolesław the Shy was still somehow dependent on him.<sup>120</sup> Zientara's view is shared by Font, who accepts that from 1231 the rule of Henries in Cracow was undisputable until the Mongol onslaught in 1241.<sup>121</sup> Gyula Pauler spoke similarly over a century ago.<sup>122</sup> In such conditions, while Bolesław the Shy was turning thirteen in 1239 and was far

<sup>115</sup> Barański, *Dynastia*, 327-329. The author recapitulates studies of Bronisław Włodarski (idem, "Polityczne plany Konrada I księcia mazowieckiego" [Political Plans of Conrad I, the Duke of Mazovia], *Rocznik TNT* 76/1 (1971), Toruń) and of Benedykt Zientara (idem, *Heinrich der Bärtige und seine Zeit : Politik und Gesellschaft im mittelalterlichen Schlesien*. Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 2002. (hereafter: Zientara, *Heinrich*)).

<sup>116</sup> Barański, *Dynastia*, 331. See also: Włodarski, *Polska i Ruś*, 97.

<sup>117</sup> Barański, 328 and 332.

<sup>118</sup> Ibidem, 331.

<sup>119</sup> *Piastowie*, 192.

<sup>120</sup> Zientara, *Heinrich*, 336.

<sup>121</sup> Font, *Árpád-házi*, 218.

<sup>122</sup> Gyula Pauler, *A magyar nemzet története az Árpád-házi királyok alatt* [Hungarian National History under the Árpadian Kings], vol. 2 (Budapest: Állami Könyvterjesztő Vállalat, 1985), 136.

from opposing Henry the Pious,<sup>123</sup> the very notion that Bolesław could rule in Cracow any time in the future was barely thinkable.<sup>124</sup> Much more powerful dukes were anxious to secure it for themselves if something happened to Henry the Pious. Moreover, the latter was in his early thirties (or forties, if applying the oldest chronology), so still away from a possible death-bed. Barański introduced an interesting theory. Namely, in early July 1239, there was a political summit in Przedbórz attended by Bolesław the Shy of Sandomierz; Conrad of Mazovia; Grzymisława, mother of Bolesław; Pełka, the Archbishop of Gniezno; Wisław, the Bishop of Cracow; and a number of Lesser Poland nobility. Barański states that it was there that a decision about a marriage with Kinga was made. He also adds that this summit played a role in reconciling Conrad and Bolesław, revealed some ambitions of Bolesław to gain independence, yet – at the same time – was not directed against Henry the Pious, who supposedly was also deeply interested in a Hungarian-Polish rapprochement.<sup>125</sup> Zientara knew about the Przedbórz summit and interpreted it similarly, i.e., it was not meant against Henry the Pious.<sup>126</sup> Nevertheless, Zientara points out, contrary to Barański, that the marriage of Bolesław and Kinga was arranged through the Silesian court and its family connections.<sup>127</sup> In this context, I think, Brzeziński's ideas are questionable. Bolesław the Shy was not fighting with Conrad in 1239 and he had little chance of becoming duke of Cracow. Taking into account that Béla IV was looking for a Polish ally in Little Poland who could “persuade” Conrad of Mazovia to cease his anti-Hungarian Ruthenian politics,<sup>128</sup> the election of Bolesław over the head of the real ruler in Cracow, i.e., Henry the Pious, seems scarcely plausible to me. Another disputable issue is Béla IV's desire to secure his Ruthenian policy and neutralize Conrad of Mazovia. Włodarski and Font unanimously maintain that in the beginning of the 1230s Conrad was significantly supporting Daniel against Hungarian rule in Halich.<sup>129</sup> This, however, was no longer the case in 1235,<sup>130</sup> when Daniel arrived at the coronation of Béla IV in search of

<sup>123</sup> Zientara, *Heinrich*, 336; Barański, *Dynastia*, 335.

<sup>124</sup> *Piastowie*, 192.

<sup>125</sup> Barański, *Piastowie*, 334-335.

<sup>126</sup> Zientara, *Heinrich*, 336

<sup>127</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>128</sup> Brzeziński, *The Piasts*, 61.

<sup>129</sup> Włodarski, *Polska i Ruś*, 107. Font, *Árpád-házi*, 226 and 234.

<sup>130</sup> Włodarski, *Polska i Ruś*, 107. The author convincingly argued that after 1233 relations between Conrad and Danil were no more friendly.

support.<sup>131</sup> Moreover, in the late 1230s Conrad encountered some difficulties in his northern politics. Furthermore, the Conrad's old ally, Władysław Odonic, died in 1239, which additionally weakened Conrad's political status.<sup>132</sup> Besides, sons of Conrad – Casimir I and Bolesław I – married, respectively, Konstanze and Gertrud, daughters of Henry the Pious, around 1234, which has been interpreted as Henry's political action to pull Conrad's sons away from supporting their father.<sup>133</sup> Summarizing these points, I would argue that Conrad of Mazovia was no longer a problem for Hungarian politics in Ruthenia. What is more, I would say that temporarily Ruthenian politics was no longer a primary target for Hungary.

Béla IV was crowned in October 1235. His first years of rulership were deeply focused on domestic issues. The king continued negotiations with the papacy regarding the amount of freedom his non-Christian subjects could enjoy.<sup>134</sup> Béla IV vehemently confronted the Hungarian nobility, which had grown in power considerably after the Andrew II's internal politics. The main aim for Béla, therefore, was to restore the image, power and authority of the king of Hungary.<sup>135</sup> Such policy, however, deteriorated the already tense relations between the king and the nobility. Kosztolnyik lays the reasons there for the catastrophic military inefficiency against the Mongols in 1241.<sup>136</sup> Béla's engagement in domestic affairs practically influenced a style of the foreign policy. Hungary was not officially at war between 1235 and 1241. There was, in fact, an idea of invading Bulgaria, but Béla IV was reluctant from the very beginning and eventually gave it up.<sup>137</sup> On the other hand, the Ruthenian dukes – Daniel, Mihail, and Rostislaw – repeatedly came to the Hungarian court asking for support in their quest for Halich. Béla IV, however, was not interested in making an official contribution.<sup>138</sup> Font lists in a chronological table that after the coronation of Béla IV, Daniel twice received some military help from Hungary in his

<sup>131</sup> Kristó, *Die Arpadendynastie*, 203.

<sup>132</sup> Barański, *Dynastia*, 334.

<sup>133</sup> *Piastowie*, 413. Barański states only that the marriage of Casimir I and Konstanze, together with another marriage of 1238/9 between the Conrad's daughter, Judith, with Mieszko II the Obese, duke of Opole and Racibórz, were signs of a decline in Conrad's power. See: idem, *Piastowie*, 334.

<sup>134</sup> Engel, *The Realm*, 97.

<sup>135</sup> Kosztolnyik, *Hungary*, 122. See also: Kristó Gyula. *Magyarország története, 895-1301* [History of Hungary, 895-1301] (Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 1998) (hereafter: Kristó, *Magyarország*), 224.

<sup>136</sup> Kosztolnyik, *Hungary*, 122.

<sup>137</sup> Kristó, *Die Arpadendynastie*, 203. See also: Gyula Kristó, *Az Árpád-kor háborúi* [Wars in the Árpadian period] (Budapest: Zrínyi Katonai Kiadó, 1986) (hereafter: Kristó, *Az Árpád-kor*), 114.

<sup>138</sup> Kristó, *Die Arpadendynastie*, 203.

fights for Halich (1235/6 and 1237).<sup>139</sup> The king of Hungary rejected, nevertheless, any dynastic marriages between his daughters and the Ruthenian dukes.<sup>140</sup> Rostislav, a son of Mihail, asked for one of them in 1238/9.<sup>141</sup> Daniel also requested one of Béla's daughters for his son, Lew, in 1240, but he was also refused.<sup>142</sup> The reluctance of Béla IV to establish close family ties with Ruthenian claimants to Halich is evident here. I will compare it here immediately with the marriage of Bolesław the Shy to Kinga that took place at exactly the time when the Ruthenian applications were turned down. What were the reasons, then, to accept a weak duke, seemingly without prospects, from the Piasts and reject Ruthenian offers?

I think that Béla IV, between 1235 and 1241, was absolutely not in a mood to wage a war. Some of the reasons I have just listed. However, he also had to consider a plausible conflict with the Mongols. Kosztolnyik clearly states that Béla IV dropped the idea of a Bulgarian front in 1238, not willing to step into conflict while the military situation in the East was deteriorating drastically.<sup>143</sup> Moreover, the Cuman chief<sup>144</sup>, Kuthen, was allowed to enter the Kingdom of Hungary with his men in 1239. He accepted Christianity in exchange and promised military support for Béla IV's guarantee of the Cumans' freedom.<sup>145</sup> András Pálóczi Horváth has argued that the king's approval of the Cumans settling in the wastelands of Hungary was aimed at consolidating the central authority of the king. The reaction of the nobility was immediately hostile; whereas they were constantly limited in their privileges, the Cumans gained the rights of "guests."<sup>146</sup> The Cumans themselves, however, asked for such asylum, fleeing from the Mongols who had defeated them in their previous homelands in 1238. Béla IV had to take into account the possible consequences of allowing Cumans into his territory because the Mongols considered them their subjects. For the Mongols it was an explicit *casus belli*.<sup>147</sup> Béla IV took this risk, but probably did not want to push too far, i.e., he avoided marital relations with the

<sup>139</sup> Font, *Árpád-házi*, 240.

<sup>140</sup> Jenő Szűcs, *Az utolsó Árpádok* [The Last Árpáds], (Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 1993) (hereafter: Szűcs, *Az utolsó*), 79.

<sup>141</sup> Włodarski, *Polska i Ruś*, 117; Font, *Árpád-házi*, 239.

<sup>142</sup> Włodarski, *Polska i Ruś*, 119.

<sup>143</sup> Kosztolnyik, *Hungary*, 127.

<sup>144</sup> Professor István Petrovics, while examining my study, has suggested that Kuthen may be equally called the Cuman duke.

<sup>145</sup> Kristó, *Die Arpadendynastie*, 203.

<sup>146</sup> András Pálóczi Horváth, *Pechenegs, Cumans, Iasians. Steppe people in Medieval Hungary*, (Budapest: Corvina 1989), 49-50.

<sup>147</sup> Kosztolnyik, *Hungary*, 129-130.

Ruthenian dukes, who were directly endangered by the Mongol troops at that time.<sup>148</sup> Once he had agreed to a marriage, he would have been forced to send military units to Ruthenia to expel the Mongols.

Discussing the historical context of the Hungarian-Polish marriage, I still have not found reasons for it. On the contrary, I have been rather occupied with dismissing reasons which appear in the contemporary historiography. In fact, however, a few scholars have tried to explain the marriage and reveal its broader meaning. Brzeziński's interpretation can no longer be upheld. Barański's interpretation of, which recognized the marriage as a symbol of Bolesław the Shy's attempt at independence, works only partially, because does not explain the intentions of Béla IV. Many scholars have only mentioned the marriage without pondering over it.<sup>149</sup> Others did not mention it at all.<sup>150</sup> Szűcs suggested that in difficult circumstances, when Hungary was under threat before 1241, the only ally was Bolesław the Shy, but this was not enough and, therefore, Béla IV had to seek support in the West.<sup>151</sup> On the other hand, Font states ambiguously that the marriage of Bolesław and Kinga was not aimed against the Mongols, although it could have later acquired this particular meaning.<sup>152</sup> Unfortunately, she does not suggest any other reasons except for mentioning, in a footnote following Jerzy Wyrozumski's textbook,<sup>153</sup> that the political status of Bolesław stabilized only after he defeated Conrad of Mazovia in 1243. Bolesław the Shy indeed became the duke of Cracow in that year but, as I have already pointed out, in 1239 there was no reason to expect such a revolution in the Polish political scene. The Mongol invasion in 1241 destroyed the "monarchy" of the Henries and trampled Henry the Pious himself on the field of Legnica (or immediately after, as some scholars suggest). That is why Conrad of Mazovia could raise his claims to Cracow again and Bolesław found a chance to step into a competition. Thus, the claim of Font remained unhelpful in the discussion.

<sup>148</sup> Włodarski, *Polska i Ruś*, 118.

<sup>149</sup> Zientara, *Heinrich*, 336; Pauler, *A magyar*, 136; Włodarski, *Polska i Ruś*, 118; *Piastowie*, 196; Szűcs, *Az utolsó*, 76; Kristó, *Magyarország*, 224; naming only a few.

<sup>150</sup> This is the case of Kosztolnyik, *Hungary*.

<sup>151</sup> Szűcs, *Az utolsó*, 76.

<sup>152</sup> Font, *Árpád-házi*, 251.

<sup>153</sup> Wyrozumski, *Dzieje*.

Year	Poland	Hungary	the Mongols
1238	the beginning of the Henry the Pious' rulership in Cracow	the Hungarian invasion of Bulgaria suspended	the Mongols defeat the Cumans
			Northern Ruthenia conquered by the Mongols
1239	the Conrad of Mazovia's decline in power	Béla IV refuses to give his daughter to Rostislaw	Southern Ruthenia invaded by the Mongols
	the marriage of Bolesław the Shy and Kinga	Mihail flees to Hungary from the Mongols	the Mongols advance to Kiev
		the Cumans settle in Hungary	
1240		Béla IV refused to give his daughter to Lew, a son of Daniel	the Mongols seize Kiev, 6 December
			the Mongols seize Halich

**Figure 7. Table showing major events in Poland and Hungary between 1238 and 1240.**

Since other explanations seem unworkable, I will make here a working hypothesis that Béla IV negotiated with Henry the Pious (Zientara) and then agreed to the marriage to build an alliance against the Mongol threat. This idea makes more sense, I think, than the existing ones, even with its drawbacks. The chart above lists the major events which I have referred to already. They disclose a parallel political development in three different regions and help in grasping the big picture. The approach of the Mongols coincides with Béla IV's firm withdrawal from an active Ruthenian policy; his attempt to strengthen the royal forces with a significant number of Cuman highly trained light cavalry, and his effort to find an ally. According to Szűcs, Hungary at the early phase of Béla IV's reign was politically isolated,<sup>154</sup> while Bohemia was deeply involved in domestic imperial politics and in building up its influence in Austria, which was contrary to Hungarian interests.<sup>155</sup> Under such conditions Poland was a convenient place to start a search for an ally.

Henry the Pious was the most convenient political partner for Béla IV. He was the most powerful duke in Poland, he ruled in Cracow and, what is crucial, he was the second-ranking Polish relative to the king of Hungary, just after Bolesław the Shy himself. Henry the Pious had previously been married to Anna, a daughter of

<sup>154</sup> Szűcs, *Az utolsó*, 76.

<sup>155</sup> Jörg Konrad Hoensch, *Geschichte Böhmens: von der slavischen Landnahme bis ins 20. Jahrhundert*. (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1992), 84-86.

Konstanze, who was Béla IV's aunt. Such family connections surely helped. In 1239 Henry the Pious had three unmarried sons: Bolesław II Rogatka (14-19 years old), Henry III the White (9-12 years old), and Conrad I (8-11 years old). Thus, it seems probable that one of them should have been considered first for marriage with Kinga, the oldest daughter of Béla IV.<sup>156</sup> The simplest solution, nevertheless, was difficult in practice, I think. The sons of Henry the Pious and Kinga were related in the second grade of kinship,<sup>157</sup> and for such a marriage papal approval was necessary, yet hardly obtainable. At the same time, thirteen-year-old Bolesław the Shy was not only the proper age and under the control of Henry the Pious, but he was also a brother of Coloman's wife, a brother of Béla IV. In such conditions there was no need for papal approval and the marriage could still buttress a political alliance. Thus, theoretically, the question of why the petty duke of Sandomierz acquired a daughter-in-law of the prestigious<sup>158</sup> Árpád dynasty is answered. From the Polish point of view, as I have elaborated above, further marital ties with the Árpáds were a political and prestigious profit. Therefore, the Little Poland's nobility, together with Wisław, the bishop of Cracow, could strongly lobby for it and this truly happened at the summit in Przedbórz. The pressure by Salomea which was mentioned in the sources fits into the general mood of pushing the negotiations forward and overcoming any obstacles. The charter of 1257, where Bolesław the Shy recalled that the nobility advised him to marry Kinga, seems to fit here as well. The negotiations were apparently held with a consciousness of the Little Poland nobility and Bolesław, once he received the offer from Henry the Pious, undoubtedly turned to his closest retinue and other honorable Polish officials for advice. The question of why Bolesław did not mention Henry the Pious in his charter cannot be answered definitely. I would speculate that the reasons of issuing the charter and political conditions of that time demanded that Bolesław

<sup>156</sup> Polish historiography maintains that Kinga was five years old in 1239 (Brzeziński, *The Piasts*, 59-60; Barański, *Dynastia*, 334). To the contrary, the genealogical tables of *Lexikon* (61-65), compiled by Gyula Kristó and Ferenc Makk, give 1224 as the Kinga's year of birth, therefore, she would have been fifteen in 1239. Włodarski's argument was in concordance with *Lexikon*, when he claimed that Kinga was the oldest daughter of Béla IV (idem, *Polska i Ruś*, 118).

<sup>157</sup> Konstanze, grandmother of the boys, and Andrew II, grandfather of Kinga, were siblings. Papal approval was needed even for unions of the third grade of kinship. This was not only the second grade but also, in 1239, the relations of both rulers with the pope were less than friendly.

<sup>158</sup> An important point should be made here. According to Gábor Klaniczay, the canonization of Elisabeth Árpád in 1235 was a turning point in the Árpáadian dynastic history. St. Elisabeth became an ideal of a woman's sanctity, which was recommended by the pope, Gregory IX. Moreover, other dynasties started to look for family connections with the Árpáds in order to use the esteem of St. Elisabeth for themselves, idem, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses: Dynastic Cults in Medieval Central Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 209-211 and 235.



underline the influence of the nobility and not describe the whole story of the origins of his marriage.

Did Béla IV, however, turn to the North in order to find an ally against a likely Mongol invasion? This seems rather difficult to prove explicitly because the sources do not say much about it. Nonetheless, the shape of the Mongol campaign in the Central Europe in 1241 and all that is known about Mongol warfare offer some clues in this matter. Namely, there is the question of why the Mongols invaded Hungary, Little Poland, and Silesia simultaneously in 1241. Scholars are divided on this matter. Many do not see any connection between these two campaigns and treat them separately.<sup>159</sup> Several others cannot ignore such a military “coincidence” and see a kind of flanking strategy.<sup>160</sup> Finally, there are scholars who openly maintain that the Mongol incursion into Poland was aimed to keep the Polish forces at bay while the main army was destroying Hungary.<sup>161</sup> For my hypothesis, I admit, the last idea looks particularly attractive. James Chambers gives a convincing description of European politics on the doorstep of the Mongol onslaught. He argues that at least in early 1239 all of Europe was aware of the advancing threat.<sup>162</sup> Chambers puts the major responsibility for the unpreparedness of Europe against the Mongols on the shoulders of Emperor Frederick II and Pope Gregory IX, who were fighting each other and had successfully preoccupied other European powers with their quarrels.<sup>163</sup> Chambers’ reconstruction of the Mongol invasion in Poland should be taken into account here:

While Batu’s army was advancing into Hungary, Baidear and Kadan were marching through Poland. ... The Poles had obviously been taken by complete surprise. With no apparent opposition, the conditions seemed ideal for a quick conquest, but unfortunately Baidar and

<sup>159</sup> Here are some examples: Barański, *Dynastia*, 336; Włodarski, *Polska i Ruś*, 119-121; Zientara, *Heinrich*, 343; Kristó, *Az Árpád-kor*, 128; *Dzieje Polski średniowiecznej* [The History of Medieval Poland], vol. 1. (Cracow: Platan, 1995), 278; Josef Válka, *Středověká Morava* [Medieval Moravia] (Brno: Muzejní a vlastivedná Společnost, 1991), 48; Tibor S. Kovács, “Támadás és Védekezés,” *A tatárjárás* [The Mongols’ Onslaught], Ed. Ágnes Ritoók, Garam Éva, (Budapest: Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, 2007), 16.

<sup>160</sup> Examples: David Morgan, *The Mongols*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990) (hereafter: Morgan, *The Mongols*), 139-140; Jerzy Wyrozumski, *Dzieje*, 222-223; Szczur, *Historia*, 263. Krystyna Pieradzka, the author of the footnotes in the source edition: Jan Długosz, *Roczniki czyli Kroniki sławnego Królestwa Polskiego* [The Annals or the Chronicles of the Illustrious Kingdom of Poland], vol. 7-8 (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1974) (hereafter: Długosz, *Roczniki*, VII-VIII), 9.

<sup>161</sup> Kosztolnyik, Hungary, 139; James Chambers, *The Devil’s Horsemen: The Mongol Invasion of Europe* (New York: Atheneum, 1979) (hereafter: Chambers, *The Devil’s*), 96. J. J. Saunders, *The History of the Mongol Conquests* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001) (hereafter: Saunders, *The History*), 85.

<sup>162</sup> Chambers, *The Devil’s*, 85.

<sup>163</sup> Ibidem, 88. The author added there: “The armies in the front lines, the Teutonic Knights, the Poles, the Hungarians and the Bulgars, were isolated and unsupported, and the Mongols knew it.”

Kadan's objective was to draw the northern European armies away from Hungary, and it did not yet look as though these armies had even been mobilized. Although their own army was already dangerously small, they decide to divide it and spread alarm over as wide an area as possible; in the last resort Mongols could always retreat faster than any European army could advance. While Kadan rode north-west to attack Mazovia, Baidar took a calculated risk and continued his advance south-east, directly towards the Polish capital at Cracow. Raiding and burning and drawing attention to itself, Baidar's vanguard advanced to within a few miles of Cracow and then slowly turned back as though returning to its camp with its plunder and prisoners. ... Bolesław's army would be one of the first to march to the rescue of his father-in-law, the King of Hungary, and Baidar had not only found it, but had lured it out from behind the city walls where it might have held out long enough for the other Polish dukes to reach Hungary unopposed or to come to its relief in dangerously superior numbers. ... Baidar and Kadan had arranged to meet again at Breslau [Wrocław – WK], the capital of Silesia, where they expected to find the strongest of the Polish armies ... Kadan had not yet arrived and Baidar began to lay siege to it [Wrocław – WK], but at last he received a report that Henry of Silesia had assembled an army of the northern princes at Liegnitz ... and King Wenceslas of Bohemia was marching to join him. Baidar abandoned the siege, sent word to Kadan and Batu, and set out at full speed to reach Liegnitz before Wenceslas.<sup>164</sup>

Zientara argues similarly in crucial parts. He agrees that some Mongol troops were dispatched to Mazovia to keep Conrad away and that the winter-time onslaught was a complete surprise. He also points out that Henry the Pious pulled back to Legnica because he strongly believed that help was about to come from Wenceslas. Henry, continuing the Zientara's argument, did not want to repeat the loss of the Little Poland army, when too small forces had clashed with the Mongols. Finally, Henry had to enter the battle, because Wenceslas unexpectedly stopped his armies and there was a growing pressure from society, which blamed the duke for his passive strategy of avoiding a fight.<sup>165</sup> Chambers continues:

When the news of the defeat [at Legnica – WK] reached him, Wenceslas fell back to collect reinforcements from Thuringia and Saxony. At Kłozko the Mongol vanguard found him, but his army was far too powerful for it and it was driven off by his cavalry. ... However, he [Wenceslas – WK] was already two hundred and fifty miles from Bela's army in Hungary and all they [Mongols – WK] had to do was keep him there. They made a feint advance towards the west,

<sup>164</sup> Chambers, *The Devil's*, 96-97.

<sup>165</sup> Zientara, *Heinrich*, 343-345.

drawing Wenceslas after them, and then broke up into small groups and rode around him through Moravia, burning towns as they went.<sup>166</sup>

This fine description meticulously reconstructs the Mongol tactics and strategy. According to Chambers, the Mongols were well prepared before launching a major invasion on the wealthy and powerful Kingdom of Hungary. The first news of their hostile intentions arrived at the Hungarian court in 1237.<sup>167</sup> The Mongols, who had suffered heavy losses during the conquest of Ruthenia, spent most of the year 1239 rebuilding and reorganizing their army.<sup>168</sup> The Mongols made also a huge effort to create an “intelligence service” to provide them with the data necessary to properly deploy a major army.<sup>169</sup> Moreover, it allowed them to coordinate numbers of army corps on a vast scale.<sup>170</sup> A short study by Stephen Turnbull clearly describes the characteristic features of the Mongol army, which included: reconnaissance in force, cruelty as a powerful psychological weapon, and a sophisticated system for scouting the enemy.<sup>171</sup> Taking all of this into consideration, I would argue strongly that the Hungarian and the Polish campaigns of 1241 were closely related. The Mongols did not behave in Poland as though they intended to occupy it. They appeared unexpectedly, ran through the country routing its armies, and finally left. On the other hand, assumptions that the Mongols wanted to incorporate the vast Hungarian plains to their empire have some credibility,<sup>172</sup> therefore, I would follow these lines and state that the Polish campaign was merely a flanking operation which, perhaps surprisingly, proved to be a success. The Mongols, however, could not have expected such a swift expedition. Furthermore, judging from their tactics I would claim that they anticipated serious military aid coming from the North, which had to be prevented at the root.

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<sup>166</sup> Chambers, *The Devil's*, 99.

<sup>167</sup> Kosztolnyik, *Hungary*, 132.

<sup>168</sup> Saunders, *The History*, 83.

<sup>169</sup> Ibidem, 84. See also Antti Ruotsala, *Europeans and Mongols in the Middle of the Thirteenth Century: Encountering the Other* (Helsinki: The Finnish Academy of Science and Letters, 2001), 32: “As always the Mongols planned their operations carefully. Spies collected information about the targets of the attack and the political situation of Europe was charted. The Mongols were well aware of the struggle between Pope Gregory IX and the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II, and the problems of the King of Hungary Béla IV with his nobles, as well as the nine quarrelsome Polish duchies. Western Christendom, in all its discord had no chance of mounting a united defence.”

<sup>170</sup> “At a distance of more than seven centuries, the historian is still struck with wonder at this extraordinary campaign. Whether one considers geographical scope of fighting, which embraced the greater part of eastern Europe, the planning and co-ordination of movement of so many army corps, the clockwork precision whereby the enemy was surrounded, defeated and pursued, the brilliant manner in which difficult problems of supply were solved, or the skill with which Asian armies were handled in an unfamiliar European terrain, one cannot fail to admit that the Mongol leaders were masters of the art of war such as the world scarcely saw before or has seen since” – ibidem, 88.

<sup>171</sup> Stephen Turnbull, *Mongol Warrior 1200-1350* (London: Osprey Publishing, 2003).

<sup>172</sup> Morgan, *The Mongols*, 139-140.

Why? Because the Mongol incursion into Poland was, I think, a devastating consequence of the marriage in 1239 and the military alliance which was attached to the dynastic union.

There is, unfortunately, no direct evidence in the sources for this conclusion. Jan Długosz, the fifteenth century Polish chronicler, left a rather long and detailed narrative about the Mongol invasion of Poland.<sup>173</sup> According to Gerard Labuda,<sup>174</sup> Długosz relied on the Polish laconic annals' notes, single fragments from other chronicles, a lost Dominican annals, and tradition.<sup>175</sup> Thus, his account is generally considered credible, mainly due to the lost Dominican source, which was supposedly composed nearly on the day of the invasion. Długosz's account, nevertheless, does not mention a word about any relations between the invasions of Poland and Hungary. Neither does it say anything about the dukes' intentions to help Béla IV, nor does it explain the strategic objectives of the Mongols. Following the tradition, Długosz only remarks that Bolesław the Shy with his mother, his wife, and his retinue departed from Cracow to Hungary. Długosz immediately adds, however, that Bolesław returned and took refuge in a mountain castle once the Mongols were devastating Hungary.<sup>176</sup> The point here is that the Mongols were already deep in Hungary, because the battle of Chmielnik – after which Bolesław allegedly fled the country – took place around 18 March 1241,<sup>177</sup> while the Mongols passed the Verecke Pass on 12 March 1241.<sup>178</sup> This shows that Długosz's perspective was strongly Polish-centred and he did not even try to combine the two invasions. Probably Długosz – as I mentioned before – did not know the reasons for the marriage of 1239, but neither were the lost Dominican annals, which he used extensively, aware of the Mongol intention to keep possible reinforcements at bay from Poland. They also did not mention the ducal necessity to send help to Hungary. There may be two reasons for this. Firstly, the Dominican annals normally reported events and did not analyze the Mongol war policy, hence Długosz applied a similar “narrow” approach to his description. Moreover, the conditions of the Polish-Mongol encounter greatly troubled any Polish insight into the invaders' interests. Secondly, the Polish-centred

<sup>173</sup> Długosz, *Roczniki*, VII-VIII, 9-30.

<sup>174</sup> See: Gerard Labuda. “Wojna z Tatarami w roku 1241” [The War with the Tatars in 1241], *Przegląd Historyczny* 50 (1959): pages were not available to me.

<sup>175</sup> Długosz, *Roczniki*, VII-VIII, 9.

<sup>176</sup> Ibidem, 16.

<sup>177</sup> Ibidem, 14.

<sup>178</sup> Kosztolnyik, *Hungary*, 139.

perspective, which is quite normal under such a threat of obliteration, the complete surprise of the attack, and the lack of awareness that Hungary was already on fire (see the case of Bolesław the Shy's flight) left no chance for the Polish dukes (and Polish chroniclers, respectively) to consider any military expedition to the South. They were absolutely occupied with defending their own territory. And this was the main goal of the Mongols. Furthermore, this was the final proof of their excellence.

There is, however, a single source account to which Kosztolnyik referred after stating that "in achieving victory at Liegnitz, Batu Khan had realized his first objective: to make certain that the Hungarian king receive no military help from Silesia or Poland."<sup>179</sup> The reference is a short passage from the *Carmen Miserabile* written by Rogerius, archbishop of Split (1249-66), who expressed there his experiences as a Mongol prisoner in Hungary. The *Carmen* was written immediately after the invasion (1243-44) and is considered one of the most captivating and lively accounts of the Mongol rulership in Hungary.<sup>180</sup> The passage itself stated:

Commander Peta made his way through Poland and, having killed one of the Polish dukes, he destroyed the noble city of Wrocław and inflicted an extraordinary slaughter. Then he invaded the land of the Moravian duke and, while other dukes were unable to arrive with reinforcements, he similarly devastated the land and hastily moved on to the gate of Hungary.<sup>181</sup>

This fragment does not indicate directly that the Polish dukes were supposed to send military help to Hungary, but at least it gives an idea of the military cooperation which could have taken place had the Mongols not overrun Poland. Afterwards, the beaten Polish dukes – not to mention the massacred Henry the Pious – were genuinely unable to mount an army. In such a context, I would use this particular passage as support for my hypothesis that the Mongols really expected some military commitment from Poland for the sake of Hungary. Such a forecast was, I think, a political calculation. The Mongols knew that the pope and the emperor would not dispatch any troops. They were also aware of Hungary's isolation due to conflicts with Austria and because of the Bohemian attention centered on the Holy Roman Empire's matters. The Mongols did not have to worry about the Ruthenian

<sup>179</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>180</sup> *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, vol. 7, (1995,) 946.

<sup>181</sup> *Peta rex per Poloniam dirigens gressus suos uno ab ipso de ducibus Polonie interfecto et destructa Wratislavia civitate nobilissima et strage facta mirabili ac in terram ducis Moravie aliis ducibus prestare sibi auxilium nequentibus simili crudelitate pervandens ad portam Hungarie festinavit*, In *Scriptores rerum Hungaricarum: tempore ducum regumque stirpis Arpadianae Gestarum*, ed. Imre Szentpétery, Vol. 2 (Budapest: Nap Kiadó, 1999), 563.

dukes, who had been just expelled from their domains, yet – Poland (or more precisely, Little Poland and Silesia) drew their attention because it was the only serious and standing ally of the King of Hungary, whose military abilities had to be neutralized at the very beginning of the invasion proper. The Polish expedition to Hungary did not happen, but this is not an argument against the alleged alliance because the main factor that made any contribution unthinkable was the Mongol troops ransacking southern Poland.

### Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed two Árpád-Piast marriages which occurred in the first half of the thirteenth century. The first, Salomea and Coloman, was agreed in 1214 and eventually concluded in 1218. This marriage happened after an eighty-year-break in mutual dynastic relations and was a quite practical solution to a problem. The Árpáds and the Piasts were competing for domination in the southwestern Ruthenia of Halich and Włodzimierz (Lodomer) from the last two decades of the twelfth century. This rivalry did not bear fruit, however, and therefore the competitors attempted to find a consensus which would allow them share the profits of the region without further fights and tensions. The marriage expressed such a “new deal” for Ruthenia. Halich was supposed to become a kingdom under the rule of the Árpád-Piast royal family. This program did not work and it was dropped after three years. The marriage, however, survived this political storm and was never annulled. Therefore, I infer that the early practical meaning of this union evolved into a more long-term strategic one and in this way demonstrated the fact that both parties still saw reasons for maintaining it.

The second marriage, of Kinga and Bolesław the Shy, has been interpreted differently but often superficially. Scholars have tended to concentrate on the interests of one party and neglect the other. My examination showed that the marriage was a result of talks between Henry the Pious and Béla IV with the support of Salomea and the Little Poland’s nobles. Consequently, the negotiations led to a military alliance (particularly aimed against the approaching Mongol threat) which was confirmed by the marriage. Béla IV, who was struggling with his nobles, suffered from political “isolation,” and sought a means to solidify his royal power, gained a political partner who could be militarily helpful, if combined with the “royal” Cumans. Moreover, Béla IV, who knew very well that his authority was endangered, was not strong enough to wage war with his back unsecured, avoided conflicts, and dedicated himself

to consolidating his power. Being preoccupied with domestic policy, all he could do for the safety of his kingdom, was to establish alliances with friendly powers. In fact, however, he was needed reliable allies, but only those who did not require immediate help from Hungary. Béla did not want to fight, but wanted to be backed up, if necessary. The engagement in Ruthenia in 1239-1240 was equal to declaring war on the Mongols. Ties with Poland meant manpower assisting in the recovery of Ruthenia at some time in the future or, at least a strategic partnership with the neighboring ruler, whose borders were equally menaced by the Mongols. Bolesław the Shy was the only choice for Kinga, because the sons of Henry the Pious were legally too closely related. He was, nevertheless, the best choice as well, for he was under Henry the Pious' supervision and, at the same time, he was a young duke of Sandomierz and the lawful heir to Cracow. Although in 1239 Bolesław had little chance of becoming a duke of Cracow one day, he still remained a ruler in the Little Poland, i.e., in the Polish region which traditionally, as I have argued, was considered politically attractive by the Árpáds.

Henry the Pious was thinking about receiving a royal crown and becoming king of Poland. This would give him authority over the other Piasts, which was not guaranteed by sheer power alone. He already had close family connections with the Přemyslids and, indirectly, with the Árpáds, but as the dominant Polish duke he looked for further prominent and potent alliances. The Árpáds were "popular" with European dynasties because of St. Elisabeth, who was canonized in 1235 and soon became an influential model of a noble woman's saint. Even the imperial house was emphasizing its proximity to St. Elisabeth. These reasons of prestige were undoubtedly present in Henry the Pious' mind, but they were not the only ones. The absolute winner in this sense was Bolesław himself, who from a petty duke was transformed into a son-in-law of the king of Hungary, the most powerful state in the region. Henry the Pious, however, remained a master of the game and secured extra support for his Cracow by keeping the young couple under his control. Any serious threat to Cracow in such circumstances, was a parallel danger to Henry the Pious' rule there, but it was also a peril to Kinga and her husband, who lived under Henry's political patronage. In such a case Henry could look forward to Hungarian reinforcements coming. The alliance with Hungary not only elevated Bolesław, but it helped Henry the Pious to excel other Piasts and strengthened his political status as the real contractor of the union.

This interpretation was partially built on the character of the Mongol invasion of 1241. The previous careful examination of political circumstances and varied opinions of the secondary literature revealed a significant lack of coherence when taking into consideration both the Hungarian and Polish interests. The critical analysis of the Mongol strategy plainly hints at some unknown factors which the Mongols had taken for granted before launching the invasion. Their flanking operation in Little Poland was absolutely not a random incursion or a sheer coincidence with the Hungarian campaign. On the contrary, it was a military masterpiece which allowed the Mongols to isolate and then throw the powerful kingdom to its knees within two months. They arranged the whole campaign taking a risk that the strong Polish contingent would route the weaker Mongol troops in Little Poland and then advance to the South to crush the main Mongol army trapped between two major forces. The risk they took is the best proof of how serious they were about a danger they planned to avoid. This danger emerged from the Hungarian-Polish alliance.



## Before a Conclusion: Prelude to the Angevins

This short chapter, more like an essay, justifies the title of my thesis and is supposed to create a link between the politics of Béla IV and the Angevin period. This is not, however, a detailed examination of the half-century period, but an attempt to point out a trend which began in the 1230s and extended for the next two decades. This chapter chiefly discloses my understanding of the later development in Hungarian-Polish relations and does not emulate the approach of the previous chapters, because a reflection on the “post-Mongol” period in Central Europe demands another thorough study. Here I will only adumbrate a political aspect and mention two others, cultural and economic, which should be taken into consideration when describing the mutual relations between the Polish dukes and kings of Hungary in the second half of the thirteenth century.

A concept of a North-South strategic alliance, which was expressed for the first time in the marriage of 1239, developed and evolved into much stronger ties than was originally foreseen. This happened, as I will show now, due to the unprecedented catastrophe in 1241. Regional politics, its goals and structures, had to be reconsidered. Hungary, significant parts of Poland (Little Poland, the central regions of Sieradz and Łęczyca), and southwestern Ruthenia were unwillingly affected by the same historical experience of the Mongol invasion. The leading role, however, in the “post-Mongol” regional politics was played by Béla IV, whose kingdom suffered apparently the most from the invaders. Since for Hungarian history the “post-Mongol” period is somewhat treated as the “second foundation” of the state, the Hungarian historiography pays close attention to what happened to the country in 1241. I will present it here briefly:

In early 1241, Béla IV declared a state of emergency, but, because of the carnival season, nobody took the call seriously. The nobles, and the lesser service nobility, servientes, and even personnel attached to the court – and now called to active duty – were under the impression that members of the hierarchy had only invented the danger because they did not wish to attend the church synod that had been called by the pope. Worse still, the common folk looked upon the Cumans recently settled in their midst as ‘Russian’ (that is, Tartar) spies.<sup>182</sup>

Such an attitude towards the growing danger of a Mongol invasion had serious consequences. The country was seriously damaged, in some parts devastated and

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<sup>182</sup> Kosztolnyik, *Hungary*, 133.

partially depopulated within thirteen months. Unburied corpses spread disease, whereas those who survived often lost the property they had accumulated over their lives – houses burnt down, barns and stables demolished, and crops taken away. The abandoned and uncultivated fields resulted in a lack of harvest and, subsequently, in a huge famine which apparently claimed more lives than the invasion itself,<sup>183</sup> which supposedly killed 15-20% of the population and left Hungary to be rebuilt literally from the ashes.<sup>184</sup>

This was a traumatic experience for the country and for the king, who was chased for months by a Mongol squadron as far as the Dalmatian seashore. From then on, Béla IV was predominantly dedicated to securing peace in his kingdom and preparing it for a second invasion. The common belief of the 1240s was that the Mongols would soon return to Hungary.<sup>185</sup> This was due to the assumption that the first onslaught was just a reconnaissance focused on inflicting the highest possible number of casualties among the inhabitants.<sup>186</sup> The people's morale was so low that the king had no doubts that the next encounter with the Mongols would make his subjects submit to the invaders without serious resistance.<sup>187</sup>

The reconstruction of the country had to encompass several aspects. Alongside a new immigration policy that was aimed to repopulate deserted areas,<sup>188</sup> there was a shift in the political strategy. The experience of Mongol warfare – so different from the European fighting style – forced the king to reconsider the organization of the royal army. The drastic change in domestic politics, however, was only one side of the coin. Béla IV painfully realized that his kingdom would not be safe as long as it

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<sup>183</sup> Pál Engel, *The Realm*, 102.

<sup>184</sup> Kontler, *A History*, 78. For an extensive discussion of the modern historiographical trends concerning the impact of the Mongol invasion see: Nora Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom: Jews, Muslims, and 'Pagans' in Medieval Hungary, c. 1000-c. 1301* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2001) (hereafter: Berend, *At the Gate*), 36-37. For a similar discussion see also: László Szende, "Magyarország külpolitikája 1242-1246 között" [The Foreign Politics of Hungary between 1242 and 1246], *Első Század 2* (2000): 299-349 (hereafter: Szende, *Magyarország*), 308-313. On the whole, the invasion was not as destructive as was maintained before. Two main arguments support this claim – the victorious wars for Hungary in the late 1240s, which could not have been waged only a few years after the alleged complete devastation, and the impressive and quick recovery in the first decades following the onslaught. Dr Balázs Nagy pointed out to me that after ten or fifteen years the Kingdom of Hungary was in working order, although, the fear caused by Mongols lasted to 1270 and to some extent even until the end of the thirteenth century.

<sup>185</sup> Kosztolnyik, *Hungary*, 320; Berend, *At the Gate*, 163, 165. Earlier Nora Berend explained that "the invasion was a major turning point if we consider the deep imprint it left on the imagination of contemporaries," *Ibid.*, 37.

<sup>186</sup> Kosztolnyik, *Hungary*, 182.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibidem*, 180.

<sup>188</sup> See *ibidem*, 323-324.

faced the Mongols on its own. He believed that the best answer to the Eastern menace would be the unity of the European kingdoms, confirmed and corroborated with papal authority. Therefore, he turned to the Holy See<sup>189</sup>, to the German emperor,<sup>190</sup> and to the king of France, asking for reinforcements and support against the common danger. However, his pleas proved in vain.<sup>191</sup> Disappointed, Béla IV concentrated on Eastern Europe as the region where his idea of a system of security could prevail.

The aftermath of the Mongol invasion was, therefore, a foundation for the political cooperation between Hungary and the dukes of Little Poland in the following decades. A system of security had been proclaimed in 1239 by the alliance between Béla IV and Henry the Pious. The obvious threat of the advancing Mongols, domestic turmoil and political “isolation” forced Béla IV, as I explained in the previous chapter, to seek military and political support in the North. The system, however, did not work, owing, I think, to excellence of the Mongol warfare. The security structure had to be reorganized. The death of Henry the Pious paradoxically helped in this endeavor, because his “monarchy” disintegrated and Bolesław the Shy emerged as a claimant to the throne in Cracow and finally won it in 1243.<sup>192</sup> This did not happen, nevertheless, without the Hungarian support. Followers of Bolesław the Shy with some Hungarian reinforcements expelled Conrad of Mazovia from Cracow in 1242.<sup>193</sup> Béla IV was devoted to securing his sphere of influence.<sup>194</sup> According to Włodarski<sup>195</sup> and recently to Żmudzki,<sup>196</sup> a decisive turn to Halich was part of the previous expansionist politics of the king of Hungary. Firstly, the expansion was carried out with both military and dynastic means. The “marital” offensive to the North was the opposite of practices before 1241 and clearly aimed to build a buffer zone along the northern borders of Hungary. Rostislav of Černigov, who had already asked for a

<sup>189</sup> For need and despair reflected in the letters of Béla IV see Berend, *At the Gate*, 164.

<sup>190</sup> An envoy of Béla IV arrived at the imperial court in 1241 and promised that if Béla IV had received aid from the emperor against Mongols, he would have submitted himself and his country to him in fiefdom. See Kosztolnyik, *Hungary*, 350-351.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid., 180. Béla IV nicely expressed his frustration writing to the pope c. 1250: “When the Tartars fought against us in our kingdom, we put our request over this matter before the three principal courts of Christendom, that is Yours, which is thought and believed to be the mistress and superior of all courts by Christians, the imperial one, to which we were ready to submit ourselves because of this, if at the time of the said pestilence it had given us efficient aid and help; and we had our request laid before the court of the Franks, but from all these we received neither consolation nor help, but only words.” – Berend, *At the Gate*, 166.

<sup>192</sup> Barański, *Dynastia*, 340 and 373. Szczur, *Historia*, 264.

<sup>193</sup> Szende, *Magyarország*, 319 and 325.

<sup>194</sup> Żmudzki, *Studium*, 33 and 36.

<sup>195</sup> Włodarski, *Polska i Ruś*, 123.

<sup>196</sup> Żmudzki, *Studium*, 34.

daughter of Béla IV in 1238/9, eventually married Anna in 1243. Within ten years he became a key figure in the Balkans, controlling the Hungarian interests in the south as the duke of Bosnia and Mačva.<sup>197</sup> Nevertheless, in that year Béla IV intended to pit him in Halich against Daniel. In the meantime, Bolesław the Shy was already ruling in Little Poland. The joint Hungarian-Polish-Ruthenian expedition against Daniel, a duke of Halich, in 1245 proved in vain.<sup>198</sup> Afterwards, Béla IV dismissed the idea of conquering Halich for his son-in-law.<sup>199</sup> He launched his “marital” offensive instead, and succeeded.<sup>200</sup> Lev, a son of Daniel, married Konstanze, another daughter of Béla IV in 1251. Finally, the Polish duke Bolesław the Pious of Kalisz received Jolanta, a sister of Konstanze, as a spouse in 1256.

Béla IV made a significant effort to sustain the best possible relations with his northern and northeastern neighbors, namely, the Polish and Ruthenian dukes of Cracow and Halich.<sup>201</sup> Hence, the general security system meticulously set up by King Béla IV may be characterized as follows: the vital enemies of the kingdom were recognized on the western (Austria and Bohemia) and eastern (the Mongols) borders. The threat coming from both directions was considered long-lasting, but the western one repeatedly appears in royal donation charters over the decades. This warlike policy surely contributed to the fact that the second half of the thirteenth century was full of conflicts concentrated on the West. The southern border of Hungary was secured by the victories of Rostislav, which consequently suppressed the Kingdom of Serbia and gained some control over the Bulgarian state. On the other hand, the North (and the northeast, too, to be precise) became a rather peaceful region where the neighboring principalities were allied with the Hungarian court.<sup>202</sup>

<sup>197</sup> Engel, *The Realm*, 106.

<sup>198</sup> Włodarski, *Polska i Ruś*, 127-8.

<sup>199</sup> Szende, *Magyarország*, 339.

<sup>200</sup> Włodarski, *Polska i Ruś*, 132.

<sup>201</sup> King Béla IV on 2 April, 1264, issued a charter for a Magister Nicholas with a donation as a reward for his fidelity. The text mentions many envoys from various countries who had gathered in the court. Moreover, the presence of all three of the king's daughters with their husbands was also attested. This may indicate the king's intention to keep up good relations with his sons-in-law. *et medio tempore nuncios diversorum regnorum recepisse[m] [Béla IV – WK], grecorum scilicet, bulgarorum, boemorum et specialiter Vybar filium Beubarth, Abachy et Thamasy nuncios tartharorum, nec non et nuncios regis Francie, sollennes et honestos; eadem eciam hora domina Constancia ducissa Gallicie et Lodomerie, domina Kyngve ducissa Cracovie et Sandomerie, nec non et domina Jolen ducissa de Calis, karissime filie nostre, cum principibus earumdem ad visitandum nos convenissent (Codex Diplomaticus Patrius Hungaricus. Hazai okmánytár, Ed. Imre Nagy, Iván Páur, Károly Ráth and Dezső Véghely, Vol. 8, (Pápa: Jókai Mór Városi Könyvtár, 2004-), No. 76, 96-97).*

<sup>202</sup> This is a question for further examination, whether kings' donations on the Polish border for quite a few faithful nobles were done deliberately because the northern areas were considered genuinely peaceful. The charters examined so far do not refer to this problem explicitly.

The second half of the thirteenth century witnessed a growing political rivalry between two regional powers – Bohemia and Hungary. The war for Babenberg’s legacy, which erupted in 1246, occupied them for thirty years and greatly reshaped politics in Central Europe. For these three decades Bolesław the Shy, and his appointed successor Leszek the Black, stayed firmly in the Hungarian camp,<sup>203</sup> deserting it only in the late 1270s.<sup>204</sup> But even then, they did it for only a short time.<sup>205</sup> This is, however, not the place to discuss the events of the second half of the thirteenth century in detail. I would only argue that the sixty years after the Mongol invasion and before the ascension of Charles Robert to the Hungarian throne deeply entrenched the political horizons of kings of Hungary and dukes of Little Poland. A tradition of “going together” was, thus, present at the beginning of the fourteenth century and played a role in turning the Hungarian Angevins toward active, mostly anti-Bohemian, northern politics. Manikowska would oppose the idea of a “tradition” in practical politics, emphasizing instead the most recent events as a clue for understanding Charles Robert’s northern activity. This is definitely true, but the study of this work reveals that the Angevin-Piast alliance did not emerge out of nowhere and it had a solid historical background. The strategic decision of Béla IV in 1239 to reach out to Poland as to a political partner, although the Piasts’ status was no longer comparable with the Árpáds’, initiated a discrete “new opening” in Hungarian-Polish relations. The Mongol invasion, however, forced the Hungarians to redefine their general strategy of security, and turned it into a priority of their foreign politics. To establish a firm buffer zone, Béla IV was ready to “sacrifice” his daughters by marrying them into northern, little prestigious, dynasties. The system, exactly because of the marriages, was supposed to last for ages. And it did. History shows, nevertheless, that the Mongols acted only as a trigger which launched the system. Bohemia soon took their place and occupied it for decades. Henryk Samsonowicz has remarked that

Reconstruction of the Holy Roman Empire was performed in the time of conflicts for the creation of dynastic domains. Habsburgs, Wittelsbachs and Luxemburgs competed to secure augmentation of their hereditary domains. The competition concerned: Tyrol, Carinthia,

<sup>203</sup> Włodarski, *Polska i Ruś*, 145.

<sup>204</sup> Żmudzki, *Studium*, 260. Włodarski, *Polska i Ruś*, 155-56. See also: idem, *Polska i Czechy w drugiej połowie XIII i początkach XIV wieku (1250-1306)* [Poland and Bohemia in the Second Half of the Thirteenth Century and in the Beginnings of the Fourteenth Century (1250-1306).] (Lvov: Nakładem Towarzystwa Naukowego, 1931), 80.

<sup>205</sup> Żmudzki, *Studium*, 389.

and Brandenburg, Bohemia after the Přemyslids had died out, Hungary after the Árpáds, and also the Polish principalities (Silesia). All these regions were involved in a rivalry of the great European dynasties. ... The up-until-then peripheral Polish principalities became the scene of international rivalry.<sup>206</sup>

Continuing this big picture, I argue that Bohemia replaced the Mongols,<sup>207</sup> but the system of security ignored it, remained intact and worked as a military alliance. This was apparently a result of geopolitics, which left Poland between mighty and expansionist units – Bohemia, the Teutonic Order, and Hungary. The regional balance of power demanded sustaining the alliance, which in the meantime caused serious cultural and economic consequences. Explaining them, considering the massive Czech, Hungarian, and Polish, Slovak, and Western secondary literature, would be challenging but the only rational task. This would give a broad context for the alliance and its evolution, which had its roots in 1239 but also a continuation in 1320.

Jerzy Wyrozumski<sup>208</sup> stated once that history is a domain of people, and not of economy. I agree,<sup>209</sup> and therefore, I maintain that to understand the Angevin policy towards Władysław Łokietek at the beginning of the fourteenth century, it is necessary to understand the objectives of people who were part of the Charles Robert's retinue, and who often perceived Little Poland from a very Árpadian perspective, which was, as I have presented here, a consequence of a strategic decision in 1239. The reconstruction of Poland's place (or rather Little Poland's) in the Árpadian spectrum and its practical, i.e., economic, cultural, and political, meaning would be, I think, an appropriate approach to the emerging Angevin period in the early fourteenth century, because not only did the Angevins win the Hungarian crown for themselves, but with it they also inherited the country's politics and its horizons. They could not totally abstract themselves from them. Moreover, the strong economic ties, which intensified under Bolesław the Shy and Béla IV, kept on

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<sup>206</sup> Henryk Samsonowicz. "Miejsce Polski w Europie w XIII/XIV w." [The Polish place in Europe at the turn of the fourteenth century.] *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 100, No. 4 (1993): 95. Translation mine.

<sup>207</sup> This simply means that the Mongols were no longer such a great as earlier. Żmudzki has pointed out, however, the sincere will of Leszek the Black to support Ladislas IV of Hungary in 1285 during the second Mongol invasion. Idem, *Studium*, 389.

<sup>208</sup> Jerzy Wyrozumski, "Gospodarcze i społeczne uwarunkowania procesu zjednoczeniowego w Polsce w XIII wieku" [The Economic and Social Conditions of the Unification Process in Poland in the Thirteenth Century], *Przemyśl II. Odnowienie Królestwa Polskiego*, [Przemyśl II. The Restoration of the Kingdom of Poland], ed. Jadwiga Krzyżaniakowa (Poznań: Instytut Historii Uniwersytetu Adama Mickiewicza, 1997), 64.

<sup>209</sup> This is an anthropological statement, which claims that a human being cannot be reduced to its biological or economic needs or desires. My agreement with Wyrozumski on the basic anthropological issue does not mean that I set aside strong economic motifs, which were (and are) ubiquitous in any sort of politics.

developing and made Hungary the major Polish trade partner in the fourteenth century.<sup>210</sup>

## Conclusion

From the very beginning this study was meant to be a prelude for future research on Angevin-Piasts relations at the turn of the fourteenth century. Practically, the prelude was composed from a reflection on the marital politics of the Árpáds and Piasts in their mutual context. The Angevins started to marry the Piasts very early, and seemingly they followed some patterns of their Árpáadian predecessors. This study has attempted to reconsider the Árpád-Piast marriages in the perspective of their prestige and political meaning. I intended to discover whether there was a difference between the marriages in the first centuries of the political existence of Hungary and Poland and those that took place in the first half of the thirteenth century. The type and idea of this study did not allow complete and exhaustive genealogical research, but it was devised to make use of existing materials with a fresh approach. The most important features of my study were a thorough reconsideration of the political role of marital alliances and an attempt to identify their reflections in the Polish and the Hungarian secondary literature. I called the picture that was revealed “the prelude to the Angevins.”

The main reason for the first chapter was to give a general overview of dynastic marriages between the Árpáds and Piasts until 1140. There were three of them: Bolesław I, son of Mieszko I and an anonymous woman, probably a daughter of Géza I, concluded c. 986; an anonymous daughter of Mieszko II and King Béla I, concluded 1041-1042; and Mieszko the Old, a son of Bolesław III the Wrymouth and Elisabeth (Erzsébet, Gertrúd), a daughter of Béla II, concluded before 1140. During my research, I have been able to justify the following statements. Firstly, in the period until 1140 the Piast and the Árpáds perceived each other as having similar status. The marriages of that time show patterns which suggest that relations with the Hungarians

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<sup>210</sup> Kazimierz Myśliński, “Rola miast małopolskich w handlu międzynarodowym późnego średniowiecza” [The Role of the Towns of Little Poland in the International Trade in the Late Middle Ages], *Czas, przestrzeń, praca w dawnych miastach: studia ofiarowane Henrykowi Samsonowiczowi w sześćdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin* [Time, Space, Work in Old Towns: Studies Presented to Henryk Samsonowicz for His 60. Birthday], ed. Andrzej Wyrobisz and Michał Tymowski (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1991), 418-419. See also: Danuta Molenda, *Polski ołów na rynkach Europy Środkowej w XIII-XVII wieku* [Polish Lead on Central European Markets between the Thirteenth and the Seventeenth Centuries] (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Instytutu Etnologii i Archeologii Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 2001), 57.

had little prestige for the Piasts, but were useful and possibly beneficial. Both dynasties could run their politics separately yet successfully. This was mainly the case of marriage in the tenth century, but the situation did not change much in the eleventh century. Such cooperation of comparable powers was strengthened by a common threat, i.e., the expansion of the Holy Roman Empire and Bohemia, which was under imperial influence. Close political ties developed further in the second half of the eleventh century, when Poland was very active in fights for the throne in Hungary. There was also a geographical factor that had an impact on Hungarian-Polish relations. As the example of Bolesław III revealed, the natural political partner for the Árpáds was the one who ruled Cracow, because his domain was directly adjacent to the Hungarian border. That the prospective double marriage of 1136-1138 might indicate that a succession pact was being planned for is the final argument for my reasoning. Such a pact, however, was never acted on, but its traces emphasize the practical equality of the Piasts and the Árpáds.

The second chapter focused on a statistical analysis of a database of marriages. The database included eighty-five dynastic marriages of the Árpáds and Piasts which took place in approximately the period 1150 to 1250. The data was divided into “generations” to allow for an examination of changing patterns in marital tendencies over the decades. My basic aim in this discussion was to reconstruct the dynastic horizons of the Árpáds and the Piasts. I also compared both houses within one generation in a search for both common and distinctive features, and then I summarized the data in total to get a big picture of the whole period. Finally, I made a comparison to see which of the two dynasties married more prominently. As a result I arrived at the following conclusions. The later period of 1150-1250 brought a gradual change in the status and perspectives of these two dynasties. As the percentages of marriages showed, the dynastic horizon of both houses, i.e., whom they married, varied significantly and consistently, changing along the generations. Whereas the Árpáds became a dynasty with wide European relations, the Piasts submerged into more and more short-distance dealings with a shrinking international perspective. In addition, due to the progressive dismemberment of Poland, the Piasts lost their dynastic attractiveness to royal courts, including the Árpáds. Therefore, I can state that not only was there a striking gap between the Piasts’ and the Árpáds’ dynastic perspectives in the middle of the thirteenth century, but also Hungarian Northern politics at the turn of the thirteenth century took shape as a result of the Árpáds’



choice and changed the direction of their further expansion. Hence, marriages with Ruthenia and one with Poland in 1214 were effects of this renewed Northern policy. According to the percentage data, the two following marriages of 1239 and 1256 were extraordinary for the Piasts, who scarcely managed to marry into any nuclear royal family for a whole century, and suddenly they received two royal daughters as spouses. In addition, my research demonstrated plainly that the Piasts and the Árpáds were no longer of equal status.

The third chapter compared two Árpád-Piast marriages which occurred in the first half of the thirteenth century. The first, Salomea and Coloman, was agreed in 1214 and eventually concluded in 1218. The Árpáds and the Piasts were competing for domination in the southwestern Ruthenian lands of Halich and Włodzimierz (Lodomer) from the last two decades of the twelfth century. This rivalry did not bear fruit, however, and therefore the competitors attempted to find a consensus which allowed them to share the profits of the region without further fights and tensions. The idea worked in practice for only three years, until Halich was lost again to the Ruthenian duke, but the marriage itself survived. The second marriage of Kinga and Bolesław the Shy I can be interpreted differently. My examination showed that the marriage was a result of talks between Henry the Pious and Béla IV with the support of Salomea and Little Poland's nobles. Consequently, the negotiations led to a military alliance (particularly aimed against the approaching Mongol menace), which was confirmed by the marriage. The idea of a military alliance was supported mainly in a discussion of Mongol warfare, which was a new approach to the problem of the marriage. A critical analysis of the Mongol strategy plainly hinted at some factors little known until now, which the Mongols had taken for granted before launching the invasion (the effect of their professional intelligence service). Their flanking operation in Little Poland in 1241 was absolutely not a random incursion or sheer coincidence with the Hungarian campaign. On the contrary, it was a military masterpiece which allowed the Mongols to isolate Hungary, and then damage it. They seriously expected a strong Polish army marching southwards, and therefore they risked a small unit to run through Little Poland and wreak as much havoc as possible. Thus, I suggest that the Mongols knew about something (pact, alliance), which would have caused a Polish intervention. I have also presented the reasons for the alliance in 1239 from the Hungarian perspective. Béla IV, who was struggling with his nobles and suffered from political isolation, needed a reliable partner. Ties with Little Poland

meant manpower to assist in recovering Ruthenia at some future time (as it had been twenty years earlier) or, at least, a strategic partnership with the neighboring ruler, whose borders were equally menaced by the Mongols. Bolesław the Shy was chosen for Kinga because he had the advantage of ruling the part of Little Poland (i.e., the Polish region which was traditionally considered politically attractive for the Árpáds), and simultaneously the sons of Henry the Pious were legally too closely related. The Polish perspective on the marriage included several prestigious matters. Henry the Pious was apparently thinking about receiving a royal crown and becoming king of Poland. The Árpáds were “popular” with the European dynasties because of St. Elisabeth, who was canonized in 1235 and soon became an influential model for noble woman sainthood. Even the imperial house was emphasizing its proximity to St. Elisabeth. Henry the Pious, by the marriage, secured extra support for his rule of Cracow by keeping the young couple under his control. Hence, any threat to Cracow was a parallel danger to the Henry the Pious’ rule, but also peril to Kinga and her husband, who lived under Henry’s political umbrella. Henry could, therefore, look forward to Hungarian reinforcements coming. The alliance with Hungary not only elevated Bolesław, but it helped Henry the Pious to excel over other Piasts and strengthened his political status as the real contractor of the union.

The last chapter of this study had a very specific meaning and it could also have been included in the conclusion. It played the role of a *pontifex*, i.e., a special unit, which was set out to build a bridge over the period of the early reign of Béla IV and the arrival of the Angevins in the beginning of the fourteenth century. I tried to draw some lines or suggest trends that originated in the first half of the thirteenth century and then lasted, in changing political conditions, to the turn of the next century, with their core, i.e. their main strategic idea, preserved. This was, however, more than a military alliance. The North-South cooperation increasingly relied on social and economic aspects, which eventually produced circumstances that by their nature stifled any conflict. Apparently Little Poland and Hungary became friends over the second half of the thirteenth century. This friendship was partially expressed through political cooperation but, I think, it was mainly constructed on the more common level – trade, culture, and religion. The cult of St. Elisabeth in Poland spread quickly; apparently the cult of St. Stanislas found followers on Hungarian soil, too; the bordering district of Nowy Sącz, offered by Bolesław the Shy to his Hungarian spouse Kinga in 1257, earned significant profit from international trade. All these

issues, now only partially examined, await further research, which would include both the Hungarian and Polish sources and secondary literature. My first intention, to study Angevin-Piast relations, was reconsidered once I realized that a wide economic, social, and political panorama of the Hungarian-Polish relations after 1241 would give a proper background for the political decisions of the beginning of the fourteenth century. This would be also a crucial contribution to the scholarship. For further research awaits, for instance, the reasons for the following marriages: Andrew III to Fennena and two unions of Charles Robert to the Piasts. On the whole, I have argued in this study that answers for these and other political matters at the turn of the fourteenth century can be traced back to the 1239 and the Mongol invasion, because I strongly believe that the Árpád-Piast alliance, the interesting partnership of the big and the small, was a true prelude to the Angevin-Piast union many decades later.

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