

# ITALIAN TRADERS IN POLAND 1300-1500

by

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# List of Abbreviations

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ASF – Archivio di Stato di Firenze

ASpO – Archivi di Stato di Prato

ASM - Archivio di Stato di Milano

ASV – Archivio di Stato di Venezia

ANK - Archiwum Narodowe w Krakowie

Consl. Crac. – Acta Consularia Cracoviensia. Księgi radzieckie m. Krakowa, rps  
APKr

Castr. Crac. – Acta Castrensia Cracoviensia

Akta Miasta Krakowa, civitatis Cracoviae iceptum anno Domini XCCCCXXX  
primo 1431-1446.

<https://szukajwarchiwach.pl/29/33/0/1.1.1/6/str/1/8/15/W8do5kX0n2TdycKS4uQdnA/#tabSkany>

[APWr] Archiwum Państwowym we Wrocławiu

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# **I. Introduction**

At the start of the fourteenth century, a young man, raised by the shores of the Mediterranean, entered the gates of a town far from home. The place was small by the standards of his homeland, its streets unpaved, and the languages spoken around him foreign. Yet, there was a market in the town's central square and the man found it was a place he could do business. In time, he settled permanently, purchased property, married, started a family, raised his children, and eventually died and was buried. That, in a few words is the life-story of many of the Italian merchants who traveled abroad in medieval times and it is dry as dust. It is the color, details, motivations, and patterns that make such a tale interesting, and allow us to better grasp the past. It is the purpose of this thesis to supply those elements. The study of Italian merchants abroad has a long and illustrious historiography to which this work makes a small contribution. Small indeed, given that the number of Italians who migrated to Poland during the fourteenth and fifteenth century was relatively low, little more than a hundred individuals. Yet, their presence fairly explodes off the pages of the sources – notarial records, court proceedings, letters, accounts. Their relative importance to the Polish economy of the time was far greater than their low numbers would indicate. Inspired by a number of push and pull factors, many Italians emigrated during the Late Middle Ages. War, factional politics, and high taxes in Italy pushed many men to seek their fortunes abroad just at the moment when the Kingdom of Poland began expanding on the European stage. Some who came traded for only a season while others migrated permanently, setting up families but often still retaining strong links back to their home communities. Merchant networks, family connections and personal patronage allowed certain individuals to gain otherwise unaccountable access to high positions. These connections spread beyond all political or cultural borders, linking Florence and Bruges, the Kingdom of Hungary with the Black Sea, and Venice to Bohemia, all via Italians present in Krakow transmitting goods, knowledge and cash. As interconnections increased, Italian city governments began to tap their citizens to promote their own interests at court and support them in turn by sending letters of recommendation. The aim of this work is to introduce the Italian traders who operated in Poland between 1300-1500, showcasing their lives, impact, and where possible, motivations. The title of the thesis reflects these themes, seeking to be as simple and encompassing as possible. “Italians” are considered those who resided on the Italian peninsula and its accompanying Islands during the period in question, a geographical and cultural-linguistic label as opposed to a political one. The term ‘traders’ meanwhile, is here taken in a broad sense – those who trade, exchange, do business – in both goods and services

for economic gain. “Poland” is likewise given an expansive general meaning, encompassing the borders of the contemporary Kingdom of Poland, as it fluctuated throughout the period, and extending westwards to include Silesia. While Silesia was not always politically attached to the Polish Kingdom, it was nonetheless closely entwined with it in cultural-economic terms that are relevant to this study. The timeframe discussed, 1300-1500, should perhaps more accurately be expressed as 1306-1518, from the appearance in the sources of the first Italian identifiable with a specific surname, to the marriage of King Sigismund the Old to Bona Sforza which ushered in a new age of Italian interest in Poland. The timeframe is not strict however, and there are mentions of events and personages both proceeding and postdating those expressed as they relate intimately to the narrative. The title thus seeks to be as general and as possible while clearly stating its purpose, allowing potential readers to identify content of the study as of potential interest without getting too bogged down in semantic specificities as to render it unintelligible. Finally, the need for such a study arises from the fact that while plenty of research has been done on Italians in Poland during the Early Modern Period, only a few Polish scholars have looked into the earlier period and almost nothing is available in English. This thesis fills the gaping lacuna.

## Research Questions

The questions underpinning this work follow the usual pattern of “Ws”. To start, *who* were these Italian traders who traveled to Poland during the period? Over a hundred can be identified. From *whence* did they come, *what* was their background and motivation for travel? This is where the story starts. From there, the questions take an economic turn. *What* were the goods they traded? Poland had many merchants of its own. How did these foreigners fare amongst them, were their goods unique, where did they procure them, what was their cost, and how successfully did they sell them? Much can be learned about the practicalities of long-distance trade from the answering of such questions as these. The when and the where having already been established – the Late Medieval period and the case of Italians in Poland, because both have been understudied. Moving then to what is perhaps the crux of the matter as it regards this thesis, *why* did these individuals choose of all places, Poland to trade in? Certainly, the Kingdom of Poland flourished between 1300-1500, but it was still a long ways from the Italian Peninsula. How did people even become aware of opportunities in Poland and what made them decide to risk the venture? As well, if over a hundred could be tempted, why not more? Finally, having established all the other interrogatives, the final question is *how* did Italian traders fare

in Poland? Did they meet with success or failure and what along the way were the social, legal, and financial obstacles they encountered? In essence: *Who* were they? *What* did they do? *Why* did they do it? and *How* did it work? These are the starting questions for this research, but they are not always answerable. Who the people were that travelled to Poland is frequently obscured by a lack of clear surnames or extensive documentation. What they were involved in is a bit easier as we simply dip into the sources and present what appears, but undoubtedly many activities went unrecorded and this fact should not be forgotten. Above all, the question of motivation – why individuals chose to migrate to Poland - is a difficult nut to crack, as even in the present, internal rationales can frequently only be guessed at or assumed from behavior. That said, a number of ideas on this are presented in the following pages. The final issue, how it all worked, is perhaps the most interesting and easiest to analytically dissect. Method can be extrapolated from the existing evidence and comparative models from other regions brought to bear. The difficulties notwithstanding, this thesis tackles the above questions regarding the Italian presence in Poland during the Late Medieval Period and seeks to address them to the best of the author's ability.

## **II. Chronological and Geographical Limits of the Research**

Whenever approaching the past history of a region, it is paramount to first define the nature of the area under study. This work focuses on the Kingdom of Poland and individuals who were from various polities in the Italian Peninsula. While at times in this thesis I will refer to these areas as Poland and Italy, it must be kept firmly in mind that we are not speaking of the same places we know as the nations of Poland and Italy today. This thesis focuses on the Late Middle Ages, specifically the years, 1306-1518, from the year of the first named Italian found in Polish sources to the marriage of Bona Sforza to King Sigismund I of Poland, when due to the new queen, a large Italian influx changed the picture dramatically. For simplicity's sake however, the years 1300-1500 are used in the title. Some mention will of course be made of earlier periods; and as the stories of a number of merchants from the fifteenth century extend beyond 1500, the sixteenth century is not entirely absent, but for the most part, the temporal limits have been respected.

## 1. What is the Poland of Which we Speak?

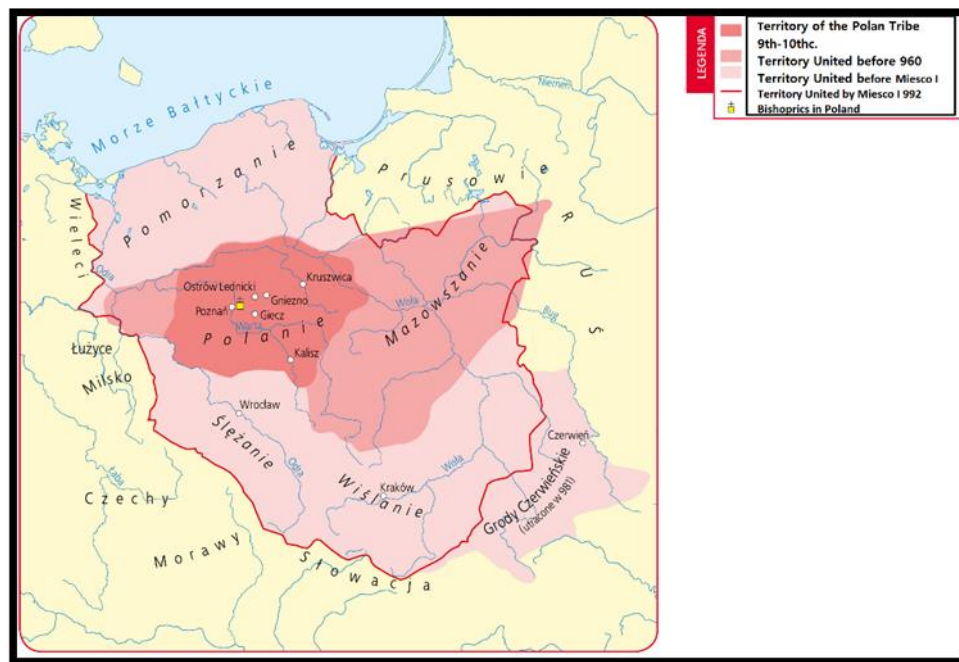


Figure 1 The Medieval Kingdom of Poland under Mieszko I Piast – 992 AD

Source: Mapy Online <https://mapyonline.gwo.pl/#>

The borders of the Kingdom of Poland changed dramatically between 1300 and 1500. The lands brought together by Poland's great unifier, Mieszko I Piast (930-992), were roughly equivalent to the shape of the country today, a fact that is not coincidental. (Figure 1) By 1300 however, Poland had shrunk to a fraction of its former size; as fractious Piast Dukes, successive Mongol invasions, and the aggressions of the Teutonic Knights disrupted ties and peeled away territory. By 1300, what remained was essentially the regions of Małopolska, Wielkopolska, Mazovia, and Silesia. By this point however, Silesia was controlled by a set of small, constantly feuding, Piast princelings which made them easy pickings for their neighbor. The territory was reunited in part under Władysław Łokietek in 1320, but some lands were permanently lost. (Figure 2)

In 1327 King John of Bohemia invaded and in 1335, in return for a number of political concessions, the Polish King Casimir the Great renounced all claim to the region. Wrocław and its territories thus became a part of Bohemia and the Holy Roman Empire, but the region remained, despite protests, solidly within the Ecclesiastical Province of Gniezno, which made

up the Polish church. This loss in the west was balanced however, by Casimir's conquests in the east. In the 1340s, Polish forces under Casimir stormed into the territory of the princes of Galicia–Volhynia, a region which included the City of Lviv, and by 1353 had succeeded in annexing the entire area, referring to it as Red Ruthenia. (Figure 3) The seizure of these lands turned Poland overnight into a multi-ethnic, multi-religious polity, as many more Jews, Armenians, and Ruthenians, most of whom were Orthodox Christians, inhabited them. It also placed the borders of the Polish Kingdom much closer to the routes that lead to Italy via the Black Sea.

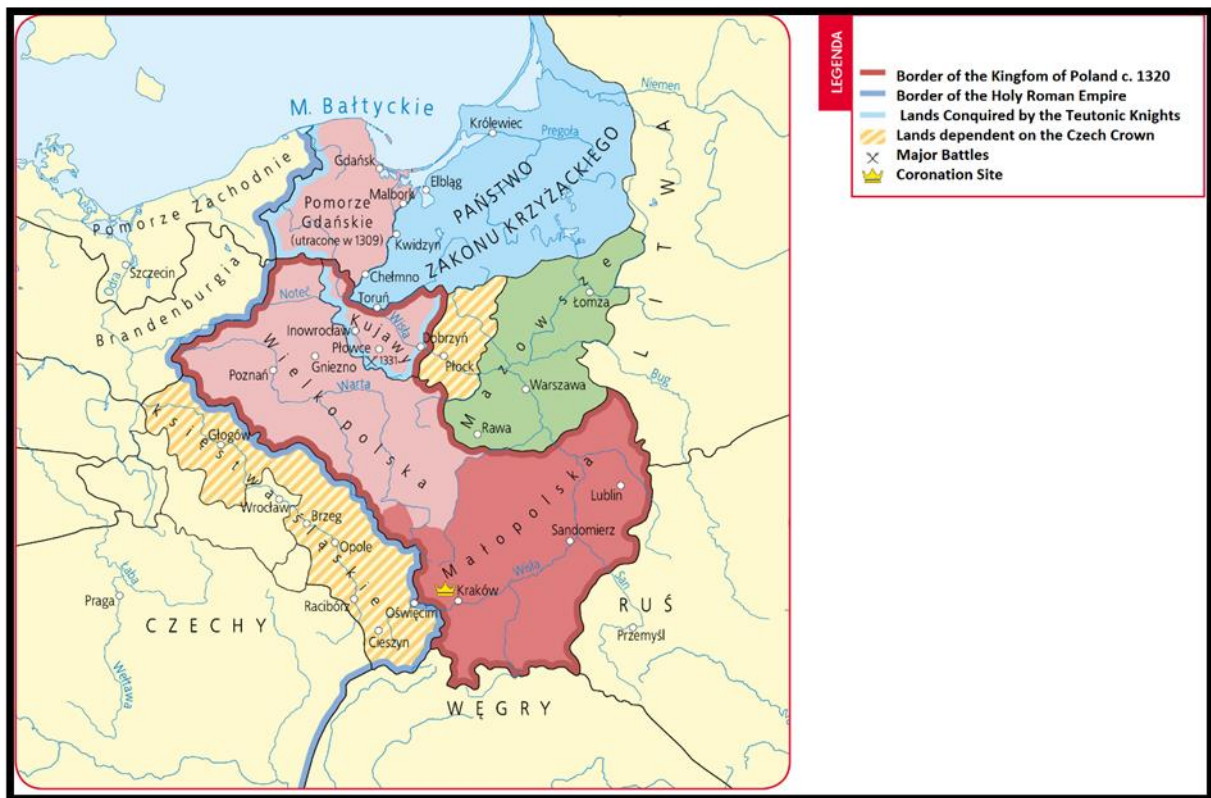


Figure 2 Poland and its Regional Divisions under Władysław Łokietek c. 1320

Source: Mapy Online <https://mapyonline.gwo.pl/#sredniowiecze>

In the north meanwhile, the Polish Kingdom and the Teutonic Knights engaged in a never-ending series of legal and military actions over Pomerelia, Pomerania, and Prussia. The battle of Grunwald/Tannenberg in 1410 turned the tide in favor of the Poles and over the rest of the fifteenth century, much of the lands in the north were retaken. (Figure 3) This, lead to greater control of the trade routes through the region, above all the Vistula and direct access to the



Baltic Sea. The definition of ‘What is Poland?’ for this thesis thus ebbs and flows over the time-period covered, tracking with military successes and defeats. There will also be a great deal of discussion about Wrocław, because despite its inclusion early on into the Kingdom of Bohemia, the city retained strong ties with Krakow and many Italians concluded business in both cities. The important towns of the north however, most notably Gdańsk, Toruń, and Elbląg, are not frequently sighted, as very few Italians appear to have taken an interest in this region during the period. While this work looks at the presence of Italian trade in Poland at large, in effect due to the nature of the interactions involved and the hazards of source survival, much of the focus falls on the cities of Krakow, Wrocław, and Lviv.



Figure 3 Poland under King Casimir the Great 1333-1370

Source: Mapy Online <https://mapyonline.gwo.pl/#sredniowiecze>

## 2. What is the Italy of Which we Speak?



Figure 4 The Italian Peninsula c.1494

Source: Wikipedia [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italian\\_city-states#/media/File:Map\\_of\\_Italy\\_\(1494\)-en.svg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italian_city-states#/media/File:Map_of_Italy_(1494)-en.svg)

The Italian Peninsula had a far more complicated and turbulent political history between 1300-1500 than even that of Poland. (Figure 4) The south of the peninsula and the island of Sicily were composed of the Kingdom of Naples, the Kingdom of Sicily, and the Papal States. Yet, for our story this region has little bearing, as despite the importance of Rome and the Pope, no traders arrived in Poland from this region and only one individual from Naples is recorded - Matteo di Lamberto. He was an Archdeacon of Wrocław and a papal tax collector, and as a member of the clergy is not really to be counted, given the focus of the present work. Indeed, the lack of a presence of men from Southern Italy in Poland is reflective of the different political situation and mercantile prominence of the two regions. The situation in the north of the peninsula was far more pertinent and complicated. Composed of a plethora of warring city-states, the Italians who migrated to Poland came primarily from Genoa, Milan, Florence, Venice, Bologna, and various satellite communities within their domains. These states were immensely wealthy, a wealth that was in large part fueled by the enterprising merchants who

braved long-distance trade routes. The two marine republics, Genoa and Venice, were the first to take advantage of increased opportunities while it was only after the decimations wrought by the Black Death (1347-8) that concentrated capital in the hands of a remaining few, that Florence and Milan began their climbs. The two-hundred years covered by this thesis saw the expansion of Milan, Florence, and Venice, while Genoa and Bologna both entered a period of eclipse. The confluence of increasing wealth, greater accounting and banking sophistication, and political turbulence at home, led many men to seek their fortunes abroad. Poland was but one of the many places merchants from these early Renaissance states traveled to trade in.

### III. Historiography

The theme of this thesis arose largely out of the fact that to date, there have been very few studies on the subject of Italian/Polish relations for the Late Medieval Period. While the Renaissance and Early Modern Period after 1500 has been well covered, far less attention has been paid to the previous centuries. Furthermore, those that have reached the public have done so primarily in Polish, making them difficult for international scholars to access.<sup>1</sup> This section offers a brief review of my theoretical framework proceeding a historiographical overview of studies done to date followed by a review of the sources, both edited and unedited, used in the making of this thesis. The purpose of what follows is less to analyze individual pieces but rather to provide a detailed overview, in essence, it forms the annotated bibliography that I wish had been available to me at the outset of this study. The published sources are described with the aim to point future scholars to places where relevant information may be found. Finally, the unpublished resources accessed in both Polish and Italian archives are detailed. Here, descriptions are given not only of places where I found useful information but also describes fonds where I found little or nothing of particular interest. These are included as an aid for future researchers that they may not waste time accessing these sources which I have

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<sup>1</sup> There is an abundance of literature on Italians in Poland post 1500, I will therefore list only a few: Jan Ptaśnik, *Gli Italiani a Cracovia: dal XVI secolo al XVIII* (Rome: Forzani E. C. Tipografi del Senato, 1909); Danuta Quirini-Popławska, *Działalność Włochów w Polsce w Połowie XVI wieku: na dworze królewskim, w dyplomacji i hierarchii kościelnej* [Italian activities in Poland during mid-17th century: at the royal court, in diplomacy and within the church hierarchy] (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy Imienia Ossolińskich Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1973); Adam Manikowski, *Il Commercio Italiano di Tessuti di Seta in Polonia nella seconda metà del xvii secolo: L'azienda di Marco Antonio Federici a Cracovia, 1680-1683*. (Warsaw: Wyd. Uniw. Warsz., 1983); Zdzisław Noga, "Italians in the City of Cracow's Authorities in the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries," *Acta Poloniae Historica* 119 (2019): 197-207.

already eliminated as containing no pertinent information. Negative data is after all still a valuable resource, even if it is less exciting than its positive twin.

## 1. Theoretical Framework and Methodological Models

Recent years have witnessed a veritable tsunami of studies on Italians abroad, a full accounting of which could be a thesis in and of itself. The topic has long interested both Italian and international scholars, but in recent years its popularity has truly exploded. In part, the attractiveness of this topic can be explained by the depth and richness of Italian archives which has given researchers plentiful fodder to gorge themselves upon. This is far from the only reason, however, as scholars have sought to explain why Italy had during the twelfth to fifteenth centuries more than its fair share of prominent, and that is to say, well-documented, individuals who went abroad. The reasons for this were manifold, but as argued by Robert Lopez already several decades ago, rest most firmly on Italy's early start during the medieval Commercial Revolution and the societal structures arising from the communal system that promoted long-distance trade.<sup>2</sup> The greater attention given to these issues can be explained by the modern interest in globalization, migration, and cross-cultural exchange. As history writing often reflects far more the occupations of the present than those of past ages, our modern need to look to the past for an example of how to deal with our ever more emmeshed and cross-connected world has aided in bringing the experiences of Italian travelers and traders to the fore.

The recent explosion of studies of Italians abroad in the last two decades should also be viewed within the larger context of the movement away from nineteenth and twentieth century nationalist histories and the post-structuralist search for liminal spaces. The search to move beyond modern lines on a map gave rise in recent decades to Mediterranean studies which centered research around the more neutral pre-modern highway of the Central Sea that links Europe, Africa, and Asia. This focus, pioneered by Henri Pirenne, Fernand Braudel, Peregrine Horden, and Nicholas Purcell, and carried on within the recent book series published by Brill - *The Medieval Mediterranean Peoples, Economies and Cultures, 400-1500*, reflects a preoccupation with interconnectivity and exchange rather than on insular differentiation.<sup>3</sup> This

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<sup>2</sup>Robert S. Lopez, *The Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages, 950-1350* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1976).

<sup>3</sup> Fernand Braudel, *La Mediterranee et le monde mediterraneen a l'epoque de Philippe II*, (Paris: Colin, 1949). Henri Pirenne, Jacques Pirenne, and V. Vercauteren. *Mahomet et Charlemagne* (Brussels: Nouvelle société et

work expands on these ideas, using their theoretical frame as groundwork but moving beyond the Mediterranean to the inland regions of Central Eastern Europe that have so far gone mostly unexplored.

The study of merchant communities abroad, and Italians in particular, has also been strongly influenced by the advent of Micro-history, which proposed that by studying a specific individual or unusual case, it is possible to say much about the society in which they moved. Individuals became agents exposing ideas and pasts greater than themselves while simultaneously providing a focal point of human interest. Instead of the histories of Great Men, it became popular to write the histories of small men, and even women, through whose lives whole worlds could be revealed. Having arisen in Italy, this method has left a particularly lasting impact on researchers of the region, as historians have followed in the footsteps of Carlo Ginzburg, the researchers of *Quaderni Storici*, and Natalie Zemon Davis among others.<sup>4</sup> More than anything, this thesis seeks to emphasize the individual, exploring the lives of the men and women who made their way from Italy to Poland and through the pattern of their experiences, divulging a larger whole. For this reason, the entire work, although more specifically the case studies presented in Chapter 4 can be considered a Micro-history.

While this study focuses on the activities of ‘traders’, it is not in the traditional sense an economic history. Rather, it is a social history that explores the activities of individuals engaged in economic activities. The mid-twentieth century also saw a flourishing of interest in the mixed economic and social history of Medieval Italy and in particular, the activities of Italian merchants abroad. Sought are the reasons behind their unusual success and often searching to identify the antecedents of the modern globalizing economy. The rich legacies left in Italian archives made economic studies there possible which would have been unfeasible elsewhere. Special interest has thus been dedicated to Italians, Tuscans in particular, and their activities

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édition, 1936); Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History*, (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2000). From the Brill series in particular volumes 79, 93, and 94: Claire Judde de Larivière, *Naviguer, commercer, gouverner: économie maritime et pouvoirs à Venise (XVe-XVIe siècles)*. Vol. 79, (Leiden: Brill, 2008); (Leiden: Brill, 2013); Georg Christ, *Trading conflicts: Venetian merchants and Mamluk officials in late medieval Alexandria*. Vol. 93. (Leiden: Brill, 2012); Ingrid-Houssaye Michienzi, *Datini, Majorque et le Maghreb (14e-15e siècles): Réseaux, espaces méditerranéens et stratégies marchandes* Vol. 94 (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

<sup>4</sup> Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*, trans. John Tedeschi and Anne Tedeschi (Baltimore, Md.: John Hopkins University Press, 1980); Carlo Ginzburg, “Clues: Roots of an Evidential Paradigm,” In *Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method*. 96–125 (Baltimore, Md: John Hopkins University Press, 1989); Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1983); For a full overview of *Quaderni Storici*’s many studies see: “*Quaderni storici* Indice dei fascicoli, 1966-1999,” [https://www.mulino.it/edizioni/riviste/quadernistorici/indici/elenco\\_gen.htm#2](https://www.mulino.it/edizioni/riviste/quadernistorici/indici/elenco_gen.htm#2) Accessed January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

abroad. The pioneers of this type of study include such luminaries as: Armando Saporì, Federico Melis, Raymond Roover, and Alwyn A. Ruddock.<sup>5</sup> Interest in this subject has only increased in recent years as historians are drawn to seek parallels with our increasingly interconnected global economy with societies in the past. This drive has been significantly aided by the studies of the recently digitized Datini archive with its great wealth of account books and business letters which has allowed for a much deeper understanding of the mechanics of Italian long-distance mercantile exchange.<sup>6</sup> There has also been in recent years a drive to move beyond the numbers in economic history. These studies have sought to untangle the more intimate realities of inter-personal exchange by focusing on the social networks underlying economic realities and have proven invaluable for my research. Of special note, are those by Krisztina Arany, Katalin Prajda, Ingrid Houssaye Michienzi, and Paul D. McLean, as well as others.<sup>7</sup> These works have had a direct influence on this thesis, by providing both related source material and models of approach.

This thesis was also made possible only by the greater access to primary and secondary sources permitted by digitization projects undertaken over the last twenty years. While often

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<sup>5</sup> Armando Saporì, *The Italian Merchant in the Middle Ages*. (New York: Norton, 1970); Armando Saporì and Giuseppe Prato. *La crisi delle compagnie mercantile dei Bardi e dei Peruzzi* (Florence: Olschki, 1926); Federico Melis, *Aspetti della Vita Economica Medievale: Studi nell'archivio Datini di Prato* (Siena: Monte dei Paschi di Siena, 1962); Federico Melis, and Elena Cecchi, *Documenti per la Storia Economica dei Secoli XIII-XVI* (Florence: L.S. Olschki, 1972); Raymond de Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank: 1397-1494* (Washington DC: Beard Books, 1999); Raymond de Roover, *Money, Banking and Credit in Medieval Bruges: Italian Merchant-Bankers, Lombards and Money-Changers* (Cambridge Massachusetts: The Medieval Academy of America, 1948); Alwyn A. Ruddock, *Italian Merchants and Shipping in Southampton: 1270-1600* (Southampton: University College, 1951).

<sup>6</sup> Martin Malcolm Elbl, "From Venice to the Tuat: trans-Saharan copper trade and Francesco di Marco Datini of Prato," in *Money, Markets and Trade in Late Medieval Europe*, eds. Lawren Armstrong, Ivana Elbl and Martin M. Elbl 411-459 (Leiden: Brill, 2007); Giampiero Nigro ed. *Francesco Di Marco Datini: The Man the Merchant* (Florence: Firenze University Press, 2010); Ingrid-Houssaye Michienzi, "Datini, Majorque et le Maghreb (14e-15e siècles): Réseaux, espaces méditerranéens et stratégies marchandes," in *The Medieval Mediterranean Peoples, Economies and Cultures, 400-1500* vol. 94. (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

<sup>7</sup> Krisztina Arany, "Florentine Families in Hungary in the First Half of the Fifteenth Century." *Phil. Diss Central European University* (2014)., Katalin Prajda, *Network and Migration in Early Renaissance Florence, 1378-1433* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018); Katalin Prajda, "Unions of Interest. Florentine Marriage Ties and Business Networks in the Kingdom of Hungary during the Reign of Sigismund of Luxemburg." in *Marriage in Premodern Europe: Italy and Beyond*, ed. Jacqueline Murray, 1-20 (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2012); Ingrid Houssaye Michienzi, "La 'nation' et les milieux d'affaires florentins aux XIV<sup>e</sup> et XV<sup>e</sup> siècles," in *Nation et nations au Moyen Âge*, (Paris: Éditions de la Sorbonne, 2014) 299-309. <https://doi.org/10.4000/books.pSORbonne.2175>; Paul D. McLean, *The art of the network: Strategic interaction and patronage in Renaissance Florence*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007); Josh Brown, "Multilingual merchants: the trade network of the 14<sup>th</sup>-century Tuscan merchant Francesco di Marco Datini," in *Merchants of Innovation. The languages of traders*, ed. Esther-Miriam Wagner, Bettina Beinhoff, & Ben Outhwaite (Berlin DeGruyter, 2017), 235-251; Francisco Apellaniz, "Florentine networks in the Middle East in the early Renaissance," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 30.2 (2015): 125-45.

underpublicized, historical studies have been greatly aided by technological innovations and the advent of digital humanities, which has provided ever greater access to materials, together with new tools of analysis. This is especially true concerning 2020-21 when the global Covid-19 viral pandemic made travel, archival and library access nearly impossible. Without access to these sources online, this thesis would not have been possible.

## 2. Polish/Italian Relations Studies

While the lion's share of research on Polish/Italian matters has been carried out by Polish historians, the earliest works were, interestingly enough, done in other languages. The genesis of these works can be found with an Italian, who was himself resident in Poland. Sebastiano Ciampi, was among the first to take an interest in the exchange of individuals between Italy and Poland. Invited to teach Latin at the University of Warsaw, Ciampi completed two works in the 1830s based on primary sources available in Italian archives.<sup>8</sup> His work remains useful as a reference guide down to this day, and in places offers the only transcribed editions of specific documents. A few other primary sources were brought to light in 1908 in an article intitled *Tra l'Italia e la Polonia*, published in the *Archivio Storico Italiano*, by Israel Zoller, who although born in Austrian Partition Poland, spent most of his adult life in Italy.<sup>9</sup> Ciampi's work however, stood at the primary base for all further studies completed in the early twentieth century, but was then largely forgotten. Written in Italian, it remains one of the few works available on the topic in that language. The topic was introduced to the French academy in the early 1890s by Louis Fournier, in a volume on the history of Florentines residing abroad during the middle ages which included a section dedicated to *Les Florentins en Pologne*.<sup>10</sup> The chapter was strongly indebted to Ciampi, and includes some references to the earlier period, but focusses primarily on the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Still, it remained one of the fundamental texts on the subject for non-Polish historians due to its availability in French.

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<sup>8</sup> Sebastiano Ciampi, *Notizie di Medici, maestri di Musica e cantori, pittori, architetti, scultori, ed altri artisti Italiani in Polonia e Polacchi in Italia* (Bologna: A Forni, 1830); Sebastiano Ciampi, *Notizie dei secoli XV e XVI. sull'Italia, Polonia e Russia, colle vite di Bona Sforza de' duchi di Milano, regina di Polonia e di Giovanni de' Medici, detto delle Bande Nere* (Florence: Leopoldo Allegrini e Giov. Mazzoni, stampatori nella Badia fiorentina, 1833); Sebastiano Ciampi, *Bibliografia critica delle antiche reciproche corrispondenze, politiche, ecclesiastiche, etc., dell'Italia, colla Russia, colla Polonia ed altre parti settentrionali* (Florence: Guglielmo Piatti, 1834).

<sup>9</sup> Israel Zoller, "Tra l'Italia e la Polonia," *Archivio Storico Italiano*, serie V, 42, no. 252 (1908): 388-97.

<sup>10</sup> Louis Fournier and Hippolyte-André Charpin-Feugerolles, *Les Florentins à Lyon* (Lyon: Libr. ancienne de L. Brun, 1893).

Another volume that bears mentioning is that of Jan Fijałek, published in 1900.<sup>11</sup> While composed by a Polish scholar, the work was written in Latin, and chronicles the Polish students who studied abroad in Italy during the fifteenth century, focusing in particular on the Universities of Bologna and Pavia. As this thesis centers on trade and Italian migration, I have made little use of this particular work, but it marks the first of an important branch of study interested in intellectual exchange between Italy and Poland which has since produced numerous valuable works.<sup>12</sup>

The turn of the nineteenth century brought the single most important researcher on Italians in Poland to the stage. Indeed, one cannot speak on this topic without first and foremost acknowledging the work of Jan Ptaśnik. Born in a village located not far from Krakow in 1876, Ptaśnik studied at Jagiellonian University and dedicated his life to Polish independence and the revitalization of his nation's past. His interest in Italian studies came early in his career, when he traveled to Rome in 1903 for the first of five year-long expeditions to hunt down Polish diaspora material in the Vatican Archives. It was during this time that he collected the sources that would serve as the foundation of his habilitation thesis and later collections dedicated to Italians active in Poland.<sup>13</sup> Over the next few years between 1907 and 1910, Ptaśnik published three works dedicated to Italians in Poland.<sup>14</sup> Two of these works dealt with Italians in the medieval and the third in the Early Modern period, this last work incidentally also appeared in Italian, making it accessible to non-Polish scholars. Ptaśnik's final magnum opus dedicated to Italians in Poland in the Medieval Period was published in 1922 and remains to date, the only

<sup>11</sup> Jan Fijałek, *Polania apud Italos scholastica saeculum XV* (Krakow: Typis et sumptibus Universitatis Jagellonicae, 1900).

<sup>12</sup> Anna Horeczy, *Prawnicze doktoraty Polaków w Bolonii w XV wieku* [Polish Doctors of Law in Bologna during the XV century], *Roczniki Historyczne* 81 (2015): 147-85;

Stanisław Sroka, "Doktoraty Polaków na uniwersytecie w Ferrarze w pierwszej połowie XVI wieku [Doctorates of Poles at the University of Ferrara in the first half of the 16th century]," *Roczniki Historyczne* 80 (2014): 155-67; Stanisław A. Sroka, "Wynagrodzenia profesorów z Polski na Uniwersytecie Bolońskim w drugiej połowie XV wieku [Salaries of professors from Poland at the University of Bologna in the second half of the fifteenth century].." *Roczniki Historyczne* 83 (2018): 175-186; Jerzy Kowalczyk, "L'arte del primo umanesimo in Polonia e i suoi legami Ccn l'Italia," *Arte Lombarda, Nuova Serie*, no. 44/45 (1976): 217-24.

<sup>13</sup> Jan Ptaśnik, "Z dziejów kultury wolskiego Krakowa [The History of Italian Culture in Krakow]," *Rocznik Krakowski* 9 (1907): 1-148.; *Italia mercatoria apud Polonos Saeculo XV ineunte: Opera*, ed. Jan Ptaśnik (Rome: Loescher, 1910).

<sup>14</sup> Jan Ptaśnik, "Z dziejów kultury wolskiego Krakowa [From the history of Italian culture in Krakow]," *Rocznik Krakowski* 9 (1907): 1-148; Jan Ptaśnik, *Gli Italiani a Cracovia dal secolo XVI al XVIII*, (Roma: Forzani, 1909); Jan Ptaśnik, *Włoski Kraków za Kazimierza Wielkiego I Władysława Jagiełły* [Italians in Krakow during the Reign of Casimir the Great and Władysław Jagiełło], *Rocznik Krakowski*. 13. (Krakow : Druk. "Czasu", 1910).



dedicated monograph on the topic.<sup>15</sup> Importantly, Ptaśnik's 1922 work was later summarized and published in Italian without footnotes by Armando Sapori in 1967, marking the first time that Ptaśnik's work on the medieval history of Italians in Poland reached a non-Polish speaking audience.<sup>16</sup> Sapori's summary then became the touch-stone for information on Italians in Poland for international scholars who often did not realize that his work was merely a summation of Ptaśnik's labors. Due to the high caliber of Ptaśnik's scholarship and a general turn towards other questions of historical interest in the reconstituted Polish Republic from the 1920s, his work has remained unchallenged for nearly a hundred years. Yet, for all of his acumen, Ptaśnik was not infallible and during his research developed the rather unfortunate habit of seeing Italians behind every likely bush in the historical record, a common scholarly affliction, particularly given that from the sources it is often extremely difficult and at times impossible, to determine with exactitude the origin or familial relationship of a particular individual. Names in particular are notoriously tricky, given the lack of set spellings, orthographic peculiarities, copying mistakes or a later scholar's erroneous transcription. For this study, I have sought above all to be transparent when I have cause to be unsure about an appellation and cite sources and reasons when I make probable guesses. This approach has very often required me to go back to the original sources instead of relying on other scholar's interpretations, particularly those of Ptaśnik, who for all his knowledge and insight could occasionally make leaps of historical faith on very flimsy evidence. For this reason, while I have drawn very much from his work in this study, apart from his source editions, there will be almost no footnotes in this thesis citing Jan Ptaśnik's work. While his work is certainly the bedrock from which I have drawn inspiration and direction, I have sought to take none of his analysis for granted. With this in mind, I have looked over each primary document myself, and working with new materials and theoretical frameworks, crafted an original story of the Italians traders who came to Poland. It must also be noted, that while no other scholars have taken such a holistic view of Italian migration to Poland since Ptaśnik, some from his generation sought to approach the topic from a variety of individual angles, art-historical, regionally specific, church history, etc. In this vein, Kazimierz Kaczmarczyk's study on the Italian in the City of Poznań during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, in his 1928 article "*Włosi w Poznaniu na*

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<sup>15</sup> Jan Ptaśnik, *Kultura Włoska Wieków Średnich W Polsce* [Italian Culture in Medieval Poland]. (Warsaw: Instytut Wydawniczy Biblioteka Polska, 1922).

<sup>16</sup> Armando Sapori, "Gli Italiani in Polonia fino a tutto il Quattrocento," *Studi di storia economica* 3 (1967): 149-176.

*przełomie XV na XVI wiek*”, deserves special mention, as it greatly expanded the work done by Ptaśnik in this particular city.<sup>17</sup>

The post-war generation brought an increased interest primarily in Polish economic history and with it, unsurprisingly, attracted some to question Poland’s contacts with the economic powerhouse of the age – the Italian Peninsula. This interest led the famous Polish economic historians, Marian Małowist and Henryk Samsonowicz, to produce several studies on the commercial relations with Italy during the medieval period.<sup>18</sup> Francis W. Carter, the English historical geographer, later produced a number of fundamental studies on aspects of the Polish economy, many of which related to Italian matters.<sup>19</sup> Carter’s work was furthermore published in English, making it one of the few studies dealing with the Polish economy of the medieval period available in that language. Since that generation, Danuta Quirini-Popławska and her student, Rafał Hryszko, have been the only scholars to delve into the topic of Italians in medieval Poland. Their focus however, has been primarily on trade relations with the Black Sea region, rather than on the Kingdom of Poland as a whole. Both Quirini-Popławska and Hryszko’s work has proved a touch-stone for my own, and will be found frequently footnoted in sections dealing with Poland’s contacts with the Black Sea Coast. Helpfully for Italian scholars, Luca Palmarini has recently contributed by summarizing most of Quirini-Popławska and Hryszko’s findings, while adding his own assessment to the sources.<sup>20</sup> The other researcher that must be mentioned here is Grzegorz Myśliwski, who has written unparalleled studies on the City of Wrocław and its connections with Venice and the German lands in the Later Middle Ages. These, having been published in English, has also made them available to

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<sup>17</sup> Kazimierz Kaczmarczyk, "Włosi w Poznaniu na przełomie XV na XVI wiek [Italians in Poznań at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries.]" *Kronika Miasta Poznania: kwartalnik poświęcony sprawom kulturalnym stoł. m. Poznania*: organ Towarzystwa Miłośników Miasta Poznania 6.1 (1928): 1-40.

<sup>18</sup> Marian Małowist, "Polish-Flemish trade in the Middle Ages," *Baltic Scandinavian Countries* 4 (1938): 1-9; Marian Małowist, *Kaffa-kolonia genuenska na Krymie i problem wschodni w latach 1453-1475 = Caffa - colonie génoise en Crimée et la question d'orient. 1453-1475* (Warsaw:: Nakładem towarzystwa Miłośników Historii z zasilku Ministerstwa Oświaty, 1947); Marian Małowist, *Wschód a Zachód Europy w XIII-XVI wieku: konfrontacja struktur społeczno-gospodarczych* [East and West of Europe in the XIII-XVI century: a comparison of socio-economic structures] (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawn Naukowe, 1973); Henryk Samsonowicz, "Relationes commerciales Polono-Italiennes dans le bas Moyen Age," in *Studi in memoria di Federico Melis*, ed. Luigi De Rosa, vol. 2 (Florence:Giannini, 1978), 287-301

<sup>19</sup> Francis W. Carter, "Cracow's Transit Textile Trade, 1390–1795: A Geographical Assessment," *Textile History* 19.1 (1988): 23-60; Francis W. Carter, "Cracow's wine trade (fourteenth to eighteenth centuries)," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 65.4 (1987): 537-578; Francis W. Carter, *Trade and Urban Development in Poland: An Economic Geography of Cracow, from Its Origins to 1795*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

<sup>20</sup> Luca Palmarini, "La presenza dei mercanti genovesi in Polonia nei secoli XIV e XV," in *Punti d'incontro, studi sulla lingua, sulla letteratura e sulla cultura*. edited by Koman Aleksandra, Kwaśniewska-Urban Paulina Woźniak Katarzyna Katarzyna Woźniak. 49-65. (Krakow: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Pedagogicznego, 2018).

international scholars. Rather unfortunately, Myśliwski's work related to Venice remains less-well known than its quality deserves, due to its placement within a festschrift volume dedicated to Paul Knoll.<sup>21</sup> Benedykt Zientara meanwhile, in the 1970s, penned a very interesting article dealing with the realities of foreigners' movements to Poland between the tenth and fifteenth century.<sup>22</sup> While much of this work dealt with German, Armenian, and Jewish populations, Italians were also a component and her general framing of the situation continues to be valid. More recently, Elżbieta Jamrozik authored an article dealing with Italian and Polish relations in French, but as with many other studies, after a few paragraphs summarizing generalities about the medieval period, the paper becomes detailed only with the arrival of Bona Sforza as bride of King Sigismund the Old of Poland in 1518.<sup>23</sup> Finally, most recently, the Italian scholar, Francesco Bettarini, has produced an article using the source collection published by Jan Ptaśnik, together with new documents combed from the Florentine and Venetian archives.<sup>24</sup> This article explores some of the activities of the Florentine di ser Matteo family in Poland and while useful in many respects, contains a number of glaring errors which mars this otherwise useful contribution.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Grzegorz Myśliwski, "Venice and Wrocław in the later Middle Ages." in *Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages: A Cultural History: [essays in Honour of Paul W. Knoll]*. 100-115. ed. Piotr Górecki and Nancy Deussen (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2009); Grzegorz Myśliwski, "Wrocław's Economic Links with the Upper German Lands in the Thirteenth to the Fifteenth Century," *Acta Poloniae historica* 102 (2010): 5-42.

<sup>22</sup> Benedykt Zientara, "Foreigners in Poland in the 10th-15th Centuries: Their Role in the Opinion of Polish Medieval Community," *Acta Poloniae Historica* 29 (1974): 5-28.

<sup>23</sup> Elżbieta Jamrozik, "Les Italiens dans les villes polonaises des XVe et XVIe siècles," *Cahiers d'études romanes. Revue du CAER* 18 (2008): 117-129.

<sup>24</sup> Francesco Bettarini, "The new frontier : Letters and merchants between Florence and Poland in the fifteenth century," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome - Moyen Âge* (2015):127-2 <https://doi.org/10.4000/mefrm.2648>

<sup>25</sup> Dr. Bettarini is to be congratulated for being one of the few scholars to attempt post Ptaśnik to look into links between medieval Italy and Poland and for presenting new material culled from the Venetian archives. However, some of his interpretations of the material have obvious errors. For example, he makes reference to the, "venerabili viro domino Johanne, decretorum dotore nuntio et familiar commensale Vestre Clementie" mentioned in a 1406 letter of recommendation sent by the Florentine Signoria to King Władysław Jagiełło, and postulates that the aforementioned "Vestre Clementie" was Giovanni di Bicci di Medici. While Giovanni di Bicci di Medici was many things, he was not a doctor of cannon law, nor to my knowledge ever a boon companion of the King of Poland. In another case, Bettarini confuses the term "lapides" as implying a non-existent trade in lapis lazuli, when in fact it refers to the unit of measurement – a stone. He also fails to note that the sentence related to a dissolution of a company between the di ser Matteo brothers, laid down by the *Mercanzia* Court in Florence March 15<sup>th</sup> 1416, according to the Florentine calendar, as recorded in the *Manuale di Mercatura* by Sanminiato de' Ricci, was likely unrelated to the de Ricci family. By that point, Sanminiato who had written the work in 1396, was almost certainly deceased, and the continuation of his merchant manual had been taken up by Antonio di Francesco Saluti di Pescia. [Itali] nr. 18.

### 3. Thematic Historiographic Traditions

While the above section has explored the historiography of general works on Italian/Polish relations, for a full understanding of the historiographical tradition underlying this thesis, it is necessary to explore a number of thematic avenues.

#### 3.1 Papal Collectors

An important sub-genre of works that have a place in this thesis are those related to papal collectors in Poland. As the financial tax apparatus of the papacy became more extensive starting in the twelfth century, it became increasingly necessary for large sums of money to be transferred across great distances through multiple political borders, posing a significant logistical problem. This necessity encouraged the sending of special collectors to the various dioceses, including Poland. It soon became their job to organize the shipment of monies to either Bruges or Venice, where they encountered the growing Italian banking network and could safely send large sums on to the pope. This process involved the hands of many Italians and encouraged a number to migrate to Poland. The preliminary work on this topic was completed by Jan Ptaśnik and Yves Renouard, and has since been continued by Marek Daniel Kowalski, Stanisław Szczur, and Markus Denzel.<sup>26</sup> The studies have been in Polish, French, and German, so English speakers have remained largely unfamiliar with the topic. Their efforts however, remain fundamental to this study as their work has explored the mechanics of papal collection in Poland, which was frequently handled by Italians. These connections in time,

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<sup>26</sup> I would like to extend a particular thank you to Dr. Kowalski for taking the time to meet with me and offer advice on matters related to this thesis. Jan Ptaśnik, "Kolektorzy kamery apostolskiej w Polsce Piastowskiej [Collectors of the Apostolic Camera in Piast Poland]," *Rozprawy Akademii Umiejętności, Wydział Historyczno-Filologiczny*, series II vol. 25, (1907): 1-80; Yves Renouard, "Achats et paiements de draps flamands par les premiers papes d'Avignon," *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire* 52, no. 1 (1935): 273-313; Yves Renouard, *Les Relations des papes d'Avignon et des compagnies commerciales et bancaires de 1316 à 1378* (Paris: de Boccard, 1941); Marek Daniel Kowalski, *Proventus camerae apostolicae debiti: opłaty duchowieństwa polskiego na rzecz papieża w latach 1417-1484* [Proventus camerae apostolicae debiti: payments of the Polish clergy to the papacy in the years 1417-1484] (Krakow: Towarzystwo Wydawnicze Historia Iagellonica, 2010); Marek Daniel Kowalski and Robert Bubczyk, "The Papal Collectorate in the 15th Century Poland," *Quaestiones Medii Aevi Novae*. 19 (2014): 447-459; Marek Daniel Kowalski, "Rationes Iacobini de Rubeis, collectoris in Regno Poloniae (1426-1434)," *Studia Zródłoznawcze* 49 (2011) 61-96; Stanisław Szczur, *Skarbowość papieska w Polsce w latach 1378-1431* [The Papal Treasury in Poland in the years 1378-1431], (Krakow: Societas Vistulana, 2008); Stanisław Szczur, Papal collectors and state power in Central Europe, in *Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages: A Cultural History: [essays in Honour of Paul W. Knoll]*. 100-115. ed. Piotr Górecki and Nancy Deussen (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2009); Markus A. Denzel, "Kleriker und Kaufleute. Polen und der Peterspfennig im kurialen Zahlungsverkehrssystem des 14. Jahrhunderts," *VSWG: Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 82.H. 3 (1995): 305-331.

further provided the initial means by which advanced Italian banking methods and companies entered the country.

### 3.2 Banking

The story of Italian banking in medieval East-Central Europe has been largely underrepresented until recent years, but as it played a major role in where and how Italians operated in Poland, a brief summary of its historiographical importance is appropriate. Up until the sixteenth century, the number of Italian banking houses with branches beyond the Alps remained small. Banking business with East-Central Europe was instead largely funneled through two major clearing houses – Bruges with its connection to the Baltic, and Venice at the foot of the Alps. Until the mid-fifteenth century most financial instruments in Poland were handled through Bruges as the route along the Vistula to the Baltic sea was faster and more secure than that overland to Venice. The lack of interest shown by Italian banking houses in Polish affairs was due to a number of factors. Still, there were a few attempts made to set up Italian banking establishments in Poland in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The Guadagni family moved money for Polish individuals and the Medici sent Albizzo di Talenti di Medici, a scion of the family, who lived in Krakow for many years. While most of these interactions were focused on the remittance of ecclesiastical tithes, there was some exchange of credit also between Polish and Italian merchants moving goods through Bruges, Wrocław, and Venice. To understand these dynamics, of first importance is the work of Raymond de Roover followed by the more recent studies completed by Arnold Esch and Kurt Weissen.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> I would like to give a special thanks to Dr. Weissen for assisting me in procuring copies of his work for use in this study. Raymond de Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank: 1397-1494* (Washington DC: Beard Books, 1999); Arnold Esch "Bankiers der Kirche im Grossen Schisma," *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken* 46 (1966): 277-398; Arnold Esch "Italienische Kaufleute in Brügge, flandrisch-niederländische Kaufleute in Rom," *Vorträge und Forschungen* 72 (2010): 245-61; Arnold Esch, "Das Archiv eines Lucchesischen Kaufmanns an der Kurie 1376 - 1387 (mit Beobachtungen zum Zahlungsverkehr zwischen Deutschland und Rom um 1400)," *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung* 2, no. 2 (1975): 129-71; Kurt Weissen, "Dove il Papa va, sempre è caro di danari. The Commercial Site Analysis in Italian Merchant Handbooks and Notebooks from the 14th and 15th Centuries", trans. Marcia Glenn and Doris Glenn Wagnerna, in *Kaufmannsbücher und Handelspraktiken vom Spätmittelalter bis zum beginnenden 20. Jahrhundert*, no. 163, ed. Markus A. Denzel, Jean Claude Hocquet, and Harald Witthöft (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2002); Kurt Weissen, "Ci scrivo in tedesco! The Florentine merchant-banker Tommaso Spinelli and his German-speaking clients (1435-72)," *The Yale University Library Gazette* 74, no. 3/4 (2000): 112-25; Kurt Weissen, "Florentiner Bankiers und Deutschland (1275-1475). Kontinuität und Diskontinuität wirtschaftlicher Strukturen." PhD diss., University of Basel, 2001; Kurt Weissen, "Florentiner Kaufleute in Deutschland bis zum Ende des 14. Jahrhunderts". in *Zwischen Maas und Rhein Beziehungen, Begegnungen und Konflikte in einem europäischen Kernraum von der Spätantike bis zum 19. Jahrhundert*, ed. Franz Irsigler (Trier: Kliomedia, 2006), 363-401; Kurt

### 3.3 Humanism

There is also a separate group of historians who have taken an interest in the introduction of Renaissance Humanism to Poland that was in large part exported by Italians or absorbed by Poles who attended Italian universities starting in the late fifteenth century. While this thesis is more concentrated on trade and mercantile matters, there are many cross-currents, as a number of the Italians who came to Poland during the latter half of the fifteenth century were Humanists. These men, among them Giovanni di Saccis di Pavia, Monaldo di Lucca, and Filippo Buonaccorsi known by his pen name *Callimachus Experiens*, brought with them new ideas, books, and even acted as patrons of their fellow Italians, helping to spread nascent thoughts and humanist ideals.<sup>28</sup>

### 3.4. Geographic Parallels

#### *Hungary*

Perhaps nowhere else has the interest in Italians abroad been more acute in recent years than in Hungary. The strength of such studies has been grounded in the wealth of contacts between the two regions during the medieval and later Renaissance period. Hungary was far and away more popular as a destination for Italians during the period than Poland, making it an interesting comparative and simultaneously interconnected case. While most of the research has been carried out by Hungarian researchers and thus published in Hungarian, a lot of material has also been published in Italian and of late much has been written in English. Interest in the topic began in earnest in the 1970s, with important studies coming from Zsigmond Pál Pach and for the first time, Zsuzsa Teke, who would later make her academic name studying Florentines in

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Weissen, “La rete commerciale Tedesca delle Compagnie Fiorentine Romanam Curiam Sequentes, 1410-1470,” *Archivio Storico Italiano* 169, no. 4 (630) (2011): 707-26.

<sup>28</sup> Henryk Barycz, “Bologna nella civiltà polacca tra medioevo e Rinascimento,” in *Italia, Venezia e Polonia tra Medioevo e Eta Moderna*, 19-44, ed. Vittorio Branca and Sante Graciotti (Florence: Olschki, 1980); Stanisław A. Sroka, “Doktoraty Polaków na uniwersytecie w Ferrarze w pierwszej połowie XVI wieku” [Doctorates received by Poles at the university of Ferrara in the first half of the 16th century], *Roczniki Historyczne* 80 (2014): 155-67; Harold B. Segel, *Renaissance Culture in Poland: the Rise of Humanism : 1470-1543*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989); Jerzy Kowalczyk, “L'arte del primo umanesimo in Polonia e i suoi legami con l'Italia (1420-1500),” *Arte Lombarda*, Nuova Serie, no. 44/45 (1976): 217-24; St. Widlack, “Gli Italiani nella Cracovia Rinascimentale e i Loro Scritti Litterari” in *La letteratura dell'emigrazione: gli scrittori di lingua italiana nel mondo*; ed. Jean-Jacques Marchand (Turin: Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli, 1991); I. . Zoller, “Tra l'Italia e la Polonia,” *Archivio Storico Italiano*, serie V, 42, no. 252 (1908): 388-97; Paul Knoll, “Humanism,” in idem, *A Pearl of Powerful Learning: The University of Cracow in the Fifteenth Century*, 540-94 (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

Hungary.<sup>29</sup> Two conferences were further held, the first in 1970 and a second in 1973, organized by the Fondazione Giorgio Cini in Venice, with contributions from both Hungarian and Italian scholars, that produced two volumes on connections between Venice and Hungary in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.<sup>30</sup> In recent years however, interest in Italians in Hungary has turned away from other parts of the peninsula and decidedly in the direction of Florence. In 2007, a conference was held at the Harvard Villa I Tatti, and a volume subsequently published a few years later entitled, *Italy & Hungary: Humanism and Art in the Early Renaissance*.<sup>31</sup> First, Zsuzsa Teke whose landmark studies on the Florentine presence in Hungary have remained a touchstone for all later research on the topic, followed by a number of articles published in both Hungarian and Italian making her more recent work accessible outside of Hungary.<sup>32</sup> Martin Štefánik has also greatly advanced the state of research dealing specifically with Italian mercantile interest in mining and metal export in the Upper Hungarian (Slovakian) region of the Kingdom of the Hungary. This had further implications for Poland, as much of the metal transited along the Vistula before being transported by ship to Mediterranean ports. Further, numerous individuals who were involved in Hungary, eventually took up positions in Polish mine administration and the metals trade.<sup>33</sup> Denis Delentant meanwhile, has produced a number of useful studies on the trade between the Italian colonies

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<sup>29</sup> Zsigmond Pal Pach, "La Politica commerciale di Luigi d'Angio e il traffico delle "Mercenzie Marittime" dopo la pace di Zara," in *Rapporti veneto-ungheresi all'epoca del Rinascimento: atti*. Vol. 2. 105-19 ed. Tibor Klaniczay (Buda: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1975); Zsigmond Pal Pach, "Levantine Trade Routes to Hungary 15th–17th Centuries." *Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, vol. 33, no. 1, (1987): 57–65; Zsuzsa Teke, "Rapporti Commerciali tra Ungheria e Venezia nel secolo XV," in *Rapporti veneto-ungheresi all'epoca del Rinascimento: atti*. Vol. 2. 143-52 ed. Tibor Klaniczay (Buda: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1975).

<sup>30</sup> Vittore Branca ed., *Venezia e Ungheria nel rinascimento Civita Veneziana* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1973); Tibor Klaniczay ed., *Rapporti veneto-ungheresi all'epoca del Rinascimento* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1975).

<sup>31</sup> Péter Farbaky and Louis Alexander Waldman eds. *Italy & Hungary: humanism and art in the Early Renaissance* (Florence: Villa I Tatti, 2011).

<sup>32</sup> Susanna Teke, "Operatori economici Fiorentini in Ungheria nel tardo trecento e primo quattrocento," *Archivio Storico Italiano* 153, no. 4 (566) (1995): 697-707; Susanna Teke, "L'economia fiorentina e l'Europa centro-orientale nei secoli XIV e XV," *Archivio Storico Italiano*. 153, no. 4 (566) 1995: 631-32; Zsuzsa Teke, "Firenzei kereskedőtársaságok, kereskedők Magyarországon Zsigmond uralmának megszilárdulása után, 1404-37 [Florentine trading companies, merchants in Hungary after the consolidation of Sigismund, 1404-37]," *Századok* 129.1 (1995), 195-214; Zsuzsa Teke, "Az 1427. évi firenzei catastro. Adalékok a firenzei magyar kereskedelmi kapcsolatok történetéhez," [The Florentine Catasto of 1427. Contributions to the history of Hungarian trade relations with Florence] *Történelmi Szemle* (1984): 42-49.

<sup>33</sup> Martin Štefánik, "Guerra commerciale. Il blocco economico del Re Sigismondo contro Venezia. Il ruolo delle città e dei mercanti nella lotta fra gli stati," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome - Moyen Âge* 127-2 (2015), Accessed 26 avril 2018 <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2820>; Martin Štefánik, "Italian Involvement in Metal Mining in the Central Slovakian Region, from the Thirteenth Century to the Reign of King Sigismund of Hungary," in *I Tatti Studies. The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies*. Vol. 14-15 (2011-2012): 11-46; Martin Štefánik, "Rame di Pollana "spíšsko-gemerská meď vo flámsku av benátkach v prvej tretine 14. storočia." [Rame di Pollana "Slovak-German copper in Flemish and Venice in the first third of the 14th century]," *Historický časopis* 65.2 (2017): 193-216.

on the Black Sea through Wallachia and Moldavia, to Hungary and Poland.<sup>34</sup> These works explore the socio-political reality which impacted the flow of goods transiting this region. Mention should also be made of the large number of works related to the movement of Italians in Dalmatia and Slavonia, which being located on the East coast of the Adriatic Sea, attracted large numbers of resident Italians. However, for a significant chunk of the medieval period Dalmatia and Slavonia were under the contested control of the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>35</sup> The Florentine specialist, Bruno Dini, has also produced an extremely interesting work which while somewhat misleadingly purports to consider all of Central-Eastern Europe, focusses entirely on late fifteenth and early sixteenth century Hungary. This work also provides useful meditations on larger themes that apply to the region as a whole.<sup>36</sup> Finally, the enormous contributions of Krisztina Arany and Katalin Prajda, who have demonstrated the strong ties between Florence and Buda and the powerful influence of family connections and political gamesmanship in making a successful business venture abroad, must be mentioned.<sup>37</sup> With both scholars publishing much of their research in English and making them available online, the information is eminently available, and I have taken both methodological and source

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<sup>34</sup> Dennis Deletant, "Genoese, Tatars and Rumanians at the Mouth of the Danube in the Fourteenth Century," *The Slavonic and East European Review*, vol. 62, no. 4,( 1984): 511–30; Dennis Deletant, "Moldavia between Hungary and Poland, 1347-1412," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 64, no. 2 (1986): 189-211; Dennis Deletant, "The Political and Confessional Landscape in Alexander the Good's Moldavia: The Hussites," *Annual of the Medieval Studies at CEU* vol. 12 (2006): 125-42.

<sup>35</sup> To give just a few examples see: Neven Budak and Sandra Paić Piljac. "I Fiorentini nella Slavonia e nella Croazia nei secoli XIV e XV," *Archivio Storico Italiano* 153, no. 4 (566) (1995): 681-95; Bruno Škreblin, "Ethnic Groups in Zagreb's Gradec in the Late Middle Ages," *Review of Croatian history* 9.1 (2013): 25-59; Bariša Krekić, "On the Latino-Slavic Cultural Symbiosis in Late Medieval and Renaissance Dalmatia and Dubrovnik," *Viator* 26 (1995): 321-32.

<sup>36</sup> Bruno Dini, "L'economia fiorentina e l'Europa centro-orientale nelle fonti toscane," *Archivio Storico Italiano* 153.4 (566) (1995): 633-655.

<sup>37</sup> I would like further to give a particular thank you to Dr. Arany for her multiple consultations on this project and Dr. Prajda for her assistance during my time working in the Florentine archive. Krisztina Arany, "Florentine Families in Hungary in the First Half of the Fifteenth Century," *Phil. Diss Central European University* (2014); Katalin Prajda, "Florentine merchant companies established in Buda at the beginning of the 15th century," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome - Moyen Âge* [En ligne], Accessed December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019, <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/1062> ; DOI : 10.4000/mefrm.1062; Katalin Prajda. "The Florentine Scolari Family at the Court of Sigismund of Luxemburg in Buda," *Journal of Early Modern History* 14.6 (2010): 513-33; Katalin Prajda, "Justice in the Florentine Trading Community of Late Medieval Buda," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome - Moyen Âge* Accessed March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018 <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2716> ; Katalin Prajda, *Rapporti tra la Repubblica Fiorentina e il Regno d'Ungheria a livello di diplomazia, migrazione umana, reti mercantili e mediazione culturale nell'età del regime oligarchico (1382-1434), che corrisponde al regno di Sigismondo di Lussemburgo (1387-1437)*. Diss. European University Institute, Department of history and civilization, 2011; Katalin Prajda, "Unions of Interest. Florentine Marriage Ties and Business Networks in the Kingdom of Hungary during the Reign of Sigismund of Luxemburg," in *Marriage in Premodern Europe: Italy and Beyond*, ed. Jacqueline Murray. 1-20 (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2012); Katalin Prajda, *Network and Migration in Early Renaissance Florence, 1378-1433* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018).



material from them for my own work. For those who would be interested in a more in-depth description of the history and historiography of research into Italians resident in medieval Hungary in English, I can highly recommend the article by Andrea Fara, which in a clear and succinct manner lays out the accumulated work on the subject over the last hundred years.<sup>38</sup>

### *The German Lands*

Another area of studies which bears mentioning is that which focuses on German-speakers' interactions with Italy during the period in question. This is particularly important to this study as most, if not all, of the merchants in Poland who involved themselves with Italians were German speakers. While Polish was the primary language of the Kingdom of Poland's core rural areas, the urban elites and the population on the northern coast, which had long been under the domination of the Teutonic Knights, for the most part spoke German. This is a gross simplification of the case, which has been carefully researched by Agnieszka Bartoszewicz, but it covers the general trend and gives an idea why German studies would be of such importance to this thesis.<sup>39</sup> Further, merchants working in Poland were considered by Italians themselves, to fall under the catch-all category of those operating in "*l'Magna*", that is, in "Germany". Polish merchants were also included among those registered at the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* - the German merchant house in Venice. Thus, studies related to "Germans" working in Italy and Italian merchants in "Germany" had to be consulted for disguised Poles in this thesis. The most important studies that need to be included in this review therefore are those already mentioned by Kurt Weissen, together with the fundamental work of Wolfgang von Stromer, which revealed among other things, the close connection of Nuremberg merchants with those in Krakow, Wrocław, and Italian families such as the Medici.<sup>40</sup> Turning then to studies specifically related to the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, Henry Simonsfeld stands as the

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<sup>38</sup>Andrea Fara, *Italian Merchants in the Kingdom of Hungary in the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period (XIIIth–XVIth Centuries)*, in *Italy and Europe's Eastern Border, 1204–1669*, eds. Iulian Mihai Damian, Ioan–Aurel Pop, Mihailo St. Popović, and Alexandru Simon (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang International Academic Publishing, 2012), 119–34.

<sup>39</sup> Agnieszka Bartoszewicz, "The litterati Burghers in Polish Late Medieval Towns," *Acta Poloniae Historica* 83 (2001): 5–26; Agnieszka Bartoszewicz, *Urban literacy in late medieval Poland*, trans. Anna Adamska (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2017), 11–15.

<sup>40</sup> Wolfgang von Stromer "Handel und Geldgeschäfte der Mendel von Nürnberg 1305–1449," *Zeitschrift für Unternehmensgeschichte* 11.1 (1966): 1–16; Wolfgang von Stromer "Nürnberger Unternehmer im Karpatenraum: ein oberdeutsches Buntmetall-Oligopol 1396–1412," *Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej* 16.4 (1968): 641–62; Wolfgang von Stromer. *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz, 1350–1450* vol 1–3 (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1970); Wolfgang Von Stromer, "Nuremberg in the International Economics of the Middle Ages," *The Business History Review*, vol. 44, no. 2, (1970): 210–25.

grandfather of the field. In recent years however, the many articles published by Philippe Braunstein, including his magnum opus on the subject, *Les Allemands à Venise: (1380-1520)* published in 2016, have proven fundamental.<sup>41</sup>

## IV. Sources

Like all historical research we are confined by the sources available to us. In this thesis, I have sought to make use of as wide a range of primary material as possible. I have thus explored: account books, notarial records, tax records, court decisions, charters, last wills, letters, chronicles, and other writings, seeking to form from these scraps as holistic an image as possible of what transpired between Italy and Poland between 1300 and 1500. This meant collecting a large number of published records and visiting multiple archives. The research for this project was complicated by its bi-polarity, as explaining the connections between two different regions required looking into source material available from Polish archives and Italian ones. To accomplish this task, I planned a two-step approach.

First, I gathered as many published and archival sources as possible from Poland and set about identifying Italians within them and creating a prosopographical database of individuals. Having created a basic database of individuals, I then turned my attention to the Italian side of the equation, by first looking through published source material before turning to direct archival work. For this research, I was thus able to access important documents available in the *Archivio di Stato di Venezia*, the *Medici Avanti il Principato* files in the *Archivio di Stato di Firenze*, and the *Fondo Datini* in the *Archivio di Stato di Prato*. Italian archives are extremely rich, and even with recent digitization efforts, the vast majority of documents still remain undigitized and accessible only in person. The following source descriptions are organized according to the archive in which they were found, in the hopes that the descriptions may prove useful to future scholars desiring to access the same, or similar materials.

The lion's share of the source material used in this work comes from notarial registers, court summaries, and tax records, which offer only fragmentary glimpses of the lives of the individuals discussed. The resulting patchwork of information can at times be frustrating, as it

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<sup>41</sup> Henry Simonsfeld, *Der Fondaco dei Tedeschi in Venedig und die deutsch-venetianischen Handelsbeziehungen*. vol. 1 (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1887); Philippe Braunstein, *Les Allemands à Venise: (1380-1520)*, (Rome: École française de Rome, 2016); Philippe Braunstein, "Relations d'affaires entre Nurembergeois et Vénitiens à la fin du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle". *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire* 76 (1964): 227-69; Philippe Braunstein, "Les entreprises minières en Vénétie au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle," *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire* 77.2 (1965): 529-607.

renders certain questions impossible to answer. Motivation and sentiment - the human side of the equation, is almost impossible to grasp while even simple biographical statistics such as birth, death, and marriage are often difficult to answer. Still, by milking those fragments for all the information they contain, I have sought to create a set of case studies rendering a faint simulacrum of the individuals whose passing historical shadow they represent. Further, by contextualizing these snippets of the past within a larger framework, I show how they interacted with the world in which they found themselves - how they changed their surroundings, and were in turn, changed by them.

Finally, it is important to remember that one must always be aware of the biases of the material, the purpose it was initially intended to serve, the means of its transmission, and its originally intended audience. The particular sources at our disposal are also exceptionally fraught, as they tend to be a selected sample of problems. Notarial records and especially court records, while providing a verdant pile of information, bias our view, as they record only those moments when something went wrong. Successful business ventures, happy partnerships, hand-shake transactions, and fulfilled promises on the other hand do not appear, and so we are left with an oddly lopsided image of our subjects only in difficult circumstances. It is important to keep in mind that even though they often went unrecorded, it does not mean positive events did not occur and that by reading the material against the grain, greater insight into the totality can be found.

## 1. Italian/Polish Edited Sources

When turning to edited primary sources important for this topic, first and foremost there is a debt owed to Jan Ptaśnik for the documents he collected and published in 1910 as: *Italia Mercatoria apud Polonos saeculo XV ineunte: Opera*. This volume contains a wide variety of material related to Italians of the fourteenth and fifteenth century, collected by Ptaśnik from Poland, the Vatican Archives, the *Archivio di Stato di Firenze*, and the *Archivio di Stato di Venezia*. While some of the material had been published previously, the majority was entirely new, and represents the largest and most diverse single collection of Italian material related to Poland published to date. I make extensive use of these documents in this thesis. The second notable work was that completed by August Cieszkowski, who was the first to search through the Venetian archives looking for material related to Poland. Cieszkowski published his transcriptions of relevant documents in two volumes in 1887 and 1889, entitled *Materyały do*

*historii Jagiellonów z archiwów Weneckich* [Materials related to Jagiellonian history from the Venetian archives] before combing the material in 1890 into *Fontes Rerum Polonicarum e Tabulario Reipublicae Venetae: Exhaustit, collegit, edidit, nonnullisque adnotationibus Polonicus muniit Augustus Comes Cieszkowski*. While the work was not in fact exhaustive, it did represent a significant first peek into the surprising wealth of Poland-related material to be found in Venice. Cieszkowski's work was later picked up by Ptaśnik, who quotes him extensively, and also by Henry Simonsfeld. Simonsfeld, collected further documents related to the activities of the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* in Venice, where numerous Polish merchants were enrolled and involved with Italian affairs, publishing his findings in *Der Fondaco dei Tedeschi in Venedig und die deutsch-venetianischen Handelsbeziehungen*. Apart from these volumes, there are no other edited additions dedicated to Italian/Polish material for the Middle Ages. In order to acquire material for this study therefore, I surveyed a wide variety of more general primary documents searching for anything related to Italians active in Poland.

The following section looks at the Polish edited material, followed by the Italian, and then those from other neighboring countries where Italians “passed through” on their way to and from Poland, leaving a useful paper-trail in their wake. It needs to be acknowledged now, that the listing below is not exhaustive and instead gives merely a general overview of the most important editions. For a complete list of sources see the bibliography. Modern scholars are further blessed that today, most of these publications are now accessible online through the Polish regional digital library project, the most useful of which for this work are the regional libraries: [Silesia](#), [Małopolska](#), [Pomerania](#), and [Polona.pl](#), a national state-funded effort to make Polish materials including manuscripts, incunabula, and books now out of copyright available online.

## 2. Polish Edited Sources

For this study I have first and foremost made use of the large amount of edited primary material available from the Kingdom of Poland. These volumes which were published largely prior to World War II, include charters, letters, contracts, notarial records, and court cases, all involving Italians present on Polish soil.<sup>42</sup> A special subset of documents related to church affairs was

<sup>42</sup> *Codex epistolaris saeculi decimi quinti. 1384-1492*, vols 1-3, ed. Anatol Lewicki (Krakow: Akademia Umiejętności, 1891-94; *Matricularum Regni Poloniae sumaria, excussis codicibus, qui in Chartophylacio Maximo Varsoviensi asservantur, part 1 Casimir IV regis tempora complectens 1447-1492*, ed. Theodorus Wierzbowski (Warsaw: typis Officinae C. Kowalewski, 1905; *Starodawne Prawa Polskiego Pomniki* [Old Polish

also at times extremely helpful.<sup>43</sup> An entirely different genre of documents – account books known in Polish as *Rachunki*, have also proven valuable for this study, the most relevant being those related to the Royal court where Italians served, and the salt mines in Bochnia where they acted as administrators.<sup>44</sup>

Apart from these collections, which relate to the kingdom as a whole, Polish source material has tended to be published by region or relating to a particular town.<sup>45</sup> The records collected for the regions of Małopolska and Wielkopolska include primarily charters granting land or privileges to Italians, while the collection for Silesia is much more varied and includes notarial records, contracts, and court rulings. By far however, the largest amount of material comes from sources gathered relating to individual towns. As the majority of Italians were present in the major cities, most especially Krakow, Lviv, Wrocław, and to a lesser extent Poznań, these records are invaluable. In these documents we discover a distinct Italian preference for written legal documentation and they thus appear frequently in the rich notarial records and legal disputes.<sup>46</sup> In particular, those documents preserved from Krakow include copious amounts of

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Law Monuments], vols 2, 7, 10, ed. Bolesław Ulanowski (Krakow: Sumptibus Academiae Litterarum, 1885-88); *Archiwum Komisji Historycznej (Collectanea ex Archivo Collegii Historici)*, vols 1-12 (Krakow: nakł. Akademii Umiejętności, 1878-1938).

<sup>43</sup> *Monumenta Poloniae Vaticana*, vols 1-10 ed. Jan Ptaśnik (Krakow: Sumpt. Academiae Litterarum Cracoviensis, 1876-1930); *Bullarium Poloniae*, vols 1-4, eds. Irene Sułkowska-Kurasiowa and Stanisław Kuraś, (Rome: Fundacja Jana Pawła II. Polski Instytut Kultury Chrześcijańskiej, 1982-1992); *Vetera monumenta Poloniae et Lithuaniae gentiumque finitimarum historiam illustrantia maximam partem nondum edita ex tabularis Vaticanis deprompta collecta ac serie chronologica disposita*, vols 1-2. ed. Theiner Augustin (Rome: Typis Vaticanis, 1860-1).

<sup>44</sup> *Rachunki dworu Króla Władysława Jagiełły i Królowej Jadwigi z lat 1388 do 1420* [The Royal account books of King Władysław Jagiełło and Queen Jadwiga 1388-1420], ed. Franciszek Piekosiński. *Monumenta Medii Aevi Historica Res Gestas Poloniae Illustrantia* Vol. 15. (New York, NY [u.a.]: Johnson, 1965); *Rachunki królewskie z lat 1471-1472 i 1476-1478* [Royal accounts for the years 1471-1472 and 1476-1478], ed. Stanisław Gawęda, Zbigniew Perzanowski and A. Strzelecka (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1960); *Liber quitantiarum regis Casimiri ab a. 1484 ad 1488/Księga skarbowa króla Kazimierza Jag.* Ed. Adolf Pawiński (Warsaw: Skł. gł. w księg. Gebethnera i Wolffa, 1897); “Rachunki żupne bocheńskie z lat 1394-1421”, [Accounts of the Salt-works at Bochnia between the years 1394-1421] In *Archiwum Komisji Historycznej* series 2 vols. 3 (15) (1939): 123-232.

<sup>45</sup> *Kodeks dyplomatyczny Małopolski 1257-1506*, [Records of the region of lesser Poland 1257-1506] vols. 1- 4 ed. Franciszek Piekosiński (Krakow: NAU, 1876-1903); *Zbiór dokumentów Małopolskich* vols. 1-6 [Collected Documents of Małopolska 1257-1506 vol 1-6], ed. Stanisław Kuraś and Irena Sułkowska-Kurasiowa (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy Ossolińskich-wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1962-1974); *Kodeks Dyplomatyczny Wielkopolski 984-1287* [Records of the region of Greater Poland 984-1287] vol. 1-5 ed. Franciszek Piekosiński (Poznań: Bibl. Kórnicka, 1877-1908); *Codex Diplomaticus Silesiae* vols. 1- 36 (Wrocław : Josef Max and Komp., 1857-1933).

<sup>46</sup> *Kodeks dyplomatyczny miasta Krakowa 1257-1506* [Records of the City of Krakow 1257-1506] 4 vols. ed. F. Piekosiński, *Monumenta Medii Aevi Historica*, vol. 5, 7, (Krakow: Akad. Umiejętności, 1879-1882); *Księgi ławnicze krakowskie 1365-1376 i 1390-1397* [The Cracow Books of the Municipal Bench 1365-1376 and 1390-1397], ed. Stanisław Krzyżanowski (Krakow: Drukarni Uniwersytetu Jagiełłonskiego, 1904); *Libri iuris civilis Cracoviensis 1392-1506 /Księgi przyjęć do prawa miejskiego w Krakowie 1392-1506*, ed. Kazimierz Kaczmarczyk (Krakow: Uniwersytetu Jagiełłonskiego, 1913); *Najstarszy zbiór przywilejów i Wilkierzy miasta Krakowa* [The oldest set of privileges and laws of the City of Krakow], ed. Stanisław Estreicher (Krakow:

information on the Italians living in the city, as they appear frequently in the notarial record, in charters, and legal documents issued by the city courts. Special mention must be made of *Cracovia Artificum: 1300-1500* and its subsequent five supplemental volumes. This work reflects a culled version of Krakow's extant notarial books and some added material from the ecclesiastical archives related to craftsmen and merchants, and includes a great number of entries related to Italians.<sup>47</sup> Finally, also considered are those documents from Kazimierz, the smaller satellite community of Krakow.<sup>48</sup> The abundant records related to the affairs of the Jagiellonian University might also prove fruitful for those interested in the later fifteenth century and the influx of Italian Humanism into Poland. However, as that is not the main focus of this dissertation, they have been largely left to the side.<sup>49</sup>

For Lviv, the records are no less abundant. The surviving edited records include notarial acts and records kept by the City Council, including tax and budgetary details starting from the late fourteenth century but with numerous breaks.<sup>50</sup> Also useful are the many documents collected and published by the Romanian historian, Nicolae Iorga, which include otherwise unedited material from the Lviv archives between 1409-1792. The notes are related primarily to interactions with Moldavia and Wallachia, but includes a large number of references to Italian

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Nakładem Polskiej Akameji Umiejętności, 1936); *Księga proskrypcji i skarg miasta Krakowa 1360-1422 / Liber proscriptionum et querelarum civitatis Cracoviensis 1360-1422*, ed. Bożena Wyrozumska. Fontes Cracovienses, vol. 9. (Krakow: Towarzystwo Miłośników Historii i Zabytków Krakowa, 2001).

<sup>47</sup> *Cracovia Artificum: 1300-1500*, eds. Jan Ptaśnik and Stanisława Pańków (Krakow: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 1917); *Cracovia artificum: supplementa : teksty źródłowe do dziejów kultury i sztuki z najdawniejszych oficjaliów krakowskich, lata 1410-1412 oraz 1421-1424* [Cracovia artificum: supplementa source texts for the history of art and culture of ancient offices of Krakow 1410-1412 and 1421-1424] eds. Bolesław Przybyszewski and Lech Kalinowski (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1985); *Cracovia artificum: Supplementa; Źródła do dziejów sztuki i cywilizacji w Polsce 1441-1450* [Cracovia artificum: Supplement; Sources for the history of art and civilization in Poland 1441-1450] ed. Bolesław Przybyszewski (Krakow: Wydawn. i Druk: 1993); *Cracovia artificum. Supplementa. Teksty źródłowe do dziejów kultury i sztuki z archiwaliów kurialnych i kapitulnych w Krakowie 1451-1460*, [Source texts to the history of culture and art of curial archives and chapter in Krakow 1451-1460] ed. Bolesław Przybyszewski (Krakow: Zakład Narodowy Im. Ossolińskich - Wydawn. Polskiej Akad. Nauk, 2001); *Cracovia artificum. Supplementa 1462-1475*, ed. Bolesław Przybyszewski (Krakow: PAU 2000).

<sup>48</sup> *Księgi Radzieckie Kazimierskie 1369-1381 I 1385-1402/ Acta Consularia Casimiriensia 1369-1381 Et 1385-1402*, ed. Adam Chmiel (Krakow, Archiwum Aktów Dawnych Miasta Krakowa, 1932); *Księga ławnicza kazimierska 1407-1427/Acta scabinalia Casimiriensia 1407-1427*, ed. Bożena Wyrozumska (Krakow: Drukrol, 1996).

<sup>49</sup> For those interested see: *Codex diplomaticus Universitatis studii generalis cracoviensis: continet privilegia et documenta quae res gestas academiae eiusque beneficia illustrant* vol. 1-5. (Krakow: sumptibus et typis Universitatis, 1873-1900); *Acta rectoralia almae Universitatis Studii Cracoviensis inde ab anno MCCCCLXIX* vol 1-2. eds. Władysław Wisłocki, and Stanisław Estreicher (Krakow: Sumptibus Academiae Litterarum Cracoviensis, 1893).

<sup>50</sup> *Album Civium Leopoliensium: Rejestry Przyjęć do Prawa Miejskiego we Lwowie 1388-1783* ed. Andrzej Janeczek, A. (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskiego Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Nauk, 2005); *Pomniki Dziejowe Lwowa z Archiwum Miasta* [Historical Monuments of Lviv From the City Archives] vol. 1-4. (We Lwowie: Nakł. Edited by Aleksander Czołowski and Franciszek Jaworski (Lviv: Gmina król. stoł. miasta Lwowa, 1892- 1905).

merchants who traded across these lands from the Black Sea to Poland.<sup>51</sup> Of fundamental importance are also the acts of the *grodzki* [castle] and *ziemski* [district] courts from the so-called Bernardine Archives in Lviv.<sup>52</sup> This collection includes among other things a variety of charters detailing trade privileges and property transactions, but the most useful by far are the court records contained in volumes 14, 15, and 19. Unfortunately, these records of court proceedings have been preserved only from 1440, and with subsequent gaps for certain years. Given that they contain the majority of information regarding Lviv's interaction with the East and Italian presence, this has meant that the historiography has naturally favored this later period for study. The tendency to privilege this later period is compounded by the fact that the other extremely useful set of records, commonly referred to as the Crown Metrica, records special favors, contracts, grants and ennoblements, given to Italian merchants by various Polish kings. This compilation however, begins only from 1447, thus also privileging the later dates.<sup>53</sup> This gap in the sources has led to a natural bias that not much was going on during the years prior to the mid-fifteenth century. This study, in some way seeks to correct this scholarly myopia by looking at other source material. Still, it cannot be denied that the period prior to 1450 is less well represented in the existing sources and it is therefore difficult to accurately assess the robustness of Italian connections with Poland during this time. Readers should be aware of these challenges and consider the results accordingly. It is very likely that far more individuals were present and commercial activity was happening under the radar than we are now able to ascertain. For this current study, I have not consulted any unedited material from the Lviv archive, as the current amount of edited material is abundant. I have however, made use of the works of Stanisław Kutrzeba and Feliks Kiryk who have worked with these sources.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> *Acte și fragmente cu privire la Istoria Românilor adunate di depozitele de manuscrise ale apusului*. Vol. 3 [Acts and fragments on the History of the Romanians gathered from the manuscripts of the west Vol 3.], ed. Nicolae Iorga (Bucurest : Imprimeria Statului, 1897); *Notes et extraits pour servir à l'histoire des croisades au XVe siècle*. The Studii și documente cu privire la Istoria românilor [Studies and documents on the History of the Romanians], ed. Nicolae Iorga (Bucharest: Edition de l'academie Roumaine, 1899-1915); *Studii și documente cu privire la Istoria românilor*, ed. Nicolae Iorga vol. 6 and 23 (Bucharest: Editura Ministeriului de Instrucție Publică, 1904, 1913).

<sup>52</sup> *Acta grodzkie i ziemskie czasów Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z Archiwum tak zwanego Bernardyńskiego we Lwowie* [The urban and terrestrial Acts of the Polish Republic from the Archive of the so-called Bernardyński in Lviv]. edited by Wydał Hejnosz Wojciech vol. 1-25. (Lviv: Główny skład w księgarni i Czajkowskiego 1868-1935).

<sup>53</sup> *Matricularum Regni Poloniae Sumaria, Excussis Codicibus, qui in Chartophylacio Maximo Varsoviensi Asservantur. Part 1 Casimir IV regis tempora complectens 1447-1492* ed. Theodorus Wierzbowski (Warsaw: typis Officinae C. Kowalewski, 1905).

<sup>54</sup> Stanisław Kutrzeba, *Finanse i handel średniowiecznego Krakowa*. [Finance and Trade of Medieval Krakow] (Krakow: Wydawn. "Avalon", 2009); Feliks Kiryk, „Związki Lwowa z Krakowem w późnym średniowieczu [Lviv's relationship with Krakow in the late Middle Ages], in *Lwów: Miasto, społeczeństwo, kultura. Studia z*

For Wrocław, much of the thirty-six volumes comprising the previously cited *Codex Diplomaticus Silesiae* contain material related to this city. Thankfully, we also have the work produced by Otto Strobe who copied down some of the Wrocław notarial records prior to their destruction in World War II.<sup>55</sup> For Poznań, two distinct sets of notarial records have been edited, one from the late fourteenth century and another from the later fifteenth century. It is only in the later set of documents however, that Italians begin to appear.<sup>56</sup> Other notarial registers that have been preserved and edited include those for Warsaw, Elbląg, Toruń, and Gdańsk, but none contain notes relevant to this study.<sup>57</sup> Surprisingly, given the known Italian presence in both locations, the records preserved from Przemyśl and a set of fragments from Olkusz, were similarly unfruitful.<sup>58</sup>

### 3. Polish Unedited Sources

I have also had access to many of the unpublished notarial and legal records kept in the *Archiwum Narodowe w Krakowie* – the Krakow National Archive. While most of the notarial registers from fourteenth century Krakow have been published, the fifteenth century documents are more abundant and have only been published in fragments as part of the *Cracovia Artificum* referenced above, or as a part of larger studies. I have made a general survey of these

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*dziesięć Lwowa*, vol. 2, ed. Henryk Żaliński and Kazimierz Karolczak. 9-39 (Krakow: Wydaw. Naukowe Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej, 1998).

<sup>55</sup> “Mittheilungen aus Breslauer Signaturbüchern,” in *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens*, Bd. 6-8. (Wrocław : Josef Max & Komp., 1865-8).

<sup>56</sup> *Die Ältesten Grosspolnischen Grodbücher Posen. 1386-1399*, ed. J. von Lekszycki (Leipzig: Berlag von G. Dirzel, 1887); *Stadtbuch Von Posen; Die Mittelalterliche Magistratsliste; Die Aeltesten Protokollbuecher Und Rechnungen*; Bd 1, ed. Warschauer Adolf (Poznań: Eigenthum der Gesellschaft, 1892.); *Akta Radzieckie Poznańskie* [Poznań Notarial Records] vol 1-2, ed. Kazimierz Kaczmarczyk (Poznań: Nakładem PTPN, 1925-31).

<sup>57</sup> *Księgi ławnicze miasta starej warszawy z XV wieku. 1. 1.* [The Notarial Books of the Old City of Warsaw], ed. Stefan Ehrenkreutz (Warsaw: Laskauer, 1916); *Księga Ławnicza Miasta Nowej Warszawy* Vol. 1: 1416-1485, ed. Adam Wolff (Wrocław: ZNiOWPAN, 1960).; *Nowa księga rachunkowa starego miasta Elbląga, 1404-1414* [New Book of Accounts of the Old City of Elbląg, 1404-1414], vols 1-2, ed. Markian Pelech (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawn. Naukowe, 1989).; *Liber scabinorum veteris civitatis Thoruniensis: 1363-1428*, Fontes no. 29, ed. Kazimierz Kaczmarczyk (Toruń : Towarzystwo Naukowe w Toruń iu, 1936); *Księga żółdu Związku Pruskiego z okresu wojny trzynastoletniej 1454-1466* [Book of income of the Prussian Union from the Thirteen-year War period 1454-1466], ed. Antoni Czacharowski (Toruń : TNT, 1969); *Księga ławnicza Starego Miasta Toruń ia 1456-1515* [Notarial Books of the Old Town of Toruń 1456-1515], vols 1-2, ed. Krzysztof Kopinski, Krzysztof Mikulski and Janusz Tadecki (Toruń : TNT, 2007/2018); *Księgi Młodego Miasta Gdańska 1400-1455 (1458-1459)* [Notarial Book of the New City of Gdańsk 1400-1455 (1458-1459)], ed. Krzysztof Kopyński, and Piotr Olinski (Toruń : TNT, 2008).

<sup>58</sup> *Księga ławnicza : 1402-1445, Pomniki Dziejów Przemysła 1404-1445, 1445-1452* [Notarial records of the city of Przemyśl 1404-1445, 1445-1452] vol. 1-2 eds. Zofia Tymińska and Jan Smółka, (Przemyśl: Nakł. Gminy Miasta Przemysła, 1936).

Bożenna Wyrozumska, ”Fragmenty najstarszej księgi miejskiej Olkusza [Fragments from the Notarial registers of Olkusz]” *Małopolskie Studia Historyczne*, (1959): 49-57.



unpublished documents, but their quantity has made an in-depth study unfeasible for this thesis. Of the notarial records I have reviewed in greater detail, the most useful has undoubtedly been the *Acta Consularia Cracoviensis rkps* 427 and 428.<sup>59</sup> It is my hope that future scholars will explore these books in yet greater detail, bringing to light as yet unknown features of the Italian presence in Poland. The recent move to digitize this material and place it online on Szukajwarchiwach.pl, will make this job immensely easier.

### 3. Italian Edited Sources

Italian source material is far more abundant than that of Poland. Literacy was more widespread in Italian cities during the Later Middle Ages. Italians had much earlier taken up the habit of writing literature, histories, and memoirs but at the same time were also developing and sophisticated accounting techniques and complex business-related documents including notarial instruments, and letters of credit. This, together with greater wealth, earlier developed archives, and a less destructive modern history has meant that far more material can be found stored in Italian vaults. This great bounty however, can at times prove a burden to a researcher with a project such as mine as it means searching for a needle in a truly enormous haystack. As a part of this research, I have gone through the indexes and scanned my way through the contents of as many volumes as I could access and thought might be relevant. Given the miniscule size of the needle I was searching for - fewer than a hundred individuals across two centuries, I was blessed to find as much as I did. The following is a brief overview of the most important Italian edited sources that I use in this thesis, they fall into a few general categories. The first category, *Regesta* – consists of collections of summaries of letters sent by Italian cities to the Polish court. The second is personal memoirs that include mention of Italians present in Poland. The third is comprised of notarial records that again include individuals of interest. My choices as to what cities' records I chose to focus on was determined by my knowledge of the background of the individuals involved – primarily Genoese, Florentine, and Venetian, combined with the availability of the material.

For the *Regesta*, I was able to access those which have been compiled for Venice, Milan, and the limited selection of those published from Genoa.<sup>60</sup> The Florentine *Regesta* are published

<sup>59</sup> I would like to thank Dr. Zdzisław Noga for helping me in procuring high-resolution photos of these documents.

<sup>60</sup> *I Libri Commemoriali della Repubblica di Venezia: Regesti* (Venice: A spese della Società, 1876); *I libri commemoriali della Repubblica di Venezia : regesti* vol. 4 ed. Fratelli Visentini, (Venice: Deputazione veneta di storia patria, 1896); *Inventari e Regesti del R. Archivio di Stato in Milano Milano, Palazzo Del Senato, 1915-1920*

differently, corresponding to the period of individual Chancellors, and are not comprehensive. The diplomatic correspondence between Florence and Poland has appeared piecemeal in various collections, or remains in manuscript in the Florentine archive, and is therefore discussed in the section dedicated to unedited sources. The second category of sources is a mixed bag, but can be generally considered personal works where Italians active in Poland are mentioned by others.<sup>61</sup> The last category includes edited notarial records available from the Genoese archives and are primarily related to her overseas colonies.<sup>62</sup> Some work has been done on the Venetian notarial books, but for an earlier period, and having perused them I found no Polish connections. The Florentine and Milanese notarial records meanwhile, have yet to be edited. Turning then to the copious Genoese fonds, most of these contained no documents of interest for this study but a few revealed surprising details. I have made use of all edited notarial records available from the Genoese archives related to her overseas colonies which fall into the relevant timeframe. Most of these contained no documents of interest for this study but a few revealed surprising details. The records compiled in Kiliya and Caffa bore particularly bountiful harvests, revealing among other things, a direct link between Armenian families active in these ports and Italians in Poland.<sup>63</sup>

A number of revealing court cases involving goods belonging to Polish merchants sequestered by Italian individuals appear spread across a number of document collections.<sup>64</sup> Finally, of

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ed. Cesare Manaresi (Milan: Cisalpino-Goliardica, 1971); *Trattati e negoziazioni politiche della Repubblica di Genova: 958-1797: Regesti*, eds. Pasquale Lisciandrelli and Giorgio Costamagna (Genoa: Società ligure di storia patria, 1960).

<sup>61</sup> Rinaldo Albizzi, *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi per il Comune di Firenze: dal Mcccxcix al Mccccxxxiii* (Florence: M. Cellini, 1867); Saminiato de' Ricci and Antonia Borlandi, *Il Manuale di Mercatura. Fonti e Studi* Università di Genova. Istituto di Storia Medievale e Moderna 4. (Genoa: Di Stefano, 1963).

<sup>62</sup> Michel Balard, *Notai genovesi in Oltremare: atti rogati a Cipro: Lamberto di Sambuceto (31 marzo 1304-19 luglio 1305, 4 gennaio-12 luglio 1307. Giovanni de Rocha (3 agosto 1308-14 marzo 1310), Collana storica di fonti e studi, vol. 43* (Genoa: Università di Genova, Istituto di Medievistica, 1984); Valeria Polonio, *Notai genovesi in Oltremare: Atti rogati a Cipro da Lamberto di Sambuceto (3 luglio 1300-3 agosto 1301)*. (Genoa: Università di Genova, Istituto di paleografia e storia medievale, 1982); Romeo Pavoni, *Notai genovesi in Oltremare: atti rogati a Cipro da Lamberto di Sambuceto (gennaio-agosto 1302)*. (Genoa: Università di Genova, Istituto di Medievistica, 1987); Valeria Polonio, ed., *Notai Genovesi in Oltremare. Atti rogati a Cipro da Lamberto di Sambuceto (3 luglio 1300-3 agosto 1301)*, Collana storica di fonti e studi 31 (Genoa: Università di Genova: Istituto di paleografia e storia medievale, 1982); Auslia Roccatagliata, "Notai genovesi in oltremare: Atti rogati a Pera (1453)," *Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria, nuova serie* XXXIX/1 (1999): 101-60.

<sup>63</sup> Geo Pistarino, *Notai genovesi in oltremare: atti rogati a Chilia da Antonio di Ponzò (1360-61)*. Collana storica di fonti e studi (Genoa: Istituto internazionale di studi liguri, 1971); Giovanna Raiteri and Silvana Balbi, *Notai genovesi in Oltremare. Atti rogati a Caffa e a Licostomo (sec. XIV)* (Genoa: Istituto Internazionale de studio Liguri, 1973)

<sup>64</sup> Auslia Roccatagliata, *Notai Genovesi in Oltremare. Atti rogati a Pera e Mitilene*, vol. 1: *Pera, 1408-1490*, Collana storica di fonti e studi 34.1 (Genoa: Università di Genova: Istituto di paleografia e storia medievale 1982); Auslia Roccatagliata, *Notai Genovesi in Oltremare. Atti rogati a Pera e Mitilene*, Vol 2 *Mitilene, 1454-1460*, Collana storica di fonti e studi 34.2 (Genoa: Università di Genova: Istituto di paleografia e storia medievale

considerable interest were the documents collected by Giacomo Grasso related to the ultimately unsuccessful attempt to form a league of Christian powers against the Ottomans in 1481. These documents revealed the surprisingly robust lobbying efforts of Italians active in Poland to convince the Genoese government to back the scheme and retake their lost colony of Caffa with the aid of the Polish king.<sup>65</sup> The sources listed above give only the most important ones used, and is by no means an exhaustive account.

## 5. Italian Unedited Sources

A great deal of time on this project has been spent uncovering and analyzing primary documents related to Italians present in Poland from the *Archivio di Stato di Venezia*, the *Archivio di Stato di Firenze*, and the *Fondo Datini* in the *Archivio di Stato di Prato*. It would have made sense to also attempt to survey other Italian archives, particularly the *Archivio di Stato di Genoa*, but time constraints and the lack of cataloguing that plagues the Genoese archive in particular, required me to narrow my focus. Given the biographies of the known Italians in Poland, I determined that the best sites to focus on would be Venice and Florence. The choice to include Prato was an easy one, as the Datini Archive is eminently searchable online, and I was fortunate enough to find a number of individuals of interest involved in that merchant's widespread network of affiliates. Below is a brief summary of the type of documents used in this thesis and the general categories of information they provided.

### *Archivio di Stato di Venezia*

#### Cancelaria Inferiore, Notaio

The fond of documents known as the *Cancelaria Inferiore, Notaio* contains 380 *Buste* - document files, written by official notaries within the City of Venice between 1038 and 1544, that were not specified as last wills and testaments. Wills can occasionally be found among the documents, but they are filed under a different fond of documents even if they were written by the same notary as will be discussed shortly. The document fond is organized according to

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(Genoa: Università di Genova: Istituto di paleografia e storia medievale 1982); Amedeo Vigna, *Codice diplomatico delle colonie tauro-liguri durante la signoria dell'Ufficio di S. Giorgio* (MCCCCLIII-MCCCCLXXV) vol. 1. Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria, VI/II, (Genoa: Tipografia del r. i. de Sordo-Muti, 1868); Vigna, Amedeo. *Codice diplomatico delle colonie tauro-liguri durante la signoria dell'Ufficio di S. Giorgio* (MCCCCLIII-MCCCCLXXV) Vol. 2. Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria», VII/1 Genoa: Tipografia del r. i. de Sordo-Muti, 1871).

<sup>65</sup> *Documenti riguardanti la costituzione di una lega contro il Turco nel 1481*, Giacomo Grasso ed. (Genoa: Tip. del R. Istituto sordo-muti, 1880).

the surname of the individual notary, disregarding any chronological order. The documents themselves appear frequently in the form of large leather-bound notarial registers made of either paper or parchment, or as single parchment sheets. Occasionally, the registers will include an “alphabet” where the names of individual clients with corresponding page number were recorded by the notaries themselves. These indexes are incredibly useful to scholars seeking specific names or identifiers such as profession or nationality, as they prevent one from having to read each individual record. These can extend into the many hundreds in even a single register. Another useful key to access these records is to note that the notaries tended to have a specific geographical range and social milieu wherein they provided services. Thus, if one German speaking merchant who traded on the Rialto appears in the documents, there are very likely to be others. Merchants in turn, tended to use the same notaries on more than one occasion, so if you discover one document, there are also likely to be others. These facts make it easier to identify relevant documents and even networks between individuals. While I surveyed a large number of these registers, only a few contained relevant information.<sup>66</sup>

## Notariale, Testamenti

The archival series, *Notariale, Testamenti* contains the last wills and testaments of individuals living in Venice covering the period from 1275 to 1808. Just as the *Cancellaria Inferiore Notaio*, it is organized alphabetically by the cognomen of the notary who recorded the document. Many of the notaries who appear in the *Cancellaria Inferiore Notaio* also produced testaments. Indeed, it proved fruitful to scour the records left by these individuals in both locations, for as noted above, merchants tended to prefer notaries they were familiar with. The number of testaments recorded in Venice, during the fifteenth century in particular, is striking. Men and women both commonly left bequests and instructions to the surviving families outlining how their patrimony was to be distributed. These documents generally appear on single sheets of paper or more rarely on parchment in both Latin and vernacular Italian. After surveying over a thousand documents from multiple notaries, I was able to find three wills of interest related to members of the Bicherano family.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>66</sup> ASV, Cancellaria Inferiore, Notaio 91 - Gebellinio Giorgis, Cancellaria Inferiore, Notaio 96 - Griffon Pietro, Cancellaria Inferiore, Notaio 225 - Venetia de Angeletto, Cancellaria Inferiore, Notaio 226 - Venetia de Angeletto, Cancellaria Inferiore, Notaio 228 - Venetia de Angeletto.

<sup>67</sup> ASV, Notarile, Testamenti 364 - Darvasio Basilio - plebano S. Trinitatis, Notarile, Testamaneti 554- Griffon Pietro.

## Sources for Further Study

While I was able to survey large numbers of the *Cancelaria Inferiore Notaio* and the *Notarile, Testamenti*, further time spent with these documents would no doubt produce more information on Italians with interests in Poland and Polish traders operating in Venice. During the course of my research, I also looked into a large number of other Venetian document fonds, but two in particular should be mentioned as likely avenues for further possible research – the *Avogaria di Comune* and the files catalogued under the *Procurator di S. Marco*.<sup>68</sup>

## Archivio di Stato di Firenze

### The Florentine Catasto of 1427, 1430, 1433, 1458, and 1480

The Florentine Catasto is one of the most interesting and useful stools for economic and social history existing from the Late Medieval period. In 1427, in the face of a mounting financial crisis due to a series of wars waged against the aggressive rulers of Milan, the Florentine government sought to stem the tide by initiating a reform of the tax system. Thus was born the Catasto, which required every citizen of the city and its surrounding *contado* to submit a form which described their financial status. These tax returns - *Portate*, followed a standardized form, although each individual was responsible for writing, or in many cases having a scribe write it for them. They described their properties – urban and rural, revenues derived from those properties, investments in the *Monte* – the public debt, business partnerships, and a list

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<sup>68</sup> The *Avogaria di Comune* contains documents from 1259-1654 and is divided into a number of subsections, the most important of which for this type of research are the GRAZIE and RASPE. The GRAZIE files contain special concessions which were granted by the Venetian government to citizens and foreigners including: commercial privileges, financial aid, grants of citizenship, and remission of sentences. The RASPE on the other hand, are a recording of various criminal sentences passed against citizens and foreigners by the Venetian courts, providing a unique window into the lives and behaviors of individuals at the time. I made only a small survey of these documents and uncovered a number of interesting cases involving merchants from the German Lands, but none with direct links to Poland. Further research in these files however, is likely to reveal more. Another set of documents likely to produce interesting results are those contained in the fond of the *Procuratori di San Marco*. The documents cover a time period ranging from the eleventh to the twentieth century. The position of procurator di San Marco was the most eminent post in the Republic after that of the doge. Initiated in the ninth century – their number had risen to six by 1319 and then was set definitively at nine by 1442. From the fourteenth century, the City of Venice was divided into three Procuratia: 1) *de supra* - saw to the administration of the Basilica of San Marco. 2) *de citra* - administrated over *tutele*, *commissarie*, and testaments from the sestieri of San Marco, Castello, and Cannaregio. 3) *de ultra* - administrated over *tutele*, *commissarie*, and testaments from the sestieri of Dorsiduro, San Polo, and S. Croce. Given that the majority of those involved with the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* and trade in Poland had their homes located around the Rialto bridge, the sestiere of San. Polo and San. Marco would be the most likely to contain useful documents. Thus, a thorough survey of the *de citra* and *de ultra* documents for the relevant time period would be of potential benefit. During my research, I was unfortunately able to look into only a fraction of the available material. Of particular interest would also be the years 1457 and 1463 when Antonio di Giovanni Diedo and Andrea di Antonio Diedo, the son-in law and grandson of Pietro Bicherano, who lived much of his life in Poland, were elected as *Procuratori di San Marco*.

of current creditors and debtors as of the date of submission. Further information such as family status, current location and name and age of household members, were also included. This last item was particularly important as each individual within a household was granted 200 fl as “living costs” which could be subtracted from the taxable total. For historians, this sort of biographical information is invaluable. These *Portate*, upon being submitted, were assessed and catalogued, stripped of what was considered irrelevant information and transferred into a set of books known as *Campione*. The numbers recorded in these *Campione* then formed the basis for a new form of direct taxation that was more equitable and more profitable for the state than had been the case with the previous *Estimi*. The project was immense, with 60,000 *Portate* submitted and an estimated over 250,000 individuals recorded. The process was repeated over the next hundred years at irregular intervals with some modifications. For this study, the years investigated were: 1427, 1430, 1433, 1458, and 1480 – the years the Catasto was ordered during the fifteenth century. Not all of the Catasto records have survived, but the vast majority of both the *Portate* and *Campione* have withstood the tests of time. Between the two, the *Portate* are the most valuable, having been written by the citizens themselves, they contain more information and often details related to business problems or family relations, which were considered superfluous by the Florentine authorities who later compiled the *Campione* and edited out. Of particular use to this study are mentions within the documents of business transacted in Poland or with Polish individuals.

### Signori, Missive, I and II Cancelleria

The Signori, Missive, I and II Cancelleria form a small part of the correspondence produced by the Florentine *Signoria* between the years 1308 – 1554. Series I includes 58 registers covering the years 1308 – 1554 and series II includes 71 registers covering the years 1441 – 1532. The records include only outgoing mail sent by the *Signoria* to courts and notables, both inside and outside the Italian peninsula. Included among these were numerous letters sent to kings of Poland.

### Medici Avanti il Principato

The *Medici Avanti il Principato*, is an enormous and diverse collection of documents related to the Medici Family, beginning in the fourteenth century and extending until the time of the investiture of Cosimo di Medici as Duke of Florence in 1537. The documents have been partially indexed and are currently available online in their entirety on the website of the

*Archivio di Stato di Firenze*.<sup>69</sup> Among the most useful files for this dissertation were Filza 6, 7, 8, 12, and 13, which contain letters written by the Medici factor stationed in Lübeck - Gerharo Bueri, and Filza 153, which includes the secret account books of the Medici Bank.

### Sources for Further Study

The Florentine archive is vast and there are a number of different caches of documents which might contain relevant material for this study. During the course of my research I was able to look into a few of the possibilities, but far more remain unexplored. Those which are most likely to contain items of interest related to Poland include the records of the *Arte del Cambio*, the *Notariale Antecosimiano*, and the *Mercanzia*, but these remain only the most likely candidates for further research and do not preclude others.<sup>70</sup>

### *Fondo Datini in the Archivio di Stato di Prato*

The Datini Archive contains the business and personal documents of the famous Merchant of Prato – Francesco Datini. The collection contains documents from the nearly fifty-year period of Datini’s activity - 1363-1410. Of the 1194 items that miraculously survived under a stairwell until their rediscovery in the nineteenth century, 602 are accounting ledgers, while the other 592 are envelopes enclosing 150,000 letters. Datini’s impressive business network spread across much of Europe, but while he had no *fondaci* north of the Alps, he did engage in business there. It is not surprising therefore that a number of letters from Italian individuals involved in

<sup>69</sup> “Medici Avanti il Principato,” *Archivio di Stato di Firenze*. <https://www.archiviodistato.firenze.it/map/> Accessed January 27th, 2021.

<sup>70</sup> The records contained in the *Arte del Cambio* – the registers of the Guild of Bankers, extend from 1299-1777. The registers include the names and dates of new members enrolled in the guild as well as contracts drawn up between them, and complaints filed before the guild’s court. Given that a number of individuals enrolled in the guild, including Vieri di Medici, Giovanni di Bicci di Medici, and Vieri Guadagni, who were all involved in banking transactions in Poland and other parts of Central Eastern Europe, it would be reasonable to assume that some mention of Poland might be found in these registers. During the course of this research however, having surveyed volumes 62, 63, 64, 65, and 66, I found no direct references to any Polish related material. That said, it is possible that more in-depth research would uncover relevant information. The *Notariale Antecosimiano* is the rough Florentine equivalent of the Venetian Cancellaria Inferiore, Notaio. It contains the registers of Notariles active in Florence between 1237-1569, with some documents extending until 1705. The fond is organized as that in Venice, alphabetically according to the cognomen of the notary. Apart from the name and the dates the notary was active, these records remain unindexed. These notarial registers, which are extremely abundant, have the potential to provide useful information on a wide number of topics. They have not however, been widely used and given the lack of previous scholarship, it is difficult to have even a weak idea of where to start looking on any particular project. The *Mercanzia* was the commercial court of Florence. Founded in 1308 by the city’s five most powerful guilds it operated to adjudicate disputes between merchants in the city and between Florentines and their international business partners. Indeed, this second function was its original main purpose. The documents contained in the fond run from 1306 to 1770, and cover a wide variety of cases. While these sources have the potential to be useful for any study involving international trade, due to the constraints of this thesis, only one case is included.

Polish trade can be found among his documents and these are referenced in this dissertation. Today, many of the letters have been digitized and are viewable online with more being added continually and it is hoped that in the future, further connections between the Datini network and Poland may be uncovered.

## **V. Methodology**

The principal methodological approach to this thesis was to return to the primary sources – reviewing previously known material with new eyes and uncovering new data from heretofore ignored troves. With this in mind, having defined my timeframe to the relatively understudied Late Medieval period (1300-1500), from the start I chose to use the work of Jan Ptaśnik as an initial spring board I then reviewed individually every piece of primary evidence he cites and never took his conclusions at face value. If there is a source mentioned in this study, I have reviewed it personally. Having chosen to focus the thesis on the lives and activities of individuals, rather than attempting a more general global or theoretical study, the next step was to build a comprehensive prospographical survey, collecting as much information on each individual as possible. The fruits of this research, which began life as an Excel spreadsheet, can be viewed in the Appendix. My two goals were to review all the sources with fresh eyes and provide a fuller and more detailed image of the endeavors of the Italians traders who traveled to Poland during the Late Medieval Period. With this in mind, it was immediately obvious that the study would require a two-pronged approach – one directed in Poland and the other in Italy. Over the subsequent three years I journeyed from Budapest to Krakow many times, holing up for long periods in the Jagiellonian University Library and the Krakow National Archive. This time allowed me to gather a large volume of material which serves as the core of the data underlying this thesis. Having completed my time in Poland, I then turned to the other prong of research – the Italian side. Having gathered as much as possible from published sources and the ever increasing amount of digitized material, I made plans to visit the Italian archives. Since the Genoese archives remain without proper categorization and in a state of general disarray, I made the choice to focus my efforts on those of Venice and Florence, from which, after Genoa, the largest number of Italians in Poland originated. As it turned out, contrary to my expectations, the amount of useful material extant in the *Archivio di Stato di Venezia* actually superseded that of Florence. In Venice, I focused on private wills and notarial documents, making a number of useful finds. Then, I transferred my focus to the *Archivio di Stato di Firenze* and focused most of my attention on the Florentine Catasto series, together



with *Cancellaria* records. Having gathered these documents together, I commenced writing the thesis, putting the new source data together with secondary literature. Following the micro-historical approach, with the focus on merchant lives, demonstrated most clearly in the case studies. Their experience is contextualized by the thesis's other chapters - the routes taken, the changing political landscape, the goods traded, the legal wrangling, and discussion of family structures, all combine to paint a picture into which the merchant's life can be better placed.<sup>71</sup>

## VI. Chapter Summary

The objectives set out in this thesis are addressed in five main chapters, each focusing on a different aspect of the Italian merchant presence in Poland during the Later Middle Ages.

Chapter One describes the history of the earliest Italians who came to Poland. It then gives a limited quantitative analysis of the origins and residency habits of Italians who settled in the kingdom over time. It also offers a brief account of the diplomatic relationships between Poland and various Italian polities, as well as connections to Italian communities in Hungary and the German Lands.

Chapter Two looks at the trade routes that ran through the Kingdom of Poland that were utilized by Italians. Concentrating on each of the four cardinal directions, the chapter covers the often complex political history that influenced the routes taken, emphasizing how these changes impacted Italians interested in trading in the region.

Chapter Three covers the various goods traded by Italians within the Kingdom of Poland and to a lesser extent Silesia, as the two were frequently connected. It discusses imports and exports as well as products such as salt, which were traded primarily internally. The reason for the choice of these products is speculated upon and the tribulations and successes involved in their sale discussed. It also lays out the history of papal tax collectors in the region, their important connection to Italians, and their impact on the history of banking in the kingdom.

Chapter Four offers a series of case studies, biographies of various Italian merchants who traded in Poland during the Late Middle Ages. This section is broken into three time periods, 1300-1400, 1400-1450, 1450-1500, that correspond roughly to times when the makeup of

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<sup>71</sup> Thanks to an Erasmus + Internship grant, I was able to stay in Krakow for four months in 2018, splitting my time between research and my job at the Krakow History Museum. Thanks to two research grants I received from CEU, I was able in the summer and fall of 2019 to travel first to Venice for a month and then to Florence for four, working as a junior fellow at the Medici Archive Project.

Italians present in Poland and the activities they engaged in, which were in flux due to changing political tides. These biographies provide a window into the lives and lifestyle of the individuals presented, and the world they inhabited. For some, a great deal about their lives is known, while others only appear as vague hints in the sources, but each one offers valuable insight into the actions and motivations of Italian traders of the time and is duly presented.

Chapter Five explores the legal status of Italians and their business ventures in Poland. It then takes a more in-depth look at the various courts utilized by Italians and their strategies for seeking justice. The section covers: letters of recommendation, letters of complaint, and the use of the right of reprisals both by and against Italian citizens in Poland.

The conclusion gives a summary of the main findings of the thesis and tackles the reason why such a relatively small number of Italians came to Poland during the period. The final section of this thesis is the Appendix which houses a gazetteer of place names and a prosopographical dataset. The gazetteer of place names includes those locations referenced in this thesis whose names may be familiar to readers under a different title. As many of the places referred to in this thesis have historically been known by various names as their political affiliation and local populations have changed over time, to avoid confusion I have collated the most common appellations to act as a reference guide for readers. Within the text itself, I have as a rule, used the standard historical English name when one exists and otherwise the name of the site in its modern local variant. Other historical titles may be found in the gazetteer. The second part of the Appendix is the prosopographical dataset which includes details on every Italian considered in this thesis, a brief synopsis of each primary source record they were involved in, organized in chronological order. The individuals are categorized in alphabetical order by personal name. This listing stands as the foundation upon which the rest of the thesis is built. While many of these individuals are discussed in detail throughout this work, some are mentioned only in passing and many of the details of each individual life are glossed over. For those interested in greater detail or a specific individual, the appendix is for them.

# Chapter 1 – Italian Merchants in Poland

## 1.1 The Earliest Italians in Poland

Italians first arrived in Polish lands as part of missionary efforts in the tenth and eleventh centuries and played a small but significant role in the slow buildup of the Church. In 1175, the Polish Duke, Bolesław I Wysoki, invited both German and Italian Cistercian monks to settle on his territory. By 1184, the cult of the Roman martyr St. Florian had become so popular that the Pope permitted his relics to be translated to the Wawel Cathedral in Krakow, accompanied by an Italian retinue.<sup>72</sup> Despite this initial enthusiasm, in my research covering the years 1300-1500, I have identified just over 100 Italians present and working in Polish crown lands. I will make a point here to clarify that I am speaking of lay individuals, as I do not cover the comings and goings of prelates or monks, who at times arrived from Rome or their mother houses on the peninsula. However, even within the Church, the number of Italians was vanishingly small.<sup>73</sup> This very lack, however, makes those few individuals who do rise from the sources all the more intriguing. Previous scholarship has offered two possible narratives to explain the earliest Italians' transfer to Poland. Given that the majority of these early transfers came from the region of Liguria and Genoa itself, the first explanation was that these men sought to be closer to Genoese trading networks on the Black Sea coast. The second explanation has been that Italians arrived in the wake of papal collectors who came to Poland seeking the taxes demanded by the pope. On their face, these explanations appear plausible, but as we shall see, they do not match with the facts presented by the sources.

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<sup>72</sup> Magdalena Podłodowska Reklewska ed., *Wawel 1000-2000 vol 1 Artistic Culture of the Royal Court and the Cathedral Cracow Cathedral - The Episcopal Royal and National Shrine* (Krakow: Zamek Królewski na Wawelu, 2000), 13; *Kodeks Dyplomatyczny Wielkopolski 984-1287 Vol 1* [Records of the region of greater Poland vol.1 984-1287] hereafter [KDWP] I ed. I. Zakrzewski (Poznań: Bibl. Kórnicka, 1877), , nr 21.

<sup>73</sup> Approximately 90 % of the Polish high clergy in the thirteenth century were scions of Polish noble families with similar demographics to be found amongst the cathedral canons, who upon gaining the power to elect their own bishops continued to favor Polish candidates throughout the next two centuries. Meanwhile, the relatively poor state of the local cathedral schools meant that many candidates were forced to study abroad. Poles still held most high ecclesiastical positions, but nearly 50 % studied abroad in foreign Western schools. Canon law was the most popular course of study, and taken up almost entirely in Italy. Through the fifteenth century, the number of imported priests remained low. Elżbieta Jamrozik, "Les Italiens dans les villes polonaises des XVe et XVIe siècles," *Cahiers d'études romanes. Revue du CAER* 18 (2008): 117-29; Jacek Maciejewski, "Which way to bishopric?: origin and careers of polish bishops in the 13th century," in *Carreiras eclesiásticas no ocidente cristão: séc. XII-XIV* (Lisbon: Universidade Católica Portuguesa. Centro de Estudos de História Religiosa 2007), 207-17.

The earliest movements of Italians in Poland are as fragmentary as the sources are scarce. As described above, in 1175, Duke Bolesław I Wysoki, in founding a monastery at Lubiąż, invited, “*Poloni ... sive Theotonicici vel Gallici*” to come and people the lands he was granting to the Abbott, promising them equal treatment under the kingdom’s laws.<sup>74</sup> In a similar move a few decades later in 1221, High Duke Leszek Biały of Poland, invited “*Romani sive Teothonicici*” either Italians or Germans to come and work in mines in Poland, but he was assassinated just a few years later and it is difficult to say how many, if any, took him up on his invitation.<sup>75</sup>

Polish merchants were among those to be found in Kiev in 1245 in the aftermath of the great Mongol invasion where traders from Venice, Genoa, Pisa, Byzantium, Rus, and new Mongol-held territories gathered seeking to reestablish trading ties.<sup>76</sup> By the late 1260’s wine from Northern Italy was being imported to Wrocław.<sup>77</sup> Indeed, this mother city of Silesia was an early nexus for immigration, and in 1270 had a street known as “*platea Romanorum*” later referred to as “*platea Gallica*” or by the Germans “*Walgasse*”.<sup>78</sup> Silesia may indeed have been the gateway through which Italians came to the rest of Polish lands, but the sources are so

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<sup>74</sup> [KDWP] I nr 21.

<sup>75</sup> *Kodeks dyplomatyczny katedry krakowskiej św. Wacława* vol 1 [Records of Krakow Cathedral of St. Wenceslaus vol. 1] hereafter [KDKK] I ed. Franciszek Piekosiński (Krakow: Nakł. Akademii Umiejętności, 1874), pg 17 nr 12.

<sup>76</sup> *Insuper testes sunt mercatores Wratislaviae, qui usque in Kioviā venerunt nobiscum [et] sciverunt quod nos manus intravimus Tartarorum; et multi alii mercatores, tam de Polonia, quam de Austria, qui venerunt in Kioviā postquam ad Tartaros ieramus.* Giovanni di Pian di Carpine, *Storia dei Mongoli*, ed. Enrico Menestò (Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 1989), 227.

<sup>77</sup> Grzegorz Myśliwski, “Venice and Wrocław in the later Middle Ages.” in *Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages: A Cultural History: [Essays in Honour of Paul W. Knoll]* eds. Piotr Górecki and Nancy van Deusen (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2009), 101.

<sup>78</sup> A street in Wrocław was first mentioned in the Cistercian Chronicle of Henryków as *platea Romanorum* in 1270; previously it had been known as *platea Sancti Mauricii*, for the church located nearby. By 1316 the name had changed to *platea Gallica* and was later called by the German name, *Walgasse*. The final eponym caused Zientara to assume that the origins of the people who lived in the area were Walloons - romance speakers from Northern France renowned for their weaving skills. Jan Ptaśnik however, argued that these terms - *Romanis* or *Gallicus* did not refer to Walloons but rather to Italians, citing examples from the later fourteenth century. This argument appears suspect, however, as it stands only on later usages and is further undercut by the German title *Waloongasse*, referred to by Zientara, which clearly points to Walloon occupants. *Romanus* and *Gallicus* would then appear to have been used somewhat interchangeably for Romance speakers, initially Walloons and later Italians. However, looking closely at the work compiled by Zientara, a wrinkle appears. On page 177 he writes that the street *platea Gallica* was later known by the German title *Waloongasse*; in his final gazetta of all Wrocław street names, on page 181 he defines the name as *Walgasse*. Since *Wal* or *Wale* was a common title in German for Italians, it stands to reason that Italians, rather than Walloons were the original occupants of the street. Recent research by Dagmara Adamska has revealed that, prior to 1450, the street was called: in *vico beati Mauricii* (1261), in *Romana* (...) *platea* (ok. 1305), *platea gallicana* (1326), *Walgassen* (1417). Benedykt Zientara, “*Walonowie na Śląsku w XII i XIII wieku [Wallons in Silesia in the 12th and 13th centuries]*,” *Przegląd Historyczny: dwumiesięcznik naukowy* 66.3 (1975): 177, 181, 353.; Jan Ptaśnik, “*Studia nad patrycyatem krakowskim wieków średnich. [Study of the Krakow Patriciate during the Middle Ages]*,” *Rocznik Krakowski* 15 (1913): 87; Dagmara Adamska, *Podwrocławskie wsie, folwarki i majątki o metryce średniowiecznej* (ob. w granicach administracyjnych miasta Wrocławia) [Medieval villages, farms and estates near Wrocław (currently within the administrative boundaries of the City of Wrocław)] in *Atlas Historyczny Miast Polskich*, ed. R. Czaja (Wrocław, red. R. Eysymontt, M. Goliński, Wrocław 2017), 26.

fragmentary that it makes tracing difficult. What little we do know however, indicates that Italians arrived from their homes in the west rather than their colonies in the east. Apart from the hazy references to Italians in Silesia, the first hard evidence for lay Italians residing there comes only from the early fourteenth century.<sup>79</sup>

The first Italians to make a name for themselves in Poland were: Nicholas Manente (1306-1339), Hugetti Cavallo (1317), Paolo Cavallo (1338-1353), Pietro Cavallo (1347-1369), and later, Gotfridus Fattinante (1366-1393). The stories of these individuals are covered in the case studies presented in Chapter 4. Yet, while I have highlighted in this study the most prominent Italian community members, they were not the only ones to be found in Poland at the time, they were simply the ones whom the sources reveal the most information about. Indeed, they appear in our source constellation like stars around which a number of smaller bodies orbited. These lesser known men, and it was exclusively men, unfortunately lack surnames and are identifiable as Italians only by that tell-tale moniker *Gallicus*.<sup>80</sup>

The records show in the 1340s and 1350s a Petrus and a Fredericus Gallicus engaged in long distance trade across the Baltic to Bruges, while a Jacobino Gallicus worked as apothecary to the Polish king.<sup>81</sup> Between 1322 and 1351 we see a Baldewino Gallicus purchasing a house in Krakow which was later owned by a Fredericus and then a Nicolaus demonstrating perhaps a

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<sup>79</sup> The brothers Simone and Everardo Gallicus worked for the Silesian Dukes Henry III and Henry IV between 1259 and 1281, with Simone eventually rising to the position of Count Palatine of Wrocław. Numerous Italian clerics appear in the record during this period as well. For example, a charter released by Duke Bolesław Wstydlivy to Krakow Cathedral in 1279 about villages belonging to the cathedral was signed by a witness, “*Domino Philippo Canonico Cracouiensibus, natione gallicis procurantibus*,” [KDKK] I nr 81; (1259/01/24) *Schlesisches Urkundenbuch. 3. Band: 1251-1266*, ed. Bearbeitet von Winfried Irgang. (Böhlau Verlag Hermann Nachf., Köln-Weimar-Wien 1984), nr 279 pg 184, (1281/05/04) *Schlesisches Urkundenbuch, Im Auftrage der Historischen Kommission für Schlesien* herausgegeben von Heinrich Appelt und Josef Joachim Menzel, Fünfter Band 1291 - 1300, eds. Bearbeitet von Winfried Irgang and Mitarbeit Daphne Schadewaldt (Böhlau Verlag Hermann Nachf., Köln-Weimar-Wien 1998), nr 51

<sup>80</sup> Gallicus, in the medieval Polish context implies not someone from France, as might otherwise be assumed, but rather an Italian. During the fifteenth century, the term “*Italicus*” became more commonly used. See the argument put forward by Ptaśnik and a similar example from the Hungarian and Croatian contexts. Ptaśnik, “*Study nad patrycyatem krakowskim*, 87.; Krisztina Arany, *Florentine Families in Hungary in the First Half of the Fifteenth Century*,” *Phil. Diss Central European University* (2014), 36.; Neven Budak and Sandra Paić Piljac, “*I Fiorentini nella Slavonia e nella Croazia nei Secoli XIV e XV*,” *Archivio Storico Italiano* 153, no. 4 (566) (1995): 681.

<sup>81</sup> *Monumenta Poloniae Vaticana. 2 : Acta Camerae Apostolicae : 2. 1344 - 1374*, Vol. 2 Hereafter [MPV] II ed. Jan Ptaśnik (Krakow: Sumptibus Academiae Litterarum Cracoviensis, 1913), nr. 83.; *Jacobinus Gallicus apotecario regis 1363-73 Księgi ławnicze krakowskie 1365-1376 i 1390-1397* [The Cracow Books of the Municipal Bench 1365-1376 and 1390-1397] Hereafter [KLK] ed. Stanisław Krzyżanowski (Krakow: Drukarni Uniwersitetu Jagiellońskiego, 1904), 36, 94, 182, 183, 186-88, 192, 795.

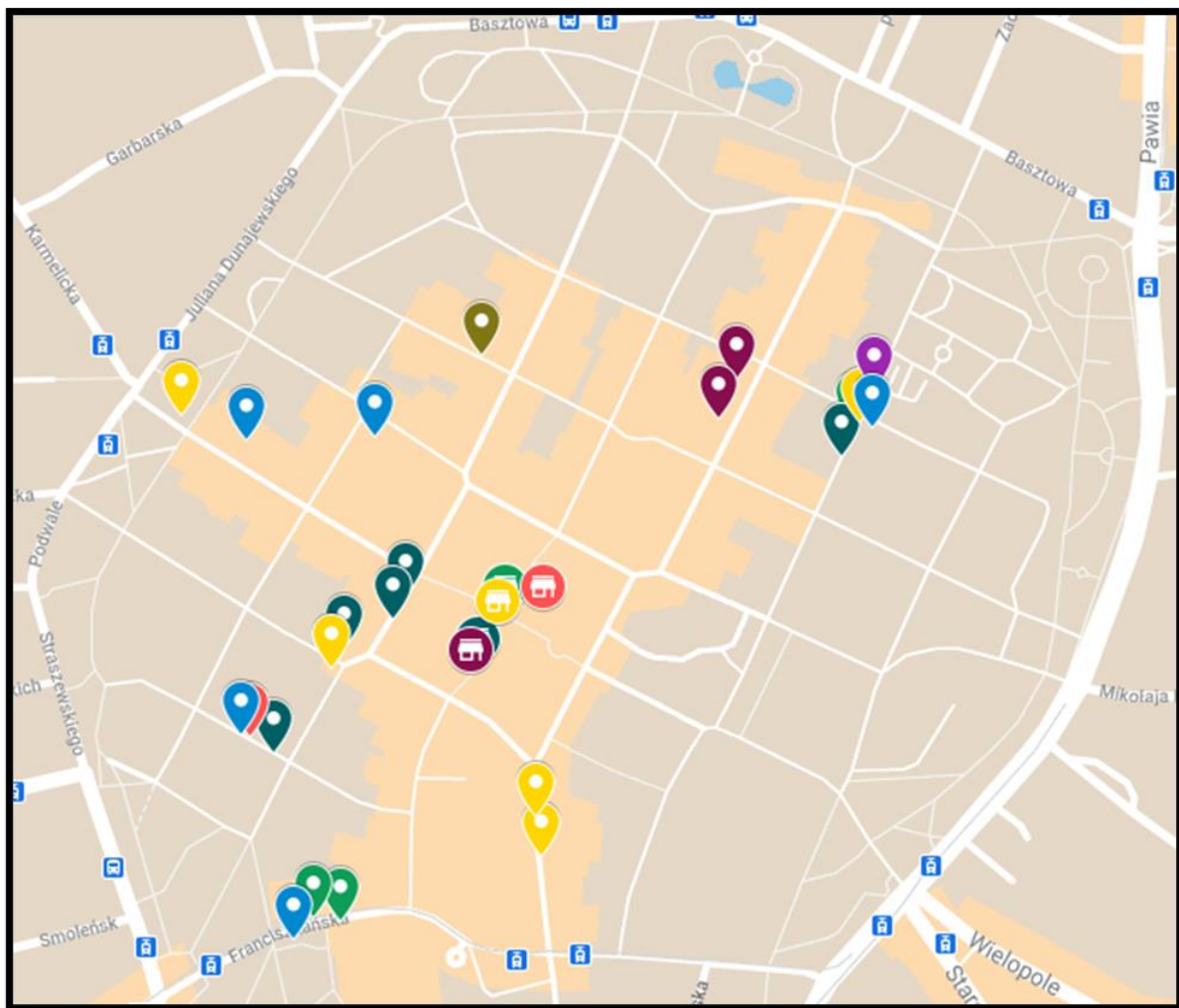
family line or at least the tendency of Italians to sell to one another.<sup>82</sup> Indeed, a map of properties owned by Italians in Krakow, based on notarial registers, shows significant clusters over time. (Figure 5)

Fredericus served for many years as a member of the Krakow City Council. His likely son Nicolaus meanwhile, had dealings with Stephanus Pexa, who was likely related to the brother-in-law of Gotfridus Fattinante, who became mayor of a village near Krakow and later a judge in the High court of Magdeburg law in Krakow.<sup>83</sup> Such mentions in the sources are frustratingly obscure, but taken together demonstrate a small but notable community centered on Krakow resident from the first decade of the fourteenth century. Given the origin of the most prominent members of the community, these men too were most likely born in Liguria.

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<sup>82</sup> Baldwin Gallicus (1322) *Najstarsze księgi i rachunki miasta Krakowa od r. 1300 - do 1400* [The earliest notary books and accounts of the City of Krakow from 1300 - to 1400] hereafter [NKiRMK] ed, Franciszek Piekosiński, and J. Suzujski (Krakow: n.p, 1878. Reprint: Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1965), nr 55, Nicolaus genereo Fredericus Gallicus (1351) [NKiRMK] nr 1609, nr 1612.

<sup>83</sup> Lead trade with Jacobus Gallicus (1366) [KLK], 65. mayor of Bronowicze (1375-1402); *Kodeks dyplomatyczny Małopolski 1257-1506 vol 1*, [Records of the region of lesser Poland 1257-1506 vol. 1] hereafter [KDMP] I ed. Franciszek Piekosiński (Krakow: NAU, 1876), nr 325, 468.



- Pietro Cavallo
- Paolo Cavallo
- Gottfridus Fattinante
- Baldwin and Fredericus Galli...
- Stefanus Gallicus
- Simon Gallicus
- Jacobus Bartholeus Gallicus
- Manetha, widow of Niczconi...

Figure 5 Properties Owned by Italians in 14th C. Krakow

Source: The information underlying the map is taken from the [NKiRMK] and [KLK]. To view the full version with references see: <https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1kqUvPK9CHmR008ZbMa-DHmThZhMCppjX&usp=sharing>

Some came for only a matter of years, while others appear to have settled down, married and raised families likely choosing local wives.<sup>84</sup> They were very probably multi-lingual, speaking Italian amongst themselves, German to their fellow townsmen, and Polish with villagers or workers at the mines demonstrating an impressive linguistic repertoire to successfully navigate life abroad. In giving to the church, they followed patterns common to their fellow countrymen with a focus on hospitals and private masses.<sup>85</sup> Most obvious however, is their presence in what today would be called white collar jobs - long-distance traders, apothecaries, judges and especially as administrators. Such occupations required a high degree of literacy that was more common to the Italian Peninsula than anywhere else at the time thus perhaps explaining their predominance in these fields. This summary leads us to a question - Why during this era were these men drawn to Poland? This question will be explored in greater detail in the conclusion, but a short explanation for the particular interest of Ligurian merchants in the region during the fourteenth century is put forth here.

As stated above, the first of the two traditional explanations for the early movement of Italian merchants to Poland was, that Genoese businessmen used Poland as a staging ground to be closer to their Black Sea holdings, facilitating an over-land route for trade that ran through the City of Lviv, then Krakow and eventually down the Vistula to the Baltic and beyond or across Hungary or the Holy Roman Empire to the Mediterranean. Upon closer inspection however, this explanation falls to pieces in face of the evidence. While the thirteenth century was Genoa's golden period of expansion, the fourteenth would see them beaten back on several fronts. In 1308 Caffa, their great emporium on the Black Sea was destroyed and only rebuilt in 1316. Soon after, the decline of the powers of the Khanate brought an end to the "Pax Mongolica" which had kept the region safe for travelers.<sup>86</sup> Even should one make it unscathed across Wallachia or Moldova, the territory of Galicia-Volhynia - Red Ruthenia, was in a state of turmoil as rival dukes battled for supremacy and further subject to regular predations by raiding Lithuanians and the Poles themselves. Only in the 1340's, after the first Genoese began

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<sup>84</sup> (1365/12/03) Indeed, the first entry of the second set of surviving notarial registers from Krakow, contains the account of a case of the widow of an Italian, and her two daughters. The honorable Lady Manetha, wife of Niczcon Gallicus, along with her two daughters Magdalena and Hella, nominated Johannes Petermani as her legal representative, in the action of selling her 1/3rd portion in a Malting house located near Cruciferus to Herman Cranz who owned the other 2/3rds. [KLK] nr 1.

<sup>85</sup> Civil war in Genoa lasted from 1314-1331. Steven A. Epstein, *Genoa & the Genoese, 958-1528*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 185-87. 194-202.

<sup>86</sup> Virgil Ciociltan, *The Mongols and the Black Sea trade in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 32.



arriving, was the area conquered by King Casimir the Great. Full integration of the region took much longer, with Lviv receiving Magdeburg law and staple rights only in 1352.

The Genoese meanwhile, had been making inroads into the Black Sea region for over a century, and were well aware of the overland route that ran through Polish territory. A portolan map of 1339 created by the Genoese Angelino Dulcert does show Lviv – described as Lemberg, in prominent detail. While, the first known mention of Lviv in Genoese written sources in 1343, in relation to an embassy which was being sent to treat with Jani Beg, Khan of the Golden Horde (r.1342-1357).<sup>87</sup> So, the Genoese were on some level aware of the city's existence. (Figure 36) However, due to the ongoing turmoil across the region, it seems unlikely that a large volume of trade goods, particularly that of the type of high-priced spices and silks that would be worth taking the more expensive overland route, would have been transported. It was simply too risky. Further, the sources in Poland give no indication of such transfers prior to the late 1370s. True, it may be that such transactions were simply not recorded or have not survived for this earlier period. However, looking also at the more abundant notarial records kept from the Genoese ports themselves, I have found no mention of any of our main protagonists nor indication that goods were headed towards Polish lands. Finally, when we can at last trace a direct connection from Caffa to Lviv and finally to Krakow, this trade was primarily in the hands of Armenian merchants and not handled by Genoese directly.<sup>88</sup> The explanation therefore, that the Black Sea trade was the major draw appears unfounded.

That brings us to the second routinely cast story, that the Genoese followed in the wake of Papal Collectors. This logical sounding explanation soon too falls apart upon closer inspection. Papal taxes began to be collected in Poland for the first time in the 1230s and during this initial phase were carried back personally by each collector in a carefully guarded chest. As time went on, and the taxes became heavier and more regularized and this system was deemed cumbersome and expensive, so new means were searched for to see the monies carried safely

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<sup>87</sup> Олександр Джанов [Oleksandr Dshanov], "Нарис освоєння генуезцями Східної Європи на північ від Криму та Тани. Історичні відомості та матеріальні залишки XIII–XV ст [Essay on the development of Eastern Europe by the Genoese north of the Crimea and Tana. Historical information and material remains of the XIII–XV centuries]," *Наш Крим* 3 (2017): 31.

<sup>88</sup> Already in 1376 we find a citizen of Lviv with property in Caffa, Tayczadin, son of Johannes of the Armenian Sirkis family. This family would dominate trade between Caffa and Lviv for the coming half century. *Acta grodzkie i ziemskie czasów Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z Archiwum tak zwanego Bernardyńskiego we Lwowie* [The urban and terrestrial Acts of the Polish Republic from the Archive of the so-called Bernardyński in Lviv] Vol. 3 Hereafter [AGZ] 3 ed. Wydał Hejnosz Wojciech (Lviv: Główny skład w księgarni Seyfartha i Czajkowskiego, 1872), pg 49 nr XXII; [NKML] I nr 338, 571, 576; Laurentiu Radvan, *At Europe's Borders: Medieval Towns in the Romanian Principalities*, (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 512-3; Nadel-Golobič, "Armenians and Jews in Medieval Lvov," 355.

to the papal coffers. In 1328, we see Nicolaus Manente, our first Polish Genovese helping to arrange for a transfer by a group of fellow Ligurians but this was a onetime deal and Nicolaus's primary interest in the region was in land administration. Later on, similar merchant bands were persuaded to carry the money for a price. The system functioned for a few years before it also was deemed too inefficient and costly. It is in this context of the ongoing search for the cheapest means to make money transfers that in 1348 the papal collector lobbied for the pope to persuade the Bardi Bank to set up a branch office in Poland with Paulo Cavallo as its main functionary. It is clear from the text of the letter sent by the collector however, that he had found Paulo already on the ground in Poland, and indeed the idea was likely coming from Cavallo himself, rather than the other way around. Again, the time-lines simply do not fit as Genoese had been active in Poland for decades before they became involved in any type of Papal transfers. The two groups, meeting each other sought to form a mutually advantageous partnership.

## **1.2 Places of Origin**

The following section looks at the Italian traders who came to Poland during the Late Medieval period from a quantitative perspective. The first thing to note is that the number of Italians who came to Poland was small, just over a hundred individuals over a two-hundred year period. Yet, for all their relatively small numbers, they made a definite impact in the sources, rendering a study of their activities worthwhile. Still, the small number and inconsistent nature of data the sources provide renders most quantitative measures folly to pursue. The following section nevertheless, focuses on what little is known about the Italians who traveled to Poland that can be quantified: their origins, times of arrival, disposition within the country. It is also important to note that the Italians who are considered in the graphs and information below, are only those identified as merchants or those who were intimately connected to business dealings in Poland. Not included are Italians who were members of the clergy and professionals, such as doctors, professors, or foreign ambassadors. Thus, men like Jacobino the Apothecary, who lived in Krakow between 1366 and 1373, is considered because he owned a cloth stall in the city's main square. At the same time, Jacobo the royal doctor, who settled in Kazimierz between 1421 and 1440 is not, as he showed no demonstratable interest in trade. Not considered also are men like Nicolao di Noali, son of Paulo di Villacosta Riparolli, who was recruited in 1486 to set up a vineyard for Uriel Górka, the Bishop of Poznań. Also not considered is the Venetian Jew, Jacob Anselmi,

who was granted permission in 1475 to move to Poland together with his family, but otherwise has no further evidence linking him to mercantile activities within the kingdom. For similar reasons, men such as the Papal Ambassador, Antonio Zeno of Milan, and the Humanist diplomat, Filippo Buonaccorsi, despite the fact that they remained in Poland for many years, are not included. With these personages excluded, we are left with 100 individuals who are considered in the following chapter and listed in the table below.



Figure 6 Map of the Origins of Italians in Poland

From the data it is clear that the Italian merchants who came to Poland between 1300-1500, were ubiquitously northerners. (Figure 6) Of these, the largest contingent was from Genoa at 36% of the total, followed by Florence 21%, Venice 7%, and Milan 5%, followed by smaller numbers from other locations in the north, and 21% whose origins are unknown. (Figure 7) That northern Italians predominate within the Polish trading space should come as no surprise, given that this was where all of the great Merchant Republics of the period were located. Milan on the other hand, is not so obvious a candidate, given that it was a rising dukedom and less dependent upon trade than its neighbors. However, as a later section will demonstrate, Poland and Milan had outstanding diplomatic ties, which rendered it more likely

that its citizens would be tempted to immigrate. Striking though, is the complete lack of any merchant from Rome and the Papal States or the Kingdom of Naples.

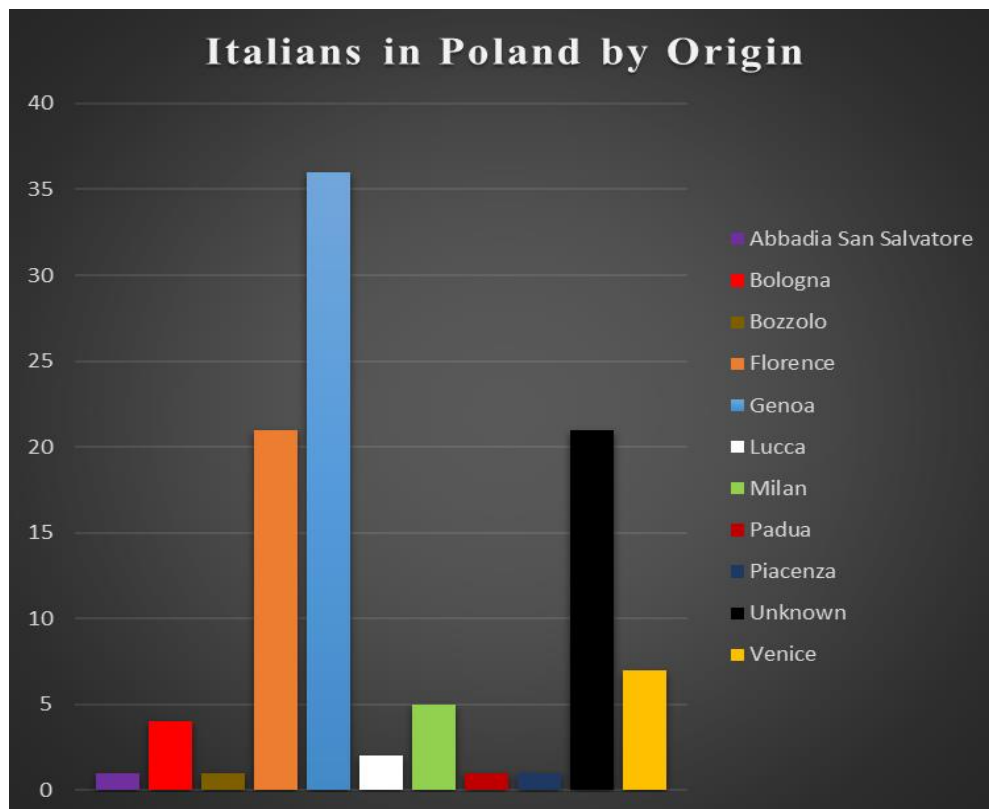


Figure 7 Italians in Poland by Origin

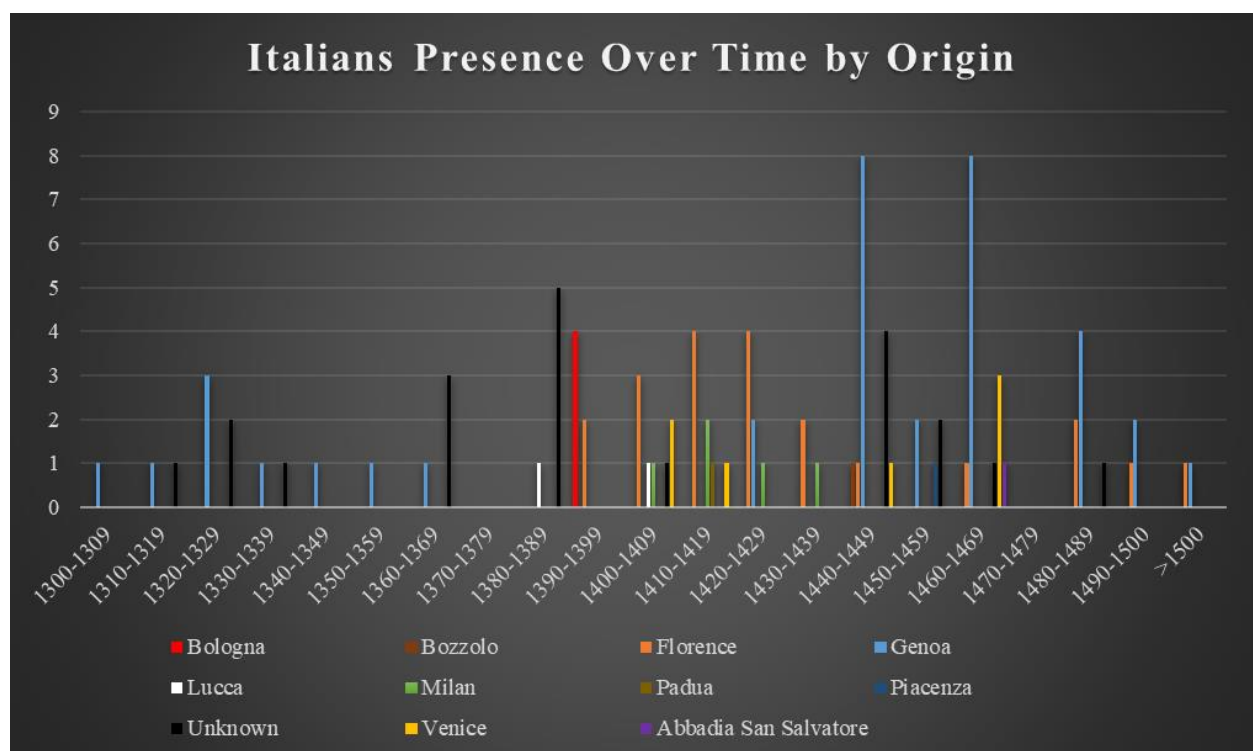


Figure 8 Italian Presence Over Time by Origin

As neither was known in this period for its trading prowess, the complete lack is telling. Breaking down the data still further, it becomes immediately obvious that not only were the Genoese the most numerous Italians present in Poland, they were also the first by a wide margin. (Figure 8) Genoese are known to have been present in Poland from at least 1306 and continued to arrive regularly throughout the rest of the fourteenth century, it was otherwise not until the 1380s that an Italian from another polity – Lucca - can be identified. The story which has come down through previous scholarship, that the Genoese were the first Italians to take an interest in Poland is true. However, the second half of the tale, that there was then a Venetian period, followed by one dominated by the Florentines, is entirely false if one looks at the numbers.

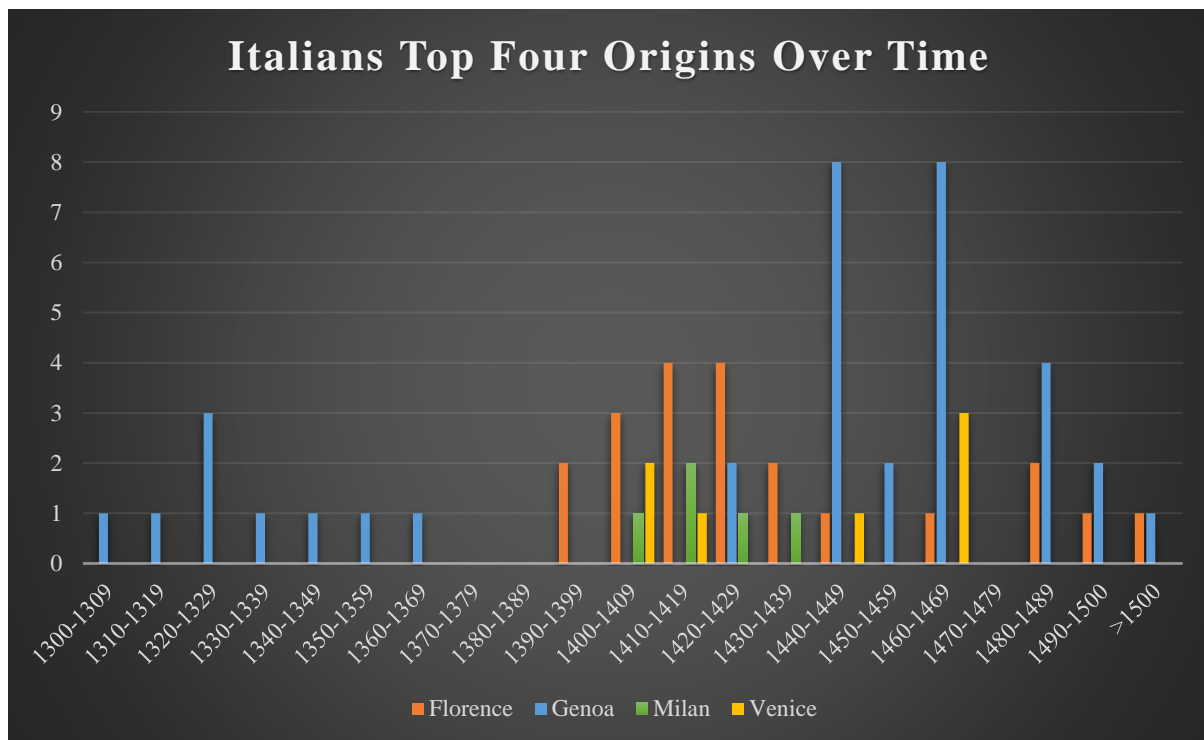


Figure 9 Italians Top Four Origins Over Time

The number of Genoese in Poland actually peaked in the 1440s and again in the 1480s. (Figure 9) In part, the increase of Genoese during this later period is the effect of source bias because it is only from the 1440s that the Lviv regional court records have survived. As will be shown in later chapters, Lviv, with its strong trading ties with the Italian colonies of the Black Sea, was the primary place where Genoese settled in Poland. It is unsurprising to see their numbers then spike as soon as more records become available. However, the increase is also a reflection of increased interest in overland trade through Poland during this period due

to Ottoman pressures which made sea travel more dangerous. The gap in Genoese arrivals between 1370 and 1420 stands out as an anomaly but makes greater sense when their numbers are compared with that of the three other identified Italian groups present at the time.

From the graphs above it is easy to note that there was a significant gap in the 1370s when very few Italians, if any, arrived in Poland. During the 1380s a few from Lucca and a family from Bologna arrived together with a large number of unidentified Italians. Then, starting in the 1390s and peaking through the 1420s, merchants from other parts of Italy, most notably Florentines, were the newcomers, together with a few Venetians and Milanese. The movement of the Florentines is particularly interesting when it is correlated with the data uncovered by Krisztina Arany that demonstrates that two significant waves of Florentines arrived in the kingdom of Hungary, the first began in the 1370s peaking in the 1380-90s, and the second between 1412 and 1427. Peaks in the entry of Florentines to Poland appear to follow that of Hungary within a decade, demonstrating perhaps a flow from one kingdom to the other. The general drop in the number of Florentines also resident in Poland post 1437 and the death of the Hungarian King Sigismund who tended to favor them, can perhaps also be seen in the graph. This trend which would be in keeping with the fact that many Florentines in Poland also had some sort of business interests in Hungary, another trend that will be discussed.

This may not be the only reason for the dip however, events back in Florence also likely played a role. The return of the Medici to power in Florence in 1434 had a devastating effect on many of the partnerships in Central Eastern Europe, who were supporters of the rival Albizzi faction, the di ser Matteo family who were active in Poland most of all. The arrival of Venetians, Milanese and individuals from other polities during this period likely corresponds to the rising prowess of the Jagiellonian dynasty, which particularly after the victory at Grunwald/Tannenberg in 1410, began making a name for itself on the greater European stage. The fifteenth century saw an increase in both the overall number as well as the diversity of origins of Italians in Poland. As the rest of this thesis will demonstrate, this was consistent with a greater overall contact between merchants traveling between the west and east that would culminate in a flood of interest in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

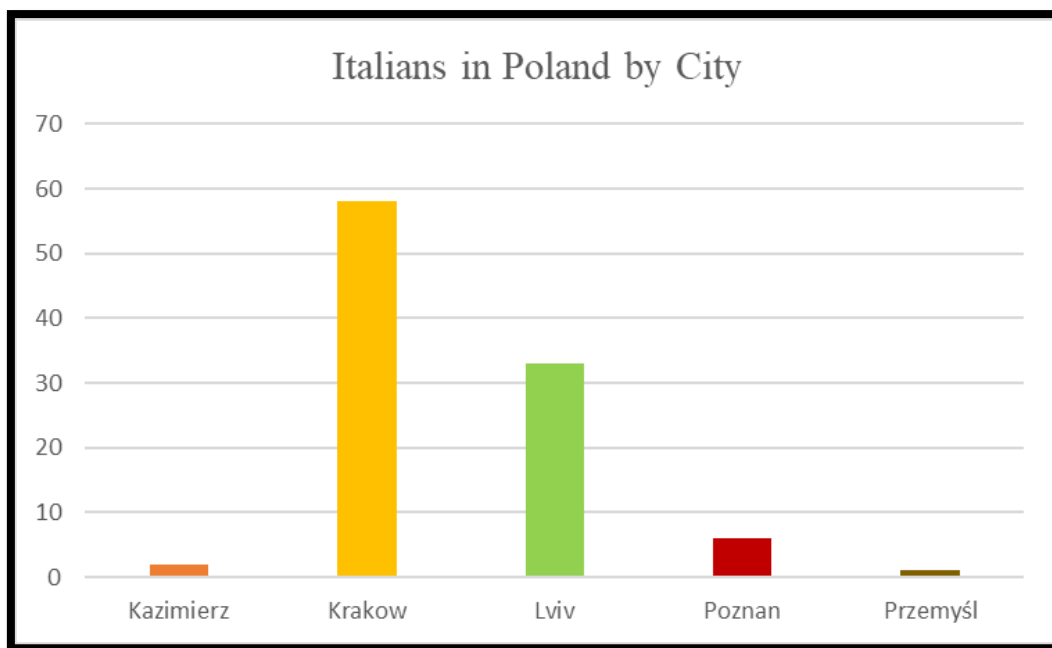


Figure 10 Italians in Poland by City

Finally, there are also some noticeable trends in where various groups of Italians chose to settle within Poland. (Figure 10) Krakow, as the de facto royal capital had the largest and most diverse population with its satellite City of Kazimierz welcoming a few as well. Second to this came Lviv, which was the most popular place of abode for the Genoese and also attracted a few members from other sites in Italy, as did the nearby town of Przemyśl, which dealt with salt mining. (Figure 11) The final Polish town to which Italians were drawn was Poznań, where a number of predominantly Genoese settled in the late fourteenth century. As the two largest and most important trading centers in the kingdom, Krakow and Lviv, with their associated secondary towns were obvious sites for Italian settlement. Poznań meanwhile, by the later fourteenth century had developed into the fourth largest Italian city. It was on a series of major trading routes also making it an understandably popular location. What is missing from this list are the cities of Wrocław, which in 1335 ceased to be a part of the Polish kingdom, and Gdańsk, which returned to Poland in 1454. While Italians were certainly present in the City of Wrocław during the early fourteenth century, data from the city has not been included due to the parameters of this study. In Gdańsk meanwhile, having performed a survey of the relevant published sources, I have found no Italians to be listed.

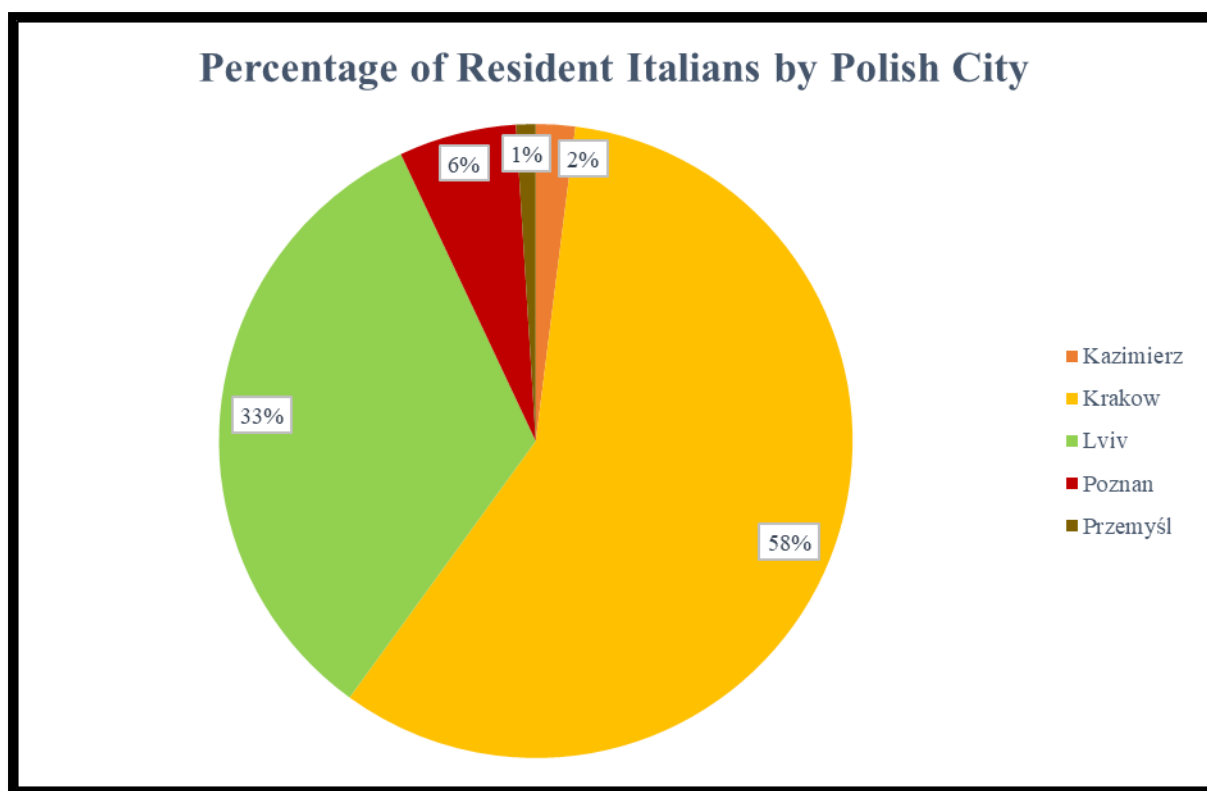


Figure 11 Percentage of Resident Italians by Polish City

*Table 1 Italian Traders in Poland 1300-1500*

Name	First Mention in Poland	Last Mention in Poland	Origin
Accursio di Calignano	1464	1470	Genoa
Alberto di Paulo di Padua	1410	1433	Padua
Albizzo di Talento di Medici	1410	1439	Florence
Anastasia Messopero	1468	1474	Genoa
Andrea der Wale	1446	1446	Genoa
Andrea di Venecia	1461	1461	Venice
Andrea Gwasko di Soldaia	1480	1489	Genoa
Angelo di Lercario	1440	1464	Genoa
Antonio Auecci	1482	1483	Florence
Antonio di Giovanni di ser Matteo	1410	1437	Florence
Antonio di Recia	1418	1418	Milan
Antonio di Valetaris	1448	1470	Genoa
Antonio Italico	1422	1422	Milan
Antonio Tron	1417	1423	Venice
Antonius Gallicus	1384	1388	Unknown
Arnolfo di Pierozzo di Tedaldi	1464	1497	Florence



<b>Augustino Italicus</b>	1468	1468	Genoa
<b>Augustino Mazoni di Promontorio</b>	1503	1523	Genoa
<b>Baldewino Gallicus</b>	1322	1322	Unknown
<b>Baltazar Italicus</b>	1450	1450	Unknown
<b>Barnabas de Nehrono</b>	1441	1488	Genoa
<b>Bartolomeo di Filippo di Guidotti</b>	1395	1401	Bologna
<b>Bernardo Bonacursi</b>	1394	1395	Florence
<b>Bonagiunta</b>	1409	1423	Venice
<b>Carlo di Bozzolo</b>	1445	1445	Bozzolo
<b>Conradus di Porthu</b>	1448	1449	Genoa
<b>Cristofero Gwardia di San Romulo</b>	1443	1467	Genoa
<b>Dominic di San Romulo</b>	1467	1483	Genoa
<b>Dominico Italicus</b>	1467	1467	Unknown
<b>Dorothea di Andrea di Soldaia</b>	1489	1489	Genoa
<b>Dorothea di San Romulo</b>	1467	1467	Genoa
<b>Durinus Cathenius</b>	1452	1465	Genoa
<b>Fenenna Cavallo</b>	1350	1350	Genoa
<b>Ffredericus Gallicus</b>	1324	1324	Unknown
<b>Francesco di Filippo di Guidotti</b>	1393	1393	Bologna
<b>Francesco di Cantello</b>	1409	1423	Unknown
<b>Francesco di Stephano Gallicus di Bronowicze</b>	1387	1400	Unknown
<b>Frederico di Oppizis di Monelia</b>	1328	1328	Genoa
<b>Fredericus Gallicus</b>	1324	1351	Unknown
<b>Giovanni di Baldo di Pierozzo di Tedaldi</b>	1504	1505	Florence
<b>Giovanni di Carminano</b>	1328	1328	Genoa
<b>Giovanni di Paravisino</b>	1433	1450	Milan
<b>Giovanni di Talenti</b>	1403	1406	Florence
<b>Giovanni Gallicus</b>	1388	1388	Unknown
<b>Gotfridus Fattinante</b>	1366	1393	Genoa
<b>Gregorio di Nehrono</b>	1459	1467	Genoa
<b>Gregors Wloch di Wallachia</b>	1485	1485	Unknown
<b>Guglielmo Rucellai</b>	1442	1442	Florence
<b>Guido di Giovanni di ser Matteo</b>	1429	1433	Florence
<b>Hugo Cavallo</b>	1317	1322	Genoa
<b>Isidorio di Amiono di Mediolano</b>	1419	1422	Milan
<b>Jacobino Gallicus Apotecario Regis</b>	1366	1373	Unknown
<b>Jacobino Gallicus di Sale</b>	1387	1387	Unknown
<b>Jacobo Bonacursi</b>	1394	1395	Florence
<b>Jacobo di Filippo di Guidotti</b>	1391	1395	Bologna
<b>Jacobo di Florentia</b>	1431	1431	Florence
<b>Jacobo di Paravisino</b>	1408	1439	Milan

<b>Jacobo di Sancto Salvatore</b>	1466	1466	Abbadia San Salvatore
<b>Jacobo Gallicus</b>	1366	1397	Unknown
<b>Jacobus der Wale</b>	1443	1443	Unknown
<b>Jeronimo di Olmerio</b>	1440	1442	Genoa
<b>Juliano di Valetaris</b>	1464	1467	Genoa
<b>Juliano Gebeletus di Caffa</b>	1468	1468	Genoa
<b>Laurencius Gallicus</b>	1387	1387	Unknown
<b>Leonardo di Giovanni di ser Matteo</b>	1414	1430	Florence
<b>Lodovico Baglioni</b>	1406	1420	Lucca
<b>Lodovico di Florencia</b>	1411	1441	Florence
<b>Lucinus di Caffa</b>	1466	1467	Genoa
<b>Marsonu Manente</b>	1328	1328	Genoa
<b>Matteo di Medici</b>	1428	1428	Florence
<b>Micheal Auecci</b>	1483	1483	Florence
<b>Monaldo di Lucca</b>	1387	1428	Lucca
<b>Nembrot Veluti</b>	1464	1465	Venice
<b>Neri di Cipriano di Tornaquinci</b>	1409	1424	Florence
<b>Niccolo Bicherano</b>	1448	1448	Venice
<b>Niccolo di Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe</b>	1427	1434	Florence
<b>Nicholas Manente</b>	1306	1339	Genoa
<b>Nicoros der Wale</b>	1443	1443	unknown
<b>Ottaviano di Gucci Cavlacani</b>	1496	1531	Florence
<b>Paulo Cavallo</b>	1338	1353	Genoa
<b>Paulo di Grimaldi</b>	1429	1453	Genoa
<b>Paulo di Promontorio</b>	1483	1515	Genoa
<b>Peregrinus di Promontorio</b>	1494	1517	Genoa
<b>Perozzo di Baldo di Tedaldi</b>	1492	1507	Genoa
<b>Philippus der Wale</b>	1443	1443	Unknown
<b>Pietro Bicherano</b>	1404	1424	Venice
<b>Pietro Cavallo</b>	1347	1369	Genoa
<b>Pietro di Filippo di Guidotti</b>	1393	1393	Bologna
<b>Pietro di Giovanni</b>	1431	1450	Florence
<b>Pietro Messopero di Ansaldo</b>	1441	1470	Genoa
<b>Pietro Veluti</b>	1465	1467	Venice
<b>Raphael di Sancto Romulo</b>	1453	1453	Unknown
<b>Rinaldo di Sandro di Altoviti</b>	1428	1430	Florence
<b>Rinaldo Italico</b>	1440	1440	Unknown
<b>Simone di Talenti</b>	1401	1403	Florence
<b>Simone Gallicus</b>	1315	1318	Unknown
<b>Stefano di Promontorio</b>	1488	1489	Genoa
<b>Stephanus Gallicus</b>	1366	1380	Unknown
<b>Thomas Italicus di Placencia</b>	1457	1457	Piacenza

Urbanus di Zenowa	1427	1427	Genoa
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### 1.3 Relations between Poland and Genoa

Genoese merchants had the longest history of involvement in Poland, having shown an interest in the kingdom already from the early fourteenth century. Still, as with the other Italian polities, evidence of direct diplomatic correspondence appears only later. In part, this may be due to a deficit of sources, and further investigation into the Genoese archives may alter our perception of the situation, but as it stands, the Genoese first made contact with a King of Poland only in the later fourteenth century.

As with both Venice and Florence, Genoa initially had far greater interest in Hungary than Poland and was sending ambassadors to King Louis Anjou as early as 1352.<sup>89</sup> When Louis became King of Poland in 1370, the Genoese chancery began writing to him in this double capacity, but their focus, and indeed his, remained primarily with events in Hungary and the Italian Peninsula.<sup>90</sup> As described in Chapter 2, the Genoese received significant trading concessions from King Louis, but it remains unclear if the granted privilege also extended to his Louis's Polish domains, likely not.<sup>91</sup> Despite this, many Genoese made their way to Poland, forming by far, the largest Italian contingent in Poland – of the 100 Italian traders considered for this study, 36 of them are known to have been Genoese. (Figure 12) There would likely be more, but gaps in the sources, particularly those from Lviv, make a full accounting difficult.<sup>92</sup> The distinctive break in the arrival of new Genoese to Poland between 1370 and 1420 is also likely deceptive, as a large number of 'unidentified' individuals who make up 21% of the total over all, appeared during this period, some of them no doubt, were Genoese. (Figure 15) While the first of these individuals settled in Krakow in the early fourteenth century, the majority

<sup>89</sup> *Trattati e negoziazioni politiche della Repubblica di Genova: 958-1797 : Regesti.* eds. Pasquale Lisciani and Giorgio Costamagna (Genoa: Società ligure di storia patria, 1960), nr 579.

<sup>90</sup> *Trattati e negoziazioni politiche della Repubblica di Genova*, nr 641.

<sup>91</sup> (1376/08/04) ASF, Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, 17. fol. 52v; Prajda, *Network and Migration*, 47.

<sup>92</sup> Zygfryd Rymaszewski, "O średniowiecznych księgach sądowych jako źródle poznania prawa polskiego – krytycznie [On the Medieval Court Records as a Source of Knowledge of Polish Law – Critically]," *Studia Iuridica Lublinensia* 25.3 (2016): 811-818.

were eventually centered on Lviv where from the early fifteenth century they traded with their compatriots who resided in the Italian Black Sea colonies.

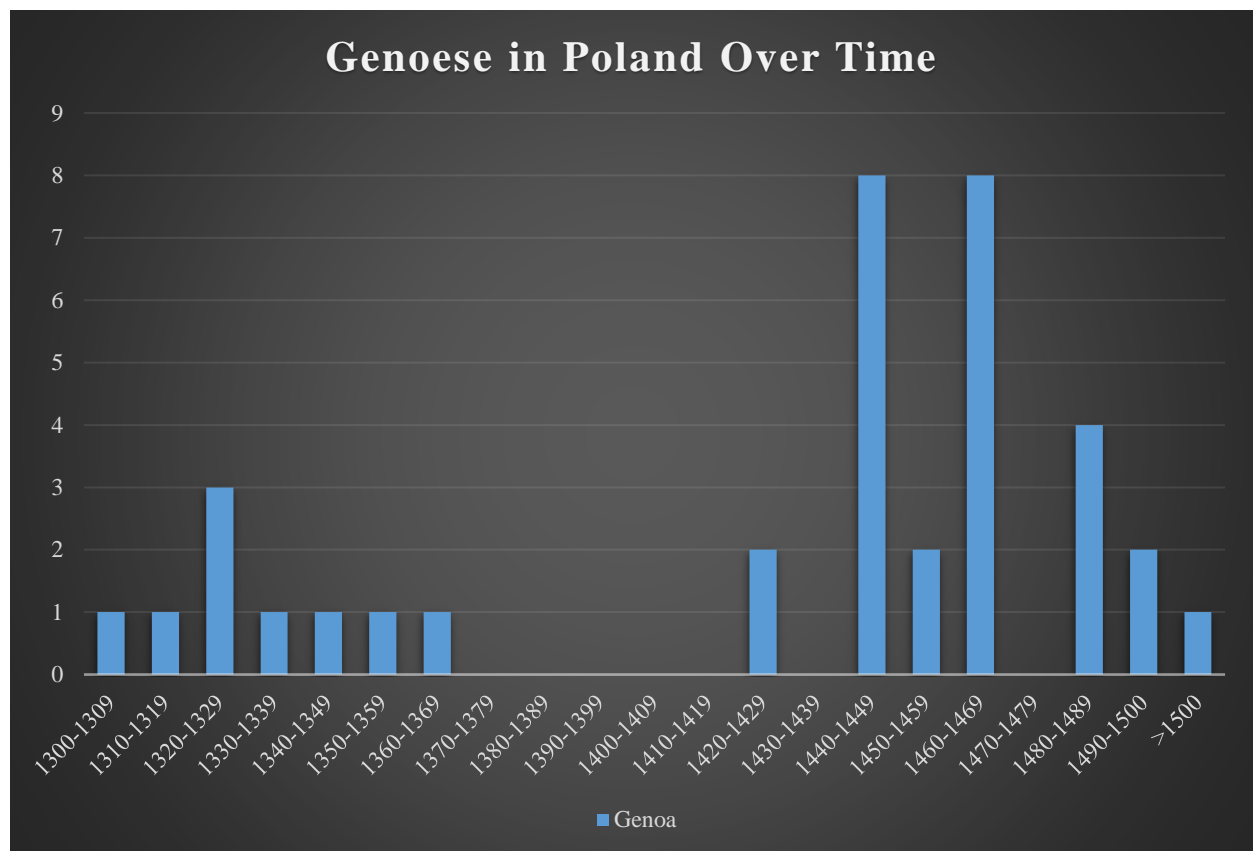


Figure 12 Genoese in Poland Over Time

The rising success of the Ottoman Empire however, threatened these ties and eventually wiped them out completely. In a bid to assist these beleaguered merchants, special consideration was given to Genoese merchants by the Polish monarch in 1466, when the Genoese were granted full free trading rights throughout the kingdom of Poland by King Casimir IV Jagiełło. The king did this in response to pleadings from Genoese authorities in the Black Sea colonies beleaguered by the Ottoman threat and overtures from the metropole.<sup>93</sup> The measure went some way toward mitigating the loss of control over the Dardanelles by making the overland route through Poland more attractive. It remains unclear however, due to the lack of a source

<sup>93</sup> (1466/01/02) The charter granted Genoese merchants from the Black Sea colonies free passage through Poland but still required them to pay some tolls, including those in Lviv. There they were required to pay a special tax of one florin for every slave transported, but they were free to ignore Lviv's staple. "*per eadem dominia regni nostri cum rebus, mercibus, fam uis, curribus, et aliis bonis quibus cumque pro Ubito transeundi vers Januam aut alibi eundi*" Małowist, *Kaffa*, 67; Hryszko, *Januensis, ergo mercator*, 50-1.

base, how much this concession affected Genoese trade through Poland. Genoese traders continued to operate in Poland, and in particular in Lviv through the 1460s and 70s. When in 1475, the key Italian trading city of Caffa had fallen to the Ottoman advance, it appeared to be only a matter of time before Kiliya and Moncastro, the two primary Italian Black Sea ports through which eastern merchandise arrived in Poland, were forced to capitulate.<sup>94</sup> These losses meant that the once common site of Genoese migration, Lviv, was far less attractive than it had been in the past and it is therefore unsurprising to find a group of Genoese merchants settling in Poznań in the 1480s. As noted previously, Poznań was by now the Kingdom of Poland's fourth largest city and its location along the reoriented trade routes made it a major hub. Given this, the Genoese merchants who settled in the city were soon placed in the middle of the struggle to gather a force to retake control of the Black Sea from the Ottomans. A flurry of diplomatic activity crossed between Genoa, Venice, Poland, the Crimean Khan, Lithuania, Moldavia, Rus, Portugal, and the Papacy, seeking to put together an anti-Ottoman alliance that could be turned into a crusade. Attempts to form such an alliance had already been made back in 1476 when Filippo Buonaccorsi, known by his sobriquet, *Callimachus Experiens*, a Tuscan diplomat living in Poland, had been sent to Venice representing Polish interests, but to no avail. Attempts at talks were renewed in 1481, when Genoa, backed by the Papacy, sought to gather forces to help beat back the Ottoman threat and retake their possessions in the east.<sup>95</sup> The Genoese mounted an all-out charm offensive, seeking to convince the Tartar khan and the king of Poland to unite with them in an anti-Ottoman alliance. Ambassadors were sent bearing expensive gifts; and letters whizzed back and forth between various courts, including to Filippo Buonaccorsi, who by now had been appointed royal secretary in Poland.<sup>96</sup> During these exchanges, a total of over 4,000 lire was spent on embassies sent by Genoa to Poland.<sup>97</sup>

Over the next four years, great hope was placed in an alliance which would combine the forces of the Tartar khan with those of Poland and Moldavia on land, while papal, Portuguese and Genoese ships would attack from the sea. Hope was further inflamed by reports sent by Andrea Gwasko di Soldaia, a Genoese merchant. After the fall of Soldaia in 1475, where he had held property and based most of his business, Andreoli sought tirelessly to encourage its recapture. He reported that the residents of Caffa were primed to rise up in revolt; and the Crimean Khan

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<sup>94</sup> . For more on this, see Chapter 2

<sup>95</sup> Danuta Quirini-Popławska, "Attempts at Forging a Genoese-Polish-Tatar Alliance against the Ottoman Empire in 1480–1484," in *From Pax Mongolica to Pax Ottomanica: War, Religion and Trade in the Northwestern Black Sea Region (14th-16th Centuries)*, eds. Ovidiu Cristea and Liviu Pilat (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 169-191.

<sup>96</sup> Quirini-Popławska, "Attempts at Forging a Genoese-Polish-Tatar Alliance," 182-4.

<sup>97</sup> 4,298 lire in total. Quirini-Popławska, "Attempts at Forging a Genoese-Polish-Tatar Alliance," 185 fn 50.

was ready to come to terms with Poland. Neither of these predictions turned out to be accurate, but Andreoli spent considerable energy going back and forth from Poland to Venice and as far as Nuremberg, all the time in connection with Genoese diplomats seeking to promote the scheme.<sup>98</sup> It was at this point that Paolo di Promontorio, a Genoese merchant resident in Poznań, became involved. He was connected to the case both through Filippo Buonaccorsi, who appears to have been a close friend, and Andreoli Guasko who, as evidence shows, in 1483 was indebted to Paolo for a purchase of a significant amount of black damask and the loan of a horse.<sup>99</sup> In the spring of 1484, Paolo was even involved in a last ditch effort by the Genoese ambassador, Vincentio di Domenico, to formulate an anti-Ottoman alliance involving Genoa, the Crimean Khanate, and Poland, when he agreed to assist in forwarding the ambassador's letter through his own channel of contacts to Genoa.<sup>100</sup> The ambassador had already sent the letter by more normal means, but in order to ensure its arrival, he requested Paolo to attempt to do so also through his own private network of family and mercantile contacts. This demonstrates how important such connections were during this period. In the end, however, all efforts failed and Caffa (Feodosia), Soldai (Sudak), Kiliya, and Moncastro remained in the hands of the Ottomans.<sup>101</sup> Andreoli meanwhile, never reclaimed his property in Soldaia, but instead chose to do business trading from Poland. In 1486, he arranged for Nicolao di Noali, son of Paulo di Villacosta Riparolli, to move from Italy to Poland in order to set up Bishop Uriel Górka's longed-for Italian style vineyard.<sup>102</sup> He settled into the standard Italian habit of renting tolls to turn a profit, until he passed away in 1489.<sup>103</sup> His daughter

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<sup>98</sup> Giacomo Grasso, ed., *Documenti riguardanti la costituzione di una lega contro il Turco nel 1481* (Genova: Tip. del R. Istituto sordo-muti, 1880), 11, nr. 20, 45, 50, 58, 80, 90, 103, 105, 106. Quirini-Popławska, "Attempts at Forging a Genoese-Polish-Tatar Alliance against," 178-85.

<sup>99</sup> Paolo appears to have had more extensive dealings with Andreoli; as the two agreed to a partnership to sell silk cloth in a wide variety of colors and the prized red cochineal dye, which was harvested annually from the region (1483/09/27) [AKapSąd II] nr. 1441.

<sup>100</sup> "Wincentego do Dojhinico listy o Polsce pisane do senatu genueńskiego r. 1483-1484. [Letters sent by Vincentio de Dominico from Poland to the Genoese Senate 1483-1484]," *Biblioteka Ossolińskich* 2 (1863): 345-8. Quirini-Popławska, "Attempts at Forging a Genoese-Polish-Tatar Alliance," 187.

<sup>101</sup> Quirini-Popławska, "Attempts at Forging a Genoese-Polish-Tatar Alliance, 169-191.

<sup>102</sup> (1486/06/07) – It was agreed that Nicolao de Noali would move to Poland and work there for four years, planting and organizing a vineyard and performing other agricultural duties for the bishop. He was paid in addition to room and board, 24 libras of Genoese standard coin or otherwise 8 ducats and 1 libra of Genoese standard coin. Andrea, for his services in organizing the contract was to be paid 3 gold ducats. "... *supra et eidem Nicolao dabit et solvet pro eius salario libras viginti quinque Ianuinorum monete currentis sive ducatos octo et libram unam Ianuinorum et ultra eidem Nicolao tam sano quam infirmo dabit expensas videlicet cibi et potus toto dicto tempore dictorum annorum quatuor necnon sibi fieri faciet expensas in itinere et donec fuerit per iter videlicet victus tantum. Insuper confitens dietus Nicolaus ex nunc a dicto domino Andriolo habuisse et recepisse ducatos tres auri largos in solutione dieti eius salarii.*" Archivio di Stato in Genova. Sezione Archivio Notarile. [Atti del Not. Gio. Antonio Castello. Filza II, f. 130]. 1485, 8 lug. In Zoller, "Tra l'Italia e la Polonia,"

<sup>103</sup> Andrea took over the toll of Gniezno. (1485/05) [MRPS] I nr 1661. (1489/04/28) – Andrea has passed away and so upon the request of Gregori de Ludbrancz, Vice Chancellor of Poland, King Casimir IV Jagiełło agrees to grant the *tribunatum terrae Calischensis* to Martino Borzimowski. [MRPS] I nr 1982.

however, continued on in the country, marrying a Polish nobleman and receiving a dowry of over 2000fl owed to her father by the Polish Crown.<sup>104</sup> The Promontorios, on the other hand, continued to trade with success from their base in Poznań until 1496, when a series of poor business choices forced them into bankruptcy. As the possibility of recovering the Black Sea territories retreated ever further into impossibility, communication between Genoa and Poland faded as well, and the two polities returned to a state of polite indifference.

## 1.4 Relations between Poland and Venice

Poland had limited direct interaction with Venice prior to the fifteenth century. As detailed further in Chapter 3, goods such as “*rame di Pollana*”- Polish copper, arrived in Venice aboard the annual galleys sent to Bruges, but such interactions were indirect. The trading ties that did exist, ran through the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, where Polish merchants were included amongst the others originating from *la Magna* (a catch-all term used in Italy for countries beyond the Alps). Polish merchants thus made their way to Venice, the Venetians did not come to them. On the political front, the ties were equally tenuous. The Venetian Republic first initiated contact with “Kings of Poland” in the early fourteenth century, but these men were titular claimants to the title and had no real political control over the territory. They had also been contacted by the Venetians for reasons apart from their nominal suzerainty over Polish territory.<sup>105</sup> Poland really appeared on the Republic of Venice’s radar in 1410, following the surprise Polish victory against the Teutonic Knights at the battle of Grunwald/Tannenberg. More to the point, it was the shift in policy towards friendlier relations with Poland made by Sigismund, King of Hungary and newly crowned King of Germany in the wake of the battle, that made Venice sit up and take notice. The Venetian Republic was at that point seeking for any means to gain leverage with the Hungarian king, and so sent out feelers towards the Polish court to see if they might be interested in backing the Venetian cause. While the Poles chose to side with King Sigismund, from this point forward, diplomatic exchanges with Venice became common. In 1425, the Doge Francesco Foscari was invited to attend the christening of

<sup>104</sup> Andrea’s daughter Dorothea married Nicolai Myloslawsky, *gladiferi Calischienti* and was owed 2100 hufl as acknowledged by the crown after her father’s death. [MRPS] I nr 2035

<sup>105</sup> These included, Henry of Corinthia, (1328) and John of Bohemia (1331). The Serenissima sent a letter to what one now would recognize as a King of Poland for the first time only in 1350, to King Casimir III the Great, but again only as part of a larger more general diplomatic blitz, seeking allies in its renewed war against Genoa. King Casimir does not appear to have responded. *I Libri Commemorativi della Repubblica di Venezia: Regesti*, Riccardo Predelli, and Pietro Bosmin eds., (Venice: A spese della Società, 1876-8), Vol 1 nr. 383; Vol 2 nr. 147, 217, 219, 363, 453.

Władysław Jagiełło's son and heir, the future King Władysław III. To extend the invitation, the king sent both a letter and an Orator, an official ambassador to Venice, the first time a Polish monarch had done so.<sup>106</sup> Over the coming century, letters and diplomats were regularly exchanged between the two polities, with the most common topic of consideration being proposed alliances against the Ottomans.<sup>107</sup>

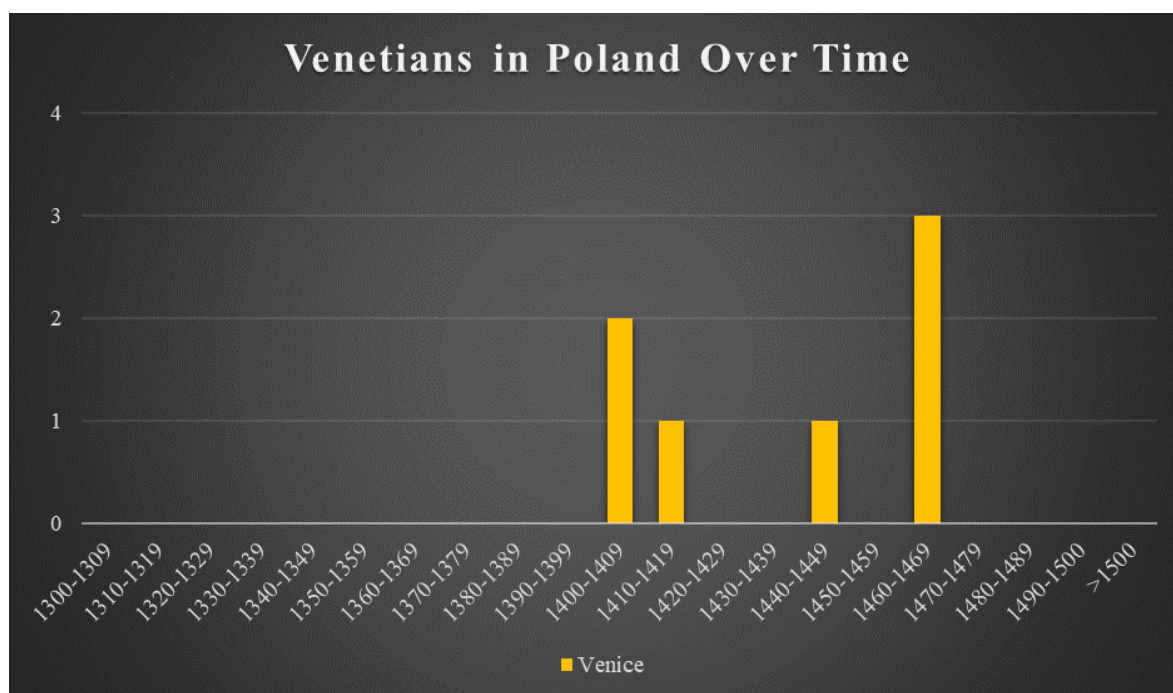


Figure 13 Venetians in Poland Over Time

The fifteenth century also saw for the first time, Venetian merchants themselves travelling to Poland. The recorded number of Venetians in Poland is small, only seven for the entire period

<sup>106</sup> *Codex epistolaris Vitoldi Magni ducis Lithuaniae: 1376-1430 = Kodeks listów Witolda, W. Ks. Litwy*. Edited by Antonius Prochaska, Krakow: Sumptibus Acad. Literarum Cracoviensis, 1882), nr. MCLXXVIII pg. 686-7.

<sup>107</sup> Harold B. Segel, *Renaissance culture in Poland: the rise of humanism : 1470-1543* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 56; (1442/10/29) - Władysław III, King of Poland and Hungary, sends a letter to the Signoria of Venice, informing them that 80,000 Turks had crossed the Danube. The King had gathered a force of 25,000 knights and on Sept. 2, defeated them in battle, making the Danube run red with the blood of the fallen Turks. Tiepolo, Giovanni Battista, and Emilio Aleo. *Cronica di Venezia di Giovanni Tiepolo fù de Agostin patrizio veneto (secc. XVI-XVII)*. Bononia University Press, 2012, Vol II 730; (1444/08/04) - Letter from Venetian Senate to confirm that the doomed King Władysław III will indeed be sending an Army into Romania against Murad II, as agreed at Buda. The army would leave Orşova on the 1st of September; heading down the Danube (Battle of Varna Nov. 10) to be coordinated with Francesco Condulmer, cardinal vice-cancelliere, and Giuliano Cesarini, cardinal di S. Angelo, papal legate, and commander of the fleet of the fleet. *I libri commemoriali della Repubblica di Venezia : regesti*. Vol. 4 ed. Fratelli Visentini, (Venice: Deputazione veneta di storia patria, 1896), nr. 284; (1475 07/14) - Venetian ambassadors dine at the Royal court. “*Item semellas emptas exposui pro 18 gr., qui tunc interfuere omnes nuncii de Venecia et domini Magioris Polonie*”. - Also offer a great deal of beer that day. *Rachunki wielkorządowe krakowskie z 1471* [Krakow governmental account of 1471], ed. Roman Grodecki. Archiwum Komisji Historycznej, vol. 4 (Krakow: Nakładem Polskiej Akademii Umiejętności z Zasilku Ministerstwa Szkół Wyższych i Nauki, 1951), 403 nr. 75.



under consideration, and the identification of one of these is arguable. (Figure 12) Wrocław, which had closer ties with the Lagoon City, saw a few more, but even here the numbers were not large.<sup>108</sup> The reason for the lack, in comparison to the number of Genoese or Florentines in Poland, is due largely to Venice' singular focus on Levantine and North African trade and the strength of the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*; whose members handled most of the trade between the two regions. Those exceptional Venetians who did go to Poland become therefore all the more interesting.

The presence of three of the seven is simple to explain, as they came from the same family – the Bicherano. The first commonality between the Venetians who settled in is thus the preponderance of family ties of those who chose to abide in Poland. In every case, there was a strong element of familial attachment, which while certainly present among the other Italian groupings, was not so overwhelmingly so as in the Venetian's case. This tendency is in fact unsurprising, as it reflected the general setup of Venetian business arrangements in the Late Middle Ages. Where places like Genoa and Florence had begun investing in joint-stock companies and general firms began to flourish, “family partnerships continued to dominate in Venice, supplemented by short-lived joint ventures.”<sup>109</sup> Such relatively short-term joint ventures in the Polish case took a unique twist, as they all involved partnerships with non-Venetians. Pietro Bicherano and his kin with the men of the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* and the Medici bank, Antonio Tron with his brother-in-law, Anthonius di Puteo, who may or may not have been Italian himself, and Albizzo di Medici. The Veluti brothers meanwhile, had a business partnership with Julianio di Valetaris of Genoa and Arnolfo Tedaldi of Florence. In each case, it is likely that it was the partner's contacts in Poland which drew these men to the region, rather than some individual initiative. This seeming reliance on non-Venetian partners is likely explained by the tiny number of traders from Venice who made their way to Poland. For more on each of these cases, see Chapter 3.

Still, throughout the fifteenth century, particularly in the wake of the battle of Grunwald/Tannenberg and Venice's growing enmity with Poland's neighbor Hungary, the Venetian Republic sent a both letters and ambassadorial missions to the kingdom. As described in detail in Chapter 4. Pietro Bicherano, a Venetian merchant who had been active in the kingdom since 1406, was the first person tapped to act as an ambassador on the ground for the

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<sup>108</sup> For more on the Venetian merchants active in Wrocław see Chapter 3.

<sup>109</sup> Frederic C. Lane, “Family partnerships and joint ventures in the Venetian Republic,” *The Journal of Economic History* 4.2 (1944): 195.

Republic. Given Pietro's relationship with the Polish royal court, he was to act as an interlocuter, softening the king's stance towards the Venetians. In this, he appears to have been somewhat successful and in 1412, a more official ambassador was sent with the task of negotiating an alliance of friendship and confederation between Venice and Poland.<sup>110</sup> The ambassador was well received and in a very flowery diplomatic letter, King Władysław Jagiełło promised help arbitrating between the Venetians and King Sigismund of Hungary in their ongoing dispute.<sup>111</sup> All the same, a further two ambassadors, Tommaso Mocenigo and Antonio Contarini were sent to ensure the deal.<sup>112</sup> Everyone agreed to meet at a great summit in Buda a few months later and as described in chapter 2, a flurry of negotiations ensued with all side jockeying for position. The final outcome for Venice was not what they might have hoped. Despite Doge Michael Steno offering to cover the cost of maintain 500 knights, should King Władysław Jagiełło not enter into an alliance with King Sigismund of Hungary, the counter proposal made by the Hungarians, of territory in the Spiš region and a favorable adjudication of Poland's fight with the Teutonic Knights, was too enticing and the treaty of Lubowla was signed.<sup>113</sup> Still, Venice and Poland remained on good terms and King Władysław Jagiełło even rebuked King Sigismund when he dishonored the Venetian flag during the summit.<sup>114</sup> A few years later, Venice sought again the Polish king's assistance in parlaying with Hungary, this time sending as their emissary the Doge's notary, Francesco della Siega.<sup>115</sup>

During these years, Venice and the kingdom of Poland kept up distant but cordial relations and when at last King Władysław Jagiełło's son and heir Władysław III was born, the Doge together

<sup>110</sup> The Venetian Senate sent first as Ambassador Zannachius Quirini, who recommended Pietro Bicherano, who was already resident in Poland and known to the king, to act on the Republic's behalf. After this, a second round of negotiation led to the sending in January 25<sup>th</sup> 1412, the Ambassador was Paulus Nicoletti di Veneto, an Augustinian monk, professor and master of theology at the University of Padua. ASV 328 - Catalogo dei Sindicati vol. I Senato Registri de regg. I e II (1329-1425), nr 426; Štefánik, Martin. "Poľsko, Žigmund a benátska diplomacia. K medzinárodnému pozadiu zálohu spišských miest za vlády Žigmunda Luxemburského [Poland, Sigismund and Venetian diplomacy. On the international background, the advance of the Spiš towns during the reign of Sigismund of Luxembourg]," In *Ingenii lau,s* eds. Eva Benková and Marek Púčik (Bratislava : vydavateľstvo UK v Bratislave, 2017) 210-8.

<sup>111</sup> *Elementa ad Fontium Editiones t. II, "Liber disparata antiqua continens" Alexandro Masoviensi episcopo tridentino dicatus*, ed. Edmond Winkler (Rome: Institutum Historicum Polonicum Romae 1960), nr. 97.

<sup>112</sup> (1412/04/16) ASV, 328 - Catalogo dei Sindicati vol. I Senato Registri de regg. I e II (1329-1425), nr. 466.

<sup>113</sup> For the text of the letter see: *Elementa ad Fontium Editiones t. II*, nr. 97; Jan Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae incliti regni Poloniae* vol. 10-11. Eds. Ioannes Dąbrowski, and C. Baczkowski (Warsaw:: Wydawn. Naukowe PWN, 1997), 204-5.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Francesco della Siega was sent twice as an emissary, once in 1414 and again in 1419, both times in an attempt to gain King Władysław Jagiełło's assistance in treating with King Sigismund of Hungary. (1414/02/16), (1419/08/13) (1419/09/01) *Monumenta Spectantia Historiam Slavorum Meridionalium*: vol 20 (Zagreb: Župan Albrecht et Fiedler, 1882), 147-8, 293-6; (1419/08/11) *I Libri Commemoriali*, nr. 18.

with the Duke of Milan were the only Italians invited to attend the christening. Unable of course to attend himself, the Doge none the less authorized others to stand in as his representative and sent a gift.<sup>116</sup> Still, Venice's interactions with Poland were grounded in its relations with Hungary and they tended to seek to make better contact with Poland only when their relations with Hungary were at a particularly low ebb and were seeking allies against King Sigismund.<sup>117</sup> It thus comes as little surprise that in the wake of Sigismund's final decision to call off his attempts to embargo Venice in 1433, Poland and Venice did not communicate for nearly a decade. When they did, the letters related to King Władysław III's crusade against the Ottomans where the Venetians were his allies.<sup>118</sup> For the rest of the fifteenth century, the dominating theme of Venice's relations with Poland revolved around various schemes to confront the Ottomans, but after the disaster at Varna in 1444, none prevailed.<sup>119</sup> The biggest push in this direction came in 1474, when the Venetians sent an embassy headed by Ambrogio Contarini (b.1429-1499) to Poland, seeking their enrollment in a new crusade sponsored by the pope, which together with Christian forces would make use of Tartar and Persian troops to fight the Ottomans. Ambrogio traveled through Poland on his way to Isfahan to treat with Uzun Hassan, the leader of the Aq Qoyunlu tribal federation. While near Warsaw, Ambrogio and his entourage were feted by the king, but an agreement was not in the making.<sup>120</sup> Part of the plan proposed by the Venetians included large numbers of troops being permitted to cross

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<sup>116</sup> Jan z Tarnowa, Castellan of Krakow, Mikołaj z Michałowa Castellan of Sandomierz, and Stanisław Ciołek the Vice-Chancellor of Poland (1425/01/13) ASV 328 - *Catologo dei Sindicati* vol. I Senato Registri de regg. I e II (1329-1425), nr. 519.

<sup>117</sup> (1432/11/14) This can be seen for example, in 1432, when in a bid to gain favor with King Władysław Jagiełło, Doge Francesco Foscari sent him a letter describing Sigismund's duplicity in his preparations for making war against the Ottomans, something which the king had no real intention of doing despite his loud diplomatic protestations otherwise. [CodEp] II, 305.

<sup>118</sup> (1442/10/29) King Władysław III of Poland and Hungary, sends a letter to Venice informing them 80,000 Turks had crossed the Danube, the King had gathered a force of 25000 knights and on Sept. 2 defeated them in battle making the Danube run red with the blood of the fallen 70,000 Turks...Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, and Emilio Aleo. *Cronica di Venezia di Giovanni Tiepolo fù de Agostin patrizio veneto (secc. XVI-XVII)* Vol 2 (Bologna: Bononia University Press, 2012), 730; (1444/08/04) Letter from Władysław of Poland informing Venice of his utter commitment to the war against the Ottomans and that his army would be leaving to meet them in battle mid-September. - The battle at Varna which would see the king's death, the destruction of his army, and any hope of a successful Crusade against the Ottomans *I Libri Commemorativi*, nr 264.

<sup>119</sup> (1463/03/26) Cristoforo Moro, Venetian Doge sends a letter to King Casimir IV, proposing a Christian league against the Ottomans together with Mathias Corvinus of Hungary. (1463/06/14) - Cristoforo Moro, Venetian Doge sends a second letter to King Casimir IV, informing the King about the new Christian Kingdom of Bosnia, and inviting him to join a crusading effort against the Turks. [MRPS] I nr 628, nr 630.

<sup>120</sup> His journey through Poland took him through Poznań, Kiev, Kaffa along the Tartar route. Chareyron, Nicole. *Globe-trotters Au Moyen Âge*. Paris: Éditions Imago, 2004),

Polish territory as well as financial and personal obligations.<sup>121</sup> In this, the Poles had very little interest. The humanist scholar, Filippo Buonaccorsi, who was then engaged by the Polish court as a diplomat, labored tirelessly to keep Poland out of a grand alliance against the Ottomans.<sup>122</sup> The Poles were at this point on relatively good terms with the Empire and given that the last great failed attempt had lost them a king at Varna, they were not tempted to tweak the bear. In the course of the negotiations, Buonaccorsi made a number of embassies to Venice on behalf of the Polish crown to treat directly with the Venetians, and he was entertained with great respect while succeeding in stymying any official alliance.<sup>123</sup> Apart from efforts to repel the Ottomans, only two letters appear to have reached Poland from the Republic of San. Marco regarding other issues. One of these was a letter of complaint requesting aid for the Venetian citizen Nembrot Veluti and his business partners in regaining some stolen property, a case discussed further in Chapter 5, and the other, a letter of *salvus conductus* granted to a Venetian Jew named Jacob Anselmi, and his family in 1475.<sup>124</sup> Poland and Venice thus continued on good terms, but with only limited direct involvement.

Most of Venice's business interests were based in the Mediterranean and oriented towards the Levant and North Africa and what business they had north of the Alps was handled through the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*. It makes sense therefore, that comparatively fewer Venetians engaged directly in trade in Poland than did the Genoese or Florentines. That said, Venice was always geographically speaking, the closest Italian entrepot to Poland. Given this, connections with the Lagoon City, were key to many of the Italians who resided in Poland, even if they were not Venetians themselves. A very special triangle of trade thus grew up between the Florentine community who lived in Venice and traders in Poland, a connection exemplified most clearly by the di ser Matteo family of whom more is related in Chapter 3.

### **The Florentine Community in Venice and Their Links to Poland**

The Florentine community in Venice was a small, but important component of the city's overall business structure. From the fourteenth century, and particularly after the arrival of the plague

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<sup>121</sup> (1475 07/14) The royal records record that, “*Item semellas emptas exposui pro 18 gr., qui tunc interfuere omnes nuncii de Venecia et domini Magioris Polonie*”. *Rachunki wielkorządowe krakowskie z 1471* [Krakow governmental account of 1471], ed, Roman Grodecki. Archiwum Komisji Historycznej, vol. 4, 365-434. t (Krakow: Nakładem Polskiej Akademii Umiejętności z Zasiłku Ministerstwa Szkół Wyższych i Nauki, 1951), 403 nr. 75. a great deal of beer was also offered that day Segel, *Renaissance culture in Poland*, 54-5.

<sup>122</sup> Segel, *Renaissance culture in Poland*, 54-7.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> [CodEp] III nr. 74 pg 583-4; [MRP I] nr 1245.

in 1348, Venetian emigration policy became more welcoming to outsiders.<sup>125</sup> Over the subsequent two centuries, Florentines would come to form the single largest immigrant community in Venice.<sup>126</sup> Florentines were drawn to the lagoon because of its status as a major trading port where products produced in Florence could be easily marketed, the commercial law of the city was swift and equitable, and given the heavily regulated state galley system, the arrival and departure times of goods on the market could be calculated, allowing at least a chance a predicting the swing in local exchange rates. As the difference in exchange rates was what underlay the profits of the medieval banking system, Florentine merchant bankers logically found Venice tempting.<sup>127</sup> Due to the fact that Venetians themselves showed limited interest in international banking and the exchange of *lettere di cambio*, except in the Levant, they relied instead heavily on the services of the Florentine banking companies. Due to the presence of these companies, as demonstrated in Chapter 3, Venice was frequently used as the nexus point for the transmission of papal funds from Poland. Added to this, the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* provided a direct line to knowledge of trade beyond the Alps; so it is unsurprising that the Florentine community in Venice would become aware of Poland and its prospects.

It was no doubt through such connections that at the turn of the fifteenth century, Neri Tornaquinci, the Florentine manager of the Venice branch of the Medici Bank, underwrote Pietro Bicherano and the Amman-Kammerer-Seiler-Grau company's business ventures in Poland.<sup>128</sup> Neri Tornaquinci may also have been the conduit through which the di ser Matteo family decided to try their luck in Poland. As described in Chapter 4, Michele di ser Matteo had decided to emigrate from Florence to Venice in 1405, gaining full citizenship in 1420.<sup>129</sup> With him came the bulk of the family fortune and Venice became the point around which the other four brothers oriented. Michele was thus present in Venice while Neri was in his prime,

<sup>125</sup> Reinhold C Mueller "Mercanti e imprenditori fiorentini a Venezia nel tardo medioevo," *"Società e Storia"*, LV (1992): 35.

<sup>126</sup> Where previously the legislation required that a foreigner be resident in Venice for 5 years before receiving a *de intus* privilege (freedom to engage in local commerce and assume certain bureaucratic positions) now one simply had to inscribe oneself on an official list, upon taking up residency. In a similar way, the residency requirement for a *de extra* privilege (freedom to trade overseas and with foreigners) was dropped from 25 years to 15. Between 1305 and 1500, 247 Florentines gained Venetian citizenship, on an average 2-3 per year. These numbers are slightly misleading however, as not every new resident recorded their place of origin and the remaining records contain some gaps, but the general trend is clear. Mueller "Mercanti e imprenditori fiorentini a Venezia," 40.

<sup>127</sup> Reinhold C. Mueller, *The Venetian money market: banks, panics, and the public debt, 1200-1500* (Baltimore: JHU Press, 2019), 73-5.

<sup>128</sup> For the specifics of this venture see Chapter 3.

<sup>129</sup>

[http://www.civesveneciarum.net/dettaglio.php?tipo=pagina&lingua=ita&titolo=dettaglio&collocazione=SM53%3A83R%20SP1%3A189R&nome\\_italiano=MICHELE%20DEL%20FU%20GIOVANNI%20DI%20SER%20MATTEO](http://www.civesveneciarum.net/dettaglio.php?tipo=pagina&lingua=ita&titolo=dettaglio&collocazione=SM53%3A83R%20SP1%3A189R&nome_italiano=MICHELE%20DEL%20FU%20GIOVANNI%20DI%20SER%20MATTEO) Accessed June 20<sup>th</sup> 2020.

managing the Medici banking branch, the two must have become acquainted through the local Florentine community channels. In 1409, when Neri Tornaquinci decided to quit Italy all together to take up permanent residence in Poland, he made Michele his procurator, enabling him to oversee his legal and commercial affairs left behind in the lagoon. Less than a year later, Michele's brother, Antonio di ser Matteo, appeared in Wrocław for the first time, and the brother's business affairs in Poland soon began. From Venice, Michele was able to tap into the emerging silk market in Florence, trading Polish cochineal to silk dyers in return for the finished product, which was shipped back to the kingdom for sale.<sup>130</sup>

Like their Venetian counterparts, Florentines in Venice did not go into business in Poland alone, but relied upon already established local partners. In the case of Pietro Bicherano, these were Klaus Kezinger, Conrad Seiler, and Klaus Kammerer, who while originally from Nuremberg, had been active in Krakow for years. The di ser Matteo brothers on the other hand, worked with a number of Wrocław merchants, most prominently Johannes Bank who also had strong ties to Krakow.<sup>131</sup> The influence of Florentines resident in Venice in Poland appears to have ended with the death of Neri Tornaquinci in the mid-1420s and the withdrawal of Michele di ser Matteo in the face of his brothers' failures in Poland just a few years later, as discussed in Chapter 4.<sup>132</sup> The first decades of the fifteenth century thus mark a brief window of time when the Florentines of Venice took a direct interest in Polish affairs. It is interesting to note that the climax of their activities also corresponds with the height of Florentine involvement in Hungary, many of whom also had strong ties to Venice. The eventual flops of both Neri Tornaquinci's enterprises, who appears to have died in poverty in Krakow, and that of the di ser Matteo brothers, may indicate why Venetian Florentines failed to return.<sup>133</sup>

## 1.5 Relations between Poland and Florence

Just as with Venice, Florence had very limited direct contact with Poland prior to the fifteenth century. This is unsurprising, given that Florence itself was not a major trading power beyond the boundaries of Tuscany until the later fourteenth century. In contrast, the maritime

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<sup>130</sup> ASF, *Catasto*, 361, c. 365r. (1430); [Itali] nr 50 (1428/06/19), nr 54 (1429/10/19)

<sup>131</sup> The names included as debtors in Michele di ser Matteo's 1427 *Catasto Matteo e Qurado di Bresilavia dela Mangnia, Piero Bede di Bresilavia dela Mangnia, and Giovanni, Bancho di Bresilavia*, ASF, *Catasto* 38 fol. 717r-722v (Santa Maria Novella – Vipera) 1427

<sup>132</sup> The last known source regarding Neri Tornaquinci is from 1424. [CA2] nr 238

<sup>133</sup> In 1424, the last year that Neri is found in the Krakow sources, Giovanni di Bicci di Medici remitted to Neri 36 florin, having heard that he had fallen into poverty and despite everything, felt it was best to treat a former partner with compassion. Roover, *The Rise*, 54.

Republics of Venice and Genoa had begun projecting their influence abroad already from the late eleventh century as a result of the first Crusades. The earliest hint of contact between Florence and Poland comes from the chronicle of Benedetto Dei, who recorded that in 1305, Bencivenni Flochi of Florence was elected and sent to the papal court in Rome on behalf of the kings of Poland and Rus together with a retinue of ninety horsemen and a great display of finery.<sup>134</sup> Apart from this event however, the next indication that the Florentine government was interested in affairs in Poland comes only from the beginning of the fifteenth century.

The normal means by which Italian city-states ingratiated themselves with far away monarchs was to send a representative together with gifts to the candidate to be wooed. To fill the role of ‘ambassador’, Italian polities regularly tapped their citizens who had previous knowledge and interests in the region to fulfil this duty. More often than not, these men were merchants, already invested in fostering closer relations, and with knowledge of the country in question. As the Italian city-states were “merchant republics”, it makes all the more sense that their initial interlocutors would be men of business, perhaps even a requirement. Such a course was pursued by the Florentines in Hungary for example in the 1390s when the merchant, Andrea di ser Lorenzo Buondelmonte, was sent together with Grazia Castellani to the court of King Sigismund.<sup>135</sup> Florence would send other such representatives to barter on their merchants’ behalf to France and Germany in coming years.<sup>136</sup>

In a similar mode, three years earlier, the Florentine *Signoria* had drafted a letter was sent by the Florentine *Signoria* to the King of Poland, Władysław Jagiełło.<sup>137</sup> The timing of the letter was propitious. Having in the same year succeeded in triumphing over their long-term rivals in Pisa and thereby gaining direct access to the sea, the Republic was feeling its oats and

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<sup>134</sup>, “fiorentino, eletto e mandato dallo re di Polana e dallo re di Rassina, e giunse a Roma chon novanta chavagli alla divisa del regnio e vestiti a la trevisondea Benedetto Dei, *La cronica dall'anno 1400 all'anno 1500*. Edited by Roberto Barducci, and Anthony Molho (Florence: F. Papafava, 1984),89.

<sup>135</sup> Katalin Prajda, “The Florentine Scolari Family at the Court of Sigismund of Luxemburg in Buda,” *Journal of Early Modern History* 14.6 (2010): 516.

<sup>136</sup> Piero Cambini and ser Bartolomeo di Bambo Ciai were the representatives sent in 1409. A. Schulte, *Geschichte des mittelalterlichen Handels und Verkehrs zwischen Westdeutschland und Italien mit Ausschluss von Venedig*, (Leipzig, Duncker & Humblot, 1900), 173-174; Lorenz Böniger, “Gli uomini e le donne d'affari tedeschi e la Mercanzia di Firenze nei primi decenni del XV secolo.” *Tribunali di mercanti e giustizia mercantile nel tardo Medioevo*(2016): 166.

<sup>137</sup> ASF, Signoria, Missive, F Canc, reg. 27, i.; The document is reproduced in: *Codex epistolaris saeculi decimi quinti 1384-1496*. Vol. 1 eds. August Sokołowski, and Józef Szujski (Krakow: Akademia Umiejętności, 1876), nr. 25 and [Itali], nr.18.

seeking to expand its markets and influence further east. Its textile industry was booming, its merchant banking houses were growing ever more prosperous, with artists like Brunelleschi, Donatello, and Ghiberti bustling their way through its streets, the City of Florence was entering its Renaissance and interested in expanding its diplomatic reach. The Kingdom of Poland, while distant, was also not entirely unfamiliar. Already, a few Florentines had made forays into Poland, including a pair of weavers – Bernardo and Jacobo Bonacursi who settled in Kazimierz, and the Talenti brothers who traded in silver and cloth from Hungary.<sup>138</sup>

The first official letter addressed by the *Signoria* in 1406 to King Władysław Jagiełło, and the embassy that was to accompany it deserve a deeper analysis as they demonstrate clearly the intentions of Florence towards Poland during this period and the way in which contact between such polities was carried out. The letter recommended to the king three men who bore it acting as Florence's representatives and offered him an extravagant gift, with the hope that he might look favorably upon further relations.<sup>139</sup> The embassy bears all the hallmarks of a good will mission intent to establish relations and seek better commercial ties. The letter praised the king in the sycophantic-sounding prose popular to this form of letter of recommendation, calling him, "*Serenissime ac gloriosissime princeps et domine benefactor noster singulissime*," - our most serene and glorious prince and singular benefactor, this, despite this being the first official communication between the two polities.<sup>140</sup> The *Signoria* then moved on to make an interesting reference to King Władysław Jagiełło's predecessor, King Louis Anjou, speaking of his memory as that of, "*celebrande indelebilisque memorie invictissimo illustrissimoque principe et domino Lodovico olim rege Hungarie etc. nostre communitatis singularissimo protectore*," – the celebrated unforgettable memory of the most invincible and illustrious prince and lord, Louis, formerly King of Hungary, etc. our community's most singular protector.<sup>141</sup> This section was more honest as Florence had had far greater contact with Louis Anjou in his capacity as king of Hungary, but also post his ascension in 1370, at least titularly as king of Poland, and here brought his memory to bear.<sup>142</sup> The *Signoria* may even have been hinting specifically at the request they had made to Louis Anjou in 1376, to grant them the

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<sup>138</sup> (1394) - Bernardo and his brother Jacobo take citizenship in Kazimierz, where they work as weavers. [K RKaz] 301; (1403/03/31) – Simone Talenti sends 505 marks worth of cloth to Andree Czarnissa in the hands of his brother Giovanni in Košice to purchase silver for the Krakow mint. [Crac. Cons], 176.

<sup>139</sup> (1406/06/24) ASF, Signori Cancellaria, Missivi I nr. 27, fol 3 reproduced in: [CodEp] I nr. 25 and [Itali] nr.18.

<sup>140</sup> "*Serenissime ac gloriosissime princeps et domine benefactor noster singulissime*" [Itali] nr.18.

<sup>141</sup> [Itali] nr 18

<sup>142</sup> Prajddda, *Network and Migration*, 47.



special trading rights that appears to have been granted within the Hungarian realm, hoping perhaps that Władysław Jagiełło would offer them a similar deal in Poland.<sup>143</sup> To sweeten the king's temper, there was also an extravagant gift in the offering – a pair of mated lions. Lions and other exotic animals were surprisingly enough, not uncommon presents between rulers and lions in particular, with their potent symbolic resonance, were a popular choice.<sup>144</sup> In Western Europe during the fifteenth century, 19 out of 20 recorded menageries included them, beating out most other animals by a nearly 2 to 1 margin. Florence itself, at the end of the fifteenth century, had at least 25 lions in captivity, making their gifting easier.<sup>145</sup> The letter was further explicit in their reasoning for why they had chosen to send lions to the king of Poland. Among the myriad of stories and symbols surrounding lions, a few in particular were the focus of Florentine intent. Indeed, the *Signoria* quoted directly from the extremely popular *Etymologiae* of Isidore of Seville, “The lion is the king of all beasts, thus its name in Greek (*leo*) means "king" in Latin”.<sup>146</sup> The King of Poland was thus worthy of receiving such noble beasts. The council's letter then continued, “*Et sicut Rex sic leo adversus imbecilles et timidos clementissimum se ostendit, et adversus inquietos et timidos, terribilem se offert animadversion iustissima,*” - Just as a king is dignified, powerful, and magnanimous to the people they rule over, so a lion is generous and unflinching in vigor before the animals it leads.<sup>147</sup> Here the reference is again to the lion's symbolic role as a righteous leader of all, quite standard symbolic flattery. The letter does not stop with mere blandishments however,

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<sup>143</sup> (1376/04/08) ASF, Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, 17. fol. 52v.; Katalin Prajda, *Network and Migration in Early Renaissance Florence, 1378-1433* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018), 47.

<sup>144</sup> As a top predator, they reflected a king's place in the social hierarchy and also showed his dominion over even so powerful and potentially dangerous an animal. Yet, brute force control was not the only symbolic message a lion could bear. Lions were strongly associated with rulership but also with justice, taken from the biblical description of their decorative presence near the wise King Solomon's throne. Christianity had also layered on a number of additional levels of symbolic meaning. Lions stood for strength and moral values; they represented St. Mark the evangelist, and were even equated with Christ in various ways. Medieval bestiaries, which were the zoological encyclopedias of their day, stated that lions licked their cubs to life, cunningly concealed their tracks with their tail, and terrified other animals with their roar. Thierry Buquet, “Les animaux exotiques dans les ménageries médiévales” In *Fabuleuses histoires des bêtes et des hommes*, Edited by Jacques Toussaint. (Namur: Société archéologique de Namur, 2013), 103; 1 Kings 10:18-21; Louis Charbonneau-Lassay and D M. Dooling, *The Bestiary of Christ* (New York: Arkana, 1992), 7-9.

<sup>145</sup> La seule ménagerie où nous n'avons pas trouvé mention de lion est celle de Jean de Berry ; 2. les chameaux et dromadaires sont mentionnés 13 fois ; 3. les leopardus ou lieparts, pouvant désigner soit des panthères, soit des guépards, 13 fois ; 4. les singes, 11 fois ; 5. les ours, 9 fois ; 6. les autruches, 9 fois ; 7. les éléphants, 6 fois ; 8. les lynx et autres chats sauvages, 6 fois ; 9. les perroquets, 6 fois ; 10. les oiseaux chanteurs, 6 fois. Buquet, “Les animaux exotiques), 103.

<sup>146</sup> “*Conveniunt nempe cum regia maiestate leones, quoniam leo grece latine rex dicitur*” *Codex epistolaris*...nr. 25. (Isidore of Seville *Etymologies*, Book 12, 2:3-6) “Lion” The Medieval Bestiary, Accessed December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017. <http://www.bestiary.ca/beasts/beast78.htm>

<sup>147</sup> [Itali] nr 18.

but importantly picks up a new symbolic association, which is at the crux of the embassy's agenda, that of the lion as a champion of justice. The letter proclaims, "*Dignetur igitur vestra serenitas munusculum hoc gratanter suscipere et non rem missam sed mittentium affectionem inscipere. Sunt enim cives nostril maiestatis euisdem devotissimi servitores, quos in regno vestro dignemini opportunis favoribus prosequi...*", - Just as a king, so a lion shows clemency to the weak and timid and stands against injustice and arrogance, rendering terrible punishment for the sake of righteous justice...<sup>148</sup> Here, the *Signoria* is referring to the popular legend, again taken from the *Etymologiae* of Isidore of Seville, that a lion only ever attacked when it was hungry, and even then, that it would mercifully pass by a man who prostrated himself before it.<sup>149</sup> Władysław Jagiełło is thus praised by analogy as a righteous, just and merciful king. The reason the council picked this symbolic thread to pull becomes obvious in the rest of the letter, where the council asks that justice, mercy and the king's favor be bestowed upon all citizens of Florence in his lands, and in particular, those bearing the council's note.<sup>150</sup> As the *Signoria* was seeking a favor from the king, his beneficent aid to their citizens, the lion presented a gift-wrapped symbolic package for sending. A beautifully crafted piece of propaganda, the burgeoning city-state obviously wished to make a good first impression. The embassy, with its impressive gift, was thus the opening salvo in a Florentine push to improve relations with the kingdom of Poland and achieve better trading conditions for its citizen's therein. Wishing to extend their influence towards Poland, the *Signoria* chose their messengers very deliberately, employing a lawyer with influence at the Polish royal court, a banker, and a merchant who was also already a familiar figure in Poland.

The lawyer, as it turns out, is the most historically mysterious figure of the group. Described in the letter as, "*venerabili vero Johanne decretorum doctore, nuntio et familiar et commensale vestrae clementiae*" - the right honorable John, doctor of canon law, ambassador and table companion of the king.<sup>151</sup> For all its many epithets however, this description fails to give the surname of the man John; and it is therefore very difficult to say with complete certainty who he may have been. He was assuredly not, as some have claimed, Giovanni di Bicci Medici, as that famous founder of the Medici bank never received a doctorate of law.<sup>152</sup> Far more

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<sup>148</sup> [Itali] nr 18.

<sup>149</sup> Lion" The Medieval Bestiary, Accessed December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017. <http://www.bestiary.ca/beasts/beast78.htm>

<sup>150</sup> [Itali] nr 18.

<sup>151</sup> [Itali] nr 18.

<sup>152</sup> A fact Bettarini unaccountably, in what is in many ways an excellent work of scholarship, fails to notice. Bettarini, "The new frontier: Letters", 11.

probably, the lawyer Johannes was John Śledź of Lubień, a Polish clergyman, well acquainted with the king. Having served as Władysław Jagiełło's personal chaplain since 1391, he was also familiar with Italy, having gained his doctorate in canon law from the University of Padua.<sup>153</sup> The lawyer's role in the expedition was the obvious - connection at court. Indeed, as the letter stated openly, it was into John's hands that the *Signoria* had placed the letter of recommendation, its accompanying feline offering and thus the hoped for success of the mission.<sup>154</sup> What John was likely getting out of this adventure, was the eternal thanks of the Florentine *Signoria*, a piece of goodwill not to be underestimated. More than this was the possibility of pleasing his boss by presenting him with an extravagant present - a win both ways. The second member of the team, the banker, was Leonardo Bartoli, a native of Florence, but one who as far as we know, had never been to Poland before but was perhaps looking to expand his horizons. Leonardo appears as a member of the *Arte Camprorum* in 1395 and 1401. In 1405, just a year before the lion embassy, he was enrolled on the list of members of the *Arte del' Cambio* – the guild of bankers and moneychangers.<sup>155</sup> The final member of the embassy was, as described in Chapter 4, Pietro Bicherano. The choice of Pietro appears a bit unusual for such a posting, as he was Venetian not Florentine. However, at the time, there appears to have been no other Florentine merchant operating in Poland whom the *Signoria* could have called upon, and Pietro, known to the Italian community in Venice and its Florentine contingent there, appears to have been recommended for the role.

Yet, while Pietro would go on to great success in Poland, being named manager of the important Krakow salt mines already in November 1406, it remains unclear if the aforementioned Florentine embassy was ever actually carried out. Apart from the copy of *Signoria's* letter, which is to be found today in the *Archivio di Stato di Firenze*, we have no evidence that the lions ever arrived in Krakow.<sup>156</sup> The Polish chronicles of the time make no

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<sup>153</sup> Krzysztof Ożóg, "University masters at the royal court of Hedwig of Anjou and Władysław Jagiełło." In *Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages: a Cultural History*. Eds. Piotr Górecki and Nancy van Deusen (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2009), 152.

<sup>154</sup> "Super predictus insuper idem dominus Johannes serenitatem vestram seriusus alloquetur, quam exaltare et conservare digetur Dominus noster omnipotens feliciter et longaeve." [Itali] nr 18.

<sup>155</sup> Filippo Argelati, *De Monetis Italiae Variorum Illustrium Virorum Dissertationes, Quarum pars nunc primum in Lucem Prodit*, part 4 (Milan: Ex aedibus Societatis palatinae, 1752), 51-2.

<sup>156</sup> Checking to ensure the authenticity of the letter, I have viewed the microfilms of this document in the archive in Florence. The 1406 letter is the first document to appear in that register of the missive recorded by the Florentine *Cancellaria*, so its position would make it easier to plant a fake. However, the hand, style, and language of the text is consistent with the rest of the documents in the register and then there is the question of motive. Still, to be entirely sure, it would be advisable to check the original document, which unfortunately due to archival restrictions, I was unable to do. ASF, Signori Cancellaria, Missivi I nr. 27, fol 3; (1406/11/21) [SPPP] 10 nr 154

mention of it, the surviving royal account books include no sudden note of lion food or a den being prepared, and no obligatory “thank you” letter appears to have left the chancery of the Polish king.<sup>157</sup> It thus appears possible that the letter in the archives is only a draft copy, the outline of a grand plan never carried to fruition. After all, the arrival of so splendid a gift, so exotic and stupendous an occasion as a pair of lions coming to town would warrant a mention somewhere, and yet the Polish historical record remains deafeningly silent. Given this silence, it is my belief that, the lion embassy of 1406 never completed its mission. Perhaps the *Signoria*’s attention was drawn elsewhere and the expedition never properly set out, or during the arduous journey, the death of their charges caused a change in plan. In any event, the aim of the embassy – to promote its members and turn the king’s eye favorably towards Florentine citizens in the Polish realm -- was largely achieved as he employed a number of them in sensitive positions over the coming decade - with or without the lions. Still, the *Signoria* likely had hoped for more; but no formal trade privileges were ever issued. Then again, after 1406, contact between Poland and the government in Florence remained tenuous. There were meetings between ambassadors at larger international summits, a few letters of recommendation for Florentine citizens residing in the country which will be discussed further below, and the correspondence sent by Arnolfo Tedaldi on the behalf of the Polish royal court to Lorenzo di Medici, who was then the central figure of the Florentine government.<sup>158</sup> Had the Florentine *Signoria* made more of an effort to promote their connections with Poland, better trading terms might have been in the offing, but this did not happen. Poland being so far away and the number of merchants involved there so small, no greater diplomatic push was made.

While the Italian merchants who arrived in Poland would no doubt have loved to have received greater consideration, it is likely that they did not do so because their various polities did not have enough pull at the Polish court to obtain concessions. This does not mean however, that they did not try. This was in essence what the 1406 embassy was about, had it arrived. Given this fact, it is unsurprising then that the next official point of contact between Poland and

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pg. 78-9. For a proper dating of the event see: Jerzy Zatycki, “Ze źródeł do dziejów walki klasowej w żupach krakowskich. Pamiętnik Biblioteki Kórnickiej Z. 5.” [From sources on the history of the class struggle in the Cracow villages. Diary of the Kórnicka Library Vol 5]. *Biblioteka Kórnicka* (1955); 178-80.

<sup>157</sup> Małgorzata Wilska’s supposition that there was a paid “keeper of the royal menagerie” under Władysław Jagiełło and Queen Jadwiga is unsupported by the sources she cites. She also makes the error of stating that the 1406 letter was preserved in the chancery of Władysław Jagiełło. Małgorzata Wilska, “The Attractiveness of Court Culture during the Jagiellonian Era.” *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* (2013): 85.

<sup>158</sup> (01/05/1481) The letter sent by Arnolfo does not appear to have survived, but record of it endures in the register of return missives sent by Lorenzo, wherein he thanked Arnolfo for the letter and a gift of some falcons who had sadly not arrived. ASF, MaP 62 fol. 83v

Florence came in the form of letters of recommendation sent in support of the di ser Matteo family who were seeking to develop business interests in Poland and take on the role of Zupparius - salt mine manager.

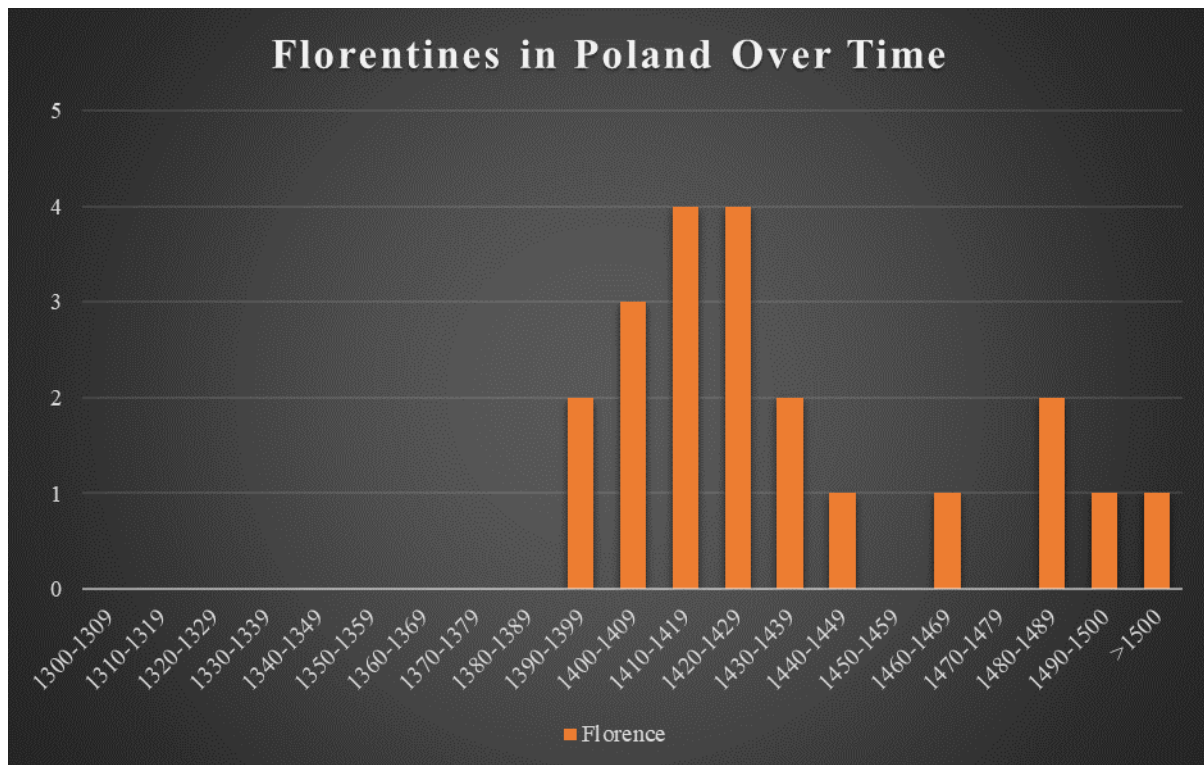


Figure 14 Florentines in Poland Over Time

The form and function of these letters will be discussed further in a separate section, but in raw figures, between 1424 and 1430 the *Signoria* sent eight letters of recommendation to the king and his councilors related to the di ser Matteo family, and afterwards two more in the 1440s in connection with other merchants. At the same time, between 1406 and 1500 a further seventeen Florentines would arrive in Poland, a number of them choosing to immigrate permanently. (Figure 13) Yet despite this, no other direct forms of communication appear to have occurred between the two polities, except in the form of letters.<sup>159</sup> Unlike other Italian polities who had more significant contact with Poland: Genoa, Venice, and Milan – Florence never sent ambassadors to Poland, but kept contact with the kingdom only in the form of irregularly sent letters. Whether the strong reliance on written correspondence which has been noted also in

<sup>159</sup> Albizzo di Talento di Medici, Antonio Auecci, Antonio di Giovanni di ser Matteo, Arnolfo di Pierozzo di Tedaldi, Filippo Buonaccorsi, Giovanni di Baldo di Pierozzo di Tedaldi, Guglielmo Rucellai, Guido di Giovanni di ser Matteo, Leonardo di Giovanni di ser Matteo, Lodovico di Florencia, Matteo di Medici, Micheal Auecci, Neri di Cipriano di Tornaquinci, Niccolo di Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe, Ottaviano di Gucci di Cavlacanti, Petrus Italicus, Rinaldo di Sandro di Altoviti. See the chart at the end of this chapter.

the case of Hungary was a defining feature of Florentine diplomacy outside of the peninsula is an intriguing question that only comparative analysis beyond the scope of this thesis will answer.<sup>160</sup>

Apart from letters of recommendation, I have found only two other letters exchanged between the king of Poland and the Florentine *Signoria*. The first was sent by King Władysław III in 1444, just before his disastrous crusade against the Ottomans. The king informed the *Signoria* about the current military situation and, playing upon their Christian piety, sought to encourage them to lend their aid to the undertaking.<sup>161</sup> The *Signoria* sent a response a month later, lauding the king for his bravery and noble cause but refusing to join the fight.<sup>162</sup> It is worth noting that the Venetians on the other hand did invest in the endeavor and in an effort to coordinate their forces were also writing to King Władysław III during this period.<sup>163</sup>

The final evidence of communication between the Florentine and Polish polities that I have so far uncovered, are the letters written by Arnolfo Tedaldi to Lorenzo di Medici, known as *il Magnifico*, who was at the time the *de facto* ruler of Florence. Arnolfo, whose history is presented in detail in Chapter 4, was from a prominent Florentine family with strong political ties. Two letters are recorded as having passed between Arnolfo and Lorenzo, one in 1481 and another in 1489, and it is possible that there were others that have simply escaped our notice.<sup>164</sup> In both, Arnolfo acted as a conduit between the Polish government and that of Florence, in the form of Lorenzo. Proof of the formality of the exchanges can be seen in the fact that the letters were written in Latin, rather than in Italian which of course both parties understood well, and by the fact that diplomatic gifts were exchanged.<sup>165</sup>

<sup>160</sup> Prajda, "Trade and Diplomacy," 104.

<sup>161</sup> (1444/06/02) Bibliothèque Ricciantiana de Florence, ms. 660, fol. 61 vo et suiv. published in: Nicolae Iorga, *Notes et extraits pour servir à l'histoire des croisades au XVe siècle*. Series 2 part 1 (Paris: Erenst Lerous Editeur, 1899), 404-5.

<sup>162</sup> (1444/07/02) Iorga, *Notes et extraits series 2 part 1*, 404.

<sup>163</sup> (1444/08/04) - Letter from the Venetian Senate to confirm that the doomed King Władysław III will indeed be sending an army into *Romania* against Murad II, as agreed at Buda. The army would leave Orsova the 1st of September heading down the Danube (Battle of Varna Nov. 10) to be coordinated with Francesco (Condulmero) cardinale vice-cancelliere, di Giuliano (Cesarmi) cardinale di S. Angelo e legato pontificio, e dei comandanti le flotte del duca di Borgogna and of Venice. *I Libri Commemoriali*. Vol. 4, nr. 284.

<sup>164</sup> (1481/05/01) ASF, MaP 62 fol. 83v, (1489/08/28) ASF, MaP 63 99v

<sup>165</sup> In 1481, Arnolfo sought to arrange for the sending of a set of falcons as a gift to Lorenzo di Medici but at the time of the letter of response, they had not yet arrived in Florence and it is unclear if they ever made it. ASF, MaP 62 fol. 83v

## 1.6 Relations between Poland and other Italian Polities

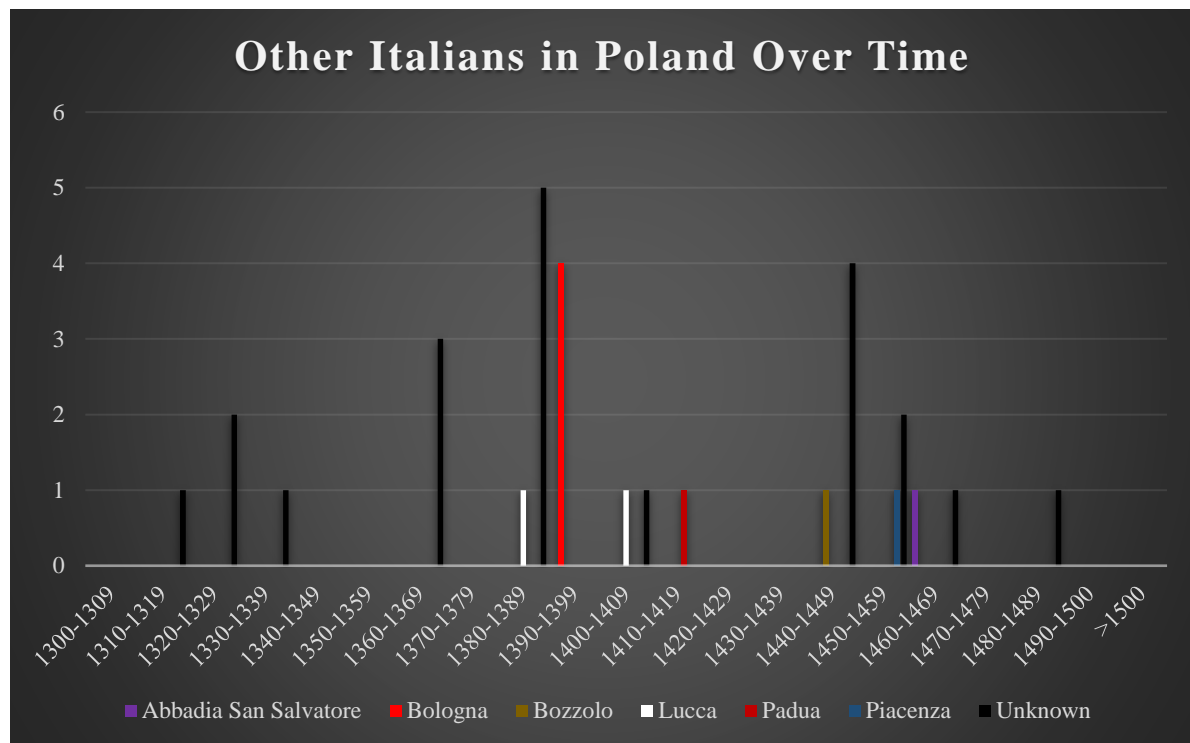


Figure 15 Other Italians in Poland Over Time

Of the other Italian polities, apart from the Papal States, which are deemed a separate entity and not considered here, only Milan had significant diplomatic ties with Poland. Of the other polities from which all identified Italians residing in Poland, are known to have originated – Abbadia di San. Salvatore, Bologna, Bozzolo, Lucca, Pavia, Padua, Piacenza, San Gimignano, and San Romulo, none appear to have made diplomatic contact.<sup>166</sup> (Figure 15) Then again, none of these cities retained their full independence throughout the Late Medieval Period. The Abbadia di San. Salvatore and Bozzolo were little more than villages at the time while the smaller towns of San Gimignano, and San Romulo were dominated early by their more aggressive neighbors, Florence and Genoa respectively. Pavia and Piacenza meanwhile, fell under the sway of Milan, while Padua was incorporated into the Venetian *stato di terra*. Lucca in the interim, exchanged hands a dizzying number of times. Only Bologna continued to hold out a contested form of independence through most of the period. It is therefore unsurprising that so far, no record of direct communication with these sites has yet been uncovered.

<sup>166</sup> Figure 15 includes on those Italians considered as ‘traders’ and thus ignores a number of others who served as doctors and professionals who originated from the other polities listed.

Milan however, was a different case. While only five Milanese settled in Poland during the period, the two polities kept up robust diplomatic ties. (Figure 15) The first evidence of direct contact between Milan and Poland comes from 1388, when envoys were sent to the Polish court by Gian Galeazzo Visconti of Milan.<sup>167</sup> Gian Galeazzo Visconti was an ambitious man and intent upon expanding his domains and becoming a respected figure on the larger European political stage. He was also distantly related to Queen Jadwiga through his first wife, Isabella of Valois, although she had died in 1372.<sup>168</sup> It is likely due to his ambitions that Gian Galeazzo first made overtures to Poland, hoping to gain greater recognition abroad, and in this he appears to have been entirely successful. What started out as a diplomatic gambit blossomed into a regular exchange and an enduring friendship between the two states. Throughout the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, ambassadors were exchanged more regularly than any other Italian polity and many fine gifts were sent between Milan and Poland.<sup>169</sup> The third Duke of Milan, Filippo Maria Visconti was even named as a godparent to King Władysław Jagiełło's son and heir.<sup>170</sup> Thus, unlike the Florentine *Signoria*, who sought to promote itself through the success of its merchants abroad, Milanese trading ties with Poland remained weak while its high-level diplomatic connection was strong.<sup>171</sup>

What comes as a surprise from the sources is a nearly complete lack of communication with the Kingdom of Naples. This is odd, especially if one considers that for at least a brief period during the late fourteenth century, the two kingdoms were both ruled by the House of Anjou. Still, apart from two papal collectors, no known Neapolitans made their way to Poland during

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<sup>167</sup> [RdKWJiKJ], 44, 103.

<sup>168</sup> [RdKWJiKJ], 44.

<sup>169</sup> (1418) Milanese dogs sent as a gift to King Władysław Jagiełło. [RdKWJiKJ], 556; (1425/11/09) Two *coperto da cavallo* sent to Poland in the hands of Federico de Petiis. *Inventari e Regesti Ddl R. Archivio di Stato in Milano ... Milano, Palazzo del Senato*, vol. 2 part 1 ed. Cesare Manaresi (Milano: Cisalpino-Goliardica, 1971), nr. 1468. The dogs in particular appear to have been greatly appreciated by Władysław Jagiełło, as he was an avid hunter. On October 29<sup>th</sup> 1429, the new third Duke of Milan, Filippo Maria Visconti, sent Damiano di Paravesino his *familiaris*, with a gift of one of his best corsieri, 8 great danes, and the requested goshawks, a falconry master, and 4 other dogs, to Poland. Note that the ambassador, Damiano di Paravisino was almost certainly related to Giovanni and Jacobo Paravisino who were resident in Poland. *Inventari e Regesti del R. Archivio di Stato in Milano*, vol 2 part 1, nr. 316; Letters exchanged between Milan and Poland in: 1455; 1461; 1466; 1474, and 1498. Archivio di Stato di Milano, Potenze estere (1450 - sec. XVII) <https://www.archiviodistatomilano.beniculturali.it/getFile.php?id=475> Accessed June 5<sup>th</sup> 2020.

<sup>170</sup> Stephen Christopher Rowell, "Gossipred and Lithuanian dynastic politics in early-fifteenth-century Poland," *Bažnyčios istorijos studijos* (2016): 57.

<sup>171</sup> Further exploration of this topic will be undertaken in a forthcoming article.



the period.<sup>172</sup> On the other hand, unlike the other polities which did have significant contact with Poland, the Kingdom of Naples was not a major trading power, as its wealth came primarily from agriculture. The single piece of evidence this author has uncovered connecting Poland and Naples comes from an entry in the treasury notes of the kingdom of Naples which records the arrival of a Polish embassy sent to treat with King Alphonso I of Naples in 1450.<sup>173</sup> It is likely that further research in this direction will uncover greater contacts, but this work lies outside the scope of this thesis.

## 1.7 Italian and Polish Connections with the German Lands

When speaking of “Germans” known as *Tedeschi*, *Teotonici* or *Alemanni* (in Venetian sources), it is important to be aware that this was in no way considered as a political label, Germany as a united state would of course not exist for another five-hundred years. The label was rather used in a geo-linguistic sense to denote any person who spoke German and arrived from beyond the Alps – *La Magna*. As the German-speaking world during this era included the entire area we now consider Germany but also parts of Switzerland, France, Austria, Czechia, Hungary, Romania, Poland, and much of the Baltic coast, the label was extremely broad. Their primary place of abode on the political map of the time, was the Holy Roman Empire which encompassed many of the above mentioned modern countries. Merchants from these “German Lands” had long held strong trading ties with Poland. Unsurprisingly so, given that due to earlier waves of immigration, the lingua franca of the Polish merchant community prior to the sixteenth century, was largely German, and the regions were next door neighbors. Italians had less significant links with their neighbors beyond the alps, but ones that began to change precipitously throughout the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century. Trade was a primary reason that men and occasionally women crossed the Alps in both directions.<sup>174</sup> While Germans began to settle in Italy directly from at least the late thirteenth century, setting up small trading communities in the most vital cities of the peninsula, Italian interest spread slowly

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<sup>172</sup> Johannes Manco, Canon of Naples and Clerk of the Apostolic Camera (1378) [Bull] III nr. 4, 5, 6.; Matteo di Lamberto of Naples, Archdeacon of Wrocław, papal collector (1398-1413). Theiner II Pg. 767-769 nr. 1038-1040; 1413 *Acta summorum pontificum: res gestas Bohemicas aevi praehussitici et hussitici illustrantia* vol 1-2. Monumenta Bohemiae Vaticana Vol 6. Ed. Jaroslav Eršil (Prague : Academia, 1980), nr. 848.

<sup>173</sup> Nicolae Iorga, *Notes et Series 2 vol 1*, 46.

<sup>174</sup> Apart from the Merchant community who lived and worked in the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, a large number of German artisans lived in Venice. By the fourteenth century a few had set up their own *scuola* – there thus existed in Venice a separate guild of German bakers and shoemakers among others. Carolin Wirtz, “mercator in Fonctio Nostro”: Mercanti Tedeschi fra la Germania e il Fondaco dei Tedeschi a Venezia,” In *Presenze Tedesche a Venezia*, ed. Susane Winter (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Lettera Centro Tedesco di Studi Veneziani, 2005), 3-4.

into the German Lands.<sup>175</sup> In the northern German regions, the power of the Hanse trading block, unwilling to admit Italians to their territory, kept merchants from the peninsula at bay for many years.<sup>176</sup> The merchant culture of the Baltic and the Mediterranean ran on different tracks that met only at the fringes. Bruges, thus became the major clearing house for the Baltic zone and a place a meeting between the north and the south. The city became a central node of trade, where Italian merchant and banking houses had offices, and merchants from Spain, the Flemish and French interior met with parties, including Poles, coming from the Baltic north. The turn of the fourteenth century saw Italians seeking to make further inroads into Hanse territory, igniting vehement protests. In 1397, a motion was put forward at the semiannual meeting of The Hanseatic league to ban Italian merchants bankers from operating inside its domains altogether. The Hanse-Kontor in Bruges and Lübeck protested the move, and it failed to pass but the call was renewed again in 1400 and 1405 with similar results.<sup>177</sup> It was in these two northern cities that Italian merchants began to achieve a toe-hold in the region but while the Hanse breathed, they would never achieve true success. The situation in southern Germany was somewhat different. No overarching mercantile league sought to prevent Italian traders from entering the region, but circumstances were still often unfavorable to migration and it was only in the second half of the fifteenth century that Italians began to make inroads. The first Florentine merchant established in Nuremberg for example, appears only in the 1470s.<sup>178</sup> In trading with the Italian Peninsula, the southern Germans cities on the other hand tended to manage their affairs through Venice.

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<sup>175</sup> The *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* in Venice was founded in 1228 and one in Genoa in 1425, although there was a significant German presence there already from 1370. Florence also had its fair share of Germans, who began migrating to that city during the fourteenth century. This process sped up during the fifteenth century as skilled German weavers and silk workers were enticed to immigrate, and Germans quickly became the largest ex-patriot community in the city. Marco Veronesi, *Oberdeutsche Kaufleute in Genua 1350-1490: Institutionen, Strategien, Kollektive* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer Verlag, 2014), 29-38, 87-117; Samuel Kline Cohn, *The laboring classes in Renaissance Florence* (New York: Elsevier, 2013), 98-113.

<sup>176</sup> Ulf Christian Ewert and Stephan Selzer, *Institutions of Hanseatic Trade* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang International Academic Publishers, 2016), 135-40.

<sup>177</sup> Gerhard Fouquet, "Ein Italiener in Lübeck: der Florentiner Gherardo Bueri (gest. 1449)". *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 78, 195.

<sup>178</sup> Benvenuto di Daddo Aidobrandi operated in Nuremberg between 1471-74 as part of the company of Cuasparre di Niccodemo Spinelli, the heir of the noted banker, Tommaso Spinelli. Kurt Weissen, "I mercanti toscani alle fiere tedesche nel tardo medioevo." In *Conference: Fiere e mercati nella integrazione delle economie europee: [Atti della trentaduesima settimana di studi; Prato, 8-12 maggio 2000]* 894 fn 27.

### 1.7.1 The Fondaco dei Tedeschi

In 1228, German merchants in Venice were assigned their own *Fondaco* - a permanent enclave, hostel, and warehouse, in the district of San Bartolomeo, flanking the Rialto bridge. By the end of the fifteenth century, an estimated four to five thousand German speakers resided in the lagoon, making them one of the largest resident minorities.<sup>179</sup> Of these, the merchants of the *Fondaco* made up but a tiny minority, between 100-120 men, who came and went throughout the year, selling and purchasing goods and storing their merchandise in the warehouse between trips.<sup>180</sup> These merchants were technically forbidden to reside anywhere but inside the *Fondaco* nor were they permitted to make bargains beyond its walls, but it appears that these regulations were not always enforced. While merchants came from all over the German speaking areas, including Poland, during the fourteenth century those from Regensburg and Nuremberg were the most numerous.<sup>181</sup> No matter their origin, all merchants were to be treated the same, a ruling enshrined in the 1471 bi-laws of the *Fondaco*, where it was expressly stated that, Polish merchants, together also with those coming from Bohemia or Hungary, were to be treated in a like manner as those from the German Lands proper with the same rights and obligations.<sup>182</sup> It should be noted of course that the need for such an addition to the bi-laws implies that previously this had not always been the case.

While working out of the lagoon, it was not only goods and coins that German merchants picked up from their Italian counterparts, but also accounting and commercial practices. The earliest known example of Arabic numeral usage and double entry book-keeping from a German company, is found in a fragmentary account book belonging to the Kress company of Nuremberg from 1389 and it should be recalled that the Kress company, had strong ties with Venice, the *Fondaco*, and Poland.<sup>183</sup> As Bruges was in the north, Venice served as the clearing

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<sup>179</sup> Ermanno Orlando, *Migrazioni Mediterranee: Migranti, Minoranze e Matrimoni a Venezia Nel Basso Medioevo* (Bologna: Società editrice il Mulino, 2014), 83-4.

<sup>180</sup> Carolin Wirtz, "mercator in Fonctio Nostro: Mercanti Tedeschi fra la Germania e il Fondaco dei Tedeschi a Venezia," In *Presenze Tedesche a Venezia*, ed. Susane Winter (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Lettera Centro Tedesco di Studi Veneziani, 2005), 11.

<sup>181</sup> Wirtz, "Mercator in Fonctio Nostro," 11-2.

<sup>182</sup> *Che per remouer ogni dubitacion et differentia che podesse nascer sia dechiarido che tuti Todeschi si de Alemagna bassa chome de lalta si subditi del imperador come de ogni altro signor Todescho et similiter Polani Ongari et Boemi siano oblisfati cum tute sue marchadantie ai dacij del fontego nostro cum tuti modi et condicion de quello et se algun dacier ouer altri per loro tentasse ouer trazesse i prediti dal fontego per redur ad altri dacij caza a pena de ducati 100. per ogni uolta da esser diuisa per terzo remanendo sempre fermo el datio del fontego nostro. Capitolar dei Visdomini del Fontego dei Todeschi in Venezia: Capitular des Deutschen Hauses in Venedig*, ed. Georg M. Thomas (Berlin: A. Asher, 1874), 227.

<sup>183</sup> Wolfgang von Stromer, "Nuremberg in the International Economics of the Middle Ages," *The Business History Review*, vol. 44, no. 2, (1970), 214.

house and trade entrepot of the south for the German Lands, a key node that connected Florentine bankers with credit seeking merchants at a marketplace that contained all the goods of Afro-Eurasia. The route from Poland to Venice, via sea from Senj or all the way overland might be plagued with difficulties, but it was worth it.

## 1.7.2 Nuremberg

While Nuremberg had strong direct ties with Italy and in particular, at the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* in Venice, it had equal or perhaps even stronger links to Poland. It was further strategically located in the center of the southern German Lands at the confluence of a set of major trade routes. In 1365, Nuremberg merchants managed a coup receiving from King Casimir the Great a privilege to trade through Polish territory as far as Lviv, opening up the country for increased commerce.<sup>184</sup> Wolfgang von Stromer implied in his research that south Germans, merchants from Nuremberg in particular, began moving into Poland and edging out Italian competitors from the start of the fourteenth century, eventually so that, for a few centuries from then on Poland - up to the Poznań-Warsaw line – was the domain of the Nuremberg merchants.<sup>185</sup> This is however, more than a slight exaggeration. Nuremberg merchants did have great success in Poland during this period but as the previous section of this chapter has shown, Italians too were active. In fact, the Nurembergers suffered a major set-back in 1457 when King Casimir IV Jagiełło forbade them and other foreign merchants from trading or residing in Polish cities where they did not have citizen status as their activities were “impoverishing the locals”.<sup>186</sup> The ban didn’t stick, but it was a blow at the time. Still, Nuremberg merchants did considerable business in Poland throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Rather than viewing Italian merchants operating in Poland as competing against Italians in the region, as proposed by Stromer, the records indicate that in a number of cases, the two groups worked together. As Kurt Weissen has shown, merchants from Florence began setting up companies in Nuremberg from 1471, trading primarily in luxury textiles and silk.<sup>187</sup> The papal collector for Poland, the

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<sup>184</sup> Stromer, “Nuremberg in the International Economics,” 217.

<sup>185</sup> “Für einige Jahrhunderte war fortan Polen — bis etwa zur Linie Posen-Warschau — eine Domäne des Nürnberger Fernhandels”- Wolfgang von Stromer, “Nürnberger Unternehmer im Karpatenraum: ein oberdeutsches Buntmetall-Oligopol 1396-1412,” *Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej* 16.4 (1968):661.

<sup>186</sup> (1457/03/06) [KDMK] I nr. 164 pg. 231

<sup>187</sup> The first stable Florentine in the city was Benvenuto di Daddo Aldobrandi who worked as a factor for Guasparre di Niccodemo Spinelli, nephew of the banker Tomaso Spinelli. Soon after, the firms of Salviti Ovieri and Torrigiani, opened soon after and continued to trade in the city well into the sixteenth century. For more on this trade see Kurt Weissen, “I mercanti italiani e le fiere in Europa centrale alla fine del Medioevo e agli inizi dell’età moderna,” *La pratica dello scambio: Sistemi di fiere, mercanti e città in Europa (1409-1700)*, (2003):

German Lands, and Scandinavia, Marinus di Fregeno remarked in his *Descriptio provinciarum Alamanorum*, composed in 1479, on the large number of Venetian and Genoese merchants active in the city.<sup>188</sup>

The most obvious case of Nuremberg merchants teaming up with Italian merchants trading in Poland would be the cabal of the Amman-Kammerer-Seiler-Grau and Flextorfer-Kegler-Zenner companies who, financed by the Medici Bank, together with the Pietro Bicherano managed to peel away control of the profitable salt and lead mines located near Krakow. This event, described in detail in Chapter 4, demonstrates how merchants from Nuremberg could work hand in hand with their nominal Italian competitors towards a common goal. The di ser Matteo brothers had contacts in the city as cited above and another example of close ties between Nuremberg merchants and Italians in Poland would be that of the di Promontorio clan who settled in Poznań in the 1480s and 90s. The sources show that Promontorio's network of contacts beyond Poland oriented towards the German Lands – the cities of Frankfurt, Berlin, Leipzig, and above all, Nuremberg.<sup>189</sup> Peregrino Promontorio was even briefly imprisoned in the city when he ran into trouble paying off his local debts.<sup>190</sup> Indeed, at times these Genoese merchants even relied on Nuremberg intermediaries to acquire goods from Italy itself. In 1496, Paolo di Promontorio purchased 150 cubits of Venetian damask and several dozen different lengths of cloth together with some spices from Hanusz Blode of Nuremberg in 1496.<sup>191</sup> On the face of it, an Italian purchasing products from his home territory through a German intermediary appears odd, but upon reflecting that the Promontorio clan were from Genoa, it is not really surprising that they would have limited personal contacts in Venice. The Nuremberg traders on the other hand, worked frequently out of the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*.

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168-9; Richard A. Goldthwaite, *Economy of Renaissance Florence* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2009), 198-201; Francesco Guidi-Bruscoli, "Florence, Nuremberg and Beyond: Italian Silks in Central Europe during the Renaissance," in *Europe's Rich Fabric*, eds. Bart Lambert and Katherine Anne Wilson (London: Routledge, 2016), 123-162.

<sup>188</sup> *Inter Sweviam et Bavariam ex una et Franconiam partibus ex altera ipsam Franconiam maxima parte ad sinistram dimittendo iacet insigne oppidum Nurenbergense, in quo multae artes mechanicae sunt, et ex eius populo multi mercatores, qui per superiorem Italiae partem praecipue Venetias et Ianuam ac per residuum orbis christianorum negotiantur, discreti viri et maxima parte probi.* Klaus Voigt, "Der Kollektor Marinus de Fregeno und seine" *Descriptio provinciarum Alamanorum*." *QFIAB* 48 (1968) (1968): 156,198.

<sup>189</sup> This is fully in keeping with strategies pursued by other Florentine companies pursuing textile trade in the German lands in the sixteenth century. [AKapSąd II] nr. 1441, 1626; Kaczmarczyk, "Włosi w Poznaniu na przełomie," 8; Guidi-Bruscoli, "Florence, Nuremberg and Beyond," 108.

<sup>190</sup> (1495/09/02) [ActaPoz] II nr 1623

<sup>191</sup> (1496/02/29) [ActaPoz] II nr 1657; Jan Ptaśnik, *Akta Norymberskie do Dziejów Handlu z Polską w Wieku XV* [Nuremberg Documents on The History Of Trade With Poland In 15th Century] (Krakow: Nakładem Akademii Umiejętności skład główny w księgarni spółki wydawniczej Polskiej, 1909), 299 fn 1

Indeed, of all the German companies who resided in the *Fondaco*, those from Nuremberg were the largest and most active. Given that Nuremberg was at the time, arguably the premier city of the Holy Roman Empire and that travel time between it and Venice was on average only 14 days, this comes as no real surprise.<sup>192</sup> Indeed, the Nurembergers trafficked so much with the Lagoon City that a Venetian proverb arose in the fifteenth century claiming that, “The Germans are blind, but Nuremberg has at least one eye.”<sup>193</sup> On occasion, Nuremberg and Polish merchants would meet in Venice itself, there working with Venetian and Florentine traders. In 1403 for example, William Rummel of Nuremberg together with Ulricus Kress of Nuremberg and the Florentine merchant who lived in Rome, Lipatu di Bardis recorded a transaction before a Venetian notary declaring among other things that *Gregorio Symonis de Cracovia* owed 1,200 ducats.<sup>194</sup> The di ser Matteo brothers also had close contacts with Nuremberg merchants, so much so that during the brothers lengthy court case with Johannes Bank, it was revealed that their factor, Niccolo di Vaggio, had spent some time in the city. In fact, much of the case hinged on conflicting testimony as to whether Niccolo had given assurances on Michele di ser Matteo’s behalf that there were a sufficient number of Nuremberg merchants who would act as surety for the di ser Matteo brothers.<sup>195</sup> Contacts between the three groups were thus not uncommon and frequently served everyone’s mutual benefit.

### 1.7.3 Lübeck

Apart from Nuremberg, the other city worth mentioning in the context of combined interest of German and Italian merchants in Poland, is Lübeck. Perched where the Trave river enters the Baltic, Lübeck was a strategic and wealthy German port town and an important member of the Hanse. A prosperous commercial junction, it is unsurprising that Italian merchants would be drawn to the site. From at least 1405, Ludovico Baglioni of Perugia made Lübeck his home.<sup>196</sup> Exiled from his home town in 1393 when the governing regime in Perugia, of which the

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<sup>192</sup> In 1434 it took on average 14 days to travel between Nuremberg and Venice, although in a very exceptional example, the journey was made in 9 days by the Margrave of Brandenburg in 1435. With better roads, in later years the time was cut to 13 days. Philippe Braunstein, “*Relations d'affaires entre Nurembergeois et Vénitiens à la fin du XIVe siècle*”. *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire* 76 (1964): 262 fn.1; Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 171-6.

<sup>193</sup> Esch, “Das Archiv eines Lucchesischen,” 138.

<sup>194</sup> It is unclear if the Ulrich mentioned was the famous member of the Kress family, resident in Venice, but given that he and Rummel worked together on a number of occasions, it seems likely. (1403/08/28) ASV, Canc. Inf .Not. 226, book 1 fol. 141. (Angeletus de Venetiis)

<sup>195</sup> 1431/03/13) [Itali] nr 65, 66.

<sup>196</sup> Fouquet, “Ein Italiener in Lübeck,” 197.

Baglioni family were partisan supporters, was overthrown by a *popolani* uprising, Lodovico was forced to turn his interest abroad.<sup>197</sup> Very quickly, Lodovico made himself useful to the papal curia and was named papal collector for Germany, Bohemia, Denmark, Sweden and Norway.<sup>198</sup> He handled this post with aplomb for a number of years, successfully filtering money south and in 1402, Poland was added to the list of the regions he was responsible for.<sup>199</sup> Lodovico's status was upgraded to that of papal nuncio in 1406 and reconfirmed in 1410 and 1411.<sup>200</sup> It remains unclear if Lodovico ever sent funds to the Curia that were collected in Poland, but over the next ten years he continually transmitted money from Scandinavia.<sup>201</sup> Part of Lodovico's success as a transmitter of papal funds was due to his connection with Giovanni di Medici and the Medici bank and that came primarily through his young partner, Gerardo di Bueri. A native of Florence, Bueri was the distant cousin of Giovanni di Medici's wife Piccarda Bueri.<sup>202</sup> Nepotism was a powerful force and in 1406, Bueri was employed as a factor for the Medici bank in Venice making 20fl under the branch head Neri Tornaquinci.<sup>203</sup> For reasons which remain obscure, although perhaps because Neri had been keeping everyone's wages in arrears as he floundered, seeking to recoup the losses from poor crediting decisions, Bueri eventually quit his position, leaving a debt of 61 ½ fl. This money was however, written off by the Medici, who appear not to have held bad blood over it, perhaps because of Neri's perfidy, and they continued to use Bueri as an agent and correspondent for many years after.<sup>204</sup> In 1413, Bueri appears for the first time in Lübeck, now partnered with Lodovico.<sup>205</sup> The two would remain partners until Lodovico's death in 1426. Bueri fully embraced life in Lübeck, becoming a citizen in 1420, purchasing numerous properties, and marrying the Lady Tybbeke, daughter of Johann Bere the Burgomaster of Lübeck (1439-49).<sup>206</sup> In the same year that Bueri

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<sup>197</sup> Arnold Esch, "Bankiers der Kirche im Grossen Schisma," *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken*, 46. (1966): 347, 393.

<sup>198</sup> [Itali] nr 85.

<sup>199</sup> [Bull Pol IV] nr. 835

<sup>200</sup> (1406/10/05) Letter of safe conduct issued for LB as "*nuntio apostolico ad partes Germany, Bohemia, Denmark, Sweeden, Norway, and Poland* Same day also issued a letter of "*Fidei puritas*" naming him not as collector in the region, but one who is able to transmit funds to the camera. Eršil, Jaroslav. *Acta summorum pontificum: res gestas Bohemicas aevi praehussitici et hussitici illustrantia*. Prague: In aedibus Academiae scientiarum Bohemoslovacae, 1980, nr 233 pg 148 (1411/09/01) - Letter of safe conduct issued by the Curia for LB as *nuntio apostolico* in Germany, Bohemia, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and the Kingdom of Poland.

<sup>201</sup> Kurt Weissen, "La rete commerciale tedesca delle compagnie fiorentine romanam curiam sequentes, 1410-1470." *Archivio Storico Italiano* 169.4 (630 (2011):716 fn29.

<sup>202</sup> For a full family tree outlining this connection see: Kurt Weissen, "Briefe in Lübeck lebender Florentiner Kaufleute an die Medici (1424-1491)," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 83 (2003):54; Fouquet, "Ein Italiener in Lübeck," 201-3.

<sup>203</sup> Roover, *The Rise*, 63.

<sup>204</sup> Roover, *The Rise*, 63, 240.

<sup>205</sup> Roover, *The Rise*, 63.

<sup>206</sup> Weissen, "Briefe in Lübeck lebender," 53; Fouquet, "Ein Italiener in Lübeck," 201; Roover, *The Rise*, 63.

became a citizen however, his partner Ludovico left town on a special mission from Giovanni di Medici. As the event was recorded later in the Medici secret account books, “*Baglioni per lui a Ghoschalcho quando lo mandamo in Carchovia a rischutare i danari dobbiamo avere per la ragon vecchia di Vinegia*”<sup>207</sup> – Baglioni, for him to Ghoschalcho, when we sent him to Krakow to recover the money we were owed from that old issue in Venice. The “*la ragon vecchia di Vinegia*” – the old issue in Venice, referred to is the perfidy of Neri Tornaquinci, which saw money placed into the hands of among other Pietro Bicherano, but was never properly repaid. Having sent Albizzo di Medici on a similar round of attempted collection back in 1410, here again, a decade later and fourteen years after the event itself, the Medici bank was still working to collect its debts.<sup>208</sup> Upon Baglioni’s death, Bueri took over his accounts, working together with his brother Eduardo, two other Florentines, Niccolo di Bernardo Bonis and Francisco di Filippo Rucellai, and two factors.<sup>209</sup> In 1432, Bueri was approached by the Gdansk City Council at the recommendation of one of their members to assist them in sending 200 ducats via *lettera di cambio* to Rome.<sup>210</sup> Bueri executed the order and the money was given out in Rome by the Curial branch of the Medici Bank. In the 1440s he attempted to do the same with a set of exchanges requested by the Teutonic Knights, but they do not appear to have been properly fulfilled.<sup>211</sup> During that period another Florentine agent, Giovanni Talani, arrived in Lübeck, filling orders for *lettere di cambio*, but Gerardo remained the primary point of contact.<sup>212</sup> Gerardo died in 1449 and his post in Lübeck was taken over by Francesco di Filippo Rucellai who served as the correspondent of the Medici Bank in Lübeck until at least 1470, when he left the city.<sup>213</sup> With him, the last link to Italian banking establishments was broken and the city was reliant on nascent German banking houses to make their transfers.

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<sup>207</sup> ASF, MAP, f. 153, 1, c. 100. See: Weissen, Kurt. "Florentiner Bankiers und Deutschland (1275–1475). Kontinuität und Diskontinuität wirtschaftlicher Strukturen," PhD diss., dissertazione, Basel, Universität Basel, 2001, 282-3; Roover, *The Rise*, p. 455, note 91.

<sup>208</sup> ASF, MaP Filza 153, doc. 1, fol. 80rv

<sup>209</sup> The factors, are recorded as “Claus Walen” who was Bueri’s brother in-law and “Frascicus Walen”, marking them also as Italians. Fouquet, “Ein Italiener in Lübeck,” 201-2.

<sup>210</sup> (1432/07/03) The City Councilor was Bertold Buramer, who had previously used Bueri as an agent. Fouquet, “Ein Italiener in Lübeck,” 212.

<sup>211</sup> Fouquet, “Ein Italiener in Lübeck,” 213.

<sup>212</sup> Giovanni Talani was present in Lübeck 1441-1448. Kurt Weissen, “Fortschrittsverweigerung? Die Haltung der deutschen Handelsherren gegenüber der italienischen Banktechnik bis 1475.” Tradition, Innovation, Invention. De Gruyter, 2011. 167.

<sup>213</sup> (1449/08/06) Fouquet, “Ein Italiener in Lübeck,” 219-20; Weissen, “Fortschrittsverweigerung?,” 167.



## 1.7.4 Bohemia

By all rights it would appear that a greater portion of this thesis should be directed towards links between Italians in Poland and those in the Bohemian Kingdom. However, apart from the work of Roman Zaoral and Winfried Reichert who focus on the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, I was unable to uncover any reliable studies on the topic of Italians in the Czech lands.<sup>214</sup> Further, both Zaoral and Reichert focus essentially on the same thing, the story of the enrollment of three Italians as mine managers and minters in Kutná Hora in the early fourteenth century. As this story has some direct bearing on events in Poland, it is related here.

In 1298, silver was discovered in lands owned by the Abbey of Sedlec setting off what became known as the ‘*sbeh ke Kutne*’ – the rush to Kutná.<sup>215</sup> King Wenceslaus II Přemyslid (r. 1278-1305) quickly took possession of the site as reportedly thousands of miners from across the region rushed to open up the new seam which initially yielded over 6 tons of silver per year.<sup>216</sup> Soon after, in order to better regulate the site, Wenceslaus II issued the *Ius Regale Montanorum*, a new mining code for the kingdom that was modeled after the older Code of Jihlava (Iglau), but reformulated by Gozzius of Orvieto, an Italian professor of law.<sup>217</sup> With the backing of these enormous new silver reserves, Wenceslaus II set about enacting a radical reform of the kingdom’s currency, beginning to mint the heavy silver Prague grosz which would circulate widely in Central Europe for the next two centuries.<sup>218</sup> In order to solidify his currency reforms, Wenceslaus II invited a group of Italians to advise him on how to reorder his mint.<sup>219</sup> A charter from 1301 records how “*Reynharius, Apardius, et Cyno socii de Florencia*” had come to serve

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<sup>214</sup> Roman Zaoral, “The management of papal collections and long-distance trade in the thirteenth-century Czech lands,” *Mélanges de l’École française de Rome* – Online Accessed June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018, <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2732>; Roman Zaoral, “Silver and glass in medieval trade and cultural exchange between Venice and the Bohemian Kingdom,” *Czech Historical Review/Český časopis historický* 109 (2011): 235-261; Winfried Reichert, “Mercanti e monetieri italiani nel regno di Boemia nella prima metà del XIV secolo,” in *Sistema di rapporti ed elites economiche in Europa (secoli XII–XVII)*. Ed. Mario Del Treppo, (Naples: Liguori, 1994), 337–348.

<sup>215</sup> Blanchard, *Mining, Metallurgy...* Vol 3, 929-30; Spufford, *Money and its use*, 24-6.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid.

<sup>217</sup> Zaoral, “The management of papal collections,” 27.

<sup>218</sup> Initially, the coin weighed 3.8 grams, the rough equivalent of heavy silver coins already in circulation in Italy and France. This coin was copied in the German Lands and in Hungary in 1329. King Casimir the Great would attempt to introduce a similar heavy coin, but lacking silver mines of his own, would be unsuccessful and was forced to continue minting *kwartniks*, much smaller silver coins. The Prague grosz, calculated at a nominal rate of 48 to the mark, would continue to be the high-value silver standard coin circulating in Poland for the coming two-hundred years. Spufford, *Money and its use*, 233.

<sup>219</sup> A later Czech chronicle recorded, “*Anno vero domini MCCC in mense Julio idem d. rex Wenczeslaus munfficus fecit primum cudi grossos in Montibus Cuthnis per quosdam Italicos et ob hoc curia monete regalis in Montibus Cuthnis curia italica nuncupatur.*” František Záruba, “Vlašský dvůr [The Italian Court],” *Castellologica Bohemica* 11. Praha (2008): 234.

the king in his ambitious new venture for which they were offered a number of concessions, including the use of the home of the former *magister monetae*, Eberhardi in Brno.<sup>220</sup> Scholars have labored to clearly identify who these men were, with some liking Aparado to the influential Donati family, members of which a few years earlier could be found running the mints in London and Dublin; Reynharius meanwhile, has been linked to either the Peruzzi family or the Macci, but all of these identifications are subject to doubt.<sup>221</sup> Regardless of their exact family background, it is clear that the arrival of this trio of Florentines marked a break with the past in how mints were managed in Bohemia as the position of *magister monetae* had been held exclusively by locals. The re-organization of the kingdom's currency was dramatic. Where there had previously been free-trade in silver ingots, everything was now subject to a royal monopoly and Reynharius and his associates were granted concessions which gave them near-exclusive trading rights in Bohemian silver.<sup>222</sup> Where formally there had been 17 mints spread across the Bohemian kingdom, they were all now ordered to relocate to a central facility built next to the mine at Kutná Hora.<sup>223</sup> This conglomeration of many smaller mints into one large factory was in keeping with common practice on the Italian Peninsula, and greatly increased the prospects for mint masters to turn a profit. In order to house this expansive minting facility, a vast new structure was built wherein the labor of die-casting, assaying, and stamping, was divided and hundreds of men were employed in the process turning the metal brought directly from the mine shafts into usable coin. This new structure came to be known as the *Curia Italicus*, *Vlassky dvur* in Czech – the Italian Court, and is today a UNESCO world heritage

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<sup>220</sup> *Codex diplomaticus et epistolaris Moraviae* 1294-1306 Vol. V hereafter [CDM V], eds. Antonin Boček and Josef Chytil, (Bruno: ex typographia Aloysii Skarnitzl, 1858), CXXII pg. 127 , CLXIX pg. 177, CLXXIV pg. 184.

<sup>221</sup> Between 1280-84, the family was active in Ireland with Jacopo Donati managing the mint in Dublin while his brother Thorosinaus Donati ran the mint in Waterford. Another member of the family, Johannes Donati, would serve as a mint master in London in the 1340's. The Donati family would go on in the 15th century to produce numerous Counsels for the Arte del Cambio, the banker and money-changers guild in Florence. Ignazio Del Punta, "Tuscan merchant-bankers and moneyers and their relations with the roman curia in the xiii th." *Rivista di Storia della Chiesa in Italia*, vol. 64, no. 1, (2010): 49; John Craig, *The Mint: a history of the London Mint from AD 287 to 1948* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 68; Raynerius is never supplied with a cognomen and in a later charter issued in 1305, Aparado is referred to as "*Appardus de Nigromonte*" making his link to the Donati questionable. Zaoral, "The management of papal collections," 27; [CDM V] CLXIX pg. 177.

<sup>222</sup> Merchants from Prague were permitted to trade in limited amounts but the charter forbid foreign merchants – naming explicitly those from Flanders and Venice – from exporting silver without proper documents demonstrating that they were doing so in-association with a local Prague merchant and even then only in limited amounts. Rynharius and his associates meanwhile were named as exempt from all such restrictions. *Codex diplomaticus et epistolaris Moraviae* 1334-1339 Vol. VII/3, edited by Vincenz Brandl (Brno: Verl. des Mährischen Landes-Ausschusses, 1864), nr. 161.

<sup>223</sup> Spufford, *Money and its use*, 125.

site.<sup>224</sup> While the example of Florentines being invited to take over the ambitious new mint at Kutná Hora is but one example of the general practice of inviting knowledgeable Italians to manage such projects, in this case there is also a specific connection to Poland. Since the 1290s Wenceslaus II had been seeking to expand his domains into Poland at the expense of the fractious Piast dukes, and in 1300 had succeeded in having himself crowned King of Poland. He was therefore technically ruler of the country at the time he implemented the monetary reforms in Bohemia, and it could be argued then that this marks the first instance of Italian minters into the Polish sphere. This would still be only a very tangential connection, except that a second charter issued by Wenceslaus II in 1305 revolving around rights to property in Brno lists the head of the Florentine company, Reynharius, now as “*Capitaneus Cracovie*”.<sup>225</sup> The vagueness of the title “*Capitaneus*” and his absence from Polish records makes it difficult to say if the Florentine played any part in coin manufacture in the brief period when Wenceslaus II held sway in the region, but it is not outside the bounds of possibility. Reynharius of Florence must therefore be considered as a possible candidate to be the first Italian mint master in Poland. Italians would continue to play a prominent role in Bohemian mints, together with South Germans, who became burghers of Prague throughout the fourteenth century.<sup>226</sup>

Apart from the possible arrival of Reynharius of Florence in Krakow, there are only two places in the sources I have uncovered that show Italians active in Poland interacting with merchants from Prague. The first, is an odd case which arose in Krakow in 1387. In the spring of that year, *Wenceslao Perupctke de Praga* accused a large group composed of Krakow citizens, a fellow Prague merchant named Cristofero, and a number of Italians, of attacking and robbing him of his merchandise.<sup>227</sup> The particulars of the case are unknown, but those accused were at least for a time, banned from the City of Krakow.<sup>228</sup> The lack of detail makes the significance

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<sup>224</sup> Záruba, “Vlašský dvůr [The Italian Court],” 233-86; “Kutná Hora: Historical Town Centre with the Church of St Barbara and the Cathedral of Our Lady at Sedlec,” UNESCO. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/732> Accessed 18/01/2019.

<sup>225</sup> [CDM V], CLXIX pg. 177.

<sup>226</sup> One of these Italians, *Anastasius Verius de Mattis* of Florence who had become a citizen of Prague in the was invited by King John Luxemburg in 1325 to manage the issuing of a new gold coin modeled explicitly on that issued by the city on the Arno. It is possible that this same Anastasius was responsible for the brief run of similar gold florins issued by the Silesian Duke Wenceslaus I of Legnica in 1345, but the identification is not assured. Dana Stehliková, “Some enamels of the xiv century from czech collections,” *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa. Classe di Lettere e Filosofia*, Serie III, 24, no. 2/3 (1994): 646-9.

<sup>227</sup> Those included in the accusation were: *Franciscus Gallicus*, *Monaldo [di Lucca]*, *Cristoforo di Praga*, *Johannes Perlini*, *Johannes Thamme*, *Jacobinus Gallicus de Sale*, *Laurencius Gallicus*, *Dominicus Judeorum servitor*, *Herman Jenconis Stygcri servitor*, *Franciscus aurifaber* [KsProscrKrakow] nr. 785

<sup>228</sup> Evidence of the case appears in the book of Proscriptiones – banishments, but the entry was later crossed through, implying that the ban had been overturned.

of this event difficult to comprehend, but it shows if nothing else, that Italian traders in Krakow had some links to Prague in the late fourteenth century.

The second time Italian merchants with ties to Poland appear linked to Prague also involves a court case. In 1417, Antonio di ser Francesco da Pescia came before the *Mercanzia* Court in Florence and accused Antonio and Michele di Giovanni di ser Matteo of an egregious breach of contract. Antonio related that in April of 1412, he had signed a contract with Michele in Venice, agreeing that he, Antonio da Pescia, would move to Prague, and there act as their agent servicing *lettere di cambio*, for the brothers – Michele from Venice and Antonio from Wrocław. For this work, his expenses were to be reimbursed and he was to be paid a stipulated salary. However, in the over two years he remained in the city, they never sent him any business, indeed as he related to the court, except for a pen and ink, they sent him absolutely nothing. Seeking to drum up some business on his own, on May 17<sup>th</sup>, 1413, Antonio da Pescia agreed to take 2,200 hufł from the Archbishop of Prague, to be sent to the Papal Curia. Having made this agreement, Antonio da Pescia issued a *lettera di cambio* that was sent through the bank of Filippo Gucciozzo di Ricci to the Papal Curia. Unfortunately for Antonio however, as the transaction was still being processed, the bank of Filippo di Ricci failed spectacularly, having so far only issued 1,400 hufł.<sup>229</sup> Antonio da Pescia was left on the hook for the rest. Demanding his money, the bishop of Prague threw Antonio into a terrible prison - “*tennelo in una salvaticha et aspra prigionia*”. From captivity, he wrote of his plight to Michele and Antonio di ser Matteo, requesting assistance but received no response. Luckily for him, his brother, Leonardo da Pescia, who was then a professor at the University of Padua, raced to his aid. He approached both Michele di ser Matteo in Venice and Adovardo Tornaquinci, but no money was forthcoming. Finally, half of the required sum was cobbled together, but this was still insufficient and so Leonardo da Pescia travelled to Constance, where he pressured the clerics who were meeting there for the necessary funds. Finally, with the guarantee of Aldighiero di Francesco Biliotti in hand, Leonardo was able to secure his brother Antonio’s release after 14 months in prison. Antonio da Pescia then returned to Florence where he sued

<sup>229</sup> “*Dinanzi a Voi messeri ufficiali et Corte et a Vostri et della decta Università suy consiglieri expone et dice Antonio di messer Francescho da Pescia che gli è vera cosa che a dì tre d'agosto 1412 esso Antonio s'aconciò nella città di Vinegia cum Michele di Giovanni di messer Matheo facente allora per se et per gli suoy frategli non divisi ad andare et stare nella Magna in Praga per atendere a cambi et ad altre cose che fossino di bisogno secondo che volessino decto Michele et Antonio suo fratello che stava a Bradislaio nella Magna cum pacti et modi che se contengono in una scripta la quale à decto Antonio di mano del decto Michele sottoscritta, et fra l'altre cose è che alle spese loro doveva decto Antonio andare nella Magna infino che fosse cum Antonio fratello di decto Michele et in quello di chetrovasse decto Antonio doveva cominciare il salario di decto Antonio da Pescia.*” ASF, Mercanzia 1264, c. 203r-205v, hier c. 203r: See: Weissen, *Die Marktstrategien der florentinischen*, 331 fn 5.

the di ser Matteo brothers for 725 fl, in travel expenses and damages. The *Mercanzia* Court upheld the charge.<sup>230</sup> So ended a failed foray by the di ser Matteo family to set up a business providing *lettere di cambio* and banking services between Wroclaw, Prague, and the Italian Peninsula. The di ser Matteo brothers would instead turn their focus to Poland where they prospered for a number of years before falling into ruin. The story of the family is related in greater detail in Chapter 4. Antonio da Pescia, on the other hand went on eventually to have a glowing career working for the Medici bank, eventually rising to the position of General Manager.<sup>231</sup>

While numerous mentions appear in secondary literature of an Italian community in Prague, and there were undoubtedly connections between the Peninsula and scholars at the city's university, detailed information has not been forthcoming. King Charles IV of Bohemia (r. 1346-78), who later became Holy Roman Emperor (r. 1355-78) certainly had heavy Italian connections, having made two military forays into the peninsula, he communicated with Petrarch and invited a certain Angelo of Florence to lay out a botanical garden in Prague.<sup>232</sup> Yet, little more than offhand notices such as this one provide greater insight into the Italian merchant community in the region and given this general obscurity, even less is known about their possible interaction with Italians in Poland. In the existing literature, the Italian community in Bohemia appears forever assumed, but nowhere explained. A dedicated study

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<sup>230</sup> The *Mercanzia* Courts's verdict was recorded by Antonio da Pescia in the Merchant Manual of Sanminiato de' Ricci "1416 a di XV di marzo, a Richordanza che a di detto di sopra ebbero la sentenza da Sei della Merchantantia di Firenze per le differenze e quistioni àvi tra Michele e Bernardo e Antonio di Giovanni di ser Matteo e altri loro fratelli, miei maestri che per adrieto sono stati, e chome per quella fu chiarito che fine generale facessero l'uno e l'altro di ciò che avessimo auto a fare insieme per qualunque chagione o modo avessi auto del loro, io et eziandio mio fratello, e per lo simile io a loro ; excetto rimase in pandette (?) una partita di f. 70 mi restavano a dare di panni di meo dosso, che io lasciai a Michele a Vinegia quando mi mandò nella Mangnia. Della quale partita elleno dicono esserne finiti, e questo farne pruove. E di ciò sono cho' l'oro in chompromesso per questo di 17 di marzo 1416 a mesi 4 che veggimo in ser Piero Chalchangni e Iachopo Tani, chome apare nelli Ati della detta Merchantantia, in questo di XVII marzo. E questo di 17 è stata portata la sentenza negli Atti della detta Chorte. Richordanza che io ò i libri e ongni scrittura tenuti a pratigha in uno forzeretto serato a chiave di messer Lionardo, il quale è in chamera de' ... E detti libri ò voluto più volte consengniare a Ber(o)nardo di Giovanni di ser Matteo, che a l'oro attenghano, con questo, che lui m'abbia fatto charezza di sua mano, chome detti libri abbia ricevuti. No llo à voluto fare, e per ciò no li à avuti, chome ser Pietro Chalchangni è informato di tutto." Bettarini. "The new frontier," fn 42. Accessed February 28<sup>th</sup> 2021 URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2648>; Weissen, *Die Marktstrategien der florentinischen*, 331-2.

<sup>231</sup> Antonio da Pescia worked for the Medici Bank in Florence from 1416-18, in Venice from 1418-19, in Rome from 1420-34, and was made General Manager of the bank in 1435, a post he filled until 1443. Saminiato De' Ricci, *Il Manuale Di Mercatura*, ed. Antonia Borlandi (Genova: Di Stefano, 1963), 160; Roover, *The Rise*, 53, 377.

<sup>232</sup> William Ellis-Rees, "Gardening in the Age of Humanism: Petrarch's Journal," *Garden History* 23.1 (1995): 12.

on the topic of the Italian presence in Late Medieval Bohemia awaits to be written. It is hoped that in the future, further research will permit this piece of the puzzle to be slotted into place.

## 1.8 Italian Merchant Connections between Poland and Hungary

During the medieval period, far greater numbers of Italians emigrated to Hungary than to Poland, and from a much earlier date. Unsurprisingly so, given the Hungarian kingdom's prosperity and closer geographic connection. The Kingdom of Hungary was united directly to Italian lands via the routes that ran through modern day Slovenia via Gorizia to Friuli and through sea lanes across the Adriatic sea from the Dalmatian coast. The kingdom had been Christianized with the assistance of St. Gerard, a Venetian noble, in the eleventh century and already in 1217, the Republic of Venice had signed a bilateral trade agreement. This pact was made with King Andrew II (r. 1205-1235) of the house of Arpad who married Beatrice d'Este, royal ties to the peninsula thus ran deep.<sup>233</sup> The couple's grandson, King Andrew III (r. 1290-1301) actually grew up in Venice, before becoming king of Hungary. Andrew III was to be the last Arpadian prince however, and with his death, the kingdom was taken over by the Capetian house of Anjou, who ruled the Kingdom of Naples, linking Hungary even more firmly to the Italian Peninsula. During the fourteenth century, more Italians began to migrate into Hungarian lands.<sup>234</sup> Many of these, resided in cities of the Dalmatian coast, even as the area

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<sup>233</sup> Andrea Fara, "Italian Merchants in the Kingdom of Hungary in the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period (XIIIth–XVIth Centuries)," in *Italy and Europe's Eastern Border, 1204–1669*, eds. Iulian Mihai Damian, Ioan–Aurel Pop, Mihailo St. Popović, Alexandru Simon (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang International Academic Publishing, 2012), 121.

<sup>234</sup> This topic has been recently covered in great detail by Kristina Arany and Katalin Prajda among others. See: Kristina Arany, *Florentine*.; Krisztina Arany, "Foreign Business Interests in Hungary in the Middle Ages," *The Economy of Medieval Hungary* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 491-508.; Katalin Prajda, "Florentine merchant companies established in Buda at the beginning of the 15th century," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome - Moyen âge [En ligne]*, 125-1 | 2013: <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/1062> ; DOI : 10.4000/mefrm.1062.; Katalin Prajda "The Florentine Scolari Family at the Court of Sigismund of Luxemburg in Buda," *Journal of Early Modern History* 14.6 (2010): 513-533; Katalin Prajda, "Florentines' Trade in the Kingdom of Hungary in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries: Trade Routes, Networks, and Commodities," *The Hungarian Historical Review* 6.1 (2017): 40-62.

Katalin Prajda, "Justice in the Florentine Trading Community of Late Medieval Buda," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome - Moyen âge [Online]*, 127-2 | 2015 <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2716>. Accessed June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2020; Katalin Prajda *Network and Migration in Early Renaissance Florence, 1378-1433*, (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018).; Katalin Prajda. *Rapporti tra la Repubblica Fiorentina e il Regno d'Ungheria a livello di diplomazia, migrazione umana, reti mercantili e mediazione culturale nell'età del regime oligarchico (1382-1434), che corrisponde al regno di Sigismondo di Lussemburgo (1387-1437)*. Diss. European University Institute, Department of history and civilization, 2011.; Katalin Prajda "Trade and Diplomacy in Pre-Medici Florence: The Case of the Kingdom of Hungary (1349-1434)," *Das Konzil von Konstanz und Ungarn* (2015): 85-105.; Katalin Prajda, "Unions of Interest. Florentine Marriage Ties and Business Networks in the Kingdom of Hungary during the Reign of Sigismund of Luxemburg," in *Marriage in Premodern Europe: Italy and Beyond*, ed. Jacqueline Murray. 1-20. (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2012).; Fara, "Italian Merchants in the Kingdom of Hungary," 119-33.; Susanna Teke, "Operatori Economici Fiorentini in Ungheria

shifted back and forth between the Hungarian crown and the Venetian Republic. Others however, made the journey further inland setting up in Buda, Bratislava, Košice, and Transylvania. Florentines in particular, migrated to the kingdom in the 1370s-1390s and again between 1412-1426.<sup>235</sup> Many of these migrants worked as merchants and in royal administration operating as chamber counts of the kingdom's many mining operations – salt, silver, gold, and copper – as minters and as tax officials.<sup>236</sup> The high point of the Florentine presence in Hungary coincided with the reign of King Sigismund Luxemburg (r. 1387-1437) and the career of Filippo Scolari (b.1369-1426), a Florentine condottiere who became a potent force in Sigismund's court.<sup>237</sup> When he died in 1426, the Florentine community in Hungary was struck a significant blow. The very next year, King Sigismund arrested six of the Florentine merchants present in the kingdom and confiscated their property.<sup>238</sup> Still, even after this, and in spite of the fact that King Sigismund had developed a horrible reputation among Italian merchants for repaying loans they granted him, Florentine merchants continued to flock to Hungary, although admittedly in smaller numbers.<sup>239</sup> Of the 461 *accomandite* - official trading partnerships, registered with the Florentine *Mercanzia* between 1450-1530, three related to Central Eastern Europe, two in Hungary and one in Germany.<sup>240</sup> None it should be well noted were dedicated to the Polish market. Hungary was closer, wealthier, and simply had more opportunities to offer Italian merchants than did Poland. While scholarly work has concentrated largely on the Florentine contribution, there were also numerous individuals present in the Hungarian kingdom from other parts of the peninsula. Yet surprisingly, ties between Italian merchants in Hungary and those in Poland, were far more tenuous than one might assume.

Despite early migration of Italians to the Kingdom of Hungary and the strong trade route that ran from Małopolska through the Carpathian mountains, the first direct evidence of a cross-

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nel Tardo Trecento e Primo Quattrocento," *Archivio Storico Italiano* 153, no. 4 (566) (1995): 697-707.; Teke, "Firenzei üzletemberek Magyarországon," *Történelmi Szemle*, (1995), 130-50.

<sup>235</sup> Arany, *Florentines*, 37-8.

<sup>236</sup> Arany, *Florentines*, 44-6.

<sup>237</sup> Filippo Scolari was more commonly known as Pippo Spano or in Hungarian records - Ozorai Pipó. For more on the Scolari family in Hungary see: Prajda, "The Florentine Scolari Family at the Court of Sigismund of Luxemburg in Buda," *Journal of Early Modern History* 14.6 (2010): 513-533.

<sup>238</sup> Prajda, "The Florentine Scolari Family," 531.

<sup>239</sup> János Incze, "The Pledge Policy of King Sigismund of Luxembourg in Hungary (1387–1437)," *Money and Finance in Central Europe during the Later Middle Ages*, ed. Roman Zaorol (Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2016), 87.

<sup>240</sup> Bruno Dini, *Saggi su una economia-mondo: Firenze e l'Italia fra Mediterraneo ed Europa (secc. XIII-XVI)* (Pisa: Pacini, 1995), 275.

border Italian trading partnership is traceable to the 1380s. This was the company headed by Vieri di Medici together with six other partners: Jacopo di Francesco (Venturi), Andrea di Ugo, Antonio di Sanctis, Guido di Tommaso, Gualtieri Portinari, and Giovanni Portinari, that sought to ship copper from the upper Hungarian mines to Venice described in Chapter 3. While a large portion of the product was sent via sea, a portion went “*per terram*” overland to Flanders through the Kingdom of Poland, a maneuver that would require local Polish mercantile support.<sup>241</sup>

This first notable interaction brings to the forefront an extremely important triangle of trade which would continue to be a key matrix of cross-border cooperation for the rest of the period; that involving Florentine merchants with strong ties to Venice, who traded copper and silver, between the Lagoon City, Upper-Hungary, and Poland. The Vieri di Medici copper company is one such example, while the activities of Niccolo di Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe, who as related in Chapter 4, abandoned working for Michele di ser Matteo in Poland and instead migrated to Hungary, is another. The efforts of Pietro Bicherano, offer a slight twist to the tale, as he was a Venetian, but worked in close concert with the Medici bank’s Venetian branch office and Nuremberg merchants active in the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* who were themselves embroiled in both Hungarian and Polish mining activities. The importance of the Nuremberg component at the *Fondaco* in Venice should also not be overlooked. As stated above, while previous scholarship has tended to view the increasing presence of Nuremberg merchants in the region as a challenge to Florentine domination, more recent studies have demonstrated that these merchants more often than not could be found working in concert rather than competition also in the case of Hungary.<sup>242</sup> The example of Pietro Bicherano’s involvement with both the Flextor-Kegler-Zenner and Amman-Kammerer-Seiler-Grau companies who themselves took loans from the Medici Bank, mirrors cases in Hungary when South-Germans and Italians operated as unit to the profit of both parties.

The efforts of the Talenti family to involve themselves in cross-border trade were a slightly different matter. While Pietro Bicherano and Niccolo di Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe had begun their work in Poland, the Talenti had begun their transfer to Central-Eastern Europe by moving first to Hungary. Like other Italians, they were primarily interested in managing the Hungarian mining chambers but also took a hand in various trading ventures, especially

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<sup>241</sup> (1385/03/24) ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Misti, reg. 39, fol. 61v (57v old) as shown in: Štefánik, “Italian Involvement in Metal Mining,” 32.

<sup>242</sup> Stromer, “Nuremberg in the International,” 217-8; Arany, *Florentine*, 107-115.



textiles. The Guadagni family meanwhile, a wealthy and powerful Florentine lineage, became involved in Hungary through marriage ties to the Scolari, who had significant interests in the kingdom.<sup>243</sup> The family's bank assisted in the transfer of funds from Hungary abroad, a service which was soon also utilized by Polish individuals as will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.

The Talenti and the Guadagni, both first settled in Hungary and only after establishing themselves there, sought to extend their interests into Poland. This was unusual as it things tended to be done the other way around. The general lack of Italian movement from Hungary to Poland can perhaps be explained by the fact that in the two known cases where it was attempted, the parties sojourns in Poland were limited in their success, and they soon retreated back across the Carpathians to re-concentrate their efforts in the Hungarian Kingdom. In general Hungary offered greater opportunities than Poland. For this reason, most Italians, including Pietro Bicherano, the Guidotti, of whom more will be said momentarily, as well as Niccolo di Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe, followed the opposite trajectory, starting their trading efforts in Poland before seeking interests in Hungary. Niccolo di Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe, in particular, sought greener pastures in Hungary after having worked first as a factor in Poland for the di ser Matteo family. Having gained sufficient experience after a few years however, he found more lucrative opportunities in manning the Hungarian chambers, and dumping Michele di ser Matteo leaving behind a considerable unpaid debt in Venice, he set up shop in Hungary.<sup>244</sup> The final, somewhat unusual case would be that of Antonio di ser Matteo, who every time he ran into trouble, would seek the protection of King Sigismund of Hungary, who for some unknown reason chose to name him *familiaris* and stand as his patron until after Sigismund's death he lost royal support.<sup>245</sup> The great period of cross-border Italian interests between Hungary and Poland ran from 1380-1430, after-which far fewer Italian connections can be found. This matches with the heyday in particular of Florentines in Hungary, as they were heavily favored under King Sigismund of Hungary (1387-1437). The

<sup>243</sup> Prajda, *Network and Migration*, 127-131.

<sup>244</sup> (1433/05/10) – Recorded in the Catasto tax return of Michele di Giovanni di ser Matteo under bad debtors “Nicholo di Vaggio Giuseppe sta a Charchovia e nulla torna maj 79 fl” ASF, Catasto 454, 326r (1433).

<sup>245</sup> (1420/03/16) – Antonio named as a *familiaris* of King Sigismund in Wrocław. [RI XI/1] nr 4062; (1432/09/20) – Antonio named *familiaris* to King Sigismund while in Siena. [RI XI/2] nr 9252; (1432/10/08) – Antonio, described as “*alias in Crakovia Supparius*” – Zupparius of Krakow, authorized by King Sigismund to take reprisals against the citizens of Poland. [RI XI/2] nr 9270; (1437/02/04) – King Sigismund of Hungary writes to the City Councilors of Wrocław, since he had not yet received a response to an earlier message, that Antonio should be granted freedom from his debts. [RI XI/2] nr 11659; (1439) – King Sigismund charged Antonio with an unknown crime and events digressed. He was found to be disobedient and there was a quarrel and because of this quarrel he left the City Council and can/should not come to see them until they ask. [Bresbook] 8 pg 441

single exception to this is the case of Ottaviano di Gucci di Cavalcanti who was active in Poland between 1496 and 1531. The Cavalcanti family had been active in Hungary in the early fifteenth century and it was likely that this previous connection helped draw Ottaviano towards commerce in the region.<sup>246</sup> Despite this historical connection however, Ottaviano showed no direct interest in Hungarian trade, instead focusing his efforts in the Polish East. Thus, apart from the three case studies presented in the previous section, only one family group, the Guidotti, had interests in both Hungary and Poland deserving of extended treatment and is presented as a case study in Chapter 4.

## 1.9 Why Poland?

Answering the question of why Italian merchants did or did not migrate to Poland during the fourteenth and fifteenth century is a key demand of this thesis. That said, the question is not an easy one to answer, as the merchants themselves failed to leave behind any documents explicitly explaining their motivations. As is so often the case then, one is forced to rely on circumstantial evidence and a healthy dose of informed supposition to obtain an explanation. As in any migration story, there were both push and pull factors involved that spurred those who made their way to Poland

### The Push Factors

The fourteenth and fifteenth century was a turbulent time for the Italian Peninsula, particularly in the northern Republics. Genoa saw its last great period of expansion during the first half of the fourteenth century while Venice created the *terra firma* portion of its empire. Florence meanwhile, entered a new expansionist phase, gobbling up nearby communes and expanding its territory. Its textile industry boomed, its long-distance trade bloomed, and after the conquest of Pisa in 1406 and the purchase of Livorno in 1421, the burgeoning city-state had direct port access to the Mediterranean. Milan too, began reaching for ever greater territorial gains, expanding under both the Visconti and the Sforzas, while its military might grew apace, fueled in part by its increasingly famous trade in arms and armor. The wealth that flooded this region, particularly after the demographic collapse following the plague in 1348 which concentrated funds in the hands of a remaining few, was like nothing that had been seen before. Despite the horrors and grief wrought by the plague, the increased start-up capital available in its wake

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<sup>246</sup> Prajda, "Unions of Interest," 7-9; Prajda, *Network and Migration*, 104-8.

meant that riskier and potentially more profitable trading ventures could be tackled, that might have seemed impossible before. Competition amongst Italian merchants themselves also helped lead to more outgoing ventures. Enclaves of Italian merchant communities were soon to be found in cities across Europe, in the Netherlands, England, Spain, France, Hungary, and increasingly in the Holy Roman Empire as well as in the older communities of the East and North Africa.<sup>247</sup> Growing numbers of individual Italians also found positions in royal courts as doctors, lawyers, mint-masters, and financiers. Simultaneously, even as the economy boomed and the culture of the communes rose to new heights, not all that glittered was gold. Problems too pushed many Italians from their native lands. Civil wars, foreign domination, internecine fighting between rival Guelf and Ghibelline factions and the rising power of the *popolo* placed pressures against ruling noble oligarchies. Trade in the East suffered and wars drained the treasury leading to higher taxes and a mounting public debt that nearly sank the ship of State. All this is to say nothing of the plague which continued to roll through urban communities leaving death in its wake and stalling business. Political unrest could also be a critical factor in the decision to migrate. The fourteenth and fifteenth century on the Italian Peninsula was an era of exiles. Politics was played for keeps and losing factions frequently found themselves banned from the city of their birth. These frequent banishments helped fuel the number of Italian communities abroad as wealthy businessmen were pushed from their homes and forced to set up shop beyond their natal borders.<sup>248</sup> While it has been put forward that tensions among members of rival factions in Poland caused turbulence within the local Italian community, the case is debatable and no known examples of exiles appear in Polish records.<sup>249</sup> Exile may have pushed many abroad, but it was not the primary motivator for individuals in Poland. Yet, for all its many problems, the Italian Peninsula prospered mightily

<sup>247</sup> Josh Brown, "Multilingual merchants: the trade network of the 14th century Tuscan merchant Francesco di Marco Datini," *Merchants of Innovation. The languages of traders* (2017): 235-251; Bruscoli F. Guidi, "Trade with northern Europe," in *Francesco di Marco Datini. The Man the Merchant* ed. Gino Nigro (Florence: Firenze University Press, 2010): 395-417; Alwyn A. Ruddock, *Italian Merchants and Shipping in Southampton: 1270-1600*. Southampton: University College, 1951; Armando Saporì, *The Italian merchant in the Middle Ages*, (New York: Norton, 1970); Javier Quinteros Cortes, "Nuevas consideraciones sobre la economía medieval en el espacio mediterráneo." *El caso del colectivo Italiano del Reino de Murcia y los Reyes Católicos (1474-1504): Un ciclo económico de la influencia?*, 1-33.

<sup>248</sup> The large Pisan communities that grew in Spain and Sicily after the city was conquered by Florence in 1406 and many of its merchants forced abroad is an excellent large scale example of such a push. Soldani makes the interesting point however, that it was rarely the case that exiles fell into penury. While forbidden from their home city, their wealth and status served to insulate them from total disaster and they frequently went into exile at other major trading entrepôts - Avignone, Barcelona, Bruges, Paris, or Venice. Maria Elisa Soldani, *Uomini d'affari e mercanti toscani nella Barcellona del Quattrocento* (Barcelona: Editorial CSIC-CSIC Press, 2010), 25-6..

<sup>249</sup> Bettarini makes this claim about the Florentine di ser Matteo brothers who were supporters of the Albizzi faction and Albizzo di Medici, for more on this issue see Chapter 4. Bettarini, "The new frontier," <https://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2648?lang=es#ftn65> Accessed April 30<sup>th</sup> 2021.

during the thirteenth and fourteenth century, investing in its population in ways that made them desirable as workers abroad and furnishing them with capital and financing options to make possible trade ventures that would not have been contemplated before.

Technological advancements also underlay the expansion of Italian traders ever further abroad. In particular, changes in ship design allowed for easier connection between the Mediterranean, the waters of the North Sea and the Baltic. Adapted from cogs, the new multi-masted square rigged carracks, were larger and more stable with a superior rudder design that made them true ocean-going vessels.<sup>250</sup> With these changes, ships swelled in size, improving cargo tonnage, and bringing down the price of transport. Transportation costs were a major factor impeding medieval trade. It has been calculated that for the Prato merchant, Francesco Datini, the cost of transporting woolen cloth by ship from Prato to the Balearic Island of Majorca off the coast of Spain, averaged around 3%. At the same time, the movement of goods overland from Avignon to Milan was around 10%.<sup>251</sup> In contrast, in the hinterlands of the Balkans, in contrast, transport costs could run as high as 25%.<sup>252</sup> Trade by water was both faster and considerably cheaper than going overland. Volumes of trade swiftly increased as the superior carrack design was adopted. The first to benefit were the Genoese, who used these ships to make sail for Bruges, starting the annual *Mugone* fleet voyages in 1277.<sup>253</sup> Venice would begin running similar fleets from 1314, while Florence would equip smaller expeditions from 1425-78.<sup>254</sup> In addition to these official convoys, many private vessels also made the trip. The improvement in transportation meant more security in trade and greater profits for the merchants, helping fuel the push abroad.

Another important aspect pushing Italians abroad were skill sets that made them valuable. Improved education and the development of advanced accounting and book-keeping techniques made Italians arguably the most well-trained administrators and merchants of the era leading to their being highly valued and sought after by powers abroad. The northern Republics in particular, had an impressively high literacy rate. In Florence for example,

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<sup>250</sup> Frederic C. Lane "Market Expansion: The Case of Genoa: Discussion," *Journal of Economic History* (1964): 465-469.

<sup>251</sup> Paola Pinelli, "Florentine Merchants Traveling East through Ragusa (Dubrovnik) and the Balkans at the End of the 15th Century," in *Conference Proceedings in Honor to Academician Desanka Kovacevic Kojic*, Banja Luca 2015, 198-9.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>253</sup> Bruscoli, "Trade with northern Europe," 396.

<sup>254</sup> W.B Watson, "The structure of the florentine galley trade with Flanders and England in the fifteenth century," *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 39.4 (1961): 1073-4.

Giovanni Villani recorded already in the 1330s that, “We find there are eight to ten thousand boys and girls at reading school; between a thousand and twelve hundred boys at six abacus schools; and five hundred and fifty to six hundred learning logic and grammar in four large schools.”<sup>255</sup> If these figures are to be taken seriously, and later evidence from the 1427 Catasto demonstrates that they were not wild exaggeration, 67 to 83 percent of Florentine men were literate.<sup>256</sup> In Poland meanwhile, while by late 1370s there existed in Poland as many as 173 parish schools and 46 of higher learning, but the same level of general education present in the Italian communes would not be achieved until the second half of the sixteenth century.<sup>257</sup>

Perhaps even more fundamental to success in business than literacy was *numeracy*, and in this the merchants of the northern Italian communes had a significant advantage, thanks to the foundational work of Leonardo Fibonacci (1170-1250).<sup>258</sup> The son of a Pisan administrator, Fibonacci was influential in the transfer from cumbersome Roman numerals to the Hindu-Arabic numeral system. He greatly assisted commercial development through the publication of a short treatise entitled *liber abbaci*. This volume functioned as a handbook of practical mathematics suited to mercantile activities and the founding text of the study of *abbaco*. Unlike what one might assume today, the study of *abbaco*, did not presume the use of an abacus for counting, but instead referred to a series of mathematical operations including algorism, geometry, and algebra, designed to solve basic issues related to mercantile activity. The *abbaco* curriculum based on Fibonacci’s work was soon taught in abacus schools such as the six mentioned by Villani as active in Florence already in 1338, quickly spreading across northern Italy.<sup>259</sup> This foundation allowed for the development of more sophisticated methods of accounting and eventually double entry book-keeping.<sup>260</sup> No merchant account books have survived from medieval Poland, so it is impossible to say whether these improvements were transferred from the Italian migrants to Polish traders during the period. The first evidence of the use of double entry bookkeeping north of the Alps appears in 1389, in the accounts kept by the Nuremberg Kress Company. This company had numerous associates registered at the

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<sup>255</sup> Robert Black, “Literacy in Florence,” in *Florence and beyond: culture, society and politics in Renaissance Italy: essays in honour of John M. Najemy*, eds. David Peterson and Daniel Bornstein (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2008), 195.

<sup>256</sup> Black, “Literacy in Florence, 195-96, 206.

<sup>257</sup> By the second half of the sixteenth century, it is estimated that 80% of male town dwellers and 30% of female urbanites could read and write. Agnieszka Bartoszewicz, “The litterati Burghers in Polish Late Medieval Towns.” *Acta Poloniae Historica* 83 (2001): 7.

<sup>258</sup> Paul F. Grendler, *Schooling In Renaissance Italy: Literacy and Learning, 1300-1600* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 306-9.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid, 309-20.

<sup>260</sup> Geoffrey Alan Lee, “The development of Italian bookkeeping 1211-1300,” *Abacus* 9.2 (1973): 137-155.

*Fondaco dei Tedeschi* in Venice, and partners with the Venetian Pietro Bicherano, who had extensive interests in Poland. Given this, it is likely that transfer of this methodology did occur.<sup>261</sup>

## The Pull Factors

When one asks what might have pulled Italians, who were already primed to leave the peninsula towards Poland, there are two approaches to consider. First, to consider how the possibilities represented in the kingdom of Poland would appear to an Italian merchant of the era. In order to answer this, it is necessary to know what such merchants were looking for. Helpfully, a new genre of writing which was just coming into being – the *Practica di Mercatura* – merchant handbooks, allows us a glimpse of what traders of the time believed was key when considering a new business venture. This premise however, supposes that merchants at the time did not suffer from an information deficit, something we know was not the case. The second question to be answered then is to assess what information about Poland was circulating in Italy at the time, which would have informed Italians living there about local conditions.

Kurt Weissen, has made a thorough analysis of the most popular of the *Practica di Mercatura* - Merchant handbooks works, distilling down their essential arguments and advice given to merchants of the era seeking riches abroad.<sup>262</sup> Each individual manual offers largely similar advice; with the *Book of the Art of Trade* written in 1458 by Benedetto Cotrugilis (b.1416-69), a Ragusan merchant, being the most comprehensive. For this reason, I will use Cotrugilis's list of desirable features as the basis for analyzing how enticing the Polish market would appear to Italian merchants of the period. Cotrugli's points can be boiled down to five qualities that merchants were advised to consider before choosing a place to do business: (1.) healthy air (2.) many inhabitants and businessmen (3.) peace (4.) commercial practices, and (5.) mercantile wealth.<sup>263</sup> Poland received high marks on only a couple of these points while dismally failing others, meaning that according to the merchant advice of the time, it was a mediocre place to

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<sup>261</sup> Strummer, "Nuremberg in the International," 214.

<sup>262</sup> Other famous examples of the genre include: *la Pratica della Mercatura* by Pegolotti (1340), the *Tarifa de pexi e mexure veneziana*, *Il Manuale di Mercatura* by Saminiato de' Ricci (1416), *Zibaldone da Canal* (1311-1422), *Libro di gabelle* by Giovanni da Uzzano (1442), and *Libro di Mercatantie et usanze de' paesi*, attributed to Giorgio Chiarini (1481). For a survey of the most commonly cited works see: Kurt Weissen, "Dove il Papa va, sempre è caro di danari. *The Commercial Site Analysis in Italian Merchant Handbooks and Notebooks from the 14th and 15th Centuries*," trans. Marcia Glenn and Doris Glenn Wagnerna, in *Kaufmannsbücher und Handelspraktiken vom Spätmittelalter bis zum beginnenden 20. Jahrhundert*. No. 163. Eds. Markus A. Denzel, Jean Claude Hocquet, and Harald Witthöft (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2002), 64-72.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid, 71.

do business at best. These facts, influenced deeply how and when Italians chose to trade in Poland, as the following section will show.

### 1. Healthy Air

The call for “healthy air” in the medieval context is not the same thing as a strident push for less polluted skies in our modern day. Air was considered to be at all times, a possible agent of disease. As the famous philosopher, Qusta ibn Luqa (820–912) explained in his work, *On Contagion*, disease could be spread by the “surrounding air,” which is spoiled by pollution sources arising from the earth, such as swampy vapors, smoke from furnaces and cremated bodies, and decomposing things left out to rot in the sun.<sup>264</sup> Many other natural philosophers and physicians took up Qusta ibn Luqa’s ideas and the notion that disease could be spread by miasma – foul air, was widespread during the Late Medieval and into the Early Modern period. Neither Krakow, nor any of the other Polish cities were famous for their cleanliness or particularly wholesome locations. Yet, neither were they infamous for “bad air” or unhealthy general surroundings.<sup>265</sup> Cotrugli’s first point can thus be considered as generally neutral. Italian merchants would neither be put off, nor enticed by Poland’s general sanitation situation.

### 2. Many Inhabitants and Businessmen

The population of the Poland here understood to mean the regions of Małopolska, Wielkopolska, Mazovia, and Silesia around 1300 is estimated to have been 714,000 persons with a density of 3.8 per sqm.<sup>266</sup> This number rose during the fourteenth century, with the inclusion of Pomerania, to a little over a million.<sup>267</sup> Krakow, meanwhile, the kingdom’s largest city, housed around 12,000 in 1340, with that number bumped up to 13-14,000 if the people living in the satellite town of Kazimierz, are included in the figure. By 1500 the number had increased to around 15,000, and over the next fifty years to 18,000, demonstrating a slow but steady population growth.<sup>268</sup> This however, was nothing compared to the numbers in Italy. Around 1300, the Italian Peninsula, together with its Islands, was home to over 8 million people. Northern Italy alone, including Tuscany, the Po Valley, Liguria and the Veneto region,

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<sup>264</sup> John Aberth, *An Environmental History of the Middle Ages* (London: Routledge, 2012), 14.

<sup>265</sup> For more on this topic see: Leslie Carr-Riegel, “Waste Management in Medieval Krakow” (MA thesis Central European University, 2016).

<sup>266</sup> Josiah Cox Russell, “Late ancient and medieval population,” *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 48.3 (1958): 147.

<sup>267</sup> Ibid. 148.

<sup>268</sup> Carter, *Trade*, 4–5.

where most of the migrants to Poland originated from, had around 4 million. Florence, not even the largest city in the region, hosted an estimated 55,000.<sup>269</sup> These numbers dropped significantly in the wake of the Black Death that swept through in 1348, but they soon recovered. Even at its nadir after the plague, Venice had a standing population of 65,000, four times that of Krakow during the same period.<sup>270</sup> Poland was thus far less populous than the Italian Peninsula during the same period, in fact ranking only after Scandinavia and Rus in terms of estimated total population.<sup>271</sup> These numbers had an effect on potential profits, so on this point Poland would receive a negative rating according to Cotrugli's recommendations.

### 3. Peace

The adage that, "when men are marching, goods are not" was as true in the fourteenth and fifteenth century as it is today, likely even more so as the military-industrial complex was not even a flicker in Machiavelli's eye. Poland during this period was far from a peaceful place. Reading through the chronicle by Jan Długosz, the Polish countryside appears to be simply a never-ending run of battles, skirmishes, and sieges. Polish Kings fought against the Teutonic Knights, the Lithuanians, the Ottomans, and occasionally the Bohemians and Hungarians. This was in addition to numerous disputes fought out between local rival Lords. Instability in the land further lead to brigandage, which was a continual problem, particularly in the Carpathian Mountains along the route between Poland and Hungary. Indeed, a number of the Italians who ventured to Poland suffered this problem directly. Yet, the Italian Peninsula could hardly be described as a house of the dove during this era. The fourteenth century saw Venice and Genoa battle for supremacy over the Mediterranean. Meanwhile the Holy Roman Emperors sought to push the boundaries of their power in the north, and the Angevins fought for control in the South. The fifteenth century was little better, with continued battles on all sides as well as the rise of an aggressive Milan under the Sforzas, an embattled but determined Florence, and a suddenly land-hungry Venice all seeking to claim ever greater amounts of territory. With roving bands of condottieri wandering the countryside, the peninsula was every bit as embattled as Poland, if not more so. Peace was to be had nowhere, so while Poland might not have appeared as a promised land, on this count, it was no worse or better than any other.

### 4. Commercial Practices

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<sup>269</sup> Russel, "Late ancient and medieval population," 110.

<sup>270</sup> Russel, "Late ancient and medieval population," 127.

<sup>271</sup> Russel, "Late ancient and medieval population," 148.



While the commercial practices exercised in the Kingdom of Poland may not have been as sophisticated as those pursued in Italy, they were generally consistent with those found in other regions. Medieval trade was a strictly controlled affair, both wholesale and retail goods were controlled by local guilds. Permission to trade depended on one's status, otherwise merchants had to wait for annual fairs and even then, heavy duty taxes were often applied. All of the major trade centers in Poland abided by Magdeburg Law – a set of town laws regulating trade, city life, and communal interaction.<sup>272</sup> Under King Casimir the Great in 1356, a *ius supremum Magdeburgensis castri Cracoviensis* - a Higher Court of Magdeburg law, was set up in the Wawel castle in Krakow, so that problematic cases would no longer have to be sent abroad but could be adjudicated within Poland itself. Further, Casimir the Great was instrumental in spreading the range of Magdeburg Law across Małopolska and into the newly conquered regions of Ruthenia, granting approximately 650 towns and villages this privilege during his reign.<sup>273</sup> By the mid-fourteenth century, Italians traveling in Poland would have found themselves passing through a realm of widely unified legal norms whose validity was respected across a wide swath of Europe. The court system, which will be discussed further in greater detail in Chapter 5, appears to have largely succeeded in meeting Italian trader's needs. Otherwise, Polish commercial practices appear to have been largely in line with those used in Italy. Bargains were sealed and payments made in either cash or kind, notarial registers were commonly put to use to show legal proof of a past agreement, or to nominate a third party to stand as *procurator* – legal executor, in one's stead. Debts were acknowledged and settled, or joint responsibility would be attached to the group and future traders from that location would be called to account for their fellow's perfidy. All of these were common practices on both sides of the Alps. While Italians appear to have made more regular use of the notarial registers than their Polish counterparts having a more evolved epigraphic habit, that was their privilege. The one area where Poland failed perhaps to meet expected norms was in the area of finance and banking. While crediting and the issuing of *lettere di cambio* had become a common practice in Italy during the fourteenth century, such options remained largely unavailable in Poland. Overall however, in terms of commercial practice, Poland stood on relatively favorable grounds.

<sup>272</sup> Magdeburg Law was granted to: Poznań (1253), Krakow (1257), Wrocław (1261), Gdańsk (1295), and Lviv (1356).

<sup>273</sup> Sites that were not ruled by Magdeburg law meanwhile, were regulated according to Polish customary law which was codified under the reign of Casimir the Great. Heiner Lück, "Aspects of the Transfer of the Saxon-Magdeburg Law to Central and Eastern Europe," *Rechtsgeschichte Legal History - Zeitschrift Des Max-Planck-Instituts Für Europäische Rechtsgeschichte*, no. 22 (2014): 83.

## 5. Mercantile Wealth

Benedetto Cortugli observed sagely in his book of advice to merchants that, *nel gran lago si pigliano il gran pesci* - Big fish are caught in large lakes.<sup>274</sup> To make money, one had to go where there was money, and there, the market would make the man. During this period however, Poland ranked financially speaking, only at the level of a rather prepossessing pond. In a pre-industrial society, the wealth of the men selling goods in a region was strongly linked to the fecundity of the local land, the available mineral deposits, and connectivity to other markets. The Italian Peninsula had all three of these benefits, with the added advantage of long-term habitation which had allowed for the build-up of inherited wealth. The close presence of the hub of the Catholic Church, which drew pilgrims and wealthy prelates in vast numbers was also a great advantage. The removal of the pope to Avignon (1309-76) deadened this last element somewhat, but Rome remained a potent draw nonetheless, and the entire peninsula benefited thereby.

The level of urbanization between the two regions was also drastically different. Around 1300, the Italian Peninsula had an estimated urban population of 20 % while Poland's urban populace around the same period is estimated to have been around 14%.<sup>275</sup> The devil is in the statistical details however, as scholars making estimates for Italy count as "urban" only those sites which had 5,000 or more inhabitants, while Polish scholars considered "urban" all those with anything above 100-500 inhabitants. If the same standard of 5,000 inhabitants constituting an "urban" location was applied to the Polish case, the numbers drop drastically, as only seven sites met that criteria: Gdańsk, Toruń, Krakow, Warsaw, Poznań, Lublin, and Lviv.<sup>276</sup> The Italian Peninsula meanwhile had 2,571 urban sites.<sup>277</sup> Poland was thus a less densely populated, largely rural, agrarian society with a few key centers of trade where international merchants might do business.

During the first half of the fifteenth century, rural Tuscan households had an estimated gross wealth of 66 florins, around 14fl per head.<sup>278</sup> At the same time, Polish rural households had an

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<sup>274</sup> Weissen, "Dove il papa," 72.

<sup>275</sup> Paolo Malanima, "Italian Cities 1300-1800. A quantitative approach," *Rivista di storia economica* 14.2 (1998): 96-8.; Piotr Guzowski, "Money economy and economic growth: The case of medieval and early modern Poland" *Questiones Medii Aevii Novae* 18 (2013): 239-41.

<sup>276</sup> Guzowski, "Money economy," 241.

<sup>277</sup> Malanima, "Italian Cities 1300-1800," 97.

<sup>278</sup> The Prague grosz being estimated at 23 to the florin. David Herlihy and Christina Klapisch-Zuber, *Tuscans and Their Families* (Westford: Yale University Press, 1978) 95.

estimated annual income of 107 grosz, the equivalent of around 4.6 florins.<sup>279</sup> The comparison of gross wealth to income is a bit like comparing apples to oranges, but the numbers do give some indication of the wealth disparity. Even the poorest Florentine peasants were wealthier in toto than their Polish counterparts. The peasants themselves of course, likely did not feel this advantage as the prices of goods in Italy were also correspondingly higher. However, in terms of long-distance trade, Italian merchants were at an advantage in this way, as they could purchase cheaply in the East to sell high in the West.

## 6. Monetization and Currency

The final element, that did not rank amongst Benedetto Cotrugli's top five concerns, but was nonetheless present in his work and that of most of the other merchant manuals of the epoch, was the issue of general monetization of a market and more specifically, the price of the local currency.<sup>280</sup> As covered in the previous chapter, the general level of monetization of a regional economy during the medieval period stands as a good relative measure stick, demonstrating its general prosperity, and Poland was sorely lacking in this regard.<sup>281</sup> Monetization allowed for the value of products to be more easily measured, provided a simplified means of exchange, could store value, and facilitate credit transactions.<sup>282</sup> For the same reasons that Italian Banks were disinclined to move into Polish territory, many merchants would be put off by the difficulties involved in completing exchanges.

Taken together, according to the advice expressed in Italian merchant manuals of the era, Poland did not appear as a promising choice of markets to explore. Still, some men came despite the odds and there were reasons for this as well, both pull and push factors.

## What Was Known about Poland in Italy?

Having looked at how Poland's market might have, or rather might not have appeared appealing to Italian traders, the second point to consider is what they knew of the kingdom at the time that would have influenced their desire to migrate. From the very few pieces of information I have found, it appears that knowledge of Poland was limited. The cartographic evidence presented in Chapter 1 demonstrates that the basic topography, political structure, and

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<sup>279</sup> Piotr Guzowski, "A changing economy: models of peasant budgets in fifteenth-and sixteenth-century Poland," *Continuity and Change* 20.01 (2005): 16.

<sup>280</sup> Weissen, "Dove il papa," 67-72.

<sup>281</sup> Piotr Guzowski, "Money economy and economic growth: The case of medieval and early modern Poland," *Quaestiones Medii Aevi Novae* 18 (2013):246-55.

<sup>282</sup> Guzowski, "Money economy," 246.

possible trading opportunities in Poland were known at least to an educated cartographer in the early fourteenth century. Still, what precisely the first Italians who migrated to Italy knew, and how this influenced their decisions remains a mystery. Later generations on the other hand would have the benefit of greater amounts of information, which arrived in Italy in a number of ways.

First and foremost, there were letters and contacts made between Italian merchants who had settled in Poland and their friends and family back home. This was likely the single most important transmitter of information as it could be the catalyst for a chain migrations. The sources demonstrate that family groups tended to emigrate a unit and friends of merchants already operating in Poland were far more likely to consider try their luck as well than ones who had no connection to the kingdom.

The second most common way Italians might learn of Poland was through the church. The Catholic Church was the single unifying force of Medieval Europe. Italian prelates were regularly sent to Poland while Polish priests routinely made their way to Rome or other locations where the pope was then residing, stopping in multiple locations along the way.<sup>283</sup> The Polish laity, as their pious brethren across Christendom, frequently went on pilgrimage with Rome being an extremely popular destination, particularly in the years of Jubilee.<sup>284</sup> Thirteen Poles for example are mentioned in the account books of Vieri di Vieri Guadagni's

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<sup>283</sup> Early on in Poland and Ruthenia Italians were commonly appointed as bishops and archbishops. "*multi regulares Italici sanguinis archiepiscopalibus et alibi episcopalibus titulis insigniti in has regiones ex Italia immigrabant offβiaque archiepiscopalia et episcopalia exercebant.*" By the 13<sup>th</sup> century however, 90% of Polish clergy were native-born. Due to the generally poor state of Cathedral schools however, many studied abroad, frequently traveling to Italy. Jacek Maciejewski, "Which way to bishopric?: origin and careers of polish bishops in the 13th century." *Carreiras eclesiásticas no ocidente cristão: séc. XII-XIV* (2007): 210; *Thomae Pirawski relatio status Almae Archidioecesis Leopoliensis: accedunt testamenta eiusdem Th. Pirawski et Ioannis Zamoiscii, archiepiscopi leopoliensis*, ed. Tomasz Pirawski and Korneli Juliusz Heck (Lviv: Sumptibus Societatis Historicae, 1893), 40; The Bishop of Krakow for example, resided in Florence for a month in 1408. Paola Ircani Menichini, *Vita quotidiana e storia della SS. Annunziata di Firenze nella prima metà del Quattrocento*. Vol. 8. (Florence: Convento della SS. Annunziata, 2004), 173.

<sup>284</sup> Giovanni di Pagolo Rucellai, *Zibaldone*, ed. Gabriella Battista (Florence: Sismel Edizioni Del Galltizzo, 2013), 172; Wiktor Szymborski, „Testamenty mieszczańskie jako źródła do dziejów badań nad ruchem pielgrzymkowym w średniowiecznej Polsce [Bourgeois testaments as sources for the history of research on the pilgrimage movement in medieval Poland],” in *Prawo blisko człowieka : z dziejów prawa rodzinnego i spadkowego : materiały konferencji zorganizowanej przez Sekcję Historii Państwa i Prawa Towarzystwa Biblioteki Słuchaczy Prawa Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Krakow 7-8 marca 2007 r.* ed. Miłku Maciej (Krakow: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. 2008), 153-63.

Bank's Rome branch for the year 1427, many of them likely visiting the Eternal City on pilgrimage.<sup>285</sup>

Diplomatic contacts were another means by which information was exchanged between Poland and Italy. While contact between the kingdom of Poland and Italian polities did not become frequent until the fifteenth century, as demonstrated above, in the wake of the Polish victory at the Battle of Grunwald/Tannenberg in 1410, the chanceries of Venice, Milan, Florence, and Genoa, increasingly sent solicitous letters and ambassadorial missions.<sup>286</sup> These interactions increased knowledge of the others at the highest social levels. Meanwhile, more quotidian contact was made as the occasional Polish merchant or craftsman made their way to Italy. Men such as Paulus of Krakow, a weaver who in 1430 moved to Rome where he became a member of the St. Jacobs confraternity in Rome. This group kept an altar in the German-dominated church. The group was open to both Italians and "Germans", others from Mainz, Cologne, and Ulm were enrolled together with Paulus.<sup>287</sup> Poles can often be difficult to see in the documents because they were frequently lumped in with "Germans". Thus for example were Antonio di ser Matteo and Albizzo di Medici both referred to in their Catasto tax declarations thus both referred to in their Catasto tax returns as residing "*nella Magna*" – in German lands, despite their living in Poland, as this was the catch-all term used in Florence for lands beyond the Alps.<sup>288</sup> It was also common to see Pole's involved in "German" trade organizations, as was also the case with the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* in Venice and likely also the *Fondaco der Deutschen* in Genoa, which was first established in 1424.<sup>289</sup> Tradesmen who joined these organizations brought with them knowledge of life in Poland and information which was transmitted to their Italian counterparts. Polish tradesmen also of course met with Italian bankers and merchants in Bruges, as described in Chapter 3. During exchanges there, plenty of information about products, costs, and perhaps more generally about life in Poland was transmitted.

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<sup>285</sup> ASF, Catasto 57, fol. 920-22. Salvestrus dominus de Pollone, Matteo dria Pollano, Pietritome di Polona, Andrea Posoleri di Polona, Thplzirs Johannes de Polona, Matteo Venzislai di Polona, Stanizslao Mecermeri di Polona, Ser-Chettardo dottore di Polona, Ser Piero Bolesi di Polona, Ser Piero de Llapicha di Polona, Tomaso de Trabis di Polona, Sivamulsai Polano, De Otordus de Polona

<sup>286</sup> I have a forthcoming publication dealing with Italian/Polish diplomacy in more detail.

<sup>287</sup> Clifford W Maas and Peter Herde. *The German Community in Renaissance Rome, 1378-1523* (Freiburg Br: Herder, 1981), 24 fn 96.

<sup>288</sup> ASF, Catasto 38, fol. 717r-722v – Santa Maria Novella – Vipera (1427); ASF, Catasto 382 fol. 128r - San Giovanni – Drago (1430).

<sup>289</sup> Marco Veronese, *Oberdeutsche Kaufleute in Genua 1350-1490: Institutionen, Strategien, Kollektive* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer Verlag, 2014), 29-38, 87-117.

Another point of contact was through the University system. Although this thesis deals with traders rather than academics, the influence of pan-European movements of scholars cannot be ignored as an important juncture where knowledge of Poland was transmitted abroad. Krakow University, which was founded in 1364 and revamped in 1400, soon became famous in the region. Much of the University's teaching was adapted from Italian models, including medical studies, which the medical doctor, Giovanni di Sacchis of Pavia, helped found. Giovanni, who was present and working in Krakow from 1398 as an astrologer and man of medicine, worked for the royal court and at Krakow University where he served for a time as rector. He lived out his days in Poland until his death in the 1430s.<sup>290</sup> As the fifteenth century progressed, Krakow University became more internationally renowned, attracting ever more students from abroad, including Italians.<sup>291</sup> At the same time, many Poles studied in Italian Universities, in particular at Ferrara, Padua, and Bologna.<sup>292</sup>

Not only students, but professors from Poland were welcomed into the Italian academic fold. A number of professors from Poland took up places at the University of Bologna during the fifteenth century.<sup>293</sup> Indeed, during the latter part of the fifteenth century, Poles practically dominated the Cathedras of Mathematics and Astronomy at the University of Bologna. Marcin Król z Durawica (1448-9), Wojciech z *Opatów* (1454-6), Jakub z Zalesia (1469-71), Jan de Bossis (1471-5), Jan Paweł Bossis Polonus (1471-5), Jerzy Kotermak z Drohobycz (1478-82), Mikołaj Wódka (Abstemius) z Kwidzyna (1479-80).<sup>294</sup> Most lectured for only a year or so, but Jerzy Kotermak z Dohobycz appears to have been raised to the status of permanent professor and was granted double the usual salary, garnering 200fl per year rather than the

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<sup>290</sup> Paul W. Knoll, *"A Pearl of Powerful Learning": The University of Cracow in the Fifteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 112, 405; Krzysztof Ozog, "University Masters at the Royal Court of Hedwig of Anjou and Władysław Jagiełło," in *Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages: A Cultural History: [essays in Honour of Paul W. Knoll]*, eds. Piotr Górecki and Nancy Deussen (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2009), 154; [CA] 3 nr 48

<sup>291</sup> Knoll, *"A Pearl of Powerful Learning"*, 162.

<sup>292</sup> Bologna, with its respected law school was especially popular with 29 Poles graduating from the University of Bologna during the fifteenth century. Anna Horeczy, "Prawnicze doktoraty Polaków w Bolonii w XV wieku [Polish Doctoral Students in Bologna during the fifteenth century]," *Roczniki Historyczne* 81 (2015): 185; Sroka, Stanisław, "Doktoraty Polaków na uniwersytecie w Ferrarze w pierwszej połowie XVI wieku [Doctorates of Poles at the University of Ferrara in the first half of the 16th century]," *Roczniki Historyczne* 80 (2014): 155-167; Stanisław A. Sroka, "Academic degrees obtained by Poles studying at Northern Italian universities in the second half of the 15th c. (Bologna, Padua, Ferrara)," *Annali di Storia delle Università italiane* 17 (2013): 325-332.

<sup>293</sup> Sroka, Stanisław A. "Wynagrodzenia profesorów z Polski na Uniwersytecie Bolońskim w drugiej połowie XV wieku [Salaries of professors from Poland at the University of Bologna in the second half of the fifteenth century]," *Roczniki Historyczne* 83 (2018): 176.

<sup>294</sup> Henryk Barycz. "Bologna nella civiltà polacca tra medioevo e Rinascimento," *Italia, Venezia e Polonia tra Medioevo e Eta Moderna. Venezia, Fondazione Cini* (1980): 22-3.

regular 100fl in honor of his work on solar observations and dramatic teaching style. He was later elected as rector of the College of Arts.<sup>295</sup> Jan de Bossis meanwhile, was also widely respected by his colleagues who voted unanimously to grant him extra funds to help him on his return trip to Poland. He was also renowned among many of the exalted noble families of the Peninsula for his horoscopes, having prognosticated the destinies of the Este, Bentivoglio, and Monferrato families. A large number of Polish humanist scholars came to Bologna during the 1490s, including Stanisław Ostroróg, following in his father's footsteps, Jan Kognowicki, Piotr Tomicki (1495-1500), Stanisław Borek, and Pawel Szydłowiecki, who would go on to a brilliant political career, eventually becoming the chancellor of King Sigismund the Old (r.1506-1548).<sup>296</sup>

These students brought much of what they studied back to Krakow from Bologna, including a particular love for Filippo Beroaldo, whose work helped inspire the humanist poet Pawel z Krosna to introduced a new wave of poetry studies at Krakow University in 1499. Through contacts such as these, Poles became more aware of Italians, and Italians of the Kingdom of Poland.

Finally, another less personal method by which information was transferred was through literature. In the era where print was just coming into its own, most writings were still transferred in the form of letters or laboriously copied codices. Until the mid-fourteenth century, Poland appears every so often mentioned by Italian chroniclers in a similar way as it does on early Portolan maps, a single name to the north-east of better known territory, just south of the completely unknown.<sup>297</sup> Then, when granted slightly more detail in the fourteenth century, the picture was not an inviting one. Fazio degli Uberti writing *Dicta Mundi* in 1345, proclaimed northern central eastern Europe to be, “*assai v'è gente, ma freddo è lo stallo*” – populated but cold, and Poland in particular as “*pover mi parve in vista e poco bello*”- poor and lacking in beauty.<sup>298</sup> “Poland appears as well in a few other Italian writings of the period, but always as a place of an ill-defined negative character, barbarous, other, and possibly inhabited by infidels.”<sup>299</sup> Only during the fifteenth century, after the refoundation of the

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<sup>295</sup> Ibid.

<sup>296</sup> Ibid.

<sup>297</sup> Poland is mentioned in the chronicles of Goffredo da Viterbo (d. 1191) and Fra' Salimbene de Adam (b.1222-1288). Andrea Ceccherelli, L'immagine della Polonia in Italia tra il XIV e il XVI secolo,” *Europa Orientalis* 36 (2017): 317.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid.

<sup>299</sup> Ceccherelli, L'immagine della Polonia in Polonia,” 318-9.

University of Krakow in 1400 and in the wake of the battle of Grunwald/Tannenberg in 1410 and the Council of Constance (1414-18) did the image of Poland begin to shift in Italy.<sup>300</sup> The shift was assisted by greater contact between intellectuals, in particular the growing Humanist circles. Enea Silvio Piccolomini, later elected Pope Pius II (r. 1458-1464) struck up a fruitful correspondence with the Polish Cardinal and statesman Zbigniew Oleśnicki (b. 1389-1455), and was thus able to render a more vivid description of Poland and Lithuania in his popular work, *De Europa*.<sup>301</sup> Even better informed, the picture was far from rosily painted. Poland was described as a vast realm filled with forests and without vineyards with the only city worth mentioning being Krakow, and even there, the royal court only resided for a portion of the year, otherwise following an itinerant existence. Peripatetic courts were actually the norm in the large kingdoms of Europe, but the habit appears to have been considered strange by a Tuscan intellectual used to more settled society. Still, Poland appeared far better when compared with Lithuania which was where according to Piccolomini the true rustic, infidel barbarians were described as residing. A rather more positive image of Poland was at last transmitted by Filippo Buonaccorsi, who through the intermediation of Lantazzio Tedaldi, relative of Arnolfo Tedaldi, a Florentine resident in Poland, was in contact and correspondence with such luminaries as Pico della Mirandola, Masilio Ficino, the Latin scholar Politian, and the poet Ugolino Verini among others.<sup>302</sup> Buonaccorsi wrote poetry dedicated to a Polish noblewoman, a *Vita* of the Polish Humanist Bishop Grzegorz z Sanoka, with whom he'd had personal contact, and a vindication of King Władysław III, describing his disastrous crusade against the Ottomans in 1444, and subsequent death at Varna in heroic terms.<sup>303</sup> These works, which were transmitted to Italy, painted a more sympathetic picture of Poland as a place where

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<sup>300</sup> The presence of foreign lands in literature was hardly a new phenomenon, but during this period, for the first time, places in Central Eastern Europe became settings for tales told in Italy, a sign that these regions were becoming better known on the peninsula. The humorous, *Novella del Grasso legnaiuolo*, - story of the Fat Woodcarver, stands as a case in point. Written in the early fifteenth century, the story tells of a practical joke played on a fat woodcarver from Florence. At the end of the tale, all is revealed and shamed before his friends, the woodcarver decamps for Hungary. A year prior, the Florentine Condottiere, Filippo Scolari (Pipo Spano), who had made his name fighting wars for King Sigismund of Hungary, had returned for a visit to his home city as part of an embassy, thus likely inspiring the tale. Thus, Hungary at least was on the radar of the literate Italian of the day, but it was not alone. Albert R. Ascoli, "The History of a Story: Manetti's *Novella del Grasso legnaiuolo*," in *Rituals of Politics and Culture in Early Modern Europe: Essays in Honour of Edward Muir*. eds. Mark Jurdjevic and Rolf Strøm-Olsen (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2016), 211-34; Prajda, *Network and Migration*, 197-204.

<sup>301</sup> Ceccherelli, "L'immagine della Polonia in Polonia," 319-20; Segel, *Renaissance Culture in Poland*, 7.

<sup>302</sup> Filippo Buonaccorsi wrote his first letter to Lattanzio on July 9th, 1482;. Segel, *Renaissance culture in Poland*, 79. (cf. Vat. Barb. lat. 2031, f. 89, quoted by Kristeller in his *Iter italicum*: "in vita Philippi Callimaci quam scribere aggrediemur") Brian Richardson, *Bibliothèque D'Humanisme Et Renaissance* 35, no. 2 (1973): 433.

<sup>303</sup> Segel, *Renaissance culture in Poland*, 52-5; Arturo Cronia, *La Conoscenza del Mondo Slavo in Italia: Bilencio Storico Bibliografico di un Millennio* (Padua: Officine grafiche Stediv, 1958), 90-1.



humanism was practiced even as the kingdom stood as the bulwark of Christendom against the infidel Turks.

Humanist writings were however, not the only places where Figures of Poland entered the Italian imagination as mention also appeared on occasion in vernacular literature. The Florentine barber-poet known by his nom de plume, Burchiello (b.1404-1449), known for his fantastical sonnets, in one of his surviving poems he writes as if addressing a note from a friend to himself, “*Burchiel, mio car, se tu girai al fonte/ che sta in Ouile preso a S. Francesco/ Fa che non sii Pollaco, ne Tedesco/Ma parla Fiorentin, con larga fronte....*”<sup>304</sup> A rough translation of which would run: Burchiello, my dear, if you are around the fountain, that is in the piazza in front of S. Francis church, speak neither Polish nor German, but Florentine with pride. Interesting to note here that the poet has enough knowledge to differentiate between Polish and German, somewhat surprising given that most often the land where both resided was called by the catch-all term *l’Magna*. Poland, while a far-off place whose language could be used as a punch line when compared to Florentine-Italian, was still known enough for the comparison to make sense. The knowledge of Poland as a place was thus trickling into Italian understanding but was never viewed with particularly positive overtones. Then again, by the fifteenth century, Poland was no longer a place where dragons dwelt, but a real kingdom whose inhabitants you might meet on a Florentine street and to whose borders one might journey to trade. As the fifteenth turned to the sixteenth century, the rising star of Poland-Lithuania would encourage different literary tropes and an ever greater interest in the region.

Given the above, it is not a surprise that only a small number of Italians ventured to Poland during the Late Medieval period. It would take the arrival of a Milanese princess – Bona Sforza in 1518 marrying the great Polish Renaissance monarch, Sigismund the Old, to really put Poland on the Italian map. Yet, those who did make the journey found a growing kingdom, ready to trade and in want of their capital and skills. Most were drawn by family ties, and those without were frequently members of larger social networks whose members had links to the kingdom. Upon arriving in Poland, some traders flourished and some failed, but in no greater proportion than in any other region. It is impossible given the sources, to uncover the inner motivations of the men and women who moved their lives to such a different place during the period, but those who came certainly left marks in their wake that this study has sought to reveal.

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<sup>304</sup> His actual name was Domenico di Giovanni. Burchiello, *Rime del Burchiello comentate dal Doni* (Venice: Francesco Marcolini, 1553), 151

## Chapter 2 – Routes

### Introduction

The following chapter gives an overview of the political history which impacted Italian decisions to trade in Poland between 1300 and 1500 by exploring how this altered the physical routes which they took through the kingdom. The chapter is divided into four sections each dedicated to a single cardinal direction – North, South, East, and West. As trade was frequently multi-faceted and bi-directional, this arrangement obscures certain aspects while perhaps overemphasizing others. Yet, for the most part, the schema holds together and supplies a useful framework through which to explore the political, economic, and physical geography which underlay the choices made by Italian traders in Poland. The chapter thus serves as a contextual fundament upon which the rest of the thesis drives along.

### *Poland on the Map of Europe*

A comparatively new and sparsely populated kingdom located in Central Eastern Europe, Poland was not an obvious place for Italians to be drawn. Never conquered by the ancient Romans, Poland lay beyond the Mediterranean sphere of influence, and in the Italian imagination was inhabited by semi-barbaric peoples known as Sarmatians. Poland had been Christianized however, in the tenth century and by the fourteenth was emerging as a power player in its region. Meanwhile, the financial revolution of the thirteenth century helped inspire Italians traders to venture where they had not gone before, including sending out tentative ventures beyond the alps and into the North Sea. Just as Poland was growing in wealth and prestige, so were Italian merchants backed by increasing capital looking for new opportunities to invest so the two met in the middle.

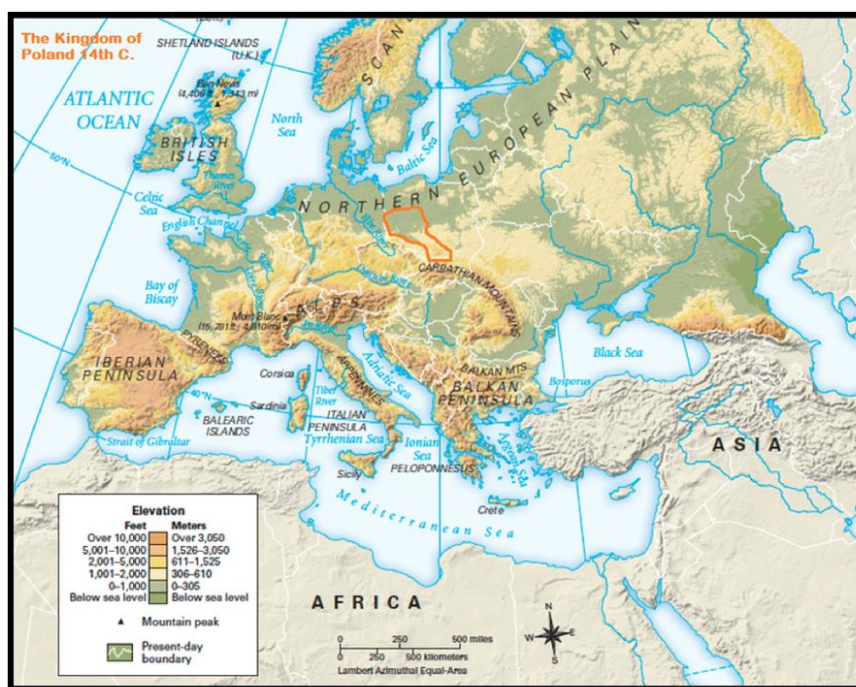


Figure 16 The Kingdom of Poland 14th C.

Source: Tisichlis <https://sites.google.com/site/tsichlis/courses/med300/europe-during-medieval-time-ch-1-3-6/maps?overridemobile=true#TOC-Physical-Features-Map> Accessed December 20<sup>th</sup> 2020



Figure 17 The Kingdom of Poland on the Political Map of the 14th C.

Source: Tisichlis <https://sites.google.com/site/tsichlis/courses/med300/europe-during-medieval-time-ch-1-3-6/maps?overridemobile=true#TOC-Physical-Features-Map> Accessed December 20<sup>th</sup> 2020

The great Polish scholar, Henryk Samsonowicz, noted that the primary economic area of Poland could be split into two distinct spheres: that which oriented around the Baltic, and that which was directed towards the Carpathians.<sup>305</sup> As Katalin Szende has more recently observed, the City of Krakow, sited as it was on the plateau of Małopolska, was the fulcrum which linked these two regions. (Figure 18)

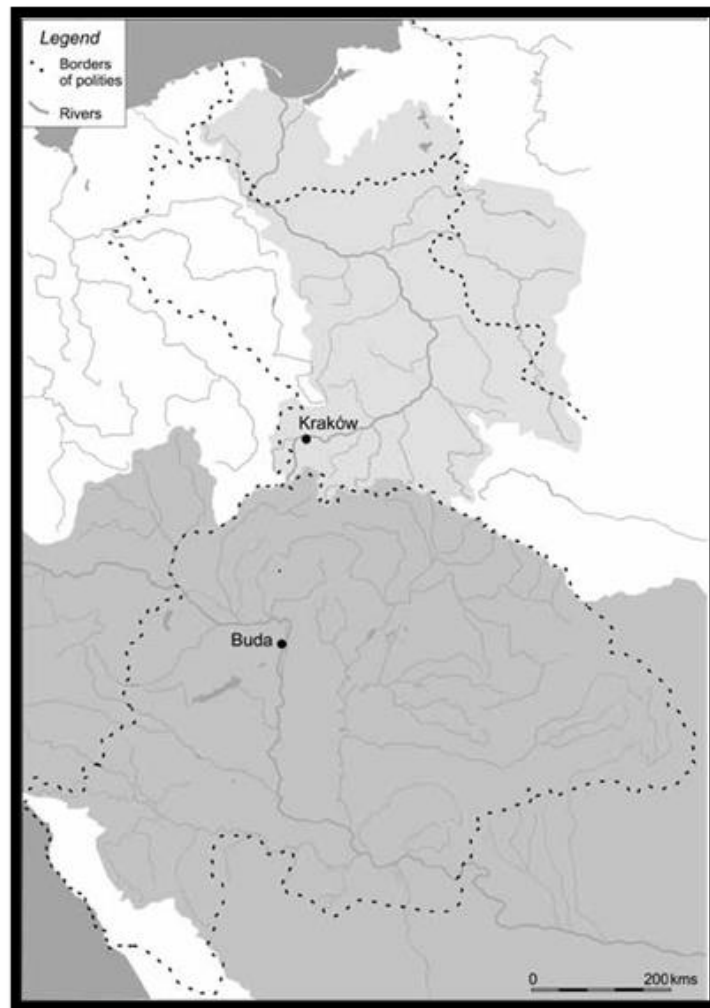


Figure 18 The Baltic and Carpathian Economic Zones

Source: Map created by Andras Vadas for Katalin Szende, “Krakow and Buda in the Road Network of Medieval Europe.” In *On Common Path. Budapest and Krakow in the Middle Ages*, eds. Brenda Judit et al. (Budapest: Budapest History Museum, 2016), 31.

<sup>305</sup> Henryk Samsonowicz, “Relationes commerciales Polono-Italiennes dans le bas Moyen Age,” in *Studi in memoria di Federico Melis* (Florence: Giannini, 1978), 289.

Resting at the foot of the Carpathian mountains linking it tightly to that economic region, while at the same time residing on the banks of the Vistula river, just 70 km from its headwaters, Krakow was well placed to act as the launching site for goods moving to the Baltic North.<sup>306</sup> The city thus evolved as the economic heart of the Kingdom of Poland and its royal capital, it is therefore unsurprising that the largest community of Italians settled here. Italians residing in Krakow could peruse interests there to the south within the Kingdom of Hungary, while also taking advantage of the highway to the north that the Vistula represented, acting as a hinge between the two regions. As Italians in Poland were interested primarily, as shall be demonstrated, in holding lucrative positions overseeing the country's mineral resources and in the long-distance trade in precious goods, their presence was an urban phenomenon. Apart from Krakow, Italians were prominent in four other Polish cities, each of which corresponded in some part with trade in a specific cardinal direction.

The second most densely occupied city was Lviv in the east, which after being added to the Polish kingdom in the 1340s, stood as a gateway to the Black Sea coastal trade, and the Italian colonies residing there. The trade to the east fed into both the Carpathian and Baltic zones, linking these regions to silk road routes that terminated in the Black Sea. As Ottoman forces advanced ever further into the region over the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, overland trade in Poland actually increased as a result of Ottoman pressures on the sea lanes used by Italian merchant vessels. Genoese traders in particular, were drawn to this region and a significant number resided in Lviv. The third most popular city for Italian merchants was Wrocław, Polish traders major hub to the west. While lost to Poland in the 1330s, the city remained deeply entwined with Polish mercantile interests and acted as a gateway for goods moving to and from Venice. In the second half of the fifteenth century, the City of Poznań, located in the northern portion of the Kingdom of Poland, would also house a small Italian community primarily dedicated to trade in the German Lands. Apart from this, while Polish merchants regularly made their way up the Vistula to Toruń, Gdańsk, and beyond by ship to the trading entrepot of Bruges, the north was under the influence of the Teutonic Knights and here, Italians made limited headway. Still, the route to Bruges was important for through traffic of goods invested in by Italians and key for the transmission of papal taxes collected in Poland, which were

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<sup>306</sup> Katalin Szende, "Krakow and Buda in the Road Network of Medieval Europe." In *On Common Path. Budapest and Krakow in the Middle Ages*, eds. Judit Brenda et al. (Budapest: Budapest History Museum, 2016), 31.

handed over to Italian Bankers. The following four sections explores the evolution of the routes used by Italian merchants.

## 2.1 Trade to the North



Figure 19 Poland and Lithuania in the fourteenth Century

Source: <https://www.bookofdaystales.com/st-casimir/> Accessed December 21st 2020

The following section focuses on the trade managed by Italians that ran from Poland's southern regions to the Baltic coast. While some of this commerce was accomplished by land, the vast majority was shipped up the river Vistula, passing through Toruń before eventually spilling out at the port of Gdańsk. While Italians were involved in this trade, they were less active along this route than in the other three cardinal directions. This section is thus correspondingly



shorter than those to follow. The reasons for the general disinclination of Italians to trade along the northern route were multiple. First and foremost, was the fact that prior to the mid-fifteenth century, most of the area which makes up the Northern part of the modern state of Poland was under the control of the Teutonic Knights and while hotly contested, was not subject to the Polish monarch. (Figure 19) The presence of the Teutonic knights meant that merchants traveling from the Kingdom of Poland to the Baltic were forced to pay higher toll and customs tariffs as they crossed from one jurisdiction to another, lowering profit margins. The Teutonic Order as a rule, was also not particularly interested in fostering trade and so were not generous in granting letters of safe conduct or merchant privileges upon which Italians depended.<sup>307</sup> Nearly all long-distance trade activities were carried out by the Western Prussian towns, primarily Gdańsk, Toruń and Elbląg.<sup>308</sup>

The unsettled political situation further led to incessant conflicts which included: The taking of Gdańsk by the Teutonic Knights (1308–1309), the Polish–Teutonic War (1326–1332) conducted over Pomerania and concluded only with the Treaty of Kalisz (1343), the Polish–Lithuanian–Teutonic War (1409–1411) ended by the Peace of Toruń (1411), the Hunger War over the border line in Samogitia in Lithuania (1414), the Gollub War, again over the border in Samogitia, ended with the Treaty of Melno (1422), The Polish–Teutonic War which was an offshoot of Lithuanian Civil War (1431–1435), the Thirteen Years' War where the Western Prussian cities including the all-important trade centers of Elbląg, Toruń, and Gdańsk fought to disengage themselves from the Order and join the Kingdom of Poland (1454–1466) settled by the Second Peace of Toruń (1466), The War of the Priests which settled the status of the Bishopric of Warmia (1467–1479), and finally the Polish–Teutonic War (1519–1521) which definitely confirmed the Teutonic Order's status as vassals of the Polish Crown. These open conflicts were further aggravated by internecine skirmishes, which occurred anytime outright war was not declared, together with attacks along the border zone between the two polities. Trade in the region was thus complicated by war and the risk of brigandage, making it a less desirable area to do business. That said, the Vistula still acted as an important conduit for merchandise traveling in both directions; as the river connected the Polish interior to the

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<sup>307</sup> It has been calculated that only around 10% of the Knights' annual budget came from trade. Roman Czaja, "Economic, social and political aspects of the trade of the Teutonic Order in Prussia," in *Communicating the Middle Ages : Essays in honour of Sophia Menache*, ed. Iris Shagrir, Benjamin Kedar, Michel Balard (London: Routledge, 2018), 64.

<sup>308</sup> "At the beginning of the fifteenth century, about 90% of the trade turnover of the Teutonic Order derived from the Prussian towns. ...The remainder consisted of business transactions concluded with the Prussian knights and with other partners, mainly the townspeople of Kujavia and Mazovia." Czaja, "Economic, social and political aspects," 66.

mercantile sphere of the Baltic region, the Hanseatic League, and the trading hub of Bruges, where many merchants from the Italian Peninsula resided.

The combination of constant instability along the route which linked the Polish Kingdom to the Baltic and the strong presence of the Hanseatic League and other German-speaking merchants who sought to monopolize trade, appears to have prevented Italians from gaining a foothold in the region. An example of such intransigence can be seen in the actions taken after the privateer Paul Beneke captured a Medici galley traveling from Bruges to the port of Pisa in 1473, claimed it as a war prize and hauled it back to the port of Gdańsk. The vessel contained a fortune in cargo and the famous Last Judgement painting by Memling commissioned by the Medici bank's branch manager, Tommaso Portinari.<sup>309</sup> (Figure 20) Despite vigorous protest, vociferous appeals before various courts, and the direct intervention of the pope, Gdańsk refused to return the goods or prosecute Beneke.<sup>310</sup> With such a hostile business environment to work in, it appears that few Italians were tempted to try. Italian interest in the Northern route through the Kingdom of Poland, while appealing in theory, proved impracticable and was used infrequently.

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<sup>309</sup> The ship was also ironically captained by Francesco di Bernardo di Giovanni di Sermattei, whose uncles Antonio, Leonardo, and Guido, had all lived and worked in Poland between 1410 and 1435. Francesco, born in Puglia in 1430, as far as can be determined, had nothing to do with that side of the family business. Considering that the eldest brother Michele, had lost much of the family's fortune and status when he sided with the ultimately defeated Albizzi faction against the Medici, and was decapitated for his political loyalties in 1436, Francesco's later success working as a merchant and Capitano out of Porto Pisano for the Medici is surprising. The Capitano of the ship captured by Paul Beneke, has previously been identified by the de Roovers as Francesco Tedaldi. The historian Michael Edward Mallett however, has convincingly demonstrated, the two should be viewed as separate individuals. Tobias Daniels and Arnold Esch, "A Donatello for Rome, a Memling for Florence. The maritime transports of the Sermattei of Florence," *Renaissance Studies* (2016):4, 11-16; Both Florence Edler de Roover and her husband Raymond de Roover make this conflation using data supplied by Alwyn Ruddock. See: Roover, *The Rise*, 347 fn 152; Florence Edler de Roover, A Prize of War: A Painting of Fifteenth Century Merchants," *Business History Review* 19.1 (1945): 3-12; Alwyn Ruddock, *Italian Merchants and Shipping in Southampton: 1270-1600*, (Southampton: University College, 195) 198, 210, 214; Michael Edward Mallett and Luca Degli Albizzi. *The Florentine galleys in the fifteenth century* (Oxford University Press, 1967), 99 fn. 4.

<sup>310</sup> Roover, *The Rise*, 346-8. For more on this remarkable event see: Barbara G. Lane, "The Patron and the Pirate: The Mystery of Memling's Gdańsk Last Judgment," *The Art Bulletin* 73.4 (1991): 623-640; Beata Możejko *Peter Von Danzig: The Story of a Great Caravel, 1462-1475* (Leiden: Brill, 2020); Alfredo Reumont, "Di Alcune Relazioni dei Fiorentini colla Città di Danzica," *Archivio Storico Italiano*, vol. 13, no. 1 (25), (1861): 37-47.





Figure 20 Hans Memling's Last Judgement, c. Late 1460s, National Museum, Gdańsk Poland

Source: Wikipedia

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Last\\_Judgment\\_\(Memling\)#/media/File:Das\\_J%C3%BCngste\\_Gericht\\_\(Memling\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Last_Judgment_(Memling)#/media/File:Das_J%C3%BCngste_Gericht_(Memling).jpg) Accessed December 20<sup>th</sup> 2020

The one transfer through the region with which Italians were intimately involved, was the shipment of papal taxes. Italian bankers and merchants, as well as clergy, were occupied in the collection of papal taxes across Europe, including Poland. While the collection of such taxes was rarely problematic, the transfer of large sums of raw specie from the Polish interior to the Papal Curia presented a major challenge. A number of solutions to address this problem were attempted during the thirteenth and early fourteenth century, with the final solution being the funneling of funds to Italian banking companies in Bruges, from whence it was transferred via *lettere di cambio* - letter of exchange, to the Roman Curia. Some of these transfers were made by Italians resident in Poland, although the majority were carried out by Krakovian merchants. Much of the third section of this chapter will be dedicated to the logistics of this unique form of exchange while chapter of this thesis will cover the these collections and banking in greater detail. Most of the following discussion will thus focus on the early period of the fourteenth century and the attempt by several Italians to set themselves up in Poznań in the late fifteenth.

### 2.1.1 Via versus Prussiam

#### The Bloom of Italians in Bruges and Interaction with the Hanse

Despite the unsettled environment in the north, access to the Baltic Sea provided plenty of opportunity for commerce. Trade flourished with the Scandinavian regions, Rus, and Northern German and Danish towns. These towns would eventually unite to form the commercial network of the Hanseatic League – a cooperative trading union amongst the premier cities of the region. As the Hanse was forming, Italians were becoming increasingly interested in the Baltic zone. Wool brought from the British Isles in the North Sea was fueling the booming Italian textile industry, while other products, chief among them metals, furs, amber and ivory, were desired from the other northeastern lands. In the early fourteenth century the City of Bruges on the edge of these Mediterranean and Baltic zones grew to become the key trade center uniting the two by sea.<sup>311</sup>

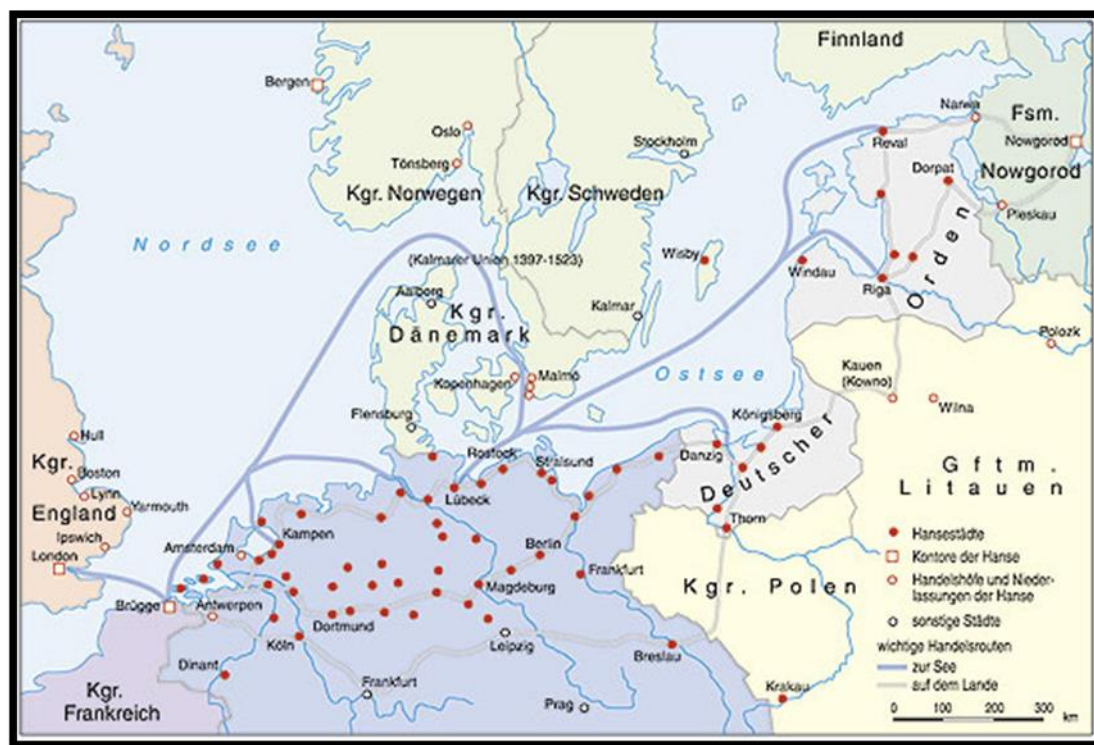


Figure 21 The Hanseatic League

Source <https://www.klett.de/alias/1076849> Accessed January 6th, 2021

Italians had made their way overland to Flanders since at least the twelfth century and, in 1277, a water route was opened by the Genoese that was soon followed by others, sailing from the

<sup>311</sup> Ships were sailing directly from Bruges to Italian ports through the straits of Gibraltar since 1270. Arnold Esch, "Italienische Kaufleute in Brügge, flandrisch-niederländische Kaufleute in Rom," in *Netzwerke im europäischen Handel des Mittelalters*, eds. Gerhard Fouquet and Hans-Jörg Gilomen, *Vorträge und Forschungen* 72 (Ostfildern: Thorbecke, 2010), 250.

Mediterranean to the North Sea through the Straits of Gibraltar.<sup>312</sup> As early as 1300, arbiters were appointed in Bruges to adjudicate disputes involving Italian, Spanish, English, and Hanse merchants.<sup>313</sup> The breakout of the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453) only increased sea-traffic as it made journeying across France a perilous prospect, forcing traders to shift their course east to the Rhineland-Upper Germany-Swiss and Austrian Alpine passes, or to take the water route around the Iberian peninsula.<sup>314</sup> Bruges thus became an entrepôt connecting north and south, flourishing during this period, expanding in size and becoming a prosperous hub of international trade that was home to a flourishingly diverse colony of Italian traders.<sup>315</sup> (Figure 21) Thus, just as the Polish Kingdom was beginning to reconstitute, Italian merchants were moving in ever greater numbers to send agents beyond the Alps and to the North Sea to London and Bruges.<sup>316</sup>

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<sup>312</sup> J. A. Van Houtte, "The Rise and Decline of the Market of Bruges," *The Economic History Review*, New Series, 19, no. 1 (1966): 33.

<sup>313</sup> Oscar Gelderblom, "The Resolution of Commercial Conflicts in Bruges, Antwerp, and Amsterdam 1250-1650," in *Law and Long-Term Economic Change: A Eurasian Perspective*, eds. Debin Ma and Jan L. Zanden (Stanford, Calif: Stanford economics and finance, 2011), 246-8.

<sup>314</sup> Esch, "Italienische Kaufleute in Brügge," 250.

<sup>315</sup> Aldo De Maddalena, "Per la storia delle " colonie " mercantili italiane: Il "libro della comunità dei mercanti lucchesi in Bruges," *Giornale degli Economisti Ee Annali di Economia*, nuova serie, 7, no. 9/10 (1948): 566-71; Laura Galoppini, "Gli Arnolfini a Bruges nel Quattrocento," in *Un filo rosso: Studi antichi e nuove ricerche sulle orme di Gabriella Rosetti in occasione dei suoi settanta anni*, eds. Gabriella Garzella and Enrica Salvatori (Pisa: ETS, 2007), 271-91.

<sup>316</sup> For the Italian movement to Bruges see: Raymond De Roover, *Money, Banking and Credit in Medieval Bruges: Italian Merchant-Bankers, Lombards and Money-Changers* (Cambridge Massachusetts: The Medieval Academy of America, 1948), 12-5.



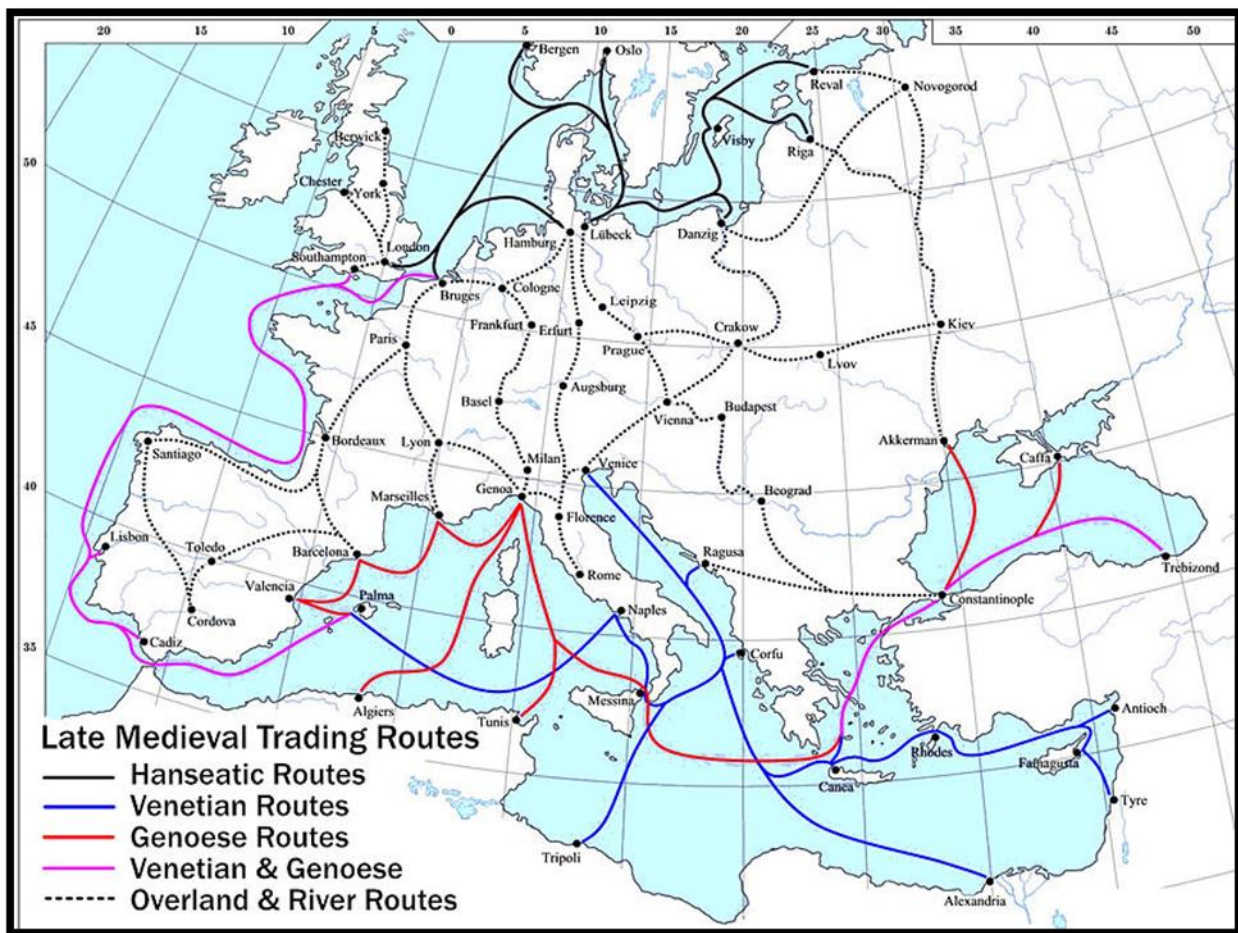


Figure 22 Medieval Trade Routes

Source: Wikipedia [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Late\\_Medieval\\_Trade\\_Routes.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Late_Medieval_Trade_Routes.jpg) Accessed January 7<sup>th</sup> 2021

Soon, Italians began to be accused of “raiding” into Hanseatic League territory. In 1350, for example, a group of Italian merchants were prevented from conducting business in Novgorod, due to previous accords made between the Ruś and the Hanseatic League. A “*quidam Lombardus*” was dismissed at the Novgorod Petershof, as it was explained in a letter sent to the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order that the Hanseatic League and the Russians had an old contract which forbade any Italian to be admitted to the local trading circle.<sup>317</sup> Krakow meanwhile, became more closely involved with the Hanseatic League starting in the 1360s, and while never a particularly active member, was influenced by their general rulings.

<sup>317</sup> Fouquet, “Ein Italiener in Lübeck,” 196.

## Krakow's Connection with Bruges

Prior to the late 1320s and early 1330s, direct long-distance trade between Krakow and Bruges was uncommon. Krakovian merchants would cart their wares perhaps as far as Toruń, and there hand them off to middlemen who would see them onward in their journey to Flanders.<sup>318</sup> In part, this was due to the fact that the route ran through the hotly disputed region of Pomerania; which in 1310 had come under the dominion of the Teutonic Knights. The Polish King Casimir the Great, would finally be forced to cede the territory in 1343, despite continual efforts to get it back.<sup>319</sup> Peaceful trading activities at times fell victim to the ongoing dispute.<sup>320</sup> Such was the case for example in 1339, when a group of Krakow merchants made a formal complaint against the Teutonic Knights, stating that as they were traveling on a trading mission to Flanders, they were set upon by a troop of Knights, their entire load of goods stolen and they were held captive for eight days.<sup>321</sup> This particular episode is interesting, as it is likely that the merchants were carrying at the time a large amount of money owed to the pope which had been gathered by his tax collectors in Poland and was being transmitted by them to representatives of the Florentine Bardi Bank in Bruges.<sup>322</sup> Given that these same merchants also carried multiple shipments of papal funds to Bruges, it is possible that some of what was stolen actually belonged to the pope.<sup>323</sup>

Such incidents did not improve relations and the road to the North continued to be contested. King Casimir the Great soon tried a new strategy, attempting economic leverage where military had failed, by issuing a charter directed specifically against the merchants of Toruń. The charter stated that merchants coming or going from the north, independent of their language or

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<sup>318</sup> This was due largely to the unstable political atmosphere described in fn 10.

<sup>319</sup> Treaty of Kalisz (1343) Carter, *Trade*, 81.

<sup>320</sup> For a number of examples from the border town of Bydgoszcz. Wojciech Józwiak, "Działalność mieszczan bydgoskich w państwie Zakonu Krzyżackiego w Prusach w pierwszej połowie XV wieku [Activity of Bydgoszcz burghers in the state of the Teutonic Order in Prussia in the first half of the 15th century]," *Komunikaty Mazursko-Warmińskie* 3 (2004): 303-6.

<sup>321</sup> The complaint made up part of a larger portfolio of grievances collected by Polish lawyers for ammunition in their litigation with the Knights. The four men who filed the suit were all citizens of Krakow: Gisco de Sandecz, Nicolaus Pensator, Johnnes Winrici, and Nicholaus de Thessin. These men are also known to have been active in moving papal funds, Gisco de Sandecz for example, was involved with transfers of papal funds at least five times: 1346 x2, 1347 x1, 1348 x1, 1351 x1. The attack was alleged to have occurred near the Feast of St. Michael (September 29<sup>th</sup>), a fact one of the men remembered more clearly than the date, which was believed to be around 1327. This timing coincided ironically enough with the moment when papal funds started to be placed in merchants' hands. *Lites ac Res gestae inter Polonos ordinemque Cruciferorum*, Vol 1, eds. Ignacy Zakrzewski, and Jadwiga Karwasińska (Poznań: Sumptibus Bibliothecae Kornicensis, 1890), 383-6.

<sup>322</sup> Georges Despy, "Bruges et les collectories pontificales de Scandinavie et de Pologne au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle," *Bulletin de l'Institut d'histoire belge de Rome* 27 (1952): 105-6; Yves Renouard, *Les Relations des papes d'Avignon et des compagnies commerciales et bancaires de 1316 a 1378* (Paris: de Boccard, 1941), 210-I-II.

<sup>323</sup> Ibid.

nationality, thus encompassing any foreign merchants, including Italians, were required to travel the path of the King's Road (*Via Regia*) when they transited through Poland towards either Ruthenia or Hungary.<sup>324</sup> Merchants going from North to South had to cart their wares via Brześć, Łęczyca, Inowłódz, Opoczno, Sandomierz, Wiślica, Krakow and Sącz, before entering Hungary. All those bound *versus Russia* had to transit via Krakow, Wiślica, and Lublin, stopping to display their wares in the market place of each before moving on. This was a complete victory for the Krakow merchants, but caused endless difficulties for traders from other cities, Toruń in particular, and sowed the seeds that would flower into an all-out trade war in the future and for a time closed Prussian roads to all Polish merchant traffic.<sup>325</sup>

### The Trouble with Toruń

During the trade war with Toruń, merchants from Krakow began seeking a new route for arriving at the Baltic which would bypass the city altogether. This attempted "Flanders road", which was to run along the Warta and the Oder to the ports of Szczecin, Anklam, and Wolgast, was not practicable and soon abandoned. Only slightly more successful were attempts made to evade Toruń by going through Poznań to Szczecin.<sup>326</sup>

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<sup>324</sup> "*Quod ab eo tempore singuli et universi hospites, cuiuscunque sint condicionis, nacionis vel linguagii, versus Cracouiam vel Vngariam cum universis ipsorum mercimoniis de Thorun transire volentes, sub privacione omnium rerum et bonorum ipsorum nullam aliam viam transeant, nisi...*" *Najstarszy zbiór przywilejów i Wilkierzy miasta Krakowa* [The oldest set of privileges and laws of the City of Krakow, hereafter [NZPiWMK], ed. Stanisław Estreicher (Krakow: Nakładem Polskiej Akameji Umiejetnosci, 1936), nr 3, pg 3.

<sup>325</sup> (1344/06/15) [NZPiWMK] nr 3; Carter, *Trade*, 81-3, fn 161; Marcin Starzynski, "Civitas Nostra Cracoviensis. A Sketch of the Town Politics of Kazimierz Wielki (part II)." *Studia Historyczne* 56, 1 (221) Krakow (2013): 6-7.

<sup>326</sup> Marian Małowist, "Polish-Flemish trade in the Middle Ages," *Baltic Scandinavian Countries* 4 (1938): 6. Molenda, "Eksploracja rud miedzi i handel miedzią w Polsce," 811.

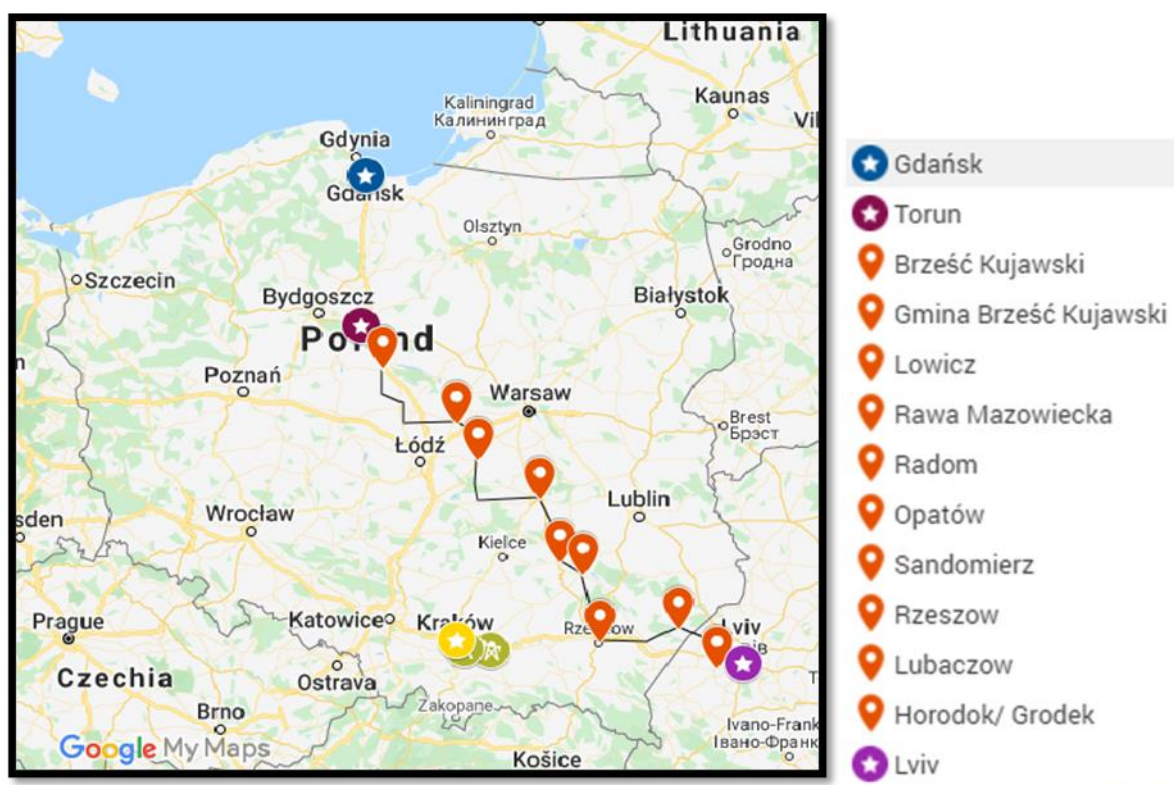


Figure 23 Route from Lviv to Toruń

Foiled in these attempts, merchants sought to do a run around Toruń by going through the formally prosperous small towns along the Vistula below Toruń - Solec and Bydgoszcz – and from thence to Gdańsk.<sup>327</sup> The Teutonic Order soon put a stop to this, however, by denying citizens' rights to form partnerships with merchants from these two towns.<sup>328</sup> By now, however, merchants from Toruń had developed strong ties, particularly with Lviv, as can be seen in the city's notarial records which mention thirteen individuals from that city between 1382-1389.<sup>329</sup> (Figure 23)

This connection meant that they had direct interaction with Italian merchants trading from the Black Sea coast, much to the chagrin of the traders in Krakow. Toruń continued to have a contract with the East as late as 1410, as the registration of a certain Abraham, *eyn burger von*

<sup>327</sup> For more on the history of Bydgoszcz and its interesting position as a border town between Poland and the Teutonic Knights, see: Wojciech Jóźwiak, "Działalność mieszczan bydgoskich w państwie Zakonu Krzyżackiego w Prusach w pierwszej połowie XV wieku [Activity of Bydgoszcz burghers in the state of the Teutonic Order in Prussia in the first half of the 15th century]," *Komunikaty Mazursko-Warmińskie* 3 (2004): 301-312.

<sup>328</sup> Małowist, "Polish-Flemish trade in the Middle Ages," 9.

<sup>329</sup> *Najstarsza księga miejska, 1382-1389* [The oldest town book, 1382-1389], Hereafter [PomnLW] I, *Pomniki dziejów Lwowa z Archiwum Miasta* Vol. 1, eds. Aleksander Czołowski and Franciszek Jaworski (Lviv: Gmina król. stoł. miasta Lwowa, 1892).

*Caffa*, in the city's notarial records makes evident.<sup>330</sup> The continuing trade war with Krakow however, disrupted this arrangement and Toruń merchants lost their direct contacts with the east as they were blocked from trading freely through Polish territory.<sup>331</sup> Continual armed conflict between the Polish Kingdom and the Teutonic Order only exacerbated the situation. Each truce and peace treaty ended with a declaration of a return to safety and openness for trade in both directions, but despite this the road remained impassable. In 1440, even the waterway of the Vistula was closed to traffic coming from Poland.<sup>332</sup> Brief periods of more active trade opened between conflicts and some merchants took advantage of the lulls, but trade remained anemic. Some attempts were made to communicate directly with Gdańsk; but this trade was entirely in the hands of German-speaking merchants and no Italians are mentioned in the sources.<sup>333</sup>

### Changes in the Second Half of the Fifteenth Century

Change finally came only in 1454 when, angered by the repressive dictates of the Teutonic Knights, members of the Prussian confederation - the cities of western Prussia including Gdańsk, Toruń and Elbląg, united with the nobility of region – sought the assistance of the Kingdom of Poland to achieve independence from their rule.<sup>334</sup> Thirteen long years of war followed, eventually ending in victory for the Confederation and Poland in the second peace of Toruń in 1466. The region now dubbed Royal Prussia was folded into the Polish Kingdom and the trade routes were once again cleared for business. By now, however, the tides of

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<sup>330</sup> *Liber scabinorum veteris civitatis Thoruniensis: 1363-1428*, ed. Kazimierz Kaczmarczyk (Toruń: Towarzystwo Naukowe w Toruń iu, 1936), nr. 863.

<sup>331</sup> In 1403, the Toruń City Council passed a declaration granting themselves staple rights preventing all merchants from Krakow from continuing to sell their goods beyond the city. In retaliation, the Krakow City Council sequestered 244,000 grosz. worth of goods from Toruń traders then residing in the city. By October, both sides had agreed to mediation, but with limited effect. The conflict was still ongoing in 1406, when the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order suggested that the dispute might be best settled by a third party - the Grand Duke of Lithuania, Vytautas. The date for the summit was set two weeks after Easter, 1407, in Vilnius, and the previously sequestered goods were given back as a measure of good faith. The merchants from Toruń, however, failed to arrive on the set date. The entire matter was only settled in 1409, when King Władysław Jagiełło agreed to allow merchants from Toruń to trade freely in Poland and Lithuania, as long as Polish merchants were extended the same right in Prussia. This was all settled just in time for the great Polish-Lithuanian-Teutonic war to break out 1409-10 and so trade continued to be hampered. Marcin Starzyński, "Litwa i Litwini w księgach rachunkowych średniowiecznego Krakowa (czasy Jagiełły i Witolda) [Lithuania and Lithuanians in the account books of medieval Krakow (in the times of Jagiełło and Vytautas)]," *Średniowiecze Polskie i Powszechne* 4 (8) (2012): 227; Kutrzeba, *Finanse i handel średniowiecznego Krakowa*, 216-22; Małowist, "Polish-Flemish trade in the Middle Ages," 7; Beata Możejko, "Shipping and maritime trade in Gdańsk at the turn of the 14th century: the maritime and commercial background of the sinking of the Copper Ship in 1408," in *The copper wreck: A medieval shipwreck and its cargo*, ed. Beata Możejko (Gdańsk: Narodowe Museum Morskie w Gdańsku, 2014.), 66-7.

<sup>332</sup> Carter, *Trade*, 81.

<sup>333</sup> Kutrzeba, *Finanse i handel*, 296.

<sup>334</sup> The Confederation had actually been formed in 1440, but requested King Casimir IV Jagiełło in 1454 to enter the Polish Kingdom.



commerce had shifted considerably. Toruń had faded from its once mighty place as little enough trade from the South had arrived to sustain it, and it was quickly being surpassed by its rival at the mouth of the Vistula, Gdańsk. Bruges, meanwhile, was no longer the main site of interest as Antwerp and later Amsterdam had taken its place, particularly in regard to Italian products.<sup>335</sup> The Hanseatic League, meanwhile, had also lost much of its power; and Krakow had so little interest in the union that in 1470 and 1476, they requested that Gdańsk represent them at the annual meeting, citing travel expenses and distance, before withdrawing completely in 1487.<sup>336</sup> With all of this unrest, trade routes were frequently reoriented to compensate for the bottleneck in the Baltic. The trade in luxury cloth that had once come from Flanders had also dried up; as suppliers had found alternative routes, and new players had in the meantime entered the game. After more than half a century of conflict and strife, by the time Southern Poland and Prussia were reunited, they had little initial interest in trading with each other. Even when ties began to form, German speaking merchants dominated and few Italians had enough interest to attempt to breach the market. A single exception to this would be a group of Genoese merchants who made a play at being burghers in Poznań for a time from the 1480s, when the worst of the fighting had subsided.<sup>337</sup>

## 2.2 Trade to the South

The trade route that ran to the south of Poland traveled through the Carpathian mountains, forming Poland's second major economic sphere, that marked by the Carpathian basin rather than the Baltic north.<sup>338</sup> During the middle ages, Poland's borders touched two polities to the south – the Kingdom of Bohemia, which will be discussed further in a subsequent section, and the much larger Kingdom of Hungary, encompassing an area which apart from its namesake,

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<sup>335</sup> Bruges had already begun to decline from the 1460s, but the outbreak of the Flemish revolt 1477-92 broke it's spine as an international trading hub. Foreigners, including the large Italian community left for safer ports as Hanse ships, moved increasingly to Antwerp and Amsterdam. Between 1473-76 only two ships arrived in Gdańsk from the port of Bruges, three from Antwerp and 70 from Amsterdam. While in 1490-91, only one ship left Gdańsk from Bruges with 15 headed to Amsterdam. Van Houtte, "The Rise and Decline of the Market of Bruges," 42-3; Małowist, "Polish-Flemish Trade in the Middle Ages," 9; Bart Lambert, "Merchants on the margins: fifteenth-century Bruges and the informal market," *Journal of Medieval History* 42.2 (2016): 240-253.

<sup>336</sup> On April 25, 1476, Krakow further granted Gdańsk power of attorney to take action in cases between Hanseatic Merchants versus London and Bruges, in cases between Hanseatic merchants and Cologne merchants, and on the Hanseatic League's relations with France. Marcin Grulkowski, "Korespondencja Krakowa i Wrocławia z Głównym Miastem Gdańskiem w późnym średniowieczu [Correspondence of Krakow and Wrocław with the Main City of Gdańsk in the Late Middle Ages]," *Czasopismo poświęcone dziejom Polski i powszechnym* 23.4 (2012): 45.

<sup>337</sup> Kazimierz Kaczmarczyk, "Włosi w Poznaniu na przełomie XV na XVI wiek [Italians in Poznań at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries.]," *Kronika Miasta Poznania: kwartalnik poświęcony sprawom kulturalnym stol. m. Poznania: organ Towarzystwa Miłośników Miasta Poznania* 6.1 (1928):1-40.

<sup>338</sup> Samsonowicz, "Relationes commerciales," 289.

included large portions of the modern states of Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatia, and Romania. Despite the obvious geographical barrier the mountains represented, the Carpathian basin which they encircled held rich trade opportunities; and ties between this region and Poland were strong.<sup>339</sup> Hungary in turn, was much more tightly connected to the Italian Peninsula, and large numbers of Venetians and Florentines in particular, migrated to the kingdom during the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century.

The connection between Hungary and Poland was particularly strong during the reign of King Louis of Anjou (b.1326-82), who ruled both kingdoms from 1370-1382. The Anjou line, which had dynastic claims on Italian soil, began to edge political consciousness of Poland closer to the peninsula, starting during his reign. The crowing of Louis's daughter, Jadwiga Anjou, as King of Poland and her subsequent marriage to the Grand Duke of Lithuania, Władysław Jagiełło, saw the two kingdoms once more go their separate dynastic ways, but political and familial ties between the two courts remained closely linked. It was during this period that the first direct diplomatic contacts between Italian polities and the Polish kingdom commenced. The strong political ties between the two kingdoms led to a constant back and forth of people, goods, and ideas, some of which had their roots in Italy.

Trade between Hungary and Poland was strong during this period, particularly between Krakow and the Hungarian towns of Košice and Bardejov, and eventually the capital, Buda.<sup>340</sup> Polish imports from Hungary consisted of metals - copper, iron, gold and silver, as well as wine and some types of cloth while lead, salt, furs, and cloth were exported. Italians, in particular Florentines, became deeply involved in the bountiful mineral resources available in upper Hungary – modern day Slovakia, much of which was then transferred to Poland, fostering connections between the Italian community on both sides of the border. Two major trade routes

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<sup>339</sup> Katalin Szende offers the best description of how the geography of the Carpathian basin radically impacted its social and economic formation. "This mighty chain of mountains, 1500 km long and 150 to 200 km wide, complemented by the Fore-Alps in the west and by the Dinaric Alps and the Morava Massif in the south, encircles an area of 325,000 km<sup>2</sup> of flat or moderately hilly land. The interior of the basin is dominated by the Danube, the only significant navigable waterway which flows through this otherwise fairly closed geographical unit and which connects it to the west and the south of the Continent." Szende, "Krakow and Buda," 162.

<sup>340</sup> Due to staple rights granted to Košice in the mid-fourteenth century, contact between the capital cities of Krakow and Buda remained indirect. Szende, "Krakow and Buda," 35. For more on this trade see: Stanisław A. Sroka, "The correspondence of Krakow with Košice in the middle ages," *Košice in the Coordinates of European History* (2013): 74-8; Stanisław A. Sroka, *Średniowieczny Bardiów i jego kontakty z Małopolską* [Medieval Bardejov and its contacts with the Małopolska] (Krakow: Tow. Nauk. "Societas Vistulana", 2010); Francis W. Carter, "Cracow's Transit Textile Trade, 1390–1795: A Geographical Assessment," *Textile History* 19.1 (1988): 23-60. Francis W. Carter, "Cracow's wine trade (fourteenth to eighteenth centuries)," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 65.4 (1987): 537-578.

ran through Hungary and into Polish territory that were frequented by Italian merchants. One meandered south through what is today modern Slovakia, Hungary and Croatia to ports on the Dalmatian coast of the Adriatic sea with an offshoot that took the overland route via Gorizia to the Italian Peninsula. The other turned slightly west to travel from Bratislava through Vienna and from there along the Semmering Road through the Villach Pass to arrive in Venice.

Although transit via water was eminently faster and less expensive than overland travel, the route over the Carpathians and through the Alps was as a crow flies the most direct way to travel between Poland and Italy. The southern route into the Kingdom of Hungary for Italians operating in Poland was important in two respects. First because it offered a direct line to the Adriatic coast via Croatia, which was used as the “*per terram*” route to reach the Baltic. Second, because due to Hungary’s vast mineral resources and the welcoming attitude of its government in the early fifteenth century, the kingdom became home to many Italians who at times also sought opportunities in Poland.



Figure 24 Routes to the South

Source: Map designed by Andras Vadas for Katalin Szende, "Krakow and Buda in the Road Network of Medieval Europe." In *On Common Path. Budapest and Krakow in the Middle Ages*, eds. Brenda Judit, Virág Kiss, Grazyna-Nurek Lihonczak, and Károly Magyar (Budapest: Budapest History Museum, 2016), 36.

### 2.2.1 The Route *versus Ungariam*

Since the mid-thirteenth century, the trade route that ran to Poland's south had been an increasingly important one. Indeed, despite that fact that merchants were forced to traverse the Carpathian mountain range, the Kingdom of Hungary would remain a major trade partner for

Poland throughout the coming centuries.<sup>341</sup> The connection between the two kingdoms was due in part to dynastic concerns, but in terms of trade, it was the outreach of intersecting north-south and east-west trade routes that ran through the capitals of Krakow and Buda.<sup>342</sup> Both cities had been re-founded in the wake of the Mongol invasions of the 1240s and subsequently granted extensive trade privileges. As their economies developed, the network of trade routes branching out from the two royal capitals encountered each other and intertwined. Buda rested atop a major crossing point on the Danube, Europe's largest east-west running river, while Krakow presided over the Vistula – the navigable northward running river that acted as a highway for trade to the Baltic, with connections by sea extending then beyond as far as Flanders and the Mediterranean.<sup>343</sup> As the two cities evolved to become the *de facto* capitals of their respective kingdoms, trade routes naturally reoriented to them. As they became embedded in the larger European trade system, foreign merchants and Italians in particular, gravitated there in search of opportunities.

### **The Route from Italy to Hungary – The *Via Latinorum***

As the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries progressed, Buda would become a hub for internal Hungarian trade but also, unlike Krakow, it was connected directly to Italy and the Adriatic. As Katalin Szende has demonstrated, “There were at least two main routes to Hungary from Italy: one on land, first following the Amber Route from Aquileia up to Körmend, and then turning northeast, to reach Buda by passing along the northern side of Lake Balaton and through Veszprém and Fehérvár; the other by sea across the Adriatic, reaching the coast at Zengg (Senj) or Zara, and then heading north-east through Zagreb towards the northern side of Lake Balaton, where it united with the other route.”<sup>344</sup> (Figure 25)

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<sup>341</sup> Szende, “Krakow and Buda, 33-4.

<sup>342</sup> Szende, “Krakow and Buda, 33-5.

<sup>343</sup> At the site of Buda and Pest, three fords were located within the space of a few kilometers and the location became a node for all primary roads crossing the Carpathian Basin. Szende, “Krakow and Buda,” 31.

<sup>344</sup> Katalin Szende, “Towns along the way: Changing patterns of long-distance trade and the urban network of medieval Hungary,” *Towns and Communication* 2 (2011): 197.

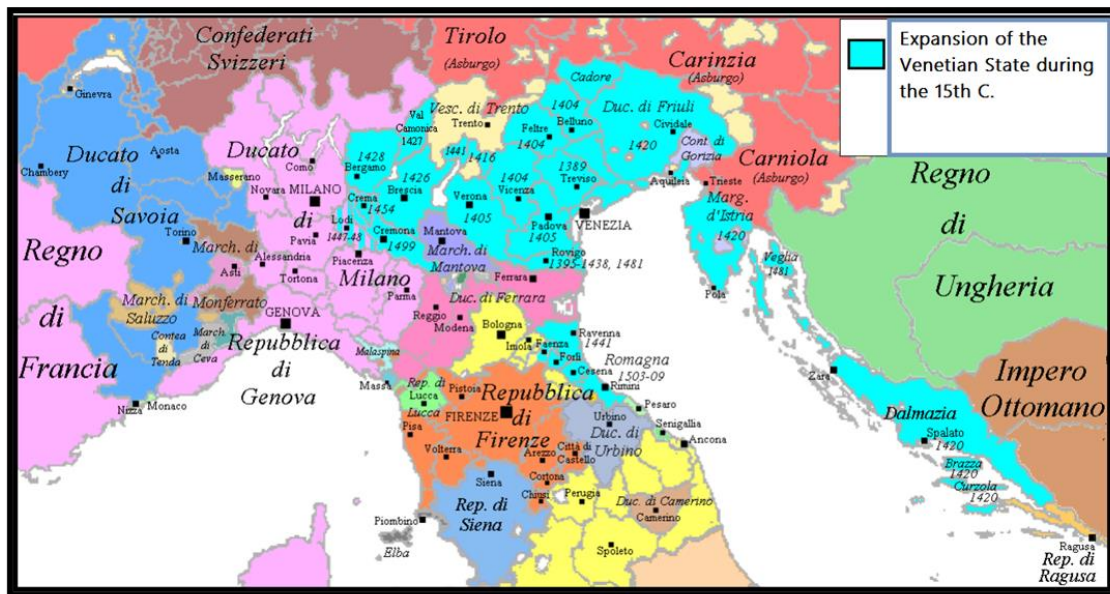


Figure 24 The Expansion of the Venetian State During the 15th C.

Source: Wikipedia

[https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Repubblica\\_di\\_Venezia#/media/File:Repubblica\\_Venezia\\_espansione\\_in\\_Terraferma.png](https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Repubblica_di_Venezia#/media/File:Repubblica_Venezia_espansione_in_Terraferma.png) Accessed December 14<sup>th</sup> 2020

Venice, with its position at the apex of the Adriatic sea, was the primary port connecting Western Europe to Central-Easter Europe. (Figure 25) Goods arriving in Hungary from Venice began their overland journey principally at the port of Senj on the Dalmatian coast. The technology of the time meant that ships traveling the Mediterranean tended to skip from port to port; and travel time depended in large part on weather conditions. The route between Venice and Senj could take anywhere from a week to over three weeks. An example of the nautical peregrination made by such ships can be reconstructed from the notes left by the Florentine ambassador travelling from Venice to Hungary in 1426. In that year, after travelling overland to from Florence to Venice via Bologna, Luca di ser Maso degli Albizzi, “took a ship in Venice and followed the coastline through Livenza (today Caorle, Italy), Daira (today Dajla, Croatia), Parenzo (today Poreč, Croatia), Fagiana (today Fažana, Croatia), Vegli (today Veli Brijuni, Croatia), Pola (today Pula, Croatia), Medulino (today Medulin, Croatia), and Ossero (today Osor, Croatia), arriving at the port of Senj after 8 days.”<sup>345</sup> (Figure 26) Upon arriving in Senj, the normal course for such merchants was to head towards the capital of Buda, as for example, the Florentine merchant Bonacorso Pitti did in 1376. Bonacorso, who was intent on

<sup>345</sup> Prajda, “Florentines’ Trade in the Kingdom of Hungary,” 53; Zigismond Pal Pach, “La Politica commerciale di Luigi d’Angio e il traffico delle “Mercenzie Marittime” dopo la pace di Zara,” in *Rapporti veneto-ungheresi all’epoca del Rinascimento: atti*. Vol. 2. ed. Tibor Klaniczay (Buda: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1975), 112.



traveling to Hungary, met up with his friend, Scielto Tinghi, in Venice and after arriving in Senj, traveled through Modrus, Zagreb, and Kapronca to arrive eventually in Buda.<sup>346</sup> Numerous other examples demonstrate that as early as the thirteenth century and continuing through the fifteenth, Senj – Zagreb – Buda was the most common route used for moving men and goods to and from Venice via the sea. Trade along this route was further encouraged by a light-handed royal trade policy, which placed tolls at, Zagreb, Vasvár, Esztergom, and Buda, but granted them no staple rights through the whole of the thirteenth and into the fourteenth century.<sup>347</sup> (Figure 24) Travel by sea was not the only option available however, as there was also a popular land route that ran from Gorizia, through Ljubljana, Celje, Ptuj, and Murska Sobota.<sup>348</sup> (Figure 24) The surviving records however, give little indication that Italian traders with interests in Poland made much use of this option.

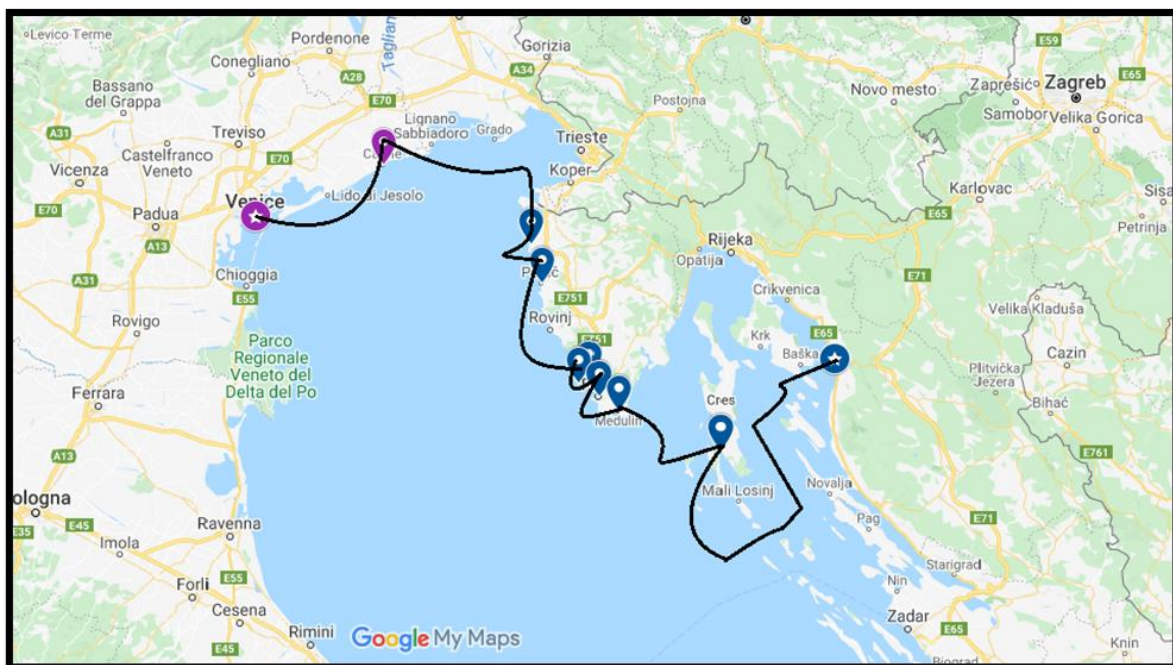


Figure 25 The Voyage of Luca di ser Maso degli Albizzi from Venice to Senj in 1426

<sup>346</sup> Pal Pach, “La Politica commerciale di Luigi d’Angio,” 112.

<sup>347</sup> Szende, “Towns along the way,” 200.

<sup>348</sup> Pal Pach, “La Politica commerciale di Luigi d’Angio,” 113.

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Given Hungary's closer connection with Italy, both geographically and dynastically, it is unsurprising that more Italians resided there during the late medieval period. A few however, continued the route northwards into Poland. From Buda, the normal road that ran towards Krakow went via Eger, then Vizsoly or Tokaj, to a popular ford at the river Tisza, and from there north to the Polish-Hungarian border through Košice, Prešov, and Bardejov. (Figure 27) Upon leaving Košice, one route was to travel through Muszyna, a small valley and settlement which during the fifteenth century came to be administered by the family of Pietro Bicherano of Venice, as discussed further in Chapter 4. The alternative to this route dived westwards from



Košice, moving through the Spiš region, which from 1412, as part of the Treaty of Lubowla, was pledged to Poland of which it remained a part for the next three-hundred and sixty years, before eventually converging on Krakow via Nowy Sącz.<sup>349</sup>

Special mention must be made of Košice as this city was by far the most important stopping point on this route for merchants interested in cross-border trade between Hungary and Krakow during the latter fourteenth century. Košice was one of the eight most important towns in Hungary and home to a significant community of Italians. The city had been founded in 1249 and received full urban privileges from King Louis of Anjou in 1347.<sup>350</sup> Located just over the mountains from one another Krakow and Košice had strong ties even before it achieved full urban status and had progressive trade agreements in 1324, 1375, and 1379.<sup>351</sup> Throughout these years, the Hungarian crown was interested in expanding Košice's economic prowess and granted it ever more extensive trading privileges.<sup>352</sup> By the 1390s these privileges included free access to trade as far as Senj and thus direct links to the Adriatic.<sup>353</sup> This, combined with Košice's close proximity to the important mining towns in Upper-Hungary and its strong trading ties with Poland, appears to have inspired an influx of Italian interest.<sup>354</sup> In 1394, just as Italians were settling in the city, Krakow and Košice agreed to sign a *pactum mutuum* – reciprocal trade pact marked by five provisions: that offered favorable terms to both sides.<sup>355</sup> Given the new provisions, which gave favorable terms and protections to both sides, it is no surprise that Italians resident in Hungary were soon engaging in trade in Poland. The city

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<sup>349</sup> The route navigated a different pass through the Carpathian mountains, following the valley of the river Poprad and passing through Levoča, Kežmarok and Stará Ľubovňa. Szende, "Towns along the way," 207.

<sup>350</sup> Szende, "Krakow and Buda," 33-4.

<sup>351</sup> Carter, *Trade*, 166.

<sup>352</sup> For more on the legal framework of Košice's trade history see: Boglárka Weisz, "The legal background of the trade life of Košice in the middle ages," in *Košice in the Coordinates of European History*, ed. Mária Hajduová and Martin Bartos (Košice : The City of Košice , The Košice City Archives, 2013), 94-111.

<sup>353</sup> Ondrej R. Halaga, "Le grand commerce Occident-Orient et l'Europe centrale," in *Studi in memoria di Federico Melis* (Florence:Giannini, 1978), 26.

<sup>354</sup> The Italians who settled in Košice are identifiable in the city books by the epithet of Gallicus in Latin or Wal in German. Occasionally, a cognomen is also listed allowing for further identification of the individual. Combining the list compiled by Ondrej Halaga and my own combing of the Košice town book, the Italians present in the city at the turn of the fifteenth century include: Petro de Pace, Johannes and Simone Talentis, Petrus Venturis, Johannes Monoculus, Rolandini, Lamonti, Bartolomeus [possibly to be identified with Bartolomeo Guidottis], Junta [Possibly Bonagiunta, nephew of Pietro Bicharano], Urbanus, Jacobus [Talentis?], Michele, and Nicolaus. Halaga, "Le grand commerce Occident-Orient," 26.

<sup>355</sup> The provisions were: "Clause I. Košice merchants have full rights to come with their goods through Krakow to all other countries. Clause II. However, at the present time, no authorization will be given for Košice merchants to use trade routes leading through Krakow to Prussia. Clause III. Krakow merchants are allowed to bring their goods to Košice and unload them according to earlier rights and customs. Clause IV. If either side does not wish to continue upholding this agreement, four months' notice must be previously given, so that each merchant can arrange to send his goods to, or from, his home. Clause V. Both sides agree to help over the problem of debtors." Carter, *Trade*, 166.

benefitted from their presence as in 1399, upon the request of Jacobo and Giovanni Talenti, two Italians with trading ties to Poland, Košice's privileges were expanded even further and King Sigismund agreed to grant the border city the same rights as the royal seat of Buda.<sup>356</sup>

### Trade, Politics, and Italians between Hungary and Poland

The City of Krakow was strategically located, but its true power came from the many trade privileges monarchs had granted it throughout the fourteenth century.<sup>357</sup> The Great Privilege granted by Casimir the Great in 1358, mandated that all merchants passing through Poland, including explicitly those from Hungary, were required to stop and offer their goods for sale in Krakow.<sup>358</sup> All legitimate trade now had to pass through the capital; and the city became the beating core of Poland's internal trade, incepting trade moving in all directions, acting as a gateway through which merchandise and merchantmen were forced to pass. Privileges in hand, the merchants of Krakow came to act as powerful middlemen for products, monopolizing trade and preventing foreign merchants from engaging in open or even transit trade through Poland. Hungarian merchants or Italians coming through Hungary were forced to come to terms with the Krakowians, either selling their wares to local merchants, or taking up citizenship in the city themselves. Four Italians are known to have taken up citizen in Krakow during the period under study.<sup>359</sup>

The case of Italian merchants in the Kingdom of Hungary meanwhile, was different; and it impacted greatly how many settled in the two Kingdoms. While in Poland, foreign merchants, Italians included, were exposed to the full weight of tolls and stapling rights, the policy decisions made by Hungarian Kings excluded Italians and later also Nuremberg merchants from such duties, encouraging them to trade throughout the Kingdom. Due to the fact that

<sup>356</sup> *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár I. (1387–1399)*, hereafter [ZsO] I ed. Elemér Mályusz (Budapest: Magyar Országos Levéltár kiadványai, II. Forráskiadványok 1., 1951) nr. 5645

<sup>357</sup> While Krakow had been given some rights in its 1257 charter, the first staple privilege was granted by Władysław Łokietek in 1306. This privilege, centered on Hungarian goods and gave Krakow citizens monopolistic staple rights over copper shipments which arrived from mines in Upper-Hungary [KDMK] I nr. 4.; Jerzy Wyrozumski, "Uwarunkowania Historyczne Rozwoju Architektury Średniowiecznego Krakowa," *Czasopismo Techniczne. Architektura* 108 (2011): 2.

<sup>358</sup> "*Mecatores de Hungaria vel de confinio Sandecensi proficiscentes, nullas vias extreaneas vel inconsoetas cum suis mercibus versus Prussiam, Poloniam, Sleziam, Boemiam vel Moraviam, nisi per ipsam Civitatem Cracoviensem transire debeant, occasione ulla non obstante.*" [KDMK] I nr 32 (1358/12/07)

<sup>359</sup> (1377) Stephanus Gallicus [KDMP] III nr. 889 pg. 303; (1408) Jacobo di Paravisino of Milan [IurCiv] nr. 1963; (1417) Antonio Tron of Venice [IurCiv] nr. 2994, (1485) Gregors Wloch di Wallachia [IurCiv] nr. 8198

Hungary possessed closer ties to Italy than Poland, both geographically and dynastically, Italians frequented the kingdom earlier and in greater numbers. Venetian traders had been present in Hungary since the early thirteenth century; but ties with the peninsula deepened significantly under the new reigning house of Anjou in the fourteenth century.<sup>360</sup>

The movement to encourage Italian traders in Hungary began in 1316, under the Hungarian King Charles Robert (r.1308-1342), who issued numerous letters of safe conduct to foreign merchants, particularly Venetians, coming from the Adriatic coast with goods moving towards the Hungarian interior. The principle route they were to take was via Zagreb as it was there and only there, at the crossing of the river Sava, that merchants were obliged to pay a toll.<sup>361</sup> This move by King Charles Robert was made in part in response to the ongoing tug of war between the Kingdom of Hungary and the Venetian Republic over the status of cities along the Dalmatian coast, which flipped back and forth between Hungarian and Venetian control. The effect was to decrease mercantile traffic across the region.<sup>362</sup> In another move to pressure Venetian goods to transit through Hungarian lands, in 1324, King Charles Robert prohibited free trade between Hungary and Vienna, thus preventing easy access to spices and Eastern wares imported by the Viennese from Venice. In his effort to block direct Venetian influence, Charles Robert sought to encourage other groups of Italians to trade in his territory, and it is no coincidence that when the Hungarian mint began issuing gold coins, they were modeled after the currency of Florence rather than the ducat of Venice.<sup>363</sup> As the *Serenissima* was too well positioned and supplied with goods to be so easily avoided, Hungarian rulers were forced to pursue a sideways strategy of encouraging merchants who originated from other polities but had at least some part of their trade operations based in Venice, in particular Florentine houses and traders from Nuremberg. To this end, Charles Robert granted the Nuremberg merchant

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<sup>360</sup> As far back as 1217, King Andrew II (1177-1235) allowed Venetian merchants to pay reduced taxes - one eightieth for general goods, and nothing on precious items like spices, silks, gold, pearls, and precious stones, Boglárka Weisz, "Royal Revenues in the Árpadian Age," *The Economy of Medieval Hungary* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 260; Arany, "Foreign Business Interests in Hungary," 494.

<sup>361</sup> In 1343 and 1346, the obligation to pay tolls at Zagreb was confirmed under King Louis Anjou including all goods which arrived "*de ultra mare*". A 1347 charter from the small oppidum of Kapronca in Slavonia a little way up the road from Zagreb, included mention of oriental spices, demonstrating that it lay along the route carrying trade from the coast to the interior. Pach, "La Politica commerciale di Luigi d'Angio," 111.

<sup>362</sup> Since 1275, Venice had sought to prevent goods brought from the Levant from arriving directly to ports on the Dalmatian coast. All such good were first to transit through Venice, where of course taxes would be levied and a percentage added, before being transported to Senj or other Dalmatian cities. Later on, Ancona and Apulia would further be added to the list. This was particularly galling to the Dalmatian cities as Apulia was a major hub for comestibles, particularly grain, and helped supply critical agricultural goods to the coastal towns. Pach, "La Politica commerciale di Luigi d'Angio," 113.

<sup>363</sup> Štefánik, "Italian Involvement in Metal Mining," 17 fn. 28; Huszár Lajos, *The art of coinage in Hungary*, (Budapest: Corvina Press, 1963), 16; Márton Gyöngyössi, "Coinage and Financial Administration in Late Medieval Hungary (1387–1526)," *The Economy of Medieval Hungary*, (Leiden: BRILL, 2018), 291-93.

Hans Ebner, who had strong ties to Venice, freedom to trade throughout the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>364</sup> The merchants of Nuremberg who already had a strong presence in the Venetian *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, thus received a helpful boost on the stage of international trade, one they would exploit to the full in coming years, becoming a powerful link between Italy, Germany, and Poland. The year 1324, was also marked by another trade treaty, that joining Krakow with Košice, the important Upper-Hungarian trade entrepôt just to the other side of the Carpathian mountains.<sup>365</sup> The road was now open for Italian merchants to travel across the breadth of the Kingdom of Hungary into Poland. Efforts by Hungarian rulers to foster relations with Italian powers other than Venice would continue throughout the fifteenth century.

### **The Impact of Louis Anjou's Reign, King of Hungary (r.1342-1382) and Poland (r.1370-1382)**

The situation changed abruptly however, when Louis Anjou, the future King of Hungary and Poland, initiated a set of dynamic campaigns on the Italian Peninsula, seeking to take back control over the throne of Naples after his brother Andrew was murdered in Aversa in September 1345. However, after four years of warring up and down Italy without great success, Louis returned to Hungary in 1351, having signed an eight-year truce with Venice. The *Serenissima* however, controlled the majority of the shipping along the Adriatic coast and held dominion over Dalmatia, making Hungary essentially landlocked. Seeking a way to change this position, in 1352 Louis signed a treaty with Venice's ever bitter rival Genoa, and when the truce expired, Louis once again attacked Venetian territory, reaching as far as Treviso, which he besieged. Venice itself however, safely ensconced in its lagoon, remained as ever impenetrable to attack by land; and eventually Louis chose instead to take his war to Dalmatia. In a series of quick campaigns he was soon liberating Trogir, Šibenik, Split, and Zadar from Venetian control. The resulting peace of Zara signed in 1358, gave control of the entire Dalmatian coast to Louis Anjou. With this new vista out to the Adriatic, Louis set to promoting foreign trade through his territory and so issued charters to towns and individual merchants to encourage the flow of goods "*de ultra mare*" from Senj towards Buda. With Venetian traders now being marked officially *persona non grata* under Louis of Anjou's new rule, the Dalmatian interior was opened up for other Italian traders, particularly the Florentines and Genoese. As a few years later, Louis of Anjou would be crowned King of Poland upon the death of his

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<sup>364</sup> Pach, "La Politica commerciale di Luigi d'Angio, 111.

<sup>365</sup> [KDMK] I nr 17

heirless uncle, Casimir the Great, there was now a direct line forged between the Adriatic coast and Polish markets. In the coming years, the port of Senj and the entrepôt of Zagreb would become the primary gateways through which shipments to and from Italy and Poland would pass.<sup>366</sup> The route did not flourish as it might have however, as the Venetians did not take the loss of Dalmatia lightly, nor did they appreciate Louis's attempt to undercut their current near monopoly of the local market.

Immediately following the peace of 1358, Venice forbade traders from Zara from exporting Venetian wares. A few years later, Ragusans and traders from Kotor were also excluded. Louis of Anjou sought to counter this move by granting the merchants of the coastal Dalmatian towns extensive privileges to promote commerce in 1368 and 1370.<sup>367</sup> He then went further, granting trading rights in his kingdom to Genoese merchants, the arch enemies of the Venetians, rights which the Florentines requested also be granted to them in 1376 when they sent their first official embassy to Hungary.<sup>368</sup> There is no surviving record of Louis of Anjou's response to Florentine overtures, but it seems likely that some concession was granted. Both Krisztina Arany and Katalin Prajda have noted a significant increase in the number of Florentine merchants in the Kingdom of Hungary from the later 1370s.<sup>369</sup> It is further, significant that even during the papal interdict handed down against Florence during the War of the Eight Saints (1375-1378) Florentines were not expelled from the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>370</sup> The Venetians however, responded in kind to Louis's attempts to undercut them; and by 1378, Dalmatian merchants were prohibited from exporting goods from Venice.<sup>371</sup> For five years, no Sclavonian [Croatian] merchants were permitted to carry goods from Venice, greatly inhibiting Louis Anjou's hopes of creating a stream of traffic in fine goods towards his capital; as he was then allied with Genoa and once again at war with Venice.<sup>372</sup> The War of Chioggia (1378-1381), as the conflict would come to be known, saw Venice emerge dominant

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<sup>366</sup> Neven Budak and Sandra Paić Piljac, "I Fiorentini nella Slavonia e nella Croazia Nei Secoli XIV e XV," *Archivio Storico Italiano* 153, no. 4 (566) (1995): 681.

<sup>367</sup> For example, he granted Šibenik freedom to sell their wares in Vienna, Prague, Zadar, and Venice, with the added provision that they could disregard the normal staple rights of the capital, Buda. This privilege was confirmed and rendered even more explicit in 1370; when he proclaimed that now that the "tyrannical weight of the usurping Venetians" had been lifted, they were permitted and encouraged to trade with the City of Zadar just as those of the City of Brasov. Pal Pach, "La Politica commerciale di Luigi d'Angio, 109-10, 115.

<sup>368</sup> (08/04/1376) ASF, Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, 17. fol. 52v.; Prajda, *Network and Migration*, 47.

<sup>369</sup> Arany, "Florentine," 37-8; Prajda, *Network and Migration*, 42.

<sup>370</sup> Arany, "Florentine," 35; Prajda, *Network and Migration*, 42, 47-8.

<sup>371</sup> Pach, "La Politica commerciale di Luigi," 114.

<sup>372</sup> Ibid.

in the Adriatic. Never again would Genoa or any other maritime republic seek to confront her in her home waters. After 1381, Louis Anjou would find himself staring out at a Venetian lake.<sup>373</sup> (Figure 25)

As the war commenced however, Louis of Anjou had great hopes that his Genoese allies would achieve victory and sought to sweeten the pot in an effort to entice non-Venetians to trade in his realms, which since 1370 included also the Kingdom of Poland. In 1379, he further extended the already generous privileges granted to Genoese merchants, who were now his allies. While the main thrust of the charter was to encourage merchants to take the route from the Dalmatian coast towards Buda, traders were encouraged to sell whatever and wherever they desired, and were free to also export goods. “*emi, facere ac vendere vel vendi facere in regno nostro et extra regnum omnes res merces et mercimonia cuicumque genereis et maneriei existant et istas portare et portari facere quocumque et ad quemque locum voluerint ut eis melius videbitur...*” - to sell, in our kingdom and beyond out kingdom all types of goods, and to transport them wherever and by whatever means seems best.”<sup>374</sup> Louis Anjou issued this charter not simply as King of Hungary but using all of his regnal titles including that as King of Poland, and while the privilege itself was obviously intended to promote the route between the Dalmatian coast and Buda, it was written to include, latitude et longitude “*latitudo et longitudo regnorum nostrorum*” – the length and breadth of our kingdoms, implying Poland might also be included.<sup>375</sup> The Genoese were now being positioned to carry goods which had been previously supplied by the Venetians, whom Louis was now at war with.<sup>376</sup>

While it appears unlikely that the privilege issued to Genoese merchants would have been strong enough to break the new Lviv or that of Krakow without contestation, the Genoese had been handed a generous pass for the rest of Louis’s realms. While there is no direct evidence of a linkage, it bears noting that during this period a significant number of Genoese were

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<sup>373</sup> During the war, Venetians at times also targeted “neutral” shippers like the Florentines trading from Hungarian territory. For example, in 1380, the Florentine government wrote a letter to the Doge of Venice seeking action on 650 weights of iron worth 8000 ducats, which had been confiscated from their Florentine owners. The seizure took place from their warehouse in the Hungarian port of Senj, during the recent Venetian attack on the city. “*sexcentumquinque fasciculi ferri, valloris mille octingen torum ducatorum.*” The Florentine citizen Alexander Nicholai, claimed they belonged to him and had been kept in the warehouse of his fellow Florentine, Nicholai Michaelis, in Senj until being illegally impounded by the Venetians. Budak, “I Fiorentini Nella Slavonia, 682.

<sup>374</sup> (1379/06/24) *Historiae patriae Monumenta: edita iussu Regis Caroli Alberti. Vol II*, eds. Baudi di Vesme, Carlo, Cornelio Desimoni, and Vittorio Poggi (Torin: Augusta Taurinorum Regium Typographeum, 1857), 854-6.

<sup>375</sup> Ibid.

<sup>376</sup> Ibid.

making their home in Krakow, the most prominent of these merchants, Gotfridus Fattinante arriving at some point around 1366.<sup>377</sup> Gotfridus, who died in 1391, was however, the last major Genoese merchant to make his home in Krakow during the fourteenth century, and Louis Anjou's great plan to encourage Genoese merchants to develop trade with his Kingdom thus breaking the Venetian monopoly, was doomed to failure.<sup>378</sup> This, despite the fact that Venice had actually lost to him during the war on the secondary land front in Dalmatia, leading to a favorable conclusion for the king at the peace of Turin in 1381. As part of the treaty, Venice agreed that Dalmatian merchants would henceforth be permitted to import and export up to 35,000 ducats worth of goods per annum.<sup>379</sup> Still, the Venetian trade regulations and the monopoly on the ships it permitted to ply the waters between the peninsula and the Dalmatian coast, combined to hamper other Italian's interest in trading in Hungary and by extension Poland.

Stymied in the Adriatic, Louis Anjou sought to forge a secure overland trade route directly from the Black Sea and its eastern products, a project which succeeded fairly well, as he expanded Hungarian influence along the Danube to its mouth.<sup>380</sup> The ramifications of the formation of this "Hungarian corridor" to the east, as it pertained to Poland, are discussed further in the following section. Yet, while Louis's efforts to woo non-Venetian Italians to his realms did not have the broad-scale impact he had hoped for; it did encourage a number of Italians, and in particular a group of Florentines who would come to have an important impact on Polish-Italian trade.

### **The Movement of Florentines to the Kingdom of Hungary**

As Krisztina Arany has shown, two significant waves of Florentines arrived in the Kingdom of Hungary, the first began in the 1370s peaking in the 1380-90s, and the second between 1412 and 1427.<sup>381</sup> The wave that began in the 1370s can be linked to Louis of Anjou's privileging

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<sup>377</sup> For more on Gotfridus Fattinante, see Chapter 4.

<sup>378</sup> István Petrovics, "Hungary and the Adriatic Coast in the Middle Ages: Power Aspirations and Dynastic Contacts of the Arpadian and Angevin Kings in the Adriatic Region," *Chronica* 5 (2005): 70-2.

<sup>379</sup> As control over Dalmatia began slipping from Hungary's grasp at the start of the fifteenth century, these provisions became ever more difficult to enforce. Pach, "La Politica commerciale di Luigi," 115.

<sup>380</sup> Dennis Deletant, "Moldavia between Hungary and Poland, 1347-1412," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 64, no. 2 (1986): 189.

<sup>381</sup> Arany, "Florentine," 37-8.

policy discussed above.<sup>382</sup> Among the early wave of Florentines who took an interest in the region were Vieri di Cambio di Medici and Jacopo Francesco di Ventura. They would attempt doing business in the kingdom, decisions that in time would have a substantial bearing on Polish trade, as shall be discussed. Another important milestone in this period that would impact Italian traders in Poland was the major reorganization of the Hungarian Kingdom's customs duties and mining and mint administration between 1395-7. Instead of being farmed out to individuals on an ad hoc basis, the system was centralized into a set of *camerae* – chambers, each run by a *comes camerae* - chamber count, appointed or approved by the king.<sup>383</sup> This new arrangement brought a large number of South German merchants including Marcus of Nuremberg, who served as count of the royal chambers, a judge in Buda, and representative of the potent Flextorfer-Zenner-Nurnberg firm. During his time as chamber count, he helped instigate a short-lived trade war with the merchants of Krakow; a confrontation which eventually ended with Krakow merchants making direct connections with Nuremberg and a number of Italians.<sup>384</sup>

These areas provided a significant portion of royal finances; and with the appointment of Filippo di Stefano Scolari known also as Pippo lo Spano (b. 1369-1426) rose to high office in 1399.<sup>385</sup> Originating in Florence, Scolari had come to Hungary as a young man; and through diligent service to King Sigismund, came to hold a prominent position at court. Over the years, he was able to furnish numerous members of his family and friends with positions in the Hungarian mining, minting, and customs administration. He remained a potent force until his death in 1426, after which Florentines lost some of their clout at court. While many Florentines continued to hold positions into the second half of the fifteenth century, they faced increasing competition from south German and Hungarian rivals.<sup>386</sup> During this period, a number of Italians who had been active in Poland sought more lucrative opportunities in Hungary.<sup>387</sup> The

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<sup>382</sup> Evidence of this can also be seen in the sudden disappearance of Venetian traders from coastal Dalmatian towns such as Zadar where Florentines took over the salt trade in the 1370's. Tomislav Raukar, "Zadarska trgovina solju u XIV. i XV. stoljeću [The Zadar Salt Trade in the 14th and 15th Centuries]," *Radovi Filozofskog fakulteta: Odsjek za povijest* 7-8 (1970): 26; Sabine Florence Fabijanec, "Profesionalna djelatnost zadarskih trgovaca u XIV. i XV. Stoljeću [Professional activity of Zadar merchants in the XIV. and XV. Centuries]," *Zbornik Odsjeka za povijesne znanosti Zavoda za povijesne i društvene znanosti Hrvatske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti* 17 (1999): 31-60.

<sup>383</sup> For information on the historical function of the chambers, see: Márton Gyöngyössi, "Coinage and Financial Administration in Late Medieval Hungary (1387–1526)," *The Economy of Medieval Hungary* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 295-8; Arany, "Florentine Families in Hungary," 39-40.

<sup>384</sup> Arany, "Florentine Families in Hungary," 85, 110, 112.

<sup>385</sup> Prajda, *Network and Migration*, 71-6; Arany, "Florentine Families in Hungary," 38.

<sup>386</sup> Arany, "Florentine Families in Hungary," 40-56.

<sup>387</sup> Niccolo di Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe being the most obvious member of this group who will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4.



death of Louis Anjou however, in the autumn of 1382, led to a period of anxious upsurge in Poland and outright civil war in Hungary which lasted until 1404 and culminated in a new set of political players coming to the fore which would have significant effect on the position of Italian merchants in both countries.

### **The Succession of King Louis Anjou – Mary and Jadwiga**

When King Louis Anjou died, he left two daughters to rule - Mary and Jadwiga. Having realized years earlier that no hoped-for male heir was going to arrive. Louis of Anjou had set about trying to organize a system of alliances and internal pledges of allegiance from the varied kingdoms to ensure that his daughters could inherit his domains. Mary become Queen of Hungary while Jadwiga took the throne in Poland and immediately, their choice of husbands became a hotly contested question with enormous international consequences.<sup>388</sup> After a period of uncertainty, in 1385, Jagiełło the pagan Duke of Lithuania was chosen as Jadwiga's groom. As part of the marital agreement Jagiełło was baptized, choosing the name Władysław and he and Jadwiga, now all of 14 years old, were married, becoming co-rulers of Poland.<sup>389</sup> The linking of Poland to Lithuania would have drastic consequences for the kingdom's future and the prospects of Italian merchants in the region.

Meanwhile in Hungary, upon her father's death, Jadwiga's sister Mary found her rule immediately contested as portions of the Hungarian nobility through their support behind Charles of Durazzo (r.1382-1386) who was King of Naples and the last male Angevin.<sup>390</sup>

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<sup>388</sup> Initially, it was planned that Jadwiga would inherit Hungary and marry William I Habsburg, son of Leopold I the Duke of Austria. Mary meanwhile, was engaged to Sigismund I of Luxembourg and Louis of Anjou was able to extract a promise from the Polish nobility that they would accept Mary as their queen. When the king died however, the entire plan unraveled. The Polish nobility rejected Mary and Sigismund demanding instead Jadwiga, who was as yet unmarried. A deal was struck, and at the tender age of twelve, she was crowned King of Poland in 1384. The question of who would be her husband however, remained an open and hotly contested question. William I Habsburg, soon arrived in Poland and seeking to claim his promised bride, but was rejected by the Polish nobility. Instead, on August 14th, 1385 the Union of Krowo was signed between Jagiełło the pagan Duke of Lithuania and the Polish nobility, which promised that if Jagiełło would accept Catholic baptism for himself and his people, then he would gain Jadwiga's hand in marriage and personal union with the Polish crown.

<sup>389</sup> For further details on this complicated back-story see: Oscar Halecki, *Jadwiga of Anjou and the rise of East Central Europe*, (Boulder, Colorado: Social Science Monographs, 1991), 173-212; and for a more modern take: Robert Frost, *The making of the Polish-Lithuanian union 1385-1569 volume 1*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 1-35.

<sup>390</sup> In September of 1385, Charles landed in Dalmatia and, backed by his Hungarian noble allies, marched on Buda. Mary and her recently wed husband, Sigismund I of Luxembourg were forced to flee, and Charles was crowned king on December 31st. Thirty-nine days later however, he was assassinated by partisans of Mary. The Hungarian nobles, unwilling to submit, turned to Charles' son and heir, Ladislaus of Naples to carry their banner of rebellion. The legitimacy of Ladislaus's claim was further recognized by the Republic of Venice and after he

Fighting went on for a number of years as Mary, now wed Sigismund I of Luxembourg, sought to retain the throne, but after a protracted series of conflicts, the rebellion was finally crushed in 1403. This early regnal instability however, led to the complete Hungarian loss of Dalmatia to the Venetians by 1409, and eventually inspired Sigismund to attempt to blockade the *Serenissima*, a move which altered the balance of Italian forces in Hungary with knock on effects in Poland.<sup>391</sup>

Hungary's relationship with Poland meanwhile, was complicated as in 1395, Mary died in a fall from a horse during a hunting party, and Sigismund's claim to the throne was placed further in doubt. Jumping at this weakness, Władysław Jagiełło now King of Poland, invaded in his wife Jadwiga's name but was quickly repulsed.<sup>392</sup> This attempt at overthrow led to tense relations between the two kingdoms and for a time severely disrupted the important trade connection between Krakow and Košice and the Italian community there.<sup>393</sup> Things might have continued poorly except that in 1396, in the aftermath of Sigismund's defeat by the Ottomans at Nicopolis, the Hungarian King was hard up for allies, and invited Władysław Jagiełło to a peace summit.<sup>394</sup> The two sides came to a mutually beneficial agreement whereby Władysław Jagiełło agreed to forever give up any possible claim to the Hungarian throne and

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succeeded briefly in securing portions of the Dalmatian coast under his sway, they negotiated to purchase it from him for 100,000 ducats. It was thus, on the midst of a prolonged series of political and military conflicts that Mary and Sigismund I of Luxemburg were able, in 1387 to seat themselves on the Hungarian throne. Pál Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen: A History of Medieval Hungary 895–1526*, trans. Tamás Pálosfalvi (London: IB Tauris, 2001), 195-8.

Venice had been a thorn in Sigismund's side since the beginning of his rule. They had supported the claims of his rival Charles Durazzo, and after his death, his successor, Ladislaus of Naples. Ladislaus of Naples had the backing of the Pope and in 1403, with the assistance of a strong segment of Hungarian nobles, succeeded in landing in Dalmatia and gaining control of much of the coastline. He was crowned king in Zadar by the Bishop of Estergom. Ladislaus soon returned to Naples however, and while the rebellion continued without him, it was all but crushed by 1404. Already in 1399 however, while Sigismund and his wife Mary were fighting desperately to stay on the throne, Venice had taken advantage of their weakness to cease paying the 7,000 ducat fee for access to the Dalmatian port cities that they had agreed to in the Peace of Turin in 1381. Sigismund demanded that they pay, but to no avail. Finally, in 1409, the Venetian Senate, continuing to recognize Ladislaus of Naples as the legal ruler of Hungary, purchased rights to Dalmatia from him for 100,000 ducats. Venice now claimed suzerainty over the Eastern Adriatic coast that Sigismund considered his own and the affront would not stand. Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen*, 206-8 Štefánik, "Guerra commerciale," <https://doi.org/10.4000/mefrm.2820>

<sup>392</sup> With Mary deceased, Jadwiga stood as the only remaining legitimate child of King Louis Anjou and thus had a strong claim to the throne of Hungary.

<sup>393</sup> The brothers Simone and Giovanni Talenti first appear in Košice around 1380 and became permanent residents there in the 1390's. The Košice notarial records also record a number of "Gallici" – Italians as well as members of the Venturi family involved in various trade relations between 1394-1405. *Älteste Kaschauer Stadtbuch* Hereafter [Kassa].ed. Ondrej R. Halaga (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1994), pg. 48 nr. 77, pg. 199 nr. 3575 pg. 315 nr. 6027; Carter, *Trade*, 74; Arany. "Florentine," 237.

<sup>394</sup> The summit was held in 1397 at Spišská Nová Ves, in Hungarian territory, allowing Jadwiga, who attended the event with her husband, to visit her ancestral home for the first time in over a decade. Balázs Nagy, "Royal Summits in and around Medieval Buda," In *The Jagiellonians in Europe: Dynastic Diplomacy and Foreign Relations*, edited by Attila Bárány Balázs Antal Bacsá (Debrecen: Forschungsgruppe "Ungarn im mittelalterlichen Europa", 2016), 12.

Sigismund renounced Hungary's claim to Ruthenia, which hailed back to the era of Louis Anjou, ensuring that Poland's links to the Black Sea and its Italian commercial ports would remain undisturbed.

Secure in his alliance with Poland, Sigismund was now able to do battle with the Hungarian nobles seeking to refute his claim to the throne. By 1403, he had bought off or subdued the remaining Hungarian barons and reclaimed his title.<sup>395</sup> In spite of this political instability and in fact, because he could not trust the loyalties of his subjects, Sigismund preferred to set foreigners in charge of royal monopolies – salt and metal mines, mints, and customs duties. Not trusting his own nobles not to betray him, and in search of men with the requisite expertise, Sigismund gave these lucrative administration posts into the hands of South German merchants and above all, Italians.<sup>396</sup> Italians had shown interest in the Hungarian mining and minting sectors since the reign of Charles Robert; but under Sigismund, they achieved entirely new levels of influence. A number of the Italians involved in Hungarian mining administration would become involved as well in Polish affairs.

### **Italians and Nurembergers between Hungary and Poland under King Sigismund**

Key at the turn of the fifteenth century was a cabal of Nuremberg merchants with strong ties to the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* in Venice, who with the assistance of the director of the Venetian branch of the Medici bank Neri Tornaquinci and the Venetian trader Pietro Bicherano, succeeded in taking control of Poland's most prosperous salt and lead mines. The case in question will be discussed further in the following sections but as regards the route which connected Hungary with Poland, a brief mention must be made here. In 1396, Ulrich Krammerer, a wealthy Nuremberg merchant and member of the Amman-Krammerer-Seiler-Grau company, which had strong ties to the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* in Venice, was named chamber count and head of the thirtieth customs in Košice, making him thus responsible for import and export duties levied on the Polish border.<sup>397</sup> Upon taking up the post, Ulrich immediately sought to make changes in how the tolls were assessed and levied, leading to immediate angry pushback from Krakow merchants. Instead of having regular customs officials make the checks on merchant baggage, Ulrich allowed the local border nobility to oversee these activities which they pursued with unaccustomed zeal. Adding insult to injury,

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<sup>395</sup> Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen*, 195-208.

<sup>396</sup> For more on the roles held by Florentines in the Hungarian Kingdom see: Arany, "Florentine,,"; Katalin Prajda, *Network and Migration*.

<sup>397</sup> Stromer, *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz vol 1*, 118; Stromer, "Nürnberger Unternehmer im Karpatenraum," 650.

he also proceeded to raise the toll rates.<sup>398</sup> Krakow merchants revolted at this, sending a flurry of letters of complaint and a number of attacks against Ulrich's business in Krakow, Nuremberg, and Venice, and refused to do business with him, bring commerce across the border to a grinding halt. Ulrich appealed to King Sigismund for assistance, but was forced to capitulate, agreeing to return assessment duties to regular officials and the toll rates to their previous levels, in particular those which related to bullion and "free copper," that which was not subject to the *urbura* tax.<sup>399</sup> Trade moved once more. Ulrich left his post in Košice after this and returned to Venice, where he became involved in financing the ultimately failed effort by King Ruprecht of the Palatinate to defeat the Visconti of Milan on behalf of Florence. The particulars of which will also be discussed further in Chapter 4. In the wake of Ulrich's retreat, another Nuremberg merchant stepped in to fill the void; and his actions would have even greater consequences for the position of Italian merchants active in trade between Hungary and Poland.

Marcus of Nuremberg, was a factor of the Flextor-Kegler-Zenner company and quickly ingratiated himself with King Sigismund; he was named a chamber count and did business in Košice.<sup>400</sup> By 1405, Marcus had been named the mint-master of Buda Chamber Count in the all-important mining town of Kremnica, and master of the 30<sup>th</sup> customs tolls.<sup>401</sup> He had become so influential that he assisted in the drawing up of a new set of statutes, which were to apply to all urban centers throughout the kingdom. These new regulations, known as the great "Urban

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<sup>398</sup> (1396/10/09) Stromer, *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz* vol 3, 488.

<sup>399</sup> "Urbura was paid by mine operators, the entrepreneurs contracted to the crown; this was equivalent to one tenth of the gold produced and one eighth of the silver and other metals. Charles I established a monopoly in precious metal, obliging everyone to redeem the gold and silver they mined. It was forbidden to trade in this or take it out of the country. The royal chambers took a 40 % profit on the gold and silver, meaning that the mine operators who redeemed it received in return coins containing that much less gold and silver." Zoltán. "Mining in Medieval Hungary," 174. (1398/01/05) Stromer, *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz* vol 1, 118-21; István Draskóczy, "Commercial Contacts of Buda along the Danube and beyond," In *Medieval Buda in Context* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 285.

<sup>400</sup> Marcus of Nuremberg engaged in a number of financial transactions in Košice from (1394/03/30); [Kassa] pg. 55 nr. 226. Marcus is further noted in Košice "*cum sociis suis*" in 1395, where he and his compatriots offered King Sigismund the substantial loan of 4,000 fl. Marcus worked as a Chamber Count between 1395—1415. Stromer, *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz* vol 1, 128, 133, 140.

<sup>401</sup> "The thirtieth was originally paid on trade within the Hungarian Kingdom (*tributum fori*), but under King Charles I it became the source of crown revenue from foreign trade. Originally levied on exports, it was later also extended to imports. Paragraph 17 of the decree of 1405 defined the thirtieth as the general duty payable on goods taken across the border. Initially, true to its name, it was set at 3.33 % of the value of the goods, but in the middle of the fifteenth century the rate was changed, so that the "thirtieth" offices actually levied a duty of one twentieth of the value. The thirtieth provided the king with much of his revenue." Balázs Nagy, "Foreign Trade of Medieval Hungary," in *The Economy of Medieval Hungary* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 488; Stromer, "Nürnberger Unternehmer," 649 fn 33. Stromer, *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz* vol 1, 133.

Decree” included a number of points related to trade, among which was a prohibition on the export of silver, gold, *and* copper, without royal leave.<sup>402</sup> Precious metals had long been under the control of the crown and their appointed chamber counts, but the addition of copper to these regulations was new.<sup>403</sup> He had also arranged in that same year with King Sigismund to gain a monopoly of purchasing rights within Hungary on all lead coming from Poland.<sup>404</sup> With everything now in place, Marcus began to threaten Polish merchants that he would prevent sale of any silver, gold, or copper to Poland unless his requested lead prices were met.<sup>405</sup> These strongarm tactics had the eventual effect of delivering the Krakow lead and salt mines into the hands of Italian merchants in Krakow, a story which will be told further in Chapter 3.

The trade war had badly affected the pocket books of many of the premier merchants of Krakow. So bad was the shortage that a Jewish resident of the city named Fester was accused of importing silver coins illegally from neighboring Silesia and burned at the stake.<sup>406</sup> A few months later, the continued economic turbulence further helped incite a horrific pogrom against the city’s entire Jewish population, who were accused of hoarding.<sup>407</sup> Meanwhile, one of the city’s most esteemed members, Nicholas Bochner, was forced into debtor’s prison and the royal monopolies he had occupied taken over by merchants from Nuremberg and Venice. The City Councilman, Andreas Wirzingi, scion of the famous Wirzingi family was so desperate that he plundered the city cash-box and was later tried and executed for this crime. Andreas had previously worked with Simon and Giovanni Talenti, Italian merchants resident in Košice, trading silver and cloth across the border, but the policies put in place by Marcus of Nuremberg made these ventures impossible.<sup>408</sup> Marcus of Nuremberg’s ploy thus had drastic consequences for the residents of Krakow, even those not directly related to international trade. With the attempted embargo having failed, Polish merchants were left in an even worse position than before while that of Marcus of Nuremberg was strengthened. The outcome of the battle was a shortening of the silver supply in Poland, which put a serious damper on Polish merchants’

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<sup>402</sup> “*Insuper, quemadmodum et ab antiquo iuxta statuta regia aurum, argentum, cuprum et alia metalla de regno nostro educi prohibita...*” *The Laws of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, ed. János M. Bak, (Bakersfield, Calif.: Charles Schlacks, Jr., Publishers, 1989), 356.

<sup>403</sup> Zoltán Batizi, “Mining in Medieval Hungary,” in *The Economy of Medieval Hungary* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 173.

<sup>404</sup> Stromer, “Nürnberger Unternehmer,” 654.

<sup>405</sup> (1405/12/30) *Archiwum Komisji Historycznej*. Vol. 9 (Krakow: Nakładem Akademii Umiejętności, 1902), 412

<sup>406</sup> Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae incliti regni Poloniae* vol. 10-11, 15.

<sup>407</sup> Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae incliti regni Poloniae* vol. 10-11, 15-7.

<sup>408</sup> More on the Talenti brothers can be found in Chapter 4.

ability to trade. Having no precious metal mines of its own, Poland was entirely dependent upon outside sources which came primarily from Hungary.<sup>409</sup> While these events allowed a few Italians to move in and take over the management of valuable mining operations, it also reduced the liquidity of the kingdom's markets making it less attractive for Italian merchants. In the short term, this meant that the Talenti brothers retreated from their business interests in Poland, and in the longer term would continue to render the kingdom unappealing as an investment site.

The injury could not have come at a worse time, as King Władysław Jagiełło was at that moment seeking to raise as much money as possible to fund his campaigns against the Teutonic Knights.<sup>410</sup> In response to the Krakow burghers' cries for appeal, Władysław Jagiełło sent letters to both the Sigismund King of Hungary and the Hungarian nobles at large, complaining of Marcus of Nuremberg's high handed treatment. The letter lamented the harm befalling relations between the two kingdoms and complained that Marcus's actions were a violation of previous treaties signed between Hungary, Bohemia, and Poland under Casimir the Great.<sup>411</sup> The letter however, saw no effect and relations both economic and interpersonal were damaged between the two countries in such a way that it would take many years to heal.

Relations between Hungary and Poland continued to sour over the next few years as King Sigismund of Hungary did nothing to curtail his retainers actions. Marcus of Nuremberg went so far as to arrest a number of Krakow merchants traveling though Hungary in the spring of 1409.<sup>412</sup> King Sigismund however, cared little for how this was affecting inter-regnal commerce and his relationship with the Polish kingdom, as Sigismund was then supporting the cause of the Teutonic Knights against Poland. Indeed, it was Marcus of Nuremberg himself who in December of 1409, assured the Order of Teutonic Knights in no uncertain terms that

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<sup>409</sup> Marcus of Nuremberg's intractability must also be put in the context of the steady downward slump of silver output by Hungarian mines. It was not simply that he wished to put pressure on Poland or reap great profits for himself by charging monopolistic rates. It was also the case that Europe generally was in the midst of what is termed the Great Bullion Famine of the fourteenth century, that lasted from 1392-1412/25. Hungarian silver mines were becoming tapped out and so prices for the metal naturally rose. Leslie Carr-Riegel, "Italian Mint Masters in Medieval Poland," *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* vol 25 (2019): 93-106.

<sup>410</sup> [CA I] nr 154; Borys Paszkiewicz, „Monety koronne władysława Jagiełły: między Wschową i Krakowem?” [Crown coins Władysława Jagiełło: between Wschowa and Krakow?], *Biuletyn Numizmatyczny* 2 (358) (2010): 113, 116, 118; Marian Gumowski, *Dzieje Mennicy Krakowskiej* [History of Krakow Coinage], (Poznań: Drukarnia Rolnicza Poradnika gospodarskiego, 1927), 43.

<sup>411</sup> *Elementa ad Fontium Editiones* vol. 2, nr 46, 47; Stromer, "Nürnberger Unternehmer" 656.

<sup>412</sup> Stromer, "Nürnberger Unternehmer," 659.

Hungary would remain benevolently neutral in their fight against Poland; and in December of that year the two polities signed a mutual non-aggression pact.<sup>413</sup>

It was only in the aftermath of the stunning Polish victory at the battle of Grunwald/Tannenberg on July 15th 1410, that Sigismund made a sudden about face.<sup>414</sup> The surprising Polish victory and the fact that he had just a few months before entered into the running to be elected King of the Romans – ruler of the Holy Roman Empire – meant that in a short time, the political landscape had changed dramatically.<sup>415</sup> Sigismund had also during this period turned his eyes towards righting what he perceived to be a gross usurpation by Venice in his territory along the Eastern Adriatic Coast, initiating a campaign against Venice which would last on and off for the next twenty years.<sup>416</sup> Before he could begin however, he needed to insure that he would not be attacked from behind by his surprisingly able northern neighbor and this meant coming to a meeting of minds with Władysław Jagiełło.

The Venetians for their part, were not unaware of the situation. They too it seems, had noted the battle of Grunwald/Tannenberg and the benefits of creating an alliance between themselves and Poland that until that moment had seemed a pointless gesture. Poland was far away and the two polities had limited contact with each other. Venice had been in contact with “Kings of Poland” from the early fourteenth century, but these men were often mere claimants to the title, and had no real political control over the territory.<sup>417</sup> Indeed, Sigismund himself was briefly included among those claiming the title of “King of Poland” whom the Venetian chancellery had recognized over the years.<sup>418</sup> However, Sigismund continued to claim the title

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<sup>413</sup> Previously, the Teutonic Knights had assisted King Sigismund with his financial difficulties, when in 1402 they accepted the pledge of the town of Neumark in Brandenburg. On December 20<sup>th</sup>, 1409 the Teutonic Knights and Sigismund signed a political alliance aimed at opposing Poland and Lithuania. Stromer, “Nürnberger Unternehmer,” 659.

<sup>414</sup> Nagy, “Royal Summits,” 358.

<sup>415</sup> The election for the next King of the Romans was an extremely convoluted and highly charged political affair and Sigismund was hardly the only candidate. King Ruprecht of the Palatinate who had been elected King of the Romans in 1402, died on May 18<sup>th</sup>, 1410. On September 20<sup>th</sup>, he was nominated by a minority of the royal electors, and after many rounds of negotiations and the death of one of the other candidates, on July 21<sup>st</sup> 1411, Sigismund was unanimously elected. For greater detail of the affair see: Márta Kondor, “The Ginger Fox’s two Crowns,” Central administration and government in Sigismund of Luxemburg’s realms (1410–1419), (Phil. Diss., Central European University, 2017), 22-27.

<sup>416</sup> (1411-13, 1418-1421, 1426-28 and 1431-33) Intermittent Trade war between King Sigismund and Venice.

<sup>417</sup> These included, Henry of Corinthia,(1328), John of Bohemia (1331) *I Libri Commemorativi* Vol 1 nr. 383; Vol 2 nr. 147, 217, 219, 453.

<sup>418</sup> This occurred in the wake of King Louis Anjou’s death when Sigismund, as Mary’s husband sought to see his bride and himself crowned as King of both Hungary and Poland as Louis had been. The Polish nobility rejected this approach however, and claimed Jadwiga, Louis’s youngest daughter as their Queen. She was duly installed as such, marrying Władysław Jagiełło a few years later. Sigismund however, continued to claim himself as King of Poland for a period of time before quietly dropping the accolade.

for a number of years, and seemingly in an effort to please, the chancery of the *Serenissima* continued to call him by it. The victory at Grunwald however, changed the political calculus in Central Europe and King Sigismund, by now having renounced all claims to the Polish throne, sought instead an alliance with Władysław Jagiełło. Hearing of this, the Venetians began their own charm offensive, and for the first time sought favor with the effective ruler of Poland.

### **Poland 'between' Venice and Hungary**

In March of 1411, the Venetian Doge Michel Steno sent a letter in the hands of the ambassador, Paulus Nicoletti di Veneto, to Władysław Jagiełło, asking him not to enter an alliance with Sigismund. In return, the doge promised to cover, in gold, the cost of maintaining 500 of the king's knights for as long as the war between Venice and Hungary continued.<sup>419</sup> In April of that same year, the Venetian Senate discussed in secret session, other possible means of keeping the two kings at odds with one another and winning the Poles over to their side. It was here that Pietro Bicharano's name was brought up. As described earlier, he was involved with the cabal of Nuremberg merchants who succeeded in taking over the lead and salt mines located near Krakow, and went on to serve successfully as Zupparius for nearly twenty years. Thanks to his work with the salt mines, Pietro was known at court. A second Venetian envoy, Zacharius Quirino, who had also been sent on mission to Poland, reported that Pietro was on good terms with the king and might be able to use his influence there to good effect.<sup>420</sup> So it was that Pietro became tapped to act as Ambassador for the Republic by the Venetian Senate, and over the next two years he, and a series of envoys, would seek to convince the king that he should forgo an alliance with Hungary and instead join Venice.<sup>421</sup> It was however, a hopeless effort. While Venice could offer some cash incentives for taking its side, the two polities had until this moment largely ignored each other for good reason, they were distant, had only limited trading contacts, and completely different strategic aims. Sigismund was both far more of a threat and a useful ally for Władysław Jagiełło than the *Serenissima* could ever be. Władysław Jagiełło was invited by Sigismund to treat in Hungary.

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<sup>419</sup> Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae incliti regni Poloniae* vol. 10-11, 189-90; *Elementa ad Fontium Editiones* vol. 2, nr. 97.

<sup>420</sup> Sen. Secr. 4, e. 166 (April 8th 1411) [FRPolVen], 154-5.

<sup>421</sup> (1411/05/18–1412/01/23) [FRPolVen], nr. 1, nr 2, nr 3, nr 4, nr 5, nr 6, nr 7



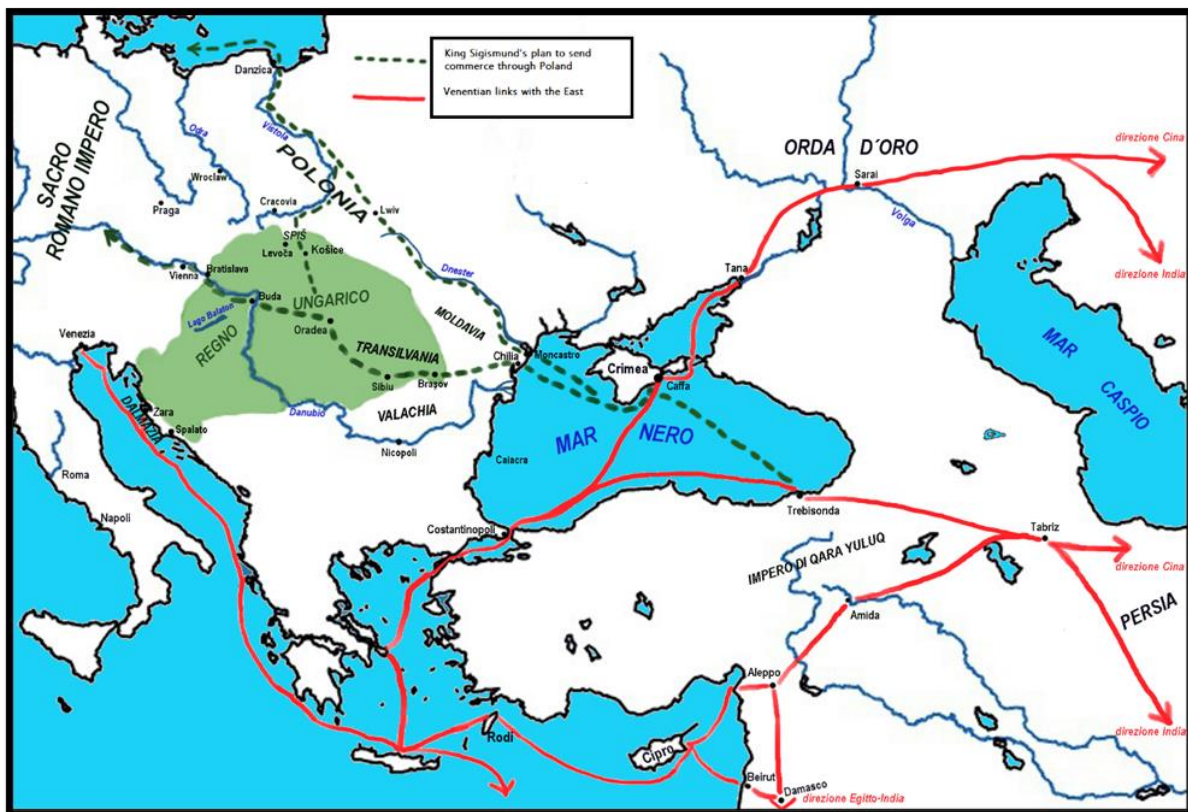


Figure 27 King Sigismund's Attempt to Blockade Venice

Source: Štefánik, Martin. "Guerra commerciale. Il blocco economico del Re Sigismondo contro Venezia. Il ruolo delle città e dei mercanti nella lotta fra gli stati", *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome - Moyen Âge* [En ligne], 127-2 | 2015, mis en ligne le 05 octobre 2015, Accessed April, 26th 2018.  
<https://doi.org/10.4000/mefrm.2820>

By now, the tension between King Sigismund and Venice had expanded from threats to outright war. Sigismund had been elected King of the Romans in part for his promise to reclaim lost Imperial territory, some of which had been gobbled up by Venice in the previous century.<sup>422</sup> Given that Venice was also seeking to encroach on Sigismund's territory in Dalmatia, it is unsurprising that despite Venetian diplomatic efforts, war was declared in early 1412. Sigismund attempted to come at the Venetians on two fronts, one military and the other economic. The latter, was the more ambitious of the two as Sigismund sought to organize an embargo against the great trading city from Hungarian lands and all the surrounding Imperial territory that he now controlled. (Figure 28) Already in late 1411, Hungarian soldiers began blocking the passes from Friuli, and on February 12<sup>th</sup> 1412, Sigismund issued an order forbidding the cities along the Eastern Adriatic Coast to trade with Venice. Suspect ships coming into such ports as Senj, which had previously operated as the major point through which

<sup>422</sup> Štefánik, "Guerra commerciale," <https://doi.org/10.4000/mefrm.2820>

Mediterranean merchandise headed towards Poland docked, were to be searched and any Venetian cargo sequestered.<sup>423</sup> Soon after, ten thousand men headed by Sigismund's loyal Florentine retainer Filippo Scolari, streamed through the pass leading into Friuli and began attacking Venetian holdings and meeting with great initial success.<sup>424</sup> After one particularly crushing victory, a large number of standards were captured and these sent to Sigismund.<sup>425</sup> Angered by these attacks and pushed to the point that they were willing to negotiate, the Venetian senate sent another group of Ambassadors to Sigismund in April 1412 with a startling offer, they would pay him the monumental sum of 300,000 ducats for rights over Dalmatia.<sup>426</sup> This enormous offer was refused outright however, and seeking to secure his flanks in order to continue to fight, Sigismund began organizing for a grand summit in Buda.

The meeting in Hungary that took place during the summer of 1412, turned into a huge affair.<sup>427</sup> Władysław Jagiełło himself was of course among the participants and would remain in Hungary as Sigismund's special guest for three and a half months as a welcome guest.<sup>428</sup> One of the key agreements made at the summit was that Sigismund would act as adjudicator in the ongoing disagreement between the Teutonic Knights and the Polish Kingdom as to the terms of peace, which after the battle of Grunwald/Tannenberg included a massive indemnity to be paid by the Knights to Poland. This may appear a sudden odd development given that Sigismund had been allied with the Teutonic Knights mere months earlier, but politics was a fickle business and in the end both sides were convinced that he was the best candidate to settle

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<sup>423</sup> Ibid.

<sup>424</sup> The Florentine Condottiere, Filippo Scolari, also known as Pypo de Ozora or Pipo Spano. Hungarian forces under Scolari eventually captured a total of 72 Venetian positions. György Szekely, "Les facteurs économiques et politiques dans les rapports de la Hongrie et de Venise à l'époque de Sigismond," in *Venezia e Ungheria nel rinascimento*, ed. Vittore Branca (Firenze: Leo S. Olschki editore, 1973), 44.

<sup>425</sup> Nineteen Venetian standards were captured at the battle which took place between the towns of Conegliano and Sacile in the Veneto.

<sup>426</sup> (1412/05/17) Štefánik, "Guerra commerciale," <https://doi.org/10.4000/mefrm.2820>

<sup>427</sup> Participants were invited from all the surrounding territories and eventually included legates sent by the Pope/Antipope John XXIII whom both Poland and Hungary recognized as legitimate. Nagy, "Royal Summits," 359-360; Janos Incze, "360 Years in Pledge. The Pledging of the Spiš Region," *Hungaro-Polonica: Young Scholars on Medieval Polish-Hungarian Relations*, eds. Dániel Bagi, Gábor Barabás, and Zsolt Máté (Pécs: Történetészeti Egyesület, 2016), 273.

<sup>428</sup> In March of 1412, the two Kings entered into initial negotiations and eventually signed the Peace Treaty of Lubowla in the town of Stará Ľubovňa in the Spiš region that is today modern Slovakia, opening the way for further talks. The group then moved to Košice, where it was eventually agreed that Sigismund would act as arbitrator between Poland and the Teutonic Knights. Incze, "360 Years in Pledge," 273.

the debate.<sup>429</sup> Once the delegates of both sides arrived, the negotiations began on July 5th, 1412.<sup>430</sup>

During the negotiations, an interesting event occurred which pitted Sigismund against the Venetians in front of Władysław Jagiełło and for a moment likely inclined him in their direction. The Polish chronicler, Jan Długosz, gives a short summary of the events,

“Meanwhile, two Venetian envoys, one of whom is the future Doge, Tomas Mocenigo, reach Buda. They have come to use Władysław as intermediary in talks with Sigismund on Dalmatia. Although adamant that Venice will never relinquish possession of Dalmatia, they have a solution: namely, that Venice will allow Hungary to be titular owner of it, for which Venice will pay Hungary a tribute of a white horse with a purple covering. When Sigismund learns of this, he feels that Venice is making fun of him, falls into a rage and has five Venetian flags, which had been captured the previous year, when the Hungarians defeated the Venetians at Forum Julia, dragged along the ground through the streets where the Venetian envoys are staying, and then along the most frequented streets of Buda to the castle. By chance Sigismund and Władysław are together, when they see this being done. Władysław is disgusted at the sight and he and his retinue refuse to tread on the flags, but Sigismund does so and is rebuked by Władysław, who tells him that it is not fitting thus to mock an enemy's flag; but that Sigismund should be expressing his gratitude to God by exhibiting a little humility; in other words, he should model himself on Władysław who, having defeated an unworthy foe in Prussia, treated the defeated with the utmost kindness, took their flags to his capital and had them placed in the cathedral there in honour of God, by whose help, he admits, they were captured.”<sup>431</sup>

Yet, despite Władysław Jagiełło's obvious disgust with Sigismund's behavior, the pull of political necessity was too much and he continued to side with the Hungarian King. In response in August, Sigismund, after two months of festivities, proclaimed a largely favorable judgement for Poland regarding their continued legal case against the Teutonic Knights. It was

<sup>429</sup> For full details on the case see: Přemysl Bar, “A Tortuous Path to Reconciliation and Justice: Sigismund of Luxembourg as Arbiter in the Dispute between the Teutonic Knights and Poland (1412-1420),” *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung/Journal of East Central European Studies* 66.1 (2017): 3-40.

<sup>430</sup> Incze, “360 Years in Pledge,” 273.

<sup>431</sup> For this lengthy quote I have chosen to use the English translation made by Maurice Michael. Jan Długosz, *The Annals of Jan Długosz: An English Abridgement*. Trans. Maurice Michael (Chichester: IM Publ, 1997), 411. For the original Latin see: Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae incliti regni Poloniae* vol. 10-11, 204-5.

agreed that the Teutonic Knights would pay 50,000 shock groschen, the equivalent of 130,000 florins to Władysław Jagiełło and a further 12,000 shock groschen or 31,000 florins to Sigismund for his work as arbitrator. This was less than the original amount agreed to in the aftermath of the battle of Grunwald/Tannenberg at the First Peace of Toruń, but had the advantage of being secured by the King of Hungary.<sup>432</sup>

On the 30<sup>th</sup> August 1412, King Sigismund agreed to take over the immediate payment of the Teutonic Knight's debt now owed to Poland as a result of his decision, with the caveat of a considerable fee owed to himself.<sup>433</sup> Sigismund would in turn use this fee to help fund his coming war with Venice.<sup>434</sup> The Teutonic Knights then agreed to pay Sigismund the rest of the money owed in a series of installments. Poland however, was to be paid off immediately, and not having such an enormous sum of money on hand, it was agreed that Sigismund would pledge the Spiš region, consisting of - thirteen towns plus Podolínec, Hniezdne, and the estate of Stará Ľubovňa – to the Polish King until the money could be repaid.<sup>435</sup> The entire agreement was worked out between the three parties by October 15<sup>th</sup> 1412, and the charter was issued by Sigismund on November the 8<sup>th</sup> while he sat in Zagreb contemplating an attack against Venice.<sup>436</sup> The collection of the money from the Teutonic Knights was assigned to the Florentine, Onofrio di Bardo, who had worked previously as a financial adviser to Filippo Scolari and in 1413, was named *familiaris* by King Sigismund. He and his family would go on to vibrant careers in Hungary, taking over a number of royal monopolies including the all-important minting chamber of Kremnica.<sup>437</sup> As it turned out, the Teutonic Knights had some difficulties in meeting the terms of repayment. Sigismund, who had been banking on having the money in hand in time for his coronation as King of the Romans, was forced to borrow the considerable sum from Antonio Fronte, another Florentine active in Hungary, to whom the Teutonic Knights were now obliged to pay.<sup>438</sup> The rest of the terms of peace between the Polish

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<sup>432</sup> Incze, "360 Years in Pledge," 271-4.

<sup>433</sup> King Sigismund demanded that the knights pay him an additional 12,000 shock grosz on top of the 50,000 shock grosz owed, in payment for his services as a mediator and for immediately clearing their debt with Poland. The Knights agreed to these terms, showing how strongly they wished to be out from under owing anything to the Polish King. Incze, "360 Years in Pledge," 273-4.

<sup>434</sup> This is the most popular theory as to what Sigismund did with his 12,000 shock grosz fee. Incze, "360 Years in Pledge," 279.

<sup>435</sup> Incze, "360 Years in Pledge," 275.

<sup>436</sup> Incze, "360 Years in Pledge," 278-9.

<sup>437</sup> Arany, "Florentine Families in Hungary," 42, 224-7; Incze, "360 Years in Pledge," 282.

<sup>438</sup> Sigismund was crowned king of the Romans in Aachen on November 8, 1414. Antonio di Pietro di Fronte had first visited Zadar in 1392; but in 1406, moved permanently to Hungary as an associate of Filippo Scolari (Pipo Spano). In 1410, he settled some of Filippo's debts with the Castellan of Kalisz in Wielkopolska. He served in a number of positions under Sigismund and was named *familiaris* by the King in 1419, but spent much of his later

crown and the Teutonic knights would continue to be argued over for the next hundred years, only being settled with the disbanding of the Teutonic State, but the pledging of the Spiš region would continue even longer than this, and was not redeemed until 1772, just as Poland itself was disappearing from the map of Europe.<sup>439</sup>

King Sigismund's attempt to embargo the Venetians would continue on and off throughout the rest of his reign, but would prove ultimately unsuccessful. Meanwhile, trade across the Polish/Hungarian border began to flow more comfortably again. In 1414, Władysław Jagiełło dropped by half the amount of customs duty collected in the Krakow area for iron, copper and other goods in the war-time and destroyed by the plague.<sup>440</sup> Sigismund's attempts to blockade Venetian shipping however, hampered products from arriving or being transported down from Poland to the port of Senj as had been common previously. The blockade also affected merchants from Nuremberg who traded through the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* in Venice. As Emperor, Sigismund counted the City of Nuremberg among his vassals and in 1420, sought to prevent them from trading with the Lagoon City which affected poorly those Nuremberg merchants who traded through Poland.<sup>441</sup> A similar prohibition was raised for Wrocław, further cutting off Poland's access to Italian goods that normally ran from the West.<sup>442</sup> The Florentine merchant Antonio di ser Matteo, who traded heavily between Krakow, Wrocław, and Venice, was among those caught up in the embargo and was forced to present himself before the Wrocław City Council in March of 1421. Antonio played dumb at the inquest, saying that he had had no idea that trade had been prohibited and with the assistance of friends was able to escape punishment.<sup>443</sup> His case was likely helped by the fact that the same year, Sigismund lost on the military front in both Friuli and Dalmatia, ceding effective control of both regions to the Venetians while internal strife led him to lift the ban on trade for both

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years in Florence, involving himself in government and managing his affairs in Hungary from afar. For more see: Arany, "Florentine Families in Hungary," 206-7; Incze, "360 Years in Pledge," 283-4.

<sup>439</sup> For more detail on the outcome of the long-running Polish-Teutonic Knight legal and military struggle see: Přemysl, "A Tortuous Path to Reconciliation," 3-40; Incze, "360 Years in Pledge," 267.

<sup>440</sup> (1414/03/19) *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár IV. (1413–1414)*, ed. Mályusz Elemér (Budapest: Magyar Országos Levéltár kiadványai, II. Forráskiadványok 25. 1994), nr. 1784.

<sup>441</sup> Sigismund requested that all merchants within his realms use the Genoese shipping routes as opposed to the Venetian on January 20<sup>th</sup> 1420. Surprisingly, the Nuremberg City Council acquiesced to this almost immediately. This was likely because the council was at the time in the hands of the Schürstab Stromeir families, who had close ties with Genoa and Milan. A few years later, the "Venetian faction" which included the Rummel, Pirckheimer, Imhof, Groß, Kreß, Mendel and Paumgartner families, would come to power in the city and policies would change. Štefánik, "Guerra commerciale," <https://doi.org/10.4000/mefrm.2820>

<sup>442</sup> Ibid.

<sup>443</sup> Otto Stobbe, "Mittheilungen aus Breslauer Signaturbüchern," in *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens Bd. 7, H. 2* hereafter [Bresbook 7], 344-5.

Nuremberg and Wrocław<sup>444</sup> Two years later however, having regrouped his forces and expanded his trading connections to the East through links with Genoa and the Black Sea coast via Transylvania, Sigismund reimposed the ban over the vociferous arguments of merchants from Nuremberg and other cities within the Empire.<sup>445</sup>

Sigismund was at the same time determined to keep good relations with the Polish king and to that end, in 1425 sought the assistance of his ally, Filippo Maria Visconti, Duke of Milan (r. 1412-1447), who was on good terms with Władysław Jagiełło.<sup>446</sup> The best that could be achieved however, was a general neutrality on Władysław Jagiełło's part regarding Sigismund's war against the Venetians and with this, the Hungarian King had to be content. The Venetians for their part, also sought to keep up friendly relations with Poland, inserting wedges into Władysław Jagiełło's relationship with Sigismund at any opportunity. In 1419 for example, the Venetian Senate sent the ducal notary, Francesco della Siega to Poland, seeking to convince the king to take up their part with Sigismund and seeking a truce.<sup>447</sup> A few years later, in 1432, a more urgent letter was sent by the Venetian Doge, Francisco Foscari, reporting to Władysław Jagiełło that whatever Sigismund may have said, he was not preparing troops to send against the Ottomans, but was instead massing troops to enter Wallachian territory which would put him at odds with Poland.<sup>448</sup> Still, Poland's interest in keeping good relations with its neighbor Hungary superseded any thought Władysław Jagiełło might have had about seeking a closer relationship with Venice.

Relations along the Polish Hungarian border thus settled down after 1412, remaining cool, but with constant movement of trade and people crossing from both sides. Fewer Italians however, made use of the route as Sigismund's blockade took its toll. The situation for Italians in Hungary also took a turn when King Sigismund's faithful Florentine retainer Filippo Scolari died in 1426.<sup>449</sup> After the death of his favored official, King Sigismund appears to have lost some of his faith in the Hungarian Florentine community, while some Florentines continued to hold their posts in the royal administration, the king confiscated the property of others and even

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<sup>444</sup> (1421/04/21) - Wrocław Ibid.

<sup>445</sup> (1423/08/16) Ibid.

<sup>446</sup> (1425/12/06 - 1429/04/29) *Inventari E Regesti Del R. Archivio Di Stato in Milano Milano, Palazzo Del Senato*, Vol. II part 2. Ed. Cesare Manaresi (Milan: Cisalpino-Goliardica, 1971), nr. 66, nr 84, nr 101, nr. 94, nr 298.

<sup>447</sup> *I libri commemoriali della Repubblica di Venezia : regesti. Vol. 4* ed. Fratelli Visentini (Venice: Deputazione veneta di storia patria, 1896), nr. 19, nr 21, nr 22.

<sup>448</sup> [CodEp] II, 305.

<sup>449</sup> Prajda, "The Florentine Scolari Family," 529-33.

imprisoned a number of them.<sup>450</sup> The Italian community in Hungary was never again as numerous or influential as it had been during the earlier years of the reign of King Sigismund.

As Italian interest in Hungary waned, so too did the cross-border connections with Poland. Even as Hungarian and Polish trade relations improved during the second half of the fifteenth century, some improvements were even made, the movement of Italians largely subsided. Privileges were confirmed between the two kingdoms regarding both side's trading rights in 1440 but the Hungarian civil war which raged from 1440-57 and Hussite activity near the borders, wrought havoc which dampened foreign trade for a time.<sup>451</sup> In 1449 in particular, the situation turned ugly as there was near constant skirmishing along the route which ran from Krakow through Muszyna and into the Spiš region.<sup>452</sup> A flurry of letters and complaints were sent regarding the issue and eventually the matter was resolved. True stability however, only returned under the masterful hand of Matthias Corvinus.<sup>453</sup> In 1473 however, King Casimir IV Jagiełło, reconfirmed Krakow's staple rights encouraging merchants coming from Hungary who did not wish to be forced to display their wares, to seek other outlets for their goods or otherwise bypass the city altogether. At last, in 1498, an accord was signed between Poland, Hungary, and Lithuania authorizing freedom of trade between the three polities.

## 2.3 Trade to the East

Where local dynastic policies and military concerns underlay much of how the northern and southern trade paths ran through Poland, the eastern routes were directly impacted by the political stratagems conducted by Italian powers between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. As one of the terminus points of the silk road network, the Black Sea was a valued commercial space. During the thirteenth century, the region was under the sway of the Mongol Tartar Khanates, but Italian trading outposts soon sprang up all along the sea's coast. These colonies became important entrepôts, dominated by Genoese and Venetian merchants.

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<sup>450</sup> Prajda, "The Florentine Soclari," 532-3.

<sup>451</sup> [KDMK] I nr 137; Carter, *Trade*, 74.

<sup>452</sup> W. Bębynek, "Starostwo Muszyńskie własność biskupstwa krakowskiego [Muszyna Starosty, ownership of the Krakow Bishopric]." *Przewodnik Naukowy i Literacki*, vol. 42 nr. 1 Lviv (1914): 14.

<sup>453</sup> István Draskóczy, "Commercial Contacts of Buda along the Danube and beyond," In *Medieval Buda in Context* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 292.

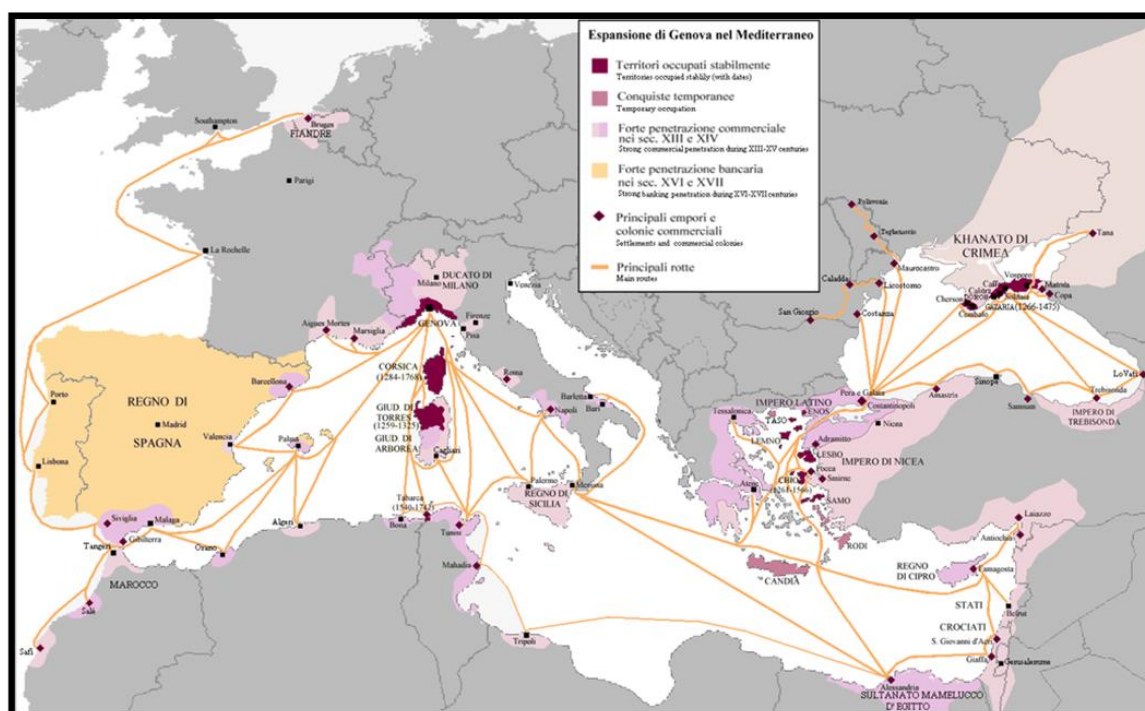


Figure 28 Genoese Expansion in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea

Source Wikimedia [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genoese\\_colonies#/media/File:Repubblica\\_di\\_Genova.png](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genoese_colonies#/media/File:Repubblica_di_Genova.png)  
 Accessed December 20<sup>th</sup> 2020

In the wake of the first Crusades, Genoa had become an important trading power, setting up trading posts in Alexandria, Tunis, Sicily and the Byzantine Empire. (Figure 8) By mid-century, they were trading freely in the Black Sea under the treaty of Nymphaeum; and around 1260, they founded the great emporium of Caffa (Feodosia) on the Crimean Peninsula.<sup>454</sup> Soon they would establish other posts; all strategically placed near significant rivers – Tana (Azov) on the Don, Kiliya at the mouth of the Danube, and Moncastro (Bilhorod-Dnistrovskiy) on the Dniester, linking the trade routes of the Eurasian Steppe to the Mediterranean.<sup>455</sup> (Figure 29/30)

<sup>454</sup> In 1261, Genoa signed the Nymphaeum Treaty with Michael VIII Palaiologos, the Emperor of Nicea. This treaty granted the Genoese freedom of navigation and trading rights in the Black Sea, in return for placing their naval fleet at the Empire's disposal. This treaty was highly contentious throughout the rest of Catholic Europe. It came in the wake of Michael VIII Palaiologos's failed attempt in 1260, to retake Constantinople from the Latin Kingdom, who had held it since the sack of 1204, in the midst of the Fourth Crusade. As the Ligurian port was seen to have put its fleet at the command of a scheming Eastern Emperor against its Western Catholic brethren, the Pope placed the city under interdict. This did not dissuade them from signing the treaty and opening up a new realm for commerce in the East. Virgil Ciocîltan, *The Mongols and the Black Sea trade in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 94.

<sup>455</sup> The colony of Moncastro has gone by many names. During the period it was often called Białogród or Bilogrodum in Polish sources; it can also be found in historical literature as Album Castrum, Ferernar, Mauro Castro, Akkerman, Asprocastro, and Cetatea Albă, among others. It has further often been confused with Cetatea Neagra, a now abandoned site on the eastern bank of the Dniester. It is possible in fact, that during the earlier period, this settlement was the port city that much of the trade running along the *via Tartarica* from





Figure 29 Italian Colonies in the Black Sea

Source: Esther M. Zimmer Lederberg, Esther M. Zimmer Lederberg Memorial Website European Colonies on the Black Sea [http://www.estherlederberg.com/Eugenics%20\(CSHL List\)/Genoa%20Black%20Sea.html](http://www.estherlederberg.com/Eugenics%20(CSHL%20List)/Genoa%20Black%20Sea.html) Accessed December 20, 2020

While the majority of this trade went by ship through the Bosphorus, as the sea passage that connected the Black Sea and the Mediterranean was always to be preferred by traders for the relative safety and speed water-travel provided. However, conflicts in this zone and trading opportunities would promote the use of overland routes. These routes wound their way through Poland, and eventually to the Mediterranean through Hungary or German Lands, or else up the Vistula to the Baltic.

Poland arrived. By the mid-fourteenth century however, trade had shifted decidedly to Moncastro when it came under the control of the princes of Moldovia. For more on the complicated history and confused historiography of the site see: Laurentiu Radvan, *At Europe's Borders: Medieval Towns in the Romanian Principalities* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 473-84; Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae incliti regni Poloniae* vol. 10-11, 198.

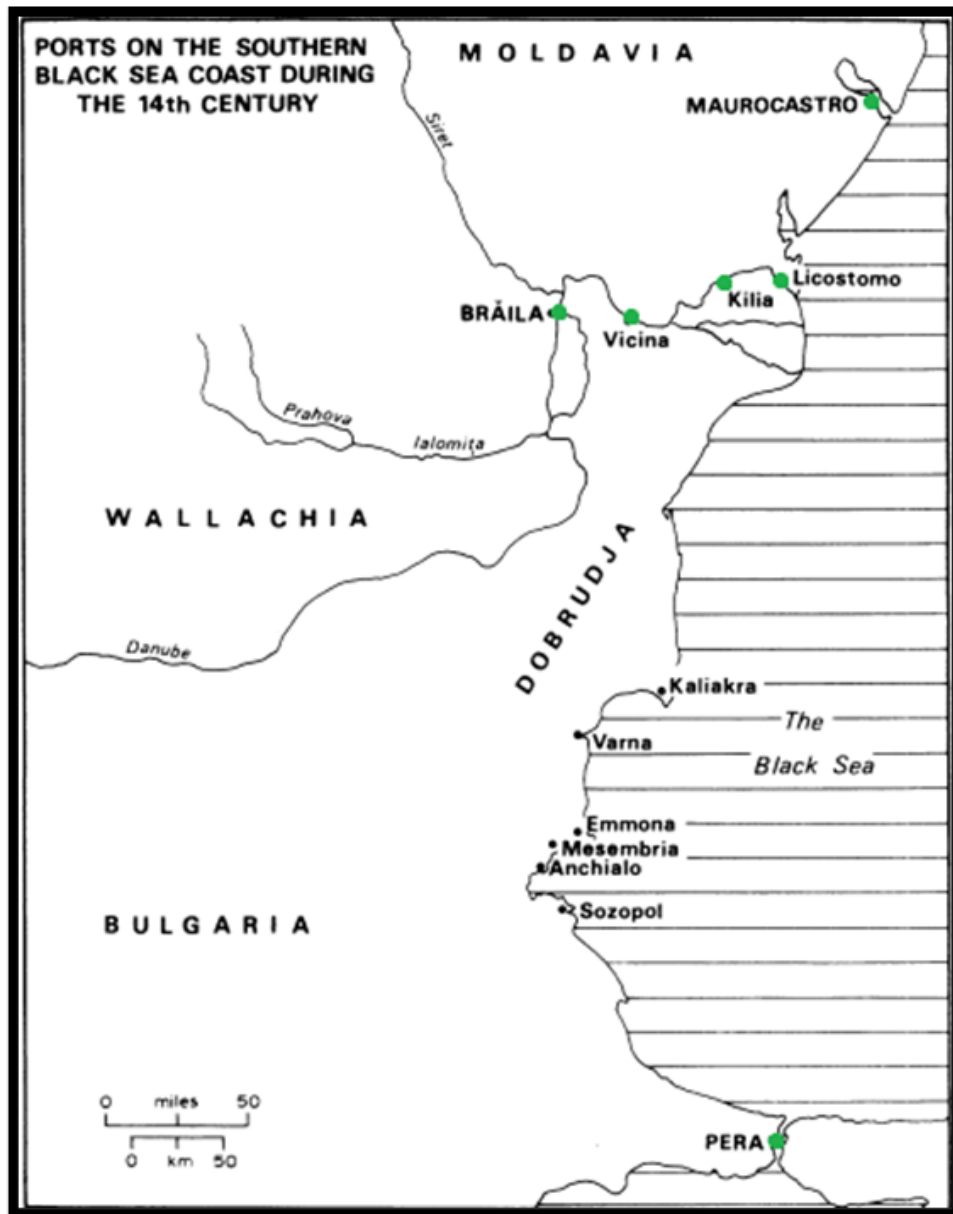


Figure 30 Ports on the Southern Black Sea Coast – Those Linked to Trade Through Poland Marked in Green

Source: Dennis Deletant, "Genoese, Tatars and Rumanians at the Mouth of the Danube in the Fourteenth Century." *The Slavonic and East European Review*, vol. 62, no. 4, (1984): 512.

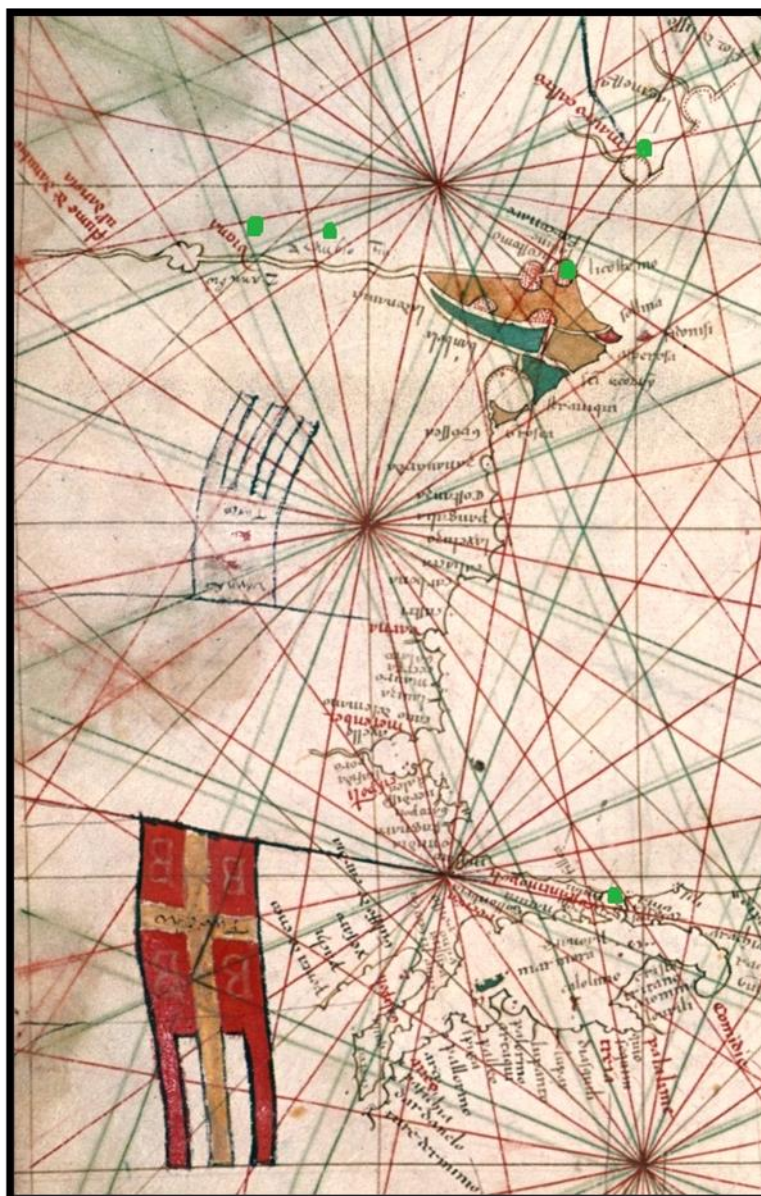


Figure 31 Ports on the Southern Black Sea Coast as Represented in the Portolan Chart of Pietro Vesconte C. 1331 – Those Linked to Trade Through Poland Marked in Green

Source: British Library MS 27376

<http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/record.asp?MSID=8335&CollID=27&NStart=27376>

Accessed January 3<sup>rd</sup> 2021

During the thirteenth and fourteenth century, the *Via Tartarica*, so called because it ran through the lands controlled first by the Mongols of the Golden Horde and later the Crimean Khanate, generally referred to as Tartars, was the favored path. The route came into use in the thirteenth century but at the start of the fifteenth century, due to instability within the Horde caused by the rise of Tamerlane and a changing political map to the South in Wallachia and Moldavia, the route was superseded by a second one known as the *Via Walachiensis*. This new path

avoided lands controlled by the Khanate and instead made its way through the newly formed states of the Danube Principalities to outlets on the coast of the Black Sea – principally Italian-dominated Moncastro and Kiliya. (Figures 31/32) From the termini of both routes, ships were used to carry goods to and from the Crimea and beyond to Asia Minor and the Mediterranean beyond the Dardanelles. As different polities waxed and waned in the East - first the Mongol Tartars and later the Ottoman Turks - the power of the Italian cities to dictate policy in the Black Sea was altered. These stratagems pitted above all Genoa and Venice against the rising might of the Ottoman Empire.

During the fifteenth century as the Ottoman noose tightened, the change in the balance of power along the Black Sea gave impetus to an initial upsurge in overland traffic through Poland. Polish merchants and rulers tracked these changes and sought at every turn to benefit by increasing incentives for trade to pass through their lands. The greatest beneficiary of these changes was the City of Lviv, where numerous Polish, Armenian, Jewish, Ruthenian, Wallachian, Italian, and other traders would meet, mingle, and reside. The city became a grand emporium, and one of few “constant markets” in Europe. Italians continued to trade through the Black Sea even after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, but by end of the century, the last Italian colonies in the region would be taken by the Ottomans and commerce shifted largely into the hands of Armenian and Jewish merchants who could more easily trade within the Empire.

### 2.3.1 The Via Tartarica

The *Via Tartarica* developed during the thirteenth century in the wake of the great Mongol invasions of 1241; when the Golden Horde under Batu Khan had swept through Central Eastern Europe, devastating Hungary and sacking the Polish capital of Krakow, before retreating to settle in the Northern Black Sea region.<sup>456</sup> (Figure 33) Traders interested in spices, silks from the far East, or fur, wax, and honey from the Crimea, had to deal with these Tartars and they were quick to do so. By 1245, as recorded by the Franciscan Friar, Giovanni de Pian di Carpine (Plano Carpini), Polish merchants were among those to be found in Kiev, where large numbers of traders from Venice, Genoa, Pisa, Byzantium, and Rus, had gathered seeking to reestablish

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<sup>456</sup> Two more smaller raids would follow in 1259-60 and 1287-8. Ciocîltan, *The Mongols*, 256; Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the West: 1221-1410* (London: Routledge, 2018).



trading ties.<sup>457</sup> Kiev had previously stood at the heart of the network of trade relations, but it lost its standing after being sacked by the Mongols; and was soon overtaken by other rising cities. Włodzimierz (Volodymyr-Volynsky) was one of the first to benefit from Kiev's decline, and briefly became a major node on the route that connected Hanseatic trade with the East.<sup>458</sup> Włodzimierz too, however, was soon surpassed by a rival, the better situated City of Lviv. Founded in the 1250s, Lviv quickly grew to prominence, as it was privileged by the Princes of Galicia-Volhynia. The region of Galicia-Volhynia, also known as Red Ruthenia, had fallen under the suzerainty of the Golden Horde in the wake of the Mongol invasion of 1241, but it continued to be ruled by the local princelings. These rulers encouraged trade to the East with the Mongols Tartars, along the route through their lands, by offering privileges to merchants and inviting Jews, and Armenians to settle in their territory.<sup>459</sup> The end of the thirteenth century therefore saw a flourishing of trade through Lviv as it became a major hub along the *Via Tartarica*; with merchants going to and from the Crimea.

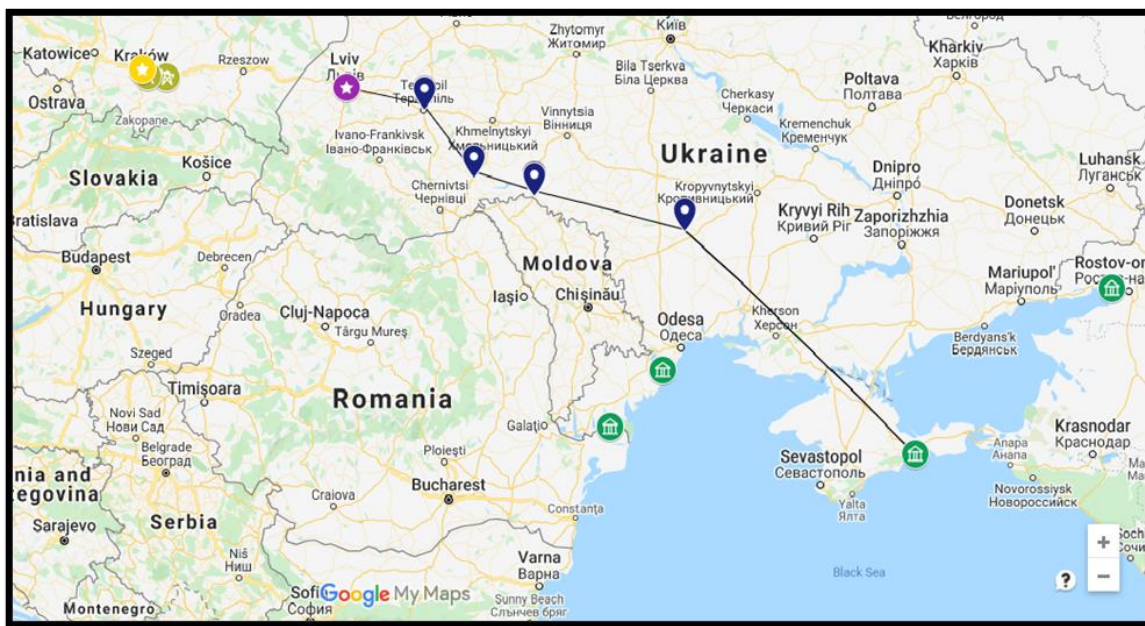


Figure 32 The Via Tartarica

<sup>457</sup> “*Insuper testes sunt mercatores Wratislavie, qui usque in Kioviam venerunt nobiscum [et] sciverunt quod nos manus intravimus Tartarorum; et multi alii mercatores, tam de Polonia, quam de Austria, qui venerunt in Kioviam postquam ad Tartaros ieramus*”; Giovanni di Pian di Carpine, *Storia dei Mongoli* edited by Enrico Menestò (Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 1989), 332.

<sup>458</sup> Małowist, “Polish-Flemish trade in the Middle Ages,” 1; Kutrzeba, *Finanse i handel*, 291.

<sup>459</sup> The city's founding is attributed to the Galician Prince Daniil Romanovich (1202-1264), who named it in honor of his son and heir Lev (1264-1300). The first mention of the city in historical sources comes from 1256 in the Galician-Volhynian Chronicle. Eleonora Nadel-Golobič, “Armenians and Jews in medieval Lvov: Their role in oriental trade, 1400-1600,” *Cahiers du Monde Russe* 20.3 (1979): 345; Marian Oleś, “Casimir The Great and the Armenian Privileges, 1333-1370,” *Études Slaves et Est-Européennes / Slavic and East-European Studies* 11, no. 3/4 (1966):72.

This route received a further boost after 1285, when trouble in the East upset Genoa's link with the termination points of the Silk Roads and the Mediterranean. First, the status of Genoese traders in Cilician Armenia deteriorated; as it came under the sway of the expanding Mamluk Sultanate. Then in 1290, after losing a series of conflicts, the Genoese signed an unfavorable peace treaty with the Sultan Al-Mansur Qalawun (1222-1290), which cut them off from direct access to Eastern trade via the Red Sea to the Indian Ocean. The Eastern circle of the Mediterranean now lay in the hands of an expanding enemy and so the Genoese were forced to go in search of new route to reach Eastern goods. Post 1290, the silk-road trade that had previously moved in a straight line from Bagdad to Genoese ports on the Mediterranean, was forced on a long, round-about circuit to the Black Sea. While the Mamluks continued to block direct access to goods coming via the Indian ocean, they were very willing to act as trade partners with the Genoese, and were hungry for slaves from the Crimea.<sup>460</sup>

The overland route *Via Tartarica* thus gained prominence; and the Genoese soon began expanding the number of colonies they operated along the Black Sea coast. Trouble erupted, however, in 1299 upon the bloody death of Nogai Khan during a battle for control of the Golden Horde. The death of Nogai led to great disruption in the region as rival khans fought for power. One of the claimants, Toqta Khan, emerged victorious and trade might have resumed, except that larger geo-political concerns got in the way; as the Horde jostled for position against the Mamluk Sultanate. The Genoese in the Black Sea had acted for many years as slave dealers of Crimean, primarily Tartar subjects, to the Sultans in Egypt; moving their human cargo from the Black Sea through the Bosphorus to Mamluk ports on the Mediterranean.<sup>461</sup> As the khans received a ten percent cut on this exchange, they rarely intervened in Italian affairs.<sup>462</sup> By 1306, however, the Khanate was facing a major manpower shortage after the devastating civil war. With the Mamluks seeking to expand in the East, Toqta Khan sought to limit the number of slaves being shipped from his own pool of human resources to his enemies. Toqta Khan demanded that the Genoese curtail their activities, but they refused. The nexus for human trafficking in the Black Sea was Caffa, and after a series of unsuccessful diplomatic initiatives, in 1307 Toqta put the city to siege.<sup>463</sup> The city held out for over eight months, but finally its

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<sup>460</sup>The Genoese also sought to reach India directly via the Atlantic route with the first recorded voyage recorded in 1291, just a year after the disastrous settlement. Unfortunately, the ships failed to return, and the attempt was not repeated. Ciociltan, *The Mongols*, 88-9.

<sup>461</sup> For a detailed study on this trade see: Hannah Barker, "Egyptian and Italian Merchants in the Black Sea Slave Trade, 1260-1500," (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2014).

<sup>462</sup> Małowist, "Kaffa," 127.

<sup>463</sup> Ciociltan, *The Mongols*, 173-202.

residents, unable to continue, torched their homes themselves and abandoned the site, leaving nothing but ashes.<sup>464</sup> Caffa would be rebuilt in 1313, but only under Toqta's successor, Ozbek Khan, who in the wake of shifting political winds, again sought to reestablish trading ties with the Genoese.<sup>465</sup> Such events led to obvious disruptions, but in the wake of Ozbek Khan's more favorable rule, the *Via Tartarica* was once again open for trade. We unfortunately lack solid Polish sources that would enlighten as to say how disruptive these events may have been, but we can assume they were dramatic.



Figure 33 Thirteenth Century Galicia-Volhynia

Source: Oleksandr Palii, A History of Ukraine <http://radiolemborg.com/ua-articles/ua-allarticles/a-history-of-ukraine-episode-30-principality-of-galicia-volhynia-kingdom-of-ruthenia> Accessed December 12th 2020

<sup>464</sup> Caffa, although founded by the Genoese around 1260, changed hands several times and was at this moment actually controlled by Genoa's great rival, Venice, who oversaw it from 1296-1308.

<sup>465</sup> Ciociltan, *The Mongols*, 157-84.



The story on the Polish side picks up again in 1320, when the Prince of Galicia granted merchants from Krakow safe passage and reduced previous tariffs to travel through his territory, signaling that trade had indeed recommenced in the region.<sup>466</sup>

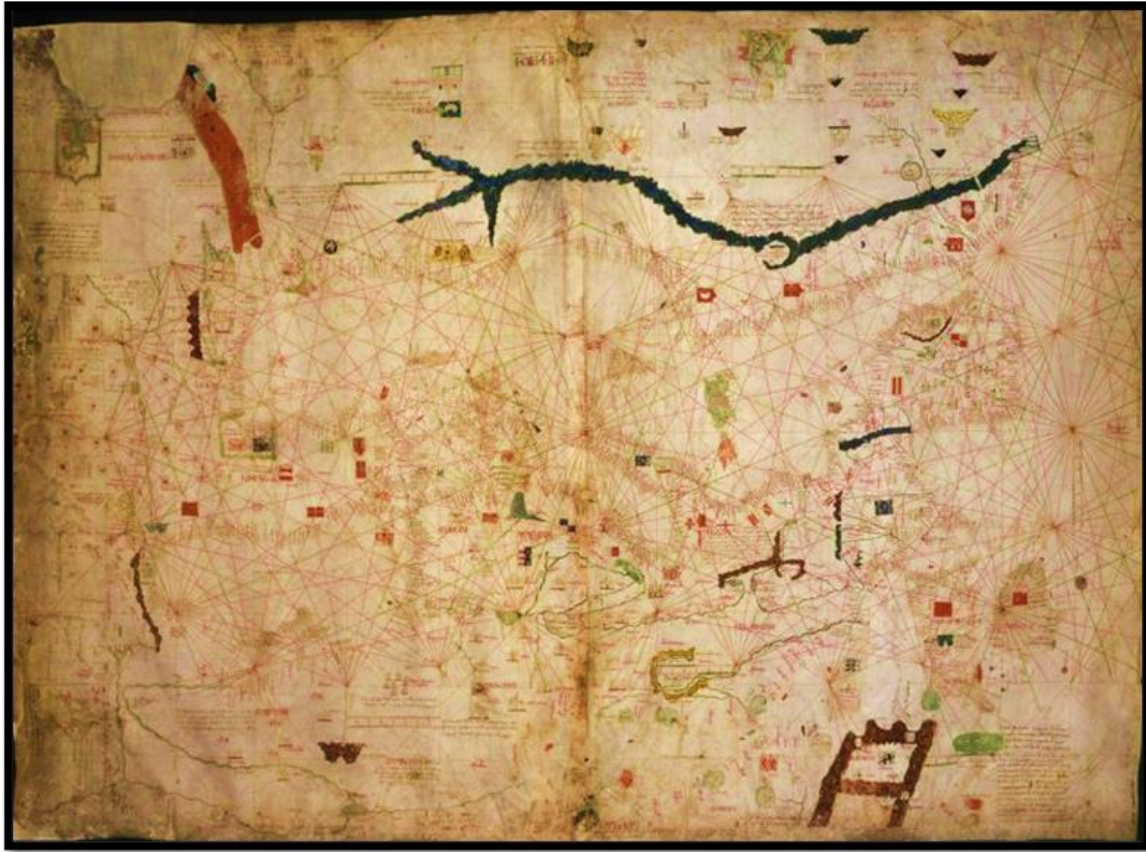


Figure 34 The 1339 Portolan Map by Angelino Dulcert

Source: Bibliotheque Nationale de France in Paris, France (B.696) Wikipedia: Wikimedia  
[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b8/Map\\_of\\_Angelino\\_Dulcert.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b8/Map_of_Angelino_Dulcert.jpg) Accessed December 12th, 2020

An Armenian community also became firmly settled in the area during the next few years, thanks to their business acumen and knowledge of Kipchak, spoken by members of the Horde, and they soon came to dominate much of the trade along the *Via Tartarica*.<sup>467</sup> During this period, it also became common for Prussian traders from Toruń to arrive in Lviv, seeking goods from the East. These merchants had been granted privileges by the Princes of Galicia–Volhynia; and thus an axis connecting the Italian Black Sea Ports with the Baltic running via Lviv and Toruń was formed. In this way, a number of Armenian and Italian merchants made

<sup>466</sup> Under Andreas of Galicia, Duke of the Russian Principality of Galicia–Volhynia – tariffs were lowered from 3 grosz per animal to 1 grosz. Kutrzeba, *Finanse i handel*, 291.

<sup>467</sup> Oleś, “Casimir the Great and the Armenian Privileges,” 76-8; Nadel-Golobič, “Armenians and Jews in Medieval Lvov,” 360-2.



their way to Toruń.<sup>468</sup> The Genoese were certainly aware of this route; as special mention of it is made on the 1339 portolan created by Angelino Dulcert. (Figure 35/36) Here, under a depiction of the obviously crenelated town of “*civita de Leo*” – Lviv, there is included an inscription “*ad civitatem istam vadunt mercatores, et postea vadunt per mare gothalandie ad partes fiandres specialiter in Bruges.*”<sup>469</sup> -To that city merchants go, and afterwards they go by the Sea of Gotland to the area of Flanders and especially to Bruges.

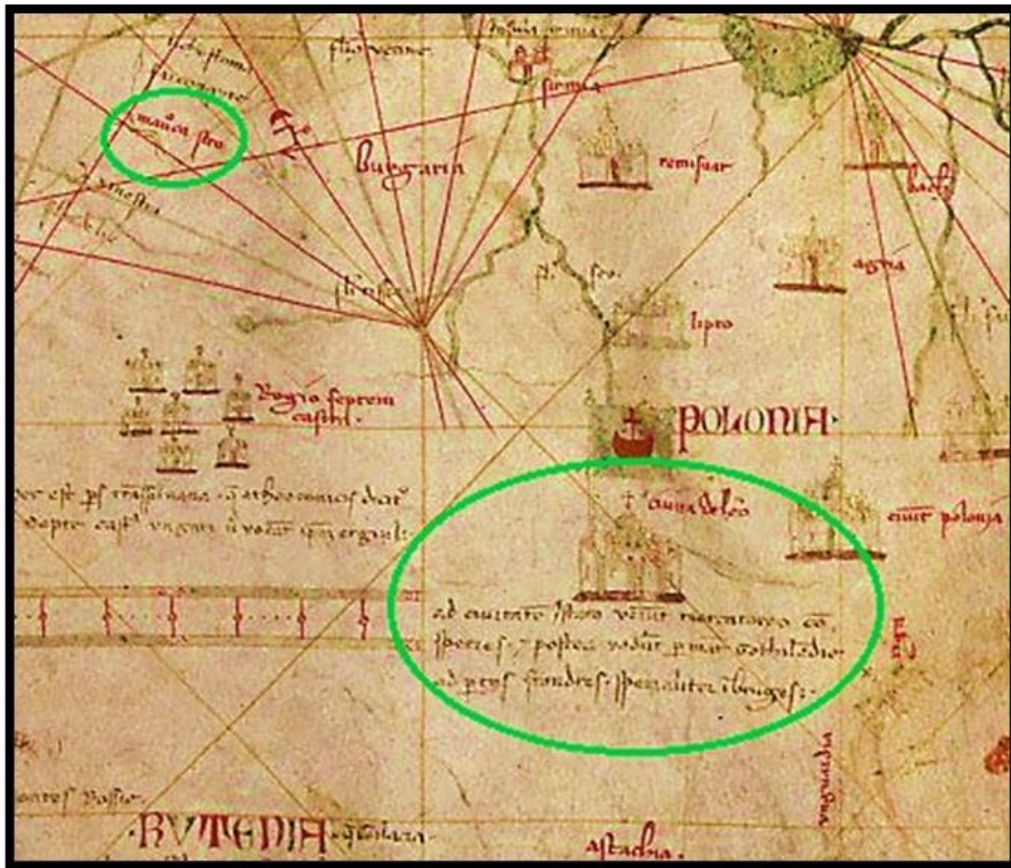


Figure 35 Detail Showing Lviv and Moncastro from the 1339 Portolan Map by Angelino Dulcert

Source: Bibliotheque Nationale de France in Paris, France (B.696) Wikipedia: Wikimedia  
[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b8/Map\\_of\\_Angelino\\_Dulcert.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b8/Map_of_Angelino_Dulcert.jpg)

<sup>468</sup> Toruń was situated on an old trade route that during the early middle ages had connected the “Varangians to the Greeks” – the Black Sea and the Baltic -- and now with paths stretching down to Silesia. The oldest route towards “Rus” went through Włodzimierz along the Vistula, and then the Bug, to Kiev. During the fourteenth century, the path linking to Lviv became more favored as the means by which to acquire goods from the Black Sea. Henryk Samsonowicz, “The city and the trade route in the early Middle Ages.” in *Central and Eastern Europe in the middle ages: A cultural history ; Essays in Honour of Paul W. Knoll*. eds. Piotr Górecki and Nancy Deussen (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2009), 26; Dennis Deletant, “Moldavia between Hungary and Poland, 1347-1412,” *The Slavonic and East European Review* 64, no. 2 (1986): 203.

<sup>469</sup> Ровенчак, І. І. "Львів на найдавніших географічних картах [Lviv on the oldest geographic maps]," *Вісник геодезії та картографії* 2 (2013): 45-6.

Moncastro is further picked out in red; and shown as the closest port on the Black Sea to Lviv. In the wake of Casimir the Great's conquest of the region in the 1340s, and the imposition of staple rights and increased tariffs in Krakow and Lviv, trade was made more expensive along this route but this did not halt its flow.<sup>470</sup> Still, a major change came when, in the 1340s, Polish forces of Casimir the Great succeeded in conquering the territory of the princes of Galicia–Volhynia. (Figure 34) In 1353, the Golden Horde recognized the transfer of authority over its now former vassal principality to what the Polish crown was calling Red Ruthenia. Despite these nominal losses, relations between the Horde and Poland were at an all-time high, and during the next couple of years Tartar cavalry would fight beside Polish troops against the Lithuanians.<sup>471</sup>

The 1340s also saw moves by Louis Anjou, the King of Hungary (1324-1382, from 1370 King of Poland), Casimir's nephew and eventual successor, towards expansion east of the Carpathian mountains into Tartar held territory.<sup>472</sup> Success in this area would eventually lead to the formation of a "Hungarian corridor" that had trade flowing along the Danube to the Black Sea; establishing yet another route for trade with the Italian Black Sea ports.<sup>473</sup> Part of this initiative included a treaty of alliance with Genoa in 1352 against their mutual enemy Venice, and the granting of free trading rights for Genoese merchants through the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>474</sup> In 1358, Louis then succeeded in wresting control over the Dalmatian coast from Venice, thus giving the Hungarian King a foothold on the Black Sea, the Mediterranean coast, and control of an overland route between the two.<sup>475</sup> Through positive immigration policies and generous trade and tax privileges to towns along the route, Louis sought to entice merchants, particularly Genoese and South-Germans, to travel through his territories, excluding the Venetians. Louis's successor, Sigismund of Luxembourg (r.1387-1437), would take this trade strategy one step

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<sup>470</sup> Merchants going from North to South had to cart their wares Via Brześć, Łęczycza, Inowłódz, Opoczno, Sandomierz, Wiślica, Krakow and Sącz. The King further confirmed Krakow's stapling rights for anyone traveling towards Russian lands "*Versus Russiam*" which included Lviv, by requiring that they first stop and display their wares in the town square before moving on. This was a complete victory for the Krakow merchants but caused traders from other cities -- Toruń in particular -- to howl with rage. This sowed the seeds that would flower into a full trade-war in the future in the early fifteenth century. Starzynski, "Civitas Nostra Cracoviensis. (part II)," 6-7; Deletant, "Moldavia between Hungary and Poland," 203.

<sup>471</sup> Ciocîltan, *The Mongols*, 218.

<sup>472</sup> For the backstory and success of the Hungarian forces in this area see: Borbála Obrusánszky, "Tatarian-Hungarian relations," *Крымское историческое обозрение* 2 (2014): 88-97.

<sup>473</sup> Deletant, "Moldavia between Hungary and Poland," 189.

<sup>474</sup> The initial treaty was signed in 1352 and subsequently renewed in 1379; by which time Louis Anjou had further become King of Poland. Obrusánszky, *Tatarian-Hungarian relations*, 94.

<sup>475</sup> Goods were to move from Kiliya on the Black sea, at the mouth of the Danube, to Brasov, and from hence to Buda. From Buda, goods would then move on to either the Senj on the Dalmatian coast -- where they entered the Mediterranean circuit, or to Vienna and the Southern German markets

further, seeking to coerce merchants into trading through territory he controlled and strangle Venetian trade entirely through an ultimately unsuccessful embargo.<sup>476</sup> As discussed above, these machinations would come to have significant impact on relations between Poland and Venice; as both Hungary and the Serenissima sought to court the Polish king to their side in the conflict.

As his nephew was gaining ground along the Danube, in 1356 Casimir granted the City of Lviv Magdeburg Law and in the same year installed a High Court of Magdeburg Law in the Castle at Krakow to adjudicate conflicts within the kingdom.<sup>477</sup> Two years later, he would grant Krakow its great Charter with extensive trading privileges that would solidify it as the pre-eminent Polish city.<sup>478</sup> From here onwards, Krakow merchants would take a keen interest in trade through Lviv. Large amounts of wax, spices, and silk began moving west in exchange for cloth and canvas.<sup>479</sup> By the 1360s he had fully consolidated Polish control over the region of Red Ruthenia; and was seeking to promote trade through Lviv.<sup>480</sup> To accomplish this, he ensured that merchants from Krakow faced no tariffs along the route to Lviv; and opened up a line through to the German Lands, by granting merchants from Nuremberg free trade as well.<sup>481</sup> Travelers leaving Lviv traveled Southeast through Red Ruthenia then Podolia through the middle Dniester valley, making stops at Tarnopol, Kamieniec, Mohylew, and Koniecpole; until they arrived in the Crimea and to the great Italian emporia of Caffa or Tana (or made the same

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<sup>476</sup> Matei Cazacu, *I rapporti tra la Repubblica di Venezia e Modova all'inizio del Quattrocento*," in *Dall'Adriatico al Mar Nero: veneziani e romeni, tracciati di storie comuni* edited by Grigore Arbore-Popescu (Rome: Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, 2003), 149.

<sup>477</sup> Previous to this, all contentious cases had to be referred to the Mother City of Magdeburg on appeal. This move consolidated Casimir's control over legal matters within his Kingdom and provided a more local appeals court for settling disputes. Starzynski, "Civitas Nostra Cracoviensis, (part II)" 10; Eleonora Nadel-Golobič, "Armenians and Jews in medieval Lvov," 345.

<sup>478</sup> [NZPiWMK] nr.3, pg. 3; Carter, *Trade*, 83 fn 161.

<sup>479</sup> In 1371, Krakow's staple rights would be further reinforced under a charter released by Elizabeth Piast in her capacity as Regent of Poland; wherein it was emphasized that all foreign merchants heading into Ruthenian territory were not permitted to travel beyond Krakow. This curtailing of free-trade may have slowed growth somewhat, but in the difficult circumstances of pre-modern travel, it placed the Krakovian merchants in a powerful position to dominate, and arguably to take greater risks, as it put them in a position of monopolistic advantage, which they fully exploited. [NZPiWMK] nr. 8, pg. 9; Carter, *Trade*, 83 fn 162; Kutrzeba, *Finanse*, 297-9.

<sup>480</sup> "Between 1340 and 1352, occupied Red Ruthenia with the cities of Przemyśl, Lwow, and Halicz; by 1366 he had extended his rule over the Ruthenian principalities of Chelm, Belz, Włodzimierz and Podolia." Carter, *Trade*, 83.

<sup>481</sup> In 1360, King Casimir forbid the toll officials in Krzeszów (located on the road to the Vladimir-Suzdal Ruthenia) and Lubaczów (on the way to Red Ruthenia) from requiring merchants from Krakow to pay fees. Then, in 1365 Casimir granted Nuremberg merchants free trade through Polish lands as far as Lviv. [KDMK] I nr. 33; Wolfgang Von Stromer, "Nuremberg in the International Economics of the Middle Ages," *The Business History Review*, vol. 44, no. 2, (1970): 217.

trip going the other way).<sup>482</sup> Trade appears to have continued largely unaffected during this period, despite turbulence in Tartar lands caused by the internecine struggles amongst the Mongol Khans. In 1370, the dice-throw of royal succession meant that Lviv and all the recently conquered lands making up Red Ruthenian were incorporated into Hungary, as upon the death of King Casimir, his nephew, Louis Anjou, inherited the Polish throne. As part of Louis's royal policy, these areas would remain part of Hungary for the next seventeen years, until Louis's death saw them once again returned to Poland.<sup>483</sup> This incorporation, however, does not seem to have had any dampening effect on trade, but did cause some changes.

Polish Regent Elizabeth Piast's embargo on all foreign trade beyond Krakow did not sit well with merchants from other cities, especially those in Lviv, who would repeatedly try to fight the staple, or when that failed, simply avoid it illegally.<sup>484</sup> By now, much of the trade along the *Via Tartarica* and with Caffa was coming into the hands of the Armenian residents of Lviv. They saw it transferred to the city and then sold it on to merchants from Krakow, Toruń, and other cities to the west who arrived despite the restrictions. In 1375, Alexander Duke of Podolia granted merchants from Krakow free carriage rights through his territory in what was perhaps a last-ditch effort to salvage the falling number of merchants traveling to Włodzimierz. This further demonstrated how dominant the position of Lviv had become in the region.<sup>485</sup> The killing blow came in in 1379, when Lviv received staple rights of 14 days from King Louis Anjou, cosigned by his mother Elizabeth Piast as Regent of Poland. From then on, all merchants traveling to or from Poland or Hungary along the *Via Tartarica* had to stop and display their wares in Lviv.<sup>486</sup> Only if the goods did not sell within those 14 days, and after paying the duty tax were they permitted to continue.<sup>487</sup> This privilege had the effect of funneling all non-illicit trade headed to and from the Italian Black Sea ports through the city. At the same time, Louis Anjou granted an extremely generous privilege to Genoese merchants. The time was ripe for such offerings, as Louis was at that very moment allied with the Genoese

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<sup>482</sup> The sources for this period are not explicit about the exact route of the *Via Tartarica*; and it is likely that it had multiple permutations, including a branch up to Kiev, which would allow transfer of goods along the Dnieper. Reconstruction of the route is generally based on later source material. Nadel-Golobič, "Armenians and Jews," 355; Laurentiu Radvan, *At Europe's Borders: Medieval Towns in the Romanian Principalities* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 328-9.

<sup>483</sup> This transfer was possible thanks to the Visegrád agreement, signed in 1339 between Casimir and Louis's father, Charles Robert, after he married Casimir's sister, Elizabeth Piast, determining the rights of Polish succession should Casimir remain without an heir. Nadel-Golobič, "Armenians and Jews," 345.

<sup>484</sup> described in footnote 418.

<sup>485</sup> [KDMK] nr 47.

<sup>486</sup> [AGZ] 3 nr. 32

<sup>487</sup> Earlier Charters mention only the *Via Tartarica*. [AGZ] 3 nr. 32.

in a fight against Venice.<sup>488</sup> Louis issued the privilege styled as king of both Hungary and Poland, encouraging merchants to take the route from the Dalmatian coast towards Buda, and from there to sell whatever and wherever they desired; and were free to export goods.<sup>489</sup> The Genoese were now being positioned to carry goods which had been previously supplied by the Venetians, whom Louis was currently at odds with.<sup>490</sup> While it appears unlikely that the privilege issued to Genoese merchants would have been strong enough to break the new Lviv or that of Krakow without contestation, the Genoese had been handed a generous pass for the rest of Louis's realms. Having been granted a two week staple, the citizens of Lviv sought immediately to capitalize on this advantage and were soon seeking to impede Krakovian merchants from using the *Via Tartarica*.<sup>491</sup> The case was laid before the King, who ruled in favor of the Krakovians. Undeterred, the Lviv City Council would raise the issue again in 1400, 1403, and 1406, before finally giving up.<sup>492</sup> By then, larger geo-political forces had come into play that saw the *Via Tartarica* eclipsed by a new route – the *Via Walachiensis*.<sup>493</sup>

### 2.3.2 The Via Walachiensis

The evolution of the *Via Walachinesis* can be clearly traced through existing charters. As late as 1395, in the documentation of the fight between Krakow and Lviv over the latter's new staple right, only the *Via Tartarica* is mentioned.<sup>494</sup> Four years later however, a charter guaranteeing Lviv's staple mentions both routes for the first time.<sup>495</sup> Prominence within the

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<sup>488</sup> The war of Chioggia, as the conflict would come to be known, saw the Genoese eventually repelled by the Venetians, but the Venetians lost on a second front in Dalmatia to Louis, leading to a favorable conclusion for the Hungarian King at the peace of Turin in 1381.

<sup>489</sup> (1379/06/24) *Historiae patriae Monumenta: edita iussu Regis Caroli Alberti. Vol II Edited by* Baudi di Vesme, Carlo, Cornelio Desimoni, and Vittorio Poggi. Turin: Augusta Taurinorum Regium Typographeum, 1857), 954-5.

<sup>490</sup> Ibid.

<sup>491</sup> “*prescriptis dominis anliquis el modernis consulibus civitatis Cracoviensis constat de Via thartarica trans civitatem Lemburgensem od quasvis Thartarie partes et iidem promiserunt iuramenta prestare, si consules Cracovienses Lemburgensibus iurare deberent.*” NKiRMK, 127; KDMK I nr. 83. For interpretation of these documents see: Kutrzeba, *Finanse*, 295-7

<sup>492</sup> Printed twice see: [AGZ] 3 nr. 67; [KDMK] I nr. 102 (1399/1400); [KDMK] I nr. 104 (1403); [KDMK] I nr. 108. (1406).

<sup>493</sup> Some attempts to perhaps revive the route can be seen in the 1430's and 40's. To this end, Vyatutus, brother of Władysław Jagiełło and Grand Duke of Lithuania, assisted Hagi Giray, a breakaway prince of the Golden Horde who succeeded in 1441, with Polish and Lithuanian backing, in forming the independent Crimean Khanate. This khanate would hold sway in the region under the auspices of the Ottoman Empire until 1783. Predations and continued strife in the region, despite friendly relations with the Khan, hampered trade. To try to ameliorate the situation, in 1442, Władysław II gave Theodoryk Buczański, Castellan of Kamieniec and Capitan general of Podolia, the region to the south-east of Lviv and permission to strengthen the fortifications along the route. Intended to ensure greater safety for travelers, this too was not enough. Cazacu, “I rapporti tra la Repubblica di Venezia e Modova,” 150-1.

<sup>494</sup> [NKiRMK] 127; [KDMK] I nr. 83.

<sup>495</sup> [AGZ] 3 nr. 67 The date on the document is in some doubt and could be either 1399 or 1400.

document is still given to the *Via Tartarica*, but the *Via Walachiensis* had already by this point become an important alternative option. Within seven years, however, the two routes' positions had completely reversed, with the *Via Walachiensis* given primary importance and those headed "*ad Thartariam*" appearing secondary.<sup>496</sup>

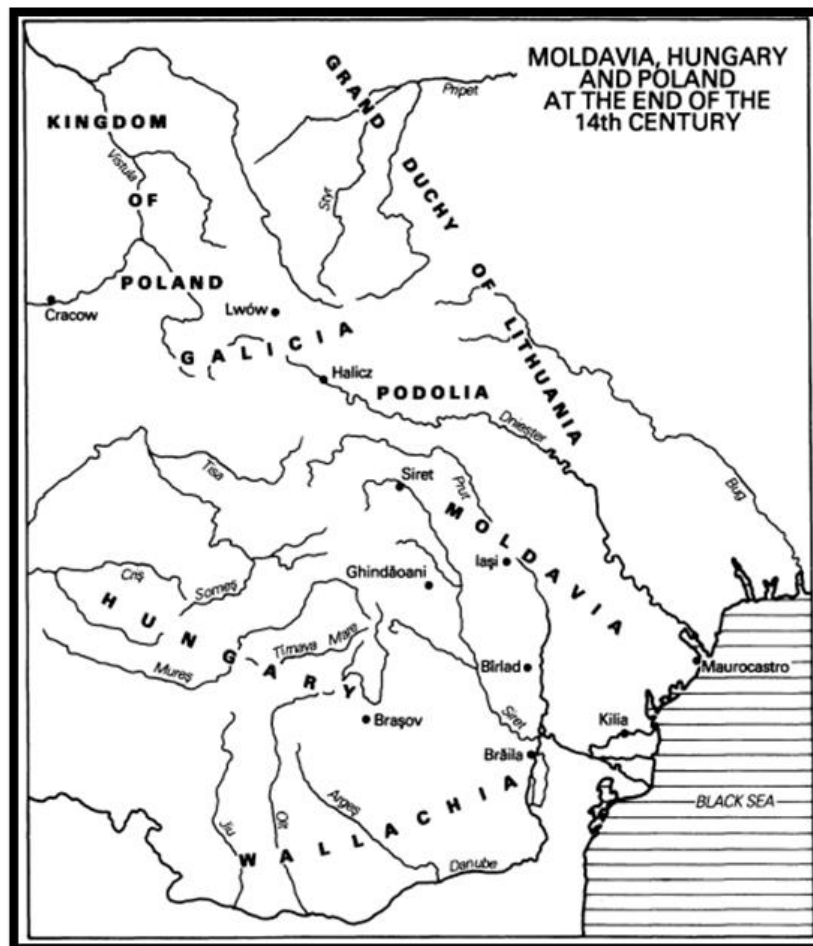


Figure 36 The Territories of Wallachia, Moldavia, Poland and Hungary in the 14th C.

Source: Deletant, "Moldavia between Hungary and Poland," 190.

From here, very quickly we see the *Via Tartarica* falling out of favor. This rapid decline was thanks to a number of factors. Primarily, the problem was instability and civil strife within the Tartar Khanate. Internecine civil wars among the Khans led from the 1360s to a growing power vacuum in the area of what is now modern Romania. This allowed for the formation of two new states – the Danubian principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia.<sup>497</sup> (Figure 37) By 1369,

<sup>496</sup> [KDMK] I nr. 108 (1406).

<sup>497</sup> Evgeny Khvalkov, *The Colonies of Genoa in the Black Sea Region: Evolution and Transformation*, (Ph.D Diss. European University Institute, 2015), 98-9. Radvan, *At Europe's Borders*, 325. Deletant, "Moldavia between Hungary and Poland," 189-211.

the Tartars had retreated from most of the region and control of the zone between Poland and the Black Sea came into the hands of the newly established princes of Wallachia and Moldavia.<sup>498</sup> Over the next fifty years, trade would shift decidedly to a new route which ran from Lviv through Moldavian territory to the Italian port of Moncastro, with a secondary branch continuing on to Wallachia and the Italian port of Kiliya.

In 1387, Petru Musat I, ruler of the new Principality of Moldavia, paid official homage to Władysław Jagiełło in Lviv, putting Moldavia officially under the hand of the Polish King.<sup>499</sup> Moldavia was as yet a weak polity and threatened on all sides. By accepting the suzerainty of Poland, they ensured some protection from attack. From the Polish side, the alliance was useful; as it boosted the potential of a new trade route which had already begun to form, that offered a more direct route to the Black sea, and avoided the customs tolls of the Horde. Importantly, the Horde had lost control of the vital port of Moncastro at the latest by 1386, until that time, the Genoese had been paying tribute in return for rights to the city, but now it fell under the suzerainty of Moldavia.<sup>500</sup> The wars of Tamerlane in the East meant more instability within the Horde, and his sacking of Astrakhan and then the port of Tana, for a time pushed greater trade through Caffa, Kilia, and Moncastro.<sup>501</sup> Smelling the changes in the air, Polish merchants began attempting to make their way along *Via Walachiensis* that same year.<sup>502</sup> At this point, the *Via Tartarica* was still the primary route used, but that would soon change. The major turning point for the *Via Walachiensis* came in 1408, when the Moldavian Prince Alexander the Good (r.1400-1432), granted merchants from Lviv the right to trade through his territory.<sup>503</sup> The City Council of Lviv had begun sending regular gifts to the prince, as goodwill gestures and a sign that the groundwork was being laid for greater political and economic ties. The prince was further included in this exchange and these gifts, arriving in the hands of representatives of the City Council, demonstrate consistent direct links between Lviv and the

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<sup>498</sup> For more on the shifting borders of these two states during their formation period see: Marian Coman, "The Wallachian-Moldavian Frontier from c. 1350 to c. 1450" *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* vol. 9 (2003), 127-54; Deletant, "Moldavia between Hungary and Poland," 189-211.

<sup>499</sup> (1387/09/26). Petru I became Władysław Jagiełło's brother in-law a year later, further cementing the alliance. Deletant, "Moldavia between Hungary and Poland," 191, 205.

<sup>500</sup> Dennis Deletant, "Genoese, Tartars and Rumanians at the Mouth of the Danube in the Fourteenth Century," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 62, no. 4 (1984):525-6.

<sup>501</sup> Małowist, "Polish-Flemish trade in the Middle Ages," 8-9; Kutrzeba, *Finanse*, 109-10.

<sup>502</sup> In 1386, Nicholas Morrynstyn, a merchant from Krakow, lodged a formal petition before the Lviv City Council that he and his "socios" had been attacked and robbed of their goods by a group of Armenians from Lviv, while on a trading mission in Wallachia. They arrived bearing letters from Roman, the brother of Peter; the Voivode of Wallachia, attesting to this fact. [PomnLw] I nr. 350.

<sup>503</sup> The privilege was subsequently renewed in 1408, 1434, 1456, and 1460. Radvan, *At Europe's Borders*, 432-33.

political powers along the *Via Walachiensis*.<sup>504</sup> Apart from laying out the route these merchants were to take and where tolls were to be paid, these merchants were further granted the right to set up a *fondaco* for themselves in the capital of Suceava, although they were only to do business from it if they paid the city tax.<sup>505</sup> Suceava was further singled out as the point where any Polish merchant wishing to sell cloth was required to go. The city was soon the single largest marketplace in the Moldavian principality, important as both a retail center and as a transit point for goods moving back and forth from the Black Sea and was used as a base for a number of Italian traders.<sup>506</sup> It is believed that a year later, the Genoese received official recognition of their rights in Moncastro, as the Poles had been granted in Suceava.<sup>507</sup> By then, Moncastro had also come under the suzerainty of the Moldavian prince, and the Genoese had petitioned him. With these privileges in place, trade along the route surged, greatly outpacing that along the less stable *Via Tartarica*.

The final blow came in 1412, with the signing of the Treaty of Lubowla (Stará Ľubovňa) between Władysław Jagiełło and King Sigismund of Hungary. This treaty dealt with a host of issues, but among them was declaring the boundaries of Poland and Hungary's spheres of influence over Wallachia and Moldavia.<sup>508</sup> In essence, Wallachia was granted to Hungary and Poland retained control over Moldavia. It is obvious from the agreement however, that it was the trade routes which connected the two to the Black sea which were the real issues at stake. Through the treaty, Sigismund insured that the "Hungarian corridor" to the sea, which ran along the Danube to the Italian port of Kiliya, would remain open; while Władysław Jagiełło insured that the port of Moncastro would be primarily the domain of the Poles.<sup>509</sup> The two split the difference at the Prut river, with Sigismund retaining Berlet on the right bank; and Władysław Jagiełło retaining the town of Jassy on the left bank. Both nations permitted free navigation to the sea. The two further approved a joint military alliance, should the Ottoman Empire mount an attack on the region. The agreement was important enough that the Polish chronicler, Jan

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<sup>504</sup> *Księga przychodów i rozchodów miasta, 1404-1414* [Book of revenues and expenditures of the city], Hereafter [PomnLw] II ed. Aleksander Czołowski. *Pomniki dziejów Lwowa z archiwum miasta*. Vol. 2, (Lviv: Gmina król. stoł. miasta Lwowa, 1896) To the Prince of Moldavia: nr. 153 weaponry – *balista*, (1407) 165, (1407); to the Prince of Wallachia - nr. 109 (1406) figs - *sportis ficubus*, nr. 138 (1407) figs - *duabus sportis ficuum*, nr. 164 (1408) weaponry – *balista*, nr. 224 (1408) cloth -  $\frac{1}{2}$  *stamina panni*, nr. 198 (1409) cloth -  $\frac{1}{2}$  *stamen*.

<sup>505</sup> Radvan, *At Europe's Borders*, 378.

<sup>506</sup> Trade was soon flowing in both directions as witnessed by a significant rise in the number of Wallachians becoming citizens of Lviv between the first and second half of the fifteenth century. Radvan, *At Europe's Borders*, 435.

<sup>507</sup> Radvan, *At Europe's Borders*, 439.

<sup>508</sup> Deletant, "Moldavia between Hungary and Poland," 208-11.

<sup>509</sup> Deletant, "Moldavia between Hungary and Poland," 189-211.



Długosz, takes the time to describe it in detail.<sup>510</sup> The securing of this route was important for Poland, but even more so for Hungary; as Sigismund planned to use it as a weapon in his battle with the Venetian Republic. To this end, in the same year, Sigismund wrote a letter to the Italian community in Caffa, proposing that they send their goods overland to Kiliya; and then a few months later ensured that the route was secure from Polish interference with the treaty of Lubowla in early 1412.<sup>511</sup> These machinations did not go unnoticed however, and in March of that year, the Doge of Venice, Michael Steno, wrote a letter that was sent with the ambassador Paulo Nicoletti di Veneto to Władysław Jagiełło; entreating him not to enter an alliance with Sigismund. In return, the doge promised to cover, in gold, the cost of maintaining 500 of the King's knights for as long as the war between Venice and Hungary continued.<sup>512</sup> The offer was tempting, but Władysław Jagiełło declined, as the guarantees within the Lubowla treaty were too important to risk. Two years earlier, Władysław Jagiełło had won a great victory at Grunwald (Tannenberg) against the Teutonic knights, but they remained hostile; and Sigismund had recently been named arbitrator in settling the dispute; it would not do to anger him. The interesting point in this exchange is that it marks the first time that Venetians had attempted to make direct contact with a Polish monarch.<sup>513</sup>

After the signing of the Treaty of Lubowla in 1412, the *Via Walachiensis* became the main route connecting Poland with Italian commercial interests on the Black Sea. The connection would continue through the fifteenth century, with only intermittent interruption due to war or epidemic along the route; which ran from Lviv to Halych then, leaving Polish territory, headed through Cernauti, Siret, Suceava, Harlau, Targu Frumos, Iasi, Lapusna and Tighina to Moncastro or further on to Kiliya on the Danube. From these ports traffic then sailed to Tana, Caffa, and beyond to Pera in Constantinople, or vice versa.<sup>514</sup>

<sup>510</sup> Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae incliti regni Poloniae* vol. 10-11, 196-8.

<sup>511</sup> The letter is undated, but likely comes from this period. Cod. Pal. 701 in the Vatican Library, Hermann Heimpel, "Zur Handelspolitik Kaiser Sigismunds," *Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 23, no. 2 (1930): 147-8

<sup>512</sup> For the text of the letter see: *Elementa ad Fontium Editiones t. II*, nr. 97; Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae incliti regni Poloniae* vol. 10-11, 189-90.

<sup>513</sup> The Venetians had previous dealings with King Louis of Anjou; but those dealings had been primarily in his capacity as King of Hungary rather than of Poland. For examples of this, see records in the Genoese regesta which records Venetian ambassadors sent to Genoa, Louis as King of Hungary, the Vicar of Padua, and the Archbishop of Aquileia in 1381. *Trattati e negoziazioni politiche della Repubblica di Genova: 958-1797: Regesti*, eds. Pasquale Liscandrelli and Giorgio Costamagna (Genoa: Società ligure di storia patria, 1960), 652.

<sup>514</sup> The trade privilege granted to Polish merchants in 1408 by Alexander the Good gives a slightly different list: Hotin, Cernăuți, Siret, Dorohoi, Iasi, Tighina, Cetatea Albă, Roman, Piatra Neamt, Bacău, Bârlad, Trotus, Baia and Moldovita. This would be altered again when the privilege was renewed in 1460 to also include: Tecuci,

## ***Via Walachiensis* – to the Port at Kiliya**

Short mention must be made of the secondary branch of the *Via Walachiensis*; which actually ran through the region of Wallachia. Indeed, confusingly, the main route of the *Via Walachiensis*, despite its name, ran primarily through the principality of Moldavia, connecting Polish lands to the Italian port of Moncastro. Merchants did however, also at times carry goods on into Wallachian territory and to the Italian port at Kiliya at the mouth of the Danube. This port had come under first Wallachian and then Moldavian control.<sup>515</sup> This was primarily the Hungarian route to the Black Sea and was overall a secondary branch; as it meant going a further distance, but it was still used. To that end, a trade agreement made between Władysław Jagiełło and the Wallachian Prince, Mircea the Elder (r.1386-1394, 1397-1418), had signed a defense treaty against possible Hungarian aggression in 1389, that was then renewed in 1403.<sup>516</sup> These accords appear to have further prompted trade in the region; and by 1408, merchants from Lviv were purchasing fish in the Wallachian town of Braila, along with wool and pepper. The purchase of pepper is particularly interesting; as it was bought from either Wallachian merchants or the Genoese traders from Caffa, who brought it directly from the East.<sup>517</sup> In 1409, a year after having signed the trade agreement with Moldavia, Polish merchants were granted official access to the Wallachian market, on very favorable terms. Merchants were permitted to trade freely in the country and to transit through, provided they stopped and paid the *tricesima* in the capital City of Tîrgoviște (Târgoviște). They could buy or sell any product except for silver.<sup>518</sup> This privilege remained in place unchanged until 1439; when it was renewed with a few modifications – adding in further customs duties.<sup>519</sup> While trade along this secondary route was never as robust as that through Moldavia, Poles in the region sold fabric

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Adjud, Putna, Vaslui and Lăpusna, indicating significant urban growth over the intervening fifty years. Radvan, *At Europe's Borders*, 331, 343.

<sup>515</sup> Radvan, *At Europe's Borders*, 473-84.

<sup>516</sup> The treaty stated that Polish merchants enjoyed free right of passage in Wallachian territory, but that they had to obey a staple set at Târgovi and there pay the official customs duties the, *tricesima* - 30<sup>th</sup> part, in other words a 3% tax on the estimated value of the goods. The ruler of Wallachia further retained the right to be the first to look over and purchase any and all products brought into the country by Polish merchants. Late customs records show that the most desirable commodity brought in by Poles was Flemish cloth. Polish merchants were also forbidden to trade in silver. Radvan, *At Europe's Borders*, 439.

<sup>517</sup> Laurentiu Radvan, "On the Medieval Urban Economy in Wallachia," *Analele Științifice ale Universității „Alexandru Iaon Cuza”* din Iași 56 (2009): 493.

<sup>518</sup> [AGZ] 7, 214-15.

<sup>519</sup> Vlad, the Dragon of Wallachia, Alexandru I's heir, confirmed the earlier trading privileges granted to Polish merchants from Krakow, Lviv, and "galician Rus"; but increased the requirement to pay customs duties now initiated at the town of Râmnicu Sărat instead of Târgovite (so a less favorable deal), but upon paying those duties, merchants were permitted free travel to "the land of the Turks", the increasingly large areas controlled by the Ottomans. Radvan, *At Europe's Borders*, 230.

in return for wax, wine, furs and fish and did not stop even after the Ottomans took possession of the port of Kiliya.<sup>520</sup> (Figure 38)

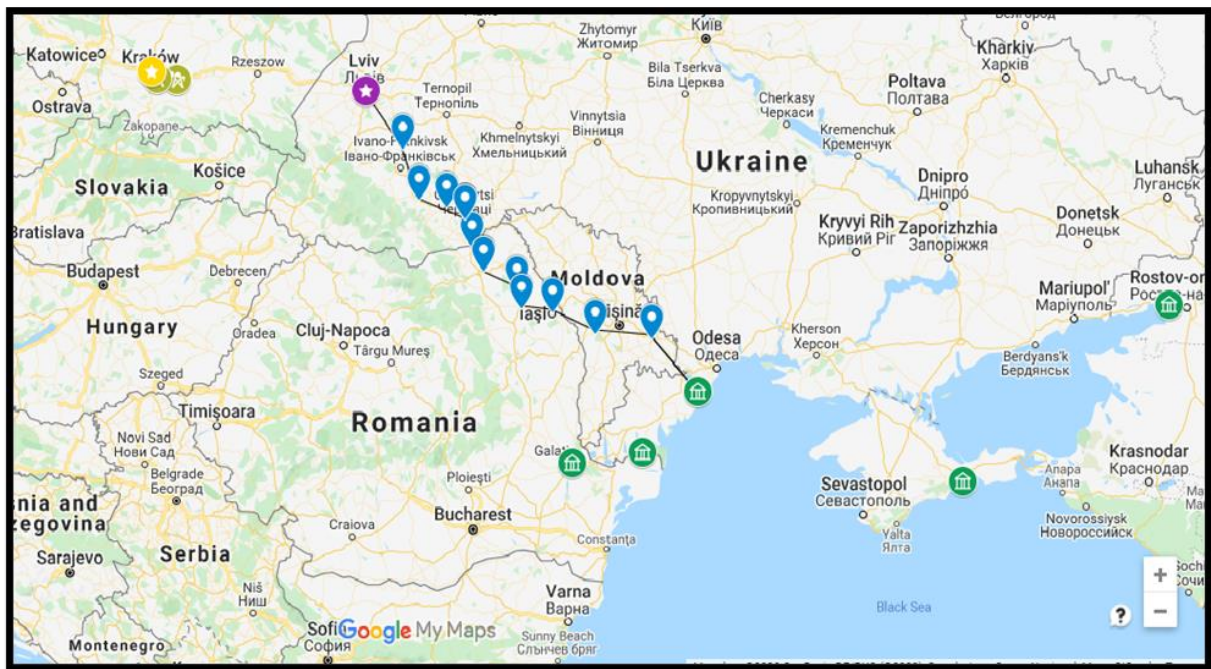


Figure 37 The Via Walachiensis

The *Via Walachiensis* flourished as merchants became familiar with the territory and cargos continued to be profitable. Starting in 1428 however, a series of incidents occurred that placed the artery in danger. In that year, Prince Alexander the Good of Moldavia, who remained a vassal of the King of Poland, and who, back in 1408, had granted generous privileges to the merchants of Lviv, invaded Wallachia, occupied the port City of Kiliya, and blocked Genoese ships from accessing the port. Three years later, he succeeded in placing a puppet of his choosing on the Wallachian throne.<sup>521</sup> Such moves were an immediate thorn in the side of King Sigismund who was the Lord protector of Wallachia; and as we have seen, greatly interested in the flow of trade that ran through Kiliya. With his time split between many other projects however, there was little he could do immediately. It was thus a relief when, just a few years later in 1431, the Moldavian prince made an about-face and joined a growing anti-Polish alliance that would come to include Sigismund and the Kingdom of Hungary, the ever hostile Teutonic Knights, the puppet Prince Alexandru I Aldea in Wallachia, and critically, Švitrigaila, the recently proclaimed Grand Duke of Lithuania. Their combined forces invaded

<sup>520</sup> Radvan, *At Europe's Borders*, 239.

<sup>521</sup> Alexandru I Aldea (1397-1436)

Polish territory, sparking the Polish–Teutonic War (1431–35).<sup>522</sup> King Sigismund of Hungary, meanwhile, who had long harbored ambitions in Poland continued to stir the pot. He gave support to the Teutonic Knights, had supported Vytautas’s attempt to be crowned King of Lithuania, and now championed Švitrigaila.<sup>523</sup> Sigismund showed his hand to all at the Council of Basel. Seeking to undercut Poland’s international credibility, he sent a letter maligning Władysław Jagiełło.<sup>524</sup> Interestingly, the Doge Francesco Foscari, seeing it in the *Serenissima*’s interest to continue to cultivate the support of Poland in their ongoing war with Sigismund, sent a copy of the letter along to Władysław Jagiełło; encouraging him to be wary.<sup>525</sup> Władysław Jagiełło was able to defuse the situation however, when in the next year he convinced a large portion of the Lithuanian and Polish nobility to elect Švitrigaila’s younger brother, Sigismund, as Grand Duke instead. This launched a civil war in Lithuania that lasted from 1431-35; but succeeded in dissolving the threatening anti-Polish alliance.<sup>526</sup>

### **Trade with the East in the Second Half of the Fifteenth Century**

The second half of the fifteenth century would be very different than the first, as it was dominated by the unstoppable advance of the Ottomans. This advance upset the Italian trade system, which had been operating in the Black Sea region since the thirteenth century; and was soon poised to threaten Poland itself. Yet, trade largely continued to flourish despite these changes. Merchants and travelers continued to use both the old *Via Tartarica* and the *Via*

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<sup>522</sup> The reasons for this sudden turn against the Polish Kingdom stemmed from the death of King Władysław Jagiełło’s brother, Vytautas, the Grand Duke of Lithuania, in October of 1430. Back in 1413, an agreement had been signed between Poland and Lithuania determining that in return for recognition of Lithuanian noble rights, the heirs of Władysław Jagiełło would succeed Vytautas to reign jointly as both Grand Duke of Lithuania and King of Poland. This pact, known as the Union of Horodło, was unpopular with some and crushing to Władysław Jagiełło and Vytautas’s younger brother Švitrigaila, who had long sought the throne. The Union of Horodło in 1413 is seen as an important intermediate step between the Personal Union of Poland and Lithuania, formalized in the Union of Krewo (1389), and the proclamation of the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth after the Union of Lublin in 1569. When Vytautas died unexpectedly, Švitrigaila seized his chance, had himself immediately proclaimed Grand Duke of Lithuania, and sought to form alliances with neighboring states. Having spent time at the courts of both Sigismund and the Teutonic Knights, it was not difficult, given this experience, to win them to his side. Alexander the Good of Moldavia, who until that moment had remained an ever-faithful vassal to Władysław Jagiełło, joined the alliance. He did this because it had been rumored that in the wake of Vytautas’s death, Władysław Jagiełło planned to combine regions that had been under the care of the Lithuanian Duke - Podolia and Volinia, together with an annexed Moldavia, directly into the Kingdom of Poland. In 1411-12 Władysław Jagiełło gave the care of Podolia, the region to the south-east of Lviv, to his brother, Vytautas, the Grand Duke of Lithuania. After Vytautas’ death in 1430, he gave it to the Buczacki family, powerful examples of the Polish aristocracy who had colonized the region of Red Ruthenia. (1350-1430), Cazacu, “I rapporti tra la Repubblica di Venezia e Modova 149-1; Robert I Frost, *The Oxford History of Poland-Lithuania: Volume 1: The Making of the Polish-Lithuanian Union, 1385-1569* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

<sup>523</sup> Frost, *The Oxford History of Poland-Lithuania: Volume 1*, 131-57.

<sup>524</sup> [CodEp] II, nr 207 (1432/10/08)

<sup>525</sup> [CodEp] II, nr 209 (1432/11/13)

<sup>526</sup> Cazacu, “I rapporti tra la Repubblica di Venezia e Modova,” 150-1.

*Walachiensis*, although the later was by now far more important. Neither the disaster at Varna in 1444, which saw the Polish King Władysław III killed at the head of an unsuccessful crusade against the Ottomans advancing into the territory, nor the capture of Constantinople in 1453, halted trade. Indeed, the route appears to have become more popular in the second half of the fifteenth century rather than less, despite continual incursions by the Ottomans into the territory of the Danubian Principalities.<sup>527</sup> (Figure 39)

By mid-century, so many Italians in particular appear to have begun trading through Lviv that a special charter was issued, attempting to curtail their movements.<sup>528</sup> Indeed, the route flourished in large part *because* of the Ottoman advance. These incursions inhibited Italian galleys from sailing freely through the Dardanelles; and thus made the overland route a more attractive alternative.<sup>529</sup> Thus, just as had happened with the *Via Tartarica* in the thirteenth century after the Mamluk Sultanate had closed off direct access to silk road products arriving from Indian Ocean trade routes, thereby privileging trade routes through the Black Sea; the closure of the Dardanelles increased traffic on the overland route via Poland. Italians, Poles, Wallachians, Armenians, Jews, and Ottomans, plied their trade along the *Via Walachiensis*. The stability and relative affordability of spices on the Polish market during these decades testifies to the continued success of this route. So important had the city become, that in 1460, Lviv received at last the prize it had been seeking for over fifty years - a complete right of staple, making it the premier point of reference for all trade travelling to and from the East through Polish territory. This was the prize that the citizens of Lviv had lobbied so hard for at the beginning of the fifteenth century and here at last, sixty years later, they could claim it.<sup>530</sup> The Krakow merchants were surprisingly silent on this front, with their attention turned to trading

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<sup>527</sup> Radvan, *At Europe's Borders*, 435.

<sup>528</sup> The charter, issued on July 16<sup>th</sup> by Władysław III, just a few months before the disastrous battle of Varna on November 11<sup>th</sup>, reinforced Lviv's staple and was applicable to all merchants; but explicitly singled out Italians had to obey the staple unless they were carrying goods through directly to be "*trans mare vendendo*" "shipped across the sea", then they were permitted to pass without having to offer their goods for sale. Should they dare to sell their goods in Wallachia however, the citizens and city council of Lviv were granted full authority to confiscate any such goods as were estimated to have been sold. Presumably from the malfizants themselves but given that the guilty party would by that time be presumably in Wallachia, and thus out of the kingdoms jurisdiction, then the next "*mercatores Italici*" – Italian merchants, or other unlucky overseas "*transmaritimus*" merchant who passed through the city would be punished instead. That all litigation dealing with merchandise from whatever nationality or religious persuasion, be they citizen, residents, or foreigners would be adjudicated in the city of Lviv under Magdeburg law. [AGZ] 5, nr 105.

<sup>529</sup> This can be seen in the "Internationalization" of the Latin colonies in the Crimea as more non-Italians became active residents in Caffa over the decades. Khvalkov, *The Colonies of Genoa in the Black Sea Region*, 236; Radvan, *At Europe's Borders*, 435.

<sup>530</sup> Feliks Kiryk, "Związki Lwowa z Krakowem w późnym średniowieczu [Lviv's relationships with Krakow in the late Middle Ages] in *Lwów. Miasto, społeczeństwo, kultura. Studia z dziejów Lwowa vol. 2* eds. Henryk Żaliński and Kazimierz Karolczak (Kraków: Wydaw. Naukowe Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej, 1998), 12.

opportunities elsewhere. It was only in 1462, responding to the heavy hand of the Italian merchant, Cristoforo di S. Romulo, who had taken over the tax farm of collecting taxes on goods in Lviv, that Krakovian merchants once more turned to the king and received a special exemption.<sup>531</sup>

Italians would eventually be largely squeezed out of their role as middlemen on the merchant highways of the Black Sea. Greeks, Poles, Wallachians, and the Ottomans themselves, together with Jews and Armenians of long-standing, would rise to fill the spaces left behind. The changeover was a slow one, but obvious when looking at the changing demographics of traders in Caffa, even prior to its fall in 1475. In 1423, the *Massariae* of Caffa (the colony's annual account books) show that 12% of the population were non-Italians; and none of whom were Polish citizens. By 1461, there had been a significant shift; with non-Italians now making up 35% of the overall population, and 8 Poles registered.<sup>532</sup> This trend can be explained by the expansion of Ottoman power in the Black sea; which encouraged the overland route through Eastern Europe. Poles in particular, appear in greater numbers in Caffa only after the fall of Constantinople in 1453. The same demographic shift is also visible in Lviv, where between 1405 and 1426, five Moldavian merchants, seven Hungarian, and four Germans were granted citizenship. Between 1461 and 1495, no fewer than eighteen Moldavians, three Hungarians and three Czechs were made citizens; demonstrating a sharp uptick in connectivity along the eastern route. Meanwhile, the first Ottoman Turkish merchant to set up a permanent house in Lviv appears in 1459.<sup>533</sup>

While trade appears to have continued unabated, the Italian place in the market system did not go unaffected. Under the new Ottoman administration of Constantinople, the loss of the Genoese trading concession in Galata (major seaport in the Pera region across the Golden Horn from Constantinople), which Genoa had held since 1267, was a particularly hard blow. That year, the Genoese Senate transferred all the Black Sea colonies of the Commune, to the Banco di San Georgio, which owned and administrated them until the end of their existence.<sup>534</sup> From 1454 onward, Caffa was forced to pay tribute to both the Tartars and the Ottomans to prevent

<sup>531</sup> Kiryk, "Związki Lwowa z Krakowem w późnym średniowieczu [Lviv's relationships with Krakow in the late Middle Ages]," 12.

<sup>532</sup> Khvalkov, *The Colonies of Genoa in the Black Sea Region*, 236; Radvan, *At Europe's Borders*, 435.

<sup>533</sup> "Domus Ciuitatis penes Hospitale. Turcicus mercator libere ibi manet et moratur." Karol Badecki "Zaginione księgi średniowiecznego Lwowa [Fragments from the Medieval books of Lviv]," *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 41 (1927), 565.

<sup>534</sup> Khvalkov, *The Colonies of Genoa in the Black Sea*, 473.

them from attacking.<sup>535</sup> Caffa had been paying tribute to the Khans for years; but the amount increased year by year and now a new Ottoman extraction tax made the burden even higher. Due to Ottoman control of the sea link to the Mediterranean, communication with the home city in Liguria was now difficult and this also increased use of the overland route. Larger numbers of Italians began travelling through Polish territory, at times accompanied by escorts of Polish knights.<sup>536</sup> The Ottomans themselves were interested in continuing trade, however, and in 1456 granted a privilege to the merchants of Moncastro to be able to travel by ship and trade freely in Edirne, Bursa and Constantinople. Thus the ties to the East were not cut, only coming ever more thoroughly under Ottoman control.<sup>537</sup>

While the loss to Ottoman control of the Dardanelles increased use of the overland route; promoting trade through Lviv, in the aggregate it meant that Italian power in the East had waned and presaged greater conflicts to come. A crusade proposed by Pope Callixtus III in 1455 never got off the ground, even as it became increasingly apparent that the Ottomans were unlikely to halt their advance for long.<sup>538</sup> The situation was becoming increasingly desperate for Caffa, hampered by its large indemnity payments together with the price of paying for mercenary protection and an expensive administrative apparatus. A congress organized by the new Pope Pius II held in Mantua in 1459 produced no solution.<sup>539</sup> Subsequent Popes would continue to try to promote the cause for a Crusade against the Ottomans throughout the coming decades, but despite collecting funds for this endeavor, they were never able to convince local rulers to buy into the project.<sup>540</sup> One by one, the islands ruled by Italians West and South of the

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<sup>535</sup> 12000 gold ducats went to the tartar Khan of Crimea, Haci Giray; and 3000 to the Ottoman Sultan, Mehmed II. As Caffa as yet remained technically in the territory of the Crimean Khante, more was owed to the Tartars than the Ottomans, despite their capture of Constantinople the year before. Giuseppe Cossuto, "L'italianità trasformata: la caduta di Caffa e gli italiani della ex colonia tra Khanato di Crimea e Impero otomano," *Altretalia* (2008):168.

<sup>536</sup> Jacques Heers, *Genes au Xv Siecle: Activite Economique et Problemes Sociaux* (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N, 1961), 383. For more see: La Primaudaie, 197

<sup>537</sup> Halil Inalcik and Suraiya Faruqi. *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*. Vol. 1. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 288-9.

<sup>538</sup> First proposed in 1455, the papal legate Juan de Carvajal was sent to Poland, Germany and Hungary to promote the cause.

<sup>539</sup> Quirini-Popławska, "Z powiązań Polski z Kaffą," 551.

<sup>540</sup> In 1457, two years after the initial call to Crusade, the Pope sent Marino di Fregeno to Lithuania, Poland, and other European powers, again seeking to promote a crusade. He even began collecting funds for the expedition, but his efforts would bear no fruit despite numerous attempts. The last attempt came in 1464, when he proclaimed indulgences to raise funds for the crusade in Lviv, Grodno and Rohatyn. The Pope was stymied by a prudent lack of enthusiasm for the project on the part of local rulers, including King Casimir IV Jagiełło, despite letters sent to him by the Pope in April 4, 1457 and May 13, 1458. The King explained his inability to join the Crusade as he was then in continued conflict with the Teutonic Order. In 1471, Giuliano Fieschi from Caffa and Giovanni Giambone from Genoa came to Poland carrying two bulls from Pope Paul II. These bulls, together with letters addressed directly to the Bishop of Lviv permitting the granting of full indulgence to the residents



Bosporus fell to the Ottomans -- Thassos, Imbros, Enos, Limnos and finally Lesbos.<sup>541</sup> (Figure 39) Italian colonies located along the Southern edge of the Black Sea coast soon too were overrun -- Amasra, Trebizond, and Sinope ... all lost.<sup>542</sup>

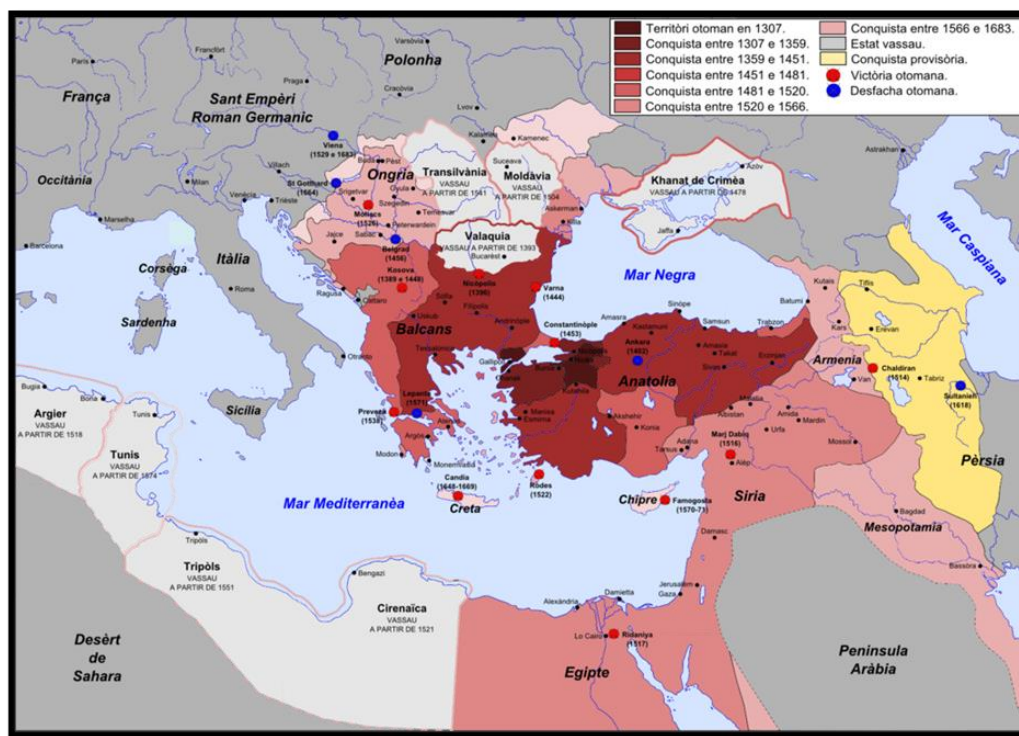


Figure 38 Territorial Expansion of the Ottoman Empire 1307 – 1683

Source: Wikimedia

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline\\_of\\_the\\_Ottoman\\_Empire#/media/File:Emp%C3%A8ri\\_Otoman\\_-\\_Expansion\\_territ%C3%B2ria\\_de\\_1307\\_a\\_1683.png](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_the_Ottoman_Empire#/media/File:Emp%C3%A8ri_Otoman_-_Expansion_territ%C3%B2ria_de_1307_a_1683.png)

In 1462, the Ottomans even succeeded in having their partisan, Radu III the Fair (r.1462-1475), installed as Prince in Wallachia. Despairing that a crusading cavalry would come to the rescue from the West, and no longer able to count on the protection of their home fleet -- now trapped in the Mediterranean -- the Black Sea colonies turned directly to other regional powers for aid, including the King of Poland. In 1462, negotiations began between Genoese officials in Caffa and King Casimir IV Jagiello of Poland; to place the city officially under the king's protection. The Caffa consul, Raphael de Monte Rubio, together with the councilor, Guirardus Lomellino, and the city provisor, Baldazarus D'Oria, members of the highest Genoese noble families, sent a petition to the King on April 1st asking for his protection against the Tartars, Turks, and their

subordinate to the bishop of the diocese, sought to gather funds for the defense of Caffa. Quirini-Popławska, "Z powiązań Polski z Kaffą," 551-6.

<sup>541</sup> Quirini-Popławska, "Z powiązań Polski z Kaffą," 553.

<sup>542</sup> Quirini-Popławska, "Z powiązań Polski z Kaffą," 553.



allies, the Wallachians.<sup>543</sup> The King replied with a tentatively positive response, although some back room negotiations can be seen in the way the charges levied against a certain Polish merchant from Lviv were suddenly dropped by the Caffa authorities. The case itself had been pending since 1459, but all at once the Caffa officials were very interested in seeing it resolved.<sup>544</sup> As part of the negotiations, the Capitanos of Caffa, the city's highest-ranking administrative official, and the bishop of Caffa, further visited the king personally in Krakow.<sup>545</sup> Finally, the king agreed, and in a direct challenge to the Ottomans, who were seeking to secure unquestioned control over the entire Black Sea region, placed Caffa under protection of the Polish crown. It would not save them.

King Casimir IV Jagiełło was simply not strong enough to guarantee the security of Caffa, but the nominal suzerainty of the Polish crown did perhaps buy the city some time. If nothing else, the trading concessions granted by the Polish king made the overland route more attractive and the near decade between 1462 and 1471 saw greater connectivity between the Black Sea ports and Poland than ever before. Diplomats were sent back and forth and trade continued.<sup>546</sup> A sign of the disturbed times can be seen in a directive of the Florentine *Signoria* that only one of their galleys at a time were permitted to enter the Black Sea, traveling from Constantinople to Caffa or Trabzon (Trebizond), and then they were only allowed to stay for no more than ten days. Captains were also further prohibited from importing arms into the region, nor even iron, which might be made into weapons. Finally, they were also prohibited from bringing in any female slaves directly to Florence under penalty of a steep fine of 100 florins, although it appears they could continue to carry them for sale to other ports.<sup>547</sup>

This flow was aided in 1466; when Casimir IV Jagiełło issued a charter granting Genoese merchants safe conduct through his entire Kingdom and the right of transit with their goods headed towards Genoa. They were still required to pay the regular tolls in Lviv, but were

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<sup>543</sup> A number of letters were sent. *Matricularum Regni Poloniae summaria, excussis codicibus, qui in Chartophylacio Maximo Varsoviensi asservantur. Pars. I, Casimiri IV regis tempora complectens* (1447-1492) Hereafter [MRP I], ed. Theodorus Wierzbowski (Warsaw: Typis Officinae C. kowalewski, 1905), nr. 587, 609; Quirini-Popławska, "Z powiązań Polski z Kaffą, 554.

<sup>544</sup> The case which involved unspecified crimes which had allegedly been committed by Clementis de Cadim, citizen of Lviv. [MRPS] I nr. 610.

<sup>545</sup> Petre P. Panaitescu, "La route commercial de Pologne a la Mer Noire au Moyen Age," *Revista istorică română*, Vol. 3, nr. 2-3, Bucharest (1934): 21.

<sup>546</sup> Polish Ambassador in Caffa (1463/12/30) Item ea (23 Iunii), et fuit antea, pro Michaelae Felaudra, ad complementum scotorum et pensione domus sue, facta et concessa ambasiatoribus regis Polonie

<sup>547</sup> Joseph Müller, *Documenti sulle Relazioni delle Città Toscane coll'Oriente Cristiano e coi Turchi fino all'anno MDXXXI*. Documenti degli Archivi Toscani (Florence: M. Cellinie, 1879), 295-6.

otherwise free to travel and do business as they pleased.<sup>548</sup> This privilege is likely related to the capture of the port of Kiliya by the Moldavian Prince, Stephan III (r.1457-1504), that same year. This complicated the overland route, which ran through Hungarian territory.<sup>549</sup> Stephen III had been maneuvering to control the trade running through the mouth of the Danube; and had repeatedly sequestered goods belonging to Genoese merchants. This angered Caffa's leadership enough that they joined a campaign lead by the Golden horde against him in 1465.<sup>550</sup> Peace would not be officially declared until September 1474, just a few months before Caffa itself fell to the Ottomans.<sup>551</sup>

The Genoese merchants were thus being pressed from all sides and had already received warning that the protection of the King of Poland amounted to little more than a fig leaf.<sup>552</sup> In 1463, the Genoese had sent envoys to the King requesting assistance in securing mercenary troops for their defense. In the end, five hundred men were enticed to the cause; and they began making their way towards Caffa. During their stay in a town along the way, while still within the dominion of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, some of the soldiers got into a fight with a local townsman and killed him. Fearing the consequences of their actions, the soldiers decided to torch the city and run. In response to this outrage, the local Lord, Michał Czartoryski, gathered together a posse of noblemen and chased after the fleeing mercenaries. The arsonists were eventually run down and cut down nearly to a man. Only seven Polish soldiers and three Genoese officials accompanying the expedition were left alive. The Genoese made their way back to Caffa; where they were forced to report the sorry tale and the loss of a great sum of money which had been collected to aid their cause. This was the one and only time the Polish King sent soldiers to help the Genoese. Worse still, in 1466, the Caffa government made a critical mistake when they picked sides in a fratricidal struggle which broke out within the Crimean Horde after the death of the reigning Khan. The Genoese in Caffa chose to back one

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<sup>548</sup> “*per eadem dominia regni nostri cum rebus, mercibus, famuis, curribus, et aliis bonis quibus cumque pro Ubito transeundi vers Januam aut alibi eundi.*” [AGZ] 6, nr 67; Rafał Hryszko, *Januensis, ergo mercator?: działalność gospodarcza Genuńczyków w ziemi lwowskiej na tle kontaktów Polski z czarnomorskimi koloniami Genui w XV wieku = Januensis, ergo mercator?: economic activities of the Genoese in the Lviv area in the light of contacts between Poland and the Black Sea colonies of Genoa in the 15th century* (Krakow: Uniwersytet Jagielloński, 2012), 50-1.

<sup>549</sup> Radvan, *At Europe's Borders*, 449.

<sup>550</sup> Dimitar. V. Dimitrov, “The Italian merchant ebb from the Western Black Sea area during the 15th century,” *Bulgaria Mediaevalis*, 3(1), (2012):569.

<sup>551</sup> Dimitrov, “The Italian merchant ebb from the Western Black Sea,” 569.

<sup>552</sup> Quirini-Popławska, “Z powiązań Polski z Kaffą,” 555.

of the claimants and it was this imbroglio that would eventually bring the Ottomans to their door at last.<sup>553</sup>

The instability of these years had a direct impact on the trade along the *Via Walachiensis*, not only because of the looming Ottomans and infighting amongst the Crimean Khans, but also a cause closer to home – the rise of the pugnacious Moldavian Prince Stephan III. Having captured Kiliya a few years earlier, in 1471 Stephan III once again attacked the neighboring principality of Wallachia, which had submitted to Ottoman suzerainty. The movements of these armies greatly impacted Polish traders, particularly those with interests on the Wallachian branch to the Black Sea. The following year, the City Council of Lviv wrote in desperation to their Archbishop, bewailing their losses in recent months due to roads being closed down and their being cut off from Pera, the Italian trading hub in Constantinople. Even more worrisome were their losses in Wallachia, which even more of their citizenry appeared to be engaged in trade with, topping 30,000 fl.<sup>554</sup> They begged the archbishop to intercede with the king on their behalf. The attempt to put in place a schedule of fairs must be seen in light of these events; which were preventing Lviv its usual access to Eastern markets. An abortive attempt in 1472 to establish a set of fairs in Lviv demonstrates the troubled times. Lviv had not bothered for decades to organize a fair; as it had become one of the rare “permanent markets” to be found in the middle ages. The volume of trade was large enough that a constant stream of commerce could be maintained; making the designation of special fairs a hindrance rather than a help.<sup>555</sup> The terms of these fairs, described with specific mention of the safety for attendees on the road to and from to be guaranteed by the King of Poland, was intended to help attract those leery of risking travel in times of war. At the same time however, they sought to keep most of Lviv’s staple rights intact and so were unattractive to most merchants. They seem to have been a general failure. The citizens of Lviv themselves sought to abolish the fairs only a few years later.

Other evidence points to a more general shift in the patterns of trade. In 1474, the Venetian Ambassador, Ambrogio Contarini, traveled through Poland on his way to treat with Uzun

<sup>553</sup> Cossuto, “L’italianità trasformata,” 168.

<sup>554</sup> “*bona ultra triginta milia recepta et perdita sunt*” No currency is explicitly stated but it was presumably florins. [AGZ] 9 nr. 128 (1472/4/29)

<sup>555</sup> The fairs were to be staggered through the year beginning on St. Agnes, then on Trinity Sunday, or on the Sunday after Pentecost. Kiryk, “Związki Lwowa,” 15.

Hassan, the Iranian ruler of the Aq Qoyunlu, to propose an alliance against the Ottomans.<sup>556</sup> Instead of taking the route through Lviv and onwards to Moldavia and the Black Sea, Contarini went through Messariza (Międzyrzecz), Posnama (Poznań), Lancisia (Łódź), and Lumberli (Lublin) and from there into Russian and Tartar territory, eventually arriving at Caffa (Caffa) with a Tartar escort to keep him from danger. Contarini thus saw Caffa at the very end of its Latin glory days; as only months later it would fall to the Ottomans. The ambassador's itinerary, running by a less comfortable and less direct route, and additionally having to secure a special meeting with the Tartar Khan to arrange an escort for Contarini, are clear indications that movement along the *Via Walachiensis* had been brought to a standstill. This insecurity may also explain the transfer of a number of Italians to Poznań at just this period, as described above. The reason for the change in route that now bypassed Lviv was painfully obvious to its inhabitants. 1473-75 saw repeated attempts by Stephan III of Moldavia to depose the Ottoman-backed Prince Radu III the Fair of Wallachia. Armies were thus marching back and forth across the area of the *Via Walachiensis*, making trade difficult and life for the locals unbearable. In response to these repeated attacks on their ally, the Ottomans landed a force of 120,000 troops in Moldavia; but were defeated by the much smaller force of 40,000 troops under Stephan III at the Battle of Vaslui on January 10<sup>th</sup>, 1475, in a stunning victory. In the aftermath, Stephan III appealed for support to both the Kings of Hungary and Poland. A great deal of pressure had now built up amongst the Polish population to go to war with the Turks, but King Casimir III Jagiełło chose instead to fall back on diplomacy.<sup>557</sup>

Then end for the Genoese came in May of 1475, when one of the combatants within the ongoing struggle for power within the Crimean Horde called on the Ottomans for assistance, giving them the *causes belli* they had been waiting for to intervene in the region. Unfortunately, the government in Caffa had chosen to shelter the contender who turned out to be the loser in the inter-Tartarian struggle.<sup>558</sup> The Consul of Caffa, Giuliano Gentile, traveled to Krakow to beg

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<sup>556</sup> The mission was a failure but Contarini's published report of his travels became a sensation upon his return. Giosofat Barbaro, Ambrogio Contarini, Laurence. Lockhart, Raimondo. Morozzo Della Rocca, and Maria Francesca. Tiepolo. *I Viaggi in Persia degli Ambasciatori Veneti Barbaro e Contarini* (Rome: Istituto Poligrafico Dello Stato, Libreria, 1973), 179-83. The work has also been helpfully translated into English see: Josafa Barbaro, Ambrogio Contarini, Henry E. J. Stanley, and Charles Grey. *Travels to Tana and Persia. A Narrative of Italian Travels in Persia, in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1970).

<sup>557</sup> He sent envoys to the Ottoman Sultan, Mehmed II, requesting that he no longer seek to attack his nominal vassal Wallachia. Quirini-Popławska, "Z powiązań Polski z Kaffą,

<sup>558</sup> Halil Inalcik, "Struggle for East-European empire: 1400-1700 the Crimean Khanate, Ottomans and the rise of the Russian Empire," *Milletleraras* 001-016 (1982):2-3.

the Polish King for assistance, but his efforts were to no avail.<sup>559</sup> A massive fleet sent by the Ottoman besieged the city and it was soon overwhelmed. The resident Italians were either deported to Constantinople, or sold into slavery, together with the Russians, Circassians, Wallachians and Poles living in the city. The Greeks, Armenians, and Jews were permitted to stay, but under the Ottomans they were now subject to new laws and higher taxation.<sup>560</sup>

In 1481, the Sultan Mehmed II, who had wrecked so much havoc on the Genoese, died. Hope was raised that Caffa might be returned to the Genoese when the new Crimean Khan, Mengli Giray, sent a letter through a Genoese resident in Poland, offering the return of the territory.<sup>561</sup> This invitation caused a flurry of diplomatic activity; ambassadors were sent from Genoa overland through Poland; and the King of Poland was asked to help with the affair.<sup>562</sup> The Genoese eventually arrived incognito to the Khan's court where for two years there were discussions about a possible anti-Ottoman alliance involving Genoa, the Crimean Khanate, Poland, and other Western Christian powers; but two years of negotiations proved fruitless. The ports of Kiliya and Moncastro would hold out for another decade, but their time was always limited. In 1484, they fell to the sword of the Ottoman Sultan, Bayezid II (1481–1512). The Crimea became a vassal state of the Ottoman Empire; with the Khan of the Golden horde hereafter officially “appointed” by the Sultan.<sup>563</sup> The thriving Italian presence which had held sway in the Black Sea for over two-hundred years was broken.<sup>564</sup>

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<sup>559</sup> We are aware of this journey; as letters of recommendation made out to the Holy Roman Emperor, the King of Poland, and the Krakow City Council are preserved in the Genoese archives, together with the accounting detail that the cost of travel and gifts given by the envoy amounted to 152 gold ducats. *Codice diplomatico delle colonie tauro-liguri durante la signoria dell'Ufficio di S. Giorgio (MCCCCLIII-MCCCCLXXV)* Vol. 2. Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria Amedeo Vigna, VII/1 (Genoa: Tipografia del r. I. De sordo-muti, 1871), nr 1040 (1473/01/08), nr 1129 (1475/05/08).; ASG, Archivio Segreto, Litterarium, nr 1800 A, s. 9 v, 10 (1474—1478). Quirini-Popławska, “Z powiązań Polski z Kaffą,” 558.

<sup>560</sup> Giuseppe Cossuto, “L’italianità trasformata: la caduta di Caffa e gli italiani della ex colonia tra Khanato di Crimea e Impero otomano,” *Altreitalie* (2008):168-9; Alexander Emanov, *Latins and Non-Latins in Caffa (13th - 15th centuries)*, 11.

<sup>561</sup> A Charter issued in Vilnius is received by Gwasko, whose contents relate that the Crimean Khan, Mengli Giray, offered the Genoese – specifically the Banco di S. Giorgio -- their previous territorial possessions in the region of Caffa. The letter then went on to say that should the Banco refuse, the Khan was prepared to offer the lands to the Pope, the Venetians, the King of Hungary, or the Duke of Milan Giacomo Grasso ed., *Documenti riguardanti la costituzione di una lega contro il Turco nel 1481*, (Genova: Tip. del R. Istituto sordo-muti, 1880), nr. 20 pg 11.

<sup>562</sup> The two ambassadors were Bartolomeo da Campofregoso and Lodisio Fiesco. Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania: International Diplomacy on the European Periphery (15th-18th Century)*. A Study of Peace Treaties Followed by Annotated Documents Vol. 47 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 235.

<sup>563</sup> Assisted by Eminek Beg, Mengli Giray, who had been captured in Caffa during the Ottoman assault, was made Khan. Halil Inalcik, “Struggle for East-European empire,” 2-3.

<sup>564</sup> Cossuto, “L’italianità trasformata,”168.

Over the next fifteen years, rumors repeatedly swirled in the West that the ports had been retaken; maps were even prepared with Genoa's now Ottoman controlled Black Sea holdings marked by the flag of St. George, but facts were always far away from these hoped for fictions. (Figure 40) As the years past, the Pope began appointing nominal bishops of Caffa from amongst the ranks of Poland's Dominican friars.<sup>565</sup>

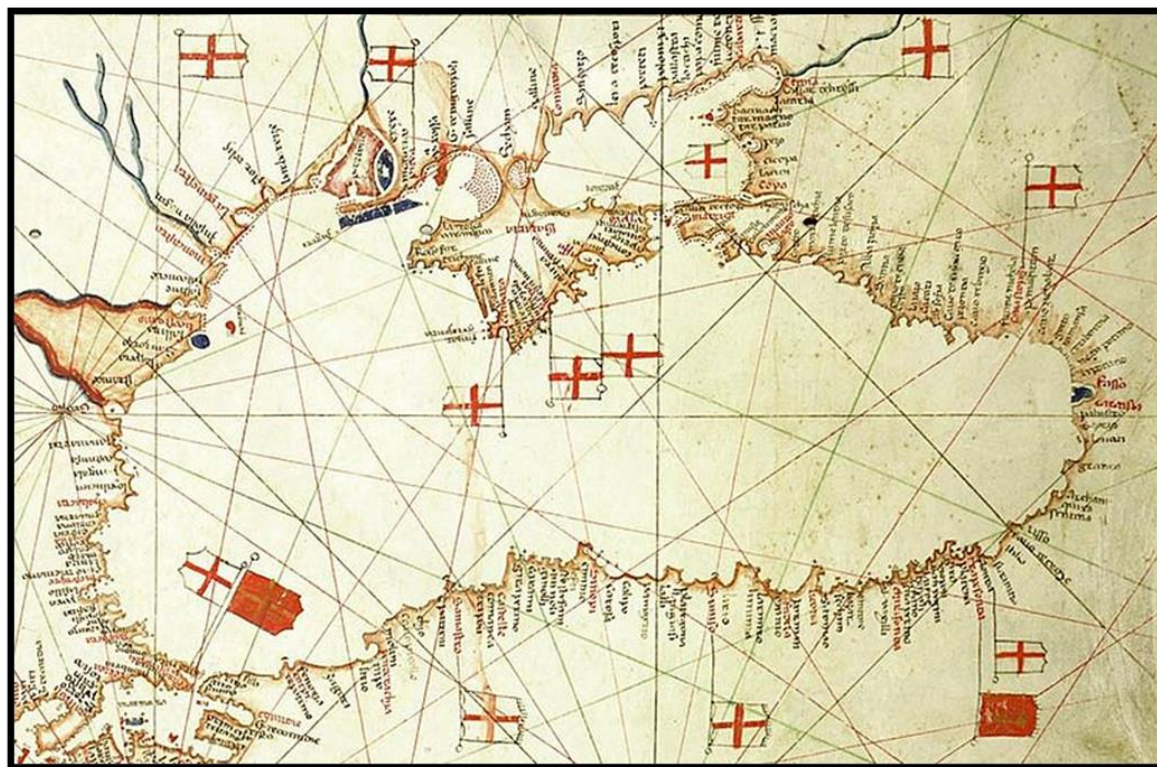


Figure 39 1489 Portolan Map of the Black Sea by Albino di Canepa Marked with the Genoese Flag

Source: Wikimedia

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Albino\\_de\\_Canepa.\\_The\\_east\\_of\\_1489\\_Portolan\\_Chart.\\_From\\_the\\_Black\\_Sea\\_at\\_the\\_top\\_to\\_the\\_Red\\_Sea\\_at\\_the\\_bottom.A.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Albino_de_Canepa._The_east_of_1489_Portolan_Chart._From_the_Black_Sea_at_the_top_to_the_Red_Sea_at_the_bottom.A.jpg) Accessed January 13<sup>th</sup> 2021

Poland was itself feeling the heat of the Ottoman invasion; and King John I Albert took the step of again proposing a trade fair in Lviv in 1494, but this time with the specific purpose of using the resulting funds the rebuild the city walls. This occurred with the acquiescence of Arnolfo Tedaldi of Florence; who would normally have collected the customs duties that would now be going instead to the city's defenses; demonstrating the seriousness everyone felt at the

<sup>565</sup> Alexandre Dzhanov, "Development of the Black Sea and the South of Eastern Europe by Genoese," in *Unesco tentative list paesaggi costruiti liguri tra oltregiogo e oltremare vol.ii novi ligure biblioteca comunale sabato 9 ottobre 2016 relazioni ufficiali*. edited by Paolo Stringa (de Ferrari 2016), 178.

situation.<sup>566</sup> The closest that Kiliya ever came to being recovered was in 1497; when the King of Poland, John I Albert (r. 1492-1501), self-organized a crusade to fight the Ottomans; and in the process also depose Stephen III of Moldavia, who was viewed as politically unreliable.<sup>567</sup> In the run up to the campaign, King John I Albert gave duty free use of Lviv's City Council royal scales and a wax chamber (warehouse) to the City Council until "Caffa, Chilia and Belgorod [Moncastro] will return to citizenship and the power of Christians."<sup>568</sup> The crusade ended in failure, however; and the ports remained in the hands of the Ottomans. The era of Italian domination of the Black sea trade carried along the overland route to Poland was over.

## 2.4 Trade to the West

The region of Silesia, of which Wrocław was the economic heart, was part of the Kingdom of Poland at its founding under the Piast King, Mieszko I (r. 960-92). During the time of the fragmentation of the Polish Kingdom (1128-1320), the region came under the control of a scattered and constantly infighting set of Piast Dukes. When King Władysław Łokietek succeeded in reuniting the kingdom in 1320, Silesia continued to remain largely outside his sphere of control. Thus it was, that when line of the Piast Dukes of Wrocław was extinguished in 1335, the region fell under the Bohemian crown and the influence of the Holy Roman Empire. King Casimir the Great sought to recover the territory, but after an unsuccessful war waged with King John the Blind of Bohemia (1310-1346), permanently rescinded all Polish claims to the region. Strong trade and interpersonal ties still bound Wrocław and Małopolska, particularly Krakow. Nevertheless, the duchy was now officially outside the borders of the Polish Kingdom and its merchants were subjected to more restrictive trade regulations and higher tariffs. Thus, when Casimir the Great granted Krakow full staple rights as part of its "Great Privilege" in 1358, merchants from Wrocław were impeded from trading with the eastern regions, including the City of Lviv, which, due to its contacts with the Italian colonies on the Black Sea coast, specialized in importing desirable eastern products.<sup>569</sup> Between the

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<sup>566</sup> *Materyały archiwalne wyjęte głównie z metryki litewskiej od 1348 do 1607 roku* [Archive Materials primarily taken from the Lithuanian Metrica from 1348 to 1607], ed. Antoni Prochaska (Lviv: Jerzy Sewer Dunin Borkowski, 1890), nr. 211 (1494/01/25).

<sup>567</sup> Pope Alexander VI did not officially sanction the crusade, the only such event in the late fourteenth century, although he did allow funds gathered in Poland and Lithuania to be used for the effort. Alexandru Simon, "Lasting Falls and Wishful Recoveries: Crusading in the Black Sea Region after the Fall of Constantinople," *Imago temporis: medium Aevum* 6 (2012): 313.

<sup>568</sup> Dzhanov, "Development of the Black Sea," 178.

<sup>569</sup> The prohibition was rescinded briefly in 1417 by Władysław Jagiełło; who allowed Wrocław merchants to travel unimpeded to Lviv, so long as they transited through Lusk. However, as tensions rose with King Sigismund

1360s and 1440, a relatively stable period of relations grew between Wrocław and Poland. Indeed, Trade continued despite the incursions of the Hussites in the region (1420-34) and a brief break in 1432, when King Władysław Jagiełło ordered a halt on all exports to the city; as there was a fear of counterfeit coins entering from the region.<sup>570</sup> Commerce was eventually restored, but Krakow and Wrocław were soon embroiled in a tit for tat trade war that lasted from 1440-1490, with Polish Kings seemingly determined to keep Silesian merchants from gaining direct access to the wealth coming out of Lviv.<sup>571</sup> The situation was further compromised when, in the 1460s and 70s, the region of Silesia became a battle ground between rivals for the Bohemian throne. The Bohemian Hussite King George of Podiebrad, and the Hungarian King, Matthias Corvinus, battled each other, with Corvinus eventually claiming the territory. Even with some amount of political normalcy restored, relations between Silesia and Poland did not improve, culminating in 1490 with a full closure of the Silesian border against Polish merchants. A few years later, the Kingdom of Poland retaliated by refusing to export cereals and oxen, which were then becoming major goods.<sup>572</sup> The loss of this commerce was disastrous for transit towns like Wrocław. The result of this animosity was to reduce trade between the Kingdom of Poland and Silesia to a trickle. Any Italians claiming citizenship rights in a Polish town would have met with stiff resistance and high tariff costs. Given the tumult in the region during the second half of the fifteenth century, it is not surprising that the heyday of Italians using the route *versus Silesium*, occurred between 1360-1440, and was afterwards rarely used.

### **Silesia's Contacts with Italy**

As early as the late 1260s, wine from Northern Italy had been imported to Wrocław.<sup>573</sup> While the treaties of the mid-fourteenth century were important, the mother city of Silesia had been an early nexus for Italian goods and immigration even under the Piasts. In 1270, the city already had a street known as the "*platea Romanorum*" later referred to as "*Platea Gallica*" or in German "*Walgasse*", demonstrating that enough Italians had by this time migrated to the

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of Hungary, who became also the King of Bohemia in 1419, the privilege was soon walked back. [NZPiWMK] nr. 3; Grzegorz Myśliwski, "Wirtschaftsleben an der Hohen Straße," in *Breslau und Krakau im hohen und späten Mittelalter: Stadtgestalt-Wohnraum-Lebensstil*, Vol. 87. ed. Eduard Mühle (Böhlau: Verlag Köln Weimar, 2014), 183-4.

<sup>570</sup> Myśliwski, "Wirtschaftsleben an der Hohen Straße," 183-4.

<sup>571</sup> Carter, *Trade*, 80.

<sup>572</sup> Ibid.

<sup>573</sup> "*de vino Gallico sive Rivali*" Grzegorz Myśliwski, "Venice and Wrocław in the later Middle Ages" in *Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages: A Cultural History: [essays in Honour of Paul W. Knoll]*, eds. Piotr Górecki and Nancy Deussen. (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2009), 101.



city to justify a street named after them.<sup>574</sup> Indeed, it is likely that Silesia was the gateway through which Italians came to the rest of Polish lands, although the sources are fragmentary enough to make precise tracing difficult. Still, Silesia developed greater ties with Italy earlier than the rest of Poland. Indeed, between 1259-1281 two Italian brothers, Simone and Eduardo served at the courts of Henry III and Henry IV Dukes of Silesia as judges and eventually as Palatine, enormously important roles.<sup>575</sup> In Krakow on the other hand, the first hard evidence for Genoese active in Krakow comes only from the start of the fourteenth century. This discrepancy might be misleading however, as the greater part of the sources for Krakow only emerge from the year 1300. In any event, the evidence from Silesia points to an Italian presence in the region already from the mid-thirteenth century although it remains unclear from which part of Italy these individuals came.

In the mid-fourteenth century, the Dukes of Legnica and Swiednicza in Silesia, using recently discovered gold deposits in their lands, struck a short series of gold coins based upon the Florentine golden florin. A Florentine named Anastasio Venturi was recruited by Duke Wenceslaus I of Legnica (r. 1342-64) in 1345 to help issue the new coins.<sup>576</sup> Duke Bolco II of Swiednicza (r. 1326-68) issued similar coins a few years later but the identity of his mint master is unknown. The coins themselves were modeled after the Florentine originals briefly

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<sup>574</sup> A street in Wrocław was first mentioned in the Cistercian Chronicle of Henric as *platea Romanorum* in 1270, previously it had been known as *platea Sancti Mauricii* for the church located nearby. By 1316 the name had changed to *platea Gallica* and was later by the German *Walgasse*. The final eponym caused Zientara to assume that the origins of the people who lived in the area were Waloons - romance speakers from Southern France renowned for their weaving skills. Jan Ptaśnik however, argued that these terms - *Romanis* or *Gallicus* did not refer to Wallons but rather to Italians, citing examples from the later fourteenth century. This argument appears suspect however, as it stands only on later usages and is further undercut by the German title *Waloongasse* referred to by Zientara, which clearly points to Waloon occupants. *Romanus* and *Gallicus* would then appear to have been used somewhat interchangeably for Romance speakers, initially Walloons and later Italians. However, looking closely at the work compiled by Zientara a wrinkle appears. On page 177 she writes that the street *platea Gallica* was later known by the German title *Waloongasse*, in her final gazette of all Wrocław street names on page 181 she defines the name as *Walgasse*. Since *Wal* or *Wale* was a common title in German for Italians, it stands to reason that Italians, rather than Waloons were the original occupants of the street. Benedykt Zientara, "Walonowie na Śląsku w XII i XIII wieku [Wallons in Silesia in the 12th and 13th centuries]," *Przegląd Historyczny: dwumiesięcznik naukowy* 66.3 (1975): 177, 181, 353.; Jan Ptaśnik, "Studia nad patrycyatem krakowskim wieków średnich.[Study of the Krakow Patriciate during the Middle Ages]." *Rocznik Krakowski* 15 (1913): 87

<sup>575</sup> (1259/01/24) *Schlesisches Urkundenbuch, Im Auftrage der Historischen Kommission für Schlesien herausgegeben von Heinrich Appelt und Josef Joachim Menzel, Fünfter Band 1291 - 1300*, eds. Bearbeitet von Winfried Irgang and Mitarbeit Daphne Schadewaldt (Böhlau Verlag Hermann Nachf., Köln-Weimar-Wien 1998) III nr 279 pg 184.; (1281/05/04) *Breslauer Urkundenbuch*. eds. Georg Korn Anton Werner (Wrocław: Erster Theil, 1870), nr 51.

<sup>576</sup> Joachim Weschke, and Manfred Czastka. *Gold Coins of the Middle Ages from the Deutsche Bundesbank Collectio*, (Muchich:GmbH,1983), XVII.

entered circulation and a number have survived.<sup>577</sup> The appearance of a member of the Venturi family associated with minting activities in Central Europe at the early date, is extremely interesting as members of that family became deeply involved in Hungarian mining operations and were later prominent merchants of the town of Pressberg, modern day Bratislava in Slovakia.<sup>578</sup> It is possible that the family got their start in the region working at the ducal mint in Silesia. Later members of the family in the fifteenth century were to be found back in Florence working as masters for the mother city.<sup>579</sup> The gold mines in Silesia quickly dried up however, and continuous minting could not be maintained. The failure of the region to unify meant that while mints in the region proliferated, they remained small and unattractive to Italian investors. It is clear from the surviving sources that while Italians may have expressed interest in region's mineral wealth, Florentine Antonio di ser Matteo for example, is credited with writing a "*Walenbücher*", a book which described in detail points in the Sudeten Mountains where treasure and good sites to mine could be found, their main focus was the City of Wrocław.<sup>580</sup> Merchants from Wrocław can be shown to have visited Venice, the closest Italian trade center, from the early fourteenth century, as they became members of the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*. Indeed, By the early fifteenth century they had their own dedicated storage section at the *Fondaco* in Venice.<sup>581</sup>

While the loss of Silesia in the 1330s, was a blow to the Kingdom of Poland, it was on the other hand, a boon to Wrocław's relations with Italy directly. The Bohemian King and the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles IV (r. 1346-78), signed a treaty with Venice in 1358 which allowed all of his citizens to trade freely with the Republic.<sup>582</sup> Even more, in 1373, the city received a privilege from King Charles IV allowing Wrocław merchants to freely export silver, gold, and

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<sup>577</sup> Numerous of examples have been found I hoards from West Germany and Austria. Joachim Weschke, and Manfred Czastka. *Gold Coins of the Middle Ages from the Deutsche Bundesbank Collection*, (Muchich: GmbH, 1983), XVII.

<sup>578</sup> For more on the activities of this family see: Judit Majorossy, "A Krisztus Teste Konfraternitás helye a középkori pozsonyi polgárok életében [The role of the Corpus Christi confraternity in the life of the medieval citizens of Bratislava]," *Történelmi Szemle* xlvii 1/2 (2004): 34-6; Arany, "Florentine," 239-40.

<sup>579</sup> Carson A. Simpson, "The Mint Officials of the Florentine Florin," *Museum Notes (American Numismatic Society)* 5 (1952): 144.

<sup>580</sup> No evidence has so far come to light demonstrating Italian presence in the smaller Silesian towns but it is possible that further research in archival sources may offer testimony of their passage. [Silesia20] nr 198 pg 83 For more on this see: Philippe Braunstein, "Leggende «Welsche» E Itinerari Slesiani: La Prospezione Mineraria Nel Quattrocento," *Quaderni Storici*, Nuova Serie, no. 70 (1) (1989): 25-56.

<sup>581</sup> 54 rooms and 22 storage areas of various sizes were available at the *Fondaco*. The merchants from Breslau held one of the larger (70m<sup>2</sup>) dedicated storage areas The area was Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 90; Myśliwski, "Venice and Wrocław," 102-3.

<sup>582</sup> Myśliwski, "Venice and Wrocław," 104.

other goods out of the great mining Town of Kutná Hora.<sup>583</sup> This privilege was partially behind the intensification of trade with Venice in the 1380s, as the Lagoon City was hungry for precious metals to feed its mint and expand its trade empire.<sup>584</sup> Merchants from Wrocław helped ship the enormous amounts of silver which flowed from mines in Bohemia, the German Lands, and even Silesia itself.<sup>585</sup> The merchants of Vienna and other Austrian towns did not look kindly on this development, and began to harass merchants traveling between Wrocław and Venice. After repeated complaints, the King of Bohemia sought to intervene; but his efforts proved fruitless. It was not until the Jodok, the Margrave of Moravia (r. 1375-1411), took a hand in the matter that a new treaty was forged in the early 1390s guaranteeing freedom of transit for Wrocław traders towards the West.<sup>586</sup> In the wake of this, Wrocław became a western gateway for the Polish kingdom.

The late fourteenth century thus saw an upsurge of Italian merchants entering Wrocław. The majority of these were Venetian, but a significant number hailed from other regions, including most notably, Florence. Venetian merchants began to take an active interest in the city around the turn of the fourteenth century, as shown in part by the names of over fifty Venetians registered between 1394-1466, that were identified by Alwin Shultz in the notarial books of Wrocław, prior to their destruction in WWII.<sup>587</sup> This was not an inconsiderable number, given that in comparison, only 12 known Viennese merchants arrived in the city during the same period.<sup>588</sup> Merchants from Nuremberg on the other hand, begin trading in Wrocław only from around 1394, and in general the presence of South Germans in the region was far more limited than was the case in Hungary or Poland.<sup>589</sup> Wrocław's most dynamic trade with Venice occurred between 1380-1440, but the two cities remained in close contact until at least the 1480's and to a lesser degree throughout the sixteenth century.<sup>590</sup> Trade could not even be fully halted between them when Sigismund of Hungary, who became Holy Roman Emperor in 1411

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<sup>583</sup> Myśliwski, "Venice and Wrocław," 109.

<sup>584</sup> Myśliwski, "Venice and Wrocław," 104.

<sup>585</sup> Alan M. Stahl, *Zecca: the mint of Venice in the Middle Ages* (London: JHU Press, 2000), 128-30; Myśliwski, "Venice and Wrocław," 109-10.

<sup>586</sup> Myśliwski, "Venice and Wrocław," 105.

<sup>587</sup> Alwin Schultz, "Topographie Breslaus im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert", in *Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens* vol 10 par 2. (Wrocław: J. Max & Komp, 1871), 245-6. For further discussion of these names see: Myśliwski, "Venice and Wrocław," 112-3.

<sup>588</sup> Grzegorz Myśliwski, "Wrocław's economic links with the upper German Lands in the thirteenth to the fifteenth century," *Acta Poloniae historica* 102 (2010):17-8.

<sup>589</sup> For example, within the duchy of Warsaw and surrounding Silesia, South German merchants rarely acquired toll rentals or purchased land, whereas this was common practice in Poland and Hungary. Myśliwski, "Wrocław's economic links," 10, 33.

<sup>590</sup> Myśliwski, "Venice and Wrocław," 106.

and King of Bohemia in 1419, sought to enact an embargo against Venice (1412–13 and 1418–1433), forbidding any of his subjects to trade with the Lagoon City.<sup>591</sup> Yet, Italian merchants working from Poland repeatedly defied the ban and trade kept moving despite the measures set to stop it.

### 2.4.1 The *Via versus Silesiam*

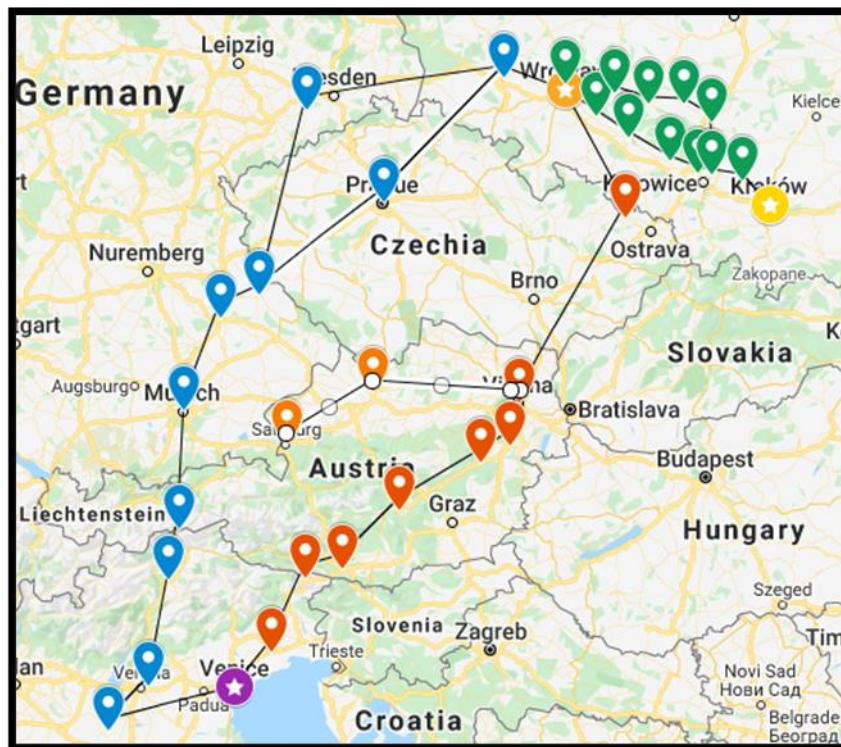


Figure 40 Routes of the *Via versus Silesiam*

Traders could travel between Venice and Wrocław by a large number of routes. Evidence from the thirteenth century points to a popular route via either Prague or else skirting Bohemia passing through Liegnitz and Freiberg to reach the Cham and then Regensburg and Munich before taking the Brenner pass through the alps to arrive in Bolzano, Verona and beyond to the Po valley or Venice on the Adriatic coast.<sup>592</sup> (Figure 41) During the fourteenth century, as Silesia came under the dominion of the Kingdom of Bohemia and found its place within the patchwork of the Holy Roman Empire, transit via eastern Austria became popular. Particularly from the final decades of the fourteenth century, merchants passed through Moravia, Vienna, and Wiener Neustadt, before crossing the Semmering Pass, stopping in Judenberg and Villach

<sup>591</sup> The embargo was in place between (1412–13, 1418–1433). Myśliwski, “Venice and Wrocław,” 105-6.

<sup>592</sup> Myśliwski, “Venice and Wrocław 101-2.

before arriving in Friuli, passing through Pontebbe and Portogruaro to arrive at last in Venice. An offshoot of this route further ran through Lintz and Salzberg.<sup>593</sup> (Figure 41) These routes were regularly affected by disputes between towns over toll payments, during the fourteenth century, the Hussite uprising during the fourteenth century, and war; but Wrocław continued to prosper during all of this. From Wrocław, the routes to Poland were also manifold; and Wrocław merchants had strong ties to both Toruń in the North and Lviv in the East. However, the most heavily traveled road led to Krakow via Brzeg, Opole, Toszek, Bytom, Będzin, and Olkusz; or by a slightly longer way through Psie Pole, Namysłów, Kluczbork, Krzepice, and Częstochowa<sup>594</sup> (Figure 41) Connections between Wrocław and Krakow in particular, were extremely strong, both in terms of trade and family ties between the cities' patriciate.<sup>595</sup>

## 2.4.2 Trade into the German Lands

While Italians in Poland worked with merchants from the German Lands, it was rare for them to do so outside of the mediating influence of the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* in Venice, and they appear to have only very rarely traded themselves in this zone. A few examples exist of such interactions however, and they are related here. The first, is of Gotfridus Fattinante whose will in 1393 requests that a certain amount of silk in his possession be delivered to his nephew Erasmus, then present and working in the City of Cologne.<sup>596</sup> Apart from this, there is no indication that Gotfridus was in regular contact with his nephew. The fairs in Cologne had been attracting Italian merchants since the twelfth century, and was one of the premier trading cities in the Empire. It is possible that Gotfridus was in regular contact with his nephew, but the route from Krakow to Cologne was a long and difficult one. Traveling the shortest route via Wrocław, merchants would have been required to travel over 1,000 km, cross six toll stations, and pass through four cities with staple rights.<sup>597</sup> It is thus unsurprising that a more sustained trading relationship does not appear in the sources. The only other major group of Italians who appear to have traded in the German Lands without the mitigation of the *Fondaco*

<sup>593</sup> Myśliwski, "Venice and Wrocław," 103, 105; Samsonowicz, "Relationes commerciales," 288.

<sup>594</sup> Grzegorz Myśliwski, "A Silesian Town and the Hungarian Monarchy: Economic Contacts between Wrocław and Hungary, ca. 1250–1500," In *The Medieval Networks in East Central Europe* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), 239.

<sup>595</sup> Jacek Wiesiołowski, "Z korespondencji prywatnej pierwszej połowy XV wieku, [Private Correspondence from the First Half of the Fifteenth Century]," *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* 33 (1988): 223-238.

<sup>596</sup> (1393/12/15) [KDKK] nr. CCCXCVI

<sup>597</sup> These numbers are calculated using the viabundus project. Bart Holterman, et al. (ed.), "Viabundus Pre-modern Street Map 1.0," (released 19-4-2021), <https://www.landesgeschichte.uni-goettingen.de/handelsstrassen/map.php> Accessed May 4th, 2021; Weissen, "I mercanti toscani alle fiere tedesche," 888-90.

is the Genoese Promontorio family, who in the 1480s-90s, worked with merchants from Frankfurt on Oder, Magdeburg, Berlin, Leipzig, and Nuremberg.<sup>598</sup> At least one member of this family was also present in Nuremberg for a time.<sup>599</sup> However, as the family was settled in Poznań and organized their trade from there, they are considered in the above section focused on trade to the north. Apart from these mentions, there is very little indication that Italians operating in Poland also sought to trade beyond Wrocław into the German Lands.

## Conclusion

The sections of this chapter cover the political history that influenced the routes which Italians took when trading through Poland. Travel in medieval times was a burden – difficult, often dangerous, and extremely costly, particularly if done overland. While we lack reliable cost figures for Poland, figures calculated by Frederigo Melis using the Datini records put the cost for cargoes of woolen cloth from Prato to Mallorca at 3% of the final price. Going overland meanwhile, was significantly more expensive. The well-traveled route between Avignon and Milan for example, cost 10% while inland transport through the mountainous regions of the Balkans rose to 24.5% of the price of the goods sold.<sup>600</sup> Technological changes, such as the evolution of Carracks, which improved links between Mediterranean merchant fleets, the North Sea and the Baltic, lowered prices and allowed for greater movement of goods such as copper, which passed through Poland. Political changes could be equally impactful, as can be seen for example in the knock on effects of the shift of the Silk roads trade towards the Black Sea. This built up the Italian colonies there and then later the Ottoman expansion saw them wither. In the meantime, these changes prioritized the overland route through Poland that, thanks to internal domestic policies, ushered trade through Lviv and Krakow. Italians traders were deeply influenced by these changes and frequently found ways to benefit themselves by them. The management of tolls and customs duties, which were imposed on traders travelling legally mandated itineraries, was a popular route to wealth taken up by Italians in Poland: Albizzo di Medici, Crsifero di S. Romulo, Durinus Cathenius, Arnolfo Tedaldi, Juliano di Valetaris, Pietro Veluti, Andrea Gwasko di Soldaia, all at one time or another gained wealth directly in

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<sup>598</sup> (1494/06/23) [ActaPoz] II nr 1582, (1495/08/05) [ActaPoz] II nr 1614, (1495/09/02) [ActaPoz] II nr 1624

<sup>599</sup> Peregrino di Promontorio (1495/09/02) [ActaPoz] II nr 1623

<sup>600</sup> Frederigo Melis, *Industria e commercio nella Toscana medievale*, edited by Bruno Dini (Florence: le Monnier, 1989), 262; Frangioni, Luciana. *Milano e le sue strade: costi di trasporto e vie di commercio dei prodotti milanesi alla fine del Trecento*. Cappelli, 1983), 182-4; Paola Pinelli, “Florentine Merchants Traveling East through Ragusa (Dubrovnik) and the Balkans at the End of the 15th Century”, in *Conference Proceedings in Honor to Academician Desanka Kovacevic Kojic, Banja Luka* 2015, 198-9.

this fashion.<sup>601</sup> Politics, profit, and physical barriers combined to craft the flow of goods through Poland. Italians were attuned to these flows more than others because they traded overwhelmingly as long-distance whole-sale merchants. Unsurprising, considering their origins and the fact that without citizenship they were banned from participating directly in local retail trade. Even the relatively small number of Italians who did become citizens still tended to specialize in long-distance trade, as it was more profitable. Given this tendency, it is unsurprising that as Chapter 3 demonstrates, they tended to focus on high-value low-bulk goods – spices, precious textiles, salt, the main exceptions to this being slaves, who moved on their own two feet, and refined metals which were always in high demand. Here though we see that the type of good also influenced the routes taken, as metals were shipped as much as possible via water - down the Vistula, as other means were impractical and cost-prohibitive. Italians stayed out of the grain and animals trade, which were managed by locals. A host of factors thus affected what routes were taken by Italians and changes over time had a great impact upon their movements.

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<sup>601</sup> [SPPP 2] nr. 1986; [SDIR] nr 12, nr 14; [MRPS] I nr 1661, nr. 730; Consul. Leopoli. 1460 — 1506, p. 110, 118, 122, 140, 142. As recorded by Jan Ptaśnik from his assessment of the Lviv City Council books. I have not personally accessed these volumes but believe Ptaśnik's explanation of the events to be credible. See: Jan Ptaśnik, *Kultura Włoska Wieków Średnich W Polsce* [Italian Culture in Medieval Poland], (Warsaw: Instytut Wydawniczy Biblioteka Polska, 1922), 58-9; Myśliwski, "Venice and Wrocław," 106 fn. 63;

# Chapter 3 - Traded Goods

## Introduction

The following chapter looks at the goods which were traded by Italians during their time in Poland. Italians in Poland dedicated themselves primarily to long-distance rather than local retail trade, a pattern consistent with most migrant merchants who travelled abroad. Medieval urban settlements made a clear legal distinction between retail and whole-sale long distance transactions and zealously guarded the privilege to engage in the former. Italians who became citizens of a Polish town might open a shop and trade in the local square, and some did, but those who did not, were relegated to fair periods, obliged to pay extra tax, or dedicated themselves to sell directly to the royal court which superseded municipal privilege. The majority of the products sold by Italians were high-end luxury items, spices, fine cloth, and even slaves together with heavy but high-value commodities like copper and lead. This trend is unsurprising, given that the time, transportation constituted an outsized cost of doing business and long-distance trade therefore required a relatively high bulk to value ratio. The major exception to this was salt, which while not shockingly expensive, was a daily necessity whose sale in bulk could be highly lucrative. Italians became involved early on in the salt trade, because of their frequent status as one of the Polish Kingdom's Zuppari – salt mine managers. The sale of salt was highly restricted but extremely lucrative, as it was a necessity rather than a luxury item, if a post could be obtained. As managers of the mines, Italians had a special status permitting them to make sales of this precious commodity. One area that Italians did not trade in, was bulk agricultural commodities, neither grain nor beasts, during the period such products remained firmly in the hands of nobles and local Polish merchants. This changed only in the sixteenth century when the need to feed a larger population pushed Italians further afield in search of such items, which due to advances in shipping technology could now be brought from the Baltic. The resulting boom pushed a large number of Italians to settle in Poland, supplying now wealthy Polish lords with lavish Italian textiles and other exotica in exchange for their cereal bounty.<sup>602</sup> During the period under discussion however, such an

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<sup>602</sup> The number of Italians in the region remained high until the second quarter of the seventeenth century when the City of Amsterdam became the new fulcrum between the Baltic and the Mediterranean and Dutch merchants increasingly pushed out their Italian counterparts. Goldthwaite, *Economy of Renaissance Florence*, 202.



exchange had yet to manifest and the number of active traders from the peninsula remained small.

Many of the items that Italians traded in tended to have a geographic focus, tracking along the routes described in Chapter 2. Copper, for example, was mined in Upper-Hungary and then traded through the Carpathian mountains to Krakow, before being shipped up the Vistula to the Baltic north and beyond to Bruges and thus ran along a north-south access through Poland, crossing from the Carpathian sphere into that of the Baltic. Other goods meanwhile traveled east to west, these included spices, sugar, exotic fruits, wine, and slaves which were imported exclusively from the Italian Black Sea colonies through Lviv, from whence they were routed westwards, feeding Polish internal markets and beyond. Italians often handled a specific segment of this trade, and only in rare cases, the entire trip. On only a few occasions were items from Poland ferried directly to the Italian Peninsula itself. Red cochineal dye and furs were transferred to Venice via Wrocław, while slaves and furs were sent from Lviv to Genoa. Italians imported directly only textiles from Italy, otherwise trading in cash or goods they had acquired in Poland itself. The following sections lay out the history of the trade of particular items and how Italians came to be involved in their exchange. Undoubtedly, Italians were involved in far more transactions than have been recorded in the historical record, but the following pages give a summary of the goods we are aware of, and Italian merchants' place in the history of their trade in and out of Poland.

### 3.1 Salt

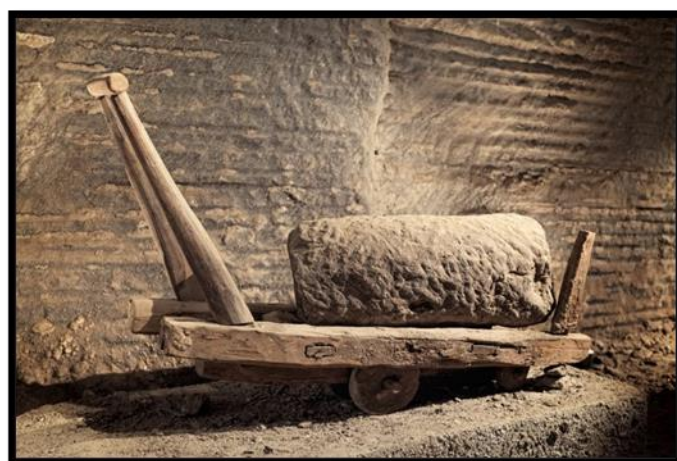


Figure 41 Medieval Salt block - “*Balwan Solny*” from the Wieliczka Salt Mine

Salt, - *sal*, was of chief importance in the pre-modern economy as it was a necessary dietary element for humans and livestock, kept food from spoiling, and had other industrial uses. The Kingdom of Poland was blessed with an abundance of this commodity, particularly in the region of Krakow. The heavily imbued rock salt of this region left by ancient seas millennia earlier, proved to be an extremely important source of revenue for the Polish monarchy who from 1278, imposed a royal monopoly on the supply.<sup>603</sup> The two most important salt mines in the kingdom were Bochnia and Wieliczka, located not far from the City of Krakow. While salt had long been extracted from the region, the ventures became organized only in the twelfth century and methods were still primitive and limited in structure and capacity until the thirteenth century. By 1368 however, it is estimated that 12,000 tons of salt were being produced by the mines near Krakow. Given that the population of Poland at the time hovered around 2,000,000, that amounted to 6 kilos of salt per person per year.<sup>604</sup> Most of this salt was processed for internal markets, but some of it was exported abroad, primarily to Hungary.<sup>605</sup>

As was common for the period, the sale of salt was a royal monopoly and profits from its sale made up a significant chunk of the royal budget. During the reign of King Casimir the Great (r.1333-70), the royal salt monopoly brought in as much as 25,000 marks annually, accounting

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<sup>603</sup> Duke Bolesław V the Chaste (1243-79) was the leader who first introduced the royal monopoly on salt in the area of Małopolska. From thence forward, the Polish salt mines would become a key element of royal finance through even to the early modern period and the partition of Poland in 1772. Bochnia had been the first site where salt was discovered and soon after, the far larger deposits at Wieliczka. In 1290, the two were united administratively and in documents as Zupy Krakowskie - the Krakow salt mines. *Brevis et accurata regiminis ac status Zupparum Vieliensium et Bochnensium sub annum Christi 1518 descriptio*, ed. Waław Walecki (Krakow: Collegium Columbinum, 2000), XXVI.

<sup>604</sup> Jerzy Wyrozumski, *Państwowa gospodarka solna w Polsce do schyłku XIV wieku* [The State salt economy in Poland until the end of the 14th c.. *Prace Historyczne* No. 21. (Krakow: Nakł. Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 1968), 136.

<sup>605</sup> Salt was a monopoly product controlled by local authorities across Europe, and its importation was strictly controlled if not banned outright. The salt exported to Hungary therefore, was frequently done so illegally. King Sigismund of Hungary for example, when he reorganized the Hungarian salt chambers in 1397, reiterated the ban on importing foreign salt. He was however, forced to repeat this mandate again in 1405, 1417, and 1427, specifically targeting Poland, demonstrating that despite restrictions, salt from Poland continued to be exported to Hungary. Evidence of salt sales in Bardejov further support the that Polish salt continued to make its way into Hungary despite royal disapproval. István Draskóczy, "Salt Mining and Trade in Hungary from the mid-Thirteenth Century until the End of the Middle Ages," in *The Economy of Medieval Hungary*, eds. Florin Curta and Dušan Zupka (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 210; "Akta odnoszące się do stosunków handlowych Polski z Węgrami głównie z Archiwum Koszyckiego z lat 1354-1505 [Files relating to Poland's trade relations with Hungary, mainly from the Koszyce Archives from 1354-1505]," ed. Stanisław Kutrzeba. *Akademia Umiejętności w Krakowie. Komisja Historyczna* Vol 9 (1902): nr. 8; Kutrzeba, *Finanse*, 238-9.

for 35% of the total income coming into the royal treasury.<sup>606</sup> In the later sixteenth century, with the introduction of new technologies the mines further increased their output, pushing revenues to over 30,000 marks annually.<sup>607</sup> By comparison, in the Kingdom of Hungary, where the crown also retained a royal monopoly on salt production, the highest earning occurred during the reign of Matthias Corvinus (r.1458-90) and even then, only reached roughly 1,500-2,000 marks per annum and was often far lower, at times reaching only 250 marks.<sup>608</sup> Salt was Poland's white gold.

As the Krakow salt mines were enlarged and improved, it became increasingly necessary to employ qualified men to oversee the process. This need developed into a position for a dedicated salt mine manager known as a Zupnik latinized to Zupparius, a term already in use in 1253 as it is found in the foundation charter of Bochnia granted by Duke Bolesław V the Chaste.<sup>609</sup> The role of Zupparius became an important administrative post responsible for ensuring the proper running of the mine, the controlled distribution of salt for sale, and its delivery to various privileged entities – the royal consort, monastic houses, and Krakow University, as well as favored nobles. Salt was further frequently used to pay the salaries of royal retainers or debts owed by the crown, all obligations that had to be monitored and paid. Not only the distribution of the finished product, but work within the mines also had to be

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<sup>606</sup> Salt sold from the various mines in the Kingdom of Poland brought in 25,000 out of a total estimated 70,000 marks to the annual royal budget. Given that the new mining law of 1368 set the rental price of the Krakow mines at 18,000 marks, we can estimate more precisely that the mines at Wieliczka and Bochnia alone, accounted for 26% of total royal revenues. See: Krzysztof Boroda and Piotr Guzowski "From King's Finance to Public Finance. Different Strategies of Fighting Financial Crisis in the Kingdom of Poland under Jagiellonian Rule (1386-1572)" in *Le crisi finanziarie. Gestione, implicazioni sociali e conseguenze nell'età preindustriale. The financial crises. Their management, their social implications and their consequences in pre-industrial times*, ed. Giampiero Nigro (Florence: Florence University Press, 2016), 452-3; Zdzisław Kaczmarczyk, *Monarchia Kazimierza Wielkiego Tom 1: Organizacja państwa* [The Monarchy of Casimir the Great Vol. 1: Organization of the State], (Poznań: Jan Jachowski Księgarnia Uniwersytecka, 1939) 199.

<sup>607</sup> By the end of the 1550s Wieliczka alone was producing around 21 000 marks annually and Bochnia a respectable 5000 marks and amount which rose further during the 1560s the profitability of both salt mines increased still further to a combined average of 35,000. Boroda, "From King's Finance to Public," 454.

<sup>608</sup> Using the calculation of 55 Hungarian florins = 1 silver Mark by weight. "100.000 florins was the highest amount that a late medieval Hungarian king could gain from the salt monopoly. King Matthias' revenues from salt ranged between 80.000 and 100.000, while in the Jagiellonian period a steep decline was registered, resulting in an annual 14.000-50.000 florins income from this monopoly. Draskóczy, "Salt mining and the salt," 214-216.

<sup>609</sup> Duke Bolesław V was married to princess Kinga of Hungary, who was later named a saint. Kinga's hagiography includes the story that desiring to bring something of value to her new people, while still in Hungary, she threw her betrothal band into a well, upon arriving in Poland, she ordered workers to dig and the shovels immediately turned up her ring and a pile of salt. Thus, so the story went, was salt introduced to Poland. The words from the 1285 charter which marked the first time the term Zupparius was used in relation to the Krakow mines, were repeated in the description of the mine made by Jan Boner in 1515 stating, "*Zupparii nostri cum scriptoribus et camerariis eorum*" The terms *magister montium* or the German *Bergmeister* would also be used for this post. Hieronim Hilary Łabęcki, *Salin krakowskich aż do żupnictwa Jana Bonara, czyli do r. 1515* [Krakow Salt Mines until the era of the saltmine operator Jan Bonar, or until 1515] (Warsaw: publisher unknown, 1856), 285.

managed. By the early sixteenth century, the salt mines in Wieliczka and Bochnia, together employed over 1000 workers.<sup>610</sup> The fragmentary remains of the ledgers kept for the Bochnia salt mine between 1394-1422 have survived, and give a good indication of the amount of work entailed in managing the mine's affairs.<sup>611</sup> Educated Italians, coming from the merchant republics who thrived on complicated business ventures, were well-suited to take up such a position. Aptitude was not the only requirement of a Zupparius however, other factors were of equal importance.

The role of Zupparius, like many positions within the royal administration, could be rented from the monarch. An interested individual would pay an up-front fee to the ruler, with the promise of a set number of later payments, but anything they made over and above this amount, they were permitted to keep as profit. This type of monopoly or tax farming, was common across Europe during the period and it was the reason why Italians were eligible for a position that today would be considered highly sensitive. During the period however, Italians across Europe were invited by various monarchs to serve as mint masters, tax collectors, customs administrators, and mine managers.

Three primary reasons underlay their success. First, Italians tended to be extremely well educated by the standards of the day, particularly in administrative and accounting techniques, which made them valuable assets. Second, their very foreignness rendered them attractive to monarchs, as it placed them in a vulnerable position. The other people who would have been educated and wealthy enough to hold such a post would likely have come from the ranks of the local nobility or highly respected burghers, who might use their position to build a powerbase that could turn against the monarch. Foreigners on the other hand, were subject to much closer legal oversight by the monarch, and less likely to be interested in fostering political division. For these same reasons, Jews were also frequently employed in such posts. At least one Jew worked as the Zupparius of the Krakow mines while many others served as toll and customs

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<sup>610</sup> A manuscript compiled in 1515 at the order of Jan Boner, the then Zupparius and royal financier, is a unique document giving the most detailed description of a pre-modern industrial enterprise in European history. In vivid detail, each office and type of worker is listed, along with their duties and salaries, together with information on the logistics of operating the mine itself and the complicated details of to whom salt was owed by ancient right and how and where it could be transported and sold. *Brevis et accurata regiminis ac status Zupparum Vieliensium et Bochnensium sub Annum Christi 1518: Descriptio*, ed. Waclaw Walecki (Krakow: Collegium Columbinum, 2000).

<sup>611</sup> "Rachunki żupne bocheńskie z lat 1394-1421," [Accounts of the Salt-works at Bochnia between the years 1394-1421] ed. Jadwiga Karwasińska, *Archiwum Komisji Historycznej Vol. 3* (15) (Krakow: Instytut Archeologii i Etnologii Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1939), 123-232.

officers, even after this practice was officially prohibited in 1423.<sup>612</sup> Third, Italians had the wealth, and more importantly, liquid capital, sufficient to pay the steep initial rental fees required to secure such posts. Contracts signed for the Krakow mines tended to be set for 3-6 years and included quarterly payments. The rental fee varied, with Pietro Bicherano (1406-1423) owing 17,000 marks per annum, Antonio di Giovanni ser Matteo (1426-1430) owing 18,500, and Nicholaus Serafino (1456-1458) owing 16,000 marks, while a non-Italian, Albertus Niger, in 1424 owed 20,000, the number dependent on the current health of the mine, the desperation of the monarch, and the credit-worthiness of the renter.<sup>613</sup> As the mines grew and as the task of managing them became more complex, Vice-Zuppari were also employed, many of whom were also Italians.

The first Zupparius known by name was a certain Nicholaus, named by King Władysław Łokietek as Zupparius in 1323.<sup>614</sup> Just a few years later in 1343, the first Italian operator arrived on the scene, Italians were thus involved in the mine's expanded administration from nearly the beginning. Recorded as, *Albetrus Porinus Gallicus*, his native city is unknown, but his appearance in the record marks the first named mine operator in Poland of Italian extraction.<sup>615</sup> Very little is known about this first Italian Zupparius, as he does not appear in a single surviving charter nor can his name be found in the Krakow notarial records. In his study on the matter, Jan Ptaśnik cited the work of Felix Boczkowski, who reported that Porinus was the first administrator at Wieliczka, and was active under King Władysław Łokietek from 1334-60. Porinus is further credited by Boczkowski with having made the first registers, divided the bottom laborers into various diggers, tacks, rotors and trucks, and set up the first standard for measuring mined salt.<sup>616</sup> Ptaśnik did not trust Boczkowski's account however, claiming much of his work was inaccurate, and as he had not cited the source where he had

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<sup>612</sup> (1378-82) *Lewko Judeus* served in the position under Casimir the Great. *Starodawne Prawa Polskiego Pomniki*. Vol I Henceforward [SPPP I] ed. Antoni Z. Helcel (Warsaw: Nakł. Księgarni G. Sennewalda, 1856), 217; Hanna Zaremska, "Jews and Their Attitude towards Christians in Medieval Poland," *Acta Poloniae Historica* 101 (2010): 153. The Statute of Warta adopted by King Władysław Jagiełło after pressure from the clergy, forbade Jews to rent tolls or customs, but this did not stop them from doing so, particularly in the surroundings of Lviv. Jacob Litman, *The Economic Role of Jews in Medieval Poland: The Contribution of Yitzhak Schipper*, (Lanham: University Press of America, 1984), 135.-

<sup>613</sup>[Itali] nr. 33; nr [MRPs] I, nr. 290; [KMP] 5 nr. 544; *Liber Cancellariae Stanislai Ciołek : ein Formelbuch der polnischen Königskanzlei aus der Zeit der Husitischen Bewegung* vol 1-2. ed. Jakub Caro (Vienna: Commission bei Karl Gerold's Sohn, 1871), LXIX II (122).

<sup>614</sup> *Nicolaus dictus Zupnik* (1323) [KDMK] I nr 13 pg 15, (1328) nr 14 pg 18.

<sup>615</sup> "Zupparii nostri cum scriptoribus et camerariis eorum" Łabęcki, *Salin krakowskich aż do żupnictwa*, 289.

<sup>616</sup> Felix Boczkowski, *O Wieliczce pod względem historii naturalnej, dziejów i kapiełi* [About Wieliczka in terms of natural history, history and chapels] (Bochnia: Nakł. i Druk. Wawrzyńska Pizsa, 1843), 49.

found this information and as Ptaśnik himself had not run across it, it could not be verified.<sup>617</sup> In my own research however, I believe I have discovered the source that Boczkowski was quoting from, a rare work published in 1649 by Andrzej Kożycki - a high-ranking courtier and capitán in charge of the Krakow salt mines under King John II Casimir Vasa (r.1648-68). Kożycki had apparently become interested in his predecessors and written briefly about their activities. We do not know what sources Kożycki was working from, or whether his account is to be believed, but he claimed that, “*Porrinus certe Gallicus ille prudentissimus, A. 1343 officia operariis praescripsit, machinas et instrumenta convenientia invenit, Aedilem sive Magistrum ut vacant monitum praefecit: cuius fidei, industriae, assiduitati, salisfodinarum in substructionibus faciendis, commissum esset negotium*”<sup>618</sup> Given that this description matches closely with that given in the authentic 1368 mining law charter, claiming that Porinus was the one who had set the initial standards for salt measuring, “*qui mensuram minuti salis minoraverunt*”, is not unthinkable. Given his position as a Zupparius himself, it is possible that Kożycki was working with documents now lost to us, and Porinus was indeed an able administrator, who was recruited from somewhere in Italy.<sup>619</sup> Thereafter, the Krakow salt mines would frequently be managed by Italians. Paulo Cavallo of Genoa (1346-1353) and Pietro Cavallo of Genoa (1356 -1365), Gotfridus Fattinante of Genoa (1366-1390), Pietro Bicherano of Venice (1406 - 1423), Antonio di Giovanni di ser Matteo of Florence (1425-1431), Nicholas Serafino (1434 -1459)<sup>620</sup>, Arnolfo di Petrucio di Tedaldi of Florence (1494-1495).<sup>621</sup> The lives of these individuals are covered in greater detail in chapter 4. When not

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<sup>617</sup> Jan Ptaśnik, “Włoski Kraków: Za Kazimierza Wielkiego i Władysława Jagiełły [Italians in Krakow: From Casimir the Great to Władysław Jagiełło],” *Rocznik Krakowski* vol. 13 (1911): 59.

<sup>618</sup> I have been unable to see a copy of the original 1649 text, and so have reproduced here what was copied into a later manual citing Kożycki as their source. Ambroży Grabowski, *Krakow i jego okolice* [Krakow and its surroundings] (Krakow: Nakł. Księgarni DE Friedleina, 1866), 290.

<sup>619</sup> Listed thus in [SPPP] I, 217

<sup>620</sup> Nicholas Serafino was of Italian descent, but had grown up in Poland and therefore may be counted only as an Italian by association.

<sup>621</sup> Paulo was Zupparius from 1346-1353. [NKiRMK] 1504,1607, 1610,1617,1624,1650. Pietro took up the post of Zupparius after his uncle, Paulo Cavallo. He himself passed away at some point before 1369 and nominated Petrus Winrichi as “tutor”; that is, legal representative for his heirs. *Diplomata Monasterii Clarae Tumbae probe Cracoviam* = zbiór dyplomów Klasztoru Mogińskiego przy Krakowie, Hereafter [KMog] (Krakow: W Druk. Uniw. Jagiełłońskiego, 1865), nr 33; [KLK] nr 834; Gotfridus Fattinante was Zupparius from 1366/7 [KLK] nr 209, 401, 810, 885, 889, 1260,1276;[KDKK], 182-5. Pietro Bicherano of Venice (1406-1423) (1406) [SPPP] 10 nr 154 pg. 78-9, (1420) *Elementa ad Fontium Editiones* vol. II, nr. 13; (1424) *Consul Crac.* 428 fol. 21; Antonio di Giovanni di ser Matteo of Florence (1425) [Itali] nr 43; (1431) *Castrens. Crac.* 4 fol. 94. Nicholas Serafino (1434-1459). Nicholas Serafino is included here as he was born to an Italian family but raised in Poland Nicholas’s name appears as Seraphim and Serafino and under the Polonized form of Zawrzykraj, which is a literal translation of the word. Intense research by Jan Ptaśnik and later scholars has been unable to pinpoint Nicholas’s precise family origins. He appears as a member of the Polish gentry but was close with a number of Italian individuals and composed at least one letter in Italian. See: Nicholas Serafino, *Corpus epistularum Nicolai Seraphin zupparii Cracoviensis* (1437-1459). ed. Waldmar Bukowski, (Krakow: Towarzystwo Naukowe Societas

managed by Italians, the mines were run by prominent Krakow burghers, including Nicholas Bochner (1394-1406), Albertus Niger (1423-1424) and Giorgius Morstin (Morsztyn) (1460-1471).

Polish salt was sold primarily within the kingdom's internal market, but some of it made its way beyond the borders. Sales were being made to Hungary from at least the 1350's, just as Italians were entering the scene.<sup>622</sup> Among the regulations imposed, was included the provision that while Hungarian merchants could purchase salt from Bochnia or Wieliczka, they were forbidden to sell it anywhere within Poland and could only return with it to Hungary. The specific inclusion of Hungarian merchants in the regulation, implies that salt was purchased by them for sale in their homeland, from the Italian Zuppari who managed the Krakow mines, this despite the standing royal mandate in Hungary forbidding the import of salt from abroad.<sup>623</sup>

Salt headed towards the south was loaded onto carts and transported along the main road that ran from the mines towards valley roads which navigated the Carpathian mountains. The primary path these carts passed along ran through the settlement of Myślenice. It was thus not by accident, that the Italian Zupparius, Pietro Bicherano and his nephew Bonagiunta purchased rights in the settlement and to the tolls that ran along the roadway in the early fifteenth century.

<sup>624</sup> Indeed, the mine operators thus profited twice from the trade in salt to Hungary, first from mine revenues and secondly from excise tolls. This healthy trade was disrupted however, in 1449, due to fighting along the border.<sup>625</sup> The year previous, Nicholas Bicherano, the grandson of the Zupparius Pietro, appears in the record as *Tentarius* – customs toll official, of Myślenice, but after the outbreak of violence, he disappears from the records.<sup>626</sup> It appears likely that, seeing less profits due to the ongoing conflict, Nicholas decided to sell his share in affairs in Myślenice and return to Italy.

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Vistulana, 2006), 13-14; Wiesiołowski, „Z korespondencji prywatnej pierwszej,” 230-1; Arnolfo di Pierozzo Tedaldi (1494-1495) Stanisław Fischer, *Dzieje Bocheńskiej Żupy Solnej* [The history of the Bochnia Salt Mine], (Warsaw: Wydawn. Geologiczne, 1962), 35.

<sup>622</sup> This is demonstrated by a treaty signed in 1354 between King Casimir the Great of Poland and Louis Anjou, King of Hungary, which included provisions for the sale of salt from Poland into Hungary. Kutrzeba, *Finanse*, 237.

<sup>623</sup> See footnote 566 for further details.

<sup>624</sup> Not just salt, but other goods as well took this path, making the tolls along the route highly lucrative. [KDKK] nr. 2 pg. 162-23 nr. 380; [SPPP] 2 nr 1191.

<sup>625</sup> W. Bębynek, „Starostwo Muszyńskie własność biskupstwa krakowskiego [Muszyna Starosty, ownership of the Cracow bishopric],” in *Przewodnik Naukowy i Literacki*, vol. 42 nr. 1 (1914): 14.

<sup>626</sup> (1448/09/28) „*Nicolaus Pykaran [Bicherano] tenutarius in Muschyna, contumax in termino primo contra Reverendum in Christo Patrem dominum Sbgneum Episcopum Cracouiensem, iuxta litteram citatoriam, videlicet pro eo, quod se intromisit in Castrum Muschyna in terra Cracouiensi pacifica, et recepit omnes census et redditus, sicut duo millia marcarum; et dampni totidem.*” [SPPP2] nr 3351

While monarchs generally sought to prohibit wherever possible, the importation of foreign salt as it cut into their own royal monopolies and enriched their neighbors, but in certain cases it was simply impractical to do otherwise. The salt mines near Krakow were an abundant source while that available within Hungarian domains had to be transported either from Maramureș, Transylvania, or the Dalmatian coast.<sup>627</sup> It is thus unsurprising that the majority of Polish salt headed to Hungary was transferred to the nearby Spiš region. In 1394 for example, a shipment was according to directions which had been put in place by the former Zupparius, Gotfridus Fattinante of Genoa.<sup>628</sup> Any issues with such cross-border transfers were neatly taken care of in 1412, when the region was pledged to Poland by the Hungarian King Sigismund so that throughout the fifteenth century Polish salt supplied the entire Spiš region.<sup>629</sup> Such timing was fortuitous for the Zupparius at the time, Pietro Bicherano, as a few years earlier, the Hungarian monarch had sought to crack down on the cross-border salt trade when in 1405, as part of the great “Urban decree”. These new regulations sought to halt completely the import of salt from Poland, but they could not fully stop the flow. In 1417, at the request of the Florentine Filippo Scolari, who was among other things, head of all the Hungarian salt chambers, King Sigismund released a decree once again banning foreign salt, and in particular, foreign Polish salt from being sold inside his Kingdom.<sup>630</sup> In 1427 the ruling was repeated once again, demonstrating that it was ineffective and that salt mined in Bochnia and Wieliczka, then under the purview of Antonio di Giovanni di ser Matteo of Florence, was making its way over the border into Hungary.<sup>631</sup>

Aside from the salt mines located near Krakow, there were also a set to be found in Ruthenia, which had been added to the kingdom’s territory after the success of King Casimir the Great’s campaigns there in the 1340’s and 50’s. Salt, had been known and exploited in Ruthenia from at least the eleventh century. Upon conquering the region in the 1350s, King Casimir the Great sought to monopolize its extraction as much as possible, although a considerable amount remained in private hands. A series of Italian entrepreneurs then, some years later, took over the administration of the Ruthenian or “Russian” salt mines, beginning with the Florentine,

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<sup>627</sup> Draskóczy, “Salt Mining and Trade in Hungary,” 209-10.

<sup>628</sup> [HUn 1] nr 24; Kutrzeba, *Finanse*, 238.

<sup>629</sup> Kutrzeba, *Finanse*, 237-8.

<sup>630</sup> (1417/07/28) “Akta odnoszące się do stosunków handlowych Polski z Węgrami głównie z Archiwum Koszyckiego z lat 1354-1505 [Documents relating to Poland’s trade relations with Hungary, mainly from the Košice Archives of 1354-1505],” ed. Stanisław Kutrzeba. In *Akademia Umiejętności w Krakowie. Komisja Historyczna* Vol 9 (Krakow: nakł. Akademii Umiejętności, 1902), pr 415 nr 8. For more on Filippo Scolari see Arany, *Florentines*, 48, 233-4.

<sup>631</sup> Kutrzeba, *Finanse*, 238-9.



Antonio di Giovanni ser Matteo, in 1434.<sup>632</sup> In the Ruthenian case, the term “salt mine” is a bit of a misnomer; as the salt was not rock salt, carved out into large cylindrical blocks known a *balwan* “snowmen” in Polish, as was done in the mines located near Krakow, but was extracted from brine-bearing wells. (Figure 43) Water from these saline wells was raised and then boiled until the liquid evaporated, leaving the crystalized salt behind. By the sixteenth century, there were over thirty such wells in the environs of Lviv, the most heavily laden of which were those located near Przemyśl and Drohobych [Дрогобич].<sup>633</sup> Once collected into barrels, most of the salt was transported to Przemyśl, which operated as a storage and distribution center, and from thence was loaded onto rafts and floated down the San River. Although the water route was certainly the faster and more common route used to transport heavy loads of salt, they could at times run into difficulties as in 1437, when Giovanni Paravisino of Milan, who was then working as the Vice-Zupparius of Przemyśl, was forced to send a letter to his superior the Zupparius Nicholas Serafino, informing him of some of the current difficulties in delivering salt to the district of Sandomierz. The salt was to be moved by water, but the rafts used to carry it, were unstable and kept falling apart making transport impossible. The water-level in the river then dropped, again making for trouble. Giovanni promises however, that as soon as the rains come, he would send the salt.<sup>634</sup>

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<sup>632</sup> Cristoforo di San Romulo held the post *Zuppariuo Drohobiczensis* (1448-1462) *Zuppario Premisliensis* (1455) *Zuppariuo Drohobiczensis*; Arnolfo Tedaldi served as *Zuppariuo Drohobiczensis* (1466-1495).

<sup>633</sup> Particularly significant sites were located in Stara Sól, Jasienica Solna, Baszowa, and Drohobych itself. Serafino, *Corpus epistularum*, 20-1.

<sup>634</sup> *I Documenti Commerciali Del Fondo Diplomatico Mediceo Nell'archivio Di Stato Di Firenze (1230-1492)*, ed. Giulia Camerani (Firenze: Olschki, 1951), 45 nr 95.



Figure 42 Remains of a Brine Pit from Przemyśl

Source: <http://napogorzu.blogspot.com/2016/03/topki-topie-czy-hurmany.html> Accessed December 31st, 2020

In spite of these occasional difficulties, during the 1430s under the direction of Nicholas Serafino, what was himself of Italian decent, the dispersal system of salt from the Ruthenian mines was drastically overhauled and improved so that barrels were sent as far afield as

Kuyavia and Wielkopolska.<sup>635</sup> There is further indication that salt from this region was also at times sold directly to the Teutonic Order in Prussia, surprising considering that the Kingdom of Poland and the Teutonic Order were almost constantly at war with each other during this period. Evidence for this trade, comes from a letter sent by Antonio di Giovanni di ser Matteo in 1428, to the Master of the Teutonic Order, Paul von Rusdorf. Antonio began by stating that he had recently been appointed Zupparius of the salt mines in Ruthenia, and he proceeded to ask Rusdorf to loan him sufficient funds to purchase back a salt shipment worth 400-500 fl., which had been sent by his predecessor.<sup>636</sup> Included in the letter was the promise that Antonio would repay the money in either Rome, Wrocław or Malbork, whichever the Grand Master preferred. Antonio sought to further sweeten the Grand Master's mind towards the idea by referring to his previous close relationship with Marshal Walrabe von Hunsbach, to whom Antonio claimed he had loaned money to in the past. The letter intimated that one good turn deserved another and that he was a reliable man to do business with.

All may not have been as it seems however, as the circumstances of the letter are unusual; as Antonio was at that time under suspicion of having misappropriated funds during his tenure as Zupparius of the Krakow salt mines. We do not have Paul von Rusdorf's reply to Antonio's overtures, so we do not know how the case played out. Of greater interest to this discussion is the reference to the salt shipment. It is obvious from the context that the salt was intended for arrival in Teutonic lands, as the letter reveals it had been sent up the Vistula and was thus likely bound for Toruń. In their analysis of the document, Michelina Duda and Sławomir Józwiak assumed that the salt had been sent from Krakow. However, given that Antonio had by this point been acting as Zupparius of the Krakow mines for a number of years, the reference to a "predecessor" implies that the shipment had instead come originally from Ruthenia, where he had only recently taken over management. The salt would then have been shipped by water raft from Przemyśl up the San river to the Vistula and from thence toward Toruń. The year 1428, marked a lull in the open fighting between Poland and the Order; so the shipment may have been a singular event, but this seems unlikely as the Teutonic lands were salt-poor and Poland the closest supplier. No other evidence however, has yet come to light offering

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<sup>635</sup> Jerzy Wyrozumski, *Państwowa gospodarka solna w Polsce do schyłku XIV wieku* [The State salt economy in Poland until the end of the 14th c.], *Prace Historyczne* No. 21. (Krakow: Nakł. Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 1968), 54-5. Serafino, *Corpus epistularum*, 20-1.

<sup>636</sup> Michalina Duda and Sławomir Józwiak, "Nowa Nieszawa (Dybów) in the late Middle Ages according to new research. The town on the border of countries, cultures and nations," *Klio-Czasopismo Poświęcone Dziejom Polski i Powszechnym* 43.4 (2017): 34-5.

evidence that salt was being traded by Italian merchants trading directly with the Teutonic Knights, but they certainly sent salt into Prussia.

The trend of Italian merchants running the Ruthenian mines would continue long after Antonio di ser Matteo's tenure selling salt to a wide variety of customers, frequently on their own account. In 1455, for example, Cristoforo di St. Romulo, who was toll master in Lviv and Zupparius in Przemyśl, purchased 1100 fl. worth of silk, *kamcha* silk, and other items from another Italian merchant, Barnabas di Nehrono in exchange for salt through a roundabout deal.<sup>637</sup> The case, like many such interactions, involved multiple parties; as Cristoforo gave 800 *vasa* – barrels of salt to Nicholas of Pyzdry, a Polish merchant working in Lviv. Nicholas, as the procurator of Piotr Szamotulski, the Castellan of Poznań, and under Piotr Szamotulski's seal, next took the load by water ferry to Toruń to sell, and used the proceeds to pay Barnabas.<sup>638</sup> Most intriguingly, this deal took place during the midst of the Thirteen Years war; as Toruń, among other cities of the Prussian confederation, sought together with the Kingdom of Poland to throw off the yoke of the Teutonic Knights. The transfer of salt from southeastern Poland to Toruń during this period demonstrates that trading ties, even during times of turmoil, were not entirely cut; and with Italians managing the Ruthenian mines, some of it was sent north.

Managing the royal salt mines was the single most prestigious and profitable position held by Italians in Poland. As a key element of royal finance, and of basic necessity of life, salt was an essential commodity. Italians leveraged their education, capital, and very foreignness to gain the position of Zupparius and on the whole succeeded in increasing the mine's efficiency and rendering them lucrative both for the crown and themselves. It comes as no surprise then that for most of the fourteenth and fifteenth century, Italians dominated these positions. Interestingly, unlike in the case of Hungary, where such positions were largely dominated by Florentines, in Poland Zuppari during the fourteenth century came largely from Genoa, in keeping with the dominance of Genoese during this period, and during the fifteenth century, together with a few local Polish individuals, the mines were managed by a mixture of Venetian, Florentine, Genoese. No group predominated due to the fact that unlike in Hungary where Florentines were promoted, particularly under King Sigismund (r 1387-1437), in Poland no

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<sup>637</sup> Cristoforo di S. Romulo came from the Ligurian town of San. Romulo, named after the fourth century sainted Bishop of Genoa – St. Romolo. The town changed its name from Villa Matutiae to San Remo in the later fifteenth century, and today is the modern Sanremo, famous for its annual music competition.

<sup>638</sup> [AGZ] 14 nr. 3319.

special favor was displayed towards any particular group of Italians.<sup>639</sup> The option to manage Polish salt mines was open to any with the capital, talent, and credibility, to do the job. Of all the activities engaged in by Italians in Poland, the management of the country's salt mines was the most important and enduring.

## 3.2 Copper



Figure 43 Medieval Raw Copper Plates Found in the Krakow Main Square, Today Displayed in the Rynek Underground Museum Krakow

Source: <https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/rynek-underground> Accessed January 1st, 2021

Copper – *cuprum*, *rame*, was one of the primary commodities traded through Poland. While not a producer of the metal, Poland was a key transit point for this material and gained significant profit thereby. An exceedingly rare metal in medieval Europe, copper was doubly precious because it was used not only for the creation of entirely copper objects, but brass and bronze ones as well. During the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, only two locations in Europe had significant quantities of copper – Sweden and the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>640</sup> The ore that was shipped through Poland was mined in Upper Hungary (modern day Slovakia) - in the Spiš region, and from workings located near Banská Bystrica.<sup>641</sup> Due to logistical constraints,

<sup>639</sup> Arany, *Florentines*, 30, 48-9.

<sup>640</sup> During the thirteenth century, much of Europe's copper supply had come from the Harz mountains; but by 1360, this source was exhausted. Significant amounts were also extracted during the earlier period from Kutná Hora in Bohemia; but by 1350, this production too was in steady decline, leaving on Sweden and Hungary. Ian Blanchard, *Mining, Metallurgy, and Minting in the Middle Ages: Continuing Afro-European Supremacy, 1250-1450*. Vol. 3 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2001), 1498-1502.

<sup>641</sup> "The Slovak orebodies were located in two discrete zones in the Western Carpathian (Západné Karpaty) geological sub-province of the extensive Carpatho-Balkan metallogenic area. The first one, Central Slovakia, supplied copper mainly from two regions: (a) the Veporské Vrchy, forming part of the Veporské Pásmo geological belt (locality of Mubietová [Lybetha, Ger. Libethen]), and (b) the Starohorské Vrchy, an extension of the DŠ umbierské Tatry portion of the Lower Tatra (Nízké Tatry) mountain chain (town of Banská Bystrica [Ger. Neusohl, Hung. Besztercebánya]).... Located in the Spišsko-Gemerské Rudohorie and conjoined formations

a good portion of the copper which was mined in Upper Hungary was transported northwards through the Carpathian mountains to Poland. From there it was purchased for local manufacture, or otherwise re-routed through Krakow either to the west Via Wrocław and Nuremberg or sent up the Vistula to Toruń, Gdańsk, and beyond, to Western European and North African markets.<sup>642</sup> Due to conflicts with the Teutonic Order, sporadic attempts were also made to transport copper from Krakow to the Baltic via Poznań, thereby bypassing Prussian territory and reaching the coast at Szczecin.<sup>643</sup>

The trade in copper was extremely lucrative, and so important that it was the first staple right granted to the City of Krakow in 1306, and reconfirmed in every privilege thereafter.<sup>644</sup> While reliable statistics for the amount of ore transported are hard to come by for the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, it has been estimated that the volume was enormous, by the later fourteenth century averaging 8000 to 10,000 centars annually (the equivalent of 520 to 650 tons).<sup>645</sup> More circumstantial evidence of this lies in the fact, as mentioned previously, that when Krakow became involved with the Hanseatic League from the late 1360s, it was known as the *Kupferhaus*—the Copper House.<sup>646</sup> The copper that made its way to the Baltic coast was from there shipped to Bruges, where it was sold to a variety of merchants, including a large number of Italians. Balducci Pegolotti, a Florentine merchant of some renown, noted in his *Practica della mercatura*, a merchant manual compiled in 1340, that “*rame di Pollana*” - Polish copper, so called because of its last port of transit - was the highest quality available in Bruges, sold in

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(Slánske Hory—Hungarian Tokaj Mountains), the most significant Eastern Slovak extraction centres coalesced in the league of Upper Hungarian mining towns (oberungarischen Bergstädte), which included Gelnica, Smolník, Rudabánya, Jasov, Telkibánya, Rozsňava, and Spišská Nová Ves. The oldest and most prestigious mining hub was Gelnica (Hnilec, Hung. Gőlniczbánya), often simply referred to as “The Mine” (Bánya, Bana). Martin Malcolm Elbl, “From Venice to the Tuat: trans-Saharan copper trade and Francesco di Marco Datini of Prato,” *Money, Markets and Trade in Late Medieval Europe* eds. Lawren Armstrong, Ivana Elbl and Martin M. Elbl (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 451-2.

<sup>642</sup> From Upper Hungary it was moved northwards through the Carpathian mountains Via Ruzomberok, through the Orawa Region, Twardoszyn, Nowy Targ and Myślenice to Krakow. Otherwise, it was moved from Košice to Krakow Via Sącz (Poprad and the Dunajec River). The route taken sometimes bypassed Krakow (through Sandomierz), a move which was loudly protested by Krakowian merchants. Molenda, “Eksploracja rud miedzi i handel miedzią w Polsce,” 811.

<sup>643</sup> Ibid.

<sup>644</sup> The staple right for copper was first granted to the Hungarian Town of Košice which was the main export center for the mined goods in 1299, then Krakow from 1306, and finally in Toruń in 1403. Ibid

<sup>645</sup> Ibid

<sup>646</sup> Krakow appears in correspondence of the Hanseatic League in the 1360s but became an official polity only in 1387. Jerzy Wyrozumski, “Uwarunkowania historyczne rozwoju architektury średniowiecznego Krakowa [Historical Conditions for the Development of Architecture of Medieval Krakow],” *Czasopismo Techniczne. Architektura* 108 (2011): 26; Carter, *Trade*, 100; Molenda, “Eksploracja rud miedzi i handel miedzią w Polsce,” 811.



long thin plates of a yellow hue and useful for making pots, utensils and coins.<sup>647</sup> Much of this copper was purchased by the Venetians, who were particularly interested in copper as it was highly prized in North Africa and could be used there to trade in exchange for gold, spices, and other exotica desired by the Europeans.<sup>648</sup> Records from Venetian galleys who plied the waters between the North Sea and the home lagoon mention “*rame di Pollana*” already from the 1320s loaded as cargo which was also useful as heavy ballast.<sup>649</sup> A great deal of profit was to be made on the transportation of copper to Venice due to its rarity, despite the many stages involved. However, in 1339, due to war conflicts, the official Venetian government galley convoys to the North ceased, not to re-commence until 1374, and mention of “*rame di Pollana*” disappears from Venetian records.<sup>650</sup> Copper still arrived in Venice, but it was increasingly transferred overland, via Wrocław through Nuremberg, and so lost the admittedly fallacious moniker *di Pollana*.<sup>651</sup>

Venetians were not the only ones interested in the copper trade however, and in the mid 1370’s, Florentines began to move in on the region. Their timing was propitious, as King Louis Anjou of Hungary and Poland was just then seeking to encourage other Italian city-states to trade through his lands as leverage against the Venetian monopoly of trade in the region. To this end, the king had in extended generous trading privileges to the Genoese and in 1376, the Florentine *Signoria* demanded the same.<sup>652</sup> Florentine merchants soon dominated the international trade in copper flowing from the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>653</sup> The company that evolved to manage the flow of copper from Hungary was headed by Vieri di Medici together with six partners: Jacopo di Francesco (Venturi), Andrea di Ugo, Antonio di Sanctis, Guido di Tommaso, Gualtieri Portinari, and Giovanni Portinari. These men, some of whom had been

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<sup>647</sup> “*Rame di Pollana dolce che sono grande pezze e dilicate così fatte: in colore gialletto e pezze lunghette e piane, e fannosene bacini e caldaie e secchie et altre stoviglie, e allegasene monete per la sua dolcezza, e suo comunale pregio si è in Bruggia in Fiandra da 44 in 46 tornesi grossi d’ariento il centinaio di Bruggia.*” Štefánik, “*Rame di Pollana*,” 200.

<sup>648</sup> Copper that was reexported from Venice was particularly prized Trans-Saharan traders. Elbl, “From Venice to the Tuat,” 447.

<sup>649</sup> Štefánik, “*Rame di Pollana*,” 201, 205-6.

<sup>650</sup> Štefánik, “*Rame di Pollana*,” 208.

<sup>651</sup> The other common transportation route for copper headed to Venice was directly from the Hungarian Kingdom itself via ports along the Dalmatian Coast, particularly Senj. Štefánik, “*Rame di Pollana*,” 207.

<sup>652</sup> The original Genoese privilege has been lost but we know of its existence from the letter the Florentines sent to the royal court demanding similar treatment. Štefánik, “Italian Involvement in Metal Mining,” 31.

<sup>653</sup> First secure mention of a Florentine trading in Hungarian copper comes from 1379 in a letter of complaint sent by the Florentine *Signoria* writing the Venetian government claiming that a load of goods belonging to two Florentine citizens, Andrea di Ugo and Antonio de Sanctis o had been illegally confiscated. The manifest of impounded articles included fabric, tin, and eight hundred panes “loaves” of copper. Six years later, these same two individuals would make up part of the partnership organized by Vieri di Cambio de Medici. ASF, Signori, Carteggi, Missive I, Cancelleria 18, fol. 33r, 5 July 1379. Štefánik, “Italian Involvement in Metal Mining,” 31

involved in the copper trade since the 1370's swore an oath before the Venetian Senate that they would export processed or unprocessed copper from Banská Bystrica "*rame de Solio*," only to Venice and nowhere else via the sea, with the caveat that they could send loads "*per terram*" – overland, meaning through the Kingdom of Poland, and from thence to Bruges and beyond.<sup>654</sup> In return, the Venetians signed an agreement to purchase 200-250 centars (13-16 tons) of copper annually from the Florentine company and in 1388, the contract was renewed for another three years.<sup>655</sup> While most of the copper was shipped from the mines going by the "sea route" to Venice, some of it traveled up through into Poland, where merchants would have been forced to accede to the Krakow staple and therefore sell their wares to Polish merchants or work out a partnership agreement. Indeed, they may well have done so as Vieri di Medici also had a company in Bruges who traded regularly with among others, Francesco Datini, the famous merchant of Prato.<sup>656</sup> It may be through this interaction that Florentine merchants first became aware of Poland as a possible market and given the strong Medici involvement in the copper company, it is unsurprising that they later showed interests in the region, particularly in the mining sector. Even after the dissolution of Vieri di Medici's holdings upon his death in 1391, the Portinari brothers and the Rinaldeschi continued for a number of years to involve themselves in mining exports further expanding their interests in the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>657</sup> The remnants of Vieri di Medici's company were not the only Italians interested in the copper trade however. In the 1390's, a group of Bolognese merchants linked with members of the Nuremberg Amman-Kammerer-Seiler-Grau company became involved in the copper trade. In 1391, Pope Boniface IX named Giacomo Guidotti, son of the powerful Bolognese banker Filippo Guidotti, collector and papal nuncio to the Polish court.<sup>658</sup> Having established a place in Poland, Giacomo's brothers, Francesco and Pietro and Bartolomeo soon followed, taking up business in Krakow, purchasing a house in the city, and seeing the potential profits to be had in the transit copper trade, were soon involved in the copper trade.<sup>659</sup> In 1397, Bartolomeo and Pietro Guidotti sold 200 marks equivalent to 1100 florins worth of "*feinkupper*" - refined

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<sup>654</sup> Štefánik, "Italian Involvement in Metal Mining," 32.

<sup>655</sup> Halaga, "Le grand commerce Occident-Orient," 26.

<sup>656</sup> For Vieri di Medici's Bruges company's interactions with Datini see: ASPo, busta 648, inserto 27, codice 412978, busta 648, inserto 27, codice 412979, busta 648, inserto 27, codice 412980.

<sup>657</sup> Susanna Teke, "Operatori Economici Fiorentini in Ungheria nel Tardo Trecento e Primo Quattrocento," *Archivio Storico Italiano* 153, no. 4 (566) (1995): 703; Arany "Florentines," 228; Štefánik, "Italian Involvement in Metal Mining," 36-7.

<sup>658</sup> (1391/12/04) "*Iacobum Philippi de Guidottis, clericum Bononiensi, in regno Poloniae proventuum camerae apostolicae collectorem...*" Arch. Vat. Anni. XXXIII, vol. 12, f. 134 and 142. reproduced in [Itali] nr.4 fn.1 and [Theiner] I nr. 1056 where the name is incorrectly recorded as Guidonis.

<sup>659</sup> Peter the apothecary appears to have died still owing the Guidotti brothers 100 sexagene and his sons were forced to give up the house to settle the account. [KDK], nr. 2172.



copper, to Ulrich Kammerer of Nurnberg, that was almost certainly bound for Venice.<sup>660</sup> Evidence that copper continued to be traded between these groups through Poland, appears four years later, as it was Konrad Grau, one of the Amman-Kammerer-Seiler-Grau company's representatives in Krakow who was made *procurator* for Konrad Seiler at the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, to recover a debt owed Bartolomeo Guidotti and brothers.<sup>661</sup> The Guidotti were thus intimately involved in the copper triangle that ran between Upper Hungary, Poland, and Venice. Yet, the brothers were not destined to remain in Poland for long. After the untimely death of their brother Giacomo in 1398, they saw greater opportunities for advancement in the Kingdom of Hungary and transferred most of their activities there, entering the service of King Sigismund.<sup>662</sup> The brothers continued to engage in some minerals trade as well as banking, on occasion even combining the two, as for example in 1398 when Bartolomeo Guidotti helped King Sigismund repay a debt owed to Pietro Regla and Caterina Greci worth the equivalent of 18,000 ducats of gold, by arranging for one portion to be paid in cash and the other half in copper.<sup>663</sup> Their interests in Poland however, were at an end.

Italians were thus, intimately involved in the copper trade on both sides of the border but their dominance was challenged in the first decade of the fifteenth century as a cabal of Nuremberg merchants, operating out of the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* in Venice in concert with a set of Italian traders. The men from Nuremberg, succeeded in insinuating themselves into the good graces of King Sigismund of Hungary seeking a monopoly on copper and other precious metals exported to Poland. In 1405, Marcus of Nuremberg, representative of the Flextorfer-Kegler-Zenner firm, helped influence the passing of a new "Urban decree" in Hungary that among other things, forbid the export of silver, gold, or copper, without royal leave.<sup>664</sup> This provision

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<sup>660</sup> Document taken from the Košice archive Cassovie City Book I folio 60. See: Halaga, "Le grand commerce," 25.

<sup>661</sup> Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 225 fn 103.

<sup>662</sup> Giorgio Tamba, "Filippo Guidotti" *Treccani Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, accessed October 3rd, 2019. [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/filippo-guidotti\\_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/filippo-guidotti_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/); (1402/11/29) [ZsO] II nr. 2081

<sup>663</sup> (1397/07/17) King Sigismund had borrowed the sum from Regla and Greci against a collateral of two boxes of jewels deposited by Tommaso Mocenigo with the procurators of San Marco in Venice. On the 12th of June 1398, Bartolomeo presented a load of copper as partial payment, worth an estimated 9000 ducats. The other half of the debt was then paid in cash by Bartolomeo two months later. A further sum of 1500 ducats owed to Tommaso Mocenigo was paid later on November 20th 1398 by Bartolomeo through the bank of Bonifacio Gozzadini. Giorgio Tamba, "Filippo Guidotti" *Treccani Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, accessed October 3rd, 2019. [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/filippo-guidotti\\_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/filippo-guidotti_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/)

<sup>664</sup> "*Insuper, quemadmodum et ab antiquo iuxta statuta regia aurum, argentum, cuprum et alia metalla de regno nostro educi prohibita existunt ita inter alias constitutiones civitatibus, oppidis et liberis villis ad presens editas sanximus et statuimus*," János M. Bak ed. *The Laws of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary* (Bakersfield, Calif.: Charles Schlacks, Jr., Publishers, 1989), 356.

placed South German and Italian merchants with interests in Upper Hungarian mining operations in an advantageous position. The next year, Marcus of Nuremberg, who had been made count of the royal chambers by King Sigismund, refused to allow silver to be sold to Polish merchants unless he was permitted to purchase Polish lead at an arbitrarily low price, helping tip an important financial balance in Krakow, forcing a number of prominent merchants into bankruptcy. This upset, allowed Pietro Bicherano of Venice and Klaus Kezinger, representative of the Nuremberg Amman-Kammerer-Seiler-Grau company to swoop in and take over the lucrative salt and lead mines located near Krakow. The coup had been easily achieved as the Krakow merchants had borrowed heavily from Pietro Bicherano and Klaus Kezinger, who in turn were partially backed by loans given by Neri Tornaquinci of Florence, the Medici banks' Venetian branch manager.<sup>665</sup>

While Pietro Bicherano and the Nuremberg cabal prospered nicely, Neri, initially lost in the deal, as the loans were not repaid in time. To cover the deficit, he was forced to borrow secretly from others at 8% interest in order to hide his mistake from his boss Giovanni di Bicci di Medici. The error could not be hidden forever however, and in the spring of 1406 when the Venice branches' books were audited, Neri's perfidy was uncovered, he was fired, and the sizable debt of 5,356 florins was laid at his feet.<sup>666</sup> For a time however, even after his firing Neri remained in Venice somehow managing to stave off Medici retribution and continue his own business projects, including the transfer of a large load of copper from Venice to a branch of the Datini firm in Majorca.<sup>667</sup>

The copper, which amounted to 3,664 libre (1.7 tons) was sent from Venice to Majorca in the hold of a ship captained by Marcho di Benedetto of Venice. Upon receiving the goods, money was to be paid to Nofri d'Andrea and Andrea di Giovanni del Palagio in Florence who since 1404 had formed a company together with Giovanni Tosinghi to trade in Hungarian copper.<sup>668</sup>

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<sup>665</sup> (1402/03/05-04/1406) – Neri was elected the first branch manager of the Venetian branch of the Medici bank and worked in that capacity four years, before being replaced by Giovanni di Francesco da Gagliano (1406/05/25) once his perfidy was uncovered. Roover, *The Rise*, 41.

<sup>666</sup> Roover, *The Rise*, 240.

<sup>667</sup> I would like to extend a special thanks to Ingrid Houssaye Michienzi, for looking over by transcriptions of this document. (1407/06/21) ASPo, Datini, busta 1083, inserto 42, codice 123922.

<sup>668</sup> The content of the business letter sent by Neri is today conserved in the Datini archive and is here transcribed for the first time. It was sent from Venice by Neri Toranquinci and Tommaso di Giovanni e comp. to Francesco di Marco Datini and Carocci Cristofano di Bartolo e comp. in Majorca and ran thus, "*Al nome di Dio ammen a di xxi [21] guingnio 1407 Questo di chol nome di Dio e di salvamento vi mandamo per la chocca di Marcho di Benedetto viniziano cholli quatordici di rame in tole, e n'è cholli XIII a tole XXI per chollo e in chollo uno à tole 22 sicché in tutto sono tole 295, e al peso grosso di qua sarono in tutto lib. 3 664. Quando a salvamento l'avete ricevuto ne farete la volontà di Nofri d'Andrea e Andrea di Giovanni e chonpangni nostri di Firenze, e loro n'avisate. Al padrone d'esso niente avete a dare per suo nolo perché qua l'abiamo chontentoncelonvy [= ve*

While the ship, with the copper tucked away in its hold arrived in Majorca without incident, its eventual fate was not a happy one for the Datini company.<sup>669</sup> Having been shipped to the port of Honein on the Algerian coast, the copper was then transferred to camelback for a journey across the Sahara, but while in route, the Tuat caravan was attacked and a large part of the shipment lost. The Datini company received word of the disaster only months later, but the damage was done. Neri however, was duly paid for his efforts back in Venice.

The question though, is how Neri ever became involved with the transaction. The letter sent by him and his partner to the Datini company listed Nofri d'Andrea and Andrea di Giovanni del Palagio as *chonpangni nostri*, implying they were business associates.<sup>670</sup> How precisely they came into contact with each other remains mysteries, but it likely had to do with Neri's ties to Poland. Evidence for this comes from a court case raised before the Florentine *Mercanzia* Court in March of 1407, three months prior to Neri's letter to the Datini branch in Majorca. The court case saw Giovanni Tosinghi, brought before the *Mercanzia* by his business associates Nofri d'Andrea and Andrea di Giovanni, those who would soon be engaging Neri to assist them.<sup>671</sup> Nofri d'Andrea and Andrea di Giovanni del Palagio claimed that Giovanni Tosinghi had gone to Hungary without informing his partners, and there made a deal with King Sigismund whereby he was permitted to export a large load of copper from the country to sell in Venice, the profits from which would go to help pay off a 20,000fl loan the company had given to the king. All this might have been fine, the partners claimed that after selling the copper, Giovanni had failed to split the money appropriate with them as he should have per the profit sharing agreement they had all signed. Giovanni vigorously denied these claims and it

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*l'abbiamo fatto contento]. Né altro per questa v'abbiamo a dire. Che Cristo vi ghuardi.*" ASPo, Datini, busta 1083, inserto 42, codice 123922.; Nofri d'Andrea, Andrea di Giovanni, and Giovanni di Nicolò Tosinghi, had formed a company to trade in Hungary in 1404. The company's debts had yet to be fully resolved even long after Giovanni Tosinghi's death which occurred sometime between December 4<sup>th</sup>, 1407 and March 25<sup>th</sup>, 1408, as is shown by the 79 s. 15 still owed to his son Scolari in 1427. For Giovanni's death see: his last letter to Francesco Datini ASPo, Datini, busta 1068, inserto 10, codice 1102144 and a letter from Majorca mentioning the event, Elbl, "From Venice to the Tuat," 459; Arany, *Florentines*, 289; Prajda, *Network and Migration*, 203 fn 88.

<sup>669</sup> It should be noted that Giovanni Tosinghi, a noted Florentine trader in Hungary was also involved in this deal and lost a considerable amount when the caravan was attacked. Giovanni had worked as an agent for the original copper company of Vieri di Medici so was familiar with the trade. So far, no documentation connects Giovanni and Neri together directly. But they were certainly in each other's orbit, as they operated in a similar region and had many of the same business contacts, Datini, the Scolari, and del Palagio. It is highly possible that the two knew each other and even collaborated. Neri Elbl, "From Venice to the Tuat," 433-7; Arany, *Florentines*, 238-9; Prajda, *Networks*, 203

<sup>670</sup> See fn 631.

<sup>671</sup> The court case was held on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 1406 according to the Florentine convention which counted the new year only from March 24<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>. According to a modern dating, it would be March 6<sup>th</sup>, 1407. Kurt Weissen, "Florentiner Kaufleute als Monopolisten im Handel mit ungarischem Erz um 1400," in *Montangeschichte lehren*, eds. Hans-Joachim Kraschewski, Ekkehard Westermann (Berlin: Matthiesen Husum, 2015), 97-100.

remains unclear how the court decided the case. However, given that Nofri d'Andrea and Andrea di Giovanni del Palagio were arranging the shipment of a large quantity of copper only three months later, either the court ruled that Giovanni give up some of the copper he had transported to his associates, although in the court records he claimed he had already sold the copper and for only a minimal profit, or they had been able to arrange a second shipment from Hungary to Venice, from their headquarters in Florence, in record time. This, may have been where Neri Tornaquinci stepped into the picture. Stationed as he was then in Venice, but with connections to Krakow in the form of, which was located not that far from the Upper-Hungarian copper mines, in the form of Pietro Bicherano and the Amman-Kammerer-Seiler-Grau company, he may have arranged the shipment with their help. It is also possible that he was simply operating as a pick-up as a middle-man in Venice between Nofri d'Andrea and Andrea di Giovanni del Palagio in Florence and the Datini company branch in Majorca.

How Neri became involved with Nofri d'Andrea and Andrea di Giovanni del Palagio, was likely through his partner Giovanni di Tommaso, likely identifiable as Giovanni di Tommaso Salvestri, who in the 1390s had joined a company of merchants in Hungary.<sup>672</sup> While it remains unclear precisely what this company's primary business was in Hungary, the copper trade was very likely one of their interests. Neri was certainly in Venice during this entire period, and it was during this period that he also became involved with Michele di Giovanni di ser Matteo, whose family would a decade later become important players among the Italians working in Poland as will be discussed further in Chapter 4.<sup>673</sup> Neri further appears to have maintained ties with the Italians trading in Hungary as in 1410, he was paid 1,900 fl by Filippo Scolari and a further 300fl by Antonio di Pietro di Fronte, Scolari's associate.<sup>674</sup> The reason for the pay-off is not given, but the large amount of money involved and the fact that the transaction was recorded in Krakow's notarial register despite involving Florentine merchants active in

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<sup>672</sup> In 1394, the Florentine Signoria sent a letter of recommendation on behalf of the merchant company made up of: Giovanni di Tommaso Salvestri, Augustino Mauriccio, Francesco di Lapo Federighi and his son Domenico, Niccolò di Giovanni da Uzzano, Antonio e Silvestro di Lipaccio Bardi and Antonio di Niccolò Macigni. Giovanni di Tommaso Salvestri continued to have interests in Hungary through till at least 1427 as he remained part of a company together with Niccolò di Giovanni da Uzzano, Francesco Federighi, and Antonio Rimbertyni. *Florentines*, 231-2; Katalin Prajda, *Rapporti tra la Repubblica Fiorentina e il Regno d'Ungheria a livello di diplomazia, migrazione umana, reti mercantili e mediazione culturale nell'età del regime oligarchico (1382-1434), che corrisponde al regno di Sigismondo di Lussemburgo (1387-1437)*. Diss. European University Institute, Department of history and civilization, 2011), 94.

<sup>673</sup> (1409/03/12) - Michele di Giovanni di ser Matteo was appointed by Neri Tornaquinci as factor and procurator in Venice, being able to substitute him for all the matters would have involved his master. ASV, Cancelleria inferiore, Notai, 226.

<sup>674</sup> For the activities of Antonio di Piero di Fronte in Hungary see: Arany, *Florentine*, 205-7; Consul. Crac. 427, fol. 370.

Hungary, indicates that it was likely related to the copper trade. The men who paid Neri in Krakow, were extremely active in trade in Hungary, managing multiple companies out of Buda.<sup>675</sup> The Fronte family can furthermore connected to Andrea di Giovanni del Palagio, as he and Antonio di Pietro di Fronte had formed a joint company to sell wool in 1406.<sup>676</sup> They were also in some way directly connected to the copper transfer of 1406/7 as Fronte di Pietro di Fronte and *compagni*, which included his brother Antoni, are mentioned in the *Mercanzia* Court record of March, 1407, as making a claim on Giovanni Tosighi for the copper he had arranged for transport to Venice with the agreement of King Sigismund.<sup>677</sup> They would continue to make claims on Giovanni Tosighi's estate until at least 1411.<sup>678</sup> In incestuous ball of interlocking companies and familial interests thus bound the Florentine merchants active in Hungary and Poland with their compatriots who operated in Venice from whence copper entered the international market. Neri Tornaquinci's role in this complicated web, as a key broker in Venice ended in June of 1409, when he finally lost the case brought against him by Giovanni di Bicci di Medici before the Florentine *Mercanzia* Court for his still unpaid debts and was forced to forfeit all of his property in Florence which were sold for a little over 1000fl.<sup>679</sup> After this, Neri appears to have abandoned Venice entirely and moved instead to Poland. Like a rat abandoning a sinking ship, Neri left Venice just as the copper trade that ran towards the Lagoon City took a direct hit in 1409, as correspondence within the Datini archives makes plain.<sup>680</sup>

The sudden shortage was likely linked to the ongoing fight between Hungary and Venice over rights to the Dalmatian coast. Another roadblock however, was due to Marcus of Nuremberg's interference along the Polish Hungarian border preventing copper from making its way north as in the spring of that year he went so far as to arrest a number of Krakow merchants travelling though Hungary.<sup>681</sup> This, combined with Krakow's ongoing trade war with Toruń and then the

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<sup>675</sup> Katalin Prajda, "Florentine merchant companies established in Buda at the beginning of the 15th century," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome - Moyen âge* [En ligne], 125-1 | 2013, mis en ligne le 21 octobre 2013, Accessed February 21<sup>st</sup> 2021, URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/1062>

<sup>676</sup> Antonio di Pietro di Fronte was further married to Bindella di Bindo Tosighi. Prajda, *Network and Migration*, 175 fn196.

<sup>677</sup> Weissen, "Florentiner Kaufleute als Monopolisten," 98.

<sup>678</sup> *Dinanzi a voi Signori Consoli dell'Arte del Cambio, noi Niccolò di Lapo de Medici e Fronte di Piero de Fronte richiamano delle herede et beni et possessori di beni di Giovanni Tosighi... » in 1411.* ASF Cambio 65. 78v. Prajda, "Florentine merchant," Accessed February 21<sup>st</sup> 2021, URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/1062>

<sup>679</sup> Archive of the Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore, nr. o0201077.013a. <http://archivio.operaduomo.fi.it/cupola/ENG/HTML/S011/C025/T001/TBLOCK00.HTM> Accessed June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019

<sup>680</sup> ASP, D. 930 Venice-Barcelona. Lamberti to datini Co., 3 Aug. 1409. See also: Elbl, "From Venice to the Tuat," 411-459.

<sup>681</sup> Stromer, "Nürnberger Unternehmer," 659.

outbreak of the Polish–Lithuanian–Teutonic War that same year meant that any copper that did make its way into Poland would have difficulty finding its way through to Venice. The situation changed as the war wound to its end in 1414 and in a bid to re-stimulate trade, King Władysław Jagiełło halved the customs duty collected in the Krakow area for copper among other goods.<sup>682</sup> By now, Władysław Jagiełło had also come into possession of the Spiš region which gave greater access to rich copper resources but at just that moment, production was starting to level off as seams within the mines became water logged and more difficult to access.<sup>683</sup>

Even as a potent mix of South-German and Italian merchants were coming to control much of the copper trade that ran through Košice up into Polish territory, the second-half of the route that connected southern Poland to the Baltic was jeopardized. Records show that while copper was still being regularly shipped up the Vistula, by 1390 Swedish copper had outpaced that coming from Hungary in the Baltic lands and at the market in Bruges.<sup>684</sup> During the period 1390-1425, the annual production of copper in the Spiš region also declined, while that in other Hungarian regions sputtered out between 1435 and 1450. Production from this region only recovered with the introduction of the *Saigerprozess*, which allowed for the separation of mixed copper and silver ores.<sup>685</sup> This technology however, was only discovered in the second half of the fourteenth century.<sup>686</sup> Prior to this, the amount of copper mined in Upper Hungary dropped significantly. This difficult situation was made worse by the trade war between Krakow and Toruń that broke out in earnest in 1403, putting a major damper on exports. Just as that fraternal blood-letting appeared to be winding down, the great Polish-Lithuanian-Teutonic war broke out in 1409-10, rendering the route to the north at times completely impassable. These factors, combined with changes in Flanders which rendered the once

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<sup>682</sup>(1414/03/19) [ZsO] IV 1994, nr. 1784.

<sup>683</sup> Blanchard, *Mining, Metallurgy* Vol 3, 1520-1.

<sup>684</sup> Blanchard, *Mining, Metallurgy* Vol 3, 1505.

<sup>685</sup> First evidence of the liquation process, commonly referred to by its German name *saigerprozess* or *seigerhüttenprozess*, used to separate silver from lead bearing copper through the addition of lead, has been found in the Nuremberg city books in 1453. The process involved heating the silver bearing copper ore to a high temperature and then adding a large quantity of lead. The resulting mixture was then cast into “cakes” and allowed to cool. As silver molecules are naturally more attracted to lead than to copper, during the cooling process they would separate from their copper matrix and attach to the lead. The metal cakes were then reheated to a temperature above the melting point of lead, but below that of copper allowing the liquid silver bearing lead to be poured off and separated. The now silver-bearing lead would then be cupulated - reheated to a temperature above the melting point of silver (960) and the oxidizing point of lead (888) and exposed to oxygen with the result that the lead settles out and is released as litharge and the silver thus extracted from its lead matrix. The invention of this process is linked to the 500% rise in silver production in German Lands between 1450-1500. Maxime L'Héritie and Florian Téreygeol. "From copper to silver: understanding the *saigerprozess* through experimental liquation and drying." *Historical metallurgy* 44.2 (2010):136. Blanchard, *Mining, Metallurgy* Vol 3, 1073-1074.

<sup>686</sup> Blanchard, *Mining, Metallurgy* vol 3, 1505, 1510.; Carter, *Trade*, 117.

prosperous entrepot of Bruges less desirable as an outlet for merchandise, led towards an inexorable shifting of the trade route for copper away from the Vistula and towards an overland path that ran from Wrocław. Copper mining in Hungary during the first half of the fifteenth century would continue to be heavily influenced by Florentine merchants, but the tide was shifting. By the 1450's, much of the trade in copper and other metals headed towards the west was in the hands of powerful Nuremberg merchant houses, in large part due to their initial control over the introduction of the new *Saigerprozess*, which garnered them a significant upper hand.<sup>687</sup> In addition, by the second half of the fifteenth century, the merchant houses of Nuremberg had built up strong connections in Krakow and the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>688</sup> Italians might still play a role in financing, but when copper really became big business in Poland at the turn of the sixteenth century as technological enhancements improved production, the trade would be in the hands of the Thurzó and Fugger families rather than Italians.<sup>689</sup>

As a primary and highly prized transit trade good, copper was an obvious material for Italians to be interested in. Known in Venice as copper *di Pollona*, from the early fourteenth century, even after the interruption of the Venetian Galleys, the material still found its way to the Lagoon City. Through their interest in Hungarian copper exports, Florentines became more familiar with Poland as they involved themselves in overland shipments. Conflicts along the route that lead to the Baltic hampered shipment in the first decades of the fifteenth century just as mining capacity dwindled. Simultaneously, Florentine and South-German merchants found themselves in competition for control of this commodity and in the second half of the fifteenth century the merchants of Nuremberg gained the upper hand as the discovery of the *Saigerprozess*, reignited production. Through all of this, Polish and Hungarian merchants too played important roles in the copper trade, but the Italian presence was not insignificant and should not be forgotten.

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<sup>687</sup> Blanchard, *Mining, Metallurgy* vol 3, 1505, 1510.; Carter, *Trade*, 117.

<sup>688</sup> In 1429, for example, Tommaso di Piero Melanesi imported copper to Venice in the amount of 1,000 Venetian ducats. By 1435, Tommaso was directly in charge of Hungarian copper mines, which suggests that he may have traded in copper bullions on a regular basis. Prajda, "Florentines' Trade in the Kingdom of Hungary," 46; Štefánik, "Italian Involvement in Metal Mining," 37-8; Carter, *Trade*, 117.

<sup>689</sup> Molenda, "Eksploracja rud miedzi i handel miedzią w Polsce," 812-3.

### 3.3 Lead

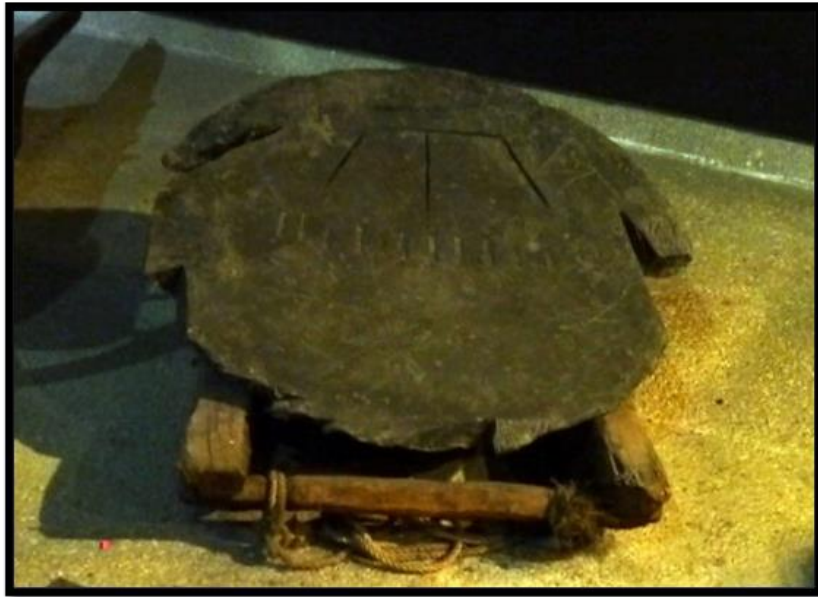


Figure 44 693 kg Slab of Medieval Lead – Marked to be Divided and Sold, Found in the Krakow Main Square. Today in the Krakow Rynek Underground Museum

Source: <https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/rynek-underground> Accessed January 8th 2021

Lead - *plumbum* was the only major metal resource mined and exported from Poland during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.<sup>690</sup> Used in a variety of products, including tableware, armor, roofing, seals, and armaments, lead was a versatile and valuable material, even more so upon the discovery of the *Saigerprozess* which permitted the extraction of pure silver from mixed ores with the application of lead to the charge. The region of Małopolska contained a number of lead mines, the most important of which were Trzebinia, Checiny, and Olkusz, which by the mid-fifteenth century were producing a combined 500-700 tons of lead per annum, achieving peak production around 1425.<sup>691</sup> Lead from this region had been transported via waterways to Wrocław and onwards to Prague and Friedberg to feed Bohemian and Saxon markets as well as up the Vistula into the Baltic zone since the late thirteenth century.<sup>692</sup> Italians in Poland took an early interest in this trade and already in the 1360's, Genoese

<sup>690</sup> Iron was also mined in Poland but it was commonly found also in other regions and was not a major export item.

<sup>691</sup> Others important sites included: Slawkow, Chrzanow, Bolesław, Tlukienka, Starczynów, Niesułowice and Gorenice. Carter, *Trade*, 112; Barbara Godzik and Marcin W. Woch. "History of mining in the Olkusz region," in *Natural and historical values of the Olkusz Ore-bearing Region*. ed. Barbara Godzik (Krakow: W. Szafer Institute of Botany, Polish Academy of Science, 2015), 30.

<sup>692</sup> Blanchard, *Mining, Metallurgy* Vol 3, 1463-4.



merchants in Krakow were engaged in selling Polish lead.<sup>693</sup> It is unclear if these men were directly involved with the mine itself in some managerial capacity, or simply interested traders.

During the 1370s, the mines were expanded and began exporting their product abroad, to Hungary in particular.<sup>694</sup> Indeed, in 1393, special mention was made of lead in the customs tariffs of Stary Sącz and Czchów that were situated on the main route that ran towards the Hungarian border and Košice.<sup>695</sup> Two years later, the situation at the mine began to change, when the Krakow burgher Nicholas Bochner took control, setting in place a cascade of events which would lead them into the hands of Italian merchants. Nicholas Bochner had big ambitions and sought to gather to himself all of the royal monopolies available in the region of Krakow, including rights to the lead mines in Olkusz and Chęciny.<sup>696</sup> His personal fortune was insufficient however, to finance his desired acquisitions and so he took on a number of loans from Klaus Kezinger, the front man for the Amman-Kammerer-Seiler-Grau company in Poland. Klaus Kezinger, had been born in Nuremberg, but from at least 1395, had worked as a merchant at the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* in Venice as an associate of the Amman-Kammerer-Seiler-Grau company, traveling back and forth from Venice to Bruges, Cologne, Nuremberg, and Krakow on their behalf.<sup>697</sup> A large part of his portfolio included the movement of copper from Krakow to Bruges, as described above, and in this way he became familiar with the Polish market.<sup>698</sup> Seeing potential in the region, in 1404 Kezinger became a citizen of Krakow and arranged with Conrad Seiler and Pietro Bicherano to supply Nicholas Bochner with extensive loans.<sup>699</sup> Bochner had used the money to become Zupparius, leasing the rights to manage and profit from the Krakow mines from King Władysław Jagiełło. The need for ready cash to fund war preparations however, soon caused the king to lean heavily on the Zupparius to meet production

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<sup>693</sup> (1365) [KLK] nr. 65

<sup>694</sup> The region around Olkusz had been exploited since the 1250's but the first royal privilege granting rights to excavate was granted in 1374. Carter, *Trade*, 112.

<sup>695</sup> Lead also made its way to Hungary through the Moravian towns of: Lewocze, Zylina, Cieszyn, and Zywiec. Blanchard, *Mining, Metallurgy* Vol 3, 1474; Carter, *Trade*, 115.

<sup>696</sup> He also rented the Krakow mint, customs duties, the salt mines in Wieliczka and Bochnia. Ptaśnik, "Studia nad patrycyatem krakowskim," 66-70; Stromer, "Nürnberger Unternehmer," 654-7; Blanchard, *Mining, Metallurgy* Vol 3, 1520-1.

<sup>697</sup> Stromer, "Nürnberger Unternehmer," 653.

<sup>698</sup> (1396) - Klaus Kezinger operates as a representative of the Kammerer-Seiler company in Bruges managing the movement of copper from Krakow. (1402) - Financed Johann Slepogil's trade trip by his factor Heinrich Smet to Bruges by changing from Klaus Kezinger in Krakow over 2500 fl. Rh. to Ulrich Kammerer in Cologne. Stromer, *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz* vol 1, 124.

<sup>699</sup> *Libri iuris civilis Cracoviensis 1392-1506*, ed. Kazimierz Kaczmarczyk (Krakow: Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 1913), no. 1512; Stromer, "Nürnberger Unternehmer," 655.

and sales targets.<sup>700</sup> Bochner managed to keep the ship afloat until 1405, when Marcus of Nuremberg arrived on the scene. Having been active in Hungary as an agent for the Nuremberg Flextorfer-Kegler-Zenner firm since at least 1395, Marcus had made himself valuable to King Sigismund and in 1405 was named chamber count of Kremnica rendering him head of all minting and mining operations in the Kingdom.<sup>701</sup> In that same year, he helped convince King Sigismund of Hungary to pass the “Urban decree” which included a prohibition on the export of silver, gold, or copper, without royal leave, and then further convinced the king to grant him monopoly purchase rights on all lead imported from Poland.<sup>702</sup> With everything now in place, Marcus used his new powers to prevent the sale of any silver or gold to Poland unless his requested lead prices were met.<sup>703</sup> Hungary was the major buyer of Polish lead, and the sudden price cut hit sharply. An order went out from Bochner that no lead was to be sold to Hungarians and soon a large stockpile of lead accumulated.<sup>704</sup> Merchants began complaining about the difficult situation to King Władysław Jagiełło, who in turn sent a letter of complaint to King Sigismund of Hungary asking him to reign in his vassal, but to no avail. By now, Nicholas Bochner, together with a number of other prominent Krakow merchants were heavily overextended.<sup>705</sup> In October 1406, faced with an enormous debt of 25,000 marks, Bochner was forced to declare bankruptcy.<sup>706</sup> He was stripped of his lease of the salt mines and his assets were seized.<sup>707</sup>

In the wake of Bochner’s fall, Klaus Kezinger took full control of the lead mines in Olkusz and Trzebinia, and became Vice-Zupparius of the Krakow salt mines under Pietro Bicherano.<sup>708</sup> Indeed, seeing how events unfolded it appears highly likely that Bochner was set up to fail.

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<sup>700</sup> Bochner had used a lot of the borrowed funds to open up the new “Bochner” shaft at the salt mine in Bochnia, but it failed to meet his expectations and he was forced to sell rights to the new shaft to the University of Krakow at a loss. In order to stave off his creditors he was forced to offer them salt instead of cash, diminishing his own profits still further. Ptaśnik, “*Studia nad patrycyatem*,” 68.

<sup>701</sup> Stromer, *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz* vol 1, 128, 133.

<sup>702</sup> *The Laws of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, 356; Stromer, “Nürnberger Unternehmer,” 654.

<sup>703</sup> (1405/12/30) Archiwum Komisji Historycznej. T. 9, 412

<sup>704</sup> Kutrzeba, *Finanse*, 238-9.

<sup>705</sup> Bochner owed 25,000 marks to Klaus Kezinger and his Nuremberg partners – Seiler and Konrad Segal, originally from Regensburg, but who had become a citizen of Krakow. Stromer, “Nürnberger Unternehmer,” 657.

<sup>706</sup> (1406/10/07) There is a discrepancy between the amount of the debt owed by Bochner in the studies by Ptaśnik (20,000 marks) and Stromer (25000). A look at the primary source quoted by Ptaśnik however, clearly states “*viginti milibus marcam vel circa personaliter obligato*” making 20,000 marks the incredible, but correct amount. [KDMK] 146; Ptaśnik, “*Studia nad patrycyatem*,” 68; Stromer, *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz* vol 1 148-9.

<sup>707</sup> Conrad Seiler of Nuremberg took among other things, Nicholaus Bochner’s property in, and the position of, *scultetus*, over the village of Bronowicze, located not far from Krakow. A site that incidentally had been home to a number of Italians. (1406) [Mag. Court 1] nr. 1682, 1705-7, 1721-22, 1725-6, (1409) 2479

<sup>708</sup> (1406/11/21) Pietro Bicherano also signed the lease to rent the Bochnia and Wieliczka mines for 17,000 marks per annum from Władysław Jagiełło. Stromer, “Nürnberger Unternehmer,” 656.

That Klaus Kezinger had alerted Konrad Seiler and Pietro Bicherano in Venice to the opportunity dangling in Krakow, to oust Nicholas Bochner from his roost as Zupparius and take over the lucrative Polish lead and salt mines by extending him more credit than he could repay. Marcus of Nuremberg in turn, while associated with the rival Flextorfer – Kegler - Zenner firm, may well have been involved in the plot as it served everyone's mutual interests. Two years later, Pietro Bicherano sold 4,000 centars (260 tons) of lead to Ulrich Reze and Lucas Kezinger, Klaus's brother, both of whom worked as representatives of the Amman-Kammerer-Seiler-Grau company for 2,000 Prague grosz, a much lower price than had been demanded by Bochner in 1405.<sup>709</sup> Indeed, the average price of lead fell slightly overall during the next five years.<sup>710</sup> It bears noting, that while the merchants of Nuremberg no doubt benefitted from the lowered Polish lead prices, it was not their intention at this point to corner the Polish market in order to feed the *Saigerhütte* first adapted in Nuremberg, as has been sometimes argued. The secrets of the *Saigerprozess*, were not discovered until the 1430s, and while first practiced in Nuremberg, it was not intensively adopted until the 1450s, thus decades after the story just related.<sup>711</sup> Control of the Polish lead mines was profitable enough as they were, even without the added demand brought about by the advent of the *Saigerprozess*.

Klaus Kezinger worked managing the lead mine until 1413, when he sold it to the Venetian Bonagiunta, Pietro Bicherano's nephew.<sup>712</sup> Stepping away from mining interests, Kezinger continued to reside in Krakow and his family within two generations moved into the Polish aristocracy.<sup>713</sup> For the next twenty years, the mines were managed by a series of Italians. First, Bonagiunta ran the mines for a number of years while simultaneously serving as Vice-Zupparius under his uncle at the Krakow salt mines. Under his administration, the lead mines flourished, shipping some 200 tons per year to Hungary.<sup>714</sup> Poland also became during the period, the primary supplier of lead to the market in Bruges following the same route up the Vistula and across the Baltic that was used for copper shipments.<sup>715</sup> From thence, it was frequently taken onboard by Italians merchants for sale in Mediterranean markets. In 1428, another Italian, Albizzo di Talento di Medici of Florence took over the reins at the Olkus lead

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<sup>709</sup> ASK, Consl. Crac., 427, fol. 315. Stromer cites the original agreement between Pietro and Ulrich incorrectly stating that it was to be found on [Consul Crac.] 427, fol. 245 when in fact it is on fol. 315; Stromer, *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz* vol 1, 10 fn 184; Stromer, "Nürnberger Unternehmer," 657, 670.

<sup>710</sup> Carter, *Trade*, 113.

<sup>711</sup> See footnote 640.

<sup>712</sup> [Mag.court 1] nr. 2812

<sup>713</sup> Stromer, "Nürnberger Unternehmer," 657.

<sup>714</sup> Blanchard, *Mining, Metallurgy* Vol 3, 1474.

<sup>715</sup> Blanchard, *Mining, Metallurgy* Vol 3, 1491.

mine.<sup>716</sup> Albizzo, had first come to Krakow on an assignment from Giovanni di Bicci di Medici in order to collect debts due to the Venetian branch of the Medici bank in 1410.<sup>717</sup> After working at the Medici bank in Florence for a number of years, he chose to return to Poland around 1418 and became quickly involved in managing tolls and mine operations, while occasionally acting as an agent for the Medici bank assisting with transferring papal funds to Rome.<sup>718</sup> Albizzo managed the Olkusz mine with success from 1428-1435, after which its running was taken over by Polish Zuppari with much of the product moving through the hands of the Krakow merchants Sweidniczer and Giorgius Morstin (Morsztyn).<sup>719</sup>

Similar to the way in which Italians moved into the role of Zupparius of Poland's salt mines, lead was another obvious source of their business interests. While not as rare or as precious as copper, lead was a valuable product and starting from at least the 1360s Italians were involved in its sale. The miscalculations of Nicholas Bochner combined with the careful manipulation of a cabal of Nuremberg merchants and Pietro Bicherano of Venice allowed for the lead mines to be transferred into the hands first of Klaus Kezinger of the Amman-Kammerer-Seiler-Grau company and after, Bonagiunta, Pietro's nephew. Albizzo di Medici later took up the reigns, and managed the mine successfully for many years until upon his death, the position fell back into the hands of local Polish notables.

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<sup>716</sup> (1428/08/20) [SPPP2] nr 2232.

<sup>717</sup> ASF, MaP Filza 153, doc. 1, fol. 80rv

<sup>718</sup>[GK] 2, 165 Accessed October 21st, 2020

[http://www.slownik.ihpan.edu.pl/search.php?id=25218&q=italicus&d=0&t=0\\_0](http://www.slownik.ihpan.edu.pl/search.php?id=25218&q=italicus&d=0&t=0_0)

<sup>719</sup> [SPPP2] nr 2612, 2614-5; Carter, *Trade*, 113.

### 3.4 Silver and Gold

#### Silver



Figure 45 Silver Grosz of King Casimir the Great

Source: <https://www.skarbnicanarodowa.pl/kroniki-numizmatyczne/192-kronika-Pieniadza-polskiego-wielkie-reformy-Kazimierza-Wielkiego>  
Accessed December 20<sup>th</sup> 2020

Silver – *argentum*, formed the basis for the European monetary system. While gold was more highly prized than silver, due to its relative scarcity, silver stood as the basis for most medieval Europe currencies, including that of Poland. Unfortunately for the Polish monarchy, apart from Lower-Silesia, which from the early fourteenth century was beyond the kingdom's borders, Poland had no silver or gold mines. This fact rendered bullion, which had to be procured from outside sources, extremely expensive, making minting more difficult and causing the local coinage to suffer accordingly.<sup>720</sup> This lack of precious metal resources on Polish territory would be a perennial problem for rulers throughout the medieval and early-modern period. Given the limited local resources, silver and gold had to be imported and that which arrived in Poland came from three primary sources – Bohemia, Upper Silesia, and Upper Hungary.<sup>721</sup> For reasons similar to those hinted at above, Italians during the fourteenth century became intimately involved in mining and minting ventures across Europe, and the case of Poland was no exception. Indeed, Italians were involved in the precious metal trade at every level – mining, trade and transport, and minting. As the trade in precious metals almost by necessity meant

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<sup>720</sup> The Zloty Stok gold mine, the oldest and largest in Lower Silesia was first opened only in 1273. Elżbieta Szychowska-Krapiec, "Dendrochronological studies of wood from mediaeval mines of polymetallic ores in Lower Silesia (SW Poland)." *Geochronometria* 26.1 (2007): 62; Blanchard, *Mining, Metallurgy, and Minting*. Vol. 2, 713-4.

<sup>721</sup> Carter, *Trade*, 111.

interest in the local mint, the following section looks at Italian involvement in the royal mint in Krakow and the silver and gold trade.

In order to understand the relatively minor presence of Italian mint masters in Poland during the medieval period, it is important to know something about general bullion fluctuations in Europe and the interests of Polish rulers towards their currency at the time. Across Europe, it was always the interplay of politics and the availability of precious metals on the market that drew mint masters from abroad and Poland was no different in this regard. Coins had been minted in Poland since at least the tenth century, but the general lack of substantial precious metal resources and limited high-value trade had led to a general paucity of specie circulation in the region. This low level of monetization would impact the arrival of Italian merchants in Poland as will be discussed in the conclusion.

Poland was greatly influenced by the monetary reforms introduced in the early fourteenth century in Bohemia and thereafter the Prague grosz would stand as the base model for Polish currency. These large silver grosz were used together with the gold Hungarian Florin, after its introduction in 1326, for nearly all high-value payments. Apart from this brief golden detour that will be discussed in the following section, which was likely issued as a display of power and not intended for general circulation, Władysław Łokietek coined denars and grosz according to the Bohemian system set out by King Wenceslaus II and his Italian mint masters based in Kutná Hora.

The first securely identifiable Italian to help manage the Krakow mint was Monaldo di Lucca, an eccentric figure who would go on to work as a professor at Krakow University, write two medical treatises, and come close to a charge of heresy when he was accused of engaging in crystallomancy and demon assisted treasure hunting in the king's garden at Zwierzyniec.<sup>722</sup> He first appears in Krakow in 1387, embroiled in a dispute with a number of Prague merchants and a group of Italians present in the city for which he and his co-conspirators were banished from the city but were then pardoned by the king.<sup>723</sup> In 1393 he was made mint master together with the prominent Krakow merchant Peter Bork in what was probably a private rental

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<sup>722</sup> Monaldo's two manuscripts are today preserved in the Jagiellonian library - *Medicinalia praecepta*, in BJ 792, fols. 33r–42r, and *Monaldus de Luca, De pestilentia*, in BJ 849, fols. 161r–162v. For a published version of these texts see: Mieczysław Markowski, "Les manuscrits des listes de docteurs en médecine à l'Université de Cracovie entre 1400 et 1611", *Mediaevalia Philosophica Polonorum* 20 (1974): 121–40; Benedek Láng, *Unlocked Books: manuscripts of learned magic in the medieval libraries of Central Europe*, (Philadelphia: Penn State Press, 2010), 217.

<sup>723</sup> [KsProscrKrakow] nr. 785.

arrangement although no contract has survived.<sup>724</sup> The sources show that he and Bork answered directly to the king and queen, presenting them with the seigniorage fee for 1393-1394 which amounted to 5,478 marks from the stamping of the largest denomination silver ½ grosz (Kwartniks).<sup>725</sup> Marian Gumowski calculated that such a return would have meant that some 1,051,777 pieces would have to have been minted during the eighteen months covered.<sup>726</sup> This was an impressive increase in production as the minting of such large silver pieces had slowed considerably over the years. The new coins also had a higher silver content and were more artfully shaped than previous versions. ¼ grosz coins (small Kwartniks) or *ternarii* were also stamped and on these appeared for the first time a minter's mark – the initials MP – the first letters of the Christian names of the masters Monaldo and Peter.<sup>727</sup> (Figure 47)



Figure 46 ¼ Grosz Coins (Kwartniks/Tenari) Issued under King Władysław Jagiełło, Carrying the Minter's Mark – the Initials MP – for Monaldo of Lucca and Peter Bochner

Source: "Władysław Jagiełło (1386-1434)," *Monety Średniowiecza* [Medieval Money], Accessed 4th February, 2019. <http://sredniowiecze.wcn.pl/coins?page=166>

The practice of adding a minter's mark was typical of Italian manufacture and was used to help ensure quality production and as a sign of authenticity. It appears that the Krakow mint continued to issue high quality silver coins for the length of Monaldo's brief tenure, but by 1395 he appears to have left the post. The reason for his departure is probably because the

<sup>724</sup> The author has helpfully collected the relevant references into a comprehensive listing. Stanisława Kubiak, *Monety Pierwszych Jagiellonów: 1386-1444* [Coinage of the first Jagiellonians: 1386-1444], (Wrocław: Zakład narodowy imienia Ossolińskich, 1970), 226-8.

<sup>725</sup> Marian Gumowski, *Dzieje Mennicy Krakowskiej* [History of Krakow Coinage], (Poznań: Drukarnia Rolnicza Poradnika gospodarskiego, 1927), 38-9.

<sup>726</sup> Gumowski, *Dzieje Mennicy*, 38-9.

<sup>727</sup> Kubiak, *Monety Pierwszych*, 254-55.



mint had begun once again to have difficulties in securing a reasonably priced bullion supply, thus decreasing profits. In 1396, the Krakow City Council sent a memorandum to the king advising him to revalue the currency in relation to the international standard set by the Prague grosz as the coins currently being minted no longer contained enough silver to maintain the old ratios and the king accepted this advice.<sup>728</sup> Monaldo continued to live in Krakow and acted regularly as a representative for the City Council abroad, was a fixture at court and eventually succeeded to a chair at the newly re-opened Krakow University while on the side experimenting in mystical arts, he never again worked with the mint. While his term in office was brief, Monaldo can perhaps be credited with improving production quality and quantity at the Krakow mint as well as initiating the trend of placing the minter's mark on coins. After Monaldo's departure the mint continued under the administration of Peter Bork and then other members of the Krakow patriciate until 1401/3 when an Italian once again arrived on the scene - Simone Talenti.<sup>729</sup>



Figure 47 Minter's Mark of Simon Talenti – S from the Half-Grosz (Ternari) Coin Issued under King Władysław Jagiełło

Source: "1386-1434 Ternary (trzeciaki), półgrosze - Władysława Jagiełły i denary Warneńczyka [1386-1434 Ternary (thirds), half-grosz - Władysław Jagiełło and denari of Warneńczyk]," *Historia Pieniądza*, Accessed 4th February, 2019. [http://www.historiapieniadza.pl/wp/?page\\_id=109](http://www.historiapieniadza.pl/wp/?page_id=109)

<sup>728</sup> The council advised the king to recall a large portion of the old denar coins and replace them with new ones of a higher standard so that the system would function according to new ratios: 1 Prague grosz (1,83 gr.) = 6 kwartnik (1,62) = 24 old denars (1,68), = 16 new denars (1,42) 1 kwartnik (0,27) = 4 old denars (0,27) — 3 new denars (0,20). *Najstarsze księgi i rachunki miasta Krakowa od r. 1300 - do 1400* [The earliest notary books and accounts of the City of Krakow from 1300 - to 1400] hereafter [NKiRMK] edited by Franciszek Piekosiński, and Josef Suzujski. (Krakow: Czasu, 1878),151-2. Paszkiewicz, „Monety koronne, 41.

<sup>729</sup> There is some lack of clarity surrounding when Simon first became involved in the Krakow mint. Written sources place him there only in 1403 but some numismatic evidence points to 1401-2. Gumowski, *Dzieje Mennicy*,229-30. Piekosiński, *O Monecie.*, 74, 137.



Simone Talenti was from a Florentine family members of which had moved to Hungary after a brief stint in Bologna in the 1380s.<sup>730</sup> Simone and his brothers Giovanni and Talentus acted as merchants but were also deeply involved in Hungarian mining and minting initiatives (a more complete biography is given in Chapter 4).<sup>731</sup> Around 1401, Simone Talenti left Hungary to become engaged at the Krakow mint, as demonstrated by coins issued bearing the first initial of his name S as a minter's mark. (Figure 48) These coins were of high quality, containing a significant amount of silver and it appears likely that Simon and his brothers with their strong connections in Hungary were able to procure supplies at a decent price.<sup>732</sup> A year later Andrzej Czarnysza, a prominent Krakow burgher, joined the consortium and the minter's mark changed to AS.<sup>733</sup> (Figure 49)



Figure 48 Minter's Mark of Andrzej Czarnysza and Simon Talenti – AS from the Half-Grosz (Ternari) Coin Issued under King Władysław Jagiełło

Source: "1386-1434 Ternary (trzeciaki), półgrosze - Władysława Jagiełły i denary Warneńczyka [1386-1434 Ternary (thirds), half-grosz - Władysław Jagiełło and denari of Warneńczyk]," *Historia Pieniądza*, Accessed 24th April, 2019. [http://www.historiapieniadza.pl/wp/?page\\_id=109](http://www.historiapieniadza.pl/wp/?page_id=109)

<sup>730</sup> Suchodolski argued for Simone Talenti being of French origin from the village de Talent in the département of la Côte-d'Or in Bourgogne. However, given the ubiquitously with which Italians were referred to in Polish sources as "gallicus" as referring solely to Italians. Given this and the contributions of Arany's research which positively identifies Simone and his brothers as originating from Italy, this identification can be safely disregarded. Suchodolski, "D'où venaient," 349-50. Arany, "Florentine", 44, 127, 237.

<sup>731</sup> Simone acted as a chamber count in 1384 and 1392, Johannes was a chamber count in 1381 and 1396, and Talentus (who might be identified with Johannes) was a chamber count in 1387. Arany, "Florentine," 237.

<sup>732</sup> 1.58g coin weight, 0.79 % silver. There is some lack of clarity surrounding when Simone first became involved in the Krakow mint. Written sources place him there only in 1403, but some numismatic evidence points to 1401-2. Gumowski, *Dzieje Mennicy*, 48, 229-30.; Piekosiński, *O Monecie...*, 74, 137..

<sup>733</sup> For more on the life and career of Andrzej Czarnysza see: Marcin Starzyński, "Andrzej Czarnysza († 1416) i jego autograf [Andrzej Czarnysza († 1416) and his autograph]," *Średniowiecze Polskie i Powszechne* 6 (2014):85-92.

These coins, stamped between 1402-3, show a slight drop in silver content but were still of decent quality.<sup>734</sup> Work appears to have been going well and in March of 1403 Andrzej Czarnysza loaned Simon 505 marks in goods and funds in order for him and his brother to purchase more silver in Hungary for use at the mint.<sup>735</sup> The order ran into trouble however, as a court case held in Košice three years later reveals that still in 1406, Simon had yet to pay Andrzej back.<sup>736</sup> The reason for the sudden hold up becomes apparent from a question posed by King Władysław Jagiełło to the Krakow City Council asking for advice on how to deal with problems at the mint.

The council's reply informed the king that Marcus of Nuremberg, who was acting head of all Hungarian mining chambers held a monopoly on the silver supply and was refusing to sell bullion to Polish merchants unless they sold him Polish lead at a ridiculously low price which they refused to do.<sup>737</sup> For this reason, the production of quality coins had become prohibitively expensive.<sup>738</sup> The councilors recommended that instead of seeking to procure new bullion, the King attempt an old-fashioned style *renovatio monetae*, calling in old silver coins from circulation in order to profit from the minting of new ones. They warned however, that such a project would have its drawbacks as the stamping of large numbers of new coins, particularly if they were of low quality could prove very damaging to internal markets.<sup>739</sup> The king may have made a brief attempt to follow the council's advice but the Hungarian blockade could not have come at a worse moment as the preparations were made for war with the Teutonic Knights.<sup>740</sup> Already by 1407 Polish coins had lost a quarter of their silver content and the currency would continue to depreciate as Władysław Jagiełło sought to fund his campaigns.<sup>741</sup> After the victory at Grunwald in 1410, some of the pressure came off of minting activities and with the silver content reduced to near half of its earlier standard and with half a million of

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<sup>734</sup> 1.58g coin weight 0.74 % silver. Gumowski, *Dzieje Mennicy*, 48.

<sup>735</sup>[Itali] nr. 12

<sup>736</sup>[ZsO] II nr. 4749.

<sup>737</sup> For more, see the above section dedicated to lead. Stromer, "Nürnberger 654-8; Stromer, *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz*, Vol 1, 143-8

<sup>738</sup> [CA] 1 nr 154. For more on this incident see: Stromer, *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz* Vol 1, 147-9.

<sup>739</sup>[CA] 1 nr 154.

<sup>740</sup> Borys Paszkiewicz, „Monety koronne władysława Jagiełły: między Wschową i Krakowem?” [Crown Coins of Władysław Jagiełło: between Wschowa and Krakow?], *Biuletyn Numizmatyczny* 2 (358) (2010): 116.; Gumowski, *Dzieje Mennicy*, 43.

<sup>741</sup>Paszkiewicz, „Monety koronne, 43.

these poor quality coins now in circulation, the mint closed in 1414.<sup>742</sup> It would remain shuttered for the next six years.<sup>743</sup> Given these circumstances, it is utterly unsurprising that Simone Talenti appears to have dropped his interest in the Polish minting project and returned to his more lucrative affairs in Hungary.<sup>744</sup>

When the attempted embargo on lead sales described in the section above, failed in late 1406, Polish merchants were left in an even worse position than before while that of Marcus of Nuremberg was strengthened. He could continue to dictate silver prices making a profitable running of the mint nearly impossible. Marcus of Nuremberg's intractability must also be put in the context of the steady downward slump of silver output by Hungarian mines. It was not that he simply wished to put pressure on Poland or reap great profits for himself by charging monopolistic rates. It was also the case that Europe generally was in the midst of what is termed the 'Great Bullion Famine' of the fourteenth century that lasted from 1392 to 1412/25.<sup>745</sup> Hungarian silver mines were becoming tapped out and so prices for the metal naturally rose. Finally, even should the mint attempt a *renovatio monetae* that might produce profitable results, the king was at that moment seeking to raise as high a seigniorage payment as possible to meet war demands and so profits for the mint master would be rendered very slim indeed. Given the state of things, this was not perhaps the best time to try to take over responsibility for the Krakow mint, it is interesting then to note that the Venetian, Pietro Bicherano, who was at that moment sweeping in to take over the Zupparius positions left open by the fall of Nicholas Bochner, was very briefly in 1406, also the head of the Krakow mint.

In March 1406, the Krakow City Council informed the king that due to Marcus of Nuremberg's refusal to sell silver bullion at a reasonable price, the mint was in trouble. We know that as the king was hearing this bad news, a plan was being formed in Florence to send an ambassadorial mission to Poland which included Pietro Bicherano as a member of the embassy. The letter from the Florentine council describing the diplomatic mission to send two lions and the mint

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<sup>742</sup> Numismatic evidence put forward recently by Paszkiewicz argues persuasively that although mention of the Krakow mint disappears from all written sources in 1414, coins were likely still minted in the city rather than at a mint in Wschowa as had been previously thought. This theoretical mint would have had limited contact with Krakow's urban administration, explaining its absence from notarial records and was located perhaps within the Wawel precinct under total royal control. In any event, it seems highly unlikely that any Italians were employed in the running of this theoretical mint that continued to stamp out badly depreciated coins between 1414-1422. Paszkiewicz, „Monety koronne, 118.

<sup>743</sup> Paszkiewicz, „Monety koronne, 113; Gumowski, *Dzieje Mennicy*, 43.

<sup>744</sup> Arany, „Florentine,” 237.

<sup>745</sup> Blanchard was not particularly well informed about Italians operating in Poland and so his comments in this regard should be taken with caution. Blanchard, *Mining, Metallurgy*, Vol 3, 971-4.

master Leonardo Bartoli to King Władysław Jagiełło then places him perhaps in Florence on May 24th.<sup>746</sup> While the mission was likely never sent, none the less, Pietro was almost certainly present in Florence at the time of the drafting of the plan. The project to send lions from Florence to Poland having failed, Pietro made his way back to Krakow without feline accompaniment and without a Florentine mint master who perhaps could have assisted at this moment of crisis. As summer turned to fall the situation on the border between Hungary and Poland became untenable as hundred weights of lead staked up, waiting to be sold.<sup>747</sup> By October 7<sup>th</sup> 1406, Nicholas Bochner was forced to face his creditors Klaus Kezinger and Konrad Seiler and admit to his debts.<sup>748</sup> Pietro in the meantime had arrived back in Krakow where on September 3<sup>rd</sup> 1406 he had a legal instrument naming his son Francisco as his *procurator* – legal representative in all his Venetian affairs before a public notary in the city.<sup>749</sup> A few weeks later, Pietro paid money on behalf of the City of Lviv to send a messenger to the Roman curia at some point before November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1406 and at that point he was listed in Lviv notarial registers as master of the Krakow mint.<sup>750</sup> On November 21<sup>st</sup>, 1406 he was made *Zupparius* of the Krakow salt mines, and as no mention is made in the contract to any concurrent status as *Monetarius* – mint master, it appears that he had given up any involvement with the mint by this date if indeed he ever held the post at all.<sup>751</sup> It is possible that the scribe in Lviv or the researcher who transcribed the document made an error and he never held the post to begin with. In either case, Pietro's term in office was extremely brief and understandably so given the current upheaval and the limited possibility for turning a profit. For the next few years, the mint would be managed by a revolving series of individuals until at last in 1414 it was forced to close and would remain shuttered for the next 17 years.<sup>752</sup> Although coins continued to be minted on a small scale at other sites, the main mint in Krakow would be re-opened only under Władysław Jagiełło's successor Władysław III in 1431 and

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<sup>746</sup> ASF, Signoria, Missive, F Canc, reg. 27, i. Reproduced in: *Codex epistolaris saeculi decimi quinti 1384-1496*. Vol. 1 eds. August Sokołowski, and Józef Szujski (Krakow: Akademia Umiejętności, 1876), nr. 25; [Itali] nr.18.

<sup>747</sup> Stromer, "Nürnberger Unternehmer", 655-6.

<sup>748</sup> Consul. Crac. nr 427, fol. 261 for the transcript of this interaction see: Ptaśnik, "Studia nad patrycyatem,"94.  
<sup>749</sup> (1406/09/03) ASV, Cane. Inf. 96, (Griffon Pietro), book 1 fol. 24.

<sup>750</sup> Pietro's payment is recorded in the Krakow city notarial records at an unclear date in 1406, but it must have occurred prior to November 2<sup>nd</sup> as the transaction was recorded only then in the Lviv notarial records and it would have taken some time for notice of the event to reach the city. Crac. Cons. A 1392 -1412, p. 456. See: [Itali] nr. 17; *Księga przychodów i rozchodów miasta, 1404-1414* [Book of revenues and expenditures of the city], ed. Aleksander Czołowski (Lviv: Gmina król. stoł. miasta Lwowa, 1896), 28.

<sup>751</sup> For the argument regarding the dating of the charter see: Jerzy Zaty, "Ze źródeł do dziejów walki klasowej w żupach krakowskich. [From sources to the history of the class struggle in the Cracow villages], *Pamiętnik Biblioteki Kórnickiej* Z. 5. (1955): 178-80.

<sup>752</sup> Kubiak, *Monety Pierwszych*, 252. Gumowski, *Dzieje Mennicy*,45.

Pietro was to be the last Italian to manage any Polish mint until the sixteenth century.<sup>753</sup> It can thus be said that three Italians worked at the mint in Krakow during the Late Medieval period, one from Lucca, one from Florence, and the final from Venice, demonstrating no particular preference on the part of the crown or the Italians themselves. This was in keeping with general European trend which recruited from a pool of Italian towns with long minting traditions.<sup>754</sup> Poland's two metal-rich neighbors, Bohemia and Hungary for example, both used imported Italians from multiple locations to run their mints. Bohemia recruited men from Florence and Pisa, while the earliest known Hungarian mint-master was a Venetian, followed by a parade of Florentines, following that kingdom's usual custom of supporting individuals from that city.<sup>755</sup> Silver and gold continued to be brought into Poland, but most of these transfers were left off the books for the sake of secrecy and to avoid taxes. Italians may have had a hand in these transactions but the patchiness of the public record makes it difficult to say. In any event, the sale of silver and gold and the managing of the Polish mint, due to the paucity of raw bullion available in the country, were not the best of investments and so Italians tended to avoid them in favor of other more lucrative opportunities.

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<sup>753</sup> Kubiak, *Monety Pierwszych*, 253.

<sup>754</sup> Asti, Lucca, and Florence were the most popular locations from which Italian minters were recruited, but individuals from other locations are also known. Carr-Riegel, "Italian Mint Masters," 94.

<sup>755</sup> One of these Italians in Bohemia, Anastasius Verius di Mattis of Florence, became a citizen of Prague after being invited by King John of Bohemia in 1325. He was recruited to manage the issuing of a new gold coin modeled explicitly after that issued by the City on the Arno. It is possible that this same Anastasius was responsible for the brief run of similar gold florins issued by the Silesian Duke Wenceslaus I of Legnica in 1345, but the identification is not assured. Two Pisans, Michael and Francis, would be active in Kutná Hora in the period of 1334-35. In the 1350s, two other Florentines "honorabilis viri domini Andree de Florencia", together with "Tomasoni de Florenci", would manage not only the mint at Kutná Hora, but that of the entire Kingdom of Bohemia as "custodes et supremi gewardatores auri et argenti per totum regnum Boemie." Dana Stehlíková, "Some enamels of the xiv century from Czech collections," *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa. Classe di Lettere e Filosofia*, Serie III, 24, no. 2/3 (1994):646-9; Emanuel Leminger, *Královská mincovna v Kutné Hoře* [The Royal Mint at Kutná Hora], (Kutná: Kutná Hora, 2003), 96, 169. In Hungary meanwhile, in 1249, "vir providus Archinus, comes camere nostre, nacione Venetus nunc civis Strigoniensis." Became the mint master of Esztergom. Attila Zsoldos, "Városlakók a királyi család szolgálatában." Town-dwellers in the Service of the Royal Family]. *Történelmi Szemle* 47 (2005): 200-1. Followed by a large number of Florentines, Štefánik, "Italian Involvement," 19-22.

## Gold



Figure 49 Florentine Golden Florin, One of 39 Discovered as Part of a Hoard Buried in Środa Śląska, Poland

Source: Wikimedia [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C5%9Aroda\\_Treasure#/media/File:Fiorino\\_1347.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C5%9Aroda_Treasure#/media/File:Fiorino_1347.jpg)  
Accessed December 20<sup>th</sup> 2020

Gold – *aurum*, *gold*, was a rare substance in Poland. The reign of King Władysław Łokietek (1320 – 1333) is marked by a unique episode in Polish monetary history. For the first and only time prior to the early modern period, a Polish king issued a gold coin. The coin, of which only a single example survives, was similar to the Florentine florin (Figure 51) in weight and size. However, instead of a fleur-de-lis on the obverse, it depicted the king enthroned in majesty and on the reverse the Figure of St. Stanisław, the patron saint of Poland, appeared in place of John the Baptist.<sup>756</sup> (Figure 50)

<sup>756</sup> The coin was uncovered by workers digging near Bochnia in 1847 and today resides in the National Museum in Krakow. It reads WLADISLAVS D [e] IG [ratia] REX on the obverse and S [anctus] STANISLAVS POL [oni] on the reverse. Weighing 3.48 g., it is in line with the 3.5 g. weight normal for Florentine florins. Jerzy Jarek, *Historia Grosza i Złotego* [History of the grosz and the Złoty], Wrocław: Europa, 2009), <http://jarekjerzy.blogspot.com/2018/02/czesc-2-grosze.html> Accessed September 13th 2019





Figure 50 Golden Florin of King Władysław Łokietek c.1330

Source: Wikimedia

[https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aureus\\_polonus#/media/Plik:Floren\\_W%C5%82adys%C5%82awa\\_%C5%81okietka\\_rewers.jpg](https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aureus_polonus#/media/Plik:Floren_W%C5%82adys%C5%82awa_%C5%81okietka_rewers.jpg) Accessed December 20<sup>th</sup> 2020

Ichnographically, the obverse depicting the king in majesty appears similar to the silver *grosso* of Charles Robert of Hungary first issued in 1327 (Figure 52) that was itself modeled after the *gigliato* of Robert I King of Naples.<sup>757</sup> (Figure 53)



Figure 51 Silver Grosso of Charles Robert of Hungary, First Issued in 1327

Source: <https://coinweek.com/world-coins/coins-of-medieval-hungary-part-2/> Accessed February 5<sup>th</sup> 2019

<sup>757</sup> Lajos Huszár, *The art of coinage in Hungary* (Budapest: Corvina Press, 1963), 14-5.



Figure 52 Silver Gigliato of Robert I King of Naples c. 1310

Source: Wikimedia

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Gigliato?uselang=it#/media/File:Gigliato\\_263885.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Gigliato?uselang=it#/media/File:Gigliato_263885.jpg) Accessed February 5<sup>th</sup> 2019

It is unknown who or even where the coins were minted and it is thought that only a few thousand were ever stamped, but the high quality of the art and its obvious reference to the Florentine model would perhaps imply an Italian master. Apart from the extremely brief run of the Polish golden Florin under King Władysław Łokietek, the only other recorded interaction of Italians in Poland with large amounts of gold bullion, comes from 1424 and involved Antonio di ser Matteo of Florence.<sup>758</sup> In that year, Pawel Hornyng came before the City Council in Wrocław bringing three pieces of un-minted gold which he owed to Antonio and his partner Johannes Bank. These pieces of gold had been given in Vienna to Haneos Hamfutengel on Antonio and Bank's behalf. The issue at stake in the case was how many golden Florins could/should be minted from these gold bars. To discover this number, and thereby the worth of the bars, the council advised that the group write to merchants in Hungary, who were thought to be much more familiar with such transactions given that in their country was located Europe's then largest gold reserve. The Hungarian merchants were expected to write back with the information as to how to properly calculate the bars and accepting this expert opinion, the bars were then to be sent to Venice, and should they be found to be worth less than imagined, then Pawel Honyng would pay them the difference and if it was worth more, then Antonio and Bank were to keep the profits. The appearance of this entire transaction in the Wrocław notarial records is surprising given that the export of precious metals, gold in

<sup>758</sup> (1424/04/26) - [Bresbook] 7 pg 355.



particular, was highly regulated by royal authorities and how Antonio and his colleagues had come by the bars is questionable. Further, transactions such as this that involved gold and silver were very frequently not recorded for the same reasons, they were either organized within the sphere of royal interest and do not appear in urban notarial sources or they happened entirely “off the books” in the back alleys of towns away from prying eyes. The appearance of gold bars in Antonio’s orbit is unaccountable but highly interesting. It is hopeful that future research might uncover more instances of gold sales or an answer as to the foundation of this particular transaction.

Poland was a kingdom poor in precious metals throughout the medieval period. This paucity forced the monarchy to import bullion to issue its coins, making the running of the mint less lucrative than it would otherwise be. Thus, while Italians were frequently hired as mint masters and Poland was no exception in this regard, only three mint masters from the peninsula are known to have managed the Krakow mint and none stayed for long. Italians may have been more deeply involved in the buying and selling of bullion than is known, but as these transactions were under careful royal supervision and rarely recorded, it is difficult to say. Italians did however, have a significant impact on the styling of Polish coins and way in which the mint operated, even if their tenures were short.

### 3.5 Textiles



Figure 53 Chasuble from St. Mary's Cathedral in Gdańsk, Second Half of the 14<sup>th</sup> C., Italian Lampas Silk

Source: Germanisches Nationalmuseum Catalog number KG1330 <https://objektkatalog.gnm.de/objekt/KG1330>  
Accessed January 20th, 2021

The textile trade was perhaps the single most important long-distance economic undertaking of medieval Europe. Required by everyone, textiles were products with an enormous market for a wide range of income levels that led to significant variation and served as the preeminent marker of social class. A great deal of money was to be made in the textile business and many of the first Italians to be found in Krakow owned cloth stalls on the city's main square.<sup>759</sup> Most of the cloth traded came from more local sources, but some arrived from Italy itself.

<sup>759</sup> (1351/03/11) Fredericus Gallicus [NKiRMK] nr 1624, (1351/03/11) Paulo Cavallo [NKiRMK] nr 1624, (1351/08/19) Pietro Cavallo [NKiRMK] nr 1625, (1373) Gotfridus Fattinante [KLK] nr 885, 891, 1151, [KDKK] 182-5.

In Poland, precious textiles, including on occasion ones brought from Italy, were frequently given out as gifts.<sup>760</sup> The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries saw much of the wealth of Northern Italian cities like Lucca, Florence, and Venice founded on their weaving of high-end silk and woolen cloth. The great port cities of Genoa and Venice also served as hubs for precious fabrics imported from the East. Silk, after all, made up the other great treasure besides spices that was carried along the "Silk Roads"; running from China through the Iranian plateau and finally terminating along the Black Sea coast. Italians had been drawn very early to this treasure; the secrets of which until the Later Middle Ages remained largely the purview of the East. For the overland trade that ran through Poland, silk and spices had the virtue of being a high value good that was also relatively light, cutting down on transport costs, and therefore making the overland route a workable alternative to travel by sea. It is no surprise then that Italians resident in Poland engaged in trading exotic foods, spices, and expensive fabrics both directly from Italy itself and as middle men for textiles brought from the East. Italians were far from the only ones to trade in these products however, and especially beginning in the second half of the fifteenth century, Armenian and Jewish merchants from Lviv became the dominant purveyors of these goods while in the West, merchants from Nuremberg brought Florentine cloth to Poland.<sup>761</sup>

Cloth made directly in Italy on the other hand, was frequently brought into Poland via the northern ports from Bruges. Archeological research in Gdańsk has identified numerous lead cloth seals which give evidence to the original provenance of the material. Judging from those seals, the most commonly imported high quality wool cloths were from the Low Countries, as might be expected, but Padua stands out as another popular supplier.<sup>762</sup> Further evidence of the trade in Italian textiles can be seen in the many sumptuous fifteenth-century

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<sup>760</sup> (1484/02/17) *10 ulnas panni florentini et tres adamasci* – 10 length of florentine cloth and three of damask given by King Casimir IV to the vicezupparius; (1485/04/05) *decem marce vel pannum bonum florentinum* worth 10 marks worth of good Florentine cloth given as gift around Easter by King Casimir IV to a retainer *Liber quitantiarum regis Casimiri ab a. 1484 ad 1488/Księga skarbowa króla Kazimierza Jag.* Edited by Adolf Pawiński (Warsaw: Skł. gł. w księg. Gebethnera i Wolffa, 1897), 3, 28.

<sup>761</sup> (1457/02/15) 6,000 marks worth of Florentine cloth imported in a major deal by Nuremberg merchants to Krakow. Krzyżanowski, Stanisław. "Morsztynowie w XV wieku: karta z dziejów krakowskiego patrycyatu.[The Morsztyns in the fifteenth century: a page from the history of the patricians of Krakow]," *Rocknik Krakowski 1* (1898): 351 fn. 3

<sup>762</sup> The full list runs as follows: Bremen, Lübeck, Haarlem, Leiden, Amsterdam, London, Tours, Augsburg and Padua. Magdalena Wojcieszak "Traces archéologiques de commerce et de réseaux de contacts avec les espaces des mers du Nord et Baltique en Pologne médiévale," in *De la Mer du Nord à la Mer Baltique. Identités, Contacts et Communications au Moyen Âge*, eds. Alban Gautier and Sébastien Rossignol (Lille: Institut de recherches historiques du Septentrion, 2012) 12.

liturgical garments made of Italian silk and velvet that were once owned by the St. Mary's Cathedral in Gdańsk and are today housed in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg.<sup>763</sup> (Figure 54) An example of a similar luxury garment can be found in the Museum of Krakow. (Figure 55) Small amounts of Florentine cloth were also imported to Prussia during the latter half of the fifteenth century.<sup>764</sup> Florentine cloth had become popular in Poland already from the early fifteenth century, but was introduced to the country primarily through Venice via Wrocław. Much of this trade, however, was third or second hand, having gone through a long set of exchanges from its home country before arriving in Poland.



Figure 54 Liturgical Vestment from Krakow, 15th C., Italian silk

Source: Thomas Kalarus „Rynek Podziemny” Muzeum Krakowa Accessed April 22, 2021  
<https://www.facebook.com/RynekPodziemny/posts/1663359263687043/>

<sup>763</sup> Birgitt Borkopp-Restle, *Der Schatz der Marienkirche zu Danzig. Liturgische Gewänder und textile Objekte aus dem späten Mittelalter.*, Berner Forschungen zur Geschichte der textilen Künste, vol. 1 (Affalterbach: Didymos-Verlag, 2018), 252-55.

Kasel aus St. Marien in Danzig (Liturgische Textilien) nr KG1332, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, <http://objektkatalog.gnm.de/objekt/KG1332> Accessed April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

<sup>764</sup> (1459) “primo 5 elen Florenten czu 1 gulden” *Księga zółdu Związku Pruskiego z okresu wojny trzynastoletniej 1454-1466* [Book of income of the Prussian Union from the thirteen-year war period 1454-1466] ed. Antoni Czacharowski (Toruń: TNT, 1969), 27.

Yet, there are a few examples of Italians selling cloth directly in Poland, some of it imported from Italy directly, with others obtained more locally or from the Black Sea colonies of the East. Already from the early fourteenth century, Italians present in Krakow engaged in the textile trade, some going so far as to own multi-generational stalls on the city's main square.<sup>765</sup> Even Jacobino, the Royal Apothecary to King Casimir the Great got in on the action, renting for a time a cloth stall on Krakow's main square.<sup>766</sup> By the turn of the fourteenth century, the Genoese merchant Gotfridus Fattinante, was simply the latest in a long line who sold cloth in the city and at the time of his death in 1393, a large stock of silk which he wished to see inherited by his nephew Erasmus in Cologne, was the only item he did not leave to the Church.<sup>767</sup> In one particular case, which underscores the importance of this good, Italians who arrived in Poland not only sold, but also produced cloth. In 1394, Jacobo and Bernardo Bonacursi, a fraternal pair of Florentine weavers, moved to Kazimierz, purchasing a cloth stall on the city's main square likely with funds borrowed from Monaldo of Lucca, whom they later repaid in paper and cloth.<sup>768</sup> The appearance of these two men in Kazimierz coincides with the satellite town's rise as an important weaving center, focused on the production of cotton and fustian cloth.<sup>769</sup> The Bonacursi brothers may have contributed to this change, sharing with the local weaving industry with their knowledge of Florentine techniques. Trace of their activities in the sources ceases after 1396 however, and their final impact remains unclear. Perhaps the brothers perished or moved on to other opportunities elsewhere. Their presence however, underscores the importance of textile production and sale during the period.

Antonio and Leonardo di ser Matteo are another prominent example of Italian merchants heavily engaged in the sale of luxury fabrics. In 1425, they sought to sell 300 *stamina* of cloth at the annual St. Stanisław fair in Krakow. In a canny move, they had arranged with another

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<sup>765</sup> (1351/03/11) Fredericus Gallicus [NKiRMK] nr 1624, (1351/03/11) Paulo Cavallo [NKiRMK] nr 1624, (1351/08/19) Pietro Cavallo [NKiRMK] nr 1625, (1373) Gotfridus Fattinante [KLK] nr 885, 891, 115; [KDKK] 182-5.

<sup>766</sup> (1366/11/18) - Jacobino acknowledges that he is obligated to pay 44 marks by St. Gaul's day for the rental of a cloth stall located on the Krakow market square from Ulric Passcuzi and should he not, then Ulric Passcuzi can rent out the stall to anyone be they Christian or Jewish. [KLK] nr 94

<sup>767</sup> (1393/12/15) [KDKK] 182-5.

<sup>768</sup>

(1394) [KRRKaz] 301; (1396/02/27) - Johannes de Szarnowecz recognized before the court that 6 roles of *stamina meliora* - superior cloth, each worth 3 marks, and 6 roles of *stamina leviora* - inferior cloth, each worth 1 1/2 marks, and paper worth 15 marcs of the local currency were purchased by the honorable magister Monaldo of Lucca. He recognizes before the court that the cloths and paper were given to him in order to pay off the debt owed by the *Pannafices Latini* of Kazimierz [NKiRMK] nr 146

<sup>769</sup> Marcin Starzyński and Michał Schmidt. "Nowe miasto tkackie? Szkic do dziejów społeczno-gospodarczych podkrakowskiego Kazimierza [A new weaving city? A sketch to the social and economic history of Kazimierz near Krakow]," *Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej* 63.1 (2015): 15-27.

Italian, Albizzo di Medici, who was then working as the customs official in Krakow, to pay 2 grosz as tax for each stamina left unsold. At the end of the fair however, the brothers claimed to have sold everything which Albizzo disputed. Albizzo brought the brothers to court and they eventually agreed to pay the proper fees owed.<sup>770</sup> A year later, Antonio was again in trouble for his attempts to illegally trade in textiles when he sought to sell a load of cloth to some other *hospites* – non-citizens in Krakow. The prohibition against selling directly to foreign merchants outside the bounds of a scheduled fair, was a common one in towns across Europe, an issue which many got around by becoming citizens themselves in the location they were keen to trade with. As it was possible to hold citizenship simultaneously in a number of localities, this was a frequently employed tactic, and one which Italians in Poland used. For unknown reasons however, Antonio chose not to go this route, perhaps because citizenship often entailed a steep fee and the purchase of local property which he may have been unwilling to acquire, but it remains an open question. The case came before the City Council, who found it shocking enough to ensure that a prohibition against such trades was inscribed officially into the city statutes - no such sales were to be allowed without the intermediation of a citizen of Krakow. Antonio was further required to pledge that he would not measure out any cloth in ells, neither Polish, nor nice cloth, nor silk.<sup>771</sup> He was forbidden to give quit receipts to anyone apart from the king, and then only if the king requested them from him. Should anyone desire a receipt from him for textiles he was to go to the main cloth-hall and offer it only there. Should he fail to do so, he would be viewed as acting against the city law and the common good and would be judged a public enemy.<sup>772</sup> Such regulations were designed to constrain Antonio, and any likeminded foreign merchant, from seeking to cut out Polish merchants by selling directly to wealthy buyers away from the eyes and taxes of the main city square. This censure does not appear to have dissuaded Antonio much however, as a year later he arranged for the bartering of a large amount of Polish cochineal dye and a load of sable furs, to be traded in Venice by his brother Michele di ser Matteo for brocades and other cloths to be returned back to Poland and sold to the royal court.<sup>773</sup> The sale of fine textiles marketed to the governing elite was a common tactic with Italian merchants abroad, not only in Poland but also in comparative cases

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<sup>770</sup> (1425/07/19) [SPPP2] nr 2043

<sup>771</sup> “*Item das her vorbas mer keyn gewant polnisch noch schöne nicht sneyden sal noch aufmessen mit der elen off keyne qweitbriue keyme menschen*” a similar statement was repeated in Latin at the bottom of the document, “*vendere aliis hospitibus nisi in die forensi et nisi in cammeris pannorum et nisi per sex stamina ad minus et que sint preciosa vel flandriensia.*” (1426/07/09) [NZPiWMK] nr 19

<sup>772</sup> (1426/07/09) [NZPiWMK] nr 19

<sup>773</sup> (1428/06/19) [Itali] nr 50

such as Hungary.<sup>774</sup> As the di ser Matteo brothers planned to offer their wares to the royal court, so men like Jeromino di Olmerio focused on exulted clientele such as the Palatine Petrus Odrowansch de Sprowa.<sup>775</sup>

There is also to be found at the end of the fifteenth century an Italian merchant in the north importing cloth directly to Poland from the Italian Peninsula. The main case in point was a Paolo di Promontorio, originally from Genoa, who was an active merchant in Poznań between 1480 and 1515, of whom more will be said in Chapter 4. The records show that on at least two occasions, he imported Italian cloth directly, using it to trade for other items.<sup>776</sup> For the most part however, Paolo although an Italian himself, worked through middle men, purchasing damask and Venetian silk in Toruń from Nuremberg merchants. This demonstrates that it was often easier to work through a chain of intermediaries, rather than bring textiles directly from Italy.<sup>777</sup>

The importation of precious fabrics from the Italian colonies along the Black Sea coast, was another matter. The first surviving evidence of silk traffic through Lviv comes from 1376; when 3 libras of good silk and 5 libras of lesser quality silk were among the goods left in the

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<sup>774</sup> Arany, Florentine, 72-8; Prajda, "Florentines' Trade in the Kingdom of Hungary," 40-62.

<sup>775</sup> (1440/07/23) [AGZ] 14 nr 49.

<sup>776</sup> (1483/09/27) – Andrea Gwasko di Soldaia, merchant of Genoa and *tentuarius* of Gniezno, worked as a factor in a complicated delivery of cloth from Genoa for Paolo in the amount of 484 hufł. to be sold on Paolo's behalf. 70 hufł. of the debt was alleviated by Andrea giving some silk-satin to Paolo. The next 207 hufł. of the debt were to be paid back in the form of 14 ells of golden silk-satin; whose worth was to be verified by two merchants who were experts in the cloth trade and who were outsiders, either from Nuremberg or elsewhere. Should the 14 ells not amount to 207 hufł, then the difference was to be made up in a measure of black silk. For the rest of the debt, amounting to 207 hufł, 91 hufł were to be taken by Paolo from the Frankfurt merchant, Bucholz, thereby resolving a debt owed to Andrea. A further 60 hufł was to be collected by Paolo from Władysław, doctor of canon law and Canon of Gniezno, who owed Andrea. The remaining debt of 56 hufł was to be paid by Andrea to Paolo in the form of 14 ells of black damask. Andrea was also to return to Paolo a horse which Paolo had loaned him that had to be returned in a verified good condition, or further payment would be necessary. 207 hufł worth of silk cloths in a variety of colors and lengths were to be sold or given back to Paolo in as good a state as when they left. The two were further involved in the selling of cochineal dye (a scarlet dye for silk derived from insects). Should either party break the contract, they would owe 300 hufł. [AKapSąd II] nr. 1441. (1495/05/08) An accord reached before the royal judge in Poznań that Paolo would pay back Mathiam Ende and Claws Wolff 340fl within 2 years. If this should not happen, then in 4 years, Paolo would repay the amount either in measured gold or in silk of any color brought from Italy. [ActaPoz] II nr 1615.

<sup>777</sup> (1493) Jan Gleywicz owed Paolo 200 marks for Damask silk purchased in Toruń from the hands of Ludwik Gruber of Nuremberg; with Leonardo Ungettumma, Adam Swarcz and Jan Kezinger, all important Krakow merchants having an interest in the proceedings. Jan Gleywicz arranged to pay back 100 marks to Jan Frickel, Paolo's factor in Toruń, and the rest at a later date. Acta consularia Cracoviensia, nr. 430 fol. 364 see: [KMP] Kazimierz Kaczmarczyk, „Włosi w Poznaniu na przełomie XV na XVI wiek [Italians in Poznań at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries],” *Kronika Miasta Poznania: kwartalnik poświęcony sprawom kulturalnym stoł. m. Poznania: organ Towarzystwa Miłośników Miasta Poznania* 6.1 (1928): 8. (1496/02/29) Paolo owing a significant amount of money to Hanusz Blode of Nuremberg for 150 cubits of Venetian damask and several dozen different lengths of cloth as well as specie. [ActaPoz] II nr 1657.

will of Tayczadin, son of Iwan, member of the prominent Armenian Sirkis family who had long historical ties to Kiliya, Caffa, and Pera.<sup>778</sup> Armenians would continue to be the primary conductors of this trade throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth century. Silk was, of course, mentioned as one of the primary trade products in the 1407 charter of Alexander the Good, and in a subsequent reissuing thereafter.<sup>779</sup> Silk was sold not only as a wholesale good to merchants; but was also purchased by the Lviv City Council to give as gifts to the royal court and other notables.<sup>780</sup> To give just a single example of gifts made to the royal court, in 1414, several lengths of Kamcha silk were presented by the Venetian, Pietro Bicherano, and the Advocatus of Drohobich to the king and queen, on behalf of the Lviv City Council.<sup>781</sup> It was not only royalty however, who might walk away with gifts of silk finery from Lviv. In 1421, Ghillebert de Lannoy, working as an ambassador of the English King, Henry V, traveled through Poland on his way to the Holy Land. He was given a particularly beautiful set of silk cloth by the Armenian community of Lviv, an experience that left him feeling very partial towards the city.<sup>782</sup> It was not only nobles and diplomats who received such gifts. In Lviv, even less exalted individuals were also paid in silk. In 1423, silk was purchased by the Lviv City Council from an Armenian trader Grehor, the grandson of the famous merchant Ywanis, to be given in payment to another Armenian Johannes Tholmacz, who worked for the city as a translator, in

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<sup>778</sup> (1388/07/21) A copy of a will originally written down in 1376 was recorded in the city notary books related to the final wishes of Tayczadin son of Iwanis of the Sirkis family, citizen of Lviv. From this document we some sense of the ongoing trade relations between Lviv and Caffa. From the property he was able to leave behind, Tayczadin appears to have been a wealthy and successful man of business. Along with his main trading partner, Chodzą Mansur a citizen of Caffa, he specialized in the luxury silk and spice trade with the black sea port. We get a sense of the types of goods he transported as the inventory of assets he left behind included 37 stones of pepper (an enormous amount), ½ stone of nutmeg, a batch of pearls, and bundles of silk of varying qualities. Somewhat unusually for Lviv, which had many Orthodox, Jewish and Armenians traders, Tayczadin was Catholic and gave lavish donations to a number of churches in both Lviv and Caffa. Silk was certainly a popular and sometimes contentious item of trade as another case from 1386 shows, where an Armenian merchant from Caffa named Lazar, brought charges against three shopkeepers from Lviv who had not paid him properly for the five and a half weights of raw silk he had sold them. [PomnLw] I nr 388, 571, 576; Marian Małowist, "Polish-Flemish trade," 9; Nadel-Golobič, "Armenians and Jews in Medieval Lvov," 355.

<sup>779</sup> [AGZ] 7, 205-13 (1407, 232 (1456), 239 (1460).

<sup>780</sup> 1407 – Kamcha purchased for the king and queen as a gift from the Lviv City Council from Iolbey Armeno. Silk purchased from Iwanis the Younger, an Armenian of Lviv, and another Armenian named Tholac by the city council for the king and queen in 1423. "*Consules tenentur Iwanis iuueni Armeno Lemburgensi X srg. pro duobus stami- nibus sericeis, donatis Regi et Reginę.*" [PomnLw] II nr. 145 (1407), 162 (1408), 332 (1413). [PomnLw] III nr. 345 (1423).

<sup>781</sup> "*Exposita presentis reysze et honoracionum in facto Advocati Drohobiciensis et citacionis cum Petro Picorano salis zuppario ad dominum Regem circa festum Purificacionis ste Marie (2 July ) de anno domini MCCCCXIVmo ad Lubomia Pro honoracione data sunt II stamina sericea alias kamchi domino Regi pro VI srg.*" [PomnLw] II 336 (1414). Silk was purchased for the king and queen on numerous other occasions: [PomnLw] II nr. 165, 182 (1407), 183 (1408), [PomnLw] III nr. 345 (1423); Badecki "Zaginione księgi średniowiecznego Lwowa," 559 (1439).

<sup>782</sup> Ghillebert de Lannoy, *Voyages et ambassades de Messire Guillebert de Lannoy: 1399-1450* edited by Constant P. Serrure (Mons: Typographie d'Em. Hoyois, Libraire, 1840), 35-40.



Silk was available in multiple different variations. Raw, dyed in a variety of colors, and even bordered or embroidered in gold.<sup>784</sup> A particular type was known as *Kamcha campha*, *camucha*, *cancha*, *capha*, *chamcha*, *kanucha*, *postawecz*. Its exact nature is unclear, but the Turkish origin of the term certainly implies an Eastern origin.<sup>785</sup> It came in both plain and decorated with gold; and appears to have been sold in single set units; as lengths are never mentioned, unlike with other types of cloth. It was traded largely through the Armenian community in Lviv, but also by a few Italians directly.<sup>786</sup> In 1446, Cristoforo di S. Rolmulo sold to the Krakow merchant, Piotr Craczmar, a variety of different precious cloths, including green and gold ‘crossed velvet’, *Samakuky*, and silk, totaling the enormous sum of 1,264 fl. In return for these, Piotr supplied cloth from the Polish city of Görlitz.<sup>787</sup> A few years later, we find Cristoforo again purchasing silk; including some of the *Kamcha* variety from a fellow Italian, Barnabas di Nehrono, for 1,100 florins.<sup>788</sup> Polish merchants would occasionally be employed as middle men for such transactions. Nicolaus Parui Polanus was, for example, robbed of the load of silk he was transporting to Lviv on behalf of the Italian merchants, Domenico di Rippa, a resident of Pera.<sup>789</sup> Burgher of Pera. Dominico di Rippa had for many years worked sending goods from Suceava, the capital of Moldavia, to Lviv, and appealed to the Polish King for recompense for the goods lost within his territory. The trade in silk continued even after the fall of the Italian colonies on the Black Sea coast; with Armenian merchants finding other suppliers. Thus in 1481, it was still possible to find 110 ells of *Kitai*

<sup>783</sup> “*Consules tenentur Grehor Armeno, filio filie diuitis Ywanis IX sxg., currentis monetę pro duobus staminibus sericeis pro honoribus regalibus, solutas domini Iohanni Tholmacz.*” [PomnLw] III nr. 344 (1423)

<sup>784</sup> 1386 – Lviv: Lazar Armenus of Caffa, an Armenian from Caffa, selling five and a half stones of raw silk to a pair of shop keepers in Lviv. “*Eodem die constitutus honestus vir Lazar Armenus de Caffa coram dominis consulibus in assesso consilio providos viros Iwanis et filium Gregorii institoris et Amyr de obligacione videlicet quintidimidii lapidiscrudi serici, in quibus prefati Iwanis et Amyr sibi Lazaro dicto fuerunt obligati, eos liberos ac solutos de prescripta predictorum bonorum obligacione totaliter dimisit, eos nec liberos ipsorum peramplius nunquam velle arrestare.*” [PomnLw] I nr. 388.

<sup>785</sup> “Camcha” Elektroniczny Słownik Łaciny Średniowiecznej w Polsce (A-Q). Accessed July 7th, 2019. [http://scriptores.pl/lexicon/pl/lemma/camcha#sense\\_0](http://scriptores.pl/lexicon/pl/lemma/camcha#sense_0)

<sup>786</sup> [PomnLw] II nr. 25, 145, 153, 162, 163, 164, 165, 181—183, 304, 307, 308, 332, 337, 342 (1404-1414); [PomnLw] III nr. 39, 60, 142, 143, 146, 161, 165, 203, 234, 253, 267, 268, 297, 377, 409, 429, 434 (1414); Badecki “Zaginione księgi średniowiecznego, 559 (1439).

<sup>787</sup> [AGZ] 14 nr. 1583

<sup>788</sup> [AGZ] 14 nr. 3319 (1455).

<sup>789</sup> [SDIR] 3, 22-3.

(a fine silk fabric of Chinese origin), among other goods on the Lviv market in the hands of Armenian merchants which had arrived via Edirne (Adrianople).<sup>790</sup>

As the textile trade was arguably the most fundamental commodity trade in medieval Europe, it is unsurprising that Italians engaged in it in Poland. Indeed, cloth was the first thing known to have been bartered by Italians in Krakow, when they had first settled there at the start of the fourteenth century. Throughout the next two-hundred years, resident Italians of every origin engaged in the trade in textiles in Poland. While precious cloth from the Netherlands remained the most popular, textiles woven on the Italian Peninsula became increasingly commonly sold in Poland as well. Fancy brocades such as that brought by the di ser Matteo family to Poland, were sold at the royal court or to high church officials who had them made into luxurious liturgical garments, a few of which can be found in museums still today. Silk cloth on the other hand, while now being spun and woven in Italy itself, still came largely from the east. The traditional 'silk roads' fabric entered Poland through the hands of Genoese and Armenian merchants who plied the route between the increasing Ottoman Empire, the Italian ports of the Black Sea coast.

### 3.6 Alum



Figure 55 Alum Crystal

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<sup>790</sup> Krzysztof Stopka, *Milites et nobiles: Ormianie a stan szlachecki Królestwa Polskiego i Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego od XIV do XVI wieku* [Milites et nobiles: Armenians and the gentry status of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania from the 14th to the 16th Century], *Lehahayer* 5 (2018): 54 fn 204.

Alum – *Alumen*, was yet another product present in the Black Sea region that made its way to Poland in the hands of Italian traders. This chemical compound, composed of a double sulfate of Potassium and Aluminium,  $KAl(SO_4)_2$ , was employed as a mordant, used to fix dyes. The product was necessary for the textile industry and available only from an extremely limited number of places; making it a valuable commodity. One of the few places the substance could be found was in the Genoese colony of Foça and the Ottoman controlled Sebinkarahisar and Kütahya in Asia minor.<sup>791</sup> Prior to the discovery of alum deposits at Tolfa within the Papal States in 1461, these were the only reliable sources known. Hundreds of tons of the white stone were annually exported from Foça and Sebinkarahisar, much of it headed towards Caffa. From Caffa, it was reshipped to Western ports, Genoa primarily, but also France, England, and above all to Flanders with its booming textile industry.<sup>792</sup> Some of the substance, however, made its way from Caffa to the port that served the *Via Walachiensis* and from thence overland to Poland. In 1448, for example, Conradus di Porthu was brought to trial by Cristoforo di San. Romulo for not delivering a large batch of alum which Cristoforo had already paid him for.<sup>793</sup> A more successful transfer was carried out in 1470, when the Krakow merchant Paweł Alganowski with his wife purchased 180 fl. worth of alum from the Armenian brothers, Kalinik and Andrzej, citizens of Lviv.<sup>794</sup> A few years later, an agreement between Katarzyna, wife of Łysa Grzegorz, citizen of Lviv, saw her buying from Zeyfryda Betinan, 2 1/2 bales of cloth for 223 1/2 fl.; which it was agreed could be paid for in coin, wax, pepper or *alum*.<sup>795</sup>

As a product with a very limited supply base, alum was a rare and precious commodity. While Poland's textile industry was during the era, nothing compared to that of Italy or Flanders, cloth was certainly produced in the kingdom and alum required to ensure that dyes retained their brilliance. Given that one of the few sources for alum was controlled directly by the Genoese

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<sup>791</sup> Foça (Phocaea) had been in Genoese possession since 1275 but was taken by the Ottomans in 1455. Çiğdem Özkan Aygün, "The flesh eating stone: alum mining and trade in asia minor 1A pietra che divora la carne: estrazione e commercio di allume in Asia Minore," *I paesaggi dell'allume. Archeologia della produzione ed economia di rete/Alum landscapes. Archaeology of production and network economy* 29 (2020): 180-1; Rafał Hryszko, "Genoese colonies in the Black Sea Area. Their role in the transfer of regional products in the late middle ages." In *Bibliotheca vita antiqua ten centuries of Byzantine trade (the 5th-15th centuries) collection of scientific papers* (Kiev: Vita Antiqua, 2012), 182.

<sup>792</sup> Hryszko, "Genoese colonies in the Black Sea Area, 182.

<sup>793</sup> [AGZ] 14 nr 1340, 2127 (1448/10/02)

<sup>794</sup> Kutrzeba, *Handel Polski ze Wschodem*, 45.

<sup>795</sup> Kutrzeba, *Handel Polski ze Wschodem*, 46.

and that the port of Caffa, which had significant traffic with Lviv, was a primary entrepôt for the mineral, it goes to form that Italians would have a hand in the trade.

### 3.7 Polish Cochineal (Porphyrophora Polonica)



Figure 56 Depiction of the Lifecycle of the *Coccus Polonicus* (1731)

Source: Johann P. Breyn, Hans Sloane, Peter Böse, Johann P. Breyn, and Cornelis. Beughem. Joannis Philippi Breynii, eds. *Academ. Imperial. Nat. Curios. Et Societ. Reg. Lond. Sodalit. Historia Naturalis Cocci Radicum Tinctorii, Quod Polonicum Vulgo Audit: Præmissis Qvibusdam Coccum in Genere Et in Specie Coccum Ex Illice, Qvod Grana Kermes Et Alterum Americanum, Qvod Cochinilla Hispanis Dicitur Spectantibus. Cum Figuris Coloribus Nativis Pictis*. Gdańsk: Sumtibus auctoris, prostant apud Cornelium a Beughem, 1731. Wikimedia [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polish\\_cochineal#/media/File:Polish\\_cochineal.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polish_cochineal#/media/File:Polish_cochineal.jpg) Accessed December 15<sup>th</sup> 2020

Cochineal dye - *Cremexi, cremesi, czierwicz*, was one of the few luxury items which Poland produced during the Middle Ages and was traded regularly by Italian merchants. Cochineal represented yet again, a high value, low weight, shelf stable, item that was furthermore highly prized by dyers in Northern Italy which housed one of the preeminent textile manufacturing centers of the period. The Italian interest in the product is therefore to be expected. The dye was harvested from a small parasitic scale insect that survives by munching on the roots and leaves of various herbaceous plants, growing in sandy arid soils, its favorite hosts being the Perennial Knawel, Mouse-ear-hawkweed, Grey-hair grass, and Creeping Thyme, all common

herbs in Eastern Poland. This (*Porphyrophora polonica*) or Polish Cochineal is but one of a variety of insects belonging to the superfamily Coccoidea which include, kermes, lac, and the cochineal. Branches of this insect family are native to the Americas, Europe, Africa, and Asia, and in each case, pre-industrial humans found a way to grow and harvest them for dye. Yet, while evidence from fabrics discovered encased in ice near Pazyryk in southern Siberia, reveal that already in the fourth century BC, the Polish Cochineal was being used to make dye, unfortunately the insect is today endangered in much of the land where it once thrived.

The lifecycle of the *Porphyrophora polonica*, determined much about its cultivation and later trade. In mid-July the mother cochineal burrows into the ground near a promising plant and lays a clutch of 400-600 eggs protected by a thick white waxy outer coating.<sup>796</sup> (Figure 56) The eggs then hatch, and between March and April, depending on weather conditions, the little larvae climb up to crunch away on the low-lying leaves of their chosen victim. After a few weeks of this, they return back underground to feed on the plant's roots and then in order to transform to the next stage of their development, they create a protective layer around themselves that appears as a small red cyst attached to the plant's roots. Emerging then as adults in late June the females climb once more up to the top of the plant where they wait for a now winged male to begin again the cycle of life. The cochineal's habit of reappearing in large numbers around June 24<sup>th</sup>, the Feast of St. John, garnered them the colloquial names St. John's Blood in English or *Czerwiec* – June, in Polish during the Middle Ages.<sup>797</sup> It was the small cysts of the as yet immature insects which were harvested and dried to be later used for dye-making. The work was labor intensive and as the insects were small, the amount of dye that could be gathered was proportionally limited, increasing the exclusivity and subsequently the price of the product. The insect's life-cycle also meant that cochineal was available on the market only seasonally, a fact which caused Italian merchants in Ragusa where Polish cochineal was regularly sold to complain that, "*di charmuxi non z'è nulla e non n'è per eserire*" – of cochineal, there is none now, and there won't be any".<sup>798</sup> By the beginning of the sixteenth century, cochineal would be one of the key exports of the Polish kingdom earning it a special

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<sup>796</sup> The insect was reclassified under the Linnaean system from *Coccus Polonicus* to *Porphyrophora Polonica*, in 1758.

<sup>797</sup> Elena Phipps, "*Cochineal red: the art history of a color*". *Metropolitan Museum of Art Vol 67 nr. 3* (2010):4-48.

<sup>798</sup> Paola Pinelli, "The Florentine Company of Francesco Neroni and Trade with Dubrovnik (Ragusa) in the First Half of the 15th Century," *Spomenica Akademika Sime Ćirković/Homage to Akademician Sima Ćirković*, (2011): ed. S. Rudić (Belgrade;o Istorijki Institut, (2011): 172-4.

place within the customs list and comment by Paulus Aemilius Giovanini, an Italian who in 1565 published a short commentary - *Relazione di Polonia*.<sup>799</sup>

During the fifteenth century, Polish cochineal was sold in large amounts in the markets of Ragusa, Venice and Constantinople.<sup>800</sup> Ragusan merchants likely received their supply from Polish merchants trading along the trade route which ran from Krakow, over the Carpathian mountains and through the Kingdom of Poland to the Dalmatian coast. From there, merchants like Francesco Neroni, whose account books have been studied in detail by Paola Pinelli, purchased the dye whenever it became available on the market, shipping it to Florence via Ancona or Rimini.<sup>801</sup> Already from 1402, the customs rolls in Florence included a provision for Polish cochineal demonstrating that the dye was making it to Italy from at least that date. The brilliant red color the Polish species of cochineal insect produced, soon became widely sought after. The dye was considered, “*lesta*” by Ragusan merchants who traded in Italy as it was always easy to sell like silver, copper, wax, and gold.<sup>802</sup> This was so much the case that in 1449, a Ragusan merchant was able to sell 1000 florins worth of cochineal on the Florentine market without any difficulty, despite the fact that Polish cochineal was taxed at a rate of 5 florins for every 80 pounds imported, an exorbitant amount.<sup>803</sup> Polish cochineal reached Venice meanwhile, through similar route or was traded overland via Wrocław. In Venice, cochineal was used almost exclusively for the dyeing of silk. The resulting scarlet fabric was incredibly expensive, unsurprising considering it took 6 to 9 pounds of Polish cochineal were needed to dye a single pound of silk. Still, the Venetians cut no corners with their products and a statute was issued in 1454, requiring that all the craftsmen of the *Arte della Seta* were forbidden from adulterating their cochineal dye with any other substance, so as not to adulterate the color.<sup>804</sup> The prohibition was only lifted in 1636, when the Venetian silk industry had fallen on hard times and could no longer keep to the standards of old.<sup>805</sup> The dye was also popular in

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<sup>799</sup> In 1509, Polish cochineal was taxed at a rate of 15 gros per stone. *Księgi Prawa Polskiego, dział pierwszy: przywileje, statuty, konstytucje, edykty, dekryty, mandaty koronne (Corpus Iuris Polonici, sectionis priusae privilegia, statuta, constitutiones, edicta, decreta, mandata Regnum Poloniae spectantia comprehendentis) II*, pg. 90 nr. 41; Paulus Aemilius Giovanini wrote in 1565 that, “haec uarrat nobis de tinctura ex Potonia proveniente, cremesi dicta : Ho inteso ricordare ciermez, herba ch' ha nella radice alcune granella attaccate, da le qua|i macerate nel Paceto si cavava liquor 6 tentura di purpura ma hoggi di c tralasciata *Scriptores Rerum Polonicarum vol 15 ed.* Joseph Conrad (Krakow: Nakładem Akademii Umiej. w księgarni Spółki Wydawniczej, 1894), 196.

<sup>800</sup> Pinelli, “The Florentine Company,” 172-4.

<sup>801</sup> Ibid.

<sup>802</sup> So, wrote Benedetto Cotrugli, in his *Practica di Mercatura* book, recorded in Ragusa in the mid fifteenth century. Pinelli, “The Florentine Company,” 172-4.

<sup>803</sup> The tax rate was that recorded in Florence in 1402 and Pisa in 1409. Ibid.

<sup>804</sup> Ibid.

<sup>805</sup> Ibid.

Constantinople, both before and after its fall to the Ottomans and Lviv served as a major hub for trade in the dye, which was there dominated by Armenian and Jewish merchants as numerous records demonstrate.<sup>806</sup>

Given cochineal's low weight to value exchange, shelf stability, and popularity within Italian markets, it was a perfect product for long-distance trade and it is therefore unsurprising that a number of Italians active in Poland traded in it. While Polish cochineal had reached Italian markets at least a decade earlier, the first record of Italians in Poland trading in the dye comes from 1412. In that year, Pietro Bicherano of Venice, who was by then Zupparius of Krakow, gave twenty-five florin worth of the dye to Jorge Hutter for him to take to Italy to sell in either Florence or Venice where Pietro had contacts. For his efforts, Hutter was to be permitted to keep one third of the profits while the rest would be given to Pietro upon Hutter's return to Krakow.<sup>807</sup> At that time the dye was worth at least a florin and a half per pound, so Hutter was carrying at least 12 pounds.<sup>808</sup> This interaction is interesting as it shows how an Italian merchant was willing to make use of local non-Italian factors to work for him, even so far as to send them abroad back to Italy, rather than going themselves or seeking another Italian to do the job. It speaks to far more intimate and intense levels of connection between the Germanic lands and the peninsula than is generally thought.

The second Italian to show an interest in the cochineal trade was Antonio di ser Matteo, a Florentine merchant who at the time had taken over the post of Zupparius in Krakow. Antonio, similarly to Pietro Bicherano, had connections in Venice and entered the business with a local merchant – Johannes Bank of Wrocław, one of the premier long-distance wholesalers of that city - but unfortunately for all concerned, the deal quickly went south. In 1428, together with his young *familiaris* Rinaldo di Sandro Altoviti, Antonio di ser Matteo had arranged for a shipment of over 22 stones worth of cochineal, approximately 264 kilograms, together with 6,500 highly prized grey squirrel pelts to Venice in the hands of an agent, Hanselinus de Larosa

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<sup>806</sup> In 1453, two Armenian brothers Marcin and Jakób Zamorak inherited 2 3/4 stones worth of *Cremesi* – cochineal together with, 15 pieces of canvas and 110 beaver fur from their mother. In 1461, the Armenian merchant Wartik, sold a considerable number of *cremesi* and pepper to a variety of individuals in Lviv. In, 1480 an Armenian named Luke paid customs duties in Lviv on 10 "litri" of *Cremesi*, together with 8 stones of pepper, 6 stones of sugar and 2 rugs. In 1485, a number of Jews in Poznań but coming from Ruthenia made a deal with Caspar Heida, city council member of Poznań to trade 302 stones of red wax from either Lviv or another town by the feast of St. Bartholomeo, and in exchange the Jews would provide seven containers of Kermes to be used for painting "pro pignore septem vasa cum "*kremesino sepefato*" - cochineal and the Jews promise that the cochineal would be of good quality. Stanisław Kutrzeba, *Handel Polski ze Wschodem w wiekach średnich* [Polish trade with the East during the middle ages] (Krakow: Druk "Czasu", 1903), 91, 93.; [ActaPoz II] nr 1428.

<sup>807</sup> (1412/03/12) [Ital.] nr 22

<sup>808</sup> Pinelli, "The Florentine Company," 172-4.

[de Rosa].<sup>809</sup> The entire load was to be given into the keeping of Antonio's brother Michele di ser Matteo to be exchanged for brocades and silk which would be brought back to Poland to be sold at the court in Krakow. Johannes Bank was co-financer of the deal, but in the ensuing transfer, was dissatisfied with the way the exchange and finances were handled. Bank took Antonio and later Michele to court, first before a tribunal in Krakow and after arbitration failed there, to Venice. The proceedings were long and arduous, including three trials over four years with the eventual outcome that the di ser Matteo brothers were found to have been in the wrong, and required to pay considerable damages and court fees to Johannes Bank.<sup>810</sup>

This incident, like the last, reveals a number of interesting details about how the cochineal trade, and Italian trade from Poland in general, was managed. First, it was apparently common for Italian merchants in Poland to work with local traders in perusing their ends. Italians might anchor both ends of the transaction, but it was perfectly acceptable to send a local factor to arrange things in the middle. Antonio at least, also does not appear to have had any initial qualms about engaging in a direct financial partnership with a merchant such as Johannes Bank. Recalling that Pietro Bicherano was close with Klaus Kezinger, Konrad Seiler and a number of other Nuremberg merchants, this too appears to have been a relatively common occurrence. In the particular case of Antonio, the partnership did not end well, but if the Venetian courts are to be believed, the fault was on his side, and not the local partners. It is also of interest that the dispute was arbitrated in not one, but two courts, first in Poland where apparently satisfaction could not be obtained, later in Venice at the bequest of both parties. Further analysis will be made of this interaction in Chapter 5, but the most striking point, the fact that Johannes Bank, a foreigner, was determined to have been the wronged party, speaks volumes as to the impartiality of Italian, or at least, Venetian mercantile justice. As to the load of cochineal, it at least, did make its way successfully to Venice where it was sold, and while the profits made for the dye were widely and lengthily disputed, the red substance itself went into the Venetian marketplace to render fine cloth boldly colored.

The third recorded example of Italian merchants in Poland trading in cochineal comes from the second half of the fifteenth century, demonstrating the ongoing appeal of the dye, it was however, an unsuccessful venture. In 1483, the Genoese merchant Paolo di Promontorio, who was part of a small family firm who had taken up residence in Poznań, sought to send a load

<sup>809</sup> One stone = 12 Kilograms, this weight estimation is taken from Myśliwski, "Venice and Wrocław," 109 fn 104.

<sup>810</sup> (1428/06/19 – 1432/02/13) [Itali] nr 50, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68.



of cochineal to Italy, but in the end was forced to back out of the deal.<sup>811</sup> Paolo's reasons for canceling his plans to trade in the red dye had to do with his complicated relationship with a certain Andreas, the *tentuarius* – customs toll official of Gniezno. Paolo had engaged Andrea previously, to deliver a large amount of cloth from Genoa to Poland. Due to the source failing to record Andrea's cognomen it is impossible to say whether he was a local or an Italian, but as the position of customs keeper was a popular one with Italian immigrants and the name Andrea, not a particularly Polish or Germanic praenomen, it is highly possible he was also of Italian extraction. Then again, as the previous two examples have shown, it was common practice for Italian merchants stationed in Poland to enlist locals to act as their factors, even on such long-distance missions as to visit Paolo's family in Liguria. Whatever his background, Andrea had been engaged by Paolo to deliver over 400 Hungarian florins worth of luxury cloth from Genoa to Poznań. There was then to be a second transaction involving the sale of cochineal, presumably for Andrea to take with him on his mission to Genoa, but Paolo had backed out at the last minute, seemingly because he was cash strapped at the time and could not come up with the capital to purchase the cochineal desired. A distinct lack of liquidity was a common problem for Paolo, as the records demonstrate, so this is not an unsurprising outcome. Thus, while the dye would no doubt have fetched an excellent price on the Italian market, it never left Poland as an initial capital investment was lacking. The issue of capitalization was a common one for all medieval traders, but long-distance merchants in particular, as to make a profit they needed to invest large initial amounts which were often hard to come by. Paolo had already extended himself for the purchase of textiles and was thus unable to also fund a supply of cochineal.

Cochineal dye was one of the few goods native to Poland which was difficult for Italians to procure closer to home. As always, the dye's status as a light weight, highly precious item made it convenient and enticing for Italian merchants to trade in. Given that market demand outstripped the dye's seasonal supply, traders who could get the dye to Italian port were all but guaranteed a quick sale. Venice, in particular, at this point due to the growth of its nascent silk industry, prized the dye. It is simple to understand then both Pietro Bicherano and Antonio di ser Matteo's moves to partner with local Polish merchants to ensure the cochineal reached the Lagoon City where heavy profits could be had. Paolo di Promontorio's later efforts to move the dye, would also likely have rendered him significant profits had he been able to supply the necessary capital from the outset. Polish cochineal would continue to be a highly prized red

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<sup>811</sup> [AKapSąd II] nr. 1441

dye until the discovery of the sixteenth century when discoveries in the new world revealed a new species of cochineal in Mexico which produced a superior product. After this, the Polish trade in the dye trailed off until the insect and its secrets was all but forgotten.

### 3.8 Fur

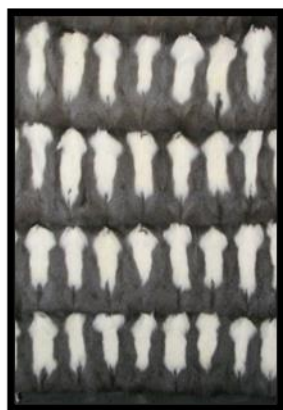


Figure 57 Russian Grey-Squirrel Skins - Vair Fur and Heraldic Vair

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vair#/media/File:Blason\\_de\\_la\\_ville\\_de\\_Hellemmes\\_\(59\)\\_Nord-France.svg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vair#/media/File:Blason_de_la_ville_de_Hellemmes_(59)_Nord-France.svg), Accessed December 20<sup>th</sup> 2020

Furs were an important export for the Polish kingdom, particularly after the union with Lithuania in the late fourteenth century.<sup>812</sup> Furs came in large numbers from the forested regions of Eastern Poland, Lithuania, and beyond from Russia and the Tartar lands. Furs that came from beyond Poland's borders were involved in the transit trade. Indeed, Novgorod was a particularly popular site for the international fur trade, so much so that the Venetian Ambassador Ambrogio Contarini (b.1429 – 1499) made special mention of the fact that large numbers of German and Polish merchants arrived in the city each year to trade for pelts.<sup>813</sup> These animal skins, once acquired, were loaded and shipped to Poland where many were sold on the internal market, while others were exported further west via Bruges or through Wrocław to Venice. There was also a transit trade in furs of animals trapped in the Carpathian mountains, which ran from Hungary through Poland to the west.

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<sup>812</sup> Carter, *Trade*, 126-9.

<sup>813</sup> Janet Martin, *Treasure of the Land of Darkness: the fur trade and its significance for medieval Russia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 104.

Furs were one of the few goods which Poland produced which were desirable and rare in Italy, making them a product worth the expense of travel to sell over long distances. Krakow, Wrocław, and Poznań were all major centers of the fur trade, and perhaps not incidentally, also points of interest for Italian traders throughout the fifteenth century. The importance of Wrocław as a fur trading center is obvious from the extremely large base unit of measurement – 1,000 furs.<sup>814</sup> Given this fact, it is not surprising then that the first indication of Italians exporting furs from Poland was a large load sent from Krakow to Wrocław to Venice.<sup>815</sup>

The shipment in question, was the same one organized by Antonio di ser Matteo and Johannes Bank, that saw 6,500 grey squirrel skins together with over two-hundred kilograms of red cochineal dye sent to Venice.<sup>816</sup> Northern grey squirrel pelts, whose coloring was a blend of white and grey, were known as *vair* or *minivair* in western Europe due to the fact that the small pelts were frequently cut and stitched together in complex patterns that gained them the unique heraldic title. These pelts were highly prized, reaching their peak in popularity at the turn of the fifteenth century when *cioppe* – loose over-gowns lined in fur, became the height of fashion.<sup>817</sup> They were also commonly used for mantels and the linings of luxury garments.<sup>818</sup> While rabbit, or other more easily domesticated animal pelts were available locally, imported furs gave the added luster of wealth and beauty, proclaiming their owner's status in a consummate act of conspicuous consumption.

The large packet of furs sent by Antonio di ser Matteo and Johannes Bank were taken to the “*domo Teutonicorum Venetiis*” – the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, where they were handed over to Antonio's brother Michele di ser Matteo who was to use them to barter for brocades and other precious cloth to be taken back to Poland to be sold.<sup>819</sup> The business deal did not go as planned and Antonio, Michele, and Johannes Bank entered a long series of litigation, but the furs, having safely arrived in Venice were eventually sold at a profit. Many other such runs were made by Polish merchants over the years, but this is the only evidence of an Italian trader using this particular route.

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<sup>814</sup> In 1403, Ywan de Novgorod sold 10,000 pelts of “*schonewerk*” the German word used for vair, to Peter Dormdorff in Wrocław.[Stobbe] 6, nr 25; Myśliwski, “Venice and Wrocław,” 109.

<sup>815</sup> (1428/06/19) [Itali] nr 50

<sup>816</sup> (1428/06/19 – 1432/02/13) [Itali] nr 50, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68.

<sup>817</sup> Patricia Lurati, “‘To dust the pelisse’: the erotic side of fur in Italian Renaissance art,” *Renaissance Studies* 31.2 (2017): 240.

<sup>818</sup> The documents record the pelts as – *vario* alias *shornweg* [Itali] nr 53; Martin, *Treasure of the Land of Darkness*, 64. One stone = 12 kilograms, this weight estimation is taken from Myśliwski, “Venice and Wrocław,” 109 fn 104.

<sup>819</sup> [Itali] nr 53

There is also evidence for Italians trading in furs from Lviv. While not as great a site for the fur trade as Wrocław, the basic unit for furs being only 40 pelts, Lviv none the less acted as a transit node for skins coming from Smolensk.<sup>820</sup> In 1464, Cristoforo di San. Romulo, who was an active merchant and Zupparius of the salt mines near Lviv, sent 295 sable pelts into the hands of his factor, Accursio di Calignano to be taken to his father in Genoa.<sup>821</sup> The transaction was recorded in the Lviv notarial register and witness by two other Italians, a not uncommon occurrence in the city where many Genoese gathered. Sable was one of the most common pelts to be traded through Lviv, whose supplies came from the Tartar controlled lands to the north-east and further away from Russia. Cristoforo's factor Arcussio, likely took the water route rather than the overland one, going by ship from Moncastro, perhaps making a stop in Caffa or Constantinople before continuing on to Genoa as at this date, the route was still the faster and easier option, despite the mounting pressure exerted by the Ottomans.

The only other records showing Italians moving furs are not strictly speaking trade voyages but were instead part of payments/gifts which were sent to the papal court by collectors in Poland. The payment of goods in kind, rather than in cash, was an extremely common phenomenon in medieval Europe, and while the pope may be counted as a general exception as Peter's Pence was to be paid in coin, on a number of occasions it was deemed more prudent to send goods instead. The first case of this happening in Poland can be traced to 1263, when the Papal Collector Petrus di Pontecurvo organized a shipment of money together with a large number of furs to Pope Urban IV.<sup>822</sup> The money and precious pelts were to be given into the hands of the Teutonic Knights and the Hospitallers in Vienna, but along the way they were lost in transit, much to the collector's dismay. A somewhat similar story occurred some 150 years later when in 1430, Giovanni Rossi, acting collector in Poland, sought to improve the travel times for shipping Peter's Pence from his many staging grounds in Krakow to Rome. He was distressed, that none of the local merchants would sell him a *lettera di cambio* – a letter of exchange, so he was forced to send the money in cash. Previously, he had been able to convince Albizzo di Medici to assist him in transferring the money via *lettere*, but on this occasion his pleading was to no avail. His solution then, was to purchase a large amount of gold - the equivalent of around 360 florins and send it overland to Venice. Nicolaus Long, a

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<sup>820</sup> This was at least the case in the sixteenth century when, sable furs were sold in the city by the *sorok* – a 40 skin unit. Nadel-Golobič, "Armenians and Jews in Medieval Lvov," 356.

<sup>821</sup> (1464/04/14- 1464/08/11) [SDIR] nr 12

<sup>822</sup> (1263/08/21) [APV] nr 14

merchant of Nuremberg, who was active in the Krakow/Wrocław trade, agreed to take on the mission of carting the gold, plus 100 ermine and 60 wolf pelts, which in and of themselves were worth a large sum, to Venice, to be given the Pope as a gift. Upon arrival, Nicholas was to hand the load over to the branch of the Medici bank active in the city. Unfortunately however, along the way Nicholas was jumped by brigands and relieved of his load along with his horse, and his own payment of 20 florins. The money was lost for good, together with the furs and the papal collector could do nothing but declare the loss to the Camera and pay the difference out of his own earnings. Given that Rossi's annual salary amounted to 365 florins, this was a heavy price to pay.<sup>823</sup> Considering that on the only two recorded occasions when furs were sent as part of the money gathered by papal collectors in Poland, the loads were lost, however good the intentions of the collectors were, seeking to mitigate accident, sending a bulky load of pelts was not the best choice.

While furs were an important export item for Poland, Italians were only marginally involved in this trade. Likely, this lack was due to the fact that while precious, furs were a relatively bulky and somewhat fragile commodity that was somewhat complicated to transport over long distances. Rock salt and ore could be shipped in blocks or jampacked into barrels for transport, furs on the other hand, as organic items needed to be treated with more care. Interestingly, all the sources which do reference Italians shipping furs involve their transport directly from Poland to Italy itself with no attempts to off load the goods in an intermediary market. This tendency is likely due to the fact that Italy was one of the primary consumers of furs, having a limited local supply of their own, and an increasing tendency towards conspicuous consumption from the fourteenth century.<sup>824</sup> To have foreign furs lining ones *cioppe*, became a mark of status. On a few recorded occasions therefore, Italian merchants in Poland chose to tap into this demand and sell pelts in their home markets. The lost cargoes of the two papal collectors on the other hand, demonstrate the possible dangers of sending such loads overland and may explain why the direct Italian trade in fur was not more common.

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<sup>823</sup> The collector's salary was normally calculated at 1 florin a day. 365 florins, but was only fully tailed and squared after eight years. Marek Daniel Kowalski, "Rationes Iacobini de Rubeis, collectoris in Regno Poloniae (1426–1434). Rachunki Giacomina Rossiego, papieskiego kolektora generalnego w Polsce, z lat 1426–1434," *Studia Zródłoznawcze* 49 (2011) :68.

<sup>824</sup> Susan Mosher Stuard, *Guilding the Market: Luxury and Fashion in Fourteenth-Century Italy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).

### 3.9 Spices

Spices from the far east were amongst the most prized products carried by Italians into the Polish market. Nutmeg, saffron, ginger, cinnamon, caraway seeds, and above all, pepper, were all in high demand. A document from 1432, laid out very clearly the minimum measures of any products that were permitted to be sold on the Krakow market that would have arrived there from Lviv. Saffron was not be sold in amounts, “*under eine phunde*” – less than 1 funt (0.405 kg) while ginger, cloves, nutmeg, caraway seeds, and cinnamon were not to be sold “*under einer margkt*” – less than 1 mark.<sup>825</sup> Such limitations were commonly employed by cities as a way to protect local retail traders who were granted permission to deal in smaller amounts. Long distance wholesale merchants such as the Italians who involved themselves in this trade on the other hand, were forced to purchase in bulk and considering the cost of these items, which could be worth their weight in gold, these are surprisingly large amounts and speak to a robust level of trade.

Due to their precious nature and high value, spices were extremely sensitive to market forces. Their price fluctuations thus act as an excellent barometer of market stability. Further, as they had precise origins and could not be easily substituted, such price indicators give a clear picture of available supply. The price data captured for Krakow in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century by Jerzy Pelc and reproduced by Francis Carter, show clearly the burgeoning importance of the *Via Walachiensis* starting in 1407; and the relative stability of that route until the 1460s. (Figure 58) Saffron, which was above all the most sensitive of spices due to its weight and prominence in Ottoman lands, is the poster child for this trend. The price graph points to rising prices from the mid-1390s which reflected instability along the *Via Tartarica*; peaking around the year 1400, and then decreasing rapidly until settling around 1408 to a stable level that lasted until the mid-1460s. (Figure 59) Increasing Ottoman pressure in the Black Sea region led to instability and a general rise in the price of spices on the Polish market in the final quarter of the fifteenth century as traditional trade routes and relationships were disrupted. From this period, fewer Italians appear in the sources dealing in these precious commodities on the *Via Walachiensis* as Armenian and Jewish merchants who were more welcome within the Empire’s expanding fold seem to have taken over much of their sale.

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<sup>825</sup> [KDMK] II, nr. 310 see also Carter, *Trade*, 122.

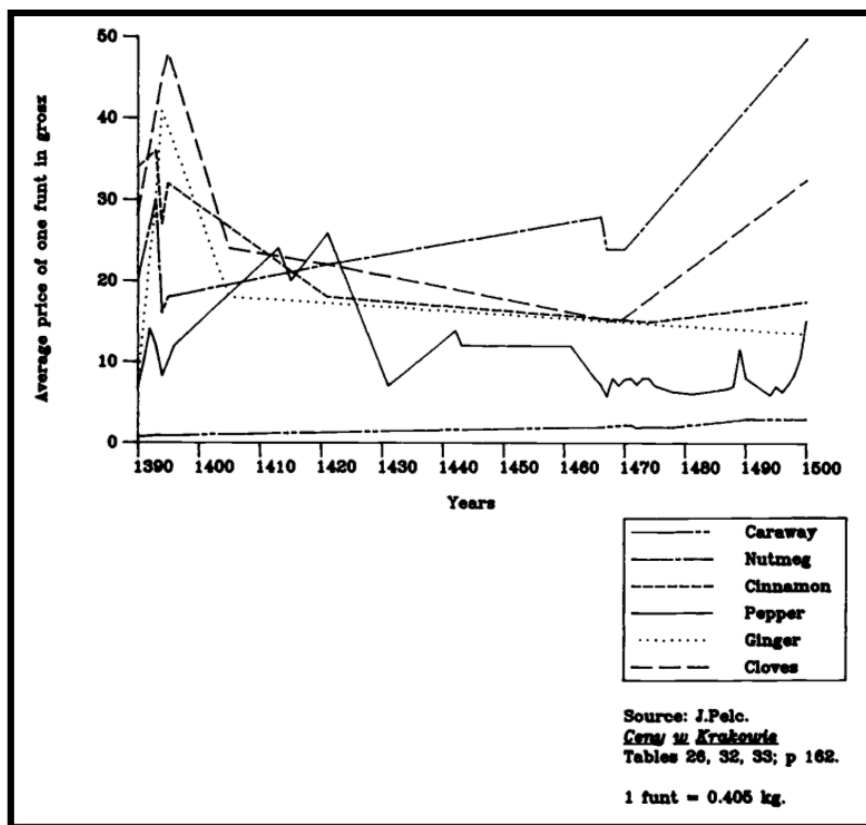


Figure 58 The Price of Particular Spices in Krakow, 1390-1500

Source: Carter, *Trade*, 121.

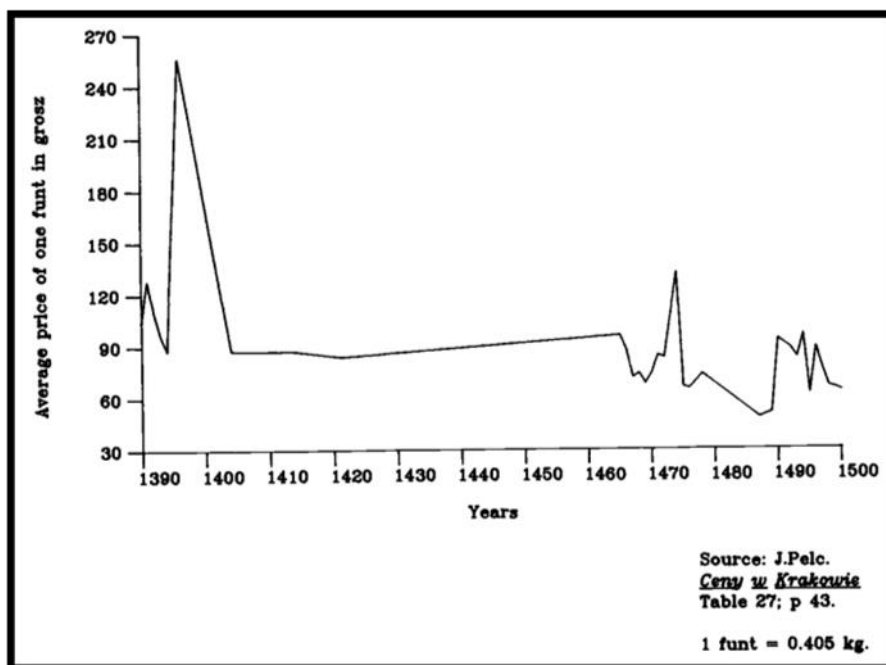


Figure 59 The Price of Saffron in Krakow, 1390-1500

Source: Carter, *Trade*, 122.

### 3.9.1 Nutmeg



Figure 60 Nutmeg

Source: Wikimedia [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Myristica\\_fragrans#/media/File:Muskatnuss.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Myristica_fragrans#/media/File:Muskatnuss.jpg)  
Accessed December 15<sup>th</sup> 2020

Nutmeg - *nux muscatus*, was an uncommon spice during the period, used predominantly in medicinal jellies.<sup>826</sup> It was taken from Lviv to Toruń by Armenian merchants with strong ties to Genoese Caffa in the late 1380s but largely disappears from later sources in Lviv.<sup>827</sup> It is likely however, that this is simply a reflection of an incomplete source base; as the spice continued to be sold on the Krakow market and at a stable price throughout the fifteenth century until the disruptions along the *Via Walachiensis*, caused by the Ottoman advance in the 1470s. This indicates that the spice was sourced from Lviv, a fact which the 1472 Lviv fair privilege confirms. This is the same case for cinnamon, caraway, and cloves; which appear infrequently in surviving Lviv sources. Given the sudden price fluctuations coinciding with the Ottoman advance, these spices were obviously arriving from the East to the Krakow market.<sup>828</sup> That said, apart from the mentions of Armenian merchants with ties to Genoese Black Sea ports, no

<sup>826</sup> Dembinska, *Food and Drink*, 74.

<sup>827</sup> Nutmeg was traded by in Lviv 1376 by the Armenian Sirkis family and from Lviv to Toruń in 1389 by Johannes Trewczen to Johannes Czeppner and Ysenhutel. “*Eodem die et iudicio Iohannes Trewczen ad repetendum omnia sua et singula debita prouidum et honestum virum Ysenhutel suum verum et legitimum procuratorem constituit, tamquam premissus personaliter interesset. Et insuper inclusit predictus Trewcze, quod Iohannes Czeppener sibi tenetur XII marcas grossorum, et easdem pecunias interdixit super muscatus, qui ducti sunt versus Thorun, et est primus.*” [PomnLw] I nr 571, 707.

<sup>828</sup> Carter, *Trade*, 121-2.



direct evidence of Italians trading in this spice remains, although it is likely that they did so given the other spices they traded in.

### 3.9.2 Ginger



Figure 60 Ginger Root

Source: Wikimedia

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Zingiber\\_officinale#/media/File:DCP\\_0786a.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Zingiber_officinale#/media/File:DCP_0786a.jpg) Accessed December 13<sup>th</sup> 2020

Ginger - *zinzibar*, *czinziber*, *sinaber*, *sinsiber*, and *symciber*, was another popular item, used in both food and medicinal remedies.<sup>829</sup> It was already being sold from Lviv for transfer to Toruń from the 1380s. Presumably much of this ginger would then be taken onwards by ship to Flanders.<sup>830</sup> Initially, much of this trade was in the hands of two Italian brothers – Antonio and Giovanni.<sup>831</sup> Antonio had come to Lviv a few years earlier, bartering wool, but the brothers appear to have hit it big by moving into ginger.<sup>832</sup> So brisk was the business, that merchants stacked up to purchase various sized orders in a way that was so contentious that the order of to whom the goods were to be delivered had to be recorded in the City Council books multiple times. Together with the two Italians, Poles, Armenians, and Jews, all appear involved in these

<sup>829</sup> [PomnLw] II nr. 21, 25, 74, 197, 236, 304, 307. (1404-13); [PomnLw] III nr. 256, 337, 345 (1419-1423).

<sup>830</sup> “*Eodem die et iudicio Margaretha relicta Friczkonis de Smotricz palam recognouit, se prouido viro Iohanni Bobiraw concui in Thoron in centum quinquaginta quinque marcis pruthenicalis numeri stare debitorie obligatam. Pro quibus quidem pecuniis prefata domina Margaretha cum omnibus suis bonis, hereditatibus mobilibus et immo- bilibus pretacto Iohanni Bobiraw necnon Iohanni Parys nomine ipsius ac procuratori eius abs omni fraude et dolo honorifice soluere promisit. De eisdem in presencia dominorum ipsa XLVIII sexagenas persoluit, residuas vero L sexagenas Hendzil Gosil cum ducentis coreis minus VI coreis et XL lapides zinziberis soluere et pagare tenetur, quae bona Friczko apud eum reliquerat.*” [PomnLw] I nr.479. (1387)

<sup>831</sup> The brother’s Italian origins are known only by their attached cognomen *Gallicus*.

<sup>832</sup> “*Anthוניus Gallicus - Hummel Eodem die et iudicio Anthוניus Gallicus 1/2 laneum Niczkoni Hummel sutori iuste ven dicionis titulo liberę resignauit.*” (1384) PomnLw I nr. 153.

transactions.<sup>833</sup> Throughout the early fifteenth century, ginger was one of the items regularly sent by the Lviv City Council as gifts to high ranking members of the nobility and the royal court.<sup>834</sup> At this point much of the spice was purchased from Armenian traders with links to Caffa; amongst them Hanuschko Sirkis.<sup>835</sup> Ginger continued to be a highly sought after spice, important enough to be added in 1456 to the list of products which received a special tax by the Moldavian authorities when moved by Lviv merchants along the *Via Walachiensis*. Ginger is also listed in the 1472 Lviv market privilege.<sup>836</sup>

### 3.9.3 Saffron



Figure 61 Saffron Crocus (*Crocus Sativus*)

Source: Wikimedia <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saffron#/media/File:Saffron8.jpg> Accessed December 20<sup>th</sup> 2020

<sup>833</sup> “*Iudicium fuit bannitum. Et coram eodem iudicio Michael dictus Nouoserth super zinziber Anthonii et Iohannis Gallicorum X marcas grossorum cum L grossis interdixit et est tercius, sed Kruk ex parte Hendzlyni Schaffer cum XV marcis grossorum est primus, et Hermanus Loyman cum II marcis est (secundus.*” 679, repeats the same note as 603, followed by and adendem in 680 “80. Eodem die Iwanis frater Morat super prefata bona Anthonii et Iohannis Gallicorum videlicet zinziber XXXIX marcas grossorum vsualium interdixit et est quartus.” [PomnLw] Inr. 608, 679, 680, 709. (1388)

<sup>834</sup> [PomnLw] II nr. 21, 25, 74, 197, 236, 304, 307. (1404-13)

<sup>835</sup> [PomnLw] II nr. 21.

<sup>836</sup> [AGZ] 7, 232 (1456), nr. 105 (1472).

Saffron - *zaffran*, *zaffris*, but predominantly as *crocus*, was another highly prized spice.<sup>837</sup> Then as now, it was among the most expensive of spices due to the difficulty of cultivation, the fact that each crocus flower from which it was taken produced only three stamen strands meaning that a single pound required the plucking of 75,000 flowers.<sup>838</sup> On the Krakow market, it was in fact the single most expensive spice by weight; but this fact was offset by its potency, which meant that only a small amount was required to flavor a dish. Unlike other spices, saffron does not appear to have been dominated by any particular group. The City Council of Lviv purchased it from a wide variety of suppliers, including the local shopkeeper Donato<sup>839</sup>, Petro Kursner<sup>840</sup> and Johanns Schrope<sup>841</sup>, as well as the Krakow-born Augusto Gemelich<sup>842</sup>, and Wolczko the Jew.<sup>843</sup> Later on, Krakovian merchants would be among those investing in this trade; as would, of course, the Italians directly. Cristoforo di S. Romulo negotiated to provide the king with a stone's worth of saffron, together with the rest of his obligations in 1454; when he took over the customs house in Przemyśl.<sup>844</sup> The use of saffron and pepper as a part of payments made by Lviv citizens to the crown were not uncommon.<sup>845</sup> Saffron continued to be of enormous importance to the Lviv market; and was listed first amongst the spices mentioned in the market charter in 1472.<sup>846</sup>

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<sup>837</sup> [PomnLw] II nr. 73, 110, 138, 154, 183, 221, 241, 342. (1404-13), [PomnLw] III nr. 60, 161, 253, 297, 305, 375, 416, 432 (1414-26).

<sup>838</sup> Carter, *Trade*, 122.

<sup>839</sup> [PomnLw] II nr. 183 (1407), 221 (1409)

<sup>840</sup> [PomnLw] II nr. 308 (1412)

<sup>841</sup> [PomnLw] III nr. 416 (1425)

<sup>842</sup> [PomnLw] III nr. 195 (1418), 298 (1422)

<sup>843</sup> [PomnLw] III nr. 432 (1426)

<sup>844</sup> [AGZ] 9 nr. 58 (1454/03/23)

<sup>845</sup> (1485/08/06) *Casimirus rex significat Sigismundum Hriczko de Pomorzany, capitaneum Trebovliensem, Benedicto alias Byenyasch, civi Leopoliensi, 339 marcas, 2 lapides piperis, 3 talenta croci et 26 boves debitum esse, idque exceptis bobus ei super theloneo Trebovliensi, a rege sibi obligato, ad 3 annos certis sub conditionibus inscripsisse.* [MRSP] 1 nr. 1797 (1485)

<sup>846</sup> [AGZ] 7 nr. 105 (1472).

### 3.9.4 Pepper



Figure 62 Piperaceae – (*Piper Nigrum*)

Source: Curtis's botanical magazine; or flower garden displayed. London, 1832, volume 59 (plate 3139). Hand-coloured engraving by Lansdown Guilding Wikimedia

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Piper\\_nigrum\\_drawing\\_1832.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Piper_nigrum_drawing_1832.jpg) Accessed December 20<sup>th</sup> 2020

Pepper – *piper*, *pheffer*, *pfeffir*, was by far and away the most popular of spices sold during the medieval period.<sup>847</sup> The volume and importance of this trade is further witnessed by the fact that the spice was the first item listed among the Eastern goods receiving a special tax in the 1407 trade privilege released to the Lviv merchants by the Moldavian Prince, Alexander the Good.<sup>848</sup> The position of pepper, together with silk, would remain as first amongst those goods from “beyond the sea” in subsequent reissuing of the privilege.<sup>849</sup> Pepper was also frequently given as a gift by the Lviv City Council to notables they sought to honor or impress. The royal

<sup>847</sup> [PomnLw] II nr. 21, 25, 42, 73, 74, 109, 110, 114, 117, 122, 138, 153, 158, 162, 164, 165, 183, 191, 220, 221, 241, 280, 331, 332, 336. (1404-1413); [PomnLw] III nr. 60, 77, 146, 159, 161, 162, 164, 165, 234, 253, 297, 337, 341, 345, 375, 407, 409, 412, 430, 431, 432, 434. Purchases of spices from Venice to be sold in Wrocław show a similar trend with pepper accounting for over half of the order, (1,460 out of 2,600 ducats) in contrast to 260 ducats spent on saffron, and only 73 ducats on ginger. Myśliwski, “Venice and Wrocław, 107.

<sup>848</sup> [AGZ] 7, 205-13.

<sup>849</sup> [AGZ] 7, 232 (1456), 239 (1460).

account books surviving from the reign of Queen Jadwiga and Władysław Jagiełło (1388-1420), note the use of plenty of pepper, much of it arriving at the royal larder in the form of gifts from Lviv.<sup>850</sup> Interestingly, from a culinary history point of view, this pepper was used primarily, in the same way as nutmeg, mace, and cloves, to flavor *comfits* and *pastilles*. Already in the 1370s, we find large amounts of it moving through the hands of Armenian traders, most prominent among them the Sirkis family.<sup>851</sup> Thanks to their strong connections with Caffa and other sites in the Khanate and Ottoman Empire, Armenians would continue to play a prominent role in arranging pepper shipments to Lviv throughout the fifteenth century.<sup>852</sup> The pepper that eventually arrived in Poland was procured from Bursa and together with the Armenians, Italians were among the main suppliers of pepper. The brothers Antonio and Giovanni sold sacks of pepper to Schlomo the Jew in Lviv in 1385; and Francesco di Cantello, the first named Italian to receive citizenship in Lviv in 1409, was among those whom the City Council paid to procure the spice.<sup>853</sup> Pepper could be purchased by Lvivian merchants in Suceava, the capital city of Moldavia, where it was brought by intermediaries from the Italian ports. It could also be purchased directly from markets in Ottoman territories.<sup>854</sup> Italian merchants on occasion carried pepper themselves along the *Via Walachiensis* to Lviv.<sup>855</sup> In some cases, we find Polish traders acting as middlemen for Genoese merchants; rather than the other way around as was the case involving a load of pepper transported from Bursa to Pera in 1452.<sup>856</sup> In other transactions, Italians sold the goods directly. An example of the latter is Cristoforo di S. Romulo, who in 1454, as part of his agreement to collect the royal customs in Przemyśl; promised to give the king 12 stones worth of pepper.<sup>857</sup> A few years later, Arnolfo

<sup>850</sup> Dembinska, *Food and Drink*, 75.

<sup>851</sup> [PomnLw] I nr. 248 (1385), 570 (1376), 571 (1388)

<sup>852</sup> For example, Tychno Armenian of Caffa, and citizen of Lviv, traded heavily in pepper [PomnLw] IV nr. 2049 (1446), 2455 (1448); AGZ 14 nr. 863 (1443), For others see: Kutrzeba, *Handel Polski ze Wschodem*, 44-7, 91-3.

<sup>853</sup> “*Primo in tribus saccis piperis XXI lapides cum 1/2 lapidibus per IX fertones. Item in duobus saccis XIII lapides cum II lapidibus per II marcas. Item in duobus saccis XI lapides per II marcas. Item in quatuor saccis XXV lapides per II marcas. 709. Eodem die coram assessore consilio ac iudicio bannito Schloma Iudeus super bona Gallicorum videlicet Anthonii et Iohannis XXVI marcas interdixit et est quartus.*” [PomnLw] I nr. 248 (1385); Francesco, who was also a citizen of Kaffa, recived citizenship in Lviv in 1409. [PomnLw] II nr. 85; “*Francisco de Cantellis tenentur sibi IV lapides piperis domino Regi receptos, quibus pro I srg. et XXIV gr. persolute sunt Francisco de Cantellis V srg. minus XXIV gr. pro pipere domino Regi dato de pecuniis ortorum.*” [PomnLw] II nr. 332 (1413).

<sup>854</sup> The trade privileges released by Moldavian rulers mention these possibilities and the different taxes to be applied in such cases. [AGZ] 7, 232 (1456), 239 (1460). Laurentiu Radvan, *At Europe's Borders*, 493.

<sup>855</sup> “*Philippus and Jacobus “der Wale”* [PomnLw] IV nr. 841 (1452).

<sup>856</sup> *Acte și fragmente cu privire la Istoria Românilor adunate di depozitele de manuscrise ale apusului. Vol. 3* [Acts and fragments on the History of the Romanians gathered from the manuscripts of the west Vol 3] edited by Nicolae Iorga (Bucurest : Imprimeria Statului, 1897), 27-30.

<sup>857</sup> [AGZ] 9 nr. 58 (1454/03/23)

Tedaldi of Florence agreed to a deal with Dimitri Walata of Album Castrum (Moncastro); for which 50 ½ stones of pepper were sold for 124 florins, equivalent to 2.5 florins for each stone.<sup>858</sup> After arriving in Lviv, this pepper was then often resold to Krakowian merchants; who would take it for sale to the capital, or for further re-export. In 1460, for example, we find the prominent Krakow merchant, Petrus Wierzinek, selling enormous amounts of pepper - 28 centars (1.81 tons). on the Hungarian market.<sup>859</sup> Due to their privileged position within the kingdom's trade structure, Krakowian merchants were able to largely dominate the re-export market from Lviv; with many developing strong ties to the city.<sup>860</sup>

Spices were the traditional long-distance trade par excellence for due to their high weight to value ratio. That Italians were heavily active in the trade of a variety of spices through Poland therefore comes as no surprise. Given that the spices in question all came from the east, along the 'silk roads' it is equally logical that the largely Genoese traders active in eastern Poland and Lviv would be particularly active. The traces left of these particular items points to the frequently complicated routes these goods took and the ease with which merchants from Poland, Moldavia, and Italy, interacted with limited friction within Ottoman lands. Spices would continue, even after the fall of Caffa and the Italian colonies of the Black Sea to enter Poland from the east, with the trade shifting into the hands of Armenian, making their way to the capital of Krakow and beyond where the wealthy used them as both medicine and appreciated gastronomical additives.

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<sup>858</sup> Arnolfo makes a trade deal with Dominus Arnst. Dymitr Walata de Albo Castro son of Iurgii Walata for "*centum et XXIIIj florenos hungaricales pro quindecim et medio lapidibus piperis, quelibet lapis per octo florenos.*" [SDIR] nr 42 (1470/05/27).

<sup>859</sup> The pepper was being moved by Nikelklen to Peter Werzini and his Hungarian associates in Bardejów; when it was confiscated in the town of Stropkov. "*Hic coram nostra celsitudine mercator noster fidelis dictus Nikelklen deposuit, quomodo pace integra inter Hungarie et Polonie regna existente, dum quodam tempore per suum servitorem prefatus Nikelklen dictum Petrum Wierzink suas merces et bona miserat in oppido Stropkow, tandem vestri concives cum eorum societate de Barduyow supervenientes, receperunt a dicto Petro Wierzink viginti octo centenarios piperis, ipsumque captivum ducentes in pretorio statuentes, centum florenos hungaricales similiter ab ipso in mensa pretorii abstulerunt.*" *Bártfa szabad királyi város levéltára*, [Archives of the Free Royal City of Bardejov] Vol. I (1319-1501) ed. Béla Iványi (Budapest: Magyar Tudományok Akadémia, 1886), nr. 507 (1448/08/28).

<sup>860</sup> Stanislaus Kutrzeba noted the names of the most active Krakow merchants to appear in records from the fifteenth century notarial records of Lviv: Jan Weber, Piotr Czemer, Flannus Bork, Sebastyan Jakis, Benesch, Nykyel Karl, Jan Lang, Krupkowie brothers, and even more prominently, Stano Zygmuntowicz, Jan Beck, Pawel Morsztyn, Jan Boner, and Zygfryd Betman: Kutrzeba, *Finanse*, 297-9



### 3.10 Sugar and Exotic Fruits and Nuts

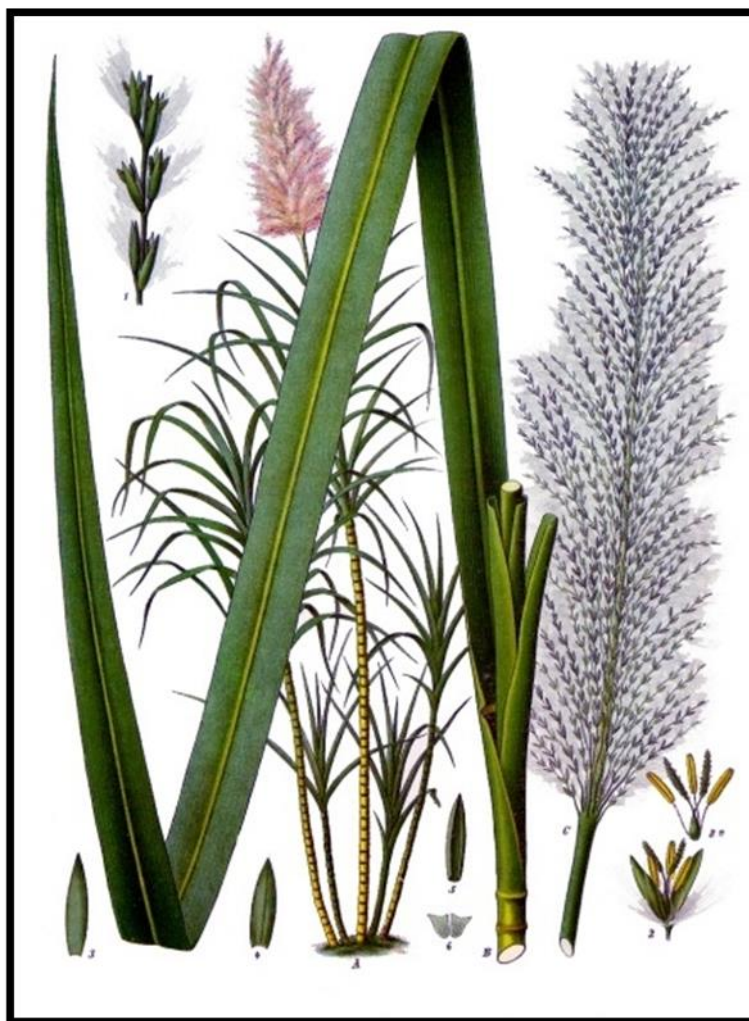


Figure 63 Sugar Cane

Source: Wikimedia [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Saccharum\\_officinarum\\_-\\_K%C3%B6hler%E2%80%93Medizinal-Pflanzen-125.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Saccharum_officinarum_-_K%C3%B6hler%E2%80%93Medizinal-Pflanzen-125.jpg) Accessed December 20<sup>th</sup> 2020

A few other items were brought from the East to Lviv in minimal quantities during the fifteenth century. These included sugar<sup>861</sup> - *czucrum*, as well as lemons<sup>862</sup> - *lemonys*, *lemonia*, *lymoniae* and figs<sup>863</sup> – *ficus*. Each of these items also appear in the Lviv records among the various gifts presented by the Lviv City Council, but were otherwise relatively rare items until the sixteenth

<sup>861</sup> [PomnLw] II nr. 109 (1404-13).; Kutrzeba, *Handel Polski ze Wschodem*, 93 (1480)

<sup>862</sup> [PomnLw] II nr. 236 (1409), 331 (1413); [PomnLw] III nr. 162,164,165 (1417), 253 (1419), 297 (1422),430,431 (1426); SDIR nr. 23 (1466); Pelc, *Ceny w Krakowie*, 163.

<sup>863</sup> [PomnLw] II nr. 109 (1406), [PomnLw] III nr.267 (1420).

century.<sup>864</sup> Lemons appear among the items purchased by the Lviv City Council for the first time in 1417, when they acquired them from the Armenian *advocat*. A rise in the number of lemons purchased can be seen in the second decade of the fifteenth century. Initially given only as gifts to the bishop of Przemyśl, who appears to have had a fondness for them, they were later also purchased to celebrate Queen Sophia's coronation in 1417, and for the baptism of the royal heir in 1426, among other occasions. Lemons and oranges were otherwise not sold on the open market in Krakow until the early sixteenth century. Figs on the other hand, were sold regularly in Krakow from the 1390's and were included in the 1472 list of expected products at the annual fair held in Lviv, but are otherwise largely absent from the sources.<sup>865</sup> Sugar, was also regularly available in Krakow, and was traded there in its bulk sugarloaf form and ground, "*czuccaro et farina czuccarij*" by Albizzo di Medici in the 1420's.<sup>866</sup>

Rice was yet another occasional item that appears only from the second half of the fifteenth century, and even then, quite rarely.<sup>867</sup> There is then the unusual case of almonds – *amigdola*. We know that almonds were available from Eastern markets only from a single case in 1445; when a servant of the abbot of the Orthodox monastery of Saint George in Lviv was accosted and robbed while traveling along the king's highway near Olesk. Among the many articles he was carrying were included four pieces of *kamcha* silk, 4 blankets, 6 ells of grey cloth, an expensive mitre, two sacks of leather, letters to the Armenian Bishop of Lviv, twenty Venetian "florins" (in reality, likely ducats), 20 Tartar "florins", and 10,000 almonds.<sup>868</sup>

These specialty food items were similar to spices that they had a high weight to cost ratio which made them excellent long-distance trade goods. As organic items, they had to be treated with some care, but dried goods, if stored properly, could last a considerable amount of time. While these goods came largely through the Italian Black Sea coastal communities, Italians in Poland

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<sup>864</sup> Nadel-Golobič, "Armenians and Jews in Medieval Lvov," 356.

<sup>865</sup> Pelc, *Ceny w Krakowie*, 162.

<sup>866</sup> (1426/05/07) [SPPP2] nr. 2097

<sup>867</sup> (1461) Kutrzeba, *Handel Polski ze Wschodem*, 91.

<sup>868</sup> "...item quatuor camchatos, quatuor lodices, item viginti. flor. Venecienses, viginti flor. Turcorum, decem sexagenas grossor., decem milia amygdalorum, dimidium alterum cathnar rosynkorum, manathiam, duo czoboti, sex ulnas panni grisei, mitram pro viginti grossis parvis, bipennem, pulvinaria, manutergia, caletham cum cultello, shyrynkam; et servitoribus eius receperunt quinquaginta grossos magnos, caligas, triginta panea lapidem usionis, duo paria patynky, literas ad Ducem Magnum directas spirituales per Metropolitanum Armenorum datas, duos saccos skórzane, sex pectines, ciphum ligneum..."[AGZ] 14 nr. 1407. Спроба Католицької, "Середньовічні монастирі в Галичині [Medieval monasteries in Galicia]," in *Analecta Ordinis Sancti Basilii Magni Annus III* (Zovkva: Typis PP. Basilianorum Zolkieviae, 1926), 84.



were joined by numerous other local traders who purchased these items for sale after which they were frequently used as gifts to powerful individuals.

### 3.11 Wine



Figure 64 Malvasia Grapes

Source: Wikimedia <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malvasia#/media/File:Malvasia.jpg> Accessed December 20<sup>th</sup> 2020

Wine – *vinum* apart from being an enjoyable beverage, was important across Christian Europe as it was fundamental to the celebration of the eucharist, where Christ's blood was ritually transformed by a priest from wine in reflection of the last supper. Having originated in the Mediterranean, the procurement of wine was not a problem for early Christians. As the religion spread northwards however, into regions where the climate did not support viticulture, it began to be a problem. Given the nature of the ritual, no other substance could substitute and so prelates began to get creative. The imbibing of "the blood of Christ" was reserved generally for the priest alone but some amount was still required and monasteries were often employed to grow wines. Poland thus produced a small amount of wine locally from the tenth century, but most of it had to be imported. The major part of this wine came from Hungary, with smaller amounts from the Austrian provinces, and from the late fourteenth century, the Black Sea.<sup>869</sup> A very select amount of wine was also imported from Italy. The earliest record of what was likely Italian wine being brought into Poland comes from Wrocław in 1266 where *de vino Gallico sive Rivali* – wine from the area of Northern Italy under the influence of Venice was

<sup>869</sup> Dembinska, *Food and Drink*, 76.

brought by Polish merchants.<sup>870</sup> *Vinum Gallicum*, was sold regularly in Krakow from the 1390's and served on special occasions at the table of Władysław Jagiełło, but it was likely purchased by Polish merchants rather than being procured by Italians traders themselves.<sup>871</sup> During the reign of Władysław Jagiełło, wine was still considered a rare treat even on the royal table. As the fifteenth century progressed however, the beverage became ever more popular until under King Sigismund I (1504-1548), it was drunk nearly every day.<sup>872</sup> As wine became ever more appreciated for its flavor and rarity by not just the royal house, but wealthy burghers and the Polish nobility, ever greater quantities were brought from abroad.<sup>873</sup> Among the most prized of these wines was that brought from the Black Sea coast, much of which ran through the hands of Italian traders.

Wine had been sold by the Genoese in Caffa in large amounts from the middle of the fourteenth century.<sup>874</sup> Much of this wine was sourced locally, from the Crimean peninsula and the Caucasian coastline where vineyards were especially abundant in Soldaia (Sudak/Судак), Balaklava (Cembalo), eighteen villages of the so-called Gotia, and the hinterland of Caffa itself.<sup>875</sup> Wine was also procured from Trabzon (Trebizond), but this source was problematic, as it depended very much on the current state of relations between the Genoese authorities and the deteriorating Byzantine State. The insecurity of this relationship could cause wild fluctuations in the customs duties charged.<sup>876</sup> The Genoese tended to obtain their wine from Greek merchants; who also brought the famous Malmsey wine from Crete. Malmsey, named after Monemvasia in the Morea, was a heavy sweet wine with a high alcohol content; that was much prized across Europe.<sup>877</sup> This wine was shipped in large barrels and like many other items, made its way through Poland along the *Via Walachiensis*. Evidence of this transit can be seen in the customs tolls issued for Lviv merchants by the Moldavian Princes, where "Greek wine" was counted amongst the "Tartar goods" for which a special duty had to be paid.<sup>878</sup>

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<sup>870</sup> Myśliwski, "Venice and Wrocław," 101.

<sup>871</sup> Pelc identifies the wine as *vin Francais*, but a more accurate reading of the term *vin gallicum* in the context would imply an Italian vintage. Julian Pelc, *Ceny w Krakowie w latach 1369 - 1600 / Les prix à Cracovie de 1369 à 1600*, (Lviv: :Wydano z Zasilku Zwotneg, 1935), 164; (1419/06/27) [RdKWJiKJ], 534.

<sup>872</sup> Dembinska, *Food and Drink*, 77.

<sup>873</sup> For the specifics of this trade see: Francis W. Carter "Cracow's wine trade (fourteenth to eighteenth centuries)," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 65.4 (1987): 537-578.

<sup>874</sup> "In the middle of the 14th century there must have been significant supplies; as the authorities set duty in the amount of 10 aspres per *botte* (482 litres)." Hryszko, "Genoese colonies in the Black Sea area," 180.

<sup>875</sup> Hryszko, "Genoese colonies in the Black Sea area," 180.

<sup>876</sup> The standard rate was 10 aspres on every *botta* (482 litres) of wine; which normally sold in Caffa for around 310 Aspres, a reasonable amount. During conflicts in 1449 however, threats were made to raise this to 60 aspres per *botta*; which would have greatly impacted profitability. Hryszko, "Genoese colonies in the Black Sea area," 180.

<sup>877</sup> Carter, "Cracow's wine trade", 549-50.

<sup>878</sup> Wine continued to be included in later reissuings of this trading privilege. [AZG] 7 nr. 208, nr. 232.

Lviv's staple allowed it to have some control over the transportation of this valuable commodity. Krakowian merchants, who would have liked to have a slice of this valuable trade, had a particularly difficult time gaining a foothold.<sup>879</sup> Wine was purchased by the Lviv City Council from a large number of individuals, including women; implying that trade was heavy in this particular item.<sup>880</sup> While some of the wine was given as gifts to important figures, it was also drunk by members of both the Lviv and Krakow City Councils on festive occasions.<sup>881</sup> Italians, from an early date were directly involved with the sale of Malmsey wine to Lviv. Franciscus di Cantello, the first Italian to become a citizen of the city, rented a set of cellars in the city which Jan Ptaśnik and Rafał Hryszko interpreted as being used to store wine for later shipment.<sup>882</sup> Later on, in 1443, two Italians - Phillipus and Jacobus der Wale ran into trouble with their shipment of pepper and Malmsey, while making their way towards Lviv. They were halted and their load confiscated in Kolomyia by Elias an officer of the Moldavian Prince Stefan II (1435-1443). Upon arriving in Lviv they complained bitterly to the city officials.<sup>883</sup> A few years later, a similar incident occurred. Goods belonging to three Genoese merchants, residents of the Italian colony on the Greek island of Chios, which were being conducted by their factor Angelo Lercario through Polish lands, were illegally seized. In this case, the merchants were well-connected enough to secure a formal letter of complaint from the Doge of Genoa to King Casimir IV of Poland.<sup>884</sup> The revised statute of Caffa, introduced in 1449, gives an indication of the Italian domination of this particular trade; as it prohibited anyone who was not Genoese or a citizen of the city to trade in wine.<sup>885</sup> Certain Jewish merchants, residents of Caffa, took advantage of this and sold wine, together with alum, rice and spices,

<sup>879</sup> They were not totally unsuccessful, however, and in 1433, we find the Krakow merchant Gregor selling Malmsey wine in the Hungarian city of Bardejow. *Bartfa szabad kirdlyi vdros leveltdra 1319-1526*, nr. 245. (1433/06/14) ; Carter, "Cracow's wine trade, 549-50.

<sup>880</sup> [PomnLw] II nr. 115 (1406); [PomnLw] III nr. 296 (1422), 350 (1423), 351 (1423).

<sup>881</sup> Krakow: *Miczke Kerbrynne III mrc. gr. pro Romania et Malmasia ad honores data et in pretorio bibita.... Sabbato infra Octauas Corporis christi; pro vino scilicet malmasia ad honores data V mrc.denar, iacobo tewfil.* [NKiRMK] II, 284.(1409); Lviv: "Pro vino, videlicet malmsya Episcupo Premisliensi honorato." [PomnLw] II nr. 115. (1407); "Item Vj den Gewant vom funstehalb (sic) Schott. Item enn Topp Malmezn XVj g." (1462), "Item pro malvasia XXX g-les." (1466) [SDIR] 23 nr.8. (1462), nr 23 (1466).

<sup>882</sup> Jan Ptaśnik, *Kultura Włoska Wieków Średnich W Polsce* [Italian Culture in Medieval Poland] (Warsaw: Instytut Wydawniczy Biblioteka Polska, 1922), 51.; Hryszko, "Genoese colonies in the Black Sea area, 180.

<sup>883</sup> "Philippus der Wale sal den schaden selbir habin, alz ym Elias Woywode von Colomia czweue zecke pfeffer hot von zeyne gezunderen way- nen hot gewonen vnd iacobus der Wale mit seyner geselleschaft sal den schaden selber habin alz en Elias Woywoda gewonnen hot czwee kuffen malmazia in der Colomia, alzo das auch eyn teyl gut suchin sal ma." [PomnLw] IV nr. 841.

<sup>884</sup> We do not know the exact nature of the cargo, but given the merchant's origins in Chios, it is very likely that they were involved in the wine trade coming through the Greek Islands. Div. Filze, nr. 16, 18th February 1444 ad 11 March 1446 (acte nr. 50). See: Jacques Heers, *Gênes au XV siècle: Activité économique et problèmes sociaux* (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N, 1961), 383 fn. 9.

<sup>885</sup> Hryszko, "Genoese colonies in the Black Sea area, 180.

to Lviv, and even onwards as far as Toruń.<sup>886</sup> Another who appears to have taken advantage of this provision was the Genoese merchant, Carlo di Bozzola, who was active along the *Via Wallachiensis* in the 1440's and was living in the Pera district of Constantinople when the Ottomans took the city in 1453. Carlo quickly sold off a large lot of Malmsey wine and fled along with many of his Genoese compatriots to the relative safety of the Island of Chios.<sup>887</sup> In later years, as the Ottoman pressure pushed out Italian influence from the region, the trade in Malmsey wine would be largely taken over by Greek merchants from Chios and Crete.<sup>888</sup> In 1473, the king helped pay some of the debt of the apothecary Paulus in Krakow; who had purchased a large amount of "*malmatietis italicis*" – here interestingly called Italian Malmsey. This demonstrated that the intervening agents had robbed it of its original Greek designation – for use in medicaments "*electari*", no doubt for his majesty's consumption.<sup>889</sup> *Electari* were a type of sweet jam or gooey candy that were usually concocted using a mixture of fruit ingredients and sugar, but could apparently also be fashioned by rendering sweet wines. Such delicacies had been originally introduced to Poland by Italians and become a staple of the royal pharmacopeia since the late fourteenth century.<sup>890</sup> Here it is further key to note that Malmsey was not generally used as a "table wine"; but instead was viewed by consumers as appropriate for festive occasions – weddings or other major celebrations, or for use as a medicine.<sup>891</sup> Apart from the importation of such special wines as Malmsey from the East, one particular Italian played an important role in the cultivation of wine in Poland in the fifteenth century. In 1486, Uriel Gorka the Bishop of Poznań (1435-1498) requested of the Genoese merchant, Andrea Gwasko di Soldaia to procure him an Italian vintner to help him found a vineyard on

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<sup>886</sup> The original document is to be found in Archiwum miasta Lwowa, *Consularia Leopoliensis*, Vol. I, pg. 147, 150-151. See: Carter, *Trade and Urban Development in Poland*, 160.

<sup>887</sup>

(1445/03/23). [AGZ] 14 nr 1340; (1453/08/23),(1454/01/29) Stefan Andreescu, "Pe Marginea Unui Act Din Arhivele Din Genova [On the Margins of an Act From the Archives of Genoa],." in *Studii i Materiale de Istorie Medie Volumul Xv* ed. Paul Cernovodeanu (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Romane, 1997), 165-66.

<sup>888</sup> Cristian Nicolae Apetrei, "Greek Merchants in the Romanian Principalities in the 16th Century. The Case of Nikolaos Domesticos Nevridis," *The Annals of "Dunarea de Jos" University of Galati*. Fascicle XIX, History 9 (2010): 41-61.

<sup>889</sup> [MRSP] I nr. 1086 (1473).

<sup>890</sup> For more on the delightful subject of Polish confectionary see: Rafał Hryszko, "Andree apothecario pro confectionibus et electuariis–cukiernictwo w Polsce w czasach Jadwigi i Władysława Jagiełły między Wschodem a Zachodem Europy [Andree apothecario pro confectionibus et electuariis–confectionary in Poland during the times of Jadwiga and Władysław Jagiełło Between East and West Europe,]" *Prace Historyczne* 143.3 (2016): 381-405.

<sup>891</sup> Malmsey and other sweet wines were considered to have intense "warming" properties; which within the humeral medical system meant they were good for those suffering from chilling ailments. Within the same system, they were considered possibly dangerous for those with a warmer temperament; and so should be drunk as a rule only in small amounts. Allen J. Grieco, "Medieval and Renaissance Wines: Taste, Dietary Theory, and How to Choose the," *Medievalia* 30 (2009): 22.

his estates. Andrea convinced Nicolao di Noali son of Paulo di Villacosta from Riparolli, a town located in the Polcevera Valley not far from Genoa. Nicolao agreed to move to Poland for four years to organize and assist in the setting up of the vineyard. For his efforts, in addition to his room and board, he was to be paid, 24 libras of Genoese standard coin or otherwise 8 ducats and 1 libra of Genoese standard coin. Andrea, on the other-hand for his services in organizing the contract was to be paid 3 gold ducats.<sup>892</sup> As the church was in constant need of wine to fulfil its spiritual duties and so the planting of a vineyard by a prominent bishop is not unexpected. The importation of an Italian to fulfil the task, when others might be had from nearby Hungary, is however surprising. The choice makes sense however, when one remembers that Uriel Gorka studied in Bologna and spent a great deal of time in Rome, there likely picking up a taste for Italian wines. It is unclear how successful the vineyard turned out to be, but Italians were certainly involved in the attempt.

As a key element of the Christian liturgical rite, wine was essential in all parts of Europe, even in those places north of the 'beer line' where vines turned into wheat and barley fields. Throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the drinking of wine became gradually more popular amongst the highest strata of Polish society. Increasing numbers of vintages were thus, imported from Hungary, Germany, Italy itself and the Black Sea and Greek isles. Italians, with their Mediterranean roots, were well acquainted with the beverage and actively engaged in its trade. In particular, the trade in Malmsey wine from the eastern Mediterranean frequently ran through the hands of Italians who traded in Lviv. The taste for wine was also influenced by the experiences of Poles abroad. Thus, when Bishop Uriel Gorka sought to introduce vines to his lands in Poland, he turned to a Genoese merchant of his acquaintance to seek out and bring back a knowledgeable vintner from his home region who could hopefully grow the grapes to which he had become accustomed during his stays on the Italian Peninsula.

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<sup>892</sup> (1486/06/07) "... *supra et eidem Nicolao dabit et solvet pro eius salario libras viginti quinque Ianuinorum monete currentis sive ducatos octo et libram unam Ianuinorum et ultra eidem Nicolao tam sano quam infirmo dabit expensas videlicet cibi et potus toto dicto tempore dictorum annorum quatuor necnon sibi fieri faciet expensas in itinere et donec fuerit per iter videlicet victus tantum. Insuper confitens dietus Nicolaus ex nunc a dicto domino Andriolo habuisse et recepisse ducatos tres auri largos in solutione dieti eius salarii.*" Archivio di Stato in Genova. Sezione Archivio Notarile . [Atti del Not. Gio. Antonio Castello. Filza II, f. 130]. 1485, 8 lug. In Isreal Zoller, "Tra L'Italia E La Polonia." *Archivio Storico Italiano*, serie V, 42, no. 252 (1908): 392, 395-6.

### 3.12 Slaves

Slaves, called *sclavi* in the sources, but in effect human beings, were an unfortunate commodity that was traded from Caffa. Indeed, a fifteenth-century observer wrote that, “*In this city they sell more slaves, both male and female, than anywhere else in the world.*”<sup>893</sup> Indeed, it was one of the most prolific slave markets Europe, a fact for which it was renowned at the time. The slave trade, which had started up soon after the colony’s founding in the 1260s, only grew over the succeeding centuries. Recall, that in 1307, it was allegedly the immense number of Tartars being sold into bondage by Italians in Caffa which caused Toqta Khan to besiege the city. The slave trade would be a staple of the Black Sea throughout the entire Middle Ages and well into the Early Modern Period. After the Genoese were ousted Caffa in 1475, the traffic only increased; as Ottoman merchants simply stepped into the roles once played by the Italians.<sup>894</sup> While only recently the subject of more intensive historical study, slavery was none the less a common feature of medieval European society.<sup>895</sup> The price of slaves spiked briefly after 1348; as a consequence of the demographic decimation caused by the Black Death. It then continued to rise steadily throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, yet continued to retain its appeal.<sup>896</sup> The slaves were exported either to the Italian Peninsula, primarily through Genoa and Venice, or to the Mamluks and later the Ottomans in Alexandria and Constantinople. Those sent to Italy served primarily in domestic environments and were status symbols, while those sold to the Mamluks were often turned into soldiers. In the 1380s, around 1500 slaves were sold annually in Caffa; while between 1410-1446, the Caffa *Massaira* show that an average of 24-25 ships with slave cargoes left the port.<sup>897</sup> Between the years 1414-1423, it has

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<sup>893</sup> *Pero Tafur: Travels and Adventures 1435-1439*, ed. Malcolm H.I. Letts (London: Routledge, 1926),132.

<sup>894</sup> Ironically enough, many of those self-same Genoese who had engaged in the slave trade were themselves put into bondage after the city’s fall. “Thousands of Italian boys (estimates range from 1500 to 5000) and hundreds of girls (perhaps 450) between the ages of 7 and 20 were taken prisoner. The Greek and Armenian populations were exempt from these levies, but all segments of the Caffan population had their slaves confiscated, 3000 in total. Finally, the remaining Italian population was deported by ship to Constantinople.” Hannah Barker, “Egyptian and Italian Merchants in the Black Sea Slave Trade, 1260-1500,” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2014),190.

<sup>895</sup> A number of up-to-date studies on this issue and focusing on Italian involvement in the slave trade have been recently published: Reuven Amitaiand Christoph Cluse, *Slavery and the Slave Trade in the Eastern Mediterranean (c. 1000-1500 c.)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018); Sally McKee, “Domestic Slavery in Renaissance Italy,” *Slavery and Abolition* 29.3 (2008): 305-26.

<sup>896</sup> Barker, “Egyptian and Italian,” 338-9. Mikhail B. Kizilov, “The Black Sea and the Slave Trade: The Role of Crimean Maritime Towns in the Trade in Slaves and Captives in the Fifteenth to Eighteenth Centuries.” *International Journal of Maritime History* 17.1 (2005): 214.

<sup>897</sup> These transports could hold between 1-175 people, but rarely transported more than 40 slaves at a time, primarily due to security reasons. Mikhail B. Kizilov, “The Black,” 215. Fabienne Plazolles and Salah Trabelsi. *Les esclavages en Méditerranée: Espaces et dDynamiques Ééconomiques* (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2012),174-5.

been estimated that as many as 10,000 people were exported as slaves through Venice. Nevertheless, by the late fifteenth century, Genoa had risen to surpass Venice as the main slave market of Italy.<sup>898</sup> This number does not even count those taken to other parts of the Italian Peninsula; let alone the markets of the Ottomans and the Mamluks. During the fourteenth century, as many as 2,000 slaves were sold per annum to Alexandria; with that figure only increasing in the century to come.<sup>899</sup> The price for a slave depended on their gender, age, and physical appearance; with profits ranging widely from 12 to over 100%.<sup>900</sup> In general, young female slaves were most sought after in Italy, especially those brought from Rus and the Caucasus, while male slaves were preferred by the Mamluks.<sup>901</sup> Around the year 1400, the price of a slave in Genoa or Venice could range from 50-70 ducats.<sup>902</sup> The median price for a slave sold in Mamluk markets meanwhile, was 80 ducats, giving an incentive to sell to the south whenever possible.<sup>903</sup> However, this was not permitted if the person was a Christian. Muslims vice-versa prohibited the sale of their co-religionists to those of another faith. It was thus technically legal to take slaves only from “infidel lands”. In practice, many Christians, primarily Russian and Ruthenian Orthodox, were swept up into bondage.<sup>904</sup> However, as time went on, these prohibitions became more heavily enforced; and at some point before 1420, the Genoese administration in Caffa introduced an inspection system whereby a clergy member, together with lay officials, would speak to each slave individually before their ship set sail, to ascertain the slave’s religious affiliation prior to their sale to Mamluks. If the slave professed to be a Christian or desired to become a Christian on the spot, then they would be removed

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<sup>898</sup> This number comes from the work of *Del traffico e delle condizioni degli schiavi*, by Vittore Lazari, published in 1862. Lazari based this estimate on his reading of the Venetian customs registers and the 5 ducat per head customs tax levied by the Venetian authorities, which supposedly garnered 50,000 ducats over the ten year period. However, Lazari failed to fully document his findings, and it has been suggested by other scholars that the 50,000 ducats reflected the full price of the slaves and not simply the tax. If this is the case, then the number of slaves shipped from Venice drops dramatically to only 1200 over that same ten years. McKee, “Domestic Slavery,” 315.

<sup>899</sup> Alan W Fisher, “Muscovy and the Black Sea slave trade,” *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 6.4 (1972): 576-8.

<sup>900</sup> Barker, “Egyptian and Italian,” 340.

<sup>901</sup> “Based on median price, Circassians were the most expensive (64 ducats in Genoa and 54 ducats in Venice), Russians were next (58.2 ducats in Genoa and 51 ducats in Venice) and Tatars were the least expensive (47.3 ducats in Genoa and 34 ducats in Venice). However, the lower median price for Tatars is partially a result of their prevalence during the second half of the fourteenth century, when slave prices were comparatively low across the board. Circassians replaced Tatars in the late fourteenth century, around the same time that overall prices began to rise.” Barker, “Egyptian and Italian,” 129-35, 335.

<sup>902</sup> McKee, “Domestic Slavery,” 309, 313, 318.

<sup>903</sup> Barker, “Egyptian and Italian,” 328.

<sup>904</sup> Barker, “Egyptian and Italian,” 18-25.

from the ship and sold instead to a Christian rather than the Muslim Mamluks. This is at least what the Caffa authorities explained to the pope when he questioned their practices in 1434.<sup>905</sup> The Genoese were not in the business of capturing slaves but accepted the poor men and women who had been captured in the endemic Tartar and later Ottoman raids into Lithuanian, Russian, Hungarian, and Polish territory.<sup>906</sup> People might also be swept up as booty in many “legitimate” military campaigns by all of these rival powers. The number of slaves led to market thus increased considerably anytime a conflict broke out. Slaves arrived in Caffa, both overland and by ship, from both Kiliya and Moncastro, and were sold there, usually to the Genoese by those who had abducted them.<sup>907</sup> For example, Maria, a Greek woman who had been, “redeemed from Saracens” in other words purchased - in Moncastro by the Genoese trader Bartolomeo of Azano, was later sold by his wife to pay off debts.<sup>908</sup> Moncastro was a busy port for the Genoese slave trade from which Cumans, Bulgarians, Russians, Turks, Alanians, and Vlachs were sold.<sup>909</sup> Upon arriving in Caffa either overland or by ship, the wretched souls would be forced into the slave market where, “*The selling takes place as follows. The sellers make the slaves strip to the skin, males as well as females, and they put on them a cloak of felt, and the price is named. Afterwards they throw off their coverings and make them walk up and down to show whether they have any bodily defect. The seller has to oblige himself, that if a slave dies of the pestilence, within sixty days, he will return the price paid*”<sup>910</sup>

Yet, interestingly, while slaves were shipped to Caffa, Kiliya and Moncastro, there is very limited evidence of slaves being taken along the *Via Walachiensis* or sold through Lviv.<sup>911</sup> We find Francisco, the son of Petrus Bicherano, the Venetian merchant who was active in Krakow (1406-1424), trading slaves at the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* in Venice, and after him his son Nicholas continued the family trade, perhaps signaling the interest of Italians who were active

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<sup>905</sup> Barker, “Egyptian and Italian,” 186.

<sup>906</sup> Danuta Quirini-Popławska, “Obecność niewolników ruskich w rejonie Morza Śródziemnego w późnym średniowieczu [Presence of Ruthenian slaves in the Mediterranean in the Late Middle Ages],” *Portolana. Studia Mediterranea* 1 (2004):119-35.

<sup>907</sup> Of the 170 slave merchants noted by name in the Caffa Massaria, 74 were Italians - 34 Genoese or Ligurian, 4 Venetians, and 36 of some other Italian provenance. The rest were Greek, Saracen, Caucasian, and 3 Jews. Fabienne Plazolles and Salah Trabelsi, *Les Esclaves*, 176. Barker, “Egyptian and Italian,” 207-8, 267.

<sup>908</sup> Barker, “Egyptian and Italian,” 30.

<sup>909</sup> Denis Căprăroiu, and Gica Pehoiu. “A Type of Urban Genesis in Romanian Outer-Carpathian Area: the Genoan Cities.” *World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology International Journal of Social, Behavioral, Educational, Economic, Business and Industrial Engineering* Vol. 4, No 6, (2010): 790.

<sup>910</sup> Pero Tafur, *Pero Tafur: Travels and Adventures*, 133.

<sup>911</sup> Barker, “Egyptian and Italian,” 267.



in Poland in this activity.<sup>912</sup> Yet, during this period there is no evidence that these slaves were forced overland through Poland rather than being shipped directly from Tana to Venice, as others sold at the *Fondaco* were. The absence of slaves from the overland route can be explained by a number of factors. First, there is always the possibility that our surviving sources simply do not record such transactions; but given that they make note of most other high-value items, it would be surprising for slaves to be missing altogether. If the sources are not the problem, then the absence may be explainable by difficulties in forcing human cargo to travel long distances. Traveling overland would provide many more opportunities for revolt or escape and would take more time in which the “investment” might grow sick or die. Added to this, there would be the general cost of upkeep, as human beings require food, water, and a place to rest, unlike say a load of equally precious silk. The simple cost-benefit ratio likely made such journeys prohibitively expensive.<sup>913</sup> Finally, there is the fact that domestic slavery was not widely practiced in Polish lands during this period; so traders would be unlikely to sell them in route. This meant that the merchant would have to take them the entire way back to the Mediterranean; rather than selling them in Lviv, Krakow or near the Baltic; as might be done with other goods. Finally, given the fact that Poland, especially the lands of Red Ruthenia, were subject to constant predations, people were no doubt aware that their own countrymen were being regularly turned into slaves after having been brutally ripped from their homes, merchants might not be greeted with enthusiasm along the route. That said, there are a number of pieces of evidence that do point to the possibility that during the later fifteenth century slaves were transported at least occasionally through Polish territory. First, as referenced earlier, in 1466, the Polish King Casimir Jagiello, having agreed to act as Caffa’s defender, issued a charter which permitted the Genoese free trading rights through his kingdom. A part of this charter included the clause that for every “*capite hominis obnoxii*” – slave that was moved through Lviv, the merchant had to pay a tax of 1 florin.<sup>914</sup> The inclusion of this provision

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<sup>912</sup> Francesco Bicarano, qui vend un esclave de 20 ans 45 ducats (Cane. Inf. 170, 1406/13/VII), une esclave russe de 18 ans, 36 ducats à un Florentin de la Giudecca (Ibid. 1406/5/VIII), un esclave russe de 16 ans a un mercier de S. Salvador (Cane. Inf. 96, 1407/2/VIII). Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 405 fn 136 ; Quirini-Popfawska, “Obecność niewolników ruskich,” 132.

<sup>913</sup> “During the sixteenth century, once raiding reached truly epic proportions, captives were regularly marched from Red Ruthenia to Caffa. An Ottoman observer of such a march commented on how the poor, and therefore one assumes inexpensive, treatment of these prisoners, made for extremely high mortality rates, which he feared would drive the cost of the survivors out of his price range. A Polish proverb from this period translated to “how much better to lie on one’s bier, than to be a captive on the way to Tartary.” Alan W Fisher, “Muscovy and the Black Sea slave trade,” 587.

<sup>914</sup> “...et aliis bonis quibus cumque pro libito transeundi versus Januam aut alibi eundi theloneis tamen nostris Regalibus per omnia persolutis ultraque a quolibet capite hominis obnoxii. quem secum eduxerint. nobis per

implies that Genoese traders intended to transfer human beings along the same overland route they were now forced to cart their wares over towards the Mediterranean, as the Ottomans had captured Constantinople and controlled the Dardanelles. The next piece of evidence comes nearly a decade later in 1474, when a certain Rusetto of Bergamo, who normally resided in Caffa, brought to Lviv a cargo of persons bound for sale in Genoa. Rusetto had been through Lviv two years previously; where he had waited some days for the arrival of his partner, Francesco of Pavia. One his partners arrived, and before continuing south, he borrowed 100 hufl from an obliging Lvivian merchant named Łukasz Lindner, no doubt repaying the debt upon his return journey. His second appearance in the sources from Lviv demonstrates that he was an active dealer in human flesh and a particularly unscrupulous one at that; as a number of his captives were judged to be Catholic Christians and unjustly enslaved.<sup>915</sup> Rusetto had been seeking to deliver his cargo to a consortium of Genoese merchants represented in Lviv by Gianotta Lomellini.<sup>916</sup> Another case from the same year gives further evidence of human trafficking. The Genoese merchant, Angelo Squarziafico of Caffa, traveled the route through Poland in a small caravan which included both Eastern goods and a group of slaves. He traveled as far as Banská Bystrica, in what is now modern Slovakia. At this point he was attacked and killed.<sup>917</sup> Given the timing of this incident, 1474, just a year before Caffa fell to the Ottomans, it is also possible that the slaves accompanying Angelo were not those he intended to sell, but rather a part of his own domestic household with whom he was traveling back to Genoa in hopes of avoiding the imminent Ottoman threat. Unfortunately for him, having left one very hot pan, he fell directly into the fire. His example provides yet another reason why slaves were not regularly transported along the overland route. Finally, in a letter sent by an Italian merchant known only as N.N. to the Genoese authorities in 1481, the man

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*florenum dumtaxat dare et in civitate Leopoliensi iu manus nostri theloneatoris reponere et consignare debeant et tenebuntur.*" [AGZ] 6 nr. 67; Hryszko, *Januensis, ergo Mercator*, 50-1.

<sup>915</sup> The persons in question before the court included: "Agnieszka and Łucja from Abogazja, both of the Greek faith, then two slaves named Marta "*de genere getico*" [Georgian], Catholics, and finally Mary of Mingrellia, of the Greek faith, was bought for 12 years, after which they would regain freedom, while the son of one of Mart, named Jerzy, and daughter of Lucia Nikolozin, were completely free and only together with their mothers did they go to Italy." For the original document see: Archiwum miasta Lwowa, *Consularia Leopoliensis*, 1460—1506, 244, 267 as recorded in: Ptaśnik, *Kultura*, 77.

<sup>916</sup> The case revealed that Lomellini was working for Girolama de Sovranis, Agostina de Ferrariis, P.Girolama de Vivaldiis, and Pietra Palavicini among others. Ptaśnik, *Kultura*., 76-7; Rafał Hryszko, *Januensis, ergo mercator?*, 54.

<sup>917</sup> For the original document see: ASG Archivio Segreto, Litterarium, nr 1799, s. 261, 261 v, 262; nr 1801, s. 66 v, 67. as recorded in: Quirini-Popławska, "Z powiązań Polski z Kaffą, kolonią genueńską, 556-7.

boasts of taking slaves on the overland route from Caffa.<sup>918</sup> As N.N. was seeking to promote himself as a knowledgeable guide to the region whom the Genoese might employ to help conduct two of their ambassadors overland to Caffa, the letter is actually quite interesting; as it demonstrates both the route generally taken, and the types of skills required to navigate it successfully. As described by N.N., a successful slaver required knowledge of the route and danger it possessed, letters of safe passage from the ruling authorities across the entire region -- which he had from Venice, the King of Hungary and the King of Poland, and finally, language skills including Italian, Polish, German, Tartar, and Greek. Above all, these skills enabled one to ask for wine at inns along the way -- “*e sì so parte de quella lingua [Polish] e un poco de todescho per demandar da vino in le hostarie, e lo tartarescho e un poco de gregescho.*”<sup>919</sup> It remains unclear, however, if N.N. was one among many who took slaves overland or indeed whether his account is to be trusted at all. Finally, in 1486, the humanist and royal favorite, Filippo Buonaccorsi (*Callimachus Experiens*), sent a twelve year-old “Scythian” slave boy decked out in “native garb”, complete with a bow and arrows and his own pony, to Lorenzo di Medici in Florence as a gift.<sup>920</sup> We know of this “present” from a letter penned during a diplomatic trip Buonaccorsi made to Venice on behalf of the Polish crown. It is therefore possible that rather than bringing the child with him, Buonaccorsi procured the boy while in Venice from that city’s large slave market; but it is equally possible that he had brought him straight from Poland.

Apart from these mentions, I have found no other evidence of Italians moving slaves through Polish lands; but it is likely they did in at least modest numbers. Soon enough however, it would be the Poles themselves who would be headed into bondage in droves. Indeed, from the sixteenth century, the term that came to be used by the Ottomans for young male slaves - *kopna* or *konia*, believed to be a distortion of the Polish word - *chlop* meaning a young male peasant.<sup>921</sup> As the Ottomans gained possession of the Black Sea, the power balance in the region was completely overturned, leading to larger and more repeated raiding by the Crimean Tartars into Polish Red Ruthenia. The first major raid of this type in 1468 captured over 18,000

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<sup>918</sup> He further boasts of having recaptured a few “*teste perdute*” runaways, demonstrating the greater risk of loss on the overland route. Giacomo Grasso ed. *Documenti riguardanti la costituzione di una lega contro il Turco nel 1481* (Genova: Tip. del R. Istituto sordo-muti, 1880), nr. 46 (1481/07)

<sup>919</sup> [Grasso], 46.

<sup>920</sup> “*Post Marsillium donavit Laurentio Petri Francisci de Medicis mancipium unum ex Scythia etatis annorum 12, scythicis vestibus indutum et cum veste, arcu et sagittis et pharetra ac equum parvulum, super quo erat...*” Heinrich Zeissberg, *Kleinere Geschichtsquellen Polens im Mittelalter; eine Nachlese* (Vienna: K. Gerold, 1877), 60. see also: Harold B. Segel, *Renaissance culture in Poland: the rise of humanism : 1470-1543* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 81.

<sup>921</sup> Kizilov, “The Black Sea and the Slave Trade,” 232.

people with similar raids following on a nearly annual basis for the coming two centuries.<sup>922</sup> By the seventeenth century the number of slaves being trucked annually through Caffa may have exceeded 30,000.<sup>923</sup> With their own countrymen being so traded into bondage, few it seems were happy to see them traded through Polish lands; and so use of the overland route for this particular trade was abandoned.

The slave trade was an integral part of Black Sea commerce. By the fourteenth century, slavery was uncommon in Poland but was practiced regularly in the Tartar lands, the Ottoman Empire, and in Italy itself. A number of the Italians in Poland were involved at least tangentially in the slave trade. Pietro Bichernao's son Francisco was an avid human trafficker while Filippo Buonaccorsi arranged for a young boy to be given as a gift to Lorenzo di Medici. Italians involved in Poland also kept slaves, including Guglielmo Rucellai and Michele di ser Matteo.<sup>924</sup> For these men, the holding of other humans in bondage was normal. It is unsurprising that Italians in Poland might be interested in the slave trade as a major center was Caffa, from whence Italians regularly ferried human cargo across the waterway between the Black Sea with the Mediterranean. As the Ottomans expanded throughout the fifteenth century however, the direct nautical route connecting the Italian Peninsula with the Black Sea was cut and so the overland journey through Poland to the West became more popular and special tax incentives were even granted by the Polish monarchy to encourage such trade. This overland route however, appears to have been used infrequently, perhaps in part due to the fact that as time progressed, ever more men and women, were captured from Polish lands themselves and taken into bondage, rendering the trade more unsavory. Thus, while Italians, the Genoese in particular, did traffic some people through Poland, their business there was limited and none appear to have kept a slave while they resided in the kingdom.

### 3.13 Money

Money – *argentus*, *pecunia*, was one of the key commodities that Italians moved through Poland. Italians were the premier bankers of the medieval period and were heavily engaged in Poland in the transfer of funds collected for the papacy. During this time, funds were funneled along two primary channels - the northern route to the Baltic and onwards to Bruges, or to the

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<sup>922</sup> Fisher, Muscovy and the Black Sea slave trade," 579.

<sup>923</sup> Kizilov, "The Black Sea and the Slave Trade," 214.

<sup>924</sup> (1418/08/05) ASV, Cancelleria inferiore, Notai, 228 fol. 432-5; Iris Origo, "The domestic enemy: the eastern slaves in Tuscany in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries," *Speculum* 30.3 (1955): 333.

south through Hungary to Venice. Upon reaching either of these junctures, the money entered Italian banking channels and could be transferred to the papal treasury with greater ease, often via a *lettera di cambio* – a letter of exchange (a financial instrument vaguely analogous to the modern check that will be described in greater detail later in this section..<sup>925</sup> The proclivity to transfer funds through either Bruges or Venice depended upon the political situation at the time and the various means by which papal collectors were able to arrange the movement of such large sums from the country. This transfer arrangements were first disrupted with the movement of the Papacy from Rome to Avignon and later by the Western Papal Schism (1378-1417). Money shifted from being sent primarily across the Baltic to Bruges to being sent through Hungary to Venice. The Council of Constance (1414-1418), which in ending the schism saw John XXIII, the papal candidate supported by the Polish clergy, deposed and declared an Anti-Pope in the historical record, witnessed another major change. During the same period there arrived in Krakow a permanent agent of the Medici bank, which allowed for the first time, *lettera di cambio* to be drafted in Krakow itself.

This section discussing money, includes the history of early Italian banking activity in Poland and also describes briefly the interesting case of Wrocław, which while outside the Kingdom of Poland, remained inside the Ecclesiastical Province of Gniezno and thus linked to the Polish Church and its collectorate. Wrocław had strong ties with Venice and was more closely linked to Italian banking circles and its special position is noted. Also compared is how banking was performed in Poland before and after Italians began introducing more advanced techniques. While, some influence can be noted, it was not until the sixteenth century, beyond the scope of this study, that modern banking techniques were adopted in Poland. Even when this was the case, it came primarily through the influence of South German merchants, rather than Italians directly. The reasons why Italian banking techniques had such a limited impact in Poland during the fourteenth and fifteenth century, despite Poland having some exposure to them, is discussed. A careful look is also taken at the *lettera di cambio* – the letter of bill of exchange, which was one of the major innovations of the medieval Italian banking system, and its use in Poland during the period.

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<sup>925</sup> Such letters of exchange can be found in the literature by a number of names: cambium (Latin); lettera di cambio or di pagamento (Italian); lettre de change (French); Wechselbrief (German: modern der Wechsel, die Tratte); or wisselbrief (Dutch).

### 3.13.1 Moving Papal Funds through Venice and Bruges

As the papal bureaucracy grew and developed from the twelfth century, so too did its need for funds and its adroitness at extracting it. Indeed, it has been argued that the unique ability of the Papacy to bring in large amounts of money from distant corners of Europe was one of the major driving factors in the evolution and success of Italian banking enterprises and accounting.<sup>926</sup> Previous to this, and really down until the formation of discontinuous Empires in the Early Modern period, no other political entity in Europe had the need to send sums such long distances. The child of this fiscal necessity was the invention of a complex system of exchange, spearheaded by Italian merchant bankers, which had far-reaching consequences for European development.<sup>927</sup> As time passed, individuals sent to gather the papal levies, known as papal collectors, would try a number of different options to move funds as quickly and as safely as possible the many miles from Poland to the court of St. Peter, be it in Rome or Avignon. From large loads of unsmelted silver hauled in a string of carts, to somewhat shady loan deals made with merchants, to contracts with Italian and South German merchant banking companies, the tale of the movement of papal monies follows that of Poland's integration with Western Europe. Papal collectors did not, as has been argued, forge the paths which were later followed by others. Rather, they were forced to take advantage of trade routes and men already in place; and their work was often frustrated by unfriendly political waters, pirates, bandits, and recalcitrant merchants. Transmission of payments was further hampered initially by a lack of proper banking facilities; which was only rectified at the beginning of the fifteenth century. From early on, the role of Italian intermediaries was of key importance. Indeed, the moment where collectors could consider the job well done was not when the money reached Rome, but rather when it arrived in either Bruges or Venice, from whence it became the responsibility of Italian papal bankers.

Yet, while papal collection missions were the first means by which Italian banking houses and their scions were introduced to Poland, they did not have an immediately significant impact on

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<sup>926</sup> Roman Zaoral, "The management of papal collections and long-distance trade in the thirteenth-century Czech lands," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome - Moyen Âge*[online], 127-2 | 2015, mis en ligne le 12 octobre 2015, Accessed December 03, 2020 URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2732> ; DOI : 10.4000/mefrm.2732, 2.

<sup>927</sup> Let it not be said, however, that the collection of Papal finances was the only root for innovations in financial transactions and accounting. The twelfth-century saw an overall increase in mercantile exchange permitting what de Roover has argued were the three basic elements needed for the development of financial schemes complex enough to require sophisticated accounting: credit, partnership, and agency. For more on this topic see: Raymond de Roover, "Characteristics of Bookkeeping before Paciolo," *The Accounting Review* 13, no. 2 (1938): 145.

trade, nor were they the root of Italian immigration to the region as has been argued by previous scholars.<sup>928</sup> If anything, it was the other way round. Papal collectors were forestalled by the necessity of using existing trade routes, and having the merchants themselves carry both coins and goods to the Curia. The routes taken were modified accordingly, due to safety concerns and normal paths used by merchants. It thus shifted over time, initially from Olomouc to Prague, Prague to Vienna, Vienna to Venice, and then to Bruges, back to Venice and a mix of the two.<sup>929</sup> The main concern was to get coins into reach of the circuit of Italian banking houses connected to the Curia; and the two closest nexus points from Poland were then either Venice or Bruges. Oddly enough, Buda was never part of the circuit; although, as the works of Krisztina Arany and Katalin Prajda have shown, there was significant Florentine merchant banking activity in that city. The reasons for this lack was discussed in Chapter 1 while the next section covers the impact of papal collections on the Italian community in Krakow, and their connection with the northern route from Poland to Bruges.

The collection and transfer of Papal funds gathered across Europe had been a major concern for Italian banking establishments from the thirteenth century. As discussed above, during most of the late thirteenth and fourteenth century, most of the money collected in Poland was funneled north up the Vistula to the Baltic and eventually to Bruges, where it entered the circuit of established Italian banking houses who kept a strong presence in the city. Given the distance of Polish territory to a point where it could enter the wider-Mediterranean trading circuit, collectors were forced to get creative. This meant that at times, monies were sent south to Venice, rather than north to Bruges.

### **Moving Funds South to Venice**

In 1261, Petrus de Pontecurvo, a clerk of the Camera and Archdeacon of Gradec, became the first Polish collector to use Venice as his transfer point.<sup>930</sup> The choice of Venice as a nexus for money being sent from Poland to Rome may appear odd at first blush, but it was in fact a well-considered choice. Critically, Venice was the most easily accessed international banking hub

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<sup>928</sup> Jan Ptaśnik, *Kultura włoska wieków średnich w Polsce* [Italian Culture in Medieval Poland], (Warsaw: Instytut Wydawniczy Biblioteka Polska, 1922), 16.

<sup>929</sup> For the earliest route through Olomouc and Vienna, see: Zaoral, “The management of papal collections URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2732> ; DOI : 10.4000/mefrm.2732, 2.

<sup>930</sup> Petrus was appointed collector in Bohemia, Moravia, Poland, Austria, and Hungary by Pope Alexander IV in either 1255 or 1259. For details of his appointment see: Zaoral, “The management of papal collections URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2732>; (1261/09/26) APV nr 9; *Regesta diplomatica nec non epistolaria Bohemiae et Moraviae* II, ed. J. Emler, (Prague Historický ústav of the Československá akademie věd, 1882), p. 125-126, nr. 328.

where troublesome hard specie could be switched for a letter of exchange, that operated in essence as a nontransferable cheque – a far safer and faster way of moving money.<sup>931</sup> The money could be deposited with the then favored banking house of the Pope, which in 1261 under Urban IV meant the Buonsignori of Siena.<sup>932</sup> Matters became much more complicated however, when in 1262 Pope Urban IV placed the cities of both Siena and Florence under interdict for their support of the Pope's enemy, Manfred of Sicily and the Ghibelline cause, which had the effect of essentially freezing all international banking transfers. Until the interdict was lifted, no commerce of any kind could be carried out between the Church and merchants of those cities. Even money which was owed to the Camera and was ready for deposit could not be sent. These sanctions were painful for both sides and caused a sudden crisis over what do with the funds now inbound from Poland.

In response to the crisis, the Collector Petrus was sent a second letter in 1262, instructing him not to attempt to take the money to Venice directly, but instead to place it into the care of the powerful Bishop of Olomouc Bruno of Schauenburg (1245-1281). It would then be his job to organize its further journey south to Venice.<sup>933</sup> Bishop Bruno meanwhile, was sent an extremely complimentary letter requesting his assistance in the matter and the counsel to store the funds, once they arrived in Venice, at the secure treasury of St. Mark's Cathedral.<sup>934</sup> It was hoped that the situation with Florence and Siena would soon be resolved, but until then the money could be stored safely in the Venetian vaults. By August of 1263, a more permanent solution had been found, as a long list of special exemptions was drawn up, absolving a large number of Sienese and Florentine banking houses from excommunication. Before a means of

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<sup>931</sup> The *Instrumenta Cambii* was a document unique to cameral banking, it functioned as a receipt acknowledging movement of Church funds to the camera's central account. All collected funds were remitted through Italian banks using this procedure. Upon arrival at the nominated papal banking house, the collector was responsible for disgorging the funds he had gathered in front of a collection of witnesses, including the papal banker who would weigh and assess them. A tally would be made; and two copies of an *Instrumenta Cambii* were drawn up, recording the final sum to be paid to the camera, the date of issue, the name of the collector and the name of the bank through which the funds would be transmitted. One copy of the document would be given to the collector as a receipt while the other was sent to the camera. Once the money had arrived and been credited to the papal account, the camera would issue a discharge to the collector. Roover, *The Rise*, 199-200; Renouard, *Les Relations*, 73-76. taking into consideration the critique by Roover that *billet a ordre* ought to be replaced with *cedule obligatoi* to avoid the impression that such bills of exchange might be negotiable as this evolution in banking did not occur until the seventeenth century. Yves Renouard, "Les relations," 358.

<sup>932</sup> The Buonsignori of Siena would hold prominence at the Papal court from 1261-1292, except for a break from 1272-76 when Pope Gregory X, formerly known as Teobaldo Visconti of Piacenza, chose to patronize his fellow compatriots, one Spini of Piacenza. Renouard, *Les Relations*, 570-2.

<sup>933</sup> (1262/05/03) APV nr. 10; *Regesta diplomatica nec non epistolaria Bohemiae et Moraviae* II, p. 140-141, nr 365.

<sup>934</sup> *Regesta diplomatica nec non epistolaria Bohemiae et Moraviae* II, p. 140, nr. 364.



negotiating passage of the money through Italian Banking houses could be attempted however, the funds first had to make it to Venice safely. For this, Petrus called upon the then functional military arm of the Church – The Order of Knights of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem, commonly known as the Hospitallers and the Knights Templar. Employing the Templars and Hospitallers as carrying agents also reflects earlier practice but would soon be abandoned. Unfortunately, a lack of sources prevents us from knowing when or how the monies collected by Petrus di Pontecurvo arrived in Rome. Presumably, the Bishop of Olomouc was able to see the funds safely carted to Venice either by Templars or in the hands of some of his own retainers. Their route appears to have taken them through Vienna, where they were obviously unable to collect Petrus's previously deposited goods, and from there mostly likely along the Southerly route to Italy through Weiner Neustadt and the Villach Pass.<sup>935</sup> The decision by Urban IV to absolve most of the Sienese and Florentine banking community in 1263, meant that letters of exchange could be sent once more from Venice to Rome.

By 1267, the Prior of St. Marks in Venice was being called upon to assist the Buonsignori Bank in their efforts to collect money due to the Camera from the Bishop of Zagreb, so by that point funds were assuredly once again flowing.<sup>936</sup> The next few years would not mark any major changes to this basic program established under Petrus. Collectors appointed to the region would visit local churches, gather funds, and then transfer them with the assistance of the Templars and the Hospitallers to Venice where they would be given over to papal bankers to be sent via a letter of exchange to Rome.<sup>937</sup> Gerardus di Mutina (Modena) remitted funds in this way during the five years he labored as collector in Poland, Hungary, and Sclavonia, sending thousands of florins worth of silver into the hands of the Venice branch of the Alfani Bank, to be credited to the Camera<sup>938</sup> A large portion of this money was then immediately sent

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<sup>935</sup> Following the route stabilized during the reign of Přemysl II Ottokar, King of Bohemia (1253-1278), falling into the footsteps of the massive shipments of silver bound for Venice from Bohemian mines, particularly Jihlava (Iglau) and Kutná Hora (Kuttenberg) which flourished during the period.: Zaoral, "The management of papal collections, 8-11.

<sup>936</sup> [Theiner] I nr. CXXIII pg. 90-1.

<sup>937</sup> Master Rainaldus, Canon of Chieti (Theracinensis) was active as a papal legate and collector in Hungary, Bohemia, Poland, Moravia, Sclavonia, and Salzburg 1265-66 *Codex diplomaticus Hungariae ecclesiasticus ac civilis, VII.1*, ed. G. Fejér, (Buda, Typis Typogr. Regis Universitatis Ungaricae, 1830), nr 271 pg. 325-328.

<sup>938</sup> (1284/08/05) "*Imprimis deposuit idem magister Gerardus apud Jacobum Alfani et eius socios mercatores de Florentia...*". APV nr. 21, 22-26. see also: *Rationes collectorum pontificorum in Hungaria. Pápai tizedszedők számadásai. 1281–1375.* (Budapest: 1887), nr. I pg. 1-12.

to assist Charles I of Anjou King of Sicily, who was heavily backed by the papacy, with the rest being sent on to Rome.<sup>939</sup>

### New Orders Mark the Shift to Bruges

A major change however, came a few years later during the tenure of the papal collector Johannes Muscato, Archdeacon Lanciciensi of Gniezno. Johannes was named to the position by Pope Martin IV (1281-1285). He had apparently begun his collecting activities in Poland in a similar fashion as his predecessors, publishing his call and asking that funds be collected by local bishops and sent to him.<sup>940</sup> Initially it was the responsibility of individual bishops to see that their local clergy paid the appropriate dues. As the administrative apparatus of the apostolic camera became more sophisticated throughout the fourteenth century, collectors instead were given the power to nominate “subcollectors” to assist them in this duty. During the first three years of Muscato’s time as collector these funds were almost certainly sent to Venice. In 1288 however, Pope Nicholas IV (1288-1292) wrote directing that all funds should be funneled, not to the south, but instead, “*ad villam Brugensem*” - to Bruges, the main trading hub on the coast of Flanders. The note from the Pope also stipulated that the money be put into the hands of a different banking house, the now favored Pulci Bank of Florence.<sup>941</sup> The change was abrupt, as less than a year earlier instructions continued to favor the Venetian route and the Alfani. There were numerous reasons for the change with the upshot being that for the next century, the greater portion of papal funds were routed to the north rather than the south.<sup>942</sup> In

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<sup>939</sup>The money was sent through the hands of Balionis Roscilionis de Luca. “*De predicta namque pecunia decimarum collecta in regno Ungarie ac in partibus Polonie et Slavonie per prefatum magistrum Gerardum de Mutina, que apud mercatores de societate Albanorum de Florentia in depositum habebatur, dicti mercatores in quibusdam mutuis factis per Romanam Ecclesiam de pecunia decime Terre Sancte domino Karulo regi Sicilie et eius filio domino Karolo principi Salernitano pro defensione et custodia dicti regni Sicilie infrascriptas quantitates pecunie persolverunt.*”. *Rationes collectorum pontificorum in Hungaria. Pápai tizedszedők számadásai. 1281–1375.* (Budapest: 1887), 11-12. For more on the political intrigues of the day and the wars these funds went to serve, see: Kenneth Meyer Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant: 1204-1571. 1, 1.* (Philadelphia, Pa: American Philos. Soc, 1991), 140-9.

<sup>940</sup> Johannes Muscato was first commissioned in January 1285. [Theiner] I nr. CLXX –CLXXXVIII pg. 92-5. APV nr. 22-25. Initially it was the responsibility of individual bishops to see that their local clergy paid the appropriate dues. As the administrative apparatus of the apostolic camera became more sophisticated throughout the fourteenth century, collectors instead were given the power to nominate “subcollectors” to assist them in this duty. For more on this see: William E Lunt, *Papal Revenues in the Middle Ages Vol 1* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1934), 274-301. And Christiane Schuchard, *Die päpstlichen Kollektoren im späten Mittelalter*, (Tubingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2000), 35-40.

<sup>941</sup> (1288/06/22) “*Rudolpho Bonaguide, Rogerio Dardorci et Johanni Bonaguide, camere nostre mercatoribus de societate Pulcum Rimbertainorum de Florentia*” APV I nr. 27.

<sup>942</sup> In a couple of cases, funds were routed through Venice rather than Bruges but this was the exception rather than the rule. These cases included: (1309/08/26) 1508 fl of funds sent from Poland deposited in Venice in many currencies by the Papal Collector Bonaiutus de Casentino, cannon of Aquileia, *magister cappellanus Pape*, with

a couple of cases, funds were routed through Venice rather than Bruges but this was the exception rather than the rule.<sup>943</sup>

### Italian Bankers in Bruges

While the first papal collectors are known to have arrived in Poland in 1230, it was half a century later that Pope Nicholas IV (1288-1292) on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1288, issued a directive that all funds coming from Poland should be funneled, not to the south as had previously been the case, but instead “*ad villam Brugensem*” to Bruges, the main trading hub on the coast of Flanders. The note from the pope also stipulated that the money be put into the hands of a different banking house, the now favored Pulci Bank of Florence.<sup>944</sup> The change was abrupt; as less than a year earlier, instructions continued to favor the Venetian route and the Alfani Bank.<sup>945</sup> There are numerous possible reasons to explain this change. At first sight, the choice of Bruges as an ultimate destination for papal collections made in Poland appears even more unreasonable than Venice. Flanders was after all much further away, located completely on the other side of the European continent, and equally distant from Rome. Upon closer inspection, however, the route made a great deal of sense. Flanders may have been further away, but the distance could be traveled nearly the entire route by water, making it much faster and cheaper. Ships had

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the Dominicans in Venice. [CVH] 1 nr. 54; (1354/02) Papal Collector Andreas de Verulis, Canon of Wrocław, sent 166 marks in gold and 1576 marks in silver for Peters Pence to Ryamund, Abbott of the monastery S. Nicolas in Lido, in Venice, Bull II nr. 689; (1369/08/05) Papal Collector Andreas de Verulis, Canon of Wrocław, sent 827fl through Nicholas Trutel, citizen of Krakow, and his company, to Venice within 12 months to the hands of Petrus, Abbott of the Monastery of St. Gregory the Greater in Venice, signed in his home in Krakow. CHV 1 nr. 82; (1369/08/05) A bunch of Krakow merchants and clerics recognize in Krakow before Papal Collector Andreas de Verulis, Canon of Wrocław, that Nicholas Trutel and his associates had delivered to Venice to Petrus, Abbot of the Monastery of St. Gregory the Greater, 827 fl. Subscript states they did this in June 1369. It seems they had promised to do so within 11 months of having originally received the funds. MPV II nr. 228

<sup>943</sup> As recently as February 1287, Pope Honorius IV had instructed Ada de Polonia, Canon of Krakow, who was working conjointly with Johannes Muscato as collector in Poland to send all funds Via the Alfani. As Ada was also responsible for monies brought in from Hungary and Zadar, the choice of Venice made sense. (1287/02/04 “*volumus et per apostolica tibi scripta districte preeipiendo mandamus, quatinus totam pecuniam, quam de predicta decima, et vicesima, legatis, obventionibus et aliis eidem subventioni concessis collectam inveneris, quamque colligere te contigerit de eisdem, dilectis filiis Iacomino Alfani, Lapo Brunecti de Alfani, Verinilio predicti Iacomini filio, Nerio Iohannis, Bruno Aldebrandini, Vanni Galterotti et Bonaventure Gerardi Civibus et Mercatoribus Florentinis, de Alfanorum societate, vel eorum soeis pro eis...*”) [Theiner] I CLXXXIII pg. 100

<sup>944</sup> “*Rudolpho Bonaguide, Rogerio Dardorci et Johanni Bonaguide, camere nostre mercatoribus de societate Pulcum Rimbertainorum de Florentia*” (1288/06/22) [APV] I nr. 27.

<sup>945</sup> As recently as February 1287, Pope Honorius IV had instructed Ada de Polonia, Canon of Krakow, who was working conjointly with Johannes Muscato as collector in Poland, to send all funds Via the Alfani. As Ada was also responsible for monies brought in from Hungary and Croatia, the choice of Venice made sense. (1287/02/04 “*volumus et per apostolica tibi scripta districte precipiendo mandamus, quatinus totam pecuniam, quam de predicta decima, et vicesima, legatis, obventionibus et aliis eidem subventioni concessis collectam inveneris, quamque colligere te contigerit de eisdem, dilectis filiis Iacomino Alfani, Lapo Brunecti de Alfani, Verinilio predicti Iacomini filio, Nerio Iohannis, Bruno Aldebrandini, Vanni Galterotti et Bonaventure Gerardi civibus et mercatoribus Florentinis, de Alfanorum societate, vel eorum sociis pro eis, nostro et eiusdem terre sanete nomine, sublato cuiuslibet difficultatis obstaculo, deponere et assignare procures...*”) [Theiner] I CLXXXIII pg. 100.

begun sailing directly from Bruges to Italian ports through the straits of Gibraltar in 1270. Soon thereafter, organized “public” galley convoys would begin to be sent northward by Venice, Genoa, and somewhat later, also Florence. While these ships eventually headed back to their home ports, they made numerous stops along the way, hitting the English coast at Southampton and the Spanish Coast at the island of Majorca. Somewhere between Majorca and Livorno, goods that were intended for the Roman market, including papal funds which by now were sometimes transformed into purchased items, were unloaded into smaller vessels which could run up the Tiber. Ships could also put in at Civitavecchia, which was where, for example, the larger Venetian galleys unloaded their cargo for Rome, but not those arriving from Bruges. The Roman customs registers indicate that most products coming from Flanders were recorded on the landward side, implying that they had been offloaded at the last major Italian port and then trundled the last few miles by cart; or that they had come the entire route overland.<sup>946</sup>

On the Polish side, the Vistula linked the Polish interior to the Baltic sea where Hanseatic vessels had begun making regular voyages through the straits of Denmark to land in Bruges during the first half of the thirteenth century.<sup>947</sup> Rome was then connected to Bruges through a strong overland route which had for over a century connected Italy with the fairs in the Champagne and now increasingly saw English wool sent to the burgeoning cloth industry in Tuscany. In 1277, however, a water route was opened as well when Genoa, soon to be followed by Venice and then Florence, hoisted sail on galleys which traveled to the North Sea through the Straits of Gibraltar.<sup>948</sup> Bruges itself was growing swiftly into a prosperous hub for international trade and an important banking center; as it stood at a nexus point connecting the British Isles to the mainland and trade running North-South. Together, these factors were combined by the year 1288 to make the possibility of sending papal funds from Poland to Bruges an attractive one.

Secondly, Nicholas IV was new to Peter’s throne; and it was common for a new papal administration to favor different banking houses from that of their predecessors. It had also been the Apostolic Camera’s policy to share out the risk of transacting business amongst a number of firms, so as not to place papal finances all in the hands of one banking house where it might be dropped. Nicholas IV continued these policies and favored multiple firms, most

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<sup>946</sup>Esch, “Italienische Kaufleute in Brügge,” 250. Renouard, Yves. “Achats et paiements de draps flamands par les premiers papes d’Avignon.” *Mélanges d’archéologie et d’histoire* 52, no. 1 (1935): 293.

<sup>947</sup> “In 1252, German trade in Flanders had grown important enough to decide Lübeck and Hamburg to open negotiations over the concession of legal status.” Van Houtte, “The Rise and Decline of the Market of Bruges,” 32-3.

<sup>948</sup> Van Houtte, “The Rise and Decline of the Market of Bruges,” 33.

prominently the Buonsignori, Ricciardi, Spini, and the Pulci.<sup>949</sup> Finally, the move may also have come about as a reaction to the widespread political disruption occurring in the region at the time. In 1287, Poland was invaded for the third time by the Mongol hordes, together with allied Ruthenians under Nogai Khan. Trouble was also brewing in the South; where in the same year, King Ladislaus IV of Hungary was excommunicated by his own bishops for adopting pagan customs. In response to this, Ladislaus IV raged that, “beginning with the Archbishop of Esztergom and his suffragans, I shall exterminate the whole lot right up to Rome.”<sup>950</sup> Obviously, moving large amounts of papal cash through these areas would not have been a wise choice. The dark clouds hovering over the route towards Bruges, on the other hand, appeared to be lifting. Duke Henryk IV Probus of Wrocław, had reconciled after many years of conflict with the bishop of that city and been made high duke.<sup>951</sup>

While as early as 1288, the papacy had been recommending that its collectors send monies via Bruges, prior to the early fourteenth century this had always been done by the collectors themselves or by the hands of traveling prelates.<sup>952</sup> While many of the early collectors were of Italian or French origin, they did not remain long in Poland beyond the mandate of their mission; and so are not included among the traders presented in this dissertation. With the papacy’s move to Avignon, and in the wake of the financial reforms made at the Council of Vienne in 1312, however, change was in the air. New methods to move the increasingly large sums of money being gathered from the provinces needed to be created.<sup>953</sup> One of these methods that became frequently used was to send funds through the hands of merchants traveling to major banking centers. In the case of Poland, that meant primarily transit through Bruges.

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<sup>949</sup> Ignazio Del Punta, “Tuscan merchant-bankers and moneyers and their relations with the Roman Curia in the XIIIth and early XIVth c.,” *Rivista di storia della Chiesa in Italia*, vol. 64, no. 1 (2010):43-4.

<sup>950</sup> Pál Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen: A History of Medieval Hungary, 895-1526* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 109.

<sup>951</sup> Długosz, *The Annals*, 229-32.

<sup>952</sup> Nicholas IV, on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1288, wrote to the papal collector in Poland, Johannes Moscata directing that all funds should be funneled “*ad villam Brugensem*” into the hands of the then favored Pulci Bank of Florence, to *Rudolphus Bonaguide, Dardorci* and *Johannes Bonaguide* of the *Pulci de Floren camere nostre mercatoribus de societate Pulcum Rimbertainorum*” (1288/06/22) [APV] I nr. 27.

<sup>953</sup> Complete reorganization of the Apostolic Camera as part of a veritable Cambrian explosion of the papal bureaucracy begun under Clement V; but was fully realized by John XXII (1316-34), who has been characterized by historians as, “an administrative genius.” Under him, the papacy’s fiscal house was put in order. Critical to this development was the centralization of the Church’s finances into the hands of the papacy, which greatly expanded its revenue stream. This process, which was spearheaded by Clement V at the Council of Vienne, 1311 – 1312, and continued throughout the rest of the century, had an enormous impact on how collections in the provinces were made, and saw a dramatic increase in papal income. – “John XXII collected some 228,000 gold florins a year; Benedict XII, 166,000; Clement VI, 188,500; Innocent VI, 53,600; Urban V, 260,000; and Gregory XI, 481,000.” Joëlle Rollo-Koster, *Avignon and its papacy, 1309–1417: Popes, institutions, and society* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 155-6.

## Poland's Connection to Bruges

Merchants from Krakow are first attested in Bruges from 1310, and while they may have begun making the trip earlier, such journeys were likely infrequent, given their absence from the sources. This lack of strong merchant ties may answer why papal collectors had not previously sought to ask merchant caravans to assist them with their transfer problems. There merchants would be headed to Bruges in any case as a part of their regular business; and so their taking along an extra load could perhaps be arranged. Prior to the late 1320s and early 1330s however, direct long-distance trade between Krakow and Bruges was still uncommon. Krakovian merchants would cart their wares perhaps as far as Toruń and there hand them off to middlemen who would see them on towards Flanders. Such multi-layered dealings would not have suited the needs of the papal collectors; who preferred a more secure point to point-to-point transfer. The fewer hands the Pope's money passed through, the better. By the first decades of the fourteenth century, however, things began to change; and merchants from both Krakow and Wrocław began venturing further afield and establishing direct long-distance trading ties. It was at this point that the papal collector, grasping for a solution, perhaps approached or was approached by a group of prominent citizens of Krakow with an interesting offer – carry the papal funds to Bruges in return for use of the money in the intervening period.

### Krakow Merchants Moving Papal Funds for Italian Collectors

This solution was hit upon because the problem for the collectors was, of course, that it was not in the merchant's interest to take on the extra risk of transporting papal funds for nothing.<sup>954</sup> Even the most pious of traders might be forgiven for expressing a certain reluctance to tote a wagon full of silver bullion through the countryside. The dangers were certainly real enough and are discussed below in the subsection, 'Transfer Problems'. Not only were all the normal discomforts and hazards of travel involved like rain, broken wagon wheels, etc., but also possible encounters with bandits, shipwreck, and imprisonment by local robber barons. Added

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<sup>954</sup> Oddly enough, both Małowist and Depsy appear to ignore this as a relevant fact completely, assuming the merchants agreed to take the funds as a matter of course. Ptaśnik, on the other hand, saw in such arrangements only an opportunity for collectors to take kick-backs in a conspiracy with the merchants to embezzle church funds. In all cases, these scholars ignored the potent reality that transferring silver and gold over long distances was a risky and therefore an expensive proposition that had to be compensated for in some manner. Jan Ptaśnik, "Kolektorzy kamery apostolskiej w Polsce Piastowskiej [Collectors of the Apostolic Camera in Piast Poland]". *Rozprawy Akademii Umiejętności, Wydział Historyczno-Filologiczny*, series II vol. 25 (1907): 59-60; Marian Małowist, „Le développement des rapports économiques entre la Flandre, la Pologne et les pays limitrophes du XIIIe au XIVe siècle,” *Revue belge de philologie et histoire*, vol. 10, fasc. 4, (1931):1013-1065.; Depsy, Bruges et les collectories pontificales, 95-109.

to this was the ongoing conflict between the Kingdom of Poland and the Teutonic Knights, who had seized large parts of Pomerania in 1310, and now claimed suzerainty over the entire area. An example of this last hazard is the aforementioned attack in 1339 by the Teutonic Knights on a Polish trading mission bound for Flanders by way of Gdańsk. Yet, the collector had no desire to pay the merchants outright; as to do so would cut into his own profits, so a deal was struck. The merchants would be given what amounted to a 10-12 month interest-free loan on the condition that they delivered the original principal amount in full to appointed individuals in Bruges by a fixed date. A good example of such an exchange contract comes from 1337, when Nicholas Wirzingi and a group of his partners agreed to convey 90 gold marks and 15 ½ scot. to the city of Bruges, taking on full liability and all expenses involved in the transfer, to be delivered within a year upon the next feast of St. Jacob (July 25th).<sup>955</sup> Nowhere is any payment mentioned for this service, even while the contract explicitly acknowledges the possible dangers and expenses involved in such a trip. The reader is forced to assume that the payment came in the implicit agreement that the merchants were free to use the money as they pleased within the allotted time, as long as they returned the principal. As long as the full amount was eventually handed over in Bruges, whatever benefits might be garnered by Nicholas and his companions by investing the principal in the interim was theirs to keep. As merchants from Krakow and Wrocław were at that moment seeking to increase their trading ties with Bruges, which acted as one of the major European entrepôts during that period, such a deal must have been extremely tempting in spite of the risks.<sup>956</sup> With papal funds, Polish merchants could purchase more goods from the home market as well as copper, lead, furs, and wax. The goods could then be transported via the Vistula to Gdańsk and then by ship to Bruges, where they could sell it in exchange for coveted Flemish cloth, wine, and other exotica.<sup>957</sup> It was also here that Polish and Italian merchants would likely have met in greater numbers for the first time. Through these contacts, Polish merchants would also have been introduced to new forms of accounting, contracts, and financial instruments like the *lettera di cambio* - letter of exchange. It is further highly possible that it was through meetings in Bruges that word returned to the Italian Peninsula that Poland might be worth investigating. By the 1350s, at

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<sup>955</sup> 1337 *Item, deposui apud Nicolaum Werzingi et socios suos nonaginta marcas auri et xv. scotos cum dimidio, quas tenentur assignare in eadem Camera similiter eorum periculo et expensis infra unum annum a festo beati Iacobi proximo continuo computandum, prout in instrumento publico per me Camere destinato plenius continetur.* [Theiner] I nr. DXIX pg. 391.

<sup>956</sup> For more on Flemish-Polish trade see: Małowist "Le développement des rapports économiques," 1013-1065. For a briefer English summary of the same material see: Małowist, "Polish-Flemish trade," 1-9.

<sup>957</sup> Małowist, "Polish-Flemish trade," 5. For more on Krakow's trade relations with Prussia and Flanders see: Kutrzeba, *Finanse i handel*, 194-235.

least one Italian, identifiable in the sources by the cognomen “Gallicus”, residing in Krakow, can be identified among the merchants carrying funds to Bruges. Later on, the assistant to the papal collector, Arnaldus della Caucina, Canon of Krakow, was also an Italian.<sup>958</sup>

It should also be noted that among the surviving contracts, none reveals a due date of less than 10 months, implying that this was the shortest period in which a merchant believed he could make a good return on investment for accepting the risks involved.<sup>959</sup> Given that a round-trip trading journey between Krakow and Bruges could take as little as two months, in theory, a merchant could travel at least 4 times back and forth before having to deposit the funds, giving ample opportunity to turn a profit.<sup>960</sup> Of course, much depended on travel conditions, the availability of goods, and the annual fair cycle, which is likely the reason why 10-12 months was the time frame eventually agreed upon. The collector, and even more so the pope, would have liked to see the money transferred faster, and letters attest to the fact.<sup>961</sup> Ten months, however, must have been the absolute limit to which a merchant would agree.<sup>962</sup> Also a factor in the contract negotiations between the merchants and the collector must have been the precise date upon which the monies were to be handed over. The choice of St. Jacob’s Day - July 25<sup>th</sup> from our example 1337 contract, was not made by chance.<sup>963</sup> It fell conveniently after the main

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<sup>958</sup> In July of 1351, Andreonus de Plana of Asti received papal monies in Bruges from the hands of Petrus Gallicus, son of Fredericus Gallicus. MPV II nr. 83. In 1371, as part of his last will and testament, Arnaldus granted his “servitor” Stephanus Gallicus 2 marks and ½ gr. MPV II nr. 278

<sup>959</sup> Roover, *The Rise*, 195.

<sup>960</sup> Beata Możejko and Waldemar Ossowski, “Artifacts from the late medieval Copper Wreck (Gdańsk, Poland),” in *Ships and Maritime Landscapes: Proceedings of the Thirteenth International Symposium on Boat and Ship Archaeology, Amsterdam 2012*, eds. Jerzy Gawronski, André van Holk, and Joost Schokkenbroek (Eeeld: Barkhuis, 2017), 124.

<sup>961</sup> In June 1333, for example, Pope John XXII sent a plea to Peter de Alvernia, asking him to speed up transfers, as the money was urgently needed by the Church. “*Cum pro negociis ecclesie Romane urgentibus pecuniis, quas collegisse debes in partibus Regni Polonie, ad quod te dudum misimus, egere nostra Camera plurimum dinoscatur, discretioni tue iniungimus tenore presentium districtius et mandamus, quatinus omnes pecunias predictas destinare fideliter ad eandem Cameram, sublata cunctatione qualibet, non postponas, ipsam de pecuniis ipsis, et de quibus proventibus eas collegeris, redditurus cerciorem clare, particulariter et distincte.*” [Theiner] I nr. 469 pg. 349.

<sup>962</sup> There is a single mention of an 8-month transfer agreement but it comes from a letter of recommendation issued by Pope Clemens V to the bishop of Gniezno, explaining to him how money was being moved by the collector Arnaldo, and advising him that he might do the same. The Pope was perhaps showing wishful thinking that an eight-month contract might be arranged, as no extant contracts demonstrate that such a shorter time frame was ever agreed upon. “*Et nichilominus easdem pecunias collectas una cum prefato Canonico, si presens fuerit, alias per te ipsum certis mercatoribus fide ac facultatibus ydoneis assignare procures, qui eorum periculis et expensis pecunias ipsas eidem Camere vel in villa Brugensi Tornacensis diocesis dilecto filio Iacobo de Malabayla mercatori Astensi, vel eius sociis aut factoribus ibidem morantibus infra octo vel decem menses a die assignationis, que per te facta eis fuerit de dictis pecuniis computandis, persolvere debeant integraliter et perfecte, faciendo super assignatione, quam de dictis pecuniis feceris, ut prefertur, publica instrumenta confici, per te ad ipsam Cameram, quam certificare studeas nichilominus super hiis, fideliter transmittenda.*” [Theiner] I nr. 620 pg 479.

<sup>963</sup> The sources indicate that all of the handoffs of papal monies by Polish merchants to Bruges were made between March and November, with the overwhelming majority taking place between June and September. See the dates collected by: Georges Despy, “Bruges et les collectories pontificales,” 105-107; Augmenting those done by Renouard, *Les Relations des papes*, 140-6.



fair in Bruges held in May, which meant the merchants would have time to sell their wares, hopefully turning a tidy profit, and then have the cash in hand to be able to return the borrowed funds.<sup>964</sup> June was also good timing to transfer money from Bruges, as exchange rates tended to be in the bank's favor during the summer; meaning that both the Bardi bank and the Papal Camera would benefit, with no loss to the merchant.<sup>965</sup> The amounts granted to merchants could vary in size but generally ranged between 500 – 2,000 fl., which even towards the lower end was still an enormous sum.<sup>966</sup> In 1329, for example, 2,700 fl, which had been borrowed by Andreas di Verulis, arrived in Bruges via two groups - Nicholaus de Zavigost of Krakow and his company, and Johannes de Mechów of Krakow and his company. The money was handed over to the Bardi bank and transmitted from there via a *lettera di cambio* – a letter of exchange (a financial instrument vaguely analogous to the modern check the details of which will be discussed later in this chapter) to the account of the Camera.<sup>967</sup> The collector, Galhardus de Carceris, tended to be more cautious with papal funds and gave out smaller loans; but his successor, Arnaldus Caucina, returned to a policy of liberality.

### **Italians Moving Funds for Papal Collectors in Poland**

The first collectors who really began to make use of Polish merchants as agents for remitting papal funds were Petrus de Alvernia and Andreas di Verulis. They were appointed collectors in 1325 by Pope John XXII; and together would manage the transmission of funds from Poland to Avignon for the next decade.<sup>968</sup> At least initially, however, the new collectors appear to have followed a more traditional course, relying on prelates already traveling in the right

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<sup>964</sup> Annual fairs in Bruges and Brabant remained important throughout the fourteenth century, but declined somewhat in the fifteenth; as market forces shifted. James M Murray, *Bruges, cradle of capitalism, 1280-1390*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 180.

<sup>965</sup> As the Florentine merchant Samminiato de' Ricci, explained in his influential fourteenth-century *Manuale di Mercatura*, the price of money increased markedly in Bruges during the months of December and January because of the annual departure of numerous ships, for whose loads much money had been spent, making June an excellent time to remit funds. For more on the advice from Italian merchant manuals of the period see: Kurt Weissen, "Dove il Papa va, sempre è caro di danari. The Commercial Site Analysis in Italian Merchant Handbooks and Notebooks from the 14th and 15th Centuries," trans. by Marcia Glenn and Doris Glenn Wagnerna, in *Kaufmannsbücher und Handelspraktiken vom Spätmittelalter bis zum beginnenden 20. Jahrhundert*, edited by Markus A. Denzel, Jean Claude Hocquet, and Harald Witthöft. (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2002), 67.

<sup>966</sup> APV I nr. 134, nr 135, nr. 142, APV II nr. 278, MPV nr. 206, [Theiner] I DCCLIV pg. 566

<sup>967</sup> APV I nr. 124.

<sup>968</sup> Andreas di Verulis and Petrus de Alvernia were appointed together by John XXII in July 1325 for an initial six year term as collectors in Poland. [Theiner] I nr. 316 pg 205-6; Stanisław Szczur, "Krakowscy dłużnicy kamery papieskiej z 1337 roku [Krakow debtors of the Papal Camera from the year 1337]," in *Venerabiles, nobiles et honesti. Studia z dziejów społeczeństwa Polski średniowiecznej. Prace ofiarowane profesorowi Januszowi Bieniakowi w 70. rocznicę urodzin i 45-lecie pracy naukowej*, eds. Andrzej Radzimiński, Anna Supruniuk, Jan Wroniszewski (Toruń : Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 1997), 128.

direction or else carrying the funds themselves along the route from Krakow to Bruges.<sup>969</sup> A look at the expense sheet they submitted to the Papal Camera for the years 1325-27 reveals that they may have attempted at first to simply pay merchants directly to make the transfer, but apparently abandoned this course as it likely proved too expensive.<sup>970</sup> In 1328 however, they tried another ploy which brought them directly into contact with Italian merchants by now residing in Poland. Their first contact was Nicolas Manente of Genoa. He appears in Polish records for the first time in 1306 when he was granted by Duke Władysław Łokietek the title of hereditary *wójt* - mayor of the important salt-mining town of Wieliczka, located a few kilometers outside of Krakow. Italians would later come to dominate administration of the salt mine industry in Poland; but this is the first indication of their presence in the region. Łokietek, who was campaigning to become king of Poland, had stripped the rights to the town from Gerlach von Kulpen, the brother-in-law of the Bishop of Krakow, Jan Muskaty, who was opposing his claim to the throne.<sup>971</sup> Wieliczka was a strategic asset, and Łokietek's choice to give possession of it to an outsider, rather than a member of the local nobility or one of the burghers of Krakow, was a canny political move to prevent it from falling into the hands of those who might later seek to turn it against him. This decision to place Italians in key positions related to royal finance is a strategy that later rulers would continue, as we shall see. The position of mayor was a lucrative one, worth 1100 fl when Nicholas Manente sold his rights some thirty years later, a small fortune.<sup>972</sup> Nicholas Manente appears to have continued living in Poland for some time and developed a good relationship with Łokietek. In 1325, he undertook a special embassy on the duke's behalf to Pope John XXII in Avignon.<sup>973</sup> It was during his stay in Avignon that Nicholas appears to have made connections at the papal court. Three years later we find him, together with his brother Manusio and two other Ligurian

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<sup>969</sup> Apart from various factors of the Bardi bank resident in Bruges, Guillelmo Lemozini, capellanus of the Camerarius, and Petrus de Ungula, a Hospitaller prior, also delivered funds to Avignon for Petrus and Andreas, 1325-27.

<sup>970</sup> "*Item pro supplemento DCCC. marcarum parvorum grossorum, quas assignavi mercatoribus solvendas in partibus Flandrie, xxxv. marcas grossorum.... Item pro expensis nuntii et equi sui, quem misi de Polonia in Flandriam, et demum de Avinione ibidem, pro expeditione solutionum faciendarum per mercatores, quibus illas concesseram in Polonia pro diebus (xiv. septimanis) utriusque itineris, computando v. grossos pro quolibet die, et pro quibusdam ministris LXIV. Florenos.*" [Theiner] I nr. CCLXII Pg 287.

<sup>971</sup> Franciszek Sikora, "Wójtostwo wielickie w średniowieczu [The mayors of medieval Wieliczka]." in : *J Księga jubileuszowa Profesora Feliksa Kiryka*, eds. A. Jureczko, F. Leśniak, and Zladiaslous Noga. *Annales Academiae Paedagogicae Cracoviensis". 21. Studia Histórica III* (2004): 201-2.

<sup>972</sup> [KDMP] I nr 202 1336/01/09 [KDMP] III n. 657 1339/01/29 Manente sold the rights as wójt of Wieliczka to Nicolaus Wirzingi, the wealthy Krakow burgher and close confidant of King Casimir the Great, at some point around 1336. A second charter released in 1339, gives more information about Gerlach von Kulpen's previous tenure and Manente's initial induction into the role.

<sup>973</sup> [Theiner] I nr. 313 pg 204 1325/06/10

merchants, assisting in organizing the transfer of papal funds from Poland.<sup>974</sup> The Instrument of Transfer lists the collector, Andrea di Verulis, the Bishop of Krakow, Walter *scolasticus* of Wrocław, Petrus called Miles, Canon of Krakow, and Nicholas and Marsono Manente of Genoa as givers of the funds. These funds were then sent in two batches through the hands of Johannes di Carminano, merchant of Savona (a small town on the Ligurian coast), and Frederico di Oppizis di Monelia, merchant of Genoa, who was stopping at Nimes and presumably would hand the money there to an officer of the Camera.<sup>975</sup> It may be that the merchants cut their trading ties with Poland; or that the transfer took too long as the original 1000 fl were actually sent in two batches with 550 fl traveling in the fall of 1328 and the remaining 450 fl only in the spring of 1329.<sup>976</sup> This transfer appears to have been a one-off affair, however, as the event was not repeated. Moreover, in the future, no Italian merchants who were not otherwise resident in Poland would be used to make such transfers. The reason for this lack of Italian interest in carrying funds from Poland was likely due to the fact that should they not otherwise have interests there, the time and effort involved was not worth the investment. In this case, the presence of Nicolaus Manente, who was a permanent resident in Poland, was the critical factor.

### **Italian Transfers Abandoned in Favor of Krakow Merchant Trains**

It was in that same year of 1328 that the collectors hit upon a method which would serve them for the next sixty years. In the first of what would become a long string of merchants from Krakow, Wrocław, and in time also Toruń, began appearing in Bruges with papal funds on loan.<sup>977</sup> Polish, and very occasionally Italian merchants, would be persuaded to carry Papal monies with them when they undertook their regular trading trips to Bruges, delivering them there into the hands of waiting Italian banking houses. The method appears to have been judged quite successful and beneficial to all sides. Indeed, in 1336, Pope Benedict XII officially approved the practice of sending money via merchants to Bruges when a newly installed collector asked for a papal seal of approval. In 1348, Pope Clement VI would also actively

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<sup>974</sup> [APV] nr. 118, nr 123 1329, *Relations*, 140-1.

<sup>975</sup> Johannes di Carminano was deputized by the papal collector to carry the funds, “*auctoritate apostolica commissarius deputatus*” and escorted the funds some distance before handing them off to Frederico di Oppizis di Monelia, a merchant of Genoa who carried them on to Nimes. [APV] nr. 118, 123.

<sup>976</sup> [APV] I nr. 118 1328 Oct, 23rd 550fl [APV] nr. 123 1329, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 450fl.

<sup>977</sup> The one mention of an earlier trip made in 1322 by a certain Stephanus de Cossavis, who handed over papal funds to Franciscus Baldoyni, a representative of the Bardi Bank in Bruges, appears to have been a singular event and may even be a transcription error, as it comes nearly ten years before the next known transfer of this type. MPV I XXV. Between 1330 and 1340, about 28,200 fl were handed off to the Bardi and Acciaiuoli banks. For the decade between 1350 and 1360, 45,500 fl were sent through the Malabayla Bank, reflecting a marked growth in trade. Renouard, *Les Relations des papes d'Avignon*, 141 142 I-IV, 210-11.

recommend the practice.<sup>978</sup> The practice may have arisen out of a collector's desperation in Scandinavia, but it was soon adopted across the region. At the latest, by 1354, merchants from Prague were being used to carry papal funds from Bohemia and on a few occasions, German merchants were tapped to do the same.<sup>979</sup> From Poland, between 1331-1373, more than 40 such transfers would take place, consigning over 65,000 fl into the hands of the Bardi, Acciaiuoli, and Malabayla banking branches in Bruges.<sup>980</sup> Occasionally, it would be singular individuals, but more commonly groups of merchants would each take on responsibility for a portion of the money to be moved, breaking up the total into smaller loans, and thereby spreading the risk across the partnership. In 1337, for example, Thomas Rasor, Henricus and Johannes called Dresler, and Petrus Jaudronis, all merchants of Krakow, made an agreement with the collector, Galhard de Carces, to send 700 florins to Bruges. Each partner took on personal liability for a portion of the total.<sup>981</sup> Such arrangements did not mean, however, that all the merchants named had to travel to Bruges themselves. Rather, the common practice was for just one of the group to go, granted by the others full legal authority to represent the group (*procurator*). This individual acted as the man on the ground, escorting the actual caravan of goods the loans had paid for to Bruges, seeing they were sold, and then repaying the loan to the nominated papal bank.<sup>982</sup> Certain men tended to specialize in this sort of traveling salesman role, with the same individuals appearing again and again in the records, making their way to Flanders. The records further indicate that it was a very select group of individuals who were engaged in this type of long-distance trade. They were uniformly wealthy and very often members of the Krakow City Council. Indeed, the Krakow City Council as a body occasionally took on debt, sending one of their own as a representative to Bruges to hand over the borrowed funds.<sup>983</sup> This system of using merchants to move papal funds from Poland to Flanders was

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<sup>978</sup> (1348/12/01) Instructions given by Clement VI “...pecunias ipsas per mercatores, fide et facultatibus ydoneas...sub nomine depositi...mittendi.” Despy, “Bruges et les collectories pontificales,” 99 fn.3

<sup>979</sup> In February of 1354, Raymundo de la Caucina, brother of the Polish collector, Arnaldus de la Caucina, was sent by the Curia to help facilitate transfer of monies sent via merchants from Krakow and Prague. For this service and to cover travel expenses, he was paid 150 fl. *Monumenta Vaticana Res Gestas Bohemicas Illustrantia*. Vol II nr. 212 pg 90. The practice appears to have been relatively uncommon in German Lands until the 1360-70's. Christiane Schuchard, *Die päpstlichen Kollektoren im späten Mittelalter* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2000), 69-71.

<sup>980</sup> Despy expanded on the impressive work already completed by Renouard. Despy, “Bruges et les collectories pontificales,” 105-107. Renouard, *Les Relations des papes d'Avignon*, 140-6.

<sup>981</sup> Renouard, *Les Relations des papes d'Avignon*, 142-II.

<sup>982</sup> In our example, the traveling merchant was Johannes Dressler, who at long last succeeded in handing over 700 fl the group had borrowed to the Acciaiuoli bank in 1340. Renouard, *Les Relations des papes d'Avignon*, 142-II.

<sup>983</sup> (1348/10/08) [MPV] II nr. 64

one of the primary means by which papal collections were transported throughout the mid-fourteenth century; but it was not without its hiccups.

### Transfer Problems

By the late 1320s, trade between Poland and Flanders had greatly increased, which made the option of sending papal funds with Polish merchants a viable possibility. Yet, it was a project that was still plagued with difficulties. Time was the most critical factor, merchants refused to contract exchanges made in less than 10 months; and very often they failed to meet even these extended terms. The reasons for this were manifold. The natural cycle of the seasons meant that transit along the Vistula was only possible during certain times of the year. Merchants were also sensitive to trade conditions and would not wish to sell their wares for a poor price. It was also obviously in their interest to keep the money in hand as long as possible, as it opened further opportunities for investment. Part of this recalcitrance might be attributed to simple greed, but merchants also had to be wary against threats along the road. Not only would merchants have to be mindful of all the normal dangers of travel – road accidents, thieves, shipwreck, but also the dangers posed by the unstable political situation. While Władysław Łokietek's coronation as King of Poland in 1320 had at last brought some unity to the country, it was still normal for him and his successor, Casimir III the Great, to go out annually on campaign. Constant low-level warfare meant that villages or even towns were often subject to pillage or destruction.<sup>984</sup> Battle with the Margraves of Brandenburg and the Luxembourgs of Bohemia for control over Silesia would continue unabated. Indeed, in the summer of 1345, John of Luxembourg would bring an army close enough to Krakow to smell the smoke from its cookfires. According to an account by the Czech chronicler, Beneš of Veitmile, John succeeded in ruining the city's suburbs.<sup>985</sup> The route from Krakow to Flanders also ran through the hotly disputed region of Pomerania which, as stated earlier, in 1310 had come under the dominion of the Teutonic Knights. Peaceful trading activities were not exempted from persecution. Even the wealthy and well-respected merchants who carried papal funds were not immune. The aforementioned attack in 1339 by the Teutonic Knights on a Polish trading mission is an example. Although they had been robbed, the merchants in this example were not off the hook for the amounts due, given that the contracts they often signed with the collector included the important clause that merchants accepted responsibility in the face of

<sup>984</sup> The chronicle of Jan Długosz offers a rather grizzly year by year account of the annual raiding sessions and the barbarous acts committed by all sides Długosz, *The Annals*, 274-327.

<sup>985</sup> Starzynski, "Civitas Nostra Cracoviensis. (part II)," 10.

even such unexpected losses.<sup>986</sup> It would have taken time to recoup such a loss; and so payment would be understandably delayed. The Krakow merchants were thus perhaps not exaggerating when they later spoke in a letter to the pope of “*multis necessitatibus et variis periculis prepediti in Curia Romana et in Brugis non assignavimus,*” great expense and many dangers they had faced in their service to the Roman Curia in carrying its funds to Bruges.<sup>987</sup> Still, not every transfer was plagued with such poor luck; and thus late payments cannot be blamed on such unusual circumstances alone. Indeed, many shipments went off without a hitch, yet the system did have numerous drawbacks and so, during his time as collector and papal nuncio, Gerhard de Carcers sought another solution.

### **The Papal Collector in Poland Desires the Bardi Bank**

In September of 1338, Gerhard de Carcers wrote a long letter to the Pope in which he recommended that his holiness should consult with the Bardi and convince them to set up what amounted to a banking field office in Krakow. Since merchants had proven themselves to be unreliable men who did not keep their promises, “*homines incerti, et nichil servant de promissis,*” and in any cases demanded at least a year’s time to move the money at all, “*quod nullus mercator has pecunias recipiet qui recipiat minus terminum unius anni*”, it would be much better to adopt a new system entirely.<sup>988</sup> It would be so much swifter and easier if the Bardi bank would simply accept funds in Krakow and transfer them via a bill of exchange document, straight to the Camera. No merchants or clerics would then need to be wrangled into carrying dangerously large amounts of cash; and the whole affair could be handled very neatly. Gerhard even had potential candidates in mind, whom he suggested the Bardi could use as their point men on the ground. One, his colleague, Andreas de Verulis, the other was a man named Paulo Cavallo, who originated from Genoa. Paulo had been present in Poland many years before his recommendation by Gerhard, and was possibly even the son of a certain Hugo “Gallicus” recorded in Krakow notarial records as far back as 1317.<sup>989</sup> Paulo would eventually rise to become a major figure, administrator of the royal salt mines in Bochnia, and a citizen and member of the Krakow City Council.<sup>990</sup> He further became extremely wealthy

<sup>986</sup>: “*renunciantes omni exceptioni fortuitus et casus, videlicet furti, incendii, naufragii, ruine et rapine, eorum periculo, sumptibus et expensis, promittentes...*” August, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1346 [Theiner] I DCXLVI pg. 496.

<sup>987</sup> [Theiner] I DXLIII pg. 414.

<sup>988</sup> [Theiner] I DLXVI pg. 419.

<sup>989</sup> [Theiner] I DCXLVI pg 497 (1346/08/03); [NKiRMK] nr 438 (1317/06/10)

<sup>990</sup> While Ptaśnik believed that Paulo Cavallo came in the wake of the collectors for the specific purpose of offering himself as a banking agent for the Bardi, this explanation seems highly unlikely. Paulo was very proudly from Genoa. Even in later years after he had become a citizen of Krakow, he continued to sign his name as “*civis*

and involved in the fabric trade; having within eight years of becoming Zupparius, purchased four properties in the city center of Krakow and a cloth shop on the main square.<sup>991</sup> He appears to have brought his Italian wife, Fenena, to Poland; as the pair received a plenary indulgence from the pope in 1350 at the special request of King Casimir.<sup>992</sup> He was eventually succeeded in his position by his nephew, Pietro Cavallo, who took over as Zupparius and made a significant impact on the mine at Bochnia when in 1357, he founded a hospital specifically for wounded and sick miners.<sup>993</sup>

Gerhard thus sought to induce the Bardi bank to take on two men to work for them as factors in Poland - Andreas di Verulis, an obvious trusted servant of the papacy, and Paulo Cavallo, who could be relied upon to understand the Italian banking system and literally communicate with the Bardi in their own language.<sup>994</sup> Such a new system, Gerhard argued, would be the utmost secure and certain "*hoc esset tutissimum, et securum et certum*".<sup>995</sup> While Gerhard was no doubt correct, his grand plan would not come to pass. The reasons were quite straightforward; Poland at this point offered little incentive for an Italian merchant bank to set down roots.<sup>996</sup> What's more, the suggestion came at a singularly ill-timed moment. A year prior, what would become the Hundred Years War between England and France started up; and the Bardi were stretched thin with far more pressing concerns regarding their international

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*Ianuensis et Cracoviensis*", and the Florentine Bardi company was highly unlikely to offer him such a position. Given that Paulo would eventually become the administrator of the Royal salt mines at Bochnia, it is far more likely that his appearance in Poland is related to the wave of Italian migrants who moved to East Central Europe in the early fourteenth century, attracted by opportunities related to mining. Ptaśnik, *Kultura Włoska*, 30-1. "*Paulino Cavallo filio quondam Hugeti Cavalli cive Ianuensi et Cracoviensi*" [Theiner] I nr. 604 pg. 497. For Hugo Gallicus see: *Najstarszy zbiór przywilejów i Wilkierzy miasta Krakowa* [The oldest set of privileges and laws of the city of Krakow], ed. Stanisław Estreicher (Krakow: Nakładem Polskiej Akameji Umiejetnosci, 1936.), nr. 438. For more on Paulo Cavallo's activities as a member of Krakow society see: Marcin Starzyński, *Krakowska rada miejska w średniowieczu* [The Town Council of Krakow in the Middle Ages] (Kraków: Tow. Naukowe "Societas Vistulana", 2010), 233.

<sup>991</sup> Paulus was Zupparius from 1346-1353. [NKiRMK] nr. 1504,1607, 1610,1617,1624,1650.

<sup>992</sup> *Bullarium Poloniae: 1342-1378*, eds. Irene Sułkowska-Kurasiowa and Stanisław Kuraś (Rome: Fundacja Jana Pawła II. Polski Instytut Kultury Chrześcijańskiej, 1985), nr. 499.

<sup>993</sup> [KDMP] III pg 100 nr. 716; [NKiRMK] 1625.

<sup>994</sup> The Genoese version of Italian being closer to that of Florence than German or Polish, although communication could also have been carried out by all parties in Latin, so language exchange was not a major hurdle.

<sup>995</sup> [Theiner] I DXLV pg. 416-20.

<sup>996</sup> A similar issue was present in all areas East of the Rhine, due to the unfavorable balance of trade between Northern and Southern Europe. Kurt Weissen neatly sums up the problem, "*Da Bargeld zum überwiegenden Teil vom Norden in den Süden transferiert wurde und nur sehr selten eine direkte Verrechnung mit Wechseln in umgekehrter Richtung möglich war, konnte dieses Geschäft nur betrieben werden, wenn ihm ein Überschuss des Warenhandels in Nord-Süd-Richtung zugrunde lag. Da die wichtigsten Handelsgüter aus dem Norden aber meist schwer und nicht sehr wertvoll waren, hätte sich dieses Geschäft vermutlich kaum gewinnbringend organisieren lassen.*" Kurt Weissen, "Florentiner Kaufleute in Deutschland bis zum Ende des 14. Jahrhunderts," in *Zwischen Maas und Rhein. Beziehungen, Begegnungen und Konflikte in einem europäischen Kernraum von der Spätantike bis zum 19. Jahrhundert*, ed. Franz Irsigler (Trier: Kliomedia, 2006), 398. Renaud makes similar observations. Renaud, *Les Relations* 145-6.

creditors and political instability at home in Florence.<sup>997</sup> Indeed, by the time the merchants of Krakow did get their wagons moving, making it to Bruges in June of 1339, they would be handing over the funds to the Acciaiuoli Bank, to which the Pope had shifted his Polish account.<sup>998</sup> The Pope also had more pressing concerns and did not pursue the issue, for reasons then both economic and political. The establishment of an Italian banking correspondent in Poland thus would not come to pass for another fifty years. As no help was forthcoming from the Italian banks, Gerhard was forced to continue to rely on the assistance of various clerics, most especially the Bishop of Wrocław, as well as Polish merchants for the rest of his time as collector.<sup>999</sup> His successor, Arnaldus de La Caucina, a Canon of Krakow, would be the collector in Poland from 1343-71. He followed essentially the same formula, relying on a mix of clergymen and merchants from Krakow. Although after 1360 he relied increasingly on merchants from Wrocław as well as Krakow, to ferry funds via Bruges into the hands of the rotating door of papal bankers and into the credit account of the Camera.

### **The Shift in Sending Papal Funds back to Venice from Bruges**

A change came to this dynamic in the dying days of the Avignon Papacy (1309-1377); when in May of 1375, Pope Gregory XI requested, upon the advice of his Treasurer Bernardo, Bishop of Bologna, all collectors in Hungary and Poland to remit their funds through Venice rather than Bruges.<sup>1000</sup> The reason for the change was the outbreak of the War of the Eight Saints (1375-1378), which saw Florence go to war against the Avignon Papacy.<sup>1001</sup> In response to the crisis, Pope Gregory XI placed the city which housed most of his bankers under interdict. While this effort did put a major strain on Florence's war efforts, it also afforded the papacy a major financial problem. To manage the papacy's accounts and financing, the papal treasurer turned to a set of smaller banking houses, including that of Fillipo Guidotti, a banker from his

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<sup>997</sup> The argument originally made by Saporì, laying the downfall of the Bardi and Peruzzi Banks at the feet of the defaulting King Edward III of England, has been nuanced in recent years, naming it as just one among a large number of factors which led to the banks' collapse in 1343 and 1346, respectively. For Saporì's original argument see: Armando Saporì and Giuseppe Prato, *La crisi delle compagnie mercantile dei Bardi e dei Peruzzi* (Florence: Olschki, 1926). For a more recent assessment see: Edwin S Hunt, "A New Look at the Dealings of the Bardi and Peruzzi with Edward III," *The Journal of Economic History* 50, no. 1 (1990): 149-62.

<sup>998</sup> This change was part of a general pulling away from the Bardi made by Benedict XII. The move to the Acciaiuoli bank, however, turned out to be an unwise decision as the bank failed in 1343, taking with it 7,475fl still owed to the camera, a large portion of which were funds collected from Poland and stockpiled in the Bruges branch. [MPV] I nr. 124 Yves Renouard, *Les Relations*, 142 II, 148, 585.

<sup>999</sup> For the names of the many merchants active in such transfers see: Renouard, *Les Relations*, 142 I-IV.

<sup>1000</sup> [Theiner] I nr. 973 pg 722

<sup>1001</sup> Previous to this, the papacy had been relying almost exclusively on the services of the Alberti Antichi Bank, but during and after the war, it changed policy to rely more heavily on a diversity of smaller companies. Renouard, *Les Relations*, 333.



own hometown of Bologna. Fillipo's good management and loyalty in time of crisis made him a rich man; and in later years he sought to improve his fortune by having his sons promoted into ecclesiastical office. One of these sons, Giacomo, would in 1391 be appointed collector and papal nuncio to the Polish court by Pope Boniface IX.<sup>1002</sup> His other sons would also try their fate in Poland before moving to Hungary, where they became prosperous tradesmen and important members of the Hungarian Kingdom's administration. More details of the Guidotti family are to be found in Chapter 4. Even after the successful end of the War of the Eight Saints, papal funds from Poland continued in large part to be funneled through Venice rather than Bruges, when they were sent at all.

### **Effects of the Papal Schism and a Brief Return to Sending Money to the North**

The events of the War of the Eight Saints helped catalyze the Western Schism (1378-1417), a nearly forty-year period during which multiple Popes made claims to the throne of Saint Peter and were backed by various factions across Europe. The division made papal collection a tricky business. The Kingdom of Poland retained its allegiance to the Roman pope; but that did not prevent claimants from both sides sending collectors. In the resulting chaos, many prelates took the opportunity to cease paying their dues altogether, or dedicated them towards other local projects. In 1399-1401, for example, the bishop of Krakow proposed that monies from Peter's Pence would go towards fighting against the Mongol Tartars. Likely seeing the difficulty in extracting the money during such troubled times, the idea was accepted by the Roman Pope, Boniface IX (1389-1404), and the Bishop of Wrocław was named collector for the Kingdom of Poland.<sup>1003</sup> Among the changes that occurred during this turbulent period was also the permanent separation between the Collectories of Poland and Hungary. Where previously, Poland and Hungary had tended to be grouped under the same collector, this was no longer the case, and down the line this would have a significant impact on how papal money was transferred through the region.<sup>1004</sup> As Kurt Weissen has demonstrated, during the schism, both sides of the fight received almost nothing from benefices in the German Lands, and Poland was much the same.<sup>1005</sup> It was only with the election of John XXIII (1410-1415), who was later

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<sup>1002</sup> "*Iacobum Philippi de Guidottis, clericum Bononiensi, in regno Poloniae proventuum camerae apostolicae collectorem...*" (1391/12/04) Arch. Vat. Anii. XXXIII, vol. 12, f. 134 and 142. reproduced in [Itali nr. 4 fn.1 and [Theiner] I nr. 1056 where the name is incorrectly recorded as Guidonis.

<sup>1003</sup> [Theiner] I nr. 1041, 1042,

<sup>1004</sup> Tamás Fedeles, "*Petrus Stephani collector apostolicus.*" in *Magyarország és a római szentszék II.* edited by Péter Tusor, Kornél Szovák and Tamás Fedeles. 31-87. *Collectanea vaticana hungaria excerptum ex classis I*, vol. 15 Rome: Gondolat, 2017), 37.

<sup>1005</sup> Kurt Weissen, "La rete commerciale tedesca delle compagnie fiorentine romanam curiam sequentes, 1410-1470," *Archivio Storico Italiano* 169.4 (630 (2011): 715-6.

declared to be an antipope but at the time of his ascension, had garnered the support from most of the royal houses of Europe, that money once again began to flow.

### **Bolognese Bankers in Poland - the Arrival of the Guidotti**

In 1391, Pope Boniface IX named Giacomo Guidotti, the son of the Bolognese banker Filippo Guidotti, collector and papal nuncio to the Polish court. At this point, Giacomo was all of twenty three years old and had as yet only attained minor orders, making him an odd choice for such a lofty position.<sup>1006</sup> The reasoning for this early promotion becomes clear however when one recalls his earlier service and further learns that soon after, Filippo Guidotti loaned 4000 florins to the Papal court, sending the money to the papal Camera through the hands of Doffi di Spinis and Benedicto di Bardi and the Medici bank.<sup>1007</sup> To cover the loan, the Pope wrote requiring that half be repaid by the City Council of Bologna and the other 2000 from the monies collected by his brother Giacomo in Poland.<sup>1008</sup> Still, the money which appears to have been from the Guidotti family's private patrimony, signified an immense outlay of capital, as interest could of course not be levied as usury was forbidden, Filippo was instead paid for his trouble though an annual sum of 200fl from the estates of the Cathedral of Bologna - not a bad bargain.<sup>1009</sup> The Pope soon after sought to further bolster Giacomo's position by making him the Bishop of Imola, but his young age and resistance from the local community stymied these efforts.<sup>1010</sup> Meanwhile two other Guidotti brothers, Francesco and Pietro, were present and doing business in Krakow at the same time that their brother Giacomo was acting as collector. The brothers appeared in the city as early as January of 1393 before later transferring their business to Hungary where they kept close ties with the Amman-Kammerer-Seiler-Grau

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<sup>1006</sup> See fn 619.

<sup>1007</sup> Filippo was at the time working as *campsores Bonoiese* – city treasurer in his hometown of Bologna. Reg. Vat. 315 f. 12. Reproduced in: [Itali] nr. 82. For further interpretation of this transaction see: Arnold Esch, "Bankiers der Kirche im Grossen Schisma," *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken*, 46. (1966): 393; and Giorgio Tamba, "Filippo Guidotti" *Treccani Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, Accessed October 3rd, 2019. [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/filippo-guidotti\\_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/filippo-guidotti_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/)

<sup>1008</sup> Reg. Vat. 315 f. 12v Reproduced in: [Itali] nr. 83.

<sup>1009</sup> As Arnold Esch notes, guaranteeing loans of this type against Church incomes had been common practice since the 1350s. While less advantageous than loans secured by deposits in the papal camera, these loans were crafted to meet the needs of those providing the loan, guaranteeing them incomes in regions where they did business. Thus, Filippo's loan was secured by revenues in his hometown of Bologna, and that collected by his son in Poland. Esch, "Bankiers der Kirche," 286.

<sup>1010</sup> It is unclear if Giacomo was ever able to take his seat in Imola despite the Pope's backing as while the conflict was still ongoing, he died prematurely on August 15th, 1399. Giorgio Tamba, "Filippo Guidotti" *Treccani Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, accessed October 3rd, 2019. [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/filippo-guidotti\\_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/filippo-guidotti_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/)

company in Venice.<sup>1011</sup> The Guidotti thus assisted in transferring papal funds from Poland to Venice through their strong banking ties and relationships within the Lagoon City.

The period of the Western Schism was a complicated one, and apart from the work done by Giacomo Guidotti, most fund transfers during this period were arranged by individual Bishops. These men used their own prelates to arrange for monies to be carried into the Italian banking network through a variety of channels, employing bankers who came from Lucca, Perugia, and Florence.<sup>1012</sup> From 1398-1413, as has been described in Chapter 1, Lodovico Baglioni of Perugia, who worked as a factor for the Medici bank in Lübeck, was named collector for the entire region of Germany, Bohemia, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Poland. However, it is unclear if he was ever able to organize the transfer of any monies from Poland.

### **Entry of the Medici Bank into Polish Papal Collections**

With the acclimation of John XXIII as pope by a large portion of Europe in 1410, collections were once again made in regions, including Poland, where for years, disagreements had led to little money being gathered. For his banking and financing needs, John XXIII relied primarily on the Medici bank, run by Giovanni di Bicci di Medici (b.1360-1429). In the German Lands, money began to flow south once King Sigismund of Luxembourg put his weight behind the popular Pope/Antipope, John XXIII. However, as the Medici bank did not yet have a branch north of the Alps, they sought an accord with Florentine merchants who were already actively

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<sup>1011</sup> (1393/01/01) “Franciscus de Bononiade Guidottis constituit fratrem suum Petrum plenipotentem procuratorem omnium suarum causarum coram quibuscumque iudicibus, tamquam premissis personaliter interesset etc.” [KLK] nr. 1651 also reproduced in [Itali] nr. 4; Peter the apothecary appears to have died still owing the Guidotti brothers 100 sexagene and his sons were forced to give up the house to settle the account. [KDK], nr. 2172; Document taken from the Košice archive Cassovie City Book I folio 60. See: Halaga, “Le grand commerce,” 25.; [NKiRMK], 168-9.; (1397/07/17) King Sigismund had borrowed the sum from Regla and Greci against a collateral of two boxes of jewels deposited by Tommaso Mocenigo with the procurators of San Marco in Venice. On the 12th of June 1398, Bartolomeo presented as partial payment a load of copper worth an estimated 9000 ducats. The other half of the debt was then paid in cash by Bartolomeo two months later. A further sum of 1500 ducats owed to Tommaso Mocenigo was paid later on November 20th 1398 by Bartolomeo through the bank of Bonifacio Gozzadini. Giorgio Tamba, “Filippo Guidotti” *Trecanni Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, accessed October 3rd, 2019. [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/filippo-guidotti\\_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/filippo-guidotti_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/)

<sup>1012</sup> (1390/07/10) Johannes, Abbott of St. Stephens Monastery in Carraria OSB, sends funds through Antonius Jacobi and Doffus Nepi de Spini, a merchant company of Florence. [MPV VIII] nr 125, (1391/11) Johannes, Abbott of St. Stephens monastery in Carraria OSB, sends funds through Ebolardi, merchant of Lucca, and the Company of Bartholomeo Turcho of Lucca [Bull] III nr. 264.; (1392) Dobrogostio Bishop of Poznań, sent all monies collected via Lando de Moriconibus domicello Lucano, thesaurius of the City of Perugia. [Bull] III nr. 321; (1393/07) Nicholas, Bishop of Culm, sends 400 fl. To the Curia in Purugia via Johannes Currificus, presbyter of Culm province. UBC nr. 399.

resident in Lübeck – the partners Lodovico Baglioni and Gerardo Bueri.<sup>1013</sup> Baglioni had left his hometown of Perugia, and in the 1390's had moved to set up shop as a money-changer and merchant in the prosperous Hanseatic League trading port of Lübeck on the Baltic coast.<sup>1014</sup> There, he also became involved in moving papal funds and was named collector on and off between 1398-1413 in Germany, Bohemia, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Poland. Later he worked with the Medici to settle arrangements made at the Council of Constance.<sup>1015</sup> Baglioni became partner with Gerardo Bueri from at least 1413. Bueri was the cousin of Giovanni di Bicci di Medici's wife, Piccarda Bueri, and had worked for a time with the bank before moving north.<sup>1016</sup> Together, the two men operated a successful money-changing business; and through Bueri's connection to the Medici, moving goods, funds, and papal monies between north and south. Letters of exchange could be purchased from them that could be cashed later in Bruges, Venice, Rome, or another of the Medici bank branches.<sup>1017</sup>

While no direct evidence has so far been found to demonstrate that Baglioni and Bueri accepted cash brought from Poland, it is highly likely that during this period at least some papal funds made their way by this route to Rome. On one particular occasion, the secret Medici account books reveal that Baglioni made a trip to Poland on the bank's behalf, seeking to recover debts owed by Polish and German merchants to the perfidious Venetian branch manager, Neri di Cipriano Tornaquinci - an incident is described in detail in Chapter 4. Baglioni was paid for his efforts, which apparently came to nothing in 1420; even though the original crime by Neri had been uncovered in 1406. This demonstrates that the Medici were similar to other merchants

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<sup>1013</sup> Kurt Weissen asserts the long-held theory that the absence of a Medici Bank in Hanseatic League territory was due to hostility and push-back from the Baltic merchants. These fellows are portrayed as intent on keeping the Italians from encroaching on their territory and being dedicated to preserving their parochial hide-bound accounting systems. Weissen, "La rete commerciale tedesca," 715-6.

<sup>1014</sup> In 1393, the governing regime in Perugia, of which the Baglioni family was party, was overthrown in an uprising by the popolani. Their property was confiscated, preventing Lodovico from being able to return home. Arnold Esch, "Bankiers der Kirche im Grossen Schisma," *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken* 46. (1966): 347, 393.

<sup>1015</sup> Baglioni was named collector in Poland in 1402, 1406, 1410, and 1411. Svenskt Diplomatariums huvudkartotek över medeltidsbreven Mercatura, nr. 84 pg 88-9, *Annales Ecclesiae Danicae Diplomatici, oder nach Ordnung der Jahre abgefasset und mit Urkunden belegte Kirchen-Historie des Reichs Dännemarck*, Vol. 2, eds. Erik Pontoppidan and Henrik S. Knudsen (Copenhagen: J. P. Anchersen, 1744), 254; *Bullarium Poloniae: 1417-1431* Vol 4, eds. Irena Sułkowska-Kurasiowa and Stanisław Kuraś (Rome: Fundacja Jana Pawła II. Polski Instytut Kultury Chrześcijańskiej), 1992., nr. 835; Urkundenbuch der Stadt Lübeck vol. 5, nr. 131; Fouquet, "Ein Italiener in Lübeck," 197; *Acta summorum pontificum: res gestas Bohemicas aevi praehussitici et hussitici illustrantia*, Vol 1, ed. Jaroslav Eršil (Prague: In aedibus Academiae scientiarum Bohemoslovacae, 1980), nr 233 pg 148, nr. 425 pg 281, nr. 557 pg 360.

<sup>1016</sup> Bueri was employed in the Venice branch of the Medici bank in 1406; but soon left the business, leaving behind a debt of 61 ½ fl that was eventually written off. Interestingly, this past behavior did not prevent Giovanni di Bicci from using him as a correspondent and factor in later years. Roover, *The Rise*, 63.

<sup>1017</sup> In 1427, the Medici balance sheets reveal that Baglioni and Bueri owed 8,334 ducats to the Venice branch and 3,945 florins di camera to the Rome branch. On the other hand, there were 587 florins standing to their credit in Florence, but this amount was earmarked to settle part of their debt in Rome." Roover, *The Rise*, 64.

of the period; who were often forced to seek repayment of loans long after debtors had defaulted.<sup>1018</sup> Baglioni died four years later; and upon his demise, Giovanni di Bicci di Medici sent Andrea di Benozzo Benozzi to Lübeck to audit the partner's books, as they did not believe the pair's claims that of late, business had been bad. Andrea reported back to his masters that indeed, it appeared that there had been minimal profits from the previous two years and that the pair had not been lying when they sent only a fraction of the expected profits.<sup>1019</sup> Still, this did not prevent Bueri from continuing to partner with the Medici bank; and they retained friendly contacts and a business partnership until Bueri's own death in Lübeck in 1449.<sup>1020</sup> However, while the Medici made use of Baglioni's and Bueri's services as factors north of the Alps, transmitting funds on both papal and private accounts, very little of this traffic appears to have come from Poland. In large part, this appears to have been due to the general drop in trade that affected the region, due to ongoing hostilities with the Teutonic Knights, but also because a new option had become available.

In 1410, the Medici sent a member of the family, Albizzo di Talento di Medici to Krakow. At its outset, Albizzo's assignment was to seek the return of money borrowed by Pietro Bicherano of Venice and his Nuremberg partners of the Amman-Kammer-Seiler-Grau company, and in this he succeeded.<sup>1021</sup> Albizzo returned back to Florence in triumph and worked for a time at the main Tavola of the Medici bank.<sup>1022</sup> In 1415; however, he chose to return to Poland, acting as an agent in the transfer of papal funds from Matteo di Lamberto of Naples, Archdean of Wrocław, to John XXIII.<sup>1023</sup> For this transfer, and later ones, however, Albizzo did not use the northern route, but instead funneled the money south to Venice, from whence it was picked up by the Medici bank's branch and transmitted onwards to Rome. From the start of the fifteenth century, the route which had previously gone up the Vistula through the Baltic ports to Bruges dried up. Funds and goods were instead directed west to Wrocław and Nuremberg and south to Venice.

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<sup>1018</sup> Roover, *The Rise*, 245 fn 91.

<sup>1019</sup> ASF, MAP, 1, n. 236. "*Benozzi riferisce dei suoi colloqui con una persona che indica sotto la sigla «be+». I nomi di Bueri oppure di Baglioni non appaiono mai in questa lettera. Visto che a un certo punto si parla di «Lodovicho», si può desumere, che il be+ sottintendeva Gherardo Bueri.*" Kurt Weissen, "La rete commerciale"; 716 fn30.

<sup>1020</sup> Weissen, "La rete commerciale tedesca," 717. For more on the life of Gerardo Bueri see: Fouquet, "Ein Italiener in Lübeck," 187–220.

<sup>1021</sup> ASF, MaP Filza 153, doc. 1, fol. 80rv.

<sup>1022</sup> Roover, *The Rise*, 385.

<sup>1023</sup> (1415/10/28) – Pope John XIII requested that monies sent from Wrocław and collected by Matteo di Lamberto of Naples, Archdean of Wrocław, papal collector for Poland, be sent through the hands of Albizzo, [Itali] nr 88.

## The Work of Leonardo di Giovanni di ser Matteo

Of particular relevance to this study is the appointment in March of 1414, of Leonardo di Giovanni di ser Matteo by John XXIII to a three year posting as papal collector in Poland.<sup>1024</sup> Leonardo was one of the five di ser Matteo brothers, originally of Florentine extraction, who in the first decade of the fifteenth century had spread out, forming an impressive trading network across Italy and Central Eastern Europe. Leonardo's appointment as papal collector in Poland followed his brother Antonio's entry into the region as a merchant in Wrocław in 1410.<sup>1025</sup> For this reason, the funds which were collected by Leonardo would most likely have traveled to the west through Wrocław rather than south through Hungary. However, one particular transfer bears special notice and may point to a transfer via the south. In early 1414, 1000 *fl. di camera* were sent by Leonardo from collections made in Gniezno and Culm provinces to the Curia through the hands of "*Caroli Geri et Adonardi de Tornaquintii*".<sup>1026</sup> A few months later, a second transfer of 250fl "*pecuniis collectorie Polonie*" of funds collected in Poland, was transferred to the Papal Camera again through the hands of *Adonardi de Tornaquincis*.<sup>1027</sup> The involvement of Adovardo in the transaction is the element which points to a possible transfer that traveled through Hungary to Venice.

Adovardo di Cipriano Tornaquinci/Ghiachinoti, was born in 1382 in Florence, the brother of Neri di Cipriano Tornaquinci.<sup>1028</sup> Both of the brothers worked in their youth for the Medici bank, with Adovardo eventually being made cashier of the Naples branch between 1400-1404, while Neri worked first in Rome and later as the branch manager in Venice between 1402-

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<sup>1024</sup> As a result of the decisions made at the Council of Constance in 1418, Pope John XXIII, was deemed an Anti-Pope, but during the period was acknowledged as the rightful Roman pontiff by a large swath of European states, including the Kingdom of Poland. Leonardo was appointed by him with the express purpose of collecting funds to help fight the schism (1414/03/16). [Theiner] II nr 12. A second letter of appointment granted to Leonardo in April of 1414, included the three year provision and the specific intention that monies collected would go toward the papacy's fight against Ladislaus Durazzo of Naples attacking the papal states. (1414/04/16) [Theiner] II nr 13

<sup>1025</sup> In 1410, Antonio was granted permission by King Wenceslaus IV of Bohemia to settle in Wrocław [Bresbook] 6 pg 350 n.1

<sup>1026</sup> [Itali] nr. 25.

<sup>1027</sup> (1414/08/16) [Itali] nr 26.

<sup>1028</sup> Adovardo di Cipriano can be identified under the surnames of both Ghiacinotti and Tornaquinci. The confusion of the name comes from a decision made by his father Cipriano in 1380 to officially abandon the Tornaquinci name in favor of Ghiacinotti. His son however, appear to have disagreed with this choice and used both variations. An example of Adovardo recorded as Adovardo Ghiacinotti de Tornaquinci appears in the records of the Opera di Santa Maria Fiori when in 1434 he was recorded as *socio* – business partner, and surety for Bernado di Vieri di Guadagni. <http://archivio.operaduomo.fi.it/cupola/ITA/HTML/S021/C393/T006/TBLOCK00.HTM> Accessed June 12th 2020; Guido Pampaloni, "I Tornaquinci, poi Tornabuoni, fino ai primi del Cinquecento.," *Archivio Storico Italiano* 126, no. 3/4 (459/460) (1968): 345-6. (1414/03/17)

1406.<sup>1029</sup> While working in Naples, Adovardo met a young Niccolo Cambini, who was his junior fellow at the bank.<sup>1030</sup> Having gained experience under the eye of Giovanni di Bicci di Medici, in 1420, Niccolo and Andrea Cambini, together with Adovardo and Bernardo di Vieri Guadagni, invested in a banking company that would eventually rise to become the successful Cambini Bank.<sup>1031</sup> The Medici were later to have excellent relations with the Cambini bank, acknowledging them as one of the few creditworthy institutions in Florence and Rome.<sup>1032</sup> These early connections however, did not prevent the two men from agreeing to form an association with the Guadagni, core members of the Medici's main political rivals in Florence - the Albizzi faction.<sup>1033</sup> Two factors would indicate that Adovardo was likely to have run the collected Polish funds given to him by Leonardo di ser Matteo through Hungary and Venice. First would be Adovardo's brother, Neri Tornaquinci, who still despite his ignominious dismissal from the Medici bank for fraud and theft, retained strong connections with the Lagoon City, in particular with Leonardo di ser Matteo's brother, Michele. In 1409, Neri Tornaquinci appointed Michele di ser Matteo as his procurator in Venice.<sup>1034</sup> Neri also had ties to Hungary, as evidenced in 1410 when he helped settle a considerable debt owed by the Castellan of Košice to Filippo Scolari and Antonio di Piero di Fronte.<sup>1035</sup> It is therefore possible that through Neri's connections, the money traveled south to Venice and then onwards to the Papal Curia. Adovardo was also connected to Hungary through his alignment with Bernardo di Vieri Guadagni. Bernardo was the son of Vieri di Vieri Guadagni, an important Florentine politician and merchant, who ran a successful banking company and also had active interests in Hungary and marriage ties to the Scolari.<sup>1036</sup> In addition, in 1414, the same year of the transfer of Polish funds made by Leonardo di ser Matteo, Bernardo was one among a number of Florentine merchant-bankers tapped to administer the funds brought into the Curia

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<sup>1029</sup> Adovardo had worked for the bank since 1396 and Neri from at least 1398. Roover, *The Rise*, 254 fn 2.

<sup>1030</sup> Niccolo Cambini worked for the Naples branch of the Medici bank from at least 1404 becoming cashier after the departure of Adovardo and working in Naples until April 1410. His eventual departure was likely in part eventuated by his theft of 142 fl. Although he returned the money with apologies sometime later, the event could not have cast him in a favorable light with his employers. Roover, *The Rise*, 255.

<sup>1031</sup> At that point the bank had two branches, one in Florence and another in Rome. Sergio Tognetti, *Il Banco Cambini. Affari e mercanti di una compagnia mercantile-bancaria nella Firenze del XV secolo*, Biblioteca storica toscana - Series I, 37, (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1999), 125-7.

<sup>1032</sup> Instructions given to a Medici branch manager in 1446 advised that draws from the Cambini bank in both Florence and Rome could be accepted up to 1,500 florin. Roover, *The Rise*, 91-2.

<sup>1033</sup> In 1425, Vieri di Guadagni set up a second company with Adovardo di Ghicinotti together with Fruosino di Luca da Panzano and Nofri di Jacopo Cardinali. Prajda, *Network and Migration*, 129.

<sup>1034</sup> (1409/03/12) ASV, Cancelleria inferiore, Notai, 226 fol. 172.

<sup>1035</sup> (1410/05/04) – Strenuus miles Johannes de Tulischow, castellanus Calissiensis [Košice], paid 1900 fl to Neri to be given to Filippo Scolari and a further 300fl to Antonio di Piero di Fronte. ASK, Consol. Crac, 427, f. 370.

<sup>1036</sup> Prajda, *Network and Migration*, 127-131.

for John XXIII. This made him the perfect conduit for Leonardo and Adovardo.<sup>1037</sup> It thus appears highly likely that the monies collected in Poland by Leonardo di ser Matteo were sent south in order to reach the Roman Curia. The calling of the Council of Constance in November 1414 however, appears to have interrupted Leonard's collecting activities, as the Church united to finally settle the Western Schism.

### **The Impact of the Council of Constance and its Aftermath**

The Council of Constance (1414-1418) sought to bring some order to the cause of conflicting claims of various papal pretenders and reunify the church. In the end, all three claimants to the crown of Saint Peter chose to step down, including John XXIII, who had been recognized by Poland, and Martin V was elected as the new universal pontiff. Among many other events of the Council was included the condemnation of Jan Hus, yet another failed attempt to arbitrate the long-standing conflict between Poland and the Teutonic Knights, and the organization of a simplified tax gathering system. The eventual new tax system agreed upon sought to ensure that the papacy received its funds in a timely manner and in sufficient quantity, without local prelates feeling overburdened. As part of this new system, only two major payments could be collected by the Pope - Services and Annates. Services were to be paid directly at the Curia, but while Annates could be paid directly in Rome, they were more commonly arranged through the local collector.<sup>1038</sup> In the second half of the fifteenth century, further taxes would be levied on monasteries and the incomes brought in from indulgences would reach significant levels, but before this, neither was relevant.<sup>1039</sup>

In 1417, under the newly crowned Pope Martin V, Petrus Fabiano de Wolfram of Lviv was appointed as papal Collector in Poland, a post he would serve in until 1425.<sup>1040</sup> The new rules handed down at the Council of Constance regarding the Services and Annates owed by individual prelates meant that frequently these monies bypassed the collector entirely and were instead delivered by direct representatives. At times, this meant that high-ranking Polish prelates relied on Italians already present in Poland to act as their messengers. Such was the case for example with the Bishop of Krakow, who in 1421 requested that Jacobo di Paravicino

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<sup>1037</sup> Prajda, *Network and Migration*, 129.

<sup>1038</sup> Marek Daniel Kowalski, "Rationes Iacobini de Rubeis, collectoris in Regno Poloniae (1426–1434). Rachunki Giacomina Rossiego, papieskiego kolektora generalnego w Polsce, z lat 1426–1434," *Studia Zródłoznawcze* 49 (2011) :61.

<sup>1039</sup> Kowalski, "Rationes Iacobini de Rubeis," 62.

<sup>1040</sup> [Theiner] II nr 18, nr 20, nr 21, nr 23, nr 28.



of Milan carry 500fl owed by the Bishop to be deposited with the Bardi Bank.<sup>1041</sup> Jacobo had taken Krakow citizenship in 1408, purchasing a house and becoming part of the small Italian community in the city. He further operated on occasion as both a Papal Nuncio and an Ambassador for Milan.<sup>1042</sup> It was not always possible to find a willing courier however, and in any event, the collectors were still responsible for the more general gathering of Peter's Pence. The old problem of how to transport large amounts of cash from Poland thus still remained, but now for the first time the option of employing a direct representative with a letter of exchange entered the picture. What had been suggested all the way back in 1338, that a member of an Italian banking company take up residence in Krakow, had finally come to pass.<sup>1043</sup> In December of 1419, for the first time, an instrument of credit to the tune of 1000fl was drafted on the Medici bank to be paid to the papal treasury from monies collected in Poland. A year later, these funds were picked up by Albizzo di Talenti di Medici in Krakow.<sup>1044</sup>

### **Albizzo di Talenti di Medici and the Papal Collector, Giacomino Rossi**

Albizzo was born in Florence in 1390, a member of the same branch of the Medici family as Giovanni di Bicci but of far less means.<sup>1045</sup> He and his brother, Antonio, both worked for a time for their wealthier cousins as agents of the Medici bank. In 1410, Albizzo was sent to Krakow on the bank's behalf.<sup>1046</sup> At its outset, his assignment was to seek the return of money borrowed by Pietro Bicherano of Venice and his Nuremberg partners of the Amman-Kammer-Seiler-Grau company, and in this he succeeded.<sup>1047</sup> Albizzo returned back to Florence in triumph and worked for a time at the bank's Florentine Tavola.<sup>1048</sup> In the fall of 1415 however, he chose to return towards Poland, and for the first time acted as agent in the transfer of papal funds from Matteo di Lamberto of Naples, Archdean of Wrocław, to John XXIII.<sup>1049</sup> In this

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<sup>1041</sup> Jacobo di Paravisino of Milan was active in Poland from 1410 to at least 1431. He carried large sums of money to the Curia for the Bishop of Krakow on multiple occasions. (1421/10/29) 500fl [Itali] nr 34, (1423/10/31) 1000fl [Itali] nr 38, (1425/02/11) 500fl [Itali] nr 40, (1410/07/12) – [SPPP] 7 nr 1390-95, (1431/05/23) [Itali] nr 67.

<sup>1042</sup> (1408/12/14) *Libri iuris civilis cracoviensis* 1392-1506, nr 1968, Papal Nuntio - (1412/05/01) [Bull 3] nr 1367, (1421/07) [Bull 4] nr. 854, (1421/11/24) [Itali] nr 87, (1423/08/21) [Bull 4] nr 1205, Ambassador - (1421/10/29) [Itali] nr 34.

<sup>1043</sup> It had been suggested by the collector, Galhardus de Carceribus, in 1338, that the Bardi bank either send a representative, or better, accept Pietro Cavallo of Genoa and Andrea de Verulis, already on the ground in Poland to operate as the bank's factors. This idea was however, rejected by the Bardi. [Theiner] I nr. 545 pg 419.

<sup>1044</sup> (1419/12) [Theiner] II nr. 28.

<sup>1045</sup> ASF, Catasto 382, fol. 128r/ 765r-765v Portate San Giovanni – Drago (1430)

<sup>1046</sup> Antonio di Talenti di Medici was born in 1380 and worked as a *giovane* – clerk at the Medici bank's Florentine Tavola for two years around 1402. Ibid. Roover, *The Rise*, 44, 46.

<sup>1047</sup> ASF, MaP Filza 153, doc. 1, fol. 80rv.

<sup>1048</sup> Roover, *The Rise*, 385.

<sup>1049</sup> (1415/10/28) – Pope John XIII requested that monies sent from Wrocław and collected by Matteo di Lamberto of Naples, Archdean of Wrocław, papal collector for Poland, be sent through the hands of Albizzo, [Itali] nr 88.

case however, Albizzo appears to have carried the “*pecuniarum et rerum*” – money and goods directly rather than using an instrument of credit.<sup>1050</sup> Starting in December of 1419 however, Albizzo began to act more as a standard bank factor, organizing the transfer of monies via instruments drafted on the Medici bank, charging for such transactions a rate of 10%.<sup>1051</sup> The Papal Collector, Giacomino Rossi (Jacobino de Rubeis), Canon of St. Mary of Castelo in Genoa, was the first to really benefit from this possibility. Soon, it was not only Albizzo and the Medici that Giacomino was able to send money through, but also the bank of Vieri di Guadagni, and later Adovardo Ghiachinoti and the Cambini bank.<sup>1052</sup> Such transfers were not always possible however, and at times Giacomino Rossi was forced to seek other means to transfer his funds. It also appears that at times he engaged the services of Giovanni di Saccis di Papia, a famous doctor of medicine, who worked for the Polish court and taught at Krakow University.<sup>1053</sup> The doctor’s engagement did not work out well as upon his death in 1431, Albizzo, who was named one of the executors of his will, was forced to reply to Giacomino Rossi’s pronouncements that they were on the hook for papal funds which were to have been transferred by Giovanni, but had never arrived.<sup>1054</sup> Such were the perils of attempting large financial transfers without the backing of a bank.

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<sup>1050</sup> [Itali] nr 88.

<sup>1051</sup> (1427/05/12) Jacobino de Rubeis sends 496fl plus 35 paying 50fl for the exchange made through the hands of Johannes and Cosimo de Medici and Co. Rationes pg 75, (1428/05/14) Jacobino de Rubeis sends 700fl via Johannes and Cosimo de Medici cost of transfer 70fl. Rationes pg 81, (1428/26), Jacobino de Rubeis sends 400 fl via Iohannis Orlandi and Johannes and Cosimo de Medici charging 40 fl. Rationes pg 81, (1429) Jacobino de Rubeis sends 300 fl from Albicius de Medici sending Peter’s Pence via Johannes and Cosimo de Medici charged 30fl, (1430/01/31) Jacobino de Rubeis sends 500 fl charged 50 Rationes pg. 81, (1433/08/31) Jacobino de Rubeis sends 197fl plus 25 solidi charged 20fl through Laurencio and Cosimo de Medici. Rationes pg. 88, (1433/02/17) Jacobino de Rubeis sends 267fl plus 27fl charge through Laurencio and Cosimo di Medici. Kowalski, “Rationes Iacobini de Rubeis,” 88.

<sup>1052</sup> A set of Giacomino Rossi’s books of account have survived in the Vatican archive and been transcribed and published by Marek D. Kowalski. In addition, evidence of perhaps more private debts can be found in the 1427 Catasto record of Giovanni di Bicci di Medici. In this records, Giacomino appears as “*Johannes di Rossi colectore in Polonia* owed – 5 R – 13 lire – 10, among the lowest amounts recorded. ASF, Catasto 49 fol. 1191r San Giovanni – Lion d’Oro (1427) From Giacomino’s own accounts we can see a number of transactions: (1426/11/26) Jacobino de Rubeis sends 596 fl plus 35 solidi to the Curia through the hands of Vieri de Guadagnis and Co. - paying 60fl for the letter of exchange. Kowalski, “Rationes Iacobini de Rubeis,” 80 (1427/01/9) Jacobino de Rubeis sends 796 fl and 35 solidi through the hands of Johannes Orlandi of Genazzano, procurator, attorney (prosecutor) of Jacobino de Rubeis in the Curia. Cambio cost 80f. Kowalski, “Rationes Iacobini de Rubeis,” 75, (1428/05/26) Jacobino di Rubeis sends 400 fl via Iohannis Orlandi and Johannes and Cosimo di Medici charging 40 fl Rationes pg 81, (1430/01/31) Iohannis Orlandi di Genazano, Adovardo Ghiachinotti, and Andree di Cambini, merchants of Florence and the Roman Curia 800fl with 80 charged Kowalski, “Rationes Iacobini de Rubeis,” 81. (1432/12/14), Jacobinus de Rubeis, sends 600 gulden from Krakow via Albicius di Medicis. Marek Daniel Kowalski, *Proventus camerae apostolicae debiti: opłaty duchowieństwa polskiego na rzecz papieżstwa w latach 1417-1484* [Proventus camerae apostolicae debiti: fees paid to the Polish clergy for the papacy in the years 1417-1484], (Krakow: Towarzystwo Wydawnicze Historia Jagellonica, 2010), 66 nr. 291.

<sup>1053</sup> (1409) [Ozog], 154, (1422/10/18) [KDUK] I nr 71 pg 1431,

<sup>1054</sup> (1434/06/09) [CA 3] nr 48

Whenever possible then, Giacomino sought to take advantage of Albizzo's presence in Krakow, but when he died in 1439, collectors in Poland were once again at a loss.<sup>1055</sup>

Evidence of the activities of Polish papal collectors for the rest of the fifteenth century is unfortunately limited by a drop in the sources.<sup>1056</sup> However, the evidence that remains demonstrates that collectors continued to have difficulties in making large financial transfers from the Kingdom of Poland. The Northern route which had been popular for much of the thirteenth and fourteenth century was no longer used. Money now traveled south through Hungary to Venice or west through Wrocław and from there to the Lagoon City. It further appears that after the death of Albizzo di Medici, no other Italian banking representative made Krakow their permanent home. Albizzo was thus, a one-off occurrence, a man who chose to stay on in Poland for its own sake who invested in both mercantile and mining activities, with banking as a secondary feature. A few signs demonstrate that at times, letters of exchange could be purchased from Italians present in Poland for transfers to the curia, such as that procured in 1473 by Johhanes de Lanka, Canon of Łowicz, from the bank of "Bernardus and Franciscus merchants of Florence" for 330fl.<sup>1057</sup> On other occasions however, it appears likely that collectors were once again reduced to requesting passing clerics on their way to Rome to act as carriers, or in transferring the funds themselves.

### 3.13.2 Banking

The story of Italian banking in medieval East-Central Europe has been underrepresented until recent years. As it played a major role in where and how Italians operated in Poland, a brief summary of its historiographical importance is appropriate. Up until the sixteenth century, the number of Italian banking houses with branches beyond the alps remained small. As discussed above, banking trade with East-Central Europe was instead largely funneled through two major clearing houses – Bruges with its connection to the Baltic, and Venice at the foot of the alps. Until the mid-fifteenth century most financial instruments in Poland were handled through Bruges, as the route along the Vistula to the Baltic sea was faster and more secure than that overland to Venice. The lack of interest shown by Italian banking houses in Polish affairs was due to the country's distance, an issue rendered acute by its land-locked nature, but more

<sup>1055</sup> ANK, Akta Miasta Krakowa, civitatis Cracoviae iceptum anno Domini XCCCCXXX primo 1431-1446 fol. 191. <https://szukajwarchiwach.pl/29/33/0/1.1.1/6/skan/full/a8cMuqn4eoVZnaRI2XI8LQ>

<sup>1056</sup> Kowalski, *Proventus camerae*, 196-7.

<sup>1057</sup> (1473/10/23) [AKapSąd II] nr. 638 pg 273

fundamentally caused by the general unequal balance of trade between north and south. Because Poland was poor in precious metals, unlike its Bohemian and Hungarian neighbors, and what goods it might offer that would be tempting to Italians such as furs, wax, honey, and salt, tended to be heavy and thus difficult to transfer, commerce was complicated. The resulting constant trade deficit had an immediate impact on possibilities for banking profits. Due to the Church's prohibitions on usury, medieval banking was linked to exchange rates and fees attached to the "*cambio*" – exchange, rather than interest, as is common today, the trade imbalance was deeply problematic. As most of the *lettra di cambio* - letters of credit were sent from Poland by ecclesiastical officials, and the volume of trade was simply insufficient to justify or allow for a turning of profit as the "*recambio*" - the remittance back towards the north was severely limited.

Banking houses did seek ways around this problem, authorizing their factors to purchase merchandise to be sold in Venice or Bruges, and exchanges from the north were frequently cleared with goods rather than specie, but such ventures had their own risks and were not always profitable.<sup>1058</sup> This dynamic changed during the sixteenth century when advances in shipping technology allowed for the greater export of grain, together with beer and more traditional goods like fur, wax, honey and refined metals from Upper Hungary, in larger volumes. By this time, the Polish economy was more fully developed and the kingdom had gained full control of the all-important Baltic sea ports, so that banking operations evolved. Yet, despite a large influx of Italians to Poland during the period, it was the German houses of Welsher and Fugger, as well as smaller more local entities, which came to dominate the trade. Still, there were a few attempts made to set up Italian banking establishments in Poland in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The Medici in particular had a number of factors there on the ground, including as discussed, Albizzo di Medici, a junior member of the family. While most of these interactions were focused on the remittance of ecclesiastical tithes, there was some exchange of credit also between Polish and Italian merchants moving goods through Bruges, Wrocław and Venice. To understand these dynamics, of first importance is the work of Raymond de Roover, followed by the more recent studies completed by Arnold Esch and Kurt Weissen.<sup>1059</sup>

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<sup>1058</sup> Esch, "Das Archiv eines Lucchesischen," 144.

<sup>1059</sup> I would like to give a special thanks to Dr. Weissen for assisting me in procuring copies of his work for use in this study. Roover *The Rise*; Esch "Bankiers der Kirche, 277-398; Esch "Italienische Kaufleute in Brügge,"

## The Rise of the Italian Merchant Banker

Part of the reason Italian merchants became so successful across Europe during the fourteenth century was their ability to finance long-distance ventures. Money-changing and the issuing of small loans had been common across Europe for centuries. This activity persisted, despite the Church's hard theological stance against usury.<sup>1060</sup> The type of large-scale international exchange which would be useful to the papacy however, had a different genesis growing out of the needs of merchants who began traveling in greater numbers longer distances starting during the twelfth century.<sup>1061</sup> In particular, the great fairs of Champagne drew merchants from across Europe who needed specie on the spot to exchange for goods. Genoese, Sienese, and Placentine merchant-come-bankers stepped in to fill this need, offering loans which could be cleared either at the next fair or in their home city at a later date.<sup>1062</sup> Enterprising merchants in Rome had long since engaged in small scale money-lending to pilgrims, visiting prelates and members of the Curia.<sup>1063</sup> With ever greater movement between Rome and the rest of Europe, they appear to have picked up and adopted what their Tuscan neighbors were engaged in, likely

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245-261 Esch, "Das Archiv eines Lucchesischen," 129-71; Weissen, "Dove il Papa va, sempre è caro di danari.; Weissen, "Ci scrivo in tedesco! 112-25.; Weissen, "Florentiner Bankiers und Deutschland (1275–1475). Kontinuität und Diskontinuität wirtschaftlicher Strukturen." PhD diss., dissertazione, Basel, Universität Basel, 2001; Kurt Weissen, "Florentiner Kaufleute in Deutschland bis zum Ende des 14. Jahrhunderts. in *Zwischen Maas und Rhein Beziehungen, Begegnungen und Konflikte in einem europäischen Kernraum von der Spätantike bis zum 19. Jahrhundert*. Edited by Franz Irsigler (Trier: Kliomedia, 2006), 363-401.; Kurt Weissen, "La Rete Commerciale Tedesca Delle Compagnie Fiorentine Romanam Curiam Sequentes, 1410-1470," *Archivio Storico Italiano* 169, no. 4 (630) (2011): 707-26.

<sup>1060</sup> While Jews are commonly linked with loans and usurious practice, there is no evidence that they played a major role in Papal finances until the later sixteenth century. Léon Poliakov, *Jewish Bankers and the Holy See (RLE: Banking & Finance): From the Thirteenth to the Seventeenth Century*. Vol. 28. (New York: Routledge, 2012), 7-8. For an overview of the theological underpinnings and evolving debate of the Church's usury doctrine see: Joan Lockwood O'Donovan, "The Theological economics of medieval usury theory," *Studies in Christian Ethics* 14.1 (2001): 48-64. For a study of the effects of the Church's usury prohibition on medieval economic markets, the means which merchant bankers employed circumvent it and a final analysis of and its distorting effects on the medieval European economy, see: Koyama, Mark. "Evading the 'Taint of Usury': The usury prohibition as a barrier to entry." *Explorations in Economic History* 47.4 (2010): 420-442.

<sup>1061</sup> Robert S. Lopez, *The commercial revolution of the Middle Ages, 950-1350*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

<sup>1062</sup> Raymond De Roover, "New interpretations of the history of banking," in *Business, banking, and economic thought in late medieval and early modern Europe: selected studies of Raymond de Roover*. Edited by Julius Kirshner, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 202-4.

<sup>1063</sup> Indeed, loans were made by small-scale merchants attached to the Curia even after larger banking houses were established. Prior to the Papacy's move to Avignon, these Roman merchants also had equal rights to complain to the Papal camera if their loans were not repaid on time and to expect that the offending cleric would be excommunicated until the money was repaid. Evidence for this is given in a letter recorded in the register of Theoderic of Orvieto, Camerarius of Boniface VIII (1294-1303), who in 1297 oversaw the excommunication of Bishop David of St. David's at the request of 5 men who traded with the Curia. These men, including a butcher, fishmonger, tavern keeper, and poulterer, had extended the bishop, credit to the tune of 680 florins. The Bishop paid at last and Theoderic ordered the ban lifted. D. P. Waley, "A Register of Boniface VIII's Chamberlain, Theoderic of Orvieto," *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 8.2 (1957): 152 nr.27.

during their own visits to Champagne.<sup>1064</sup> From the outset, the Roman merchant bankers were swiftly joined by others coming from Bologna, Genoa, Parma, Siena, Lucca, Piacenza, and Florence and by the 1250's at the latest had already lost their primacy of place.<sup>1065</sup> The late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries saw a wave of banks rise up on the Italian Peninsula, buoyed on the rising tide of the market. The capital pooling in Italy, thanks to its fecundity and the presence of the pope, spurred the development of new forms of banking and accounting practice: *lettere di cambio*, double entry book keeping, marine insurance - all of this came out of thirteenth and fourteenth century Italy.<sup>1066</sup> Soon, these banks began expanding their operations and setting up branches in other major trade cities, including very quickly both Venice and Bruges.<sup>1067</sup> Italian banking companies thus grew to hold a near monopoly on long-distance money transfers. Branches beyond the Alps remained elusive however, and it was not until 1413 that one at last was set in place.<sup>1068</sup> While a *lettera di cambio* - a letter of exchange, could be issued without a full branch being in place, this was done far less frequently.

### **How Banking Worked**

Medieval banks were different from their modern equivalents in a number of significant ways. First, they were rarely used as depositories for the safe-keeping of wealth. The medieval market was far less liquid than today. Most of societies' wealth at the time was stored in land, livestock, or in precious goods, frequently clothing and adornments, which could be bartered, sold, or used as collateral when cash was required. Medieval banks therefore, did not have vaults, but instead a locked chest located somewhere in the home of the banker. In part, this was due to the fact that liquid assets, in the form of gold or silver currency, was relatively rare, although increasingly common in the wake of the thirteenth century which saw a boom in European silver and gold mining.

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<sup>1064</sup> Economic historians have argued convincingly that the rise of widespread banking facilities in the second half of the thirteenth century was a significant reason behind the fairs' precipitous decline, as the new banking firms offered faster and more secure means of exchanging credit, so the fairs were no longer used as Europe's clearing house. John F. Padgett, and Walter W. Powell. *The emergence of organizations and markets*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012).124, 127-8.

<sup>1065</sup> Roman bankers dominated under Innocent III (1198-1216) and Honorius III (1216-1227) but Gregory IX (1227-41) favored others from Bologna, Parma, and Piacenza but most especially Siena. Innocent IV (1243- 1254) on the other hand, preferred men from Genoa and Piacenza, and during his reign for the first time Florentines, who would become so prominent in later years, arrived on the scene. Punta, "Tuscan merchant-bankers," 40-1.

<sup>1066</sup> The first known *lettera di cambio* was released in 1340, Roover, *The Rise*, 1-2.

<sup>1067</sup> Other popular sites included: Barletta, Bologna, Genoa, Naples, Perugia, Avignon, Paris, London, Barcelona, Valencia, and Majorca.

<sup>1068</sup> Weissen, "Florentiner Kaufleute in Deutschland," 395.

Secondly, due to the restrictions on usury mandated by the Church, directly collecting interest on a loan was forbidden. The theological objection to loans was that it implied the selling of time, which belonged only to God, and that any promised return in the form of a set rate of interest violated biblical teaching. For this reason, as odd as it may seem, medieval banks never (at least licitly) offered loans at interest.<sup>1069</sup> Without the incentive of an interest payment however, few desired to risk their wealth in the hands of others who might very well lose it, while denying themselves the use of the funds for a period of time. Yet, in many ways, medieval people required loans far more than now, as they were deeply tied to the seasonality of available goods. One could not simply wait until the wheat harvest arrived to purchase cochineal dye that hit the market only once per year. Relatively short-term business loans were thus frequently necessary. Merchants turned to witnessed verbal promises and IOU's written into notarial registers as frequent stop-gap measures. Pledging possessions to local Lombards, the term still used in Europe for pawnbrokers today, was another option. Finally, one could turn to a creditor. At first, many of these creditors were Jews, to whom the usury laws did not apply, but soon Christian bankers found ways around the usury dilemma.

This brings us to the third major difference. Medieval banks made their money primarily through exchange – the transfer of funds between regions, and more importantly, between currencies, rendering them in many ways more similar in many ways to Western Union than a High Street Bank. The difference in exchange rates between regions supplied the banker with his profits, and done well, the profits could be considerable. These profits were made in this way through skillful arbitrage and a knowledge of the market. Merchants were highly aware of the differences to be found in various regions, the *larghezza* and *strettezza* of money on the market, and identified the reasons for these fluctuations.<sup>1070</sup> The merchant manuals written by Samminiato Ricci and Giovanni da Uzzano, for example discuss this issue in detail.<sup>1071</sup> Both recognized for example that in January, less local currency was available on the market in Bruges due to the regular departure of merchant galleys in that month. With all the merchants in the city having just spent their capital filling the ships with goods to be sold abroad, there was a local shortage of specie and thus following the basic law of supply and demand, the local currency was more expensive to purchase. In order to turn a profit then as a banker, the merchants advised not to remit funds during such times, but instead to send cash. The other option was to avoid offering exchanges during these periods all together. As *lettera di cambio*

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<sup>1069</sup> Roover, *The Rise*, 10-4.

<sup>1070</sup> Weissen, "Dove il papa," 72.

<sup>1071</sup> Weissen, "Dove il papa," 67-8.

were time sensitive – the parties agreeing where and *when* it could be presented for cash, a knowledgeable banker could manipulate the market. Then, as now, knowledge was power and it thus became common for Italian merchants to include in any business letter the local exchange rate.<sup>1072</sup>

Given the reliance on currency flows and exchange to generate profits, the general monetization of a market was an important factor underpinning the development of banking in the region. More specifically, the price of the local currency was key.<sup>1073</sup> Indeed, the general level of monetization of a regional economy during the medieval period stands as a good relative measure-stick, demonstrating its overall prosperity and therefore its need for banking services.<sup>1074</sup> Monetization allowed for the value of products to be more easily measured, provided a simplified means of exchange, could store value, and facilitate credit transactions.<sup>1075</sup> As explained in Chapter 3 however, Poland had little to no precious metal resources which greatly hindered its ability to provide bullion to mint money, leading to a general species shortage. This problem was only exacerbated by two Great Bullion famines, one during the years 1390s-1420s and another between 1440s – 60s.<sup>1076</sup> A vibrant and reliable money market was key to banking profits and this was something Poland could not supply. Even more than its distance, the lack of a pool for currency exchange made the setting up of a branch of an Italian bank in Poland a non-starter during this period. These facts however, did not entirely prevent the drafting of *lettere di cambio* on occasion.

### ***Lettere di Cambio* in Poland**

In its most elaborated form, *lettere di cambio* - letters of exchange, worked whereby an individual wishing to transfer funds approached a person willing to sell them a letter. The person wishing to make the transfer - the buyer (the giver or remitter), gave a set amount of money in the local currency to the seller (the drawer or taker) in location A. The seller then wrote out a letter ordering his correspondent (payee or drawee), who was usually a factor or agent of the seller, to pay the equivalent value of the deposited sum at a set exchange rate in the local currency of place B to the buyer's correspondent (the payee) in location B.<sup>1077</sup>

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<sup>1072</sup> Roover, *The Rise*, 96.

<sup>1073</sup> Weissen, "Dove il papa," 67-72.

<sup>1074</sup> Piotr Guzowski, "Money economy and economic growth: The case of medieval and early modern Poland," *Quaestiones Medii Aevi Novae* 18 (2013): 246-55.

<sup>1075</sup> Guzowski, "Money economy," 246.

<sup>1076</sup> Blanchard, *Mining, Metallurgy and Minting* vol 3, 1013; Spufford, *Money*, 358.

<sup>1077</sup> For more on these operations see: Adrian R. Bell, Chris Brooks, and Tony K. Moore. "Cambium non est mutuum: exchange and interest rates in medieval Europe," *The Economic History Review* 70.2 (2017): 373-96.



The first thing approaching a *lettera di cambio* that appears to have been issued involving Poland directly was written in Kiliya in 1361 for Sarchis, son of Costantino, an Armenian merchant, and two Genoese merchants, Domenico Carefige and Ianoto di Fronte Maroso. These three men owed Sarchis 14 silver sommi, the money being owed “*per atto notarile, a titolo di cambio*”<sup>1078</sup> Sarchis was a merchant with strong ties to Poland and an eventual immigrant to Lviv. While this transaction may very well have been a common notarial record, the inclusion of the term *a titolo di cambio* is worth noting. Further *lettere* began to appear only from the 1380s. By 1381, it was already possible to send a *lettera di cambio* from Cologne or Bruges for transfer to the Curia. In 1385, the option appeared in Wrocław, when one was written on the behalf of two merchants from Wrocław, Paulus Stangil and Conrad Sculchulcz, by Francesco di Bicci di Medici sending 2,000 Prague grosz. to Rome on the behalf of Thomas, the Bishop of Tricaricensis (IT) who was serving as papal nuncio in the province.<sup>1079</sup> Francesco di Bicci di Medici was the older brother of the famous Giovanni di Bicci di Medici, who a few years down the road would open what would become the renowned Medici Bank.<sup>1080</sup> Francesco authorized the *lettera di cambio* as a member of the banking company of Vieri di Cambio di Medici, a forerunner of Giovanni, who at his height was one of the richest men in Florence.<sup>1081</sup> The timing of the *lettere* is of particular interest as it was in that same year, 1382, that Vieri di Medici showed his first interest in the region of Central Eastern Europe. The same year that Francesco entered the firm, Vieri di Medici joined a company doing trade in Hungary, centered in Buda, which focused on shipping metals mined in upper Hungary to Venice. The new company had its headquarters in Venice and included the Santi and the Portinari, who had been trading in Hungarian copper for years: Jacopo di Francesco Venturi, Andrea di Ugo, Antonio di Santi, Guido di Tommaseo e Gualterio di Sandro Portinari.<sup>1082</sup> Other examples from Poland then have to wait until the fifteenth century.

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<sup>1078</sup> Geo Pistarino, ed. *Notai genovesi in oltremare: atti rogati a Chilia da Antonio di Ponzò (1360-61)*, Collana storica di fonti e studi diretta da Geo Pistarino, 12, (Genova: Istituto internazionale di studi liguri, 1971), nr. 55.

<sup>1079</sup> (1381/03/21) Esch, “Das Archiv eines Lucchesischen,” 154; (1382/03/12) *Monumenta Vaticana res gestas Bohemicas illustrantia* Vol 5 nr. 74

<sup>1080</sup> “In 1382 Francesco di Bicci de' Medici matriculated in the Arte del Cambio, after a period of thirty years in which no member of the family had entered the guild. Four years later, in February, 1386, Giovanni di Bicci followed his brother into the same guild. Between 1386 and 1405, four Medici were matriculated in the Cambio guild: Antonio di Giovanni di Cambio (April 1386), Averardo di Francesco di Bicci (April 1390), Malatesta di Francesco di Bicci (July 1401), and Cosimo di Giovanni di Bicci (February 1405);. Antonio and Averardo were partners in large banking companies in the 1390s”. see: Gene A. Brucker, “The Medici in the fourteenth century.” *Speculum* 32.1 (1957): 21.

<sup>1081</sup> Brucker, “The Medici in the fourteenth century,” 10.

<sup>1082</sup> Susanna Teke, “Operatori Economici Fiorentini in Ungheria Nel Tardo Trecento E Primo Quattrocento,” *Archivio Storico Italiano* 153, no. 4 (566) (1995):700-1.

To date, no Polish merchant accounting books appear to have survived from the period in question. The records from the Bochnia salt mine, referenced previously, a number of royal accounts, and a few city budgets have come down to the modern day, but none belonging to private individuals. Had this been the case, it would be easier to assess the extent to which crediting and credit transfers were common. All indications however, point to them being exceedingly rare if not non-existent amongst Polish merchants. They were not on the other hand, entirely absent from the Italian community in Poland. As related earlier, Albizzo di Medici made a number of transfers Via *lettera di cambio* for the papal collector Giacomino Rossi, but these could be classified under the special favor granted to collectors. An example of a private transfer comes from 1418, when Antonio di ser Matteo had given a *lettera di cambio* worth 250 ducats to the merchant, Beda of Wrocław. Beda then transferred the money received to the Venetian, Giovanni Paruta who saw it into the hands of Antonio's brother, Michele, in Venice.<sup>1083</sup> The evidence of such transfers is thus extremely sparse and it would appear that they were used very infrequently in Poland.

### Polish Banking and Credit

Prior to the sixteenth century, banking houses as they were known in Italy did not exist in Poland. Instead, other ways were found to procure loans and make long-distance exchanges. As made obvious in the previous section, long-distance exchange was particularly difficult and no really good solution was ever found for the problem. Troubles securing credit were also problematic and greatly hindered merchants who required funds to outfit trading expeditions which required a great deal of initial capital and had a lengthy pay-off period. It was for this reason that the merchants engaged by papal collectors during the fourteenth century were so willing to take papal funds to Bruges or Venice, despite the risks, as the money acted as a form of desperately needed interest-free loan.

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<sup>1083</sup> *Michael Johannes Ser Mathey Mercator Florentinus habitator Venetiarum In contrata Sanctorum Apostolorum fruit contents et confesses recepissee- a dominis- Jeronimo Pareuta et fribus- ducatos ducentos quinquaginta auri quos Beda de Beislavia scripsit dictis .d. Jeronimo Paruta qts- solvere deberet dictos ducatos 250 predicto Michaeli Johannis per unam literam quam dictus Johannes pntavit Dictus Ser Jeronimo Pareuta et fabi- dices quod errant pro uno cambio facto per Antoni's Johannis fratrem dicti Michaelis cum praedicto Beda et quia dicti Ser Jeronimus Paruta et frcs- dubuabant si illa litera erat voluntas dei. Bede dictis Michael se in suis bonis propriis obligando promisit que illa erat euisis Voluntas Et si sibi conservarus et manui tenere promisit Et si sic non fecerint promi- Conprovere dictos pro Jeronimus et frcs- sine dano- de dictis denarii's a precedeo- Beda Propeteca ipsi- Michael obligeunt se et suos heredes et bona et personam ad carce- predicti et Paulus Barnaza (1419/03/15) ASF, Cancellaria Inferiore, Notario 228, fol 87 (Venetia de Angeletto)*

Initially, it was frequently Jews who made loans to merchants. Under King Casimir the Great however, new restrictions were invoked to prevent “Jewish Usury” and the community was forbidden to accept loans with land as collateral.<sup>1084</sup> This limitation prevented Jews from becoming landed themselves, cutting them off from access to the nobility and greater wealth. The intent was to “protect” Polish nobles, who might otherwise find themselves divested of their property. Jewish moneylending continued however, and the two largest pogroms of the period, 1407 and 1423 were both directly related to accusations of usury and angry debtors.<sup>1085</sup> Debtors who did not want to pay the money they owed, were assisted by pressure from clergymen after the second altercation. King Władysław Jagiełło adopted the Statute of Warta, which forbid Jews to lend money on mortgages and promissory notes. Credit dried up and the once great lending houses became more like pawn shops. The pawning of items was a frequent expedient used by merchants in Poland, and at times even Italians were forced to this expedient. In 1433 for example, near the end of his life, Albizzo di Medici pawned three *lodices* –coverlets and a cloak made of *popellicze* - dormouse fur, worth a startling 6 marks, to Andrea de Kokorzyno, Archdeacon and Professor of Philosophy at Krakow.<sup>1086</sup> Why Albizzo needed the money at this point is unclear, but he appears to have been able to repay it and reclaim his items, others were frequently not so lucky.

Merchants could also turn to each other for loans. Many of these transactions occurred off the books, but a large number, for security purposes, were recorded in the city’s notarial registers. While mention of an interest payment is extremely rare, unsurprising as it was technically illegal, an understood hidden payment was frequently included in the overall price. The wealthier burghers in a town would offer such loans to each other, declaring property or naming an individual who agreed to stand surety against the exchange as collateral. Italians in Poland engaged in such measures freely, lending when they had ready cash and borrowing when they were in need. The Genoese merchant, Jeronimo di Olmerio, stands as a good example of this as he both borrowed and lent money during his time trading in Lviv. In 1441, he loaned money to a group of Armenians whom he took to court for their failure to pay him back. In the same year, his friend Paolo Grimandi of Genoa, who had stood surety for him, was forced to pay over 270 florins when Jeronimo failed to come up with the cash owed to the Captain of

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<sup>1084</sup> Jerzy Wyrozumski, “Jews in Medieval Poland,” in *The Jews in Old Poland, 1000-1795*. Edited by Polonsky, Antony, Jakub Basista, and Andrzej Link-Lenczowski (London: IB Tauris, 1993), 17.

<sup>1085</sup> Litman, *The Economic Role of Jews*, 135.

<sup>1086</sup> (1433/08/28) [CA3] nr 3

Grodek.<sup>1087</sup> Grzegorz Myśliwski, has further demonstrated that merchants in Wrocław at least borrowed regularly from Venetians starting in the 1390's. Indeed, between 1395-1461, Wrocław merchants borrowed approximately 7,855 florins, or 4,301 marks Prague grosz.<sup>1088</sup> Italians were frequently *both* creditors and debtors.

### Italian Banks in Poland

Due to the aforementioned general lack of monetization and the standing trade imbalance between the north and south of Europe during the period, Italian banks had little interest in extending branches across the Alps, let alone all the way to Poland. While as early as 1338, the Papal Collector, Gerhard de Carces, had been requesting that the Pope use his influence to convince the Bardi and other merchant banks to set up a branch in Poland. To assist in the operation, Gerhard went so far as to recommend Paulo Cavallo, a Genoese citizen of long standing, act as a primary factor, but it was not to be.<sup>1089</sup> The prevailing market constraints were too strong and even the Pope could not force merchants to go where there would be no profit. When considering this issue, the relative size of Italian banking establishments is something important to keep in mind. The mythos that has grown up around, in particular the Medici bank, often blinds one to the fact that these were in reality quite small operations. The banking "super-companies" of the fourteenth century in fact employed more workers, yet even the Peruzzi Bank, the largest of these, only ever had ninety employees.<sup>1090</sup> The Medici bank on the other hand, employed at its height around fifty.<sup>1091</sup> In an interesting comparison, the Krakow salt mines employed over 1000 workers, giving some perspective on the responsibilities of the role Italians who took on the role of Zupparius took on.<sup>1092</sup> Italian merchant banks were really quite limited affairs, and it is therefore all the more understandable that they did not risk their somewhat limited resources on seeking to set up anything in as distant a post as Krakow. It is important to note here that the reason the Medici displayed only limited interest in Poland was not due to any prohibition against lending money to "German"

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<sup>1087</sup> (1441/01/27 [AGZ] 14 nr 183, (1441/05/29) nr 275.

<sup>1088</sup> Myśliwski, "Venice and Wrocław," 111.

<sup>1089</sup> "*Et, pater sancte, si Camera vestra possit concordare cum societate Bardorum, et aliis societatibus, quod ipsi hie reciperent pecunias et in Curia assignarent, prout tractabatur hoc anno per dominum Andream de Verulis et Paulinum Caballi de Genua, hoc esset tutissimum, et securum et certum, et mercatores istaram parcium sunt homines incerti, et nichil servant de promissis, et predictus Paulinus, qui est in Cracovia, scribit predictis societatibus, quod cum Camera debeant concordare et sufficientem cautionem pro recipiendis prestare.*" [Theiner] I, DXLV pg. 419.

<sup>1090</sup> Roover, *The Rise*, 95.

<sup>1091</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1092</sup> *Brevis Et Accurata Regiminis Ac Status Zupparum Vieliciensium Et Bochnensium Sub Annum Christi 1518: Descripto*, ed. Wacław Walecki (Krakow: Collegium Columbinum, 2000).

merchants in the wake of Neri Tornaquinci's 1406 debacle. The notion that Giovanni di Medici laid down such a prohibition was started with a rare error made by Roover, but then continually propagated in subsequent German and English language studies. Kurt Weissen however, having made a thorough assessment of the evidence, found no trace on any such ban on doing business with "Germans". Given Albizzo di Medici's subsequent mission to Krakow, this claim appears even more fallacious.<sup>1093</sup> Still, apart from the Medici bank and their factor Albizzo, described above, there is only one other known bank whose records indicate that they made transfers from Poland.

### **The Guadagni Bank**

In the 1420's the bank of Vieri di Vieri Guadagni made a large number of transfers for Poles. Referred to in the account book as *di Polonae*, these accounts appear on both the debit and credit side of the ledger. Among the Polish debtors listed in the company's "*libro giallo*" - the yellow book, were a certain Johannes dominus de Polone and a Salvestrus dominus de Polone, both owing significant sums, demonstrating that these were not loans to local, small-time traders.<sup>1094</sup> Salvestrus appears also on the credit side of the ledger implying an ongoing relationship.<sup>1095</sup> A number of other Polish individuals also had credit with the bank, implying that they must have had a factor on the ground who could make assurances and provide for the transfer of sums.<sup>1096</sup> Another account book, the "*libro della cassa*" house book, included further Polish individuals, but with debts of smaller sums.<sup>1097</sup> The often generic nature of the names, and the unusual spelling forms unfortunately makes it impossible to identify more closely these individuals, but these included at least one doctor and two noblemen, as well as others who are likely to be identified as merchants. Strikingly, none of the individuals are recorded as members of the clergy, implying that banking transfers during this period had evolved beyond simply that of moving funds towards the papal court. That said, Vieri

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<sup>1093</sup> Roover, *The Rise*, 41; Weissen, "Florentiner Bankiers und Deutschland," 275.

<sup>1094</sup> Johannes dominus de Polone - R 117 f.15, Salvestrus dominus de Polone R. 752 f.11. D. 8 ASF, Catasto 57, 920r-922v.

<sup>1095</sup> Salvestrus dominus de Palona - R 406 f.8 Taking into account both credits and debts, Salvestro owed the bank R R.346 f.3 ASF, Catasto 57, 920r-922v.

<sup>1096</sup> Tomaso de Trabis di Polona - R 14 f. -8-7, Sivamulsai Polano - R 24, De otordus de Polona - R 19, ASF, Catasto 57, 920r-922v.

<sup>1097</sup> These included: Matteo dria Pollano - R 18, PietriTome di Polona - R 12, Andrea Posoleri di Polona - R 25, Thplzirs Johannes de Polona - R 14, Matteo Venzislai di Polona - R 12, Stanizslao Mecermeri di Polona - R 24, Ser-chettardo dottore di Polona - R 120, Ser Piero Bolesi di Polona - R 35, Ser Piero de Llapicha di Polona - R 12, ASF, Catasto 57, 920r-922v

Guadagni also transferred money for the papal collector in Poland, Giacomino Rossi in 1426.<sup>1098</sup>

### **Vieri di Vieri Guadagni – the Eminent Politician and Banker**

Vieri Guadagni likely became involved in Poland through contacts in Hungary<sup>1099</sup> A prominent politician and member of the powerful Florentine wool guild, in 1414 Vieri enrolled in the *Arte del Cambio* and soon after opened his own, well-capitalized bank.<sup>1100</sup> The Guadagni connection to Central Eastern Europe is afterwards traceable to their ties to the Scolari and that family's interests in Hungary.<sup>1101</sup> Indeed, it was through this bank that Filippo Scolari and his brother Matteo, who were the key Florentine traders in Hungary, managed a large portion of their business.<sup>1102</sup> The families were further linked through marriage when in 1419, Catarina, the daughter of Matteo Scolari, married Francesco di Vieri di Guadagni, son of Vieri di Vieri di Guadagni. With Filippo Scolari acting as King Sigismund of Hungary's favored servitor, the Scolari were able to do extensive business in Hungary that was largely funded by credit extended by the bank of Vieri di Guadagni.<sup>1103</sup> The Guadagni bank was thus introduced to business in Central Eastern Europe and would soon extend its services to Poland.

### **Money Transfers from Poland - Adoardo Toranquinci/Ghiachinoti and Michele di Giovanni di ser Matteo**

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<sup>1098</sup> 'Dalla Chamera Apostolica a di ultimo detto f i. sei cento ebbero dalla compagnia delle rede di Veri Guadagni e compagni sono per conti paghano per nome di messer Jacomino de Rosti collettore in Pollonia per denari rischiosi in detta collettoria. f i. vi cento.' Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Camera Apostolica, Introitus et Exitus 384. fol. 2r. (30/09/1426) as reproduced in: Prajda, *Network and Migration*, 130.

<sup>1099</sup> Vieri di Vieri Guadagni was born in Florence in 1368, scion of the Guadagni who were an old *popolani* family of the Florentine Republic. By the mid-fourteenth century, the clan had been whittled down to a limited number of families, traditionally oriented towards the Guelf faction, and the family had become closely linked to the Albizzi. Vieri held an impressive number of political posts throughout his career, among other things serving as Podestà of Prato, in the *Otto della Balìa* in 1402, and *Dieci di libertà* in 1403. Over the course of his career he gave 146 speeches before the *Signoria*. In 1411 he served as ambassador to Pope/Antipope John XXIII in 1411 together with Rinaldo degli Albizzi and in 1414, Vieri's brother Bernardo was among those helping to administer transfers of monies collected for the papacy. It was likely due to these earlier interactions and Vieri's status in Florence that upon his death in 1419, Pope/Antipope John XXIII appointed Vieri along with, Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici, Bartolomeo Valori, and Niccolò da Uzzano, as the executors of his will. Prajda, *Hungary, Network, and Migration*, 128. "Guadagni, Vieri di Vieri," Treccani, Accessed June 16th, 2020. [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/vieri-guadagni\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/vieri-guadagni_(Dizionario-Biografico)/)

<sup>1100</sup> "Guadagni, Vieri di Vieri," Treccani, Accessed June 16th, 2020. [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/vieri-guadagni\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/vieri-guadagni_(Dizionario-Biografico)/)

<sup>1101</sup> The strong social ties between the Scolari and the Guadagni were solidified by the marriage of Matteo Scolari's daughter, Caterina, to Vieri di Vieri di Guadagni's eldest son, Francesco, in 1400 and the enormous dowry of 3300 florin. Prajda, *Network and Migration*, 126.

<sup>1102</sup> Prajda, *Network, and Migration*, 130.

<sup>1103</sup> Prajda, "Unions of Interest," 11.

The question of how the money was transferred from Poland and who might have been the factor or correspondent to bring it about then becomes the question. Given that Adovardo Ghiachinotti's brother Neri Tornaquinci was at the time living in Krakow, it is possible that he acted as agent for the company. Neri had been an extremely successful bank manager under the Medici before his fall, and he made at least one registered transfer of funds in Hungary for Filippo Scolari and Antonio di Piero di Fronte in 1410.<sup>1104</sup> It should also be noted that in 1414, the same year that Vieri di Vieri Guadagni opened his bank, 1,000 *fl. di camera* were sent by Leonardo from collections made in Gniezno and Culm provinces to the Curia through the hands of Caroli Geri and Adovardo Ghiachinotti.<sup>1105</sup> A few months later, a second transfer of 250fl "*pecuniis collectorie Polonie*" of funds collected in Poland, was transferred to the Papal Camera again through the hands of Adovardo Ghiachinotti.<sup>1106</sup> It is highly possible that some of these funds went through Neri Tornaquinci's hands as well, traveling from Poland south through Hungary to Venice and then on to the Curia. Unfortunately, the account books of Vieri's bank have not survived, so no direct evidence exists to support this theory and it remains only a possibility.<sup>1107</sup>

The second and perhaps more likely option is that the money sent in 1426 was funneled through Antonio di ser Matteo who was then at the height of his fortunes in Krakow. The di ser Matteo family and the Guadagni would have been well acquainted, as they ran in the same social circles and were strong partisans of the Albizzi. The family would also have been known to Adoardo and the Cambini brothers as the eldest brother Giuliano di ser Matteo as all three had been employed at the same time by the Medici bank.<sup>1108</sup> As shown above, Adovardo and Leonardo di ser Matteo had worked together in 1414, managing papal collections coming from Poland, so the families all knew and had worked with each other.

Evidence to support the possibility that Antonio, perhaps with Neri Tornaquinci's assistance, may have acted as correspondent in Poland can be found in the fact that Antonio's brother, Michele appears in Vieri di Guadagni's 1427 Catasto report of the bank's ledgers, owing a debt

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<sup>1104</sup> (1410/05/04) – Strenuus miles Johannes de Tulischow, castellanus Calissiensis [Košice], paid 1900 fl to Neri to be given to Filippo Scolari and a further 300fl to Antonio di Piero di Fronte. ASK, Consol. Crac, 427, f. 370.

<sup>1105</sup> (1414/03/17) [Itali] nr. 25.

<sup>1106</sup> (1414/08/16) [Itali] nr. 26.

<sup>1107</sup> (1409/03/12) ASV, Cancelleria inferiore, Notai, 226 fol. 172.

<sup>1108</sup> Giuliano di Giovanni di ser Matteo worked for the Medici from at least 1402 and had been named manager of the Tavola in Florence in 1406 until presumably his death in 1409. Roover, *The Rise*. 44, 377.

of 19 lire.<sup>1109</sup> On the other hand, Michele himself makes no mention of such a connection in his own Catasto of 1427, and in fact declares that his brother was active in selling goods to the court and other individuals in Poland. He states that he had not heard from him in a long time and feared the money he had loaned Antonio was lost.<sup>1110</sup> Intriguingly, Michele's Catasto declaration also includes mention of Vieri di Guadagni but provides different information. The two had apparently entered into an agreement to sell cotton thread from Florence to Venice, and for this Michele owed Vieri and his company 32 lire.<sup>1111</sup> The Guadagni company also appears however, on the credit side of Michele's ledger, where he reports they owed him 39 lire, meaning that according to Michele's reckoning, Vieri and his company were indebted to him for 7 lire, rather than he to them for 19.<sup>1112</sup> This discrepancy could be explained by the fact that Michele's balance was transcribed from his account on June 20<sup>th</sup> 1427, thus three months after that of Vieri's, and therefore payments may have been made, otherwise one of the two was lying or mistaken. These were not uncommon occurrences in Catasto returns, particularly from those operating abroad.<sup>1113</sup> It is possible of course that Antonio was acting for the bank without informing his brother, but this appears unlikely. Given Vieri di Guadagni and Michele di ser Matteo's close business and political relationships, it would have been mentioned. The question then of who was operating as the bank's factor in Poland, remains frustratingly obscured.

### **Withdrawal of the Guadagni from Poland**

The unexpected death of Vieri Guadagni in early 1427 however, saw a radical change in the trajectory of the bank and resulted in its withdrawal from business in Poland. Vieri's heirs largely withdrew from the Cambini-Ghiachinoiti bank; which turned its attention away from Central Eastern Europe to focus on the Western Mediterranean and as an intermediary between Italy and Portugal.<sup>1114</sup> It thus appears that the connecting point in Poland must have been the Guadagni, although the di ser Matteo brothers continued to do business with the bank for some

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<sup>1109</sup> Michele di Giovanni di ser Matteo dna – R 1468 – 5 ASF, Catasto 57, 920r-922v.

<sup>1110</sup> “*Da Antonio di Giovanni detro in Pollana nella Magna e perche affare della corte e chon altri signgnori e cchon molti altri el attivi de bicori di molti anni passati chome viporite in formarvi danchi LL uso alparle de sumo gli 400 di che volenturi minitoriui molnmeno vaglio oesncho – 400.*” ASF, Catasto, 38, 717r-722v (S. Maria Novella – Vipera)

<sup>1111</sup> “*Veri Guadagni e compagni definche per cotoni filati mandati loro per attinpo vaghio in Firenze R.32.f.13.d.7*” equivalent in Michele's reckoning to 360 florins. ASF, Catasto 38, 717r-722v.

<sup>1112</sup> L.39 f.1.d.3 ASF, Catasto 38, 717r-722v.

<sup>1113</sup> For more on this topic see: Francesco Bettarini, “I fiorentini all'estero ed il catasto del 1427: frodi, elusioni, ipercorrettismi,” *Annali di Storia di Firenze* 6 (2011): 37-64.

<sup>1114</sup> Kurt Weissen has noted that the Cambini bank had no correspondent in Germany. Weissen, “Florentiner Bankiers und Deutschland,” 52. For more on the history of the Cambini bank see: Tognetti, *Il Banco Cambini*.



time despite the Guadagni's retreat. Still in 1431, Bernardo and Guido di ser Matteo had a 157fl. credit with the Cambini-Ghiachinotti related to their company in Barletta.<sup>1115</sup> Two years after this however, no member of the di ser Matteo family is to be found in the Cambini-Ghiachinotti ledgers.<sup>1116</sup> This absence may be due to the general decline in the family's fortunes or a strategic choice to go with other companies. In any event, it was likely a great fortune that the Cambini-Ghiachinotti cut ties with the Guadagni after Vieri's death, as they were not tainted by association in when the Medici returned to power in 1434. For, included among those exiled by the Balìa of 1434, was the entire Guadagni clan, including Bernardo di Vieri retroactively, as he had passed away.<sup>1117</sup>

In the final analysis then, while Italians did play an important role in the transfer of papal funds to the Curia, this was not the reason that they first traveled to Poland. Rather, papal collectors, seeking a more convenient way to transfer large amounts of money from Poland sought out the assistance of Italians who were already living in the region and sought to convince them to lend assistance. Meanwhile, starting as early as the mid-fourteenth century, there was lobbying for an Italian bank to set up a branch or at least a factor in Poland, but none was forthcoming until the arrival of Albizzo to Medici in the early fifteenth century. It was during this period that it is sure that at least some transfers were made *Via lettera di cambio* from Poland, by the Medici and other transfers were made for Polish clients by the Guadagni bank. The basic financial equation however, the lack custom due to poor monetization, trade imbalance and general unfamiliarity with the practice, meant that it did not appear to be a good financial investment for a bank to set up shop in Poland, and none did so. When at last in the sixteenth century, the Polish economy, buoyed by rising grain exports, expanded enough to warrant a banker's attention, it was the south German companies – the Welshers and the Fuggers - who stepped into the void, rather than the Italians.

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<sup>1115</sup> They held a credit of 157 fl Tognetti, *Il Banco Cambini*,133.

<sup>1116</sup> Tognetti, *Il Banco Cambini*,141.

<sup>1117</sup> Other Guadagni condemned to exile included Bernardo's son, Fillipo di Bernardo di Vieri, and his two brothers Francesco di Vieri, and Migliore di Vieri. For a list of those punished or exiled by the Balìa of 1434 see: Kent, Dale V. *The rise of the Medici: Faction in Florence, 1426-1434*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), Appendix 2. For a more complete listing on banished individuals see: Alison Brown, "Insiders and Outsiders," In *Society and Individual in Renaissance Florence*, edited by William J. Connell (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002),345-50, Appendix 1 and 2.

## Conclusion

As the above chapter demonstrates, Italians were involved in trading a wide range of products through Poland. Apart from money, which had its own unique transfer circuit, Italians interests tended to spread in two directions either, precious low weight goods like spices and dye, or heavy but essential and expensive commodities like metals and salt. While it is difficult to estimate their share of the market on any one particular good, we can say that through their control of the major salt mines and to a lesser extent lead, during much of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries they held a monopoly on the product. The market in other products like copper, furs, textiles and spices were shared with local Polish and other long distance merchants like those from Nuremberg. While they were certainly players in the polish market, the number of Italians operative in Poland was simply too small overall to dominate any particular area of trade apart from salt, where they monopolized the production points.

A few products were sold primarily as part of the transit trade - copper, slaves, and cochineal dye appear to have been products which were primarily sold through Poland as part of the transit trade as Poland offered only a limited market for each. Slaves in particular, were not sold in Poland but transited through, to be sold back in Italy. Meanwhile, imports included textiles, alum, wine, spices, nuts, and dried fruits. These were luxury goods that were sold within the kingdom itself to the royal court, nobles and high members of the church, and wealthy burghers. Poland's own textile production was limited and almost non-existent when it came to luxury items and thus most of the fabrics sold by Italians were expensive imports from the peninsula or silks brought from the east. Wine, spices, and other exotic food stuffs were popular in the country, increasingly so amongst the kingdom's nobles as the fifteenth century progressed and thus were sold internally. Due to the expensive nature of the products Italians tended to import, and the restrictions which kept foreign merchants from trading freely in Polish cities, many of these items were sold directly to the royal court. At other times, these products were used as prestige gifts, sent by cities to important officials, including the monarch, as a sign of their esteem. On more than one occasion it was the Italian merchants themselves who were tasked with the presentation of these gifts, perhaps to highlight their exotic appeal. Major exports included cochineal dye, which Italians appear to have had a major hand in dealing to Venice and furs which could be sold both inside the kingdom and abroad, but Italians interest in this product appears to have been minimal. Italians were able to leverage their connections at home to bring expensive materials to Poland and ensure the sale of Polish

products like cochineal on the Italian market. Where we do not see Italians operating, is in agricultural commodities or local retail trade. While cereals, beer, and cattle would become major exports from Poland in the Early Modern Period, the trade in these items was already starting to pick up in the late fifteenth century. Italians however, did not trade in any of these commodities for the simple reason that control of the agricultural sector was firmly in the hands of the Polish aristocracy, exportable beer meanwhile, was produced and sold by a powerful subset of Polish burghers, a clique which Italians do not appear to have had an interest in cracking. As for local retail trade, in order to engage in such trade, Italians would have had to had citizenship in a town as it was generally prohibited for non-citizens to take part in local commerce. Given that only 8% of the Italians active in Poland acquired citizenship, the group who could have participated was extremely small. Apart from a few Genoese who owned cloth stalls on the Krakow market square and may very well have been selling their expensive fabrics brought from abroad, there is no evidence of an Italian working in retail.

Chronologically speaking, there appears to be no distinctive pattern to the goods traded in by Italians. Salt was always popular as were textiles. Metals were sold when mines flourished and the material was available and fighting not disrupting trade routes, but this was the case for all merchants, not simply Italians. The more exotic items which were imported from the east obviously tracked with the inclusion of Lviv into Polish domains and its rising popularity as an entrepôt throughout the period until Ottoman pressure finally pushed many Italians to abandon the Black Sea zone at the very end of the fifteenth century. Polish cochineal was always a hot commodity on markets abroad as were furs. Slaves are the only item which changes in legislation in the late fifteenth century, specifically allowed Italians to trade through Poland more easily, and while this incentive does appear to have tempted a few to do so, the up-tick was not robust. Taken together, during the period no particular item appears to have risen or fallen in popularity as a good traded by Italians. Again, apart from slaves, which as far as we know were sold only by the Genoese, it does not appear that Italians of a particular origin dominated over any single product. Italians as a group within the Polish economy were an asset, bringing in products which might otherwise never have arrived, collaborating with locals and competing with them only in the acquisition of mining monopolies for which due to education and capital accounts they were better suited to.

## Chapter 4 - Merchant Case Studies

### Introduction

The following chapter presents a set of case studies detailing the lives of Italian traders who were present in Poland from the fourteenth to the early sixteenth century. These biographies are as detailed as the sources allow, and seek to offer an impression of what types of individuals worked in Poland during the period, what activities they engaged in, and some speculation as to their motivations, successes, and failures. In many cases, the lack of sources has led to an uneven representation and it should be kept in mind that missing data does not necessarily mean a physical absence. Written in a narrative form and with additional context, these stories flesh out a certain percentage of the individuals covered in the Appendix. The chapter is broken up chronologically to give a sense of the change over time. Previous scholars have frequently characterized the Italian presence in Poland to a set of distinct phases where, for a time, individuals from a certain city-state dominated: first the Genoese, then the Venetians, and then the Florentines. This telling however, is overly simplistic, and overlooks the fact that Italians from multiple locations were constantly to be found in Poland working as business partners, legal representatives, and financial backers. Milanese supported Florentines, Genoese worked with Venetians, and men from Lucca served the royal court with Bolognese. It is true, that for the first part of the fourteenth century, the Italian community in Krakow was comprised primarily of men from Liguria; but they were soon joined by others, with only occasional friction. Italians were a litigious bunch and they appear frequently in Polish court records but only rarely in cases against each other.

An example of one of these rare instances is the drawn out dispute between Monaldo of Lucca and Jacobo di Paravisino of Milan, but even here cooperation between Italians from varied backgrounds can be seen, as Monaldo was able to produce letters of reference in his defense from Marco Morosini of Venice, as well as Neri Toranquinci and Giovanni di Cambio of Florence, despite being himself from Lucca.<sup>1118</sup> In some other cases, problems arose between individuals originating from the same community rather than between those from different cities, such as when Albizzo di Medici brought the di ser Matteo brothers Antonio and

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<sup>1118</sup> (1410/07/12) [SPPP 7] nr 1390-95; (1411/01/27) [CA2] nr. 28

Leonardo, all of whom were from Florence, to court over unpaid customs tolls.<sup>1119</sup> This stands in marked contrast to the portrait given of Hungary, where for much of the early fifteenth century, Florentines ran the field. In Poland on the other hand, there was no such marked division.

The types of Italians who came to Poland can be broken down into three basic categories. First, there were the passing merchants whose primary abode was elsewhere, be it Caffa, Košice, or Italy itself. These individuals were likely the most numerous; but leave only the faintest trace in the historical record; as they often did not bother to register their activities with the local notary or come before the court. The second type were men who made the kingdom their permanent home; often then using their acquired capital to rent the royal tolls and take over management of the salt mines. These men tended to acquire land by entering the local nobility through advantageous marriages; after which their offspring grew up among the local Polish gentry. While they retained ties to their homelands, they usually did not return in person; and continued corresponding with their friends and family only through letters. The third type of individual, are those who appeared on the scene briefly, acting as factors for permanent Italian residents to whom they were frequently related. A subset of this category are those who appeared upon the death of the second type. These were family members, including brothers, nephews, and daughters, who sought to wind up the estate of their deceased relative and who often ended up staying for significant periods of time to conclude matters. The following sections offer biographies of all three types of individuals. The individuals, and in one case a family, who were chosen for these case studies encompass as a rule, the best documented individuals but an effort has also been made to highlight one or two lesser well-sourced cases as otherwise a strong bias towards only those who remained in Poland for an extended period of time would be considered. These stories further show the activities and lifestyles of the Italian men who immigrated to Poland during this period and in some cases permit a guess at their motivation.

The section following the case studies takes a more general approach, working to tease out patterns of behavior by exploring family structures, gender ratios, and religious observance. As these factors had an enormous impact on business success as well as lived experience, they are delved into as closely as possible given again, the less than optimal nature of the source

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<sup>1119</sup> For example, Albizzo di Medici brought to court the di ser Matteo brothers Leonardo and Antonio, all of whom were from Florence, for their failure to pay him the proper customs toll in Krakow. While at the same time, he stood surety for Antonio Tron of Venice on multiple occasions. (1425/07/09) [SPPP 2] nr 2043; (1419/11/18) [Itali] nr. 31, (1423/05/15) [SPPP 2] nr 1924 1923.

material for this type of inquiry. As the connection of business strategies to kinship and patronage networks has become a solid line of scholarly interest only in more recent times, this mode of analysis has not been previously attempted on Polish material so there are no previous historiographical views to work through. To offer some sense of perspective, the findings are compared with the strategies of other groups of Italians abroad.

## 4.1 1300-1400 The Early Years

### 4.1.1 Nicholas Manente of Genoa (1306-1339) – The First Italian

Apart from a few individuals noted as “*Gallicus*” thus as “the Italian” in notarial records, the first person identifiable as an Italian with both a full cognomen and city of origin was Nicholas Manente of Genoa. He appears in Poland in 1307 where he was granted by Duke Władysław Łokietek the title of hereditary mayor (*Wójt*) of the important salt-mining town of Wieliczka, located a few kilometers outside of Krakow. Łokietek, who was campaigning to become King of Poland, had stripped the rights to the town from Gerlach von Kulpen, the brother-in-law of the bishop of Krakow, who was opposing Łokietek’s claim to the throne.<sup>1120</sup> Wieliczka was a highly strategic asset as over 25% of the royal revenue came from the salt mines. Łokietek’s choice to give possession of it to an outsider, rather than a member of the local nobility or burghers of Krakow, was a canny political move to prevent it from falling into the hands of those who might later seek to turn it against him. It remains unclear from the record whether Nicholas operated as the *Zupparius* – manager of the Wieliczka salt mines, or simply as mayor of the city. Given the frequent decision by later rulers to place Italians in key positions related to royal finance, it seems likely that he did serve in both capacities, but no evidence survives proving the case.. The position of mayor was by itself a lucrative one, worth 1100fl when Nicholas Manente sold his rights some thirty years later, a small fortune.<sup>1121</sup> Nicholas Manente appears to have continued living in Poland for some time, and developed a good relationship with Łokietek. In 1325, he undertook a special embassy on the duke’s behalf to Pope John

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<sup>1120</sup> Franciszek Sikora, “Wójtostwo wielickie w średniowieczu [The mayors of medieval Wieliczka].” in J Księga jubileuszowa Profesora Feliksa Kiryka [The jubilee book for Professor Feliksa Kiryka] eds. A. Jureczko, F. Leśniak, and Zładislauos Noga. *Annales Academiae Paedagogicac Cracoviensis*. 21. *Studia Histórica III*. Krakow (2004):201-2.

<sup>1121</sup> [KDMP] I nr 202 (1336/01/09); [KDMP] III n. 657 (1339/01/29) Manente sold the rights as *woigt* (mayor) of Wieliczka to Nicolaus Wirzingi, the wealthy Krakow burgher and close confidant of King Casimir the Great at some point around 1336. A second charter released in 1339, gives more information about Gerlach von Kulpen’s previous tenure and Manente’s initial induction into the role.

XXII in Avignon.<sup>1122</sup> He made connections during his time at the papal court; and three years later we find him assisting in organizing the transfer of papal funds from Poland, together with his brother Manusio and two other Ligurian merchants.<sup>1123</sup> After nearly three decades, Nicholas appears to have returned home after selling his rights to Wieliczka, a wealthy man.

#### 4.1.2 Paulo and Pietro Cavallo of Genoa (1338-1365) – Failed Bankers but Merchant Successes

The next prominent Italian to appear on the scene was Paulo Cavallo of Genoa. He was almost certainly present in Poland at the same time as Nicolaus; and it seems likely that the two would have met. It is further possible that he was the son of a certain Hugo “*Gallicus*” recorded in Krakow notarial records as far back as 1317.<sup>1124</sup> Paulinus was certainly present in Krakow prior to 1338 when he offered his services to the new papal collector to act as an agent for the renowned Italian Bardi Bank in Poland. His proposal was to act as a branch manager of the bank in the Kingdom, offering to use his connections in Krakow to help facilitate transactions using letters of credit, rather than sending vulnerable cart loads of silver on the long road to the Papal Curia.<sup>1125</sup> Unfortunately for the pope, the Bardi Bank saw no profit in setting up a branch in Poland, and so Paulinus’s offer was flatly rejected. Failing to acquire this lucrative job as banking middle-man, he succeeded a number of years later in having himself appointed Zupparius – royal salt-mine operator - by King Casimir the Great.<sup>1126</sup> Here again, we see Polish Kings turning to outsider Italians to manage a key element of royal finance. The mining town

<sup>1122</sup> [Theiner] I nr. 313 pg 204 1325/06/10

<sup>1123</sup> APV nr. 118,123 1329, Relations 140-1.

<sup>1124</sup> [Theiner] I DCXLVI pg 497 1346/08/03, [NKiRMK] nr 438 1317/06/10

<sup>1125</sup> “*Et pater sancte, si camera vestra possit concordare cum societate Bardorum et aliis societatibus, quod ipsi hic reciperent pecunias et in curia assignarent, prout tractabatur hoc anno per dominum Andream de Verulis et Paulinum Cavalo de Genua, hoc esset tutissimum et securum et certum et mercatores istarum parcium sunt homines incerti et nichil servant de promissis et predictus Paulinus, qui est in Cracovia, scribit predictis societatibus, quod cum camera debeant concordare et sufficienteim cautionem pro recipiendis prestare.*” [Theiner] I pg 419 nr. 545 (1338/09/31)

<sup>1126</sup> Peterlinus may have been named zupparius as early as 1343 if we associate him with Porrinus Gallicus. Porrinus is recorded by Andrzej Kozycki, a high-ranking courtier and capitan in charge of the Krakow salt mines under King John II Casimir Vasa (r.1648-68), as the first zupparius to imply new techniques at the mines. Kozycki had apparently been interested in his predecessors and written briefly about their activities. We do not know what sources Kozycki was working from, or whether his account is to be believed but he claimed that, “*Porrinus certe Gallicus ille prudentissimus, 1343 officia operariis praescript, machinas et instrumenta convenientia invenit, aedilem sive magistrum ut vacant monitum praefecit: cuius fidei, industriae, assiduitati, salisfodinarum in substructionibus faciendis, commissum esset negotium*” This description matches somewhat that given in the authentic 1368 mining law charter, saying that Porrinus was the one who had set the initial standards for salt measuring “*qui mensuram minuti salis minoraverunt*”. It is therefore possible that Kozycki was working with documents now lost to us and Porinus was a master miner and administrator who was recruited from somewhere in Italy. 18 [NKiRMK] 1504. Ambroży Grabowski, Kraków i jego okolice [Krakow and its surroundings]. Krakow: Nakł. Księgarni DE Friedleina, 1866. [SPPP1] pg. 217.

where the Zupparius had his headquarters was home to no more than 2500 people, a far cry from Genoa, which had upwards of 80,000 people prior to 1348.<sup>1127</sup> Yet, while Paulo and the other Genoese administrators may have had to give up the delights of the big city on the Mediterranean coast, they gained prominence and fortune in Poland, and the opportunity to live in a well-fortified castle.<sup>1128</sup> They had to work for this opportunity however, the job of Zupparius was a difficult one and required a great deal of administrative skill. The salt mines of Wieliczka and Bochnia, which came to be jointly managed, contained 14 shafts where 70 different types of specialized workers and around 900 people labored, ranking the sites among the largest industrial operations in Europe, extracting an estimated 12,000 tons of salt per year.<sup>1129</sup> A steady workflow had to be ensured and careful ledgers had to be kept, recording how much salt was taken out and to whom it was sold or given at the king's command.<sup>1130</sup> The task was not a simple one, but it appears to have paid off well. Within eight years of becoming Zupparius, Paulo was able to purchase four properties in the city center of Krakow, and a cloth shop on the main square.<sup>1131</sup> He likely rented the Krakow properties, which would have added to his income; while the purchase of the cloth shop allowed him to break into one of the most lucrative of medieval trade items.<sup>1132</sup> At some point before 1346, the same year he was named Zupparius, Paulo became a citizen of Krakow, thus allowing him to legally partake in trade activities within the city. He further appears to have brought his Italian wife, Fennena, to Poland around this same juncture; as the pair received a plenary indulgence from the pope in 1350, at the special request of King Casimir.<sup>1133</sup> Sadly, no surviving children appear to have

<sup>1127</sup> Zofia Czekalska-Sitko, "Kazimierz Wielki a Bochnia [Casimir the Great and Bochnia]." in *Kazimierz - sławny i z czynów wielki*, Edited by Marcin Starzyński, Zofia Sitko, Agnieszka Gicala, and Joanna Potasz (Krakow: Archiwum Państwowe, Krakow 2011), 79. Medieval population numbers are notoriously difficult to estimate but reasonable figures put the pre-plague population height at somewhere between 80-100,000 falling to 40-70,000 in the aftermath of 1348. Steven A. Epstein, *Genoa & the Genoese, 958-1528*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 213-4.

<sup>1128</sup> The shafts included: Kozuska, Hermolaus, Wieżny, Mount Solomon, Durszlak, and Regis. The castle was first built under Leszek II the Black (1241-88) and expanded and updated over the centuries. Zofia Czekalska-Sitko, "Kazimierz Wielki a Bochnia [Casimir the Great and Bochnia]." in *Kazimierz - sławny i z czynów wielki*, Edited by Marcin Starzyński, Zofia Sitko, Agnieszka Gicala, and Joanna Potasz (Krakow: Archiwum Państwowe, Krakow 2011), 80.

<sup>1129</sup> Serafino, *Corpus epistularum*, 13-14, 119-20; Wyrozumski, *Państwowa gospodarka solna*, 136.

<sup>1130</sup> Such payments included provisioning royal castles with a steady supply of salt, as well as long standing votive donations to an impressive list of religious houses, together with salaries owed to more parochial employees such as the royal tailor. [SPPP 10] nr. 23 "Rachunki żupne bocheńskie z lat 1394-1421" [Accounts of the Salt-works at Bochnia between the years 1394-1421] edited by Jadwiga Karwasińska, Archiwum Komisji Historycznej Vol. 3 (15) 1939:123-232.

<sup>1131</sup> Paulo was zupparius from 1346-1353. [NKiRMK] nr. 1504, 1607, 1610, 1617, 1624, 1650.

<sup>1132</sup> (1351/03/11) [NKiRMK] nr 1624

<sup>1133</sup> [Bull] II nr. 499



come from the union; as we meet Paulo in the sources for the last time in 1353, after this he handed the reigns over to his nephew, Pietro Cavallo, who took over as Zupparius.<sup>1134</sup>

Pietro Cavallo had come to Krakow a few years earlier and had been living in the city together with his wife Elizabeth. It is unclear if she was Italian or local as her name is not clearly distinctive. Pietro appears to have been less successful economically than his uncle - at least there are fewer properties appearing under his name - but he made a significant impact on the mine at Bochnia when in 1357, he founded a hospital specifically for wounded and sick miners.<sup>1135</sup> This pious act appears to have inspired his successor to establish a similar site in Wieliczka a few years later.<sup>1136</sup> He died rather young, leaving behind his wife and a number of children, but having arranged in advance for one of the most wealthy and prominent burghers of Krakow, the man who replaced him as Zupparius, to stand as their guardian.<sup>1137</sup>

#### 4.1.3 Gotfridus Fattinante (1366-1393) – Zupparius and City Council Member

Gotfridus Fattinante, was born in Genoa, a member of the noble Fattinante *Albergho*, one of the prominent merchant clans of the city. The Fattinante family came originally from the small Ligurian town of Voltaggio, but succeeded in transferring to Genoa and forming their own *Albergo* at some point during the fourteenth century and were thus listed among the 72 noble Alberghi of the city in 1414. By the mid fifteenth century however, the Fattinante *Albergo* largely disappears from the sources together with others such as the Sopranis as the political winds changed in Genoa.<sup>1138</sup> Gotfridus Fattinante however, lived while the family was still in its prime and stands as an example of Genoese traders during their most expansionist period. Gotfridus arrived in Poland some time before 1366; and quickly became involved in salt mine administration. Most impressively, he was instrumental in the creation of the great mining law issued by King Casimir the Great in 1368, which was to serve as the legal and administrative

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<sup>1134</sup> We know Petrus was the son of Paulinus from a property sale registered in 1351. [NKiRMK] nr 1625.

<sup>1135</sup> [KDMP III] pg 100 nr. 716

<sup>1136</sup> [KDMP III] nr. 762 pg. 165-6 1363/07/26 Petrus Winrici

<sup>1137</sup> Petrus died at some point before 1369, and nominated Petrus Winrici as “tutor”, that is, legal representative for his heirs. KMog. Nr 33; [KLK] nr 834

<sup>1138</sup> The clan was incorporated as part of the larger noble Centurione Albergo in the 1528 forced consolidation of the Genoese Alberghi. Heers, *Genes au Xv Siecle*, 582.

framework for all salt mines in Poland for the next three hundred years.<sup>1139</sup> Gotfridus did not constrain himself simply to the mines however, and he purchased a number of villages from which he gained revenue, as well as properties which he rented out in Krakow.<sup>1140</sup> He was further involved in the cloth trade, owning a shop on the city's main square, trading in silk with the assistance of his nephew Erasmus who had a business in Cologne.<sup>1141</sup> Gotfridus's brother-in-law was also involved in this trade as he briefly took over responsibility for the shop in 1373.<sup>1142</sup> Such a diverse portfolio of investments and the involvement of extended family members were common to Italian businessmen of the era, and Gotfridus appears to have prospered mightily. When he died in 1390, his will testified to over 1,700 marks in cash and collectable debts, together with a cloth shop, two urban properties and a wealth of movable goods.<sup>1143</sup> Unlike his predecessors however, Gotfridus appears to have involved himself much more deeply in local politics. He not only became a burgher of Krakow, but joined the City Council as treasurer.<sup>1144</sup> So important was this post to him, that in his will he left a special bequest to the council to cover any possible errors he might have made while in office.<sup>1145</sup> This position also placed him in the middle of an ongoing power struggle between the Krakow City Council and the royally appointed *procurator generalis* of the city.<sup>1146</sup> This tussle led to

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<sup>1139</sup> [SPPP 1] 217-8. Józef Krzyżanowski, "Statut Kazimierza Wielkiego dla krakowskich żup solnych [Statute of Casimir the Great for the Krakow salt mines]." *Rocznik Krakowski* 25 (1934):97-128.

<sup>1140</sup> [SPPP 1] 217-8. Krzyżanowski, "Statut Kazimierza Wielkiego," 97-128.

<sup>1140</sup> [ZDM] 4 nr. 985, Gotfridus purchases the rights to 3 villages near Bochnia - Lapczyca, Cayanow, (Kolanów) and Miskowice, from their former governor, Jaszco called Pegza of Bochnia, who had them previously from Father Michael, abbot of Tyniec. The charter was re-written before witnesses; as the old one had been destroyed in a fire in the house of Hermanni called Crancz, citizen of Krakow, on St. John's street. Witnesses to this new deed were: Petrus Winrici, *zuppario generai*, Pescone de Sale, Nicolaus Wirzingi, Johannes Crudicz of Krakow, Adam Pleban of Bochnia, and Nickone called Lantfoit, citizen of Wieliczka. For his Krakow properties, see: [KLK] nr 209, 401, 810, 885, 889, 1260, 1276.

<sup>1141</sup> For his involvement in the cloth trade see: [KLK] nr 1151; [KDKK] 182-5.

<sup>1142</sup> Gotfridus gave his cloth stall on the main square to his brother-in-law, Jacobus Pexa, in 1373. A month later, Pexa sold it to Hancon Bartfal. Two years later, Bartfal sold the property back to Gotfridus. In his will in 1390, Gotfridus grants the property to St Mary's Church in Krakow. Scab. 885, 891, 1151, KDKK 182-5. Jan Ptaśnik makes the argument that Jacobus Pexa stayed on in Poland, married a woman named Margaretha, and went about purchasing a series of different small land holdings, and serving the king as a scribe. Later, Pexa served as advocatus - judge of the court high court of Magdeburg Law in Krakow. The evidence for this however, is debatable; as it follows only from the similarity of the name Jacobus Pexa to: *Pegza de Bochnya*, *Iacussium dicta Pegza de Pelgrizimowice*, and *Iacussio dicto Pelcza*, across a series of charters issued from 1369-1384, when Iacussio died. As there is otherwise no connection in these documents to Gotfridus Fattinante, his brother-in-law and therefore the brother of his wife Margaretha, nor any sign that he was of Italian extraction, I do not find this evidence compelling enough to conclude that Jacobus remained in Poland longer than a few months. See: [KDMP] I 426; [KDMP] III 238, 244, 246, 261-64, 333, 353.

<sup>1143</sup> [KDKK] 182-5.

<sup>1144</sup> Starzyński, *Krakowska rada miejska*, 238; [KsProscrKrakow] nr 45.

<sup>1145</sup> [KsProscrKrakow] nr. 45

<sup>1146</sup> For the context of the City Councils ongoing struggle with the procurator Bodzęta of Kosowice see: Starzyński, "Civitas Nostra Cracoviensis. (part II)." 3-32.

Gotfried being briefly, and as the Krakow City Council howled in a formal complaint, illegally imprisoned in 1372.<sup>1147</sup> Such political imprisonments were hardly uncommon in Genoa, so while no doubt an uncomfortable event, it was likely not a surprising one. Despite living in Poland for over twenty years and making it his permanent home, Gotfridus appears to have never married and when he died, he left most of his wealth to the church.

#### 4.1.4 The Guidotti Family (1391-1398)

The Guidotti family provides a particularly interesting case, as they combined merchant activity in Hungary with papal collecting in Poland. The Guidotti were wealthy bankers in the city of Bologna.<sup>1148</sup> The family had originated in Florence, but transferred to Bologna in the fourteenth century, adopting it as their permanent home.<sup>1149</sup> The patriarch Filippo, born in 1335, had raised the family to prominence while producing an impressive crop of eight legitimate children and a further six born on the wrong side of the blanket.<sup>1150</sup> Of these, four would end up living and working in Poland – Giacomo, Francesco, Pietro, and Bartolomeo.

Filippo made the family fortune by becoming a successful banker. He achieved great success at the expense of Florentine banks, during the War of the Eight Saints (1375-1378) which saw Florence go to war against the Avignon papacy.<sup>1151</sup> When pope Gregory XI placed the city under interdict in 1376, the Guidotti bank with its base in the papal stronghold of Bologna, was soon tapped to move large amounts of funds to the papal coffers. Indeed, given that Bishop Bernard of Bologna was the treasurer general in charge of the Papal war effort, the choice of the Guidotti bank made eminent sense. By 1385, Filippo was one of the wealthiest citizens in

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<sup>1147</sup> The case involved the robbing of two peasants in a village in the Krakow region by the local official in the village. When Gotfridus and his fellow City Council member, Bartko, stepped in to arrest the offending official, the Procurator Bodzatha saw them as overstepping their authority and imprisoned them in Krakow castle. “*Actum feria quinta infra octavas beati Andree apostoli quod Bodzatha procurator prescriptus arrestavit dominos Bartkonem Streit et Gotfridum gallicum protunc consules et ipsos contra iusticiam et civitatis privilegia captivavit in castro racione furis et predonis puta Maczconis claudicantis procuratoris in Lobsow, qui propter spoliū quod in ipsa civitate commisit in duobus rusticis in civitate eciam fuerat intruncatus.*” [KsProscrKrakow] nr 45

<sup>1148</sup> For more on Filippo and the Guidotti family see: Giorgio Tamba, “Filippo Guidotti” *Treccani Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, accessed October 3rd, 2019, [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/filippo-guidotti\\_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/filippo-guidotti_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/)

<sup>1149</sup> Paula C Clarke, “The Identity of the Expatriat: Florentines in Venice in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries,” in *Society and Individual in Renaissance Florence*, ed. William J. Connell (Berkeley: Univ of California Press, 2002), 402.

<sup>1150</sup> The full list of legitimate children included: Antonio, Bartolomeo, Francesco, Gabriele, Giacomo, Pietro, Guidotto and Margherita. The illegitimate children were: Alessandro, Elena, Caterina, Dorotea, Tessa and Giovanni. Giorgio Tamba, “Filippo Guidotti” *Treccani Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, accessed October 3rd, 2019. [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/filippo-guidotti\\_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/filippo-guidotti_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/)

<sup>1151</sup> Previous to this, the papacy had been relying almost exclusively on the services of the Alberti Antichi bank, but during and after the war, changed policy to rely more heavily on a diversity of smaller companies. Renouard, *Les Relations*, 333.

Bologna with an estimated worth of 11,000 lira.<sup>1152</sup> He entered into local politics and sought to promote his son Giacomo into an ecclesiastical office. In this he was partially successful, as in 1391, Pope Boniface IX named Giacomo collector and papal nuncio to the Polish court. Given the family's familiarity with moving papal funds, the appointment of Giacomo could be seen as an intelligent choice. However, Giacomo was all of twenty three years old and had as yet only attained minor orders, making him unsuited for such a lofty position as papal emissary.<sup>1153</sup> The reasoning for this early promotion becomes clear however when one learns that soon after, Filippo Guidotti loaned 4,000 florins to the Papal court, sending the money to the papal camera through the hands of Doffi di Spinis and Benedicto di Bardi and the Medici bank.<sup>1154</sup> To cover the loan, the Pope wrote requiring that half be repaid by the City Council of Bologna and the other 2000 from the monies collected by his brother Giacomo in Poland.<sup>1155</sup> Still, the money which appears to have been from the Guidotti's family's private patrimony and signified an immense outlay of capital, as interest could of course not be levied due to the prohibition on usury. Filippo was instead paid for his trouble though an annual sum of 200 fl from the estates of the Cathedral of Bologna, not a bad bargain.<sup>1156</sup> The pope soon after sought to further bolster Giacomo's position by making him the bishop of Imola, but his young age and resistance from the local community stymied these efforts.<sup>1157</sup> In the end, all of Filippo's efforts to ensure the dream of an ecclesiastical career for his son came to little, as Giacomo died before he was able to take his seat as bishop.

Meanwhile two other Guidotti brothers, Francesco and Pietro were present and doing business in Krakow at the same time that their brother Giacomo was acting as collector.<sup>1158</sup> The pair appear in Krakow in January of 1393, not long after their brother's appointment as collector was re-ratified by the pope.<sup>1159</sup> Two years later, Giacomo and another brother Bartolomeo came into possession of a house in Krakow after the local apothecary Peter failed to pay back a loan.<sup>1160</sup> The paucity of the sources makes it difficult to say with certainty what activities the Guidotti brothers were engaged in, but evidence does point to their becoming involved in

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<sup>1152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1153</sup> See fn 619.

<sup>1154</sup> See fn 955.

<sup>1155</sup> See fn 956.

<sup>1156</sup> See fn.957

<sup>1157</sup> See fn 958.

<sup>1158</sup> See fn 959.

<sup>1159</sup> [Theiner] I nr. MXXXVI pg. 765; [Itali]. 4.

<sup>1160</sup> Peter the apothecary appears to have died still owing the Guidotti brothers 100 sexagene and his sons were forced to give up the house to settle the account. [KDK] nr. 2172.

mining and copper trade, one of the most lucrative goods that moved through the region. To that end, in 1395 Bartolomeo and Pietro Guidotti appear to have moved their base of operations to Hungary to be closer to the source of precious metals.<sup>1161</sup> Their main base was Košice, the important trading town not far from the Polish border. Strategically located close to the mining operations in the Slovak region of the Kingdom of Hungary and on the main trade route that ran through the Carpathians, from the 1380s the city came to house a small Italian community who were focused on the metals trade as previously discussed.<sup>1162</sup> In 1397 the brothers sold 200 marks equivalent to 1100 florins worth of “*feinkupper*” refined copper to Ulrich Kamberer of Nurnberg.<sup>1163</sup> In 1394 King Sigismund had granted Ulrich Kamberer and his partner Marcus of Nurnberg control over all the mining and minting chambers in the country. Kamberer began pressuring the Krakow merchants over the staple in 1397 and while he did not succeed in breaking it, did gain some concessions.<sup>1164</sup> In December of that year Bartolomeo was present at the court of King Sigismund of Hungary to whom he offered gifts and spoke on behalf of the Italian community.<sup>1165</sup> Bartolomeo became a fixture at court, often acting as a banker and go-between settling financial issues for the King. Copper, which was used to make brass and bronze implements was a valuable commodity. So much so, that the same year, Bartolomeo executed a repayment of debt for King Sigismund of Hungary to Pietro Regla and Caterina Greci worth the equivalent of 18,000 ducats of gold, half of which was paid in kind in copper.<sup>1166</sup> The family was soon after hit hard however as in November of 1398, the pater familias Filippo died so presumptuously that he had not even had time to make out his final will.<sup>1167</sup> Six months later, their brother Giacomo died as well. Bartolomeo, Francesco and

<sup>1161</sup> In that year, Urbánus de Chazaninneis de Bononia, who was working as a factor for the Guidotti brothers - Bartolomeo, Francesco, and Pietro, witnessed an exchange of 100 gold pieces being transferred to a certain Domokos in Buda from *Cassouie, in domo habitationis mee*, - his home in Košice. (1395/10/26) [ZsO] I nr. 4212.

<sup>1162</sup> Szende, “Krakow and Buda, 34; Zsuzsa Teke, Kassa külkereskedelme az 1393–1405. évi kassai bírói könyv bejegyzései alapján [Foreign trade of Košice on the basis of the registry of the 1393–1405 magistrate’s book], *Századok*, 137 (2003):381-404.

<sup>1163</sup> Document taken from the Košice archive Cassovie City Book I folio 60. See: Halaga, “Le grand commerce,” 25.

<sup>1164</sup> [NKiRMK] nr 168-9.

<sup>1165</sup> (1395/12/10) [ZsO] I nr 4184.

<sup>1166</sup> (1397/07/17) King Sigismund had borrowed the sum from Regla and Greci against a collateral of two boxes of jewels deposited by Tommaso Mocenigo with the procurators of San Marco in Venice. On the 12<sup>th</sup> of June 1398, Bartolomeo paid over the a load of copper worth an estimated 9000 ducats. The other half of the money was then paid in cash by Bartolomeo two months later. A further sum of 1500 ducats owed to Tommaso Mocenigo was later on November 20<sup>th</sup> 1398 paid by Bartolomeo through the bank of Bonifacio Gozzadini. Giorgio Tamba, “Filippo Guidotti” *Treccani Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, accessed October 3rd, 2019. [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/filippo-guidotti\\_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/filippo-guidotti_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/)

<sup>1167</sup> The lack of a will for such an important and well-endowed individual is notable. Indeed, the difficulties the lack of a will could cause is highlighted by the fact that the division of the Guidotti family properties was not finalized between Filippo’s many children in 1424, almost thirty years after his death. Ibid.

Pietro for a brief time continued to remain in the East seeking to wind up their affairs, an effort which took some time as King Sigismund, notorious for stiffing his creditors, owed the family over seven-thousand ducats.<sup>1168</sup> Both Bartolomeo and Francesco were named *familiaris* of King Sigismund but this did not help them in collecting from the delinquent royal purse. Bartolomeo continued to labor in Hungary seeking to collect his debts but in the spring of 1402, while on mission was captured and held captive by Duke William of Austria for reasons unknown.<sup>1169</sup> In response to this, Bernardo pulled on his distant familial connections to Florence, and convinced the *Signoria* to write a letter of favor Leopold of Austria, Duke Williams brother, on his behalf to help secure his release.<sup>1170</sup>

After significant international pressure, including letters from Francesco Novello da Carrara, Lord of Padua and Pope Boniface IX, Bartolomeo was released.<sup>1171</sup> In January 1403, back to dealing with financial matters for Sigismund, Bartolomeo was the one to deliver the disheartening news to the King that Venice had once again refused to pay the tribute agreed to after the Peace of Zara. By now, the sum had accumulated to 28,000 gold ducats and the Venetians refused to part with a single piece. Bartolomeo sought to convince the Republic to respect the treaty, but they flatly refused, and the prospect of war loomed larger.<sup>1172</sup> Angered by this failure, Sigismund stripped Bartolomeo of his commission and he returned to Bologna.<sup>1173</sup> The Guidotti family thus had some success in Poland before turning their sights to the more promising possibilities in Hungary, only to run afoul of King Sigismund and be forced to retreat from Central Eastern Europe altogether.

## 4.2 1400-1450 The Middle Years

### 4.2.1 Pietro Bicherano of Venice (1404-1424) – The successful Permanent Resident and Zupparius

#### Early Life in Venice and the War of Chioggia

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<sup>1168</sup> (1402/11/29) [ZsO] II. nr. 2081

<sup>1169</sup> [ZsO] II. nr 1598.

<sup>1170</sup> (1402/05/06) ASF, Miss. I canc., 25, fol. 71v. See: Clarke, “The Identity of the Expatriat,” 403 fn 59.

<sup>1171</sup> (1402/04/10), (1402/04/26) [ZsO] II. nr 1565, 1598

<sup>1172</sup> (1403/01/09), (1403/02/25), (1403/03/26) [ZsO] II. nr 2189, 2287, 2339.

<sup>1173</sup> (1403/10/22) [ZsO] II nr 2798.

Pietro Bicherano was born around 1360, the son of Nicolo Bicherano, a wealthy but plebian citizen of Venice.<sup>1174</sup> The family was resident in the S. Bartolomeo district, *Sesitere* San Marco, just a few steps away from the Rialto Bridge, the city's economic heart.<sup>1175</sup> Pietro grew up in luxury, as his father was an extremely wealthy man. The Venetian *Estimo* of 1379 (tax assessment) recorded him as being worth 10,000 ducats, ranking him amongst the top 6% in the city and one of the four wealthiest men in S. Bartolomeo.<sup>1176</sup> Yet, the family's plebian status relegated them to the life of simple merchants, away from the echelons of power controlled by Venice's noble patriciate. For all that however, Pietro's father, Nicolo, appears to have been exceedingly patriotic, so that when the War of Chioggia broke out in 1378, he immediately joined in the city's defense. As Hungarian troops attacked Venetian holdings on the mainland and a Genoese fleet successfully invaded their home lagoon, Nicolo promised that his son would join the fight. He further agreed to finance two crossbowmen "*balestrieri*" for two months, and two rowers of the galleys "*uomini da remo*" until the war was won.<sup>1177</sup> Nicolo may have come to regret his patriotic instincts however, as the War of Chioggia lasted two years and saw an immense tax burden levied on the wealthiest strata of the city. Wealthy citizens such as Nicolo were asked to contribute beyond what they may have already promised, rising to 41% of their estimated wealth in the form of a forced loan, which was to be repaid by the state, at least in theory, at a rate of 5% in the years to come.<sup>1178</sup> Yet there seemed little other choice, with Hungarian troops besieging Venetian holdings in the *terrafirma* and the confident Genoese promising to "bit and bridle the horses of San Marco," the citizenry opened their purses and the war continued. It was that or allow the Republic to fall. Thus, the old men spilled gold, the young men blood, and after numerous battles and a number of difficult moments, the war ended in 1381 with a surprising victory for the Venetians.

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<sup>1174</sup> The spelling of the family name is reproduced in documents in a number of ways: Bicherano, Bicharano, Bicarano, Bicarano, Bicarano, Bicharanus, and Pykaran.

<sup>1175</sup> Braunstein claims that Nicolo Bicherano was made a citizen of Venice; thanks to his service in the War of Chioggia, but this is not the case. Nicolo's presence in the 1379 *Estimo* and the constant attribution in documents of his district of residence, "*confinio S. Bartolomeo*", which was used within the Venetian notarial system to collocate Venetian citizens within the lagoon confirms that Nicolo was a citizen by birth. A look at the CIVES online records of enrolled citizens of Venice (that is, persons who were *made* citizens of Venice, rather than having been born citizens) further reveals no trace of any member of the Bicherano family. Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 402.

<sup>1176</sup> "Nicolo Bicarano," *L'estimo veneziano del 1379* [http://www.estimoveneziano1379.it/record?estimo\\_id=972](http://www.estimoveneziano1379.it/record?estimo_id=972)

<sup>1177</sup> *Storia della Repubblica di Venezia dal suo Principio sino al Giorno d'oggi* Vol. 5 (Venezia : G. Antonelli, 1850), 45.

<sup>1178</sup> The expenses incurred during the War of Chioggia meant that shares in the state debt (*monte*), which had been issued in exchange for the forced loan used to support the war, dropped from the original 5% return to 4% or at times just 3%. Stanley Chojnacki, "Dowries and Kinsmen in Early Renaissance Venice." *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 5, no. 4 (1975): 574. *L'estimo veneziano del 1379* "home" <http://www.estimoveneziano1379.it/homepage> Accessed December 20th, 2020

The war was a turning point in Venetian history, and left an indelible mark on the city's psyche. Invaders had broken the sanctity of the lagoon, but had then been defeated through the diligent efforts of her citizens. Venice's long-running rival, Genoa, was forever crippled in the aftermath of the war and forced to cede forever, control over the Adriatic to Venice. Still, the *Serenissima* did not escape unscathed; an estimated quarter of the city's private wealth had been spent during the war. Further, in order to secure peace, Venice was forced to renounce claims to the Dalmatian coast in favor of Hungary, agreeing to pay 7000 gold ducats per year for free access to Dalmatian ports, and handed over control of the Island of Tenedos to Savoy.<sup>1179</sup> The importance of the War of Chioggia to the Venetian sense of self can perhaps be seen most clearly however, by the fact that for the first and only time since the closing of the ranks of the nobility with the lock of the *Maggiore Consiglio* in 1297, Venice admitted new members to the patrician class. At no other moment in the 500 years of history between 1297 and the fall of the Republic in 1797, were more families admitted to the patriciate. The end of the War of Chioggia was a singular moment, and a moment which the Bicherano family missed by a hair's breadth. In 1381, it was decided that thirty new families would be admitted to the ranks of the nobility out of sixty who, due to their exemplary service during the war, were up for consideration. For his sacrifices, Nicolo Bicherano was among the 60 considered for entry to the patrician class, but in the vote held by the major council, he lost with 38 for and 53 against.<sup>1180</sup> It must have been a heavy blow, as noble status in Venice was required to hold any form of public office and the family had just lost their one chance at achieving it. This setback however, did not prevent the family from marrying members of the nobility in future

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<sup>1179</sup> This agreement confirming the status of Dalmatia as a Hungarian domain was agreed to in the Treaty of Zadar, signed between King Louis of Hungary, and later Poland and Venice, in February of 1358. Between 1381 and 1400, Venice sent the annual payment of 7000 ducats for access to the Dalmatian ports to the Hungarian court at Buda, often using Florentine banks for the transactions. In 1400 however, Venice began refusing to pay the 7000 ducats after Sigismund of Luxemburg was briefly deposed as King of Hungary by his own nobles and Ladislaus of Naples became a viable pretender to the throne. Ladislaus landed in Dalmatia in 1402 and succeeded in capturing the area around Zadar, but made few further gains, and returned to the Italian Peninsula in November of 1403, leaving a supporter to handle his affairs. Over the next five years, Sigismund gradually regained control of Hungary but the Dalmatian coast remained elusive. Still, seeing the walls closing in, Ladislaus of Naples chose to sell his claims, to the territory to Venice in 1409 for 100,000 ducats. Venice jumped at the chance, and in 1410 sent troops to secure its possessions, besieging Trogir and Šibenik and initiating a war with Hungary which would last on and off for the next twenty years. Pietro Bicherano was deeply impacted by these high-stakes political maneuvers; and in 1411 he was tapped by the Venetian Senate to act as their initial ambassador to the King of Poland, seeking to gain his aid in their conflict with Hungary. Mark R. Filip, "Venetian foreign affairs from 1250 to 1381: the wars with Genoa and other external developments." BA Thesis, University of Illinois, 1988, 109. Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen*, 161-67, 207-8, 234-8.

<sup>1180</sup> Cristoforo Tentori, *Saggio sulla Storia Civile, Politica, Ecclesiastica e sulla Corografie e Topografia degli Stati della Repubblica di Venezia* Vol. 5 (Venice: Giacomo Storti, 1785), 369.



generations, and a number of Nicolo's grandchildren would be born nobles and go on to hold high public office.

### **Pietro's Education**

Pietro Bicherano thus came of age in a time of great turmoil in Venice. While raised in privilege, he was nonetheless placed on the front lines to defend his patrimony. Given his family's wealth he was most likely schooled at home by a private tutor, of which there were many in Venice during the period. Son of a merchant republic, he would have had some classical training, but more emphasis was likely placed on the vernacular and how to "*leggere, scrivere, abbacco, et quoderno*" - to read, write, do arithmetic and book-keeping.<sup>1181</sup> The only surviving document composed by Pietro himself reveals that he could read and write in vernacular Venetian.<sup>1182</sup> It is further possible - even likely - that he had picked up a certain amount of Latin.<sup>1183</sup> Pietro's later career shows that he also almost certainly knew German. The basis of the family's wealth remains unclear, but given the general state of the Venetian economy and Pietro's later career, it was almost certainly linked to long-distance trade. Whatever the roots of his family's fortune however, Pietro appears to have chosen early on to focus on trade with Central-Eastern Europe.

### **Pietro and the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi***

Part of the initial draw may have been simple proximity. Pietro's home district of S. Bartolomeo was the heart of the German-speaking community in Venice, containing within it both the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* – the German merchant's headquarters, and their parish church. Polish merchants too, who were almost ubiquitously German speakers during this period, were lumped in among the *Tedeschi* and held places in the *Fondaco*. Pietro would have had contact with them from the start. The choice to tie himself to the *Fondaco* during this period was a strategic one, as during the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century, South-

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<sup>1181</sup> Paul F. Grendler, "Education in the Republic of Venice," in *A Companion to Venetian History, 1400-1797*, ed. Eric R. Dursteler (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 675-77.

<sup>1182</sup> Braunstein noted that the style in which the letter was written reflected a more archaic style than was common in other business letters of this type and the handwriting difficult to decipher. Braunstein, "Relations," 259 fn 4. Paul F. Grendler, *Schooling In Renaissance Italy: Literacy and Learning, 1300-1600* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 306-332.

<sup>1183</sup> Braunstein claims that Pietro was, "*désigné comme domicellus domini ducis et expert en langue allemande dans un acte d'émancipation pai un Nurembergeois de son fils à Venise*" however, the source he cites, a notarial record from the Venetian archives, is dated according to him to 1437, over ten years after Pietro had died in Krakow. It is possible that Braunstein either misquoted the date, or that the case in question referred to a different individual. I was unfortunately unable to access the original document myself to confirm. See: ASV, Cane. Inf. 122, 140' (1437/09/30) Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 402 fn 122.

German companies in particular were becoming a force to be reckoned with on the international market.<sup>1184</sup> The various quarters and warehouse spaces of the *Fondaco* and its surroundings were becoming ever more important to Venice's success and Pietro gained himself a place among them. Of the many German and Polish cities represented in the *Fondaco*, the houses of Nuremberg were the strongest and most abundant. As the unofficial capital of the Holy Roman Empire, Nurembuerg had acquired vast privileges and was a potent trading power.<sup>1185</sup> The Venetians themselves recognized the change. Given their primacy, it is unsurprising that it was with these firms that Pietro chose to involve himself with, working in particular with the Kress-Rummel and the Amman-Kammererer-Seiler-Grau companies, whose interests would eventually draw him to Poland.<sup>1186</sup>

The first mention of Pietro's involvement with merchants of the *Fondaco* comes from his inclusion in the account books of the Kress Company, registered between 1389-1392.<sup>1187</sup> It was during this period that Pietro sent a letter to Nuremberg, to Hipolit Kress, who was responsible for the company's trade with Venice.<sup>1188</sup> The precise nature of Pietro's relationship with the Kress is unclear, whether he was in the direct employ of the firm as a factor, a temporary agent, or simply a correspondent, but the relationship must have been close as he stood as a creditor in the firms books and provided Kress with precious business information.<sup>1189</sup> In the letter sent from Venice in November of 1392, Pietro reported on the loads carried by the incoming galleys arriving in Venice from Syria, to wit: 3,500 sacks of raw

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<sup>1184</sup> By 1413, the *Fondaco* was moving around 6,000,000 ducats worth of goods, providing Venice with 60,000 ducats in customs fees per annum. Martin Štefánik, "Guerra commerciale. Il blocco economico del Re Sigismondo contro Venezia. Il ruolo delle città e dei mercanti nella lotta fra gli stati", *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome - Moyen âge* [En ligne], 127-2 | 2015, mis en ligne le 05 octobre 2015, Accessed April, 26th 2018. <https://doi.org/10.4000/mefrm.2820>

<sup>1185</sup> For an overview of the topic see: Strommer, "Nuremberg in the International Economics," 210–225.

<sup>1186</sup> For a history of the Nuremberg families relations with Venice see: Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 263-322.

<sup>1187</sup> Braunstein discovered the remaining fragments of a number of account books related to the Kress company's activities in Venice, among a number of related papers kept in the Germanischen Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg. The books, which included The Great book, the Small book, and the Long book covered the years 1389-92 and were in the primary care of Hipolit Kress. The books used Arabic numerals and Italian dating styles and recorded merchandise and trading ventures which were made between Venice and Nuremberg, and debts and credits owed to the company. Both Francisco Amadi and Pietro Bicherano, recorded as Piero Bisaran, were included among the listed entries. The company traded in both directions, sending amber, silver, and linen to sell on the Venetian market and in return purchasing spices, sugar, luxury fabrics, and pearls to sell in Nuremberg. As was common for interactions during this period between North and South, the trade was unbalanced in favor of the South, as more was purchased on the Venetian market than was sold from that of Nuremberg. Braunstein, "Relations," 233-43.

<sup>1188</sup> For more on the Kress Company's trade with Venice see: Braunstein, "Relations," 227-269; Peter Spufford, "Trade in Fourteenth Century Europe" in *The New Cambridge Medieval History: Vol. 6, C.1300-c.1415*, ed. Michael Jones (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 207-8.

<sup>1189</sup> Pietro had 35 L 13s 10gr in credit with the firm. Braunstein, "Relations," 244.

cotton, 400 boxes of sugar, and 380 boxes of powdered sugar.<sup>1190</sup> Then as now, such information was of primary importance for a businessman seeking to make a profit; as the state of goods on the market influenced prices and currency rates of exchange. It is interesting to note that the famous merchant of Prato, Francesco Datini, also had a correspondent in Venice who supplied him with similar crucial market data, but one who was less quick on the draw than Pietro, writing a few days later and thus perhaps depriving Datini of a market advantage.<sup>1191</sup> Throughout the 1390's and the first decade of the fifteenth century, Pietro continued to work with various members of the *Fondaco*, standing witness for a number of business contracts, including for Konrad Plorer of Constance, Johannes Siefel, Nicolaus Mendel, Johannes Ebrager of Nuremberg as well as Konrad Seiler and Konrad Grau, who had major interests in Krakow.<sup>1192</sup> One of Pietro's other prominent connections was William Rummel, a prominent Nuremberg magnate who was, among other things, connected to Hipolit Kress through marriage.<sup>1193</sup> In 1394, Rummel would arrange with Pietro the transfer of a letter of credit through the Milanese del Maino bank worth 599 imperial pounds.<sup>1194</sup> Pietro would continue to have dealings with Rummel over the years. Apart from his business contacts, Pietro took an active interest in the community's spiritual well-being. He was listed among three Venetians who petitioned from the pope in 1401 the return of the parish church of the German speaking community, St. Bartolomeo, to be placed back under the stewardship of the bishop of Venice rather than its current situation under the Patriarchate of Grado.<sup>1195</sup>

### Connections with the Amadi Brothers

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<sup>1190</sup> Stromer, *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz*, vol 1, 121.; Eliyahu Ashtor, *Levant Trade in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 185.

<sup>1191</sup> Ashtor, *Levant Trade*, 185.

<sup>1192</sup> According to Braunstein, ASV, Cane. Inf. 91, notary Giorgio de Gibellino should have recorded a number of procurations involving German merchants, with Pietro Bicherano acting as a witness or being named himself procurator. In searching these files however, I found none of the documents indicated - the box was full of pregame and loose paper sheets, many of them wills, others involving family property disputes. No obvious German names were present; and the dates suggested by Braunstein did not appear in the annotated records. I believe Braunstein to have discovered the documents he cites, but to have erred in writing down the appropriate archival documentation. I have therefore left the reference in place as I believe the documents authentic, even if I was unable to view them myself. (1399/11/22) ASV, Canc. Inf. 21, 83' (1398/02/14), Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 263 fn 252.

<sup>1193</sup> William Rummel's brother Henriche I der Reiche, married Hipolit Kress's daughter Kunigunde, uniting the two families. Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 275. Braunstein, "Relations," 33.

<sup>1194</sup> For the letter of exchange see: Archivio della Fabbrica del Duomo di Milano, Archivio del Mayno, Mastro 27, f. 232 et 241 (1394/07/11-09/15) reproduced in: Wolfgang Stromer *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz* Vol 3, 498 and Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 276.

<sup>1195</sup> *I Libri Commemorativi della Repubblica Di Venezia*, eds. Riccardo Predelli and Pietro Bosmin. (Venice: a spese della Società, 1876), book 9 nr. 224.

It is important to note that Pietro was far from being the only Venetian to work with the merchants of the *Fondaco*. One of the other prominent examples with whom Pietro was directly connected were the brothers Francesco and Amado of the Ca' Amadi, and later Francisco's sons, Giovanni and Hans. The Amado family had its origins in Lucca, but had been transferred to Venice and by the later fourteenth century were wealthy plebian citizens of the republic.<sup>1196</sup> The family's specialty lay in the silk trade; and in the early 1390's they became closely linked to the Kress and Rummel families at the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*.<sup>1197</sup> The Amadi brothers worked together with Pietro, both at the *Fondaco* and in more personal projects, as the brothers were also involved in the setting up of the Corpus Christi Convent for which Pietro was a major donor and elected *procurator* – legal representative.<sup>1198</sup> The two families also tended to use the same Venetian notary - Pietro Griffon, for business transactions and when writing their testaments.<sup>1199</sup> This, together with the fact that the two families lived in close proximity to each other would imply that they were both professional and personal acquaintances.<sup>1200</sup> Amado Amadi wrote business letters to Hipolit Kress, similarly to Pietro in the early 1390's. Francesco Amadi together with William Rummel, loaned 1,200 ducats to King Ruprecht of the Palatinate in 1401, requesting his crown as collateral and charging him

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<sup>1196</sup> Amado and Francisco were the sons of Zaine Amadi, who had dealings with Florentine merchants in Venice, in particular, Nicolao Bonarle. Later, Francisco would be part of a short-lived venture with Lorenzo di Provincialis, his brother-in-law. In time, the family would become famous for a painting of the Madonna, which Francisco commissioned in 1409. This famous work for the next seventy years hung in an alley beside the Amati's palazzo, located not far from the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*. In 1481, an incident occurred where miraculous powers were attributed to the painting and eventually, with the Amadi's support, the church of Santa Maria dei Miracoli was raised, considered today one of the architectural gems of Venice. For more on the family see: Philippe Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 397-400. Braunstein, "Relations", 254-9; Keith Christiansen, *Piero Della Francesca: Personal Encounters*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2014, 90-5; James S. Grubb, "Piero Amadi Acts Like His Betters." *A Renaissance of Conflicts: Visions and Revisions of Law and Society in Italy and Spain* 3 (2004): 259-78.

<sup>1197</sup> For an in-depth biography of the Amadi family during this period see: Anna Pizzati, "The Family of Girolamo Amadi: A Lucchese silk Merchant in Venice," in *Piero Della Francesca: Personal Encounters* ed. Keith Christiansen (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2014), 59-72.

<sup>1198</sup> Giovanni Dominici, *Lettere Spirituali*, ed. Maria T. Casella and Giovanni Pozzi, Spicilegium Friburgense vol. 13 (Fribourg Switzerland: Edizioni Universitarie, 1969), 115-6, 341-2.

<sup>1199</sup> Pietro's son Francisco and the Amadi brothers used the notary Pietro Griffon, for business transactions see: ASV, Cancellaria Inferior 96, book 1 (Francisco Bicarano) nr 24, 26, 28, 31, 67, 68 Francisco and Amadus Amadi nr. 48. The family also relied on him to register their final wills and testaments. Amado di Amadi (1417), his daughters (1405, 1413) and Francisco de Amadi's wife (1418) all had their Testaments recorded by Piero Griffon. See: ASV, Cancellaria Inferiore 96 and ASV, Testamenti 554 as recorded in Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 397 fn 102. Pietro's wife Bona meanwhile, had her first Testament recorded in 1428 by Piero Griffon in 1428 see: ASV, Testamenti 554 nr. 48. His daughter, Clare Dolce [Bicherano] had her testament recorded twice in 1424 by Piero Griffon see: ASV, Testamenti 554 nr 91, nr 193.

<sup>1200</sup> The Amadi had a number of properties spread throughout Venice, including a house with a garden on the Island of Murano, but the main family dwelling was located on the Rio del Olio, just down the way from the house of Bicherano. Braunstein, "Relations," 256 fn 2.

18 ducats per month in interest.<sup>1201</sup> In 1405/6 Francesco Amadi was sent on a diplomatic mission into the German-speaking lands by the Venetian Senate and at one point even worked as the procurator for the Duke of Bavaria, helping him to transfer 16,000 ducats to the Visconti of Milan.<sup>1202</sup> The family also had extensive relations in Wrocław, and traveled there personally on least three occasions in 1409, 1413, and 1421. Records from the city notarial books reveal that they were owed at least 840 florins by its merchants, a full 11% of the overall recorded debt owed to Venetians between 1390 and 1461.<sup>1203</sup> Further dealing would likely have occurred had not both Amado and Francesco been struck down by the plague that claimed over 27,000 Venetians between 1423-24.<sup>1204</sup>

### **The *Fondaco*, the Medici Bank, and King Ruprecht of the Palatinate**

Apart from the Kress and Rummel families, Pietro also worked closely with the Amman-Kammerer-Seiler-Grau Company who were also from Nuremberg.<sup>1205</sup> Indeed, it was through these contacts that Pietro first became involved with interests in Poland. While Pietro had worked in particular with Konrad Grau since at least 1395, he became more intimately involved with the company in 1401, when they assisted in the financing of what turned out to be the debacle that was King Ruprecht of the Palatinate's (1352-1410) failed expedition to conquer Northern Italy.<sup>1206</sup> Fearing the advance of Milan under Gian Galeazzo Visconti, Florence agreed to help finance the expedition, this plan was stymied however, by the enormous difficulty in safely transferring such a large amount of money. To address this issue, the

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<sup>1201</sup> Braunstein, "Relations," 267-8. They further took on as collateral a load of silver, some jewels and a valuable codex. (1401/12/14) [Regg. Pfalzgrafen 2] n. 1895, in: Regesta Imperii Online, URI: [http://www.regesta-imperii.de/id/1401-12-14\\_1\\_0\\_10\\_0\\_0\\_1895\\_1895](http://www.regesta-imperii.de/id/1401-12-14_1_0_10_0_0_1895_1895) Accessed October 34th 2020 (Accessed on April 20, 2020).

<sup>1202</sup> Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 400.

<sup>1203</sup> The notarial books themselves were destroyed during WWII and so the only surviving record of them are records made by scholars in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Otto Stobbe, "Mittheilungen aus Breslauer Signaturbüchern" in *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens*, Bd. 6, H. 2., (Wrocław: Josef Max & Komp., 1865), 335-356; Alwin Schultz, "Topographie Breslaus im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert," *Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens* vol 10 patr 2, 400; Myśliwski, "Venice and Wrocław," 112.

<sup>1204</sup> Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 401.

<sup>1205</sup> (1402/05/26) – Konrad Grau, merchant of Nuremberg designated Pietro Bicherano and the Venetian merchant Thomas Sayner of S. Cassian as his procurators. (1402/05/13) – Konrad Seiler, merchant of Krakow working in Venice, nominated Pietro Bicherano and Tilman Sraiber (Schreiber) of Wrocław, *habitant in fontico Theotonicorum*, - who was staying in the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, as his procurators. Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 225 fn 103.; (1404) Pietro to be found in Wrocław collecting on debts for Ulrich Kammererer. [APWr] Lib.exc.sign, vol. 15, p. 65 (1404). See: Myśliwski, "Venice and Wrocław," 114 fn. 161.

<sup>1206</sup> (1395/12/16) – Pietro stands as witness as Konrad Grau, merchant of Nuremberg, is registered to act as procurator for Johannes Siefel of Nuremberg, (1396/01/20) - Pietro stands as witness as Konrad Plorer of Constance names Konrad Grau *qui nunc residet hic Venetiis in fontico Theotonicorum*, as his procurator in the presence of Pietro. Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 225 fn 103.

Florentine negotiator approached the members of the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* in Venice to ask for their aid. The most prominent among these individuals was William Rummel, but also significant were the contributions made by the Amman-Kammerer-Seiler-Grau company, all of whom worked closely with Pietro during these years.<sup>1207</sup> Despite the money fronted by Florence and the *Fondaco*, King Ruprecht lost to Gian Galeazzo Visconti in the spring of 1402 and retreated back into German territory.<sup>1208</sup> It was as a result of this incident, that Pietro appears to have first become involved with the Medici bank and contributed to the circumstances which would lead him only a few years later, to abandon Venice altogether in favor of moving to Poland. Pietro Bicherano's fate was also changed by the events of these years, as the scramble to supply King Ruprecht, put him directly in touch with the Medici bank, and started him on the road to Poland. While no direct evidence remains extant, it seems likely that Pietro was directly involved with the campaign to finance King Ruprecht as he worked intimately with William Rummel and Konrad Seiler and Grau.<sup>1209</sup>

Regardless, two other events that arose out of the affair deeply impacted him. First, was the decision by Giovanni di Bicci di Medici to organize an official branch of the Medici bank in Venice. Previous to this, the bank had operated through agents, but had no official permanent position on the Rialto exchange. This changed, when on March 25<sup>th</sup>, 1402, the Venetian branch of the Medici bank opened under the management of Neri di Cipriano Tornaquinci.<sup>1210</sup> Having recently visited Venice to pay over the money bound for King Ruprecht, Giovanni had apparently decided it was time. His choice of Neri Tornaquinci as the new branch manager was also an obvious one. Neri started as a factor in the bank's Rome branch, but for the last four years had operated as the Medici agent in Venice, with prodigious success.<sup>1211</sup> Having now plenty of experience operating within the Venetian money market, Neri should have had no difficulties turning a profit, but within the year he made a grave error in granting a large

<sup>1207</sup> (1402/11/11) – William Rummel of Nuremberg engaged in unspecified business with Pietro in Venice. *Guilmus Rumel de Norenbergo Rogavit Cantam comiss Ser Petro Bicharano confinio Snc. Bartolomiu. ASV, Cancelleria inferiore. Notai. 225, fol 110*; (1402/05/26) – Konrad Grau, merchant of Nuremberg designates Pietro and the Venetian merchant Thomas Sayner of S. Cassian as his procurators Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 225 fn 103; (1402/05/13) – Konrad Seiler, merchant of Krakow working in Venice, nominates Pietro and Tilman Sraiber (Schreiber) of Wroclaw Konrad Seiler - *habitant in fontico Theotonicorum* as his procurators. Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 225 fn 103

<sup>1208</sup> Florence was saved only by Gian Galeazzo Visconti's death of the plague on September 3rd 1402. John M. Najemy, *A history of Florence, 1200-1575* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 194.

<sup>1209</sup> (1402/11/11) - Guilmus Rummel of Nuremberg engaged in unspecified business with Pietro in Venice. *Guilmus Rumel de Norenbergo Rogavit Cantam comiss Ser Petro Bicharano confinio Snc. Bartolomiu. ASV, Cancelleria inferiore. Notai. 225, fol 110.*

<sup>1210</sup> Roover, *The Rise*, 41.

<sup>1211</sup> For his service Neri was awarded 1,600 florins as his salary and bonus pay in 1401. Roover, *The Rise*, 41.

loan to the Amman-Kammerer-Seiler-Grau Company and Pietro Bicherano.<sup>1212</sup> The source of Neri's misfortune was the second event which changed Pietro's future - the bankruptcy of the Amman-Kammerer-Seiler-Grau Company in 1403.<sup>1213</sup> The reason for the company's failure appears to have been due in large part to their efforts to assist King Ruprecht while simultaneously pursuing other projects in both Hungary and Poland. Indeed, it was not that the individual members of the company were without means, but that at the moment when Neri required the loans to be paid back, all of their capital was engaged, and they became insolvent.

### **The Amman-Kammerer-Seiler-Grau Company and the Move to Poland**

Pietro was primarily involved in the company's project in Poland. A few years previous, the company, together with Pietro, had decided to invest in trading ventures and mining interests in Poland – the salt mines of Bochnia and Wieliczka and the lead mines of Olkusz and Trzebinia. Just as King Ruprecht was setting off on his doomed crusade, Amman-Kammerer-Seiler-Grau company's agent in Krakow was extending massive loans to Nicholas Bochner, a leading Krakow merchant. Nicholas used the money to rent the next few year's lease rights to the Krakow mint, the lead mines in Olkusz and Trezbinia, Krakow customs duties, and the important salt mines in Wieliczka and Bochnia from King Władysław Jagiełło.<sup>1214</sup> The amount of upfront cash required to achieve this was enormous, the rental of the salt mines alone came to 17,000 marks per annum; and so he turned to Klaus Kezinger, the representative of the Amman-Kammerer-Seiler-Grau Company in Krakow, and they in turn looked to Neri Tornaquinci and the Medici bank for financing.<sup>1215</sup> Pietro appears to have been the other major

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<sup>1212</sup> Little direct details of the loan survives. The secret account books of the Medici bank – ASF, Filza 153 fol. 48v, 80-1, 100, 102. – does not give the full list of German and Polish merchants involved in Neri Tornaquinci's scandal, and the ledger books which would have held such details have not survived. Still, given the weight of the circumstantial evidence, and the fact that in later years Pietro paid the Medici on both his behalf and that of Konrad Seiler, indicates that they were the individuals in question. Stromer, *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz* vol 1, 213-17; Wolfgang von Stromer, "Das Zusammenspiel oberdeutscher und florentiner Geldleute bei der Finanzierung König Ruprechts Italienzug 1401/1402, "Öffentliche Finanzen und privates Kapital im späten Mittelalter und in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts," in *Forschungen zur Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, Vol. 16 edited by H. Kellenbenz (Stuttgart:Gustav Fischer Verlag, 1971), 76-9; Roover, *The Rise*, 240-1.

<sup>1213</sup> Stromer, "Das Zusammenspiel," 77.

<sup>1214</sup> Jan Ptaśnik, "Study nad patrycyatem krakowskim wieków średnich.[Study of the Krakow Patriciate during the Middle Ages]." *Rocznik Krakowski* vol. 15 (1913): 66-70; Stromer, "Nürnberger Unternehmer," 654-7; Blanchard, *Mining, Metallurgy* Vol 3, 1520-1.

<sup>1215</sup> Nicholas Bochner first took over rental of the mines in 1395. He appears to have given up rights to the mint in 1397, but retained his hold on the mines. Things seem to have gone well for the first few years, but when the trade war between Hungary and Poland broke out, he was unable to make payments on the loans, and his assets were seized by his backers. Ibid. According to Roover, much of the money appears to have been repaid to Neri in the years after 1406, but he failed to remit most of it. Pietro made a number of individual deposits (1414/05/21)

investing partner in the deal himself and traveled a number of times to the region. In 1404, he went to Wrocław and Krakow on commission by Ulrich Kammerer to settle a number of debts. He also and engaged in some other trade transactions on his own account, traveling as far as Lviv.<sup>1216</sup> While Pietro was becoming familiar with Poland, Nicholas Bochner made the fateful decision to use a large portion of his borrowed funds to open up the new “Bochner” shaft at the salt mine in Bochnia. The venture however, failed to meet expectations and he was forced to sell rights to the new shaft to the University of Krakow at a loss.<sup>1217</sup> Meanwhile, Bochner was unable to sell the product from the Olkusz and Trezbinia lead mines; as another Nuremberg firm, that of Flextorfer- Kegler- Zenner Company and their associate Marcus of Nuremberg, had colluded to initiate a trade war between Poland and Hungary that drove up the price of copper and silver – Hungarian exports - and down the price of Polish lead. In response, Krakow merchants initiated a lead embargo against Hungary and the Nuremberg firms that lasted for nearly a year between 1405 and 1406. Finally however, the Krakow merchants could continue the embargo no longer, and they capitulated and were forced to sell the lead at a much lower price<sup>1218</sup> By this point, Nicholas Bochner had fallen into a swirling whirlpool of debt. Unable to purchase silver bullion for the mint or sell lead from his mines to Hungary, in order to stave off his creditors he was forced to offer them salt instead of cash, diminishing his one remaining profit stream still further.<sup>1219</sup> In October 1406, faced with an enormous debt of 25,000 marks, Bochner was forced to declare bankruptcy.<sup>1220</sup> He was stripped of his lease of the salt mines and his assets were seized. In the wake of Bochner’s fall, the lead mines were taken over by Klaus Kezinger and Pietro Bicherano was able to secure the lease of the salt

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Pietro paid back 1800 fl to the Medici bank in the name of Konrad Seiler. ASF, filze 53, nr 1, fol 83r The rest of the money took even longer, (1419/05/24) ". *per nostro di qui per detto perche detto denari --- a noi per ragione che questa sot?zia avremo contro di Neri me detti sui beni.fu per danari avea rischoso per noi di ser Piero Bichierano in Carcovia, nostro debitore, i quali ci avea tenuti oculti piu. tenpo. Come per la franzia che di magna somma a pari ordinata minte.*" ASF, MAP, filze 153, nr. 1, fol. 102v

<sup>1216</sup> (1404/10/01) – Pietro working now in Krakow with Albertus Rybniker, citizen of Krakow, owing 300fl. Consul. Crac. 427, fol. 200. (1404/10/07) – *Petro Pykaran de Veneciis* mentioned in the Lviv archives. [SDIR] 23, 293.

<sup>1217</sup> [KDUK] nr. 35.

<sup>1218</sup> Ptaśnik, “Studya nad patrycyatem,” 68-70; Stromer, “Nürnbergischer Unternehmer,” 655-6; Stromer, *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz*, Vol 1, 148-9.

<sup>1219</sup> Ptaśnik, “Studya nad patrycyatem,” 68.

<sup>1220</sup> There is a discrepancy between the amount of the debt owed by Bochner in the studies by Ptaśnik (20,000 marks) and Stromer (25000). A look at the primary source quoted by Ptaśnik however, clearly states “*viginti milibus marcam vel circa personaliter obligato*” making 20,000 marks the incredible, but correct amount. [KDMK] 4, 146; Ptaśnik, “Studya nad patrycyatem,” 68; Stromer, *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz* vol 1, 148-9.



mines from the king, a role he would fulfill with great acumen and profit for the next ten years.<sup>1221</sup>

### Neri Tornaquinci and the Medici Bank Scandal

Pietro's great windfall however, did not come in time to save his errant financier, Neri Tornaquinci. Having given a large portion of the Medici Venice branch's working capital to Konrad Seiler and Pietro Bicherano in 1402, when the company became insolvent a year later and was unable to meet their immediate debt obligations, Neri too faced failure.<sup>1222</sup> Wishing to escape from censure, Neri chose to hide the extent of the problem from his Medici partners and borrowed money at 8% interest to re-capitalize the branch. For the next three years he reported fictitious profits until in 1406, having at last become suspicious, Giovanni di Bicci di Medici ordered an audit of the branch's books and the truth was revealed. Due to his initial poor choice to invest in the Amman-Kammerer-Seiler-Grau company, and their subsequent failure, Neri had driven the branch deep into debt. Upon discovering the truth, Neri was fired from his position. He remained in Venice for a number of years but in 1409, he lost the case brought against him by Giovanni di Bicci di Medici at the *Mercanzia* Court in Florence, his assets were seized, and he fled to Poland in search of those indebted to him, where he would spend the rest of his life.<sup>1223</sup> Pietro would eventually repay portions of the loan, first to Neri,

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<sup>1221</sup> (1413) The Nuremberg merchant Kezinger pledged the lead mine at Trzebinia to Bonagiunta for 100 shock grosz. [Mag.court 1] nr. 2812; Stromer, "Nürnberger Unternehmer," 656-7.

<sup>1222</sup> "On March 25<sup>th</sup>, 1402, a real branch was created and a capital of 5,000 ducats, Venetian currency, or 5,225 Florentine florins, this was raised within a few months however to 9,000 florins, as the Medici gave an additional 2,775 florins and Neri Tornaquinci invested 1,000 of his own. The surviving account books show a healthy profit from 1401 equaling 1,720 florins, and even higher gains for the next three years, but these later reports were lies. In fact, Neri had racked up a debt of 13,403 florins for the branch and failed to pay salaries. The final loss was over 14,000 florins which even when offset but the not inconsiderable profits the branch made in 1403, 1404, and 1405, the final balance was negative to a tune of 5,356 florins for which Neri was held personally responsible. Given that the original *corpo* of the branch was 9,000 fl and as the debt was the sum of all bad debts owed to the branch, plus additional interest of 8% on money Neri had borrowed seeking to halt his slide to ruins, it is likely that the original loan granted to Conrad Seiler and Pietro Bicherano was 5,000-8,000fl." Roover, *The rise*, 240. Pietro and his compatriots apparently gave money to Neri to pay the debt but he failed to remit it to his Medici partners. Pietro later returned to the Medici bank directly 1,800 fl in 1414. ASF, filze 53, nr 1, fol 83r

<sup>1223</sup> The case was first brought against him by Giovanni di Bicci di Medici in June of 1409. Neri was forced to forfeit his house and gardens in Florence, which were sold for a little over 1000fl. Archive of the Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore, nr. o201077.013a. <http://archivio.operaduomo.fi.it/cupola/ENG/HTML/S011/C025/T001/TBLOCK00.HTM>

who failed to remit the funds, and later to other representatives of the Medici Bank who made their way to Poland.<sup>1224</sup>

### **The Florentine Diplomatic Mission to Send Lions to Poland in 1406**

Interestingly, while Neri suffered mightily for trusting funds to Pietro and the Amman-Kammerer-Seiler-Grau company, Pietro himself was on the rise, even in Florence. As described in Chapter 1, by means which remain mysterious, in May of 1406, Pietro was recommended to take part in a diplomatic embassy representing the Florentine *Signoria* to King Władysław Jagiełło of Poland. Part of their mission was to present the king with two adult lions as a sign of their esteem.<sup>1225</sup> This embassy was the first recorded diplomatic interaction between the two polities; and at first blush it appears odd that Pietro, a Venetian, would be chosen as an emissary. On the other hand, there were few Italians during this period who had intimate knowledge of the region. As Florence was only now turning its interests towards the Central-Eastern European state, the city initially relied on Italians from other communities for help. Indeed, throughout the fifteenth century, there was sporadic cooperation between Venetian and Florentine delegations. Pietro, therefore, Venetian though he might be, as a well-connected Italian already on the scene in Poland was therefore an obvious choice, given that no better Florentine candidate was available.<sup>1226</sup> Still, to gain the post, Pietro must have had some sort of advocate within the *Signoria* who brought forward his name as a candidate. It has long been speculated that that this was none other than Giovanni di Bicci di Medici, but this seems odd in light of the fact that Pietro was still deeply indebted to the bank at the time.

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<sup>1224</sup> (1409/05/26) ASF, 153 nr 1 fol. 48r – Neri failed to remit the funds; (1410/11/02) – Albizzo di Medici sent to Krakow on behalf of the Medici bank where he sought to get some of the money owed to Neri Tornaquinci and the Medici bank paid by Pietro Bicherano. He succeeded in convincing Pietro to pay a portion of the debt which was recorded in the yellow book of the Medici accounts page 34 on February 28th, 1412. ASF, MaP Filza 153, doc. 1, fol. 80rv.

<sup>1225</sup> Pietro was to be sent with two other individuals representing Florence - Leonardo Bartoli and Johannes Doctor Decretus [John Śledź of Lubień]. The letter praised the King in near sycophantic prose, popular to this form of letter of recommendation, calling him, “our most serene and glorious prince and singular benefactor.”<sup>1225</sup> “*Serenissime ac gloriosissime princeps et domine benefactor noster singulissime*” ASF, Signoria, Missive, Cancancellaria 27, fol 1 reproduced in [Itali] nr.18. For Pietro’s supposed recommendation by Giovanni di Bicci di Medici without clear evidence see: Ptaśnik, *Kultura Włoska*, 20, 40. Taken up also by Saporì, *Gli Italiani in Polonia*, 156. Francesco Bettarini who argued that the mentioned Johannes was in fact “Giovanni of Bicci Medici”, who while a renowned merchant-banker, never gained the title of doctor of canon law. Francesco Bettarini, “The new frontier: Letters and merchants between Florence and Poland in the fifteenth century.” *Mélanges de l’École française de Rome - Moyen Âge* [Online], 127-2 | 2015, accessed January, 28<sup>th</sup>, 2019. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2648>

<sup>1226</sup> Garrett Mattingly, “The First Resident Embassies: Mediaeval Italian Origins of Modern Diplomacy,” *Speculum*, vol. 12, no. 4, (1937):430-1.

Giovanni was fully aware of Pietro's debt, given that only the day after the letter was drafted, Neri Tornaquinci was replaced as the branch manager in Venice.<sup>1227</sup> Still, someone must have lobbied for Pietro's name and as it is not known that he had any other Florentine contacts, it is possible that Giovanni was indeed his advocate. In any event, it appears that although he was recommended for the post, Pietro never succeeded in escorting the two lions to the Polish royal court. Apart from the copy of the letter copied into the Florentine *Cancellaria*, there is no evidence that indicates the lions ever arrived in Krakow. The chronicles of the time make no mention of it, the surviving royal account books include no sudden note of lion food or a den being prepared, and no obligatory "thank you" letter appears to have left the chancery of the Polish king. The arrival of so splendid a gift, so exotic and stupendous an occasion as a lion coming to town would have, one would assume, warranted a mention somewhere, and yet the historical record is silent. Given this deafening silence, it is my belief that in all probability, the letter was drafted, but the lion embassy of 1406 never completed its mission. Perhaps the Council of Florence's attention was drawn elsewhere and the expedition never properly set out or perhaps in the long trip the death of their charges caused a change in plan.

### **The Move to Poland**

In any event, whether as part of the Florentine embassy or not, five months later, Pietro was back in Krakow and making perhaps the single greatest decision of his life. In September of 1406, he had a notary in the city write out a document authorizing his son Francesco to act as his procurator in all matters in Venice.<sup>1228</sup> With this act, Pietro cut himself free from all responsibilities in the lagoon city, and appears to have chosen to make Poland his permanent home. Two months later, Pietro would agree to a contract renting the Krakow salt mines from King Władysław Jagiełło, and would run the mines with great success for the next ten years, never again returning to the city of his birth.<sup>1229</sup> Whatever Pietro's personal reasons for choosing to abandon his native land, he was certainly successful in his newly adopted one. As administrator of the Krakow salt mines he stood with careful management to make a great deal of money. He also for a short time operated as the manager of the Krakow mint, a typical

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<sup>1227</sup> Neri was replaced by Giovannidi Francesco da Gagliano (April 25, 1406). Roover, *The Rise*, 41

<sup>1228</sup> (1406/09/03) ASV, Cane. Inf. 96, (Griffon Pietro), book 1 fol. 24.

<sup>1229</sup> (1406/11/21) Pietro rented the mines at the same rate as his predecessor, Nicholas Bochner - for 17000 marks per annum with the first twenty months free of any payment after which 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the sum was to be paid in the local currency, and 1/3<sup>rd</sup> in either Prague grosz or florins. The contract was initially valid for four years and thereafter renewed. [SPPP] 10 nr 154 pg. 78-9; For a proper dating of the event see: Jerzy Zatycki, "Ze źródeł do dziejów walki klasowej w żupach krakowskich. Pamiętnik Biblioteki Kórnickiej Z. 5." [From sources to the history of the class struggle in the Cracow villages. Diary from the Kórnicka Library Vol 5]. *Biblioteka Kórnicka* (1955); 178-80.

occupation for Italians living near foreign courts. However, the state of the bullion market made turning a profit difficult, and he left the position within a year.<sup>1230</sup> He did not, however, give up his association with the former members of the Amman-Kammerer-Seiler-Grau Company. In 1408, he was able to arrange the sale of large amounts of lead from Polish mines to their agents. Two years later he organized with Konrad Seiler a shipment of silver and gold brought from Hungary where their partner, Ulrich Kammerer, had deep interests and would the next year be named chamber count of the mining town of Kremnica.<sup>1231</sup>

By now, Giovanni di Bicci di Medici's patience with Neri Toranquinci had fully eroded. Even after having sacked him in the wake of the knowledge that Neri had lost the bank's money and then compounded the error by lying about it, Giovanni does not appear to have gone immediately after Neri to clear the debt. Indeed, he appears to have had rather a soft spot for the man, as many years later, upon hearing that Neri had fallen upon hard times in Krakow, he sent him a gift of 36fl.<sup>1232</sup> By 1409 however, Giovanni's patience had run out, he brought Neri to court in Florence, and began hounding after the debt; Pietro Bicherano and his relationship with Neri appears in the bank's secret account book for the first time in May of that year.<sup>1233</sup> Until then, Neri had continued to live in Venice, working together with Tommaso di Giovanni in connection with the company of Francesco Datini in Spain, but now he moved first to Hungary and then to Krakow where he sought to recover some of the lost coin.<sup>1234</sup> Pietro, by this time well-settled in Krakow and turning a steady profit from the Krakow mines, was able to pay back a portion of the money, but Neri failed to remit all of it to the Medici bank.<sup>1235</sup>

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<sup>1230</sup>(1407/11/2-1407/12/04) [PomnLW] II nr 113; Leslie Carr-Riegel, "Italian Mint Masters in Medieval Poland" *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* vol 25 (2019): 93-106.

<sup>1231</sup> (1408/04/24) Pietro arranged the sale of 4,000 centars of lead to the company's agents Lucas Kerzener and Ulrich Reze. The lead was then shipped from Krakow to Toruń and eventually to Flanders. Stromer cites the original agreement between Pietro and Ulrich incorrectly stating that it was to be found on [Consul Crac.] 427, folio 245 when in fact it is on 315. Stromer, "Nürnberger Unternehmer," 657. (1410/03/12) – Pietro makes a deal with Konrad Seiler to supply gold and silver brought from the Kingdom of Hungary for transport to Flanders. [Consul Crac.] 427, fol. 363. Stromer, *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz* vol 1, 140.

<sup>1232</sup> The money was sent to Neri in 1424. Roover, *The Rise*, 52.

<sup>1233</sup> (1409/05/26) ASF, 153 nr 1 fol. 48r

<sup>1234</sup> Neri corresponded with Francesco Datini's company branches in both Majorca and Barcelona. On at least one occasion, the transaction involved a shipment of copper, indicating that Neri had retained connections with Hungary and Poland. ASPo, *Datini*, busta 1083, inserto 42, codice 123922, busta 1145.03, inserto 267, codice 11704 (1407/09/16), busta 1145.03, inserto 267, codice 11705 (1407/09/24), busta 1083, inserto 42, codice 123921 (1408/04/08), busta 1083, inserto 42, codice 123924 (1408/07/31). (1410/05/04) Neri involved in Hungary, Johannes de Tulischow, castellanus Calissiensis [Košice], paid 1900 fl to Neri for his boss Pypo de Ozora [Fillipo Scolari aka Pipo Spano], Comes Tymischwariensis [Temes], along with another 300 fl to Antonio de Frante. Consul. Crac. 427, p. 370. (1410/07/12). Neri involved with a large number of other Italians in a court case in Krakow. [SPPP 7] nr 1390-95.

<sup>1235</sup> ASF, MAP, filze 153, no. 1, fol. 103: "... fu per danari avea rischoso per noi di ser Piero Bichierano in Carcovia, nostro debitore, i quali ci avea tenuti oculuti piu. tenpo." Roover, *The Rise*, 241 fn 76.

Giovanni was at last pushed to extremes and in 1410, sent a member of his family, Albizzo di Talento di Medici, to hunt down Neri's bad debts.<sup>1236</sup> Albizzo's search eventually brought him to Krakow, where he appears to have had some success in convincing Pietro to make good his obligations as but a few months after his return to Florence, Pietro paid a considerable portion to the Medici bank directly.<sup>1237</sup> Neri meanwhile, decided to settle down in Krakow permanently, and although he met with less financial success than Pietro, he lived there presumably until his death sometime after 1424.<sup>1238</sup>

By this point, Pietro had made himself quite at home in Poland, enough so that at this point he chose to invite his nephew, Bonagiunta, to join him, and the young man was soon employed as the assistant mine-manager – Vice-Zupparius.<sup>1239</sup> Pietro worked closely with his nephew, purchasing local groves surrounding Bochnia and Wieliczka to provide timber and horses for the mines.<sup>1240</sup> Bonagiunta settled in quickly, soon marrying the daughter of one of the local gentry and applying himself to personal land acquisitions, purchasing villages in the surrounding region.<sup>1241</sup> A few years later, Klaus Kezinger, by now interested in other pursuits,

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<sup>1236</sup> Albizzo di Talento di Medici was born in 1390, a member of the primary Cafagiolo branch of the Medici, but he and his older brother Antonio were of limited means. (1410/10-1412/02) – Albizzo spent 21 months on his mission, traveling to Venice, Vienna and finally to Krakow. He was paid a salary of 80 fl per year, and granted 50 fl for expenses, 24 of which were given to the Bishop of Freising. ASF, MaP Filza 153, doc. 1, fol. 80rv; ASF, Catasto 382, fol. 128r/ 765r-765v (Portate San Giovanni – Drago 1430)

<sup>1237</sup> (1412/05/06) “e Benedetto di Bardi ppi- Oro anno ad VI di Maggio dl di Mila cento sesanta an queste di Ser XXVIII aff preo li debino dare a lib al et 57 Il quali rimaste I nostri di Venezia con Fl. 296 dl per – 27 Ser 10 d 1 pre 12 6 Che in salva avere misser P. Bicherano che saper atrnta a noi pro una ragione Vecchia tenuta aldeto misser P. / let fl. 9CCC fl in Ser CVIII a fl pro C 125 Ser 12 d 9 d avere lah o bono ldn dva per noi di Franchescho Banici per parte Di fl con de Se rischossi di avere Ser. P Bicherano il detto Franchescho Banici e fl CCCC --- da Ser Biagio da soma-----da la companifa di Ser Piero Bicherano detto per una conta che Balbani di Lucha dobbiamo avere che a noi ssapere nostra. C di XX! Di Maggio 1414 fl. Con ile otto cento di avemo dano sui di Dze Preo debino dare o gsto 86.” ASF, Filza 153, nr. 1, 80v.

<sup>1238</sup> The final mention of Neri in Polish records occurs in (1424/05/15) [CA2] nr 238. As no mention of Neri can be found in the Florentine Catasto of 1427, either under his own name or in the returns produced by his brothers, it appears likely that he died prior to that year. See: Chirico di Piero Tornaquinci and his wife Magdalena ASF, Catasto 77, 56. (Santa Maria Novella – Lione Bianco) and Adverado Cipriano Giachinotti ASF, Catasto 77, 18. (Santa Maria Novella – Lione Bianco)

<sup>1239</sup> Bonagiunta first appears in the Krakow records on (1409/01/29). [SPPP2, nr 1191.

<sup>1240</sup> (1413/07/03) – Stanislaus, heir of Lednycza, sells a meadow and a horse in Chorangwicz to Bonagiunta, nephew of Pietro, for use by the salt mines for 58 marks ½ gros. and 10 measures of grain. [SPPP] 2 nr 1322-23. (1410/03/11) – Pietro and Bonagiunta, his nephew, rent the other half of the village of Syrcza, redeeming it from Michael Long from Paulus de Doluszice and his wife Helena, to supply wood for burning and use at the mines in Wieliczka. [ZK 5] 117, 125; [SPPP2] nr 1243.

<sup>1241</sup> (1409/01/29) - Bonagiunta and his Uncle Pietro Bicherano purchase land in the village of Myślenice with Michael Long acting as intermediary for 220 large marks and a further 52 local marks. [SPPP] II nr. 1191 (1410/03/11) - Further transactions over the Myślenice land purchase. [SPPP2] nr. 1243 (1414/01/03) - Andree Czarnissa sells the villages of Rzeszotary (Górne and Dolne), located to the southwest of Wieliczka to “domino Bono Junthe” - (1419) - Bonagiunta marries a local Polish lady named Jadwiga, the daughter of Mirosław, the lord of Gdów and the owner of part of the commune of Myślenice. ZK 5, 382. “Jawczyce,” Słownik Historyczno-Geograficzny Ziem Polskich w Średniowieczu Edycja Elektroniczna [Glossary of the Historical and Geographical

sold his rights over the Trzebinia lead mine to Bonagiunta.<sup>1242</sup> Uncle and nephew worked together, hand in hand, for a number of years, and three children entered the picture as Bonagiunta's marriage produced a girl named Helena and two boys named Jan and Franciscus, the same as Pietro's own son.<sup>1243</sup> Bonagiunta died unexpectedly, however, around 1423, leaving his uncle once more alone.<sup>1244</sup>

### **Pietro as a Venetian Diplomat**

Nearly five years after his permanent transfer to Poland, Pietro received an unexpected call to assist his former home. Tension between Venice and the Kingdom of Hungary had been rising for a number of years, as both sides sought control over the Dalmatian coast and the Po Valley. In the spring of 1411, this simmering threat was poised to break out into a full-scale war and both sides began hunting allies. Poland had appeared on Venice's radar in the wake of the Battle of Grunwald/Tannenberg which saw the Poles win a crushing victory over the Teutonic Knights. Seeking an ally who occupied Hungary's northern flank, the Venetian Senate sought to ingratiate themselves with King Władysław Jagiełło. To that end, in April 1411, Pietro's name came up in a secret meeting of the Venetian Senate, when Zannachius Quirino suggested that, given his position in Poland, he might be tapped to act as a local ambassador, inclining the king towards Venetian policies.<sup>1245</sup> Zannachius Quirino, who came from an upstanding patrician family with vested interest in Crete, was a good friend of the Bicherano family. He was close enough for example, that a few years later, Pietro's son, Francisco, borrowed a Tartar slave of Quirino's for a trip out of town.<sup>1246</sup> He had recently returned from Poland, and making the council aware of Pietro's standing convinced them that he would make an attractive interlocuter. Pietro was thus approached and agreed to seek to bend the king's ear towards

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Polish Territories during the Middle Ages Electronic Edition] Accessed April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2020 <http://www.slownik.ihpan.edu.pl/search.php?id=6867&q=junty&d=0&t=0>

<sup>1242</sup> Klaus Kezinger settled permanently in Krakow together with his brother Walter. In 1404, Klaus became a citizen of Krakow, although he retained his connections with Nuremberg merchants. After some difficulties with the mines, he succeeded in getting them operating profitably, and his family within two generations had moved into the Polish aristocracy. Stromer, "Nürnberger Unternehmer," 655, 660.

<sup>1243</sup> [KDMK IV], 1472.

<sup>1244</sup> Bonagiunta's wife Jadwiga named as a widow. (1423/02/19) [CA2] nr 191

<sup>1245</sup> Zannachius Quirino made this suggestion having just returned from a trip to Poland where he had acted as ambassador, meeting with King Władysław Jagiełło and not doubt Pietro. During the Senate meeting Pietro was recorded as presented by Quirino as loyal, prudent, and willing to serve the Venetian cause. "...*personam fidam et prudentem, cui confidenter possunt nostra negotia committi videlicet ser Petrum Bicharano*" [FRPolVen], nr 1.

<sup>1246</sup> The loan of the slave was questioned by authorities who assumed that Francisco had illegally taken the young man out of the city. Francisco was forced to appear before the court where he succeeded in defending himself. (1417/02/07) ASV, Avogaria di Comun RASPE 3646, fol. 19

Venetian policies over the next few months in the lead-up to a major summit to be held between Władysław Jagiełło and King Sigismund of Hungary in Buda in 1412.<sup>1247</sup>

Pietro fulfilled his task, spending time at court, laying the groundwork for the coming Venetian ambassador, and seeking to convince Władysław Jagiełło that Sigismund's crowning as Holy Roman Emperor would make him a dangerous opponent on Poland's flank, and it would thus be better now to ally with Venice against him.<sup>1248</sup> The Venetian estimation was not incorrect, and Władysław Jagiełło must have known it. Sigismund had allied with Poland's enemies, the Teutonic Knights in the past, and even briefly sought to stake a claim as king of Poland himself, but in the wake of the battle of Grunwald/Tannenberg the wily King Sigismund had decided it was in his own best interests to shift his alliances to Poland. In the face of Sigismund's generous proposal to act as a friend and help broker a favorable peace with the Teutonic Knights, Venice was outmaneuvered. In the end, although he fulfilled it with alacrity according to reports, Pietro's task proved fruitless. Venice simply had too little to offer and so, after the great Buda summit, Poland remained allied with Hungary and Sigismund redoubled his efforts in his fight with Venice. Pietro meanwhile, returned to his duties as Zupparius in Krakow, and pursued his own trading initiatives. It would be another seven years before he would receive payment for expenses he had undertaken in his efforts as ambassador. Interestingly, this payment was made through a *lettera di cambio*, drawn on William Rummel, yet another sign that Pietro retained strong ties with the men of the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*.<sup>1249</sup>

### Later Years in Poland

For the next ten years, Pietro occupied himself with his duties as Zupparius and his own mercantile initiatives. He traveled widely across the Kingdom, at one point presenting gifts

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<sup>1247</sup> (1411/09/24 – 1412/01/23) Modern style dating. [FRPolVen], nr 2, nr 3, nr 4, nr 5, nr 6, nr 7.

<sup>1248</sup> (1412/01/23) Modern style dating. Sigismund was elected King of the Romans in January 1411 but only crowned in November 1414. [FRPolVen], nr 7; For more on this complicated story see: Martin Štefánik, "Poľsko, Žigmund a benátska diplomacia. K medzinárodnému pozadiu zálohu spišských miest za vlády Žigmunda Luxemburského [Poland, Sigismund and Venetian diplomacy. On the international background, the advance of the Spiš towns during the reign of Sigismund of Luxembourg]," In *Ingenii laus*. Eds. Eva Benková and Marek Púčík (Bratislava : vydavateľstvo UK v Bratislave 2017), 207-232.

<sup>1249</sup> (1419) The Venetian Senate agrees to pay William Rummel 94 marks which he had loaned in a letter of exchange taken by the Venetian notary, Francisco de la Senj, to Pietro to pay for expenses incurred on the Serenissima's behalf during his time working as their ambassador to the King of Poland. The transfer was made through a letter of exchange to be drawn by Pietro. Rummel was eventually paid in January of 1422. [Der Fondaco] nr 330; Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 277.

brought from the Lviv City Council to the king in Lublin, and he also visited Wrocław.<sup>1250</sup> He further traded in red cochineal dye.<sup>1251</sup> Pietro employed a certain Jorge Hutter, to act as his factor for this task, sending him with a load of the product to sell in either Venice or Florence, where it was sure to fetch a good price. As discussed later in greater detail, Pietro also appears to have kept in some amount of contact with his son Francisco, and included him in some trading ventures that went through the Kingdom of Hungary to the port of Senj.<sup>1252</sup> Pietro also at this time kept in contact with the Medici bank, continuing to make payments to them for “*una ragione Vecchia*” – an old reason, that is to say the loans defaulted on by Neri Tornaquinci in 1406.<sup>1253</sup> Pietro was very likely involved in numerous other mercantile ventures that have simply not made it into the surviving record. Apart from this, Pietro continued to serve as Zupparius, managing the Krakow mines with a firm hand, making improvements where necessary, and fulfilling his duties.<sup>1254</sup> Pietro appears to have integrated fully into society in Krakow as did his nephew Bonagiunta. Pietro was asked by various individuals to act as their legal representative before the Krakow courts.<sup>1255</sup> From the surviving record, there is not sign

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<sup>1250</sup> (1414/02/02) – Gifts presented by Pietro together with the *Advocat* of Drohobych [Дрогобич], from the city of Lviv to King Władysław Jagiełło in Lublin [PomnLW] I nr 337 pg. 131; (1415/02/02) - Mentioned in the city books of Wrocław. Schultz, “Topographie Breslaus,” 245.

<sup>1251</sup> (1412/03/12) - Petrus gives 25 florin worth of red dye to Jorge Hutter for him to take to Italy and sell - 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of profit or loss is to accrue to Jorge Hutter. When Peter hears back that the load has been sold from his acquaintances in either Florence or Venice; then he will consider him relieved of the debt. [Itali] nr 22

<sup>1252</sup> (1414/07/12) - Francesco Bicherano, son of Pietro writes included in a letter of complaint from the Venetian Council directed toward their ambassador Nicolaus Comte of Senj about various problems, including that Francesco had been unduly taxed and 1.5 gold marks taken from him which had been sent by his father Pietro from Krakow to him in Senj and who Nicolaus’s representative officials had illegally taken from him. The council requested that the money be returned to the Council’s Rectors in either Zadar or Arbe on the island of Rab. *Monumenta Spectantia Historiam Slavorum Meridionalium*: vol 12 (Zagreb: Župan Albrecht et Fiedler, 1882), 160.

<sup>1253</sup> (1412/05/06) – Pietro appears in the secret Medici account books of Giovnnani di Medici. “...e Benedetto di Bardi ppi- Oro anno ad VI di Maggio dl di Mila cento sesanta an queste di Ser XXVIII aff preo li debino dare a lib al et 57 Il quali rimaste I nostri di Venezia con Fl. 296 dl per – 27 Ser 10 d 1 pre 12 6 Che in salva avere misser P. Bicherano che saper atrnta a noi pro una ragione Vecchia tenuta aldeto misser P. / let fl. 9CCC fl in Ser CVIII a fl pro C 125. Ser 12 d 9 davere lah o bono ldn dva per noi di Franchescho Banici per parte Di fl con de Se rischossi di avere Ser. P Bicherano il detto Franchescho Banici e fl CCCC--- da Ser Biagio da soma ----da la companifa di Ser Piero Bicherano detto per una conta che Balbani di Lucha dobbiamo avere che a noi sapere nostra. C di XX! di Maggio 1414 fl. Con ile otto cento di avemo dano sui di Dze Preo debino dare o gsto 86.” ASF, Mediceo Avanti il Principato, 153 fol. 83r.

<sup>1254</sup> (1413/05/04) -The king orders Pietro as zupparius to supply also the new Carmelite monastery in Krakow with a certain amount of salt annually. [KDKK] nr 545 pg. 382; (1413/07/03) – Stanislaus, heir of Lednyczza, sells a meadow and a horse in Chorangwicza to Bonagiunta, nephew of Pietro for use in the salt mines, for 58 marks ½ grozs. and 10 measures of grain. [SPPP2] nr 1322-23; (1420) - Part of the mine at Bochnia is sublet from Pietro with the king's approval by Nicolaus de Galarnino with Przecław and Nicolus de Czacz, knights of Jagiełło, for 900 marks and 60 gr., to be paid over 4 years - to help improve issues with the shafts. [EFEII] nr 13.

<sup>1255</sup> (1423/05/14) - Pietro named as procurator for Margaretha *mulier de Stradom*, in a case she has with Mathia Laicus of Olkus - he is named here as master of the stronghold of Proschowicze [CA2] nr 203



that Pietro ever attempted to return to Venice, and so lived out the rest of his life in Poland, separated from his wife and children. In the winter of 1423, Pietro's nephew and co-worker, Bonagiunta, passed away. A year later, Pietro, too settled his bones, now over sixty years old, into the earth. His passing appears to have been a blow to the local community in Krakow, as it was marked in the city's notarial register "*Petrus Pykaran hoc nocte defuncti.*"<sup>1256</sup>

## Family Connections

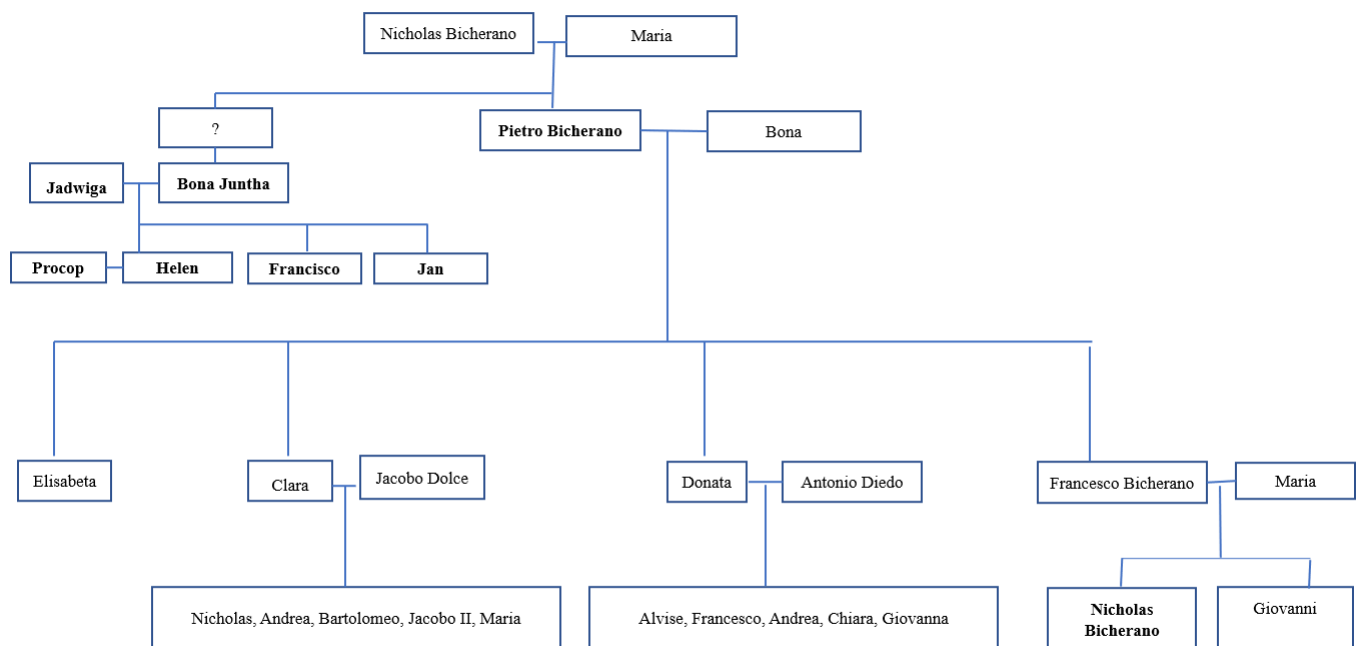


Figure 65 Bicherano Family Tree

## Daughters

Given that no brothers are mentioned in the sources, it appears likely that Pietro was the only surviving son of his father. He did however have at least two sisters, one named Donata, after whom one of his own daughters was christened, and who became a nun in the Corpus Domini

(1423/04/19) - Pietro named as *procurator et signatur* – legal representative, by Nicolaus de Moskorzow Canon of Krakow Cathedral in a case with *Nicolao Morawka fabro de Weliczka Stanislawo de Wolya* and *Clemente de Zaczrow kmethonibus* - [CA2] nr 205.

<sup>1256</sup> (1424/07/31) - Death noted in the Krakow city books by Tilman von Bruke,, Petrus Edlinger, and Johannes Poetro's procurators. ASK, Consul Crac. 428 fol. 213.

convent in Venice.<sup>1257</sup> The name of his other sister remains a mystery, although her son, Bonagiunta, joined his uncle in Poland. Pietro's wife was a woman named Bona, possessed of some property and an impressive dowry of 1000 ducats, she and Pietro had four surviving children together, three daughters – Clara, Elisabeta, and Donata and a son named Francesco.<sup>1258</sup> Clara married Jacobo Dolce, a member of a well-off but still plebeian family who would become ennobled only in the seventeenth century, with whom she had five children; Nicolaus, Andrea Bartolomeo, Jacobo, and Maria.<sup>1259</sup> Nicolaus appears to have been a favorite of his grandmother Bona as she left him a special bequest in her will.<sup>1260</sup> After her husband's death, Clara chose to enter the Augustinian convent of Andrea della Zirada in Venice where she lived in clausura until at least 1438.<sup>1261</sup> Less is known of Elisabeta. She married the nobleman Niccolo di Francesco Bernardo around 1410 but it is unclear if their union produced any children.<sup>1262</sup> Her mother Bona granted her 100 ducats from her dowry in her first will made out in 1428, but she is absent from Bona's second testament registered ten years later, implying that she had passed away.<sup>1263</sup> Donata on the other-hand, made the best match, as she

<sup>1257</sup> Donata Bicherano is mentioned in the two wills of Bona Bicherano, Pietro's wife, as a sister in the Corpus Domini convent. She is not included in the necrology of the convent composed by sister Bartolomea Biccoboni because the last entry in the necrology comes in 1436, and given that Bona's second will which revealed Donata to still be alive in 1438, she was not mentioned. Bartolomea Riccoboni, *Life and death in a Venetian convent: the chronicle and necrology of Corpus Domini, 1395-1436*, ed. and trans. Daniel Bornstein (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 101.

<sup>1258</sup> It is possible that Bona came from the plebeian family, Serial, as in her second will, written in 1438, she mentions a nephew named Tomas Serial, who had left her 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of his property upon his death. However, it is equally possible that the said Tomas was the son of one of her sisters, and thus took the name of his father rather than Bona's maiden name. ASV, Notarile, Testamenti, nr. 398. Published in [Itali] nr. 76. 1000 ducats was a substantial amount, higher in fact than the average noble dowry for the period, which between 1371-1410 has been calculated at 963 ducats. A maximum of 1600 ducats was placed on noble dowries by the Venetian government in 1420, but this would not have affected Bona or Pietro, as they were of the plebeian class. Donald E. Queller and Thomas F. Madden, "Father of the bride: fathers, daughters, and dowries in late medieval and early Renaissance Venice," *Renaissance Quarterly* 46.4 (1993):691.

<sup>1259</sup> The Dolce family were mentioned as members of Venice's noble *Maggiore Consiglio* from 1658 until its dissolution under Napoleon in 1792. Dorit Raines, "Cooptazione, aggregazione e presenza al Maggior Consiglio: le casate del patriziato veneziano, 1297-1797," *Storia di Venezia - Rivista*, I, (2003): 58.

<sup>1260</sup> In her second 1438 will, Bona named Nicolaus Dolce as one of her executors and left him 40 ducats and 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of an estate which had been left to her by her nephew Tomas Serial. ASV, Notarile, Testamenti 364 nr. 398. Published in [Itali] nr. 76.

<sup>1261</sup> As part of her will, composed in Latin in 1425, when Clara was already enclosed in the convent (she spoke to the notary through the bars on a window of the convent to have her will recorded) she left 90 gold ducats to her daughter, Maria, 100 ducats to the convent of St. Andrea della Zirada and the rest of her property was to be divided among her other children. She is further mentioned as still living in Bona Bicherano's second will in 1438. ASV, Testamenti 554 nr. 197 Notary Griffon Pietro. ASV, Notarile, Testamenti 364, nr. 398. Published in [Itali] nr. 76

<sup>1262</sup> "Abramo-Busenago," Balla d'Oro," Accessed April 18th 2021. <http://www.rikvanhauwe.be/Venice/BO/B.O.I.A.htm>

<sup>1263</sup> ASV, Testamenti 554 nr. 197 Notary Griffon Pietro. ASV, Notarile, Testamenti 364, nr. 398. Published in [Itali] nr. 76.

married the Venetian nobleman, Antonio Diedo in 1415.<sup>1264</sup> Antonio was a member of an old and respected noble family and was quite a catch for the plebian Donata. We do not know how much Donata's dowry was worth, but Pietro Bicherano's wealth must have been part of the equation. Antonio had already entered the Maggiore Consiglio before his marriage, and would go on to have an impressive career in Venetian administration and as a Capitan of her war and merchant galleys.<sup>1265</sup> Despite Antonio's many absences from home, the couple had at least five children: three boys – all three of whom went on to join the *Maggior Consiglio* and have glowing careers, with the eldest, Andrea becoming procurator of S. Marco, the post second only to the Doge in power within the Venetian government.<sup>1266</sup> The two girls meanwhile, Chiara and Giovanna, both married into the ancient noble Barbarigo family.<sup>1267</sup>

## Son

The son and heir, Francesco, meanwhile, followed his Father's footsteps into trade. He was active in the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, but his name most frequently appears in the sources involved in the Tana slave trade, where he worked closely with Ambrosio Paruta.<sup>1268</sup> Pietro's permeant transfer to Poland in 1406 caused a major cleavage within the Bicherano family. Pietro had visited the Kingdom previously, but at this point he decided to make a full break with the land of his birth, and by all indications, never returned to Venice. He arranged from

<sup>1264</sup> The husband's full name was Andrea Diedo di Giovanni, del ramo di S. Domenico, the son of Giovanni di Giacomo e di Fantina di Nicolò Morosini. Treccani refers to Donata's father as Giovanni di Bicherano, rather than Pietro. However, I believe this to be a simple error as Bona Bicherano's will of 1438 names "*ser Anthonium Diedo et do[mi]nam Donatam eius uxorem*" among her executors. "Diedi, Antonio," Treccani, Accessed April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020, [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/antonio-diedo\\_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/antonio-diedo_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/). ASV, Notarile, Testamenti, nr. 398. Published in [Itali] nr. 76.

<sup>1265</sup> Ibid. Andrea entered the Maggiore Consiglio in 1436; Alvise, in 1438 and became *Savio agli Ordini* in 1442; Francesco entered in 1454 and became *avvocato del procurator*. "Diedi, Antonio," Treccani, Accessed April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020, [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/antonio-diedo\\_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/antonio-diedo_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/).

<sup>1266</sup> Ibid. "Diedi, Andrea," Treccani, Accessed April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020, <http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/ricerca/Diedo,-andrea/>

<sup>1267</sup> Chiara married Andrea di Giacomo Barbarigo in 1442, while Giovanna married Antonio di Gabriele Barbarigo in 1452. "Diedi, Antonio," Treccani, Accessed April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020, [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/antonio-diedo\\_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/antonio-diedo_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/).

<sup>1268</sup> ASV, Cancellaria Inferiore, Notario 96 (Notario Griffon Pietro) book 1 fol. 24 (1407/08/28) Francisco dealt with the fallout from the running away of a Tartar slave brought from Tana named Martin, that he had sold. Nr. 26 (1407/05/02) Franciscus sold an 18 year old Tartar slave, baptized Giorgius, for 48 ducats to Andrea and Johannes condam (of the deceased) Johannes. fol. 28 (1407/01/17) He sold a 16 year old Russian slave boy, named Codri, and baptized Paulus, to Pietro Georgy, son of Paulus the Baker for 41 ducats. fol. 31 (1407/08/02) Francisco sold a 16 year old Russian slave boy, originally named Codri but baptized Theodore to Ser Omnebono de Sustan condam Ser Georgy de Sancte Salvator for 38 ducats. Book 2 fol. 67 (1410/04/24) Francisco sold a pregnant slave and her son Franciscus for 92 ducats to Antonio Zane. Book 2 fol. 67 (1410/04/05) Domino Bndomanelo and Ser Ambroser Paruta were legally empowered by Francesco to carry out all business on his behalf in Tana. Braunsteid also mentions a case in which Ambrosio Paruta was specifically empowered to hunt down a runaway slave in Tana for Francisco. ASV, Avogaria di Comun, Raspe 3646, 19, 14 1 2/4/II m. v as recorded in: Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 405 fn 136.

Krakow for Francesco to have full power of attorney to manage the family finances, but otherwise abandoned his wife and daughters in the lagoon, never seeing them again.<sup>1269</sup> Either because of this abandonment, or because the marriage between them had already soured, Francesco's mother Bona in her first will left only a measly five ducats for prayers to be said for her estranged husband Pietro's soul and in her second, written ten years later, left nothing at all.<sup>1270</sup> Over the eighteen years in lived in Poland however, Pietro did not lose touch with his family entirely, but retained at least some contact with Francesco. Proof of this comes in the form of a letter of complaint, was sent from the Venetian Council to the ambassador Nicolaus Comte of Senj on Francisco's behalf in 1414.<sup>1271</sup> The letter described how, during a trip to Senj, Francesco had been illegally divested by the ambassador's agents of 1.5 gold marks sent to him by his Father in Krakow. The council demanded that the funds be returned to the Venetian Rectors in either Zadar or on the Island of Rab, who would then presumably see its transfer back to Francesco in Venice. This letter shows that Francesco engaged in travels on his family's account and had enough contact with his father who was willing to send him large sums of money. Still, the rupture remained, and Pietro preferred to remain in Poland as opposed to the Lagoon City of his birth. For a man of his standing and wealth, this was a highly unusual occurrence. Given that Pietro continued to work with members of the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* and in 1411, when Pietro was tapped at the suggestion of Zannachio Quirini to be there on the ground as ambassador to the king of Poland, it seems unlikely that there was some deep ceded hatred of his homeland that caused his chosen exile, but rather a more personal reason that remains hidden from the sources.<sup>1272</sup> Francesco married a woman named Maria, and they appear to have had two sons, Nicolaus named again after Pietro's Father, and a younger son named Giovanni. The older son, Nicolaus, appears to have been raised to take over the family business and by 1438, as by now both of his parents had passed away, was the main beneficiary

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<sup>1269</sup> Pietro did not even return to Venice to hand things over to his son. Instead, he designated before an imperial notary and canon of Krakow cathedral, that Francisco should hereafter have his full power of attorney to make legal decisions regarding the family and business. The parchment document declaring that Francisco held Pietro's power of attorney was taken either by Pietro himself, or more likely by another messenger to Venice; where it was given to Francisco. Hereafter, Francisco presented it to the public notary in Venice whenever he engaged in a transaction. "*Andrea Nicolai Czarziser clericis Cracoviensis dyocies. notarii Imp. 1406 Indcit. 14, die 4 mense Sept. hora tercorum vel quasi Cracoviensis prope*"...some version of this line ran at the beginning of each of Francisco's business transactions recorded by the notary Pietro Griffon. ASV, Cancellaria Inferiore, Notario 96 - Notario Griffon Pietro

<sup>1270</sup> ASV, Testamenti 554 nr. 197 Notary Griffon Pietro. ASV, Notarile, Testamenti, nr. 398. Published in [Itali] nr. 76.

<sup>1271</sup> (1414/07/12) *Monumenta Spectantia Historiam Slavorum Meridionalium: vol 12* (Zagreb: Župan Albrecht et Fiedler, 1882), 160.

<sup>1272</sup> *Fontes rerum Polonicarum e tabulario Reipublicae Venetae*, ed. August Cieszkowski (Poznań: Typis Officinae Dziennik Poznański, 1890), nr 1.

of his grandmother Bona's will.<sup>1273</sup> Ten years later, a single brief mention puts him in Poland, acting as the toll-owner of Muszyna, through which ran one of the main route from the salt mines near Krakow towards Hungary.<sup>1274</sup> Thirty years earlier, Pietro, together with his nephew, Bonagiunta, had purchased property in this area. The property had continued in family hands down to Francesco, Bonagiunta's son, and it is highly likely that Nicolaus journeyed to Poland to join his cousin there for a time and had at least a brief career in Poland.<sup>1275</sup> Unfortunately, the record thereafter goes cold, and it is difficult to say what happened to the young man thereafter. His brother Giovanni meanwhile, appears to have been selected for a different path as he was sent to school under the Padua Humanist Gasparino Barzizza. Francisco was not entirely sure about the style of education his son was receiving however, as he wrote worriedly to complain to Barzizza in 1416 and take him away from Barzizza's tutelage. Barzizza wrote back consolingly that while Giovanni tended to push himself too hard, he was an excellent student and it would have been better for him to remain and continue to imitate Barzizza's methods.<sup>1276</sup>

## Nephew

Of even greater interest then, is the arrival in Poland of Bonagiunta, Pietro's nephew, to Poland sometime around 1409.<sup>1277</sup> By then, Pietro was an established presence in Krakow and Zupparius of the vital salt mines of Wieliczka and Bochnia. Bonagiunta joined him, acting as his assistant and Vice-Zupparius of the Krakow salt-mines.<sup>1278</sup> Ten years later, Bonagiunta

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<sup>1273</sup> Not much is known about Nicholas's life. He appears to have grown up in Venice and followed in his father's footsteps being involved with the Black Sea slave trade. Danuta Quirini-Popfawska, *Obecność niewolników ruskich w rejonie Morza Śródziemnego w późnym średniowieczu* [Presence of Ruthenian slaves in the Mediterranean in the Late Middle Ages], *Portolana. Studia Mediterranea* 1 (2004):132.

<sup>1274</sup> Recorded in the document as Nicolaus Pykaran, the cognomen applied to his Grandfather Pietro during his time in Poland. (1448/1004) [SPPP2] nr. 3351

<sup>1275</sup> Krakow National Archive, *Acta terrestria Cracoviensia. Księgi ziemskie krakowskie* 11 folio 167rv-168. (ZK 11 pp. 167-8) see: "Jawczyce," accessed April, 22 2020. <http://www.slownik.ihpan.edu.pl/search.php?q=junta&d=0&t=0>

<sup>1276</sup> Gasparini wrote, "If it had been possible, I should much like to have known something of your intention in advance. For the course you describe, and which in the case of our Giovanni's progress you have pursued rather more rapidly that may be appropriate for him or indeed than I myself would consider proper, should not be taken to the point where his studies are such a great discomfort to him. I myself would have done what good painters practice towards their pupils: for when the apprentices are to be instructed by their master before having acquired a thorough grasp of the theory of painting, the painters follow the practice of giving them a number of fine drawings and pictures as models of the art, and through these they can be brought to make a certain amount of progress even by themselves." Peter Francis Weller, "Alberti before Florence: Early Sources Informing Leon Battista Alberti's *De Pictura*," *Diss. UCLA* (2014), 122. See also, G.W. Pigman, *Gasparino Barzizza's treatise on imitation*. Humanities Working Paper, 54. (Pasadena: California Institute of Technology, 1980), 6-7.

<sup>1277</sup> It is unclear how Bonagiunta was related to Pietro. Presumably he was the son of a sister of Pietro who unfortunately fails to appear in the sources. Pietro's wife Bona's two wills and that of his daughter Clara, make no mention of the young man.

<sup>1278</sup> (1401/03/11) [SPPP2] nr 1243, (1411/10/22) [Mag.court 1] nr. 2812

married a local Polish noblewoman named Jadwiga, the daughter of Miroslaw, the lord of Gdów and the owner of a part of the commune of Myślenice.<sup>1279</sup> The pair had three children, two sons, named Jan and Francisco, and a daughter named Helena.<sup>1280</sup> The couple would come to own a large number of villages in the surroundings of Krakow, and Bonagiunta's children appear to have blended in seamlessly with the local Polish nobility, never attempting to return to Venice.<sup>1281</sup> In large part, the reason for this reluctance may lie in the fact that Bonagiunta died in 1422, only a few years after the children were born and so they swiftly lost their direct connection to Venice.<sup>1282</sup> The family continued to prosper as noble Polish gentry. The one son Jan died relatively young, and Francesco continued to administer the family lands together with his mother Jadwiga until 1442, when he left to join King Władysław III of Poland (1434-1444) on his campaign in Hungary.<sup>1283</sup> By 1445, Francesco was dead, perhaps having fallen at the disastrous Battle of Varna, and his mother Jadwiga has passed away as well.<sup>1284</sup>

#### 4.2.2 Giovanni di Talenti of Bologna/Florence (1403-1406) - The Passing Merchant and Momentary Minter

According to research undertaken by Zsuzsa Teke and Kristina Arany, the Talenti family originated in Florence, but later moved to Forli, an important trade junction located down the coast from Bologna.<sup>1285</sup> Having settled there, the family appears to have prospered and

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<sup>1279</sup> Jadwiga was furnished with a dowry worth 300 (likely florins). [Ptaśnik], 42 fn 85; [ZK] 5, 382 "Jawczyce," Słownik Historyczno-Geograficzny Ziem Polskich w Średniowieczu Edycja Elektroniczna [Glossary of the Historical and Geographical Polish Territories during the Middle Ages Electronic Edition] Accessed April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2020 <http://www.slownik.ihpan.edu.pl/search.php?id=6867&q=junty&d=0&t=0>

<sup>1280</sup> [ZDM] 7 nr 1930.

<sup>1281</sup> In 1422, Jadwiga asked the king and was granted permission to move her three villages of Jawczyce, Rzeszotary, and Ławszowa from Polish to German law. Helena married the local nobleman, Prokop of Kruszlowa [ZDM] 7 nr. 1930. "Jawczyce," Słownik Historyczno-Geograficzny Ziem Polskich w Średniowieczu Edycja Elektroniczna [Glossary of the Historical and Geographical Polish Territories during the Middle Ages Electronic Edition] Accessed April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2020 <http://www.slownik.ihpan.edu.pl/search.php?id=6867&q=junty&d=0&t=0>

<sup>1282</sup> [ZDM] 7 nr. 1930.

<sup>1283</sup> (1442/08/27) In preparation for his departure for Hungary to join the king in battle, Francisco sought to safeguard his soul and so decided to give his rights over the village of Rzeszotary to the Corpus Christi Monastery in Kazimierz, the site where his father was buried. [ZbiMP] 3 nr. 635

<sup>1284</sup> (1445/01/11) [KDMK] IV nr. 1472. Jan Długosz, *Liber Beneficorum* vol. II (Krakow: Ex typographia Kirchmajeriana, 1864), 144.

<sup>1285</sup> Stanisław Suchodolski argued that the Talenti family came from France, but the more recent research done by Teke, Arany, and Prajda proves this argument to have been faulty. Stanisław Suchodolski, "D'où venaient les

produced a generation of outgoing young Talenti men born in the region of Bologna in the 1360s.<sup>1286</sup>

### The Family's Move to Hungary

In 1380, the family, which consisted of at least three brothers, Simone, Thalentus, and Giovanni, made another move, crossing the Adriatic to pursue trade in Hungary. Simon's name appears in Hungary for the first time in 1380, in a dispute with a Genoese merchant named Nicholas before the court in Košice.<sup>1287</sup> The Genoese merchant apparently owed Simon 1,000 fl in cash together with 5,405 fl worth of goods - "*pannis et aliis rebus mercimonialibus*", primarily woolen cloth.<sup>1288</sup> Regarding this record, Zsuzsa Teke, surmised that given the location of the exchange in Košice, located on the strategic trade route running through the Tatra mountains that connected Poland and the Kingdom of Hungary, and the large amount of expensive high-quality cloth involved, it is likely that the goods had been purchased in Poland and were part of the intense transit trade in textiles brought from Bruges across the Baltic and down the Vistula river.<sup>1289</sup> Further indication of larger numbers of Italians involved in cross-border trade with Poland during this period appears in a document released by King Sigismund to the town of Košice in 1388. The document stated that Italians entering Hungary, so long as they paid the requisite border tax, were to be granted free transit for themselves and all of their merchandise. - "*nunc vero Galici, qui redditus et proventus tricesimarum et tributorum in regno nostro Hungarie convenerunt, cum eorum mercimoniis salvis tricesimis et aliis dationibus, pergere et transire possunt* ." <sup>1290</sup> Evidence from the Košice municipal records points to at least seven different Italians regularly active in the city between 1394 and 1405.<sup>1291</sup>

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monnayeurs de l'atelier monétaire de Cracovie à la fin du XIVe et au début du XVe siècle ?," *Revue numismatique*, 6 vol. 158 (2002): 349-50.

<sup>1286</sup> (1384/06/02) Document from the Hungarian National archive recorded the brothers Thalentis and Simone Talenti as citizens of Bologna. "*Simoni de Talentis de Bononia concivi nostro*" Arany, *Florentines*, 44 fn 136. Zsuzsa Teke, "Firenzei üzletemberek Magyarországon: 1373-1405 [Florentine businessmen in Hungary: 1373-1405]," *Történelmi Szemle* 37.2 (1995):134.

<sup>1287</sup> Arany, *Florentines*, 237.

<sup>1288</sup> Teke, "Firenzei üzletemberek," 134; Arany, *Florentines*, 237.

<sup>1289</sup> Teke, "Firenzei üzletemberek," 134. For more on this topic see: Francis W. Carter, "Cracow's Transit Textile Trade, 1390-1795: A Geographical Assessment," *Textile History* 19.1 (1988): 23-60.

<sup>1290</sup> (1388/01/24) [ZsO] I nr. 409; Teke, "Firenzei üzletemberek," 140.

<sup>1291</sup> [Kassa] pg. 48 nr. 77 (1394/02/14) *Michael familiarem Gallicorum*, pg. 49 nr. 104 1394/02/14 Johannes Bonafide, pg. 50 nr. 129 1394/02/14 Johannes Gallicus de Talentis, pg. 53 nr. 181 1394/03/09 Johannes de Talentis, pg. 55 nr. 231 1394/04/27 Johannes Bonafide, pg. 59 nr. 331 1394/09/22 famula Gallici, pg. 68 nr. 568 1394/01/10 Ursula uxor Thalentis, pg. 81 nr. 903 1395/05/29, Urbano gallicus Mendel pg. 83 nr. 932 1395/07/25, Bartholomeo Gallicus

## Košice

Košice during these years was a hot spot for Italian traders, particularly those engaged with the nearby upper-Hungarian mines and with interests in Poland. Over the coming years, Košice would become one of the Talenti brother's main trading bases. Giovanni Talenti in particular, made Košice his home, becoming a citizen, purchasing property and installing his wife, Ursula, in the town.<sup>1292</sup> Upon becoming a citizen in 1399, he was then able to pull off a major coup by successfully petitioning King Sigismund to grant Košice's traders the same trading rights as Buda, thus giving its citizens free access to trade networks across the Kingdom.<sup>1293</sup> The main focus of trade appears to have been cloth, but other materials passed through Giovanni's hands as well.<sup>1294</sup> The other two brothers, meanwhile, spread themselves strategically across the region, eventually gaining citizenship rights in Zadar, Pest, and Pecs, as well as Košice.<sup>1295</sup> Apart from trade activities, the brothers also followed in the footsteps of many other Italians, becoming quickly involved in mining and tax affairs. Giovanni became chamber count in Dalmatia in 1381 and count for the collection of *lucrum camera* in 1396. Thalerus meanwhile, took over his brother's duties as chamber count in 1387. Simone was named count of the royal

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pg. 90 nr. 1116 1395/11/27 Michel Gallicus, pg. 109 nr. 1606 1396/12/03, Michael Gallicus, pg. 156 nr. 2687 1399/02/11 Michael Gallicus, pg. 157 nr. 2691 1399/02/12 Michael Gallicus, pg. 144 nr. 2419 1398/06/28, Michael Bonafide, pg. 124 nr. 1967 1397/08/27 Johannes Gallicus, pg. 177 nr. 3090 1399/11/29 Johannes Gallicus, pg. 185 nr. 3265 1400/02/13 Michael Gallicus, pg. 186 nr. 3281 1400/02/14 Bartholomeus filius Junta Gallici, pg. 265 nr. 4964 1403/01/10 Bartholomeus Gallicus, pg. 186 nr. 3289 1400/02/15 Struj servant of Johannes Gallicus, pg. 190 nr. 3391 1400/04/26 Joahannes Gallicus, pg. 191 nr. 3411 1400/04/26 Johannes Gallicus, pg. 192 nr. 3431 1400/05/10 Johannes famulus Johannes Gallicus, pg. 197 nr. 35939 1400/07/12 Michael Gallicus, pg. 202 nr. 3641 1400/10/19, Johannes Gallicus, pg. 204 nr. 3689 1400/10/31 Johannes Monoculi Gallicus, pg. 204 nr. 3688 1400/10/29 Petrus Venturi Gall(icus), pg. 221 nr. 4083 1401/09/29 Johannes Gallicus, pg. 230 nr. 4262 1401/10/03, Michael Gallicus, pg. 231 nr. 4273 1401/10/03 Michael Gallicus, pg. 245 nr. 4577 1402/04/12 Michael Gallicus, pg. 255 nr. 2765 1402/09/04 Michael Gallicus, pg. 294 nr. 5601 1404/03/17 Michael Gallicus, pg. 313 nr. 5979 1405/01/20 Michael Gallicus, pg. 295 nr. 5604 1404/03/17 Johannes Gallicus, pg. 236 nr. 4393 1401/12/12 Johannes fillius gallici, pg. 298 nr. 5676 1404/04/24 Johannes Gallicus, pg. 289 nr. 5485 1403/12/01 Johannes Wal, pg. 289 nr. 5486 1403/12/01 Johannes Wal, pg. 199 nr. 3577 1400/08/02 Michael Wal, pg. 199 nr. 3578 1400/08/03 Michael Wal, pg. 262 nr. 4901 1402/12/02 Michael Wal, pg. 266 nr. 5005 1403/12/22 Michael Wal, pg. 290 nr. 551 1403/12/01 Michael Wal, pg. 295 nr. 5628 1404/04/07 Michael Wal, pg. 296 nr. 5630 1404/04/08 Michael Wal, pg. 315 nr. 6027 1405/05/08 Michael Wal, pg. 199 nr. 3575 1400/08/03 Nycolaum Wal

<sup>1292</sup> It is unclear whether Ursula was Italian herself, or a local woman. (1395/01/10) Ursula, Giovanni's wife, requested 109 fl. from the widow of Knol over a vineyard of hers, calling two witnesses to recognize her rights in the matter. [Kassa], 68 nr. 568; (1399) Giovanni became a citizen of Košice and succeeded in getting King Sigismund of Hungary to agree to grant Košice the same trading privileges as Buda. [ZsO I] nr. 5645; (1404/04/24) - Johannes Goebel sells a house formally purchased by him in Košice from Giovanni for 547 flor. [Kassa], 298 nr. 5676.

<sup>1293</sup> [ZsO I] nr. 5645

<sup>1294</sup> (1394/03/09) Giovanni owed 38 gold florins, two bolts of cloth, 100 measures of wheat, and 4 cows from Junta and Jacobo Gallicus – two other Italian merchants in Košice. [Kassa], 53 nr. 181; (1397/08/27) Johannes Gallicus – most likely to be identified with Giovanni Talenti, owed a certain Stephano 36 fl. and 16 rolls of cloth. [Kassa], 124 nr. 1967.

<sup>1295</sup> Arany, *Florentines*, 127.



chamber in 1384, and later collector of *lucrum camerae* in 1392.<sup>1296</sup> The brothers also continued their involvement in trade, interacting with other Italian merchants, in particular Florentines, who were then present in large numbers in Hungary.<sup>1297</sup>

### **Work at the Krakow Mint and Trade in Hungarian Silver**

The Talenti's interests were not confined to Hungary however, and the brothers were soon engaged in trading cloth and silver across the border.<sup>1298</sup> High quality cloth, was of course a common commercial item which the family had dealt with for a decade, but silver was a more unusual good. As described in Chapter 2, the metal was mined in the nearby region of Upper-Hungary and was particularly valued over the border precious metal-poor Poland. Around 1401, Simon Talenti made his way to Krakow and succeeded in gaining the position of *Monetarius* – mint master, running the royal mint, leveraging his brothers' contacts in Hungary to source reasonably-priced silver, enabling them to turn a profit without devaluing the coins.<sup>1299</sup> A year later, Simon was joined at the mint by a new partner - Andrzej Czarnysza, a prominent Krakow burgher.<sup>1300</sup> At this point, the trail of silver shipped from Hungary can be clearly distinguished. In March of 1403, Andrzej Czarnysza loaned Simon 505 marks in goods and funds in order for the Talenti brothers to purchase Hungarian silver for use at the mint.<sup>1301</sup> While direct written evidence for the Talenti brother's engagement in the silver trade comes only from this date, it had almost certainly started much earlier and is obscured in the sources because of the delicate and possibly illegal nature of such transactions. Precious metals such as gold and silver, and after 1405, also copper, were permitted to be exported from the country only with the King's permission. When such resources were traded, the transactions were almost never officially recorded.<sup>1302</sup> The 1403 record, is therefore a highly unusual and valuable source. However useful to scholars, the transaction itself ran into some difficulties,

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<sup>1296</sup> Arany, *Florentines*, 237.

<sup>1297</sup> In 1388, the Florentine *Signoria* wrote a letter to Nicholas Gara on behalf of Giovanni Tosinchi, an important Florentine merchant in Hungary, encouraging him to assist in the recovery of funds which Tosinchi had laid out for Simone's father but which had never been repaid. Arany, *Florentines*, 237.

<sup>1298</sup> (1403/03/31) – Simone Talenti sent 505 marks worth of cloth to Andree Czarnissa, citizen of Krakow, in the hands of his brother Giovanni in Košice, to purchase silver for the Krakow mint. [Crac. Cons], 176

<sup>1299</sup> 1.58g coin weight, 0.79 % silver Gumowski, *Dzieje Mennicy*, 48.

<sup>1300</sup> For more on the life and career of Andrzej Czarnysza, see: Marcin Starzyński, "Andrzej Czarnysza († 1416) i jego autograf [Andrzej Czarnysza († 1416) and his autograph]." *Średniowiecze Polskie i Powszechne* 6 (2014):85-92.

<sup>1301</sup> [Itali] nr. 12

<sup>1302</sup> Carter, *Trade*, 111-2.

as Simon had trouble paying Andrzej back, as a court case held in Košice three years later reveals.<sup>1303</sup>

The problem went beyond the profit margin of the two mint masters themselves, as a note left in the Krakow notarial records reveals. In the same year, 1406, King Władysław Jagiełło posed a question to the City Council asking for advice on how to deal with the sudden lack of coins coming from the mint. As described in Chapter 2, the council replied that the mint itself was in working order but the bullion required for coins was being stopped from crossing the Hungarian border by the machinations of Marcus of Nuremberg. Marcus, who was head of all Hungarian mining chambers, and held a monopoly on the kingdom's silver supply, was refusing to sell bullion to Polish merchants at anything but ruinous rates, and for this reason, the production of quality coins had become prohibitively expensive.<sup>1304</sup> Seeing no expectation of profit, Simone left the position of mint master in Krakow and with this, the brothers appear to have abandoned their interests in Poland altogether.<sup>1305</sup>

The Talenti brothers, attempt to turn a profit by supplying cheap bullion to the Polish mint was doomed to failure, as with the arrival of Marcus of Nuremberg, they appear to have lost control over their source of silver in Hungary. Without a reliable source of affordable bullion, it was impossible for a mint master to turn a fair profit. Since Poland entirely lacked its own precious metal resources, the Talenti brothers were out of luck. Giving up on establishing a presence in Poland, Simone and Thalemtis moved to Pest while Giovanni Talenti disappears from the sources again after 1406, either dying or returning to Italy.<sup>1306</sup> Simone meanwhile married, and had a daughter named Margaretha, who after her father and uncle Thalemtis's death's inherited their house in Pest and lived there with her husband Stephanus.<sup>1307</sup> This Italian family thus chose to make Hungary their permanent home leaving their descendants to blend into the general historical record.

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<sup>1303</sup> [ZsO] II nr. 4749.

<sup>1304</sup> [CA] 1 nr 154.; Stromer, *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz*, Vol 1, 147-9.; Stromer, "Nürnberger Unternehmer," 654.

<sup>1305</sup> Arany, "Florentines," 37.

<sup>1306</sup> Simone Talenti appears as a citizen of Pest in 1424. Arany, "Florentines," 237.

<sup>1307</sup> (1424/04/19) [ZsO] II XI nr 452.

### 4.2.3 Antonio di Giovanni di ser Matteo of Florence (1410-1455) - The Wily Entrepreneur and Permanent Resident

Antonio di Giovanni di ser Matteo was born in Florence in 1395 into a well-off merchant family, the youngest of six brothers.<sup>1308</sup> The sons of Giovanni di ser Matteo are a prime example of the type of entrepreneurial men produced by the bubbling broth of early fifteenth century Florence. Fueled by wealth accumulated during the previous century, and boiling over with political intrigue and new Renaissance ideas, Florence during this period sent out waves of its citizens into the wider commercial world. Giovanni di ser Matteo, the father, appears to have died before his sons reached adulthood, but left his family in good enough financial shape to permit all the boys to attend school, and later have some means with which to set up in business.<sup>1309</sup> The family home was located in the District of Santa Croce near the Church of S. Piero Maggiore on Via Fiesole in Florence.<sup>1310</sup> They also had some landed property in Borgo San Lorenzo, located about 30km north of Florence near the Mugello region, the heartland of the Medici family.<sup>1311</sup> The family loyalties however, would swing over the years to land heavily into the opposing Albizzi camp, a move for which Michele di Giovanni di ser Matteo would eventually pay with his life.

<sup>1308</sup> Some specific research has been done into Antonio and the di ser Matteo family, more so than any other group of Italians associated with Poland. However, due to incomplete knowledge of the sources, many errors about them have been perpetuated in the literature. The most enduring of these, is the confusion over the family's lack of a proper cognomen. Jan Ptaśnik erroneously labeled the family Ricci, due to a Venetian document from 1430 where Antonio was called Antonius Iohannis de Rizii. Kurt Weissen has located another document from the Florentine Mercanzia Court where Antonio is referred to as Antonio di Giovanni di ser Matteo di Paolo Ricchi, the family's ancestral name may then have been Ricchi, but apart from these two documents they never used it, instead remaining simply di ser Matteo, and I therefore do not reproduce it here. The family name has similarly also been mistakenly written as Zane, due to another Venetian document from 1431 where Antonio was called Anthonio de Zuane. It is clear in both cases that the documents refer to Antonio di Giovanni di ser Matteo; but the cognomen, perhaps due to scribal error, was recorded incorrectly or recorded with some other obscure family connection. ASF, Catasto, 80 fol. 217r. [Itali] nr 62, nr 63; Ptaśnik, *Kultura Włoska*, 8; Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 230-1; Przyczynek Jurek, "Do życiorysu żupnika Antoniego z Florencji [The Biography of the Zupparius Antonio of Florence]," *Teki Krakowskie* 5 (1997): 47-52; Daniels, "A Donatello for Rome," 1-18; Bettarini, "The new frontier," <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/264> Accessed December 20th 2019

<sup>1309</sup> Giovanni di ser Matteo was still alive in 1399, when he sent a letter from Florence to Pisa to Manno d'Albizo Degli Agli, the factor and later partner in the Pisan firm of Salvestro Balducci. The letter is today preserved in the Datini archive. (1399/10/01) ASPo, *Datini*, segnatrurabusta 495, inserto 10, codice 401758

<sup>1310</sup> The designers of the 1427 Catasto, after some deliberations, determined that all tax returns should be made according to the quartiere and gonfalone in which an individual and their family had traditionally belonged, even should they have changed residences during the course of their lifetime. For this reason, although Michele di ser Matteo and his family were resident in via Fiesole, their portate were always recorded in the Quartiere of Santa Maria Novella, Gonfalone Drago. For more on this issue see Ugo Procacci, *Studio sul Catasto Fiorentino* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki Editore, 1996), 100.

<sup>1311</sup> ASF, Catasto 39, 338v-339r Portate of 1430.

The matriarch of the family, Mona Taddea, raised six sons – Giuliano, Guido, Bernardo, Michele, Leonardo, and Antonio – to adulthood, no mean feat in days riddled with plague outbreaks and the constant threat of war. There is no evidence to indicate any daughters, but they may simply be obscured within the sources.<sup>1312</sup> Each of the brothers sought their own way in the wider world, but only two appear to have achieved long-term success – Bernardo, who became a prosperous trader in Barletta on the Apulian Coast, and more debatably Antonio, who engaged in trade in East Central Europe for nearly thirty years but appears to have barely kept his head above water most of the time.<sup>1313</sup> Of the other brothers, Giuliano, found early success working at the *tavola* of the Medici bank in Florence’s main piazza, but died young, leaving no patrimony behind.<sup>1314</sup> Michele meanwhile, appears to have been the most able and with the core of the family fortune in hand, he moved to Venice where for fifteen years he reigned as an influential merchant, before the biting winds of political change saw him returned

<sup>1312</sup> Giuliano’s birthdate remains unknown, but as he is the first to have identifiable employment it is believed he was also the first born. ASF, Catasto, 80 fol. 217r. Francesco Bettarini has done some research into the di ser Matteo family and their connections with Poland and many of the documents and readings he brings forth in his article are useful. However, there are also a number of glaring errors in his interpretation of the sources and he lacked a large number of sources available from Polish archives that fill out particularly, Antonio’s life abroad. See: Francesco Bettarini, “The new frontier,” <https://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2648#ftn32> Accessed December 18th 2019

<sup>1313</sup> Bernardo, while the most fortunate of the brothers, was not without difficulties as in October of 1434, he was arrested in Puglia and for a time put in prison as a letter from the Florentine Cancellaria protesting his innocence to Queen Joanna II of Naples, and requesting her assistance in his release makes clear. His son, Francesco di Bernardo di Giovanni di Sermattei, however, is the only child of all of the brothers who appears to have continued the family legacy, becoming a prosperous ship Capitan and merchant, making runs on the Flanders route from Porto Pisano in the 1460s and 70s before settling to trade on land in Milan and later Florence in the 1480s. Ironically enough, it was he who was captaining the Medici galley, the San Matteo, in 1473 that was attached by the pirate corsair Paul Beneke, that saw the Last Judgement by Memling end up in Gdańsk. Tobias Daniels and Arnold Esch identify Lodovicho di ser Ruberto di Giovanni Sermattei and his son Isdraello as members of the family lineage, but given that there is no record of a Ruberto in the family, I find this identification suspect. ASF, Signori, Missive, 1 Cancelleria 34, fol. 95r–v see: Tobias Daniels and Arnold Esch, “A Donatello for Rome, a Memling for Florence. The maritime transports of the Sermattei of Florence,” *Renaissance Studies* (2016):4, 11–16.

<sup>1314</sup> Giuliano worked as a clerk at the Florence *tavola* – exchange table, of the Medici bank. During those years his pay gradually increased: 1401 = 48fl, 1402 = 65fl, 1403 = 80fl, 1406 = 100fl = in charge of the *tavola* in the Mercato Nuovo in Florence. In 1407 his salary was 200fl and he had been bumped up to Partner. In 1408, he was awarded a percentage of 1/7th of the profits from the Florence bank, but he soon disappears from the sources, appearing for the last time in 1409, when he presumably died. Interestingly, the scale of salaries is similar to that of Francesco Datini; but the Medici were more generous with profit sharing at the partner level. It remained rare though, for a factor to rise to be a full Partner. Giuliano appears to have invested at least some of his earnings in credit on the Florentine Monte – the Republic’s financed public debt, as credits owed to him were inherited by his brother Michele and appear on his Catasto records in 1427 and 1430. Before joining the Medici bank there is evidence that he was active in Bologna as a letter addressed to him by Bellincioni Andrea survives among the Datini correspondence. ASF, MAP, filza 153, no 1 fol 74; Roover, *The rise*, 44–5, 377.; ASF, Catasto, 80 fol. 217r. (1427); ASF, 1430 – Catasto 361, 364v (1430); busta 646, inserto 6, codice 507875. <http://datini.archiviodistato.prato.it/la-ricerca/scheda/ASPO00053856/bellincioni-andrea-giuliano-giovanni-sermatteo?index=1&pageName=archivio&startPage=0&query=&jsonVal=%7B%22jsonVal%22%3A%7B%22startDate%22%3A%22%2C%22endDate%22%3A%22%22%2C%22fieldDate%22%3A%22dataNormal%22%2C%22fondaco%22%3A%22FIRENZE%22%2C%22mittente%22%3A%22BELLINCIONI+ANDREA%22%7D%7D&orderBy=&orderType=asc>

to Florence in chains for execution. The other three, Leonardo, Guido and Antonio, all made their way over time to Poland. Leonardo worked for a stint as a papal collector for Pope/Antipope John XXIII, before assisting his brother Antonio in managing the Krakow salt mines, while Guido traveled to Poland to assist his brothers, where he met both success and failure.<sup>1315</sup>

Antonio, while the youngest of the tribe, appears to have been most adventuresome. While still a very young man, he set his sights on making his fortune in East Central Europe, appearing for the first time in the records in 1410, having received permission from King Wenceslaus IV of Bohemia to settle in Wrocław.<sup>1316</sup> How Antonio became aware of opportunities in the region is an interesting question, and one that revolves around the family's larger interests. While originally from Florence, the center of the family's mercantile operations had shifted to Venice in the wake of Michele di ser Matteo's transfer there in 1405.<sup>1317</sup> This was not an uncommon thing for the time, as Venice offered many opportunities, and a large group of Florentine expats had by now taken up residence in the city.<sup>1318</sup> Venice was the center of overseas trade during this period, and while their main focus was the Mediterranean, they had connections ranging from the Far East to the North African coast, the British Isles, and across the Alps into the German Lands, making it a prime spot from which to conduct business. Making a successful go of it in Venice was not easy however, as many restrictions applied to non-Venetian merchants. Nevertheless, Michele di ser Matteo rose throughout the first decades of the fifteenth century to be one of the most respected Florentine tradesmen in the city, while retaining strong political ties to his home commune.<sup>1319</sup> From his 1427 Catasto tax declaration, it appears that Michele was primarily involved in the trade of luxury silk cloth produced in

<sup>1315</sup> Leonardo worked as a papal collector in Poland between 1414-15. (1414/03/16) [Theiner] II , nr 12, (1414/04/16) nr 13; (1415/05/12) [Bresbook 6] pg 353 nr. 52

<sup>1316</sup> *Codex diplomaticus Silesiae 20 Schlesiens Bergbau Und Hüttenwesen. Urkunden, 1136-1528*, ed. Conrad Wutke (Wrocław: Max, 1900), 87.

<sup>1317</sup> MICHAEL QD IOHANNIS SER MATHEI, Cives Veneciarum, <http://www.civesveneciarum.net/dettaglio.php?id=2522>, versione 56/2017-02-01 Accessed September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2019

<sup>1318</sup> For more on this issue see: Paula C. Clarke, "The Identity of the Expatriot: Florentines in Venice in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries." in *Society and Individual in Renaissance Florence*, ed. William J. Connell (Berkeley: Univ of California Press, 2002), 384-408; Sergio Tognetti, "I mercanti-banchieri fiorentini e il ruolo di Venezia come piazza finanziaria europea nel tardo Medioevo," *Archivio Storico Italiano* 107 (1999): 351-356.

<sup>1319</sup> Michele di Giovanni di ser Matteo was elected *gonfalone di compagnie* in 1420 in the first month, 1422 in the 5<sup>th</sup> month, in 1429 the fifth month, *gonfalone* in 1424 in the 9<sup>th</sup> month, one of the *buonumomini* in 1428. In 1423 Michele hosted Rinaldo degli Albizzi, the Florentine ambassador and political magnate at his home in Venice, as he treated on behalf of Florence with the Venetian Republic. Giovanni Ciappelli, "I Castellani di Firenze: dall'estremismo Oligarchico all'assenza Politica (secoli XIV-XV)," *Archivio Storico Italiano* 149, no. 1 (547) (1991): 86-88; Rinaldo Albizzi, *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi per il Comune di Firenze: dal Mcccxcix al Mccccxxiii* Vol 1 (Florence: M. Cellini, 1867), 354. [https://archive.org/details/bub\\_gb\\_NMDydfDV2JcC/page/n417](https://archive.org/details/bub_gb_NMDydfDV2JcC/page/n417)

Florence, but this may reflect only later developments.<sup>1320</sup> In any event, Michele's prominent position in Venice meant that the rest of the family orbited around the lagoon, each promoting the family business in different parts of Europe. Antonio for his part, settled in to work first in Wrocław, and soon after in the kingdom of Poland. Still, while Wrocław did have a reasonable amount of traffic with Venice, it was not the most obvious choice, and those that did trade there, usually had strong ties to the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, which the di ser Matteo family did not. The reason for Antonio's appearance in that particular area can only be traced then to Michele's close association with Neri Tornaquinci, the former head of the Venetian branch of the Medici bank, who became involved with Michele di ser Matteo after his fall from grace in 1406.<sup>1321</sup> In 1409, just prior to his final removal to Poland, Neri Tornaquinci appointed Michele di ser Matteo as his procurator in Venice, being able to substitute him in all legal matters.<sup>1322</sup> Given Neri's strong ties to the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, Pietro Bicherano, and the Amman-Kammerer-Seiler-Grau Company, plus the coincidence of the timing, it appears likely that Antonio arrived in Wrocław upon Neri's recommendation. Interestingly, the family was also connected to another Florentine who ended up working in Poland, although far more tangentially. In 1402, the eldest brother Giuliano di ser Matteo started working as a factor for the *tavola* of the Medici bank in Florence while at just the same moment, a young Albizzo di Talento di Medici, who was 17 at the time, entered the same branch of the family banking business as a *giovane* (clerk).<sup>1323</sup> Albizzo, of whom more is said later in this chapter, was sent to Poland as part of his duties for the first time in 1412 and eventually immigrated there. For a few years then, Giuliano di ser Matteo and Albizzo worked side by side in the piazza, but it is unclear if this connection continued or if Antonio and Albizzo, were surprised to find each other years later in Poland.

Antonio worked for the next ten years in Wrocław as a representative of the family company, shipping goods to and from Venice, taking a house in the city and engaging in work which

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<sup>1320</sup> ASF, *Catasto*, 361, c. 365r. (1430) Francesco Bettarini has helpfully transcribed the names of the large number of silk merchants whom Michele listed as creditors: "The new frontier Iachopo di ser Maso, setaiuolo [...] ; Iachopo Albimari, setaiuolo [...] ; Noferi, setaiuolo [...] ; Meo e Iachopo Arnoldi, setaiuoli ; Matteo ser Dini et chompagnia, setaiuoli [...] ; Lorenzo di Francesco, setaiuolo [...] ; Antonio Choveri, setaiuolo in Firenze [...] ; Zanobi sdi Iachopo, setaiuolo in Firenze [...] ; Bernardo di Betto, setaiuolo ; Zanobi di Iacho, setaiuolo [...] » . Among the bankers : « Christofero d' Andrea de' Priole del banco [...] ; Chelo ser Nardi e chompagnia, banchieri [...] ; Antonio Balbi e fratelli, banchieri [...] » Bettarini, "The new frontier," <https://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2648#ftn32>. Accessed September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2019.

<sup>1321</sup> For more on this incident see Chapter 4.

<sup>1322</sup> (1409/03/12) ASV, Cancelleria inferiore, Notai, 226.

<sup>1323</sup> Albizzo was paid only 25 Florins. He worked in the bank for only two years, Roover saw this as a sign that his work, and that of others dismissed after a short term of service, was unsatisfactory. Roover, *The Rise*, 44, 46.

appears to have been successful and prosperous.<sup>1324</sup> For a time, the family also appears to have made a stab at acting as agents processing *lettere di cambio* from the German Lands to the papal Curia, but this plan fell to pieces when their primary partner, the banker Filippo Gucciozzo di Ricci went bankrupt.<sup>1325</sup>

Things became more complicated in 1418, when King Sigismund of Hungary again decided to attempt to embargo the Venetian Republic, forbidding any merchant resident in his territories, which by this time also included the kingdom of Bohemia wherein lay Wrocław, to trade with the Venetians. The cinching tight of the embargo placed the di ser Matteo brothers in a serious bind, and likely accounts for the fact that in August of that year, the brothers agreed to a splitting of the family patrimony. Michele was left in charge of the bulk of the family assets, while the other four brothers each received 500 fl.<sup>1326</sup> The dissociation was also likely precipitated by Michele having received a special *Intus* privilege from the Venetians, that improved his status as a trader within the lagoon, but also included the provision that he was forbidden to engage in trade with members of the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*.<sup>1327</sup> In coming years, Michele would work around this prohibition by using his brother Antonio as an intermediary. In 1419 for example, Michael received 250 ducats from Jeronimo Paruta, money which Beda [Piero Bede] of Wrocław had instructed him to hand over as the 250 ducats had been given to him [presumably in Wrocław] by Antonio in a letter of exchange to be sent to Michael in Venice.<sup>1328</sup> The Paruta brothers Marco, Jeronimo, and Bartolomeo were merchants, originally from Lucca, who had settled in Venice, and who worked with members of the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* to move shipments through Wrocław from at least 1394.<sup>1329</sup> Interestingly, the Paruta appear also to have been in close connection with the Bicherano, as in 1410, a certain Ambrosio Paruta was named Francesco Bicherano's procurator in Tana and in 1412 helped him recover a Tartar slave who had run away in that same city.<sup>1330</sup>

<sup>1324</sup> The house was located on St. Adelbert street. [Itali] nr 52; [Bresbook 6], 350 (1413/05/18), 352 (1413/09/05), 353 (1415/05/12); ASV, Cancelleria inferiore, Notai, 228, fol. 87 (1419/03/15); [RI XI/1] nr 4062 (1420/03/16); [Bresbook 7], 344-5 (1421/03/04), 347 (1421/10/16), 347 (1421/11/13).

<sup>1325</sup> Kurt Weissen, *Die Marktstrategien der florentinischen Banken bei der Kurie*, (Heidelberg: Heidelberg University Press, Forthcoming 2021), 244-7.

<sup>1326</sup> ASV, Cancelleria inferiore, Notai, 228 fol. 432-5 (Venetia de Angeletto)

<sup>1327</sup> (1417/10/11) see note 190.

<sup>1328</sup> ASV, Cancelleria Inferiore, Notario 228 - Notario Venetia de Angeletto book 1 (1418)

<sup>1329</sup> [Bresbook 6] nr 14 (1394), nr 18 (1397), nr 22 (1399); Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 226, 394.

<sup>1330</sup> (1410/04/05) ASV, Cancelleria Inferiore, Notario 96 - Notario Griffon Pietro book 2 fol. 67.; ASV, Avogaria di Comun, Raspe 3646, 19, 14 1 2/4/II m. v. Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 405.

Still, even as Michele might have been able to hoodwink the Venetian authorities, Antonio's business trading between Wrocław and Venice was at this point highly illegal under the restrictions imposed by King Sigismund. This point however, did not stop the brothers. Antonio continued to live in Wrocław sending merchandise "over the line" as it were, to his brother in Venice. Such flaunting of the regulations was not uncommon during the period, and accounts in part for why Sigismund's plan eventually failed. Indeed, his own Queen, Barbara of Cilli made attempts to undermine the blockade, seeking to buy gems from the Venetian market.<sup>1331</sup> In 1421 however, Antonio was caught and accused of having traveled to Venice and procured forbidden wares there.<sup>1332</sup> Antonio defended himself, exclaiming that he had no idea that an embargo was in effect and would not have dreamed of disregarding the king's orders and it was instead his envious rivals who were spreading such horrendous rumors about his perfidy. Antonio went on to declare that should he be able to speak before the king, he would explain everything and the entire situation would be resolved and in the end, this appears to be what happened. Antonio somehow managed to clear his name, perhaps in large part due to the fact that the year before he had been named *familiaris* by King Sigismund and so had some connections at court.<sup>1333</sup> Having survived with all limbs intact, Antonio appears to have decided it was best to lay low for a while and so traveled to Rome, engaging in trade there for a few months.<sup>1334</sup> Returning from his trip to the Holy City, Antonio and his brothers apparently decided that it might be best that he removed himself from Wrocław for a time, and focused on developing business in a region which was not currently boycotting the Venetian market. With that, all eyes turned to Poland.

Wrocław and Krakow had of course extremely strong trading ties; and as already discussed, the di ser Matteo family was familiar with a number of Italians already resident in the city. On top of this, Leonardo di ser Matteo had worked between 1414-15 as a papal collector in Poland for Pope/Antipope John XXIII, moving the money to Wrocław where, with Antonio's assistance, it was transferred via *lettere di cambio* to Venice and from there via another exchange to the Roman Curia.<sup>1335</sup> The brothers were thus aware of Poland, and had some familiarity working within the kingdom, so when Antonio moved to Krakow, Leonardo went with him.

<sup>1331</sup> Daniela Dvořáková, "The Economic Background to and the Financial Politics of Queen Barbara of Cilli in Hungary (1406–1438)," In *Money and Finance in Central Europe during the Later Middle Ages* ed. Roman Zaoral, (Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016), 114.

<sup>1332</sup> (1421/03/04) [Bresbook 7], 344-5.

<sup>1333</sup> (1420/03/16) [RI XI/1] nr 4062

<sup>1334</sup> (1421/10/16) [Bresbook 7], 347

<sup>1335</sup> Theiner II nr 12 (1414/03/16), nr 13 (1414/04/16), [Itali] nr. 25 (1414/03/17) [Bresbook 6], 353 (1415/05/12)



The brothers appear to have integrated themselves into the Italian community in the city, although not without some friction, as they were soon embroiled in a court case with Jadwiga, the widow of the recently deceased Bonagiunta, nephew of Pietro Bicherano.<sup>1336</sup> The nature of the dispute is unclear, but it appears likely it involved Bonagiunta's assets, which the di ser Matteo brothers wished to acquire. Still, just a year into their stay they were helping to sign as witnesses to a charter that outlined the payment system for teachers at Krakow University together with Isidoro di Amiono of Milan who assisted Pietro Bicherno as Vice-Zupparius of the Krakow salt mine, and Giovanni di Saccis of Pavia, who was a doctor of medicine.<sup>1337</sup> The fact that the brothers were asked to act as witnesses speaks to their involvement in the circle of Italians who came to work as professors at Krakow University. The circle of Italians in Poland was small and thus intimately acquainted.

Having set down roots in the city, the brothers were excellently placed to take over the role of managing the Krakow salt mines when in the winter of 1424, Pietro Bicherano died, and the position came open.<sup>1338</sup> The job of Zupparius was in theory a highly profitable one, but also potentially perilous. The brothers would come to find this out, for the decision to take over the mines marked the start of their slide into ruin. A hint of the problems to come, appeared with the contract signed by Antonio and Leonardo which required that they deliver 18,500 marks per annum as their rental fee for the mines. Pietro Bicherano had been required to give only 17,000 marks, a sign that the king either did not trust the new Italians, or was in desperate enough need of cash to make a perhaps dangerous bargain with them. The brothers accepted the deal however, using funds no doubt loaned to them from Michele in Venice and they set to work. Where the money came from exactly remains a mystery. While the full amount of the rental fee did not have to be paid upfront, but instead in quarterly installments, that still meant a large amount of capital had to be available to secure the initial bond and pay the installments until the money generated from the sale of salt from the mine could be gathered. It is possible that the di ser Matteo brothers by themselves had enough standing capital to fund the venture, but given Michele di ser Matteo's later tax returns, it would have required most of their resources. It seems more likely then, that the brothers took out a loan and most probably the

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<sup>1336</sup> (1423/02/19) [CA2] nr 191

<sup>1337</sup> [KDUK] I nr 71 pg 143(1422/10/18). For Isidoro see: [SPPP2] nr 1664 (1419/06/25), nr 1665 (1419/06/25); For Giovanni di Saccis see: Krzysztof Ozog, "University Masters at the Royal Court of Hedwig of Anjou and Władysław Jagiełło" in *Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages: A Cultural History : [essays in Honour of Paul W. Knoll]*, eds. Piotr Górecki and Nancy van Deusen (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2009), 154 (1409), [KsProscrKrakow] nr 1127 (1412/08/27) [CA2] nr 105 (1421/05/28).

<sup>1338</sup> (1425/03/04) [Itali] nr 43

loan was taken from Vieri di Vieri Guadagni. Vieri Guadagni, whose life is covered more fully in Chapter 5, was an extremely wealthy Florentine merchant banker with ties to both Adovardo Ghiachinotti, the brother of Neri Tornaquinci, and Michele di ser Matteo. Vieri Guadagni was further, an inner circle member of the Albizzi faction in Florence, as was Michele which may be where their connection originated. However, evidence from 1427 points to a small loan on the books between Vieri and Michele, so they were also involved in crediting activities together.<sup>1339</sup> In fifteenth century Florence, business and politics were nearly always entwined, so this comes as little surprise. Of greater interest however, is the fact that Vieri's banking ledgers demonstrate that he had other ties to Poland beside the di ser Matteo brothers, having offered loans to a number of individual *di Polone*.<sup>1340</sup> Given these facts, it seems likely that a large part of the money invested by Antonio and Leonardo in securing the salt mine contract was borrowed from the Guadagni. However, without access to earlier records from the bank, which do not appear to have survived, this possibility is impossible to prove. In any event, the two di ser Matteo brothers secured the rights of Zupparius over the Krakow mines, and began working to get a return on their investment.

Things appear to have proceeded well for the first few years, and from 1424-1427, Antonio operated as the head Zupparius of both Wieliczka and Bochnia. In early 1427, the Florentine *Signoria* sent a letter of recommendation on behalf of Antonio and Leonardo, praising them for their previous work and encouraging King Władysław Jagiełło to continue to hold them in his favor.<sup>1341</sup> The issuing of such letters of recommendation was a common medieval practice, intended to prove that the individual was respected in his home-country, with no political or financial peccadillos in their past which might make them untrustworthy.<sup>1342</sup> It is difficult to say if it was the letter that made the difference, but in any event, the brothers continued to hold the contract. During his time as Zupparius, Antonio worked with a number of other Italians - first and foremost, his brother Leonardo who served with him at the post until his death, after which Guido, another di ser Matteo brother arrived, filling Leonardo's former place. Together with them, was also Niccolo di Vaggio Mazza Giuseppe, originally a factor working for Michele, he traveled back and forth from Venice assisting in mercantile ventures, before becoming involved directly with the mines. Eventually, Niccolo di Vaggio parted company

<sup>1339</sup> Michele di Giovanni di ser Matteo dna – R 1468 – 5 ASF, Catasto 57, 920r-922v.

<sup>1340</sup> Johannes dominus de Polone - R 117 f.15, Salvestrus dominus de Polone R. 752 f.11. D. 8 ASF, Catasto 57, 920r-922v.

<sup>1341</sup> (1427/02/07) [Itali] nr 46

<sup>1342</sup> More on the use of such letters sent by Italian polities to Poland will be found in Chapter 5.

with the di ser Matteo brothers and began working in Hungary. Niccolo's biography is found further along in this chapter. A certain *Petrus Italicus*, of whom unfortunately nothing more of his background is known but his name, also worked with the brothers as Vice-Zupparius for a number of years.<sup>1343</sup>

Meanwhile, at the same time as the brothers were organizing things at the mines, they were also involved in continual trade activities selling high quality cloth brought from Italy into Krakow. One of these shipments raised the ire of Albizzo di Medici, who was at that time renting the Krakow customs tolls. He accused the two brothers of not paying the proper duties on a large load of cloth they had sold during the St. Stanisław fair and brought them up on charges before the local magistrate.<sup>1344</sup> In the end, it was decided that the brothers had indeed ducked the proper fees and were required to pay. A year later Antonio was back in trouble over another load of textiles, this time accused of seeking to sell the wares to another *hospes*, a merchant who was not a citizen of Krakow.<sup>1345</sup> The prohibition against non-citizens selling wares to each other without the intermediation, and appropriate compensation, of a local merchant, was common practice in most medieval communities. In the case of Krakow however, the regulation had never been made officially part of the city's bylaws until 1426, when Antonio's actions precipitated the change. The worth of the goods Antonio had been seeking to sell must have been considerable; for the City Council to sit up and take such drastic notice of a problem that had likely been going on just under the radar for years prior. Indeed, many of the Krakow City Councilmen, frequently merchants in their own right, had probably benefited on occasion from the lack of clear rulings, but Antonio's actions changed that. Thereafter, the restrictions tightened, and citizenship became a firm requirement for direct exchange within the city. Oddly enough, Antonio did not at this point choose to become a Krakow citizen. Given that it was perfectly possible, even normal, for a long-distance merchant to hold citizen status in multiple towns, and other Italians had previously chosen to become citizens, his decision to forgo becoming one in Krakow is somewhat unaccountable. Perhaps the property requirement was a deterrent, or the taxes to be paid, but this is mere conjecture and the real reason remains a mystery. Instead, Antonio was slapped with a long list of

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<sup>1343</sup> (1432/04/03)]. [SPPP 2] nr 2437, [Itali] nr 69

<sup>1344</sup> (1425/07/19) [SPPP 2] nr 2043 reproduced also in [Itali] nr 44

<sup>1345</sup> (1426/07/09) "*Item das her vorbas mer keyn gewant polnisch noch schöne nicht sneyden sal noch aufmessen mit der elen off keyne qweitbriue keyme menschen...*" [NZPiWMK] nr 19

restrictions issued by the Krakow City Council as to what activities he could and could not engage in within the city.

Firstly, he was required to measure out any spices in small or large amounts with any kind of weight in the public market, so that he could not give out any personal receipts – except for the king’s cook and the queen’s cook if the king or queen requested his wares. Antonio was thus permitted to sell spices to the royal court but then to no one else without paying the weighing fee. Whatever else he might trade in, he was required to use the public town scales. Secondly, Antonio was not permitted to measure out any cloth in ells (79 cm), neither precious nor Flemish cloth. He was further forbidden to give quit receipts apart from the king and then only if the king requested them from him. Should anyone desire a receipt from him for textiles he must go to the main cloth-hall and offer it only there. Should he not follow these restrictions, he would be acting against the city law and the common good, and would be considered a public enemy. Antonio was thus, again restricted from selling larger amounts of cloth without paying the usual measuring tax. Thirdly, Antonio was not allowed to deal in transit trade against the staple rights of the city, apart from what he must send with oxen from the salt mine once a year. Further, within the salt market, he was required to sell as previous Zuppari had done. Antonio again was slapped with the same restrictions as other non-Krakovian merchants, he had to offer any goods he brought into the city for sale at the public market, rather than sending them straight through to some other location - except for salt. Antonio’s rights as Zupparius thus allowed him to control at least the sale of salt from the mines he controlled, but even here, the City Council sought to restrict him, demanding that he follow the prices set by previous Zuppari.

During this period, Antonio was also engaged in another common activity of a wealthy merchant, the granting of short-term loans. While questionably legal if interest was involved, such loans were common as a short-term investment strategy, and helped oil the wheels of commerce. Medieval transactions, particularly long-distance ones, could take years to complete and so capital was often tied up for long stretches at a time. Antonio’s behavior here was thus unremarkable, but does point to him having some extra cash to bargain with.<sup>1346</sup> What we know of Antonio’s financial state comes largely from his brother Michele’s 1427 Catasto tax return, where he recorded that Antonio had taken 4,400 fl of the company’s capital to use for doing business in Poland. Michele explains this business as, “*affare della corte*” - court affairs,

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<sup>1346</sup> (1426/08/24) [SPPP 2] nr 2113.

but does not mention any particular goods which Antonio might have taken to sell. This, together with the fact that Michele complains that, “*molti anni passati*” - many years had passed, since the money had been taken, makes us assume that this 4,400 fl was the original down payment given by Antonio to secure the post of Zupparius in Krakow. More than this, it suggests that, although Antonio had now held the post for almost four years, he had not yet been able or was unwilling to pay back his brother.<sup>1347</sup> At this point, given the profitability of the salt trade, Antonio should have been well on his way to getting a solid return on his investment. Perhaps though, the productivity of the mines was not what it had once been, as in 1428, Antonio made an agreement with King Władysław Jagiełło to open up a new mine shaft at Bochnia – to be named Florencia after his home town.<sup>1348</sup> The opening of a new shaft was an expensive and risky proposition and it would prove Antonio’s undoing. The new shaft cost over 1,000 florin to build and while the eventual investment might have been worth it in the long run, just two years after its initiation, Antonio was forced to sell his concession to a certain Kunczy, a wealthy furrier from Krakow.<sup>1349</sup> A few months prior, Michele had reported on his 1430 Catasto tax return that his brother Antonio was, “*disfato e questo e plobicho e me a disfato del mondo*” – bankrupt as is publicly known to the whole world. Further, Leonardo had died leaving yet further debts with Michele, as had a certain *Simone di Charchovia*.<sup>1350</sup> The outlook on the situation was bleak.

The reasons for Antonio’s sudden slide into insolvency were multiple. First of course, was the ill-timed decision to open up an expensive new working at the Bochnia mine, which ate up ready capital that could only be recouped in the long term. Second, Antonio appears to have begun to involve himself in other Polish mining operations, namely the Ruthenain or “Russian” salt mines located near Przemyśl and Drohobycz, not far from Lviv.<sup>1351</sup> As was discussed in

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<sup>1347</sup> (1427/06/11) *Da Antonio di Giovanni detro in Pollana nella Magna – 817 – e perche affare della corte e chon altri signnori e cchon molti altri el attivi de bicori di molti anni passati chome viporite in formarvi danchi LL uso alparle de sumo gli 400 dg0 che volenturi minitorui molnmeno vaglio oesncho – 400 .....4400 florin.* ASF, Catasto 38 fol, 717r.-722v (1427)

<sup>1348</sup> Długosz, *Historia Poloniae* IV, 351.; Serafino, Nicholas. *Corpus epistularum* 116-7; (1428/09/01) - Charter dealing with Antonio's authorization to build and his rights over the workers at the new Florencia mine shaft [ZDM 7] nr 2024

<sup>1349</sup> (1430/06/12) – Antonio sells the rights to the new Florencia shaft in Bochnia to the furrier Kunczy of Krakow for 1400. ASK, Castr. Crac. 4 fol. 98-9 nr. 648

<sup>1350</sup> (1430/02/10) ASF, Catasto, 39, fol 338V – 339r

<sup>1351</sup> Particularly significant sites were located in Stara Sòl, Jasienica Solna, Baszowa, and Drohobycz itself. Serafino, *Corpus epistularum*, 20-1.

Chapter 2, in 1428 Antonio wrote a letter to the Master of the Teutonic Order, Paul von Rusdorf, stating that he had recently been appointed Zupparius of the salt mines in Ruthenia, and asking Rusdorf to loan him some funds so he could purchase back a salt shipment worth 400-500fl, which had been sent by his predecessor.<sup>1352</sup> The fact that Antonio was here asking for a loan, very likely indicates his failing financial situation. Included in the letter, was the promise that Antonio would repay the money in either Rome, Wrocław or Marienberg; but it is unclear if he would actually have been able to. In order to convince the master of the Order to assist him, Antonio reminded him of his previous close relationship with Marshal Walrabe von Hunsbach, to whom he had loaned money in the past. This fact is extremely interesting, as it indicates one, that Antonio's crediting activities were more extensive than had been previously thought; and two, that Antonio had had extensive dealings with the Teutonic Knights in the past, a very interesting point given that during this period they were the sworn enemies of the kingdom of Poland.<sup>1353</sup> Whether Antonio was able to get the money and the salt shipment he desired is unclear, and the letter remains the only evidence of his involvement with the Teutonic Knights, raising a number of highly interesting questions that without further documentary evidence must remain unanswered. Still, Antonio's involvement with the Ruthenian mines and his pleading letter for a loan, indicate that by late 1428, his resources were becoming spread dangerously thin.

The final nail in the coffin of Antonio's financial state was likely the falling out over a large shipment of goods between him and his business partner, the Wrocław merchant Johannes Bank, in 1429.<sup>1354</sup> Like most merchants of his age, Antonio engaged in more than one type of activity at once and during his tenure as Zupparius, he never ceased to also be a merchant. Despite his transfer to Krakow, he also appears to have retained extremely strong ties with Wrocław. Indeed, Johannes Bank was one of the premier wholesalers of Wrocław with whom Antonio worked closely, even offering him to make use of his house in Wrocław, sending

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<sup>1352</sup> Michalina Duda and Sławomir Józwiak, "Nowa Nieszawa (Dybów) in the late Middle Ages according to new research. The town on the border of countries, cultures and nations," *Klio-Czasopismo Poświęcone Dziejom Polski i Powszechnym* 43.4 (2017): 34-5.

<sup>1353</sup> Kurt Weissen's recent study has brought more of Antonio's connections with the Teutonic Knights to light. In 1411, Antonio, together with Sigismund Poznaw, and with the assistance of the Wrocław merchant Nicholas Bunzalau, transferred money via *lettra di cambio* from Wrocław to the papal Curia for the Procurator the Teutonic Knights, Peter von Wormditt, through the bank of Filippo Gucciozzo di Ricci. The di ser Matteo brothers, had for a time the idea of setting themselves up as purveyors of letters of exchange across Central Eastern Europe, with Antonio installed in Wrocław, Michele in Venice and Antonio di Saluti da Pescia in Prague, but these plans eventually came to naught. Weissen, *Die Marktstrategien der florentinischen*, 245, 331-2.

<sup>1354</sup> [Itali] nr 53 (1429/04/16), 54 (1429/10/19).

goods back and forth to the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* in Venice. The case between the two men regarded a set of stolen documents, debts owed on both sides, and an enormous load of red cochineal dye and vair furs, that were to have been delivered to Venice to be exchanged by Michele for brocades to be sent back to Poland. A first attempt at arbitration was made by the Krakow City Council, but it was unsuccessful, and the case was soon taken to Venice, where Michele became involved in the proceedings. The di ser Matteo brothers fought hard to make their point, that Bank was in the wrong and they owed him nothing, but after two separate trial proceedings, judges moved in favor of Johannes Bank, and the brothers were forced to pay the debt, plus all legal expenses over to Bank.<sup>1355</sup>

The loss in Venice was painful and combined with money invested in the salt mines, nearly debilitating. Still, Antonio and his brothers sought hard to halt the slide of their financial fortunes. As shown above, Antonio reached out for other opportunities and sought to call in loans while Michele resisted mightily in the courts. The number of di ser Matteo brothers to work in Poland also increased, as in the wake of Leonardo's death, another of the brothers – Guido, arrived in Poland, together with a letter of recommendation from the Florentine *Signoria*.<sup>1356</sup> The letter was intended to dispel any doubt about the brother's trustworthiness and financial security in the face of doubt. A few months later another letter arrived in the hand of Niccolo di Vaggio Mazza Giuseppe, a factor of Michele who had worked in Krakow on and off since at least 1427, which recommended him and Guido once more to the Polish Court.<sup>1357</sup> More importantly, the two men arrived with an infusion of cash sent by Michele amounting to 3,120 fl., as a bid to save Antonio and the project from ruin.<sup>1358</sup> Even this effort however, was apparently not enough. Scenting blood in the water, creditors began circling, including the bishop of Wrocław, from whom Antonio had also taken a loan.<sup>1359</sup> By the time

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<sup>1355</sup> This case has been discussed by a number of scholars including: Prasnik, *Kultura*, 81-4; Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 230-4; and Bettarini. In this particular case, the work done by Bettarini on the particulars of the trial is valuable. See: Bettarini, "The new frontier," <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/264> Accessed January 5<sup>th</sup> 2019 (1429/04/16) -The council of Krakow seeks to arbitrate between Antonio and Johannes Bank over his lost Venetian property and goods. [Itali] nr 53 (1429/10/19) - The Council of Venice seeks to arbitrate between Antonio and Johannes Bank over his lost Venetian property and goods and Johannes de Bandessen gives evidence. [Itali] nr 54

<sup>1356</sup> (1429/02/23) [Itali] nr 52

<sup>1357</sup>(1427) – Catasto portata sent in by Niccolo's father, Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe, in Gonfalone Santo Spirito-Drago, in which he states that his son Niccolo, age 27 was then al a cocahvia, working in Krakow. ASF, Catasto 26, f.1083v.; (1429/06/08) ASF, Missive I Cancelleria, XXXII, fol. 80v

<sup>1358</sup>ASF, Catasto, 39, fol. 338v (1430)

<sup>1359</sup> [CodEp III] nr 97 pg 598.

Michele filled out his Catasto tax return in 1430, he had given up on his brother entirely, shamefully admitting his brother's failure and bankruptcy before the whole world, a fact which no doubt diminished Michele's own standing, as so much of medieval trade depended on a reputation for solvency. Henceforth, Michele cut ties with his brothers in Poland, acknowledging Guido's death three years later only by complaining that he'd had to pay his funeral expenses and a 100fl debt on his brother's behalf, as he had otherwise died penniless.<sup>1360</sup>

Michele's abandonment of the project in Poland could not have come at a worse moment for Antonio, because by 1431, the situation with the mines had grown dire. The brothers were unable to make the payments owed to the royal treasury, and in May, the king ordered the Italian community in Krakow arrested as hostages against the money owed. Collective punishment of a group for the behavior of a single individual was a common legal tactic of the era but it is interesting to see it applied here, as it demonstrates that in the eyes at least of the Polish authorities, the diverse Italian inhabitants of Krakow were lumped together as a unit. Antonio promised to somehow procure the needed funds and return to Krakow. In the meantime, Giovanni di Papia, doctor of medicine, Albizzo di Medici, Guido di Giovanni di ser Matteo, brother of Antonio, Paulus Ostrosska, Giovanni di Paravisino of Milan, Niccolo di Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe, Pietro di Giovanni of Florence, Jacobo of Florence, and Margaretha, Antonio's wife, together with their children, stood as guarantors of his debt and punishable by the loss of all their property and imprisonment should he fail to return.<sup>1361</sup> Luckily for everyone, Antonio did return and was able to make the necessary payment. It remains unclear from where Antonio rustled up the money. Perhaps he had some hidden away, was able to call in debts owed, or even took out a loan. Michele had already declared him publicly bankrupt, so it is unlikely that anyone would have been willing to loan to him, so where the cash came from remains a mystery. Money continued to be tight over the next year, but Antonio limped along at the mines and when he was once again about to have difficulty making a payment, he somehow convinced a group of Krakow merchants to back him.<sup>1362</sup> Even

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<sup>1360</sup> ASF, Monte Comune o dell Graticole – copie del Catasto 52, 113r (1433)

<sup>1361</sup> [Itali] nr 67

<sup>1362</sup> (1432/02/08) - *Nicolaus de Tarnawa salis utriusque Zupparius modernus, Jeorgius Kieczerar de Wyeliczka. Andreas Bankel de Wyeliczka, Nicolaus Zawrzikray, Paulus pensator et Andreas Szczypiecz de Wyeliczka* stand surety for Antonio with King Władysław Jagiełło for 200 fl each for money owed. The debts were payable by the feast of St. John. - June 24th - a month and a half later. [SPPP2] nr 2431



this was not enough however, and at some point in 1432, one of the Krakow merchants, Nicholas de Tarnów, took over the post of Zupparius from Antonio.<sup>1363</sup>

In the wake of this defeat, Antonio appears to have withdrawn from Poland and instead sought favor with King Sigismund of Hungary. Antonio had been named *familiaris* already by the monarch back in 1420, and so he must have had hopes of a warm reception. Meeting with Sigismund meant a return to Italy; as the king was at that moment just returning from being crowned king of Italy with the iron crown of the Lombards in Milan. Antonio caught up with him in Siena and by some means or other, charmed him so that he was once again granted *familiaris* status in the fall of 1432.<sup>1364</sup> He was then further empowered by King Sigismund to take reprisals against citizens of Poland, likely against some who owed him considerable debts.<sup>1365</sup> Indeed, Antonio's connection to the Hungarian king appears to have been quite close and extremely beneficial for a few years later, King Sigismund would write to the City Councilors of Wrocław, that Antonio should be granted freedom from his debts.<sup>1366</sup> While Antonio was pulling his life and reputation back from the brink at the court of King Sigismund, his brother Michele was falling from grace.

It is unknown if Antonio and Michele ever spoke after the financial disaster. Perhaps Michele would one day have forgiven his brother, but he never got the chance. In the fall of 1433, Michele involved himself in the coup led by the Albizzi that kicked the Medici and their supporters out of Florence. A year later however, the tide had turned, and the Medici were able to make a comeback. Returning in triumph to Florence, Cosimo di Medici exiled everyone who had been involved in the original plot. Among those exiled, were of course the Albizzi, but also the entire Guadagni clan.<sup>1367</sup> Strangely enough, Michele di ser Matteo was not among those included in the initial purge, and was instead condemned only in 1435, together with over a dozen others for reasons whose precise nature remain unclear. Michele was constrained by the *Balia* to live in the city of Venzona in Frigoli (Venzona) a town located on the trade route

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<sup>1363</sup> Nicolo di Vaggio Mazza Giuseppe remained employed at the mines as Vice-Zupparius even under the new Zupparius Nicholas di Tarnow and from this point forward, cut most of his ties with the di ser Matteo family. (1434/05/28-1434/06/30) [SPPP7] nr 1304-1332

<sup>1364</sup> (1432/09/20) [RI XI/2] nr 9252

<sup>1365</sup> (1432/10/08) [RI XI/2] nr 9270

<sup>1366</sup> (1437/02/04) [RI XI/2] nr 11659

<sup>1367</sup> For a list of those punished or exiled by the *Balia* of 1434 see: Dale V. Kent, *The rise of the Medici: Faction in Florence, 1426-1434*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), appendix 2. For a more complete listing on banished individuals see: Alison Brown, "Insiders and Outsiders," In *Society and Individual in Renaissance Florence*, ed. William J. Connell (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 345-50, appendix 1 and 2.

connecting the Villach pass with Udine and Venice. This was not a horrible location considering his line of work, but still difficult, it appears, to endure.<sup>1368</sup> Seemingly unable to bear the rhythms of small town life and likely wishing to return to his family and business in Venice, Michele soon broke his confinements and traveled to the Lagoon City. The Florentine government was soon made aware of his movements however, and on June 30<sup>th</sup> 1436 they sent an ambassador to Venice to demand Michele's immediate arrest and extradition back to Florence. Michele had been declared a rebel by the Florentine State, a capital offense.<sup>1369</sup> As Venetian laws included the provision that all those declared as rebels had to be handed over to their accusers, not even Michele's Venetian citizenship could save him. Together with three other men who had also broken their confinements and come to Venice, Michele was hauled back to Florence, the home he had left some thirty years before. The next day, without a trial, Michele was taken before the door of the *palazzo* of the *Capitano del Popolo* and his head was chopped off.<sup>1370</sup> By the autumn of 1436, the network of the di ser Matteo family lay in ruins. Four of the six brothers were dead, one of them in ignominy. Michele's ignominious death meant that Antonio had lost his strongest connection in Venice and a return to Florence was now rendered nearly impossible. The families of traitors were not looked upon kindly by the Republic. Antonio's brother, Bernardo, still lived, and he appears to have continued his work in Barletta, raising a family and living out his life there; but everyone else was gone. Antonio thus chose to remain in East Central Europe, as far as is known, never returning to the city of his birth. Instead, he sought to make a comeback first in Krakow and then later in Wrocław.

As things were falling apart for Michele, Antonio had set about making a surprisingly successful turnaround in his career. Having spent some time abroad in the company of King Sigismund, Antonio chose to return to Krakow, seeking to take up where he had left off, having somehow raised enough money to make this possible. It is again unclear where Antonio got his money from. Presumably with King Sigismund's backing, he was able to call in debts of his own and so rebuild. In any event, in the fall of 1434, Antonio returned to Krakow and the role of Zupparius. More ambitious than ever, he arranged to become manager of not only the

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<sup>1368</sup> Brown, "Insiders and Outsiders," 345-50, Appendix 2.

<sup>1369</sup> The name of the ambassador was Lodovico di Cecce di Verrazzano. The other men also arrested and taken from Venice were: ser Antonio di Niccolò dell'Ancisa, Zanobio di Adoardo Belfredelli and Cosimo do Niccolò Barbadoro.

<sup>1370</sup> Francesco Rinuccini, *Ricordi storici di Filippo di Cino Rinuccini dal 1289 al 1460 colla continuazione di Alamanno e Neri suoi figli fino al 1506* (Florence: Dalla Stamperia Piatti, 1840), LXXII. and Giovanni Cavalcanti, *Istorie Fiorentine scritte da Giovanni Calvacanti* (Florence: Tipographia all' insegna di Dante, 1838), 627-8.

Krakow salt mines but the Ruthenian mines as well, for a term of six full years.<sup>1371</sup> Key to this venture was Antonio's new partner - Nicholas Serafino. Without Serafino's backing, Antonio would have had no chance at becoming Zupparius once more, considering his previous failures as well as the fact that the appointment charter makes clear that he still owed King Władysław Jagiełło 1,500 Hufl, which Antonio promised to pay.<sup>1372</sup> Nicholas Serafino was a Krakow burgher of Italian descent. Despite considerable effort by scholars, the story of his family origins has remained obscure, but it seems clear that he was at least a second generation immigrant to Poland, and yet was still able to correspond in Italian.<sup>1373</sup> It is unclear how the two men first met or chose to become partners. Perhaps Nicholas wished to learn from Antonio's previous experience as Zupparius, if this was the case, Nicholas certainly learned his lessons well. After the original lease ran out in 1440, Nicholas would continue to operate the Ruthenian mines until 1440, when they were acquired by the Duchy of Zator, and the Krakow salt mines until his death in 1459.<sup>1374</sup> Antonio however, does not appear to have been able to live up to his end of the deal, as only a year after he and Nicholas Serafino had agreed to rent the mines together, Antonio was once more mired in debts he was unable to pay. Apparently, Antonio had been continuing his work as a merchant and had a load of goods stored at *Nova Civitate Stiriensi* (Wiener Neustadt), along the route between Venice and Wrocław.<sup>1375</sup> Aware of this, the Krakow City Council ordered that these goods be sequestered, in order to pay off some of Antonio's debts. The order recorded Antonio as Zupparius, but this is the last point where he appears with that title, and presumably he was stripped of it in the wake of this latest fiscal disaster.<sup>1376</sup> All trace of Antonio then disappears from the record for two years, only to have him pop up in Wrocław, with an order from King Sigismund requiring the merchants of Wrocław to forgive him any old debts.<sup>1377</sup> Faced again with financial

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<sup>1371</sup> (1434/10/25) - Together with Nicholas Serafino named Zupparius of all the salt mines Krakow and Russian, for a 6 year lease. [KDMP] IV nr 1312 pg 293-296, [Itali] nr 72

<sup>1372</sup> [MDK] IV nr. 1012 pg. 293-6

<sup>1373</sup> 46 letters written by Serafino have been preserved, one of which was written in Italian. He was also closely connected to a number of other Italian immigrants to Poland but his exact connection to the peninsula remains a mystery. Serafino, *Corpus epistularum*, 10-21.

<sup>1374</sup> Jacek Wiesiołowski, „Z korespondencji prywatnej pierwszej połowy XV wieku.” [Private Correspondence from the First Half of the Fifteenth Century],” *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* 33 (1988):230-1.

<sup>1375</sup> Bettarini incorrectly identifies this city as Gorizia. Bettarini, “The new frontier,” <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/264>

<sup>1376</sup> (1435/10/19) [Itali] nr 74

<sup>1377</sup> (1437/02/04) [RI XI/2] nr 11659.

difficulties, Antonio appears to have run to his old protector, King Sigismund, and convinced him somehow once again to offer him support.

At this point, Antonio abandoned the Kingdom of Poland for good, and instead resettled in Wrocław, where he was a citizen of the city, and now became a member of the City Council.<sup>1378</sup> Antonio's choice to move back to Wrocław is not really a surprising one. Not only was it under the sovereign hand of his supporter, King Sigismund, but Wrocław had been his first home in the region, he had lived there for ten years, and had property in the city, while in Krakow he had never taken on citizenship nor purchased a home as far as we know. He had also kept strong social ties with Wrocław, even during his sojourn in Poland he had kept in close contact with the merchants of the city. Back in 1427, he had even written a letter reporting to them regarding a recent meeting he had had with King Władysław Jagiełło. In this letter, he discussed his thoughts on the ongoing turmoil in Silesia and promised to do all he could to turn the king's favor towards Wrocław and its inhabitants in future meetings, demonstrating that his ties of loyalty remained there.<sup>1379</sup> Finally, Antonio had sent his wife Margaretha back to Wrocław in 1432, where she nominated a local merchant as her procurator in all legal matters.<sup>1380</sup> At one point, Margaretha had lived with Antonio in Krakow, but the decision for her to move back likely had to do with not wishing to leave her as a possible hostage to fortune, as she had been among those in the Italian community held collectively responsible to King Władysław Jagiełło in the face of Antonio's previous financial difficulties. Margaretha had moved by to Wrocław directly after this incident and the couple's children presumably went with their mother, and so grew up in Silesia. Given the subsequent fate of Antonio's fortunes in Poland, this appears to have been a wise choice. The probable reason for Antonio's original exit from the city was also now a non-factor, as King Sigismund had at last given up on his plan to embargo the Venetians and so trade between the state of the Holy Roman Empire and the lagoon was once again flowing. It is unclear whether Antonio returned to the same type of trade, since his main contact in Venice, his brother Michele, was now dead, but it seems likely. Antonio thus remained in Wrocław for the rest of his life, continuing to trade between Poland, Silesia, and the Italian Peninsula.

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<sup>1378</sup> (1441/01/19) [Silesia15] nr 80 pg 80

<sup>1379</sup> (1427/04/02) Tomasz Jurek, "Przyczynek do życiorysu żupnika Antoniego z Florencji," *Teki Krakowskie* 5 (1997): 47–52.

<sup>1380</sup> The man's name was Johannes Swedniczer (1432/08/08) [Itali] nr 70

Antonio's removal to Wrocław however, even with the backing of King Sigismund, does not appear to have kept him, or his family, out of trouble. Antonio continued to accumulate debts, finding himself in 1439 in hot water with both the Wrocław City Council and King Sigismund.<sup>1381</sup> A brief mention in the city books, informs us that his wife Margaretha was imprisoned for a short time that same year, implying that the kernel of the issue was likely yet more of Antonio's unpaid IOU's.<sup>1382</sup> Two years later however, Antonio was amazingly, despite everything, back on the Wrocław City Council, seemingly fully reformed and helping to determine charges against Nicholaus Gramis, a canon of Wrocław Cathedral and collector of indulgences, who was charged with embezzlement.<sup>1383</sup> That same year however, Antonio found himself once again in hot water, and this time unable to extract himself. He was brought before the City Council on charges and exiled from Wrocław.<sup>1384</sup> At this point, Antonio's story becomes extremely murky, and the loss of Wrocław's notarial books a poignant impediment to understanding his ultimate fate. It is possible, that after 1443, Antonio left East Central Europe completely, or died, as he disappears from the surviving records. One intriguing piece of evidence perhaps places him in the region in 1455 however, and this in a Walenbuch. A Walenbucher was a genre of document, with its origins in the fifteenth century, that proposed to describe the hidden routes and tunnels in Silesia and other German Lands where minable wealth could be found. A section of one such book, uncovered in the Wrocław City Archives, and dated to 1455, proclaims Antonio as its author.<sup>1385</sup> As Antonio was involved in mining activities, it is conceivably possible that he would write such a work, a type of treasure map of the Silesian mountains. If so, he must have truly mastered Silesian German, as that was the language the document was written in. However, given that he would have spent by then over forty years in the area, this is not inconceivable. In any event, while Antonio continued his career in Wrocław for a significant period after leaving Poland, moving forward but always only a few steps ahead of his creditors, he eventually died in obscurity. While the records show

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<sup>1381</sup> (1439) – This document, appearing as set of loose leaves in the notarial register, appears to be a type of draft for a document stating that Antonio had to do something in 4 weeks, then again in another 4 weeks, and again that Antonio should appear before the court. The king charged him with an undisclosed count and something went wrong. He was found to be disobedient; there was a quarrel; and because of this quarrel, he left the City Council and should not come to see them until asked to do so. [Bresbook] 8 pg 441

<sup>1382</sup> [Bresbook] 8, 440

<sup>1383</sup> (1441/04/20) [Silesia15] nr 100 pg 120, (1441/05/22) [Silesia15] nr 118 pg 159, (1441/06/18), [Silesia15] nr 118 pr 163, (1442/05/20) [Silesia15] nr 147 pg 206, (1442/09/02) [Silesia15] nr 155 pg 218, (1442/10/08) [Silesia15] nr 159 pg 223, (1443/08/26) [Silesia15] nr 167 pg 233 (1443/09) [Silesia15] nr 176 pg 246, (1441/09/19) [Silesia15] nr 121 pg 171

<sup>1384</sup> [Brebook] 8, 440

<sup>1385</sup> [Silesia20] nr 198 pg 83; Philippe Braunstein, "Leggende 'Welsche' e itinerari Silesiani: La Prospezione Mineraria nel Quattrocento," Quaderni Storici, Nuova Serie 24, no. 70 (1) (1989): 39-42

that he had a number of children, it is unclear if any of them survived, or if they stayed in East Central Europe, or returned to Italy. With Antonio's passing, the last of the di ser Matteo brothers completed their unsuccessful bid for merchant supremacy in East Central Europe, disappearing into the pages of history.

#### 4.2.4 Niccolo di Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe of Florence (1427 –1434)

##### The Factor

Niccolo di Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe was born in Florence in 1400, the eldest son of Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe.<sup>1386</sup> His father, Vaggio, was a man of some wealth, but one who preferred to focus on increasing his landed holdings rather than the business of trade.<sup>1387</sup> His son Niccolo, or Nicholeto as he was recorded in his father's tax returns, had a more adventurous spirit, and would spend most of his life living abroad. Niccolo no doubt received the standard education in reading, writing and sums for a relatively well-to-do Florentine boy.<sup>1388</sup>

##### Connection to the di ser Matteo Family

At some point in his early twenties, Niccolo became attached to Michele di Giovanni di ser Matteo, a wealthy and well-connected Florentine merchant who had interests in Poland. As described above, Michele, was the patriarch of the di ser Matteo family, which was made up of an impressive clutch of five brothers. Antonio soon saw greater opportunities in Poland, which shifted the family's focus toward Krakow in the early 1420s, culminating in 1425, with the rental of the right to administer the salt mines of Bochnia and Wieliczka from King Władysław Jagiełło, together with his other brother Leonardo.<sup>1389</sup> At this point, Michele was still backing his brothers and relying on Antonio to manage the family company's affairs in the region. It was apparently determined however, that greater assistance was needed, likely at the point where Antonio and Leonardo began executing the extra duties of Zuppari, and Michele

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<sup>1386</sup> Niccolo had a younger sister named Lamarcha born in 1403 and a brother named Giovanni born in 1414. ASF, Catasto 26, fol.1083v, Santo Spirito – Drago (1427)

<sup>1387</sup> In the 1427 Catasto, Vaggio was listed as being 72 years old and in possession of 503 fl. worth of taxable real-estate. Catasto 26, fol.1083v, Santo Spirito – Drago (1427)

<sup>1388</sup> Robert Black, *Education and Society in Florentine Tuscany: Teachers, pupils and schools, c. 1250-1500* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

<sup>1389</sup> Antonio was active in Krakow from at least (1422/10/18) [KDUK] I nr 71 pg 143; (1425/03/04) [Itali] nr 43

sent the young Niccolo to help. Niccolo thus appears on his father's 1427 Catasto tax return in Florence as, "*al a cocahvia*" in Krakow, working for Michele.<sup>1390</sup>

### Transfer to Poland

Over the next five years Niccolo traveled back and forth from Krakow to Venice ferrying goods, primarily rich textiles, which were likely sold to the royal court or wealthy nobles.<sup>1391</sup> He also assisted the other di ser Matteo brothers with their investments in the Krakow salt mines.<sup>1392</sup> Niccolo's way was smoothed during these years through intervention of the Florentine *Signoria* which in 1429, wrote him a letter of recommendation to King Władysław Jagiełło.<sup>1393</sup> Trouble arose however in 1431, when Michele's brothers, Antonio and Leonardo, found themselves in very hot water with the Polish king when they were not able to meet the terms of the contract regarding the Krakow salt mines. As a large percentage of royal revenue came from the mines, the breaking of a contract was not a thing to be taken lightly, and King Władysław Jagiełło chose to place the entire Italian community in Krakow under house arrest and pain of death if Antonio was not able to come up with the remaining money owed.<sup>1394</sup> Antonio was able to come up with the money, but the event had forced him into bankruptcy as his brother Michele's Catasto tax return lamented, his brother Antonio's very public bankruptcy. As much of the money Antonio had used to rent the mines had come from the company purse, Michele and his other brothers were hit hard by the loss. The hostages were released however, Niccolo among them, and unperturbed by the turn of events, in 1434 he was to be found working as Vice-Zupparius of the Krakow salt mines, now being managed by the Krakow burgher, Nicholas Tarnów.<sup>1395</sup> Niccolo soon left however, complaining that Nicholas

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<sup>1390</sup> ASF, Catasto 26, fol 1081v-1083v (1427).

<sup>1391</sup> (1431/03/13) Niccolo worked as a factor on behalf of Michele di Giovanni di ser Matteo and Antonio di Giovanni Ser Matteo in Bratislava, between them and Venceslao Venetias and Johannes Bank [Itali] nr 66

<sup>1392</sup> (1430) - Catasto portata of Michele di Giovanni di ser Matteo for the year 1430 relates the fact that Niccolo and Michele's brother, Guido di Giovanni di ser Matteo, had been sent on a trip to Krakow with an additional (369.12.6) 3,120 fl. of investment capital to pay off accumulated debts. ASF, Catasto, 39, fol. 338v (1430).

<sup>1393</sup> (1429/06/08) – A letter of recommendation written by the Florentine Chancellor, Leonardo Bruni, in support of Niccolo and Guido di Giovanni di ser Matteo, as the two came to Poland. ASF, Missive I Cancelleria, XXXII, fol. 80v.

<sup>1394</sup> The Italian community in Krakow including: Niccolo, Giovanni di Papia, Doctor of Medicine, Albizzio di Talento di Medici, Guido di Giovanni di ser Matteo, brother of Leonardo and Antonio di Giovanni di ser Matteo, Paulus Ostrosska, Giovanni di Paravisino of Milan, Pietro di Giovanni of Florence, Jacobo of Florence, and Margaretha, the wife of Antonio di Giovanni di ser Matteo, together with their children, all stood as guarantors for Antonio in his capacity as Zupparius of the Krakow salt mines. Antonio must return and pay the debt owed to King Władysław II Jagiełło, upon pain of loss of all their property and imprisonment for those left in Krakow, should he fail. [Itali] nr 67

<sup>1395</sup> (1434/05/28-1434/06/30) – Niccolo in a long, protracted debate before the court in Krakow with the Krakow Zupparius Nicholas Tarnaw Zupparius over his salary for 14 months of work and other monies owed on a set of notarial registers. [SPPP7] nr 1304-1332; (1434/04/30) –Niccolo working as Vice-Zupparius in Wieliczka is

Tarnów had failed to pay him properly for the time he had served. By this point, Niccolo appears to have decided to cut ties with his former employers. Michele di ser Matteo's 1433 Catasto includes Niccolo under the list of bad debtors, those not expected to repay, stating that "*Nicholo di Vaggio Giuseppe sta a Charchovia e nulla torna majl*," – Niccolo di Vaggio Giuseppe is in Krakow and nothing is coming back.<sup>1396</sup> Niccolo had decided to strike out on his own.

## Move to Hungary

After 1434, Niccolo disappears from the historical records for a time. It is possible that he returned to Venice or to Florence, but this remains unclear. It seems unlikely however, that he would have returned to Italy during this period, because in 1434, the political tides in Florence made an abrupt reversal as the Albizzi faction, of whom Michele di ser Matteo was a key member, were booted from power by the newly resurgent Medici. Michele was declared an enemy of the state and exiled. After breaking the terms of his confinement a few years later, he was captured, brought back to Florence and executed.<sup>1397</sup> Given Niccolo's close connection to Michele, it seems unlikely that he would have chosen this moment to return to his homeland where he might face possible prosecution himself. Niccolo resurfaces however, in 1450, not in Poland this time, but in nearby Hungary, where he served under John Hunyadi and worked briefly as an ambassador for the Hungarian court of Pope Nicholas V.<sup>1398</sup> Niccolo lived in Hungary for the rest of his life, serving in various posts as count of the salt chamber, a position whose duties he would have been familiar with given his past work in Poland, and as mint master in the Transylvanian town of Sibiu.<sup>1399</sup> There, he worked with a fellow Florentine Matthaeus Baldi, and formed a joint company together with *Christophorus de Florentia* and the local judge Oswaldus Wenzel to manage the silver mines at Baia de Arieș and Zlatna.<sup>1400</sup>

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involved in a case with Katherine a woman from Wieliczka, where he brings forward as witnesses Johannes *vicarius de Omnibus Sanctis*. Paulus *Pensatores de Wyelicka*, and Giovanni de Paravisino of Milan. [CA 3] nr 39  
<sup>1396</sup> He owed 79 fl. ASF, Catasto 454, 326r - S. Maria Novella - Vipera (1433)

<sup>1397</sup> Francesco Rinuccini, *Ricordi storici di Filippo di Cino Rinuccini dal 1289 al 1460 colla continuazione di Alamanno e Neri suoi figli fino al 1506* (Florence: Dalla Stamperia Piatti, 1840), LXXII. And Giovanni Cavalcanti, *Istorie Fiorentine scritte da Giovanni Calvacanti*, Florence: Tipographia all' insegna di Dante, 1838.627-8.

<sup>1398</sup> Arany, *Florentines*, 209.; *Scriptores rerum hngaricarum veteres, nunc ac genuini, partim primum...*eds. Johann Georg Schwandtner, and Mátyás Bél (Vienna: impensis I.P. Kravs, 1751), 5.

<sup>1399</sup> Arany, *Florentines*, 209. Gustav Seiwert, *Verein für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde* vol 6. (Kronstadt: Verein, 1863), 167

<sup>1400</sup> Fara posits that Niccolo was in some way related to Matthaeus Baldi, due to his name in the sources at times appearing as 'de Waldo' but this is unlikely to be the case. Matthaeus Baldi is the first known Italian resident in Transylvania, first recorded purchasing a house in Sibiu in 1410. He married Dorothea Goldschmidt, the daughter of a Sibiu burgher. After her death, he married Katharina Hennig, daughter of the greav e iudex regius Johannes



Niccolo died in Hungary at some point before 1464, as a letter arrived from the Florentine *Signoria* in that year, directed to the king of Hungary and the Buda City Council, requesting their assistance in ensuring that Niccolo's heirs were able to collect his patrimony.<sup>1401</sup>

#### 4.2.5 Albizzo di Talento di Medici of Florence (1410-1439) - The Medici Factor

Albizzo di Talento di Medici was born in Florence in 1390, the son of a minor limb of the famous Cafaggiolo branch of the Medici family.<sup>1402</sup> Albizzo was the last of three sons born to Talento di Medici, his elder brothers being Talento and Antonio. The boy's father died at some point before 1409, leaving the boys in the care of their mother.<sup>1403</sup> As the eldest, Talento di Talento took over the majority of the family holdings and the 1427 Florentine Catasto tax records show him to have been a man of limited, but sufficient means.<sup>1404</sup> Albizzo appears to have been closer to his next older brother, Antonio, as the two shared a property in the San Giovanni district in Florence together with Averardo di Medici and Papi di Bartolomeo di Medici as well as a portion of a farm.<sup>1405</sup> Their rural property also abutted that of Averardo di Medici, who at the time was one of the most successful bankers in Florence and cousin to the more famous Giovanni di Bicci di Medici, the patriarch of the Medici bank and the most famous branch of the Medici clan. The close connection between the families would have important consequences for Albizzo's life, eventually leading him to journey across the Alps to reside permanently in Poland.

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(Gyan) Henning di Sibiu, scion of one of the oldest Saxon families in Transylvania. Settling permanently in the region, Matthaeus purchased properties in Abrud and Aiud, villages which lay along the route to the rich mineral mines in the Apuseni Mountains. It is hypothesized that he was related to the brothers Angelo and Onofrio (Nofrus) di Bardo and his son Leonardo (Noffry) di Bardo who were active merchants in Buda during the reign of King Sigismund of Hungary. Verein für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde vol 6. Archiv des Vereins für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde (Kronstadt: Verein, 1863), 167; Andrea Fara, *Economia e Società in Transilvania nel Medioevo (secoli XIV-XVI)* (Rome: nella sede dell'Istituto Palazzo Borromei, 2021), 285-287; Samuel Goldenberg "Notizie del commercio italiano in Transilvania nel secolo XVI," *Archivio Storico Italiano* 121.2 (438 (1963): 257.

<sup>1401</sup> Arany, *Florentines*, 209.

<sup>1402</sup> ASF, Catasto 382, 128r, 765rv San Giovanni – Drago (1430)

<sup>1403</sup> ASF, Arte del Cambio 65, 4v.

<sup>1404</sup> "Talento di Talento di Medici" [http://cds.library.brown.edu/projects/catasto/newsearch/sqlform.php?referred=yes&drilldown=yes&stg\\_id=50009659](http://cds.library.brown.edu/projects/catasto/newsearch/sqlform.php?referred=yes&drilldown=yes&stg_id=50009659) Accessed July 27th, 2020.

<sup>1405</sup> Albizzo and Antonio together owned 1/4th of the building while Averardo di Medici owned 1/2 and Bartolomeo di Medici the final 1/4th. ASF, Catasto 382, 765r San Giovanni – Drago (1430)

While Albizzo appears to have cut ties early with his brother Talento, he and his brother Antonio shared property and registered their Catasto taxes under a single household.<sup>1406</sup> They were not tied physically close however, as seemingly having few possibilities for advancement in Florence, Antonio left to seek a life abroad and spent many years occupied in the Kingdom of Naples, eventually dying in Sicily.<sup>1407</sup> Interestingly, the relating of Antonio's death points to the extent of general contact between members of the Medici family, even while abroad. Antonio had died, soon after leaving his cousin Francesco who was then present in Sicily. Francesco upon hearing the news, took it upon himself to write to Albizzo, asking for permission to execute Antonio's will. Albizzo wrote back, granting him permission and offering the names of five men who could assist in the process. Francesco then related the entire affair to his grandfather Averardo di Medici. This exchange indicates that even while spread across the continent, members of the Medici family were aware of each other's locations and had means of keeping in touch. Such connectivity within a family was not unusual for the time period, as clan ties were amongst the most important social links of the period, with vast ramifications also for business. Nonetheless, this is an interesting case linking Sicily with Florence and Krakow.

Due to the incestuous nature of Italian business operations, many of the younger scions of the Medici clan worked at some point in their career for the family business, and Albizzo was no exception. Having completed his education, he was soon put to work as a factor in the famous bank of Giovanni di Bicci di Medici, working at the *tavola* branch in Florence.<sup>1408</sup> It is likely that he worked there for a number of years before in 1410, at the age of 20, he was sent to Krakow on behalf of the bank on a mission to collect debts owed in the region, most probably those relating to the perfidy of Neri di Cipriano Tornaquinci.<sup>1409</sup> Albizzo was abroad for 21

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<sup>1406</sup> ASF, Catasto 79, 33 (1427) San Giovanni – Drago, ; ASF, Catasto 382, 128r, 765rv (1430) San Giovanni – Drago; ASF, Catasto 474, 48rv (1433) San Giovanni- Drago

<sup>1407</sup> (1433/10/19) - Francesco di Guiliano di Medici sent a letter to his grandfather, Averardo di Medici, from his exile in Venice, telling him that he had heard of Antonio's di Talento di Medici, brother of Albizzo's death from his cousin in Sicily whom Antonio had recently left. Francesco had then written to Albizzo and gotten his consent that Antonio's testament should be carried out and a list of 5 executors were nominated in the will, including Truffa Tommaso della Truffa, Lorenzo de Vopera, factor for Giovanni Abategli, and Nicholao di Salone da Pisso. Averardo asked to notify and oversee the 3 to execute the document as a family favor. ASF, MAP, filza 5, 245.

<sup>1408</sup> The main branch of the Medici bank in Florence was known as the *tavola* (exchange table), distinguishing it from the branch which was attached to the papal curia – the “Rome” branch, which on more than one occasion were simultaneously present in Florence when the Pope visited the city. The first secure evidence of Albizzo working at the *tavola* comes only from 1414, but it seems highly likely that he gained experience there before being sent off to Poland; and that he continued there upon his return to Florence. Roover, *The Rise*, 385.

<sup>1409</sup> The full accounting of which can be read in Chapter 4.

months, traveling to Venice, Vienna, and Krakow, and was paid a salary of 80 fl per year plus 50 fl for traveling expenses and gifts.<sup>1410</sup> Interestingly, nearly half of Albizzo's travel allowance was given to the Bishop of Freising, perhaps as a means of gaining easier access through his territory, which rested on the line between Krakow, Vienna, and the Brenner Pass into Italy, but this is conjecture. During his time in Poland, Albizzo worked closely with Pietro Bicherano, who by that time had consolidated his hold on the Krakow salt mines and who was partially responsible for the debt owed by Neri Tornaquinci. Having spent nearly two months traveling beyond the Alps, Albizzo returned to Florence in 1412, and worked for the next two years in the home branch of the Medici bank.<sup>1411</sup> In 1414 however, he was sent once more out into the field, this time to Wrocław, where he served as an intermediary agent, picking up monies collected from the Bishop of Wrocław and the province of Gniezno, that were owed to the papal coffers.<sup>1412</sup> For these services, Albizzo was again paid an extra sum above his normal salary.<sup>1413</sup>

A major change came in 1416 however, when Albizzo, now 26, decided to give up his life in Florence and instead seek new ventures in Poland. In order to finance his ambitions, Albizzo was forced to sell most of his patrimony.<sup>1414</sup> Luckily, Averardo di Medici was willing to purchase both his urban and rural properties, and Albizzo was left with sufficient capital to make his entry into the merchant elite of Krakow a success. Upon arriving in Poland, he set about acquiring the positions which were the bread and butter of many Italians abroad: customs duties and mining rights. Albizzo first became the *tolneator* of Krakow, in charge of collecting the customs duties. As Krakow was the largest commercial center and wealthiest city in the kingdom, Albizzo no doubt turned a steady profit.<sup>1415</sup> The second venture he became engaged

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<sup>1410</sup> (1410/10-1412/02) ASF, MaP Filza 153, doc. 1, fol. 80rv

<sup>1411</sup> Roover, *The Rise*, 385.

<sup>1412</sup> (1414/09/28) - Conrad, Deacon of Wrocław, along with Franciscus Flosser, cannon of Wrocław, and Maczeus de Lambertis, Archdeacon of Wrocław and long-time collector in Poland, sought to send all of their collected money in one go, rather than piecemeal. They took on the services of the Medici; and Flosser gave their collected money to Albizzo. Johannes XXIII Innocent IV Acta summorum pontificum res gestas bohemicum nr. 997 (1415/10/28) – Pope John XIII requests that monies sent from Wrocław and collected by Matteo di Lamberto of Naples, Archdeacon of Wrocław and papal collector for Poland, be sent through the hands of Albizzo [Itali] nr 88

<sup>1413</sup> (1415/05/08) – Albizzo was paid a further 30 fl by the Medici bank for services rendered ASF, MaP Filza 153, doc. 1, fol. 81r

<sup>1414</sup> [Edler] box 8 card 807

<sup>1415</sup> [SPPP 2] nr 2043

in was to take over the management of the Olkusz lead mine.<sup>1416</sup> As Albizzo took up this post only in 1428, over ten years after having moved to Poland, it is likely that it took him some time to raise the funds to pay the initial rental fee. Here too, Albizzo likely made a tidy profit, as lead was the other major natural resource Poland exported, and Olkusz was the largest mine in the region. In taking up the position of Zupparius, Albizzo was also falling firmly in line with the Italian tradition of obtaining such posts.

Apart from these activities, Albizzo does not appear to have engaged much in trade. It is possible that his work as a merchant has simply not survived in the sources, but the aberration is interesting to note. It may be that he simply disliked involvement in trade, or was otherwise too busy with his other endeavors to make the attempt. The proceeds from his work as tolneator and Zupparius meanwhile, were sufficient to allow him to purchase half of a house located just behind St. Mary's church, the massive edifice which dominated Krakow's central market square. The house must have been a luxurious one, as the other half was owned by Michele, a skilled and prosperous goldsmith.<sup>1417</sup> Still, it seems a bit odd that a no doubt wealthy man, did not choose to take an entire house himself. In fact, the record clearly shows that Albizzo owned more than one property in Krakow, yet the house he abided in, he chose to share.<sup>1418</sup> The answer may lie in that fact that Albizzo never married; and perhaps seeking to avoid the loneliness of a bachelor's household, came to appreciate the companionship of another man. Yet, however cozy the house behind St. Mary's church may have been, Albizzo appears never to have fully abandoned his Mediterranean roots. As evidence of his memory of warmer climes, Albizzo took precautions against the harsh Polish winter by having at least three *lodices* –coverlets and a cloak of *popelicze* - dormouse fur worth an astounding 6 marks, to keep him warm.<sup>1419</sup>

Immediately upon moving to Poland, Albizzo appears to have embedded himself within the local Italian community in Krakow. In 1419 for example, he stood as surety for the immense sum of 100 marks for Isidoro di Amiono of Milan together with Jacobo di Paravisino, another

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<sup>1416</sup> (1428 – 1435) [SPPP 2] nr 2232, nr 2612

<sup>1417</sup> Two of Michael's works survive - one is a chalice inscribed with an inscription on the cup: "*Ave verum corpus Christi natum ex Maria Virgine vere* " and is the first Polish gothic chalice with an architectural theme in its decoration. For more see: Przybyszewski, Bolesław. *Złoty dom królestwa: Studium z dziejów krakowskiego cechu złotniczego od czasu jego powstania (ok. 1370) do połowy XV w* [Gold House of the Kingdom: A study of the history of the Krakow goldsmith's guild from its inception (around 1370) to the mid-15th century] (Warsaw: Akademia Teologii Katolickiej, 1968), 81-3

<sup>1418</sup> (1438/04/25) – Nicholas Bochsinsmeister, the mint master of Krakow required by the court to leave the house owned by Albizzo and pay him for a year's rent. [CA1] nr 33

<sup>1419</sup> (1433/08/28). [CA3] nr 3

Milanese who had lived in Krakow for a decade even before Albizzo's arrival, working as a nuncio for the papal court.<sup>1420</sup> The marks were required, as Isidoro maintained that he was of noble birth while a certain Sbigneus Lapoanowsky disputed the fact.<sup>1421</sup> The reason for this tussle over birth is not recorded, but honor had no doubt been impugned. Isidoro appears to have arrived in Krakow only fairly recently, so in some ways it is surprising that Albizzo appears to have trusted him enough to stake a large sum of money on his claim to nobility. Such a move also flies in the face of what many scholars portray as an adversarial attitude between Italians from various polities abroad. While Milan and Florence might be at war on the peninsula; in Poland, the two men were simply "Italians" in the eyes of the locals, and it was a frequent occurrence to find them working together. Already by the date of the trial however, Isidoro had worked as a Vice-Zupparius in the Krakow salt mines and thus under the direction of the Venetian, Pietro Bicherano. The record is not explicit as to which mine Isidoro helped manage, and it is possible that he was the underling of Pietro Bicherano, who was the head Zupparius of the Krakow salt mine at the time. However, given the circumstances, it seems far more likely that he worked for Albizzo in the Olkusz lead mine. Albizzo, rising to his co-worker's defense, together with a fellow compatriot from Milan, makes sense, and shows the solidarity which Albizzo felt for his fellow Italians, even those who were not from his native Florence. Isidoro remained in Krakow for two years before disappearing from the sources, perhaps choosing to return to Milan.<sup>1422</sup> In the same year that Albizzo defended Isidoro, he stood up for another Italian, acting as a guarantor this time for the Venetian, Antonio Tron.<sup>1423</sup> The Tron family were an ancient noble lineage and among the leading families in Venice, who during just this period were reaching the peak of their influence within the Republic. Antonio Tron appears to have had interests in Eastern Poland and the overland trade from the Italian colonies of the Black Sea coast, as he was engaged in a court case with the Bishop of Lviv.<sup>1424</sup> He was also interested in the Polish salt trade as records indicate he sought to purchase a large stock in 1422.<sup>1425</sup> In that same year, he became a citizen of Krakow.<sup>1426</sup>

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<sup>1420</sup> Jacobus di Paravisino had been a citizen of Krakow since 1408, and worked as a papal nuncio. (1408/12/14) Libri iuris civilis cracoviensis 1392-1506 nr 1963; (1421/07) [Bull 4] nr. 854

<sup>1421</sup> (1419/06/25) [Itali] nr 30

<sup>1422</sup> (1419/06/25 - 1422/10/18) [SPPP] 2 nr 1664; [KDUK] I nr 71 pg 143

<sup>1423</sup> (1419/11/18) [Itali] nr. 31

<sup>1424</sup> (1419/11/18) [Itali] nr. 31

<sup>1425</sup> (1422/05/25) [Itali] nr. 35

<sup>1426</sup> (1422) [LibCiv] 97

Albizzo and Antonio may have gone on to work together, but after receiving the rights of citizenship, Antonio abruptly disappears from the sources. Apart from these two gentlemen, Albizzo also had contact with a certain *Lodovicus Italicus*, of whom the sources reveal frustratingly little apart from the fact that he worked as Vice-Zupparius of the Krakow salt mines between 1424-1425, during which time he and Albizzo had business dealings.<sup>1427</sup> Lastly, given his work as an occasional agent for the Medici bank, Albizzo had extensive contacts with Giacomino Rossi of Genoa, who served as the papal collector for Poland (1426-1434).<sup>1428</sup>

These local Italian ties however, can all be assumed to have been primarily related to business affairs, Isidoro di Amiono operating as a co-worker, Antonio Tron as a partner, and Giacomino Rossi as a banking client. It is obvious from the sources that Albizzo's ties to the Italian community in Krakow went beyond mere business affiliates, as he was named one of the two executors of Giovanni di Saccis, a doctor of medicine from Pavia.<sup>1429</sup> Most telling of all, is the fact that Albizzo appears among the group of Italians who in 1431, stood as hostage guarantors for Antonio di ser Matteo, believing that he would return and pay the large sum of money owed to the king from the Krakow salt mines where he acted as Zupparius.<sup>1430</sup> That Albizzo was a part of this group is surprising, as there are many indications that he and the di ser Matteo brothers did not get along. Albizzo and the brothers had multiple law suits against each other relating to various failures to pay the proper customs tolls, which Albizzo in his role as Tolneator, was responsible for collecting. In one event, a load of fresh ginger was the bone of contention and in another, a large load of precious cloth.<sup>1431</sup> Still, despite any lingering animosity, Albizzo was among those who pledged their fortunes and indeed their lives on the surety of Antonio di ser Matteo's return.

The most unique aspect of Albizzo's life in Poland from a historical perspective, was his continued connection with the Medici Bank, for which more than fifteen years after his removal to Poland, Albizzo remained a faithful agent. The enormity of having an agent of an Italian bank living full time in Poland is covered more deeply in Chapter 3, but to summarize briefly,

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<sup>1427</sup> .(1425/05/03) [SPPP 2] nr. 2039

<sup>1428</sup> For more on Giacomino Rossi see: Kowalski, "Rationes," 61–96.

<sup>1429</sup> (1434/06/09) – Albizzo is named executor of Giovanni di Saccis, doctor of medicine's will, together with *Florentia Bernhardus, magister arcium*. The two further respond that they were not responsible for the sentence of excommunication given by Jacobinus Rubeis, papal collector, for monies owed by Giovanni to pay Peter's penance, as stated by Stanislawo de Grabowa, Albizzo's procurator before the court. [CA3] nr 48

<sup>1430</sup> (1431/06/23) [Itali] nr 67.

<sup>1431</sup> (1424/08/07) [SPPP 2] nr 1986, (1425/07/19) nr 2043

the papacy had expressed a strong desire to secure a banking agent in Poland already in 1338, over a hundred years previously, and it had never come to pass. The reasons for this lack were multiple, but needless to say, the arrival of Albizzo was greeted enthusiastically by both the local clerical establishment and the Curia in Rome. Yet, Albizzo's work for the Medici Bank in Krakow was not everything it might have been. True, he organized a number of transactions, including the large sum of 1,000 florins in 1420 that was transmitted from Poland to the Curia, but even with a direct agent of the bank present, transfers of money from Poland took a long time.<sup>1432</sup> The transfer of the 1,000 fl for example, did not arrive safely in the papal coffers until 1422, a two year delay. The reason for these long delays was the same as always, the significant distance between Rome and Krakow, and the dangers of the road in between that rendered carrying large sums of cash ill-advised. The hope had been, that with a permanent banking agent on the ground, *lettere di cambio* could be used in lieu of cash, thus negating the risk along the road. Unfortunately, the rules of arbitrage still applied, and even with an agent on the scene, the basic fiscal mechanics of long-distance exchange remained in place. Throughout this period, cash inexorably pooled in the southern portions of the continent, Italy and Rome in particular, leaving the northern regions – the German Lands, Scandinavia, and Poland – often cash poor and with a distinct trade imbalance with the south. In other words, Poland had less to offer Italians than they were interested in purchasing; and were thus forced to pay for goods in specie. For a bank, this was a recipe for insolvent disaster. In the normal course of events, Albizzo would accept 1,000 fl in specie in Krakow which he would store in a lock box and credit the amount to his banking account book. He would then write a *lettera di cambio* that would be sent to the Medici branch in Rome requesting that the money be credited to the account of a specific individual, in this case the papal treasury. The Medici branch in Rome, upon receiving and authenticating the *lettere di cambio*, would reach into their own lock box, extract 1,000 fl in specie and hand it over to the papal treasurer, marking the debit in their account books. However, the Medici branches kept around 5% of the money resting in their account books on hand in specie at any given time.<sup>1433</sup> Such a small specie reserve is still common for banks today, as these “stagnant” funds might be otherwise profitably put to use. However, both then and now, such a practice can lead to devastating consequences when bad debts pile up or money is not properly remitted.<sup>1434</sup> In the case of Poland, the second issue was

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<sup>1432</sup> [Theiner] II nr 28.

<sup>1433</sup> The amount of money kept as a reserve fluctuated according to how secure the branch manager was feeling about the overall profitability of the branch, and the liquidity of the local market. Roover, *The Rise*, 149, 228.

<sup>1434</sup> Roover, *The Rise*, 149, 228.

paramount. The hope would be in such cases that a certain amount of debt and credit swapping would occur between the multiple branches of any particular bank, that balanced out credits and debts. Unfortunately, in the case of Poland, while people frequently wished to send money to Rome, they very rarely wished to send it back to Krakow. This imbalance, if left unchecked, resulted in Albizzo having an overflowing lock-box of gold florins which no one wanted to borrow, while the Rome branch would be starving for specie with creditors banging on the door. There was simply not enough exchange to make transactions profitable for the bank, except in special circumstances. There are thus, only a handful of recorded cases where Albizzo wrote out a *lettera di cambio* on the Medici Bank's behalf. It is possible that others have not survived to come down to us, but as it stands, Albizzo did occasionally operate as an agent for the bank, but never as the forerunner of some sort of branch operator, and after his death, no other agent was sent to Poland. It is also important to note that Albizzo dealt solely with ecclesiastical accounts, never private transactions, and the destination was always the same – the papal curia in Rome.<sup>1435</sup> Finally, a ten percent fee was added by the Medici bank on top of this amount to be transferred, in order to pay for the difficulties involved in the exchange. Most of this amount was presumably kept by Albizzo.

By all accounts, it appears that Albizzo never returned to the city of his birth, and while certain members of his family knew how to contact him, others did not. Thus, in 1430, *Guiliomo da Bardo di Medici*, who appears to have been the family member charged with taking care of

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<sup>1435</sup> (1419/12/20) - An old debt owed to the Medici banking house - contracted originally in Florence between Johannes di Medici and the papal camera August 1413 for 1500fl - 500fl were paid back to them, but the remaining 1000 were still outstanding. The papal *Camerarius* thus writes on Dec 20 1419 to the collector in Poland - Petrus Fabiano de Wolfram of Lviv - asking him to use Polish revenues to resolve the debt. A subscript notes that on November 6th 1420, Albicio de Medici picked up the 1000fl in Krakow, resolving the debt with notification of this fact arriving at the Curia over two years later on (1422/06/03). [Theiner II] nr 28; (1422/11/28) - Johannes Saffranecz, Deacon of Krakow Cathedral, asserts that despite what the Cardinal of S. Vito believed, he had in fact paid the amount required to receive his prebendaryship from St. Egedius's Church in Krakow before the date required, and so the subsequent edict of excommunication he had received ought to be lifted. According to Johannes, the money had been handed over to Albicio and Leonardo de Medici to be remitted to Rome, but the transfer appears to have been held up. [Bull 4] nr 1087(1429) – Albizzo, named procurator in Krakow by Jacobinus de Rubeis of Genoa, the papal collector, who further purchases a letter of exchange for 300fl to send his collected Peter's penance from Krakow to Rome via the Medici bank, run by Cosimo and Laurencio di Medici, with a surcharge of 30fl for the service. Kowalski, "Rationes," 77; (1433/11/16) Nicolaus Laszskii Skarbinienensis, Canon of Krakow Cathedral, sends 37 fl. through the hands of Albizzo for the Bishop of Ploc to pay fees owed to the Curia. [Edler] box 8 card 807 (1429) – Albizzo named procurator in Krakow by Jacobinus de Rubeis of Genoa the Papal collector who further purchases a letter of exchange for 300fl to send his collected Peter's pence from Krakow to Rome via the Medici bank run by Cosimo and Laurencio di Medici with a surcharge of 30fl for the service. Kowalski, "Rationes," 77.

(1433/11/16) Nicolaus Laszskii Skarbinienensis, Canon of Krakow Cathedral, sends 37 fl. Through the hands of Albizzo for the bishop of Ploc to pay fees owed to the Curia. [Edler] box 8 card 807



Albizzo and Antonio's property in their absence, turned in Albizzo's Catasto tax report to the Florentine authorities, writing of him that, *si trova in Charchovia*" but "*di anni non ne sentono noveste*" – he is to be found in Krakow, but for years we have heard no news from him.<sup>1436</sup> In 1433, a similar story was told, demonstrating that although he still retained property in the city and *compania* of Florence, he had not returned to even visit it. Instead, Albizzo made a life for himself in Krakow, perhaps he had planned on one day returning to Florence but in 1439, at the age of only 49, he died and was buried in Poland, the only Medici known to have left his bones in Polish soil.<sup>1437</sup>

#### 4.2.6 Rinaldo di Sandro Altoviti – The Young Factor and Family Friend (1427-1430)

Rinaldo di Sandro Altoviti was born in Florence on September 28<sup>th</sup> 1411, the youngest child out of six had by Sandro di Vieri Altoviti.<sup>1438</sup> The Altoviti, were an old *popolani* family, who had risen to prominence in Florence during the thirteenth century. The clan was a large and extended one, with Rinaldo belonging to one of the more prosperous branches.<sup>1439</sup> His father Sandro, was not only a successful merchant, but also a well-connected politician and patriot who served the Florentine *Signoria* in a dizzying number of posts throughout his long career. The family made their home in the Vipera district of the *Gonfalone* Santa Maria Novella, the same as that of the di ser Matteo family.<sup>1440</sup> Having married as his first wife Eletta Albizzi, Sandro remained throughout his life a strong partisan of the Albizzi political faction in Florence and was thus further allied to the di ser Matteo family and the Guadagni family among others.<sup>1441</sup> They were also connected to Leonardo and Martino di Caccia Altoviti. The Altoviti in turn were deeply entwined with Matteo and Filippo Scolari, who during the same period were making names for themselves in Hungary, with Leonardo being made the brother's

<sup>1436</sup> While it was normal for a tax return which was handed in by someone other than the individual concerned to list the messenger, in none of Albizzo and Antonio's reports was this the case. ASF, Catasto 382, 765v (1430); ASF, Catasto 474, fol 48v (1433)

<sup>1437</sup> Crac Acta scabinalia 1419-1446 fol.191.

<sup>1438</sup> ASF, Catasto 38 (1427) Santa Maria Novella – Vipera, fol. 671r-677v; Luigi Passerini *Genealogia e Storia della Famiglia Altoviti*, (Florence: M. Cellini, 1871), table V.

<sup>1439</sup> Prajda, *Network*, 131.

<sup>1440</sup> "Online Catasto of 1427," David Herlihy and Christiane Klapisch-Zuber [http://cds.library.brown.edu/projects/catasto/newsearch/sqlform.php?referred=yes&drilldown=yes&stg\\_id=50004609](http://cds.library.brown.edu/projects/catasto/newsearch/sqlform.php?referred=yes&drilldown=yes&stg_id=50004609) Accessed December 14<sup>th</sup> 2020.

<sup>1441</sup> Sandro married Eletta Albizzi in 1404 and after her death, Margherita Attigianti in 1430 and Tita Dati in 1434. "Altoviti, Sandro" *Treccani Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, accessed October 17th, 2019, [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/sandro-altoviti\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/sandro-altoviti_(Dizionario-Biografico)/)

universal heir in 1412.<sup>1442</sup> This branch of the Altoviti were also strongly linked to the Guadagni, as Matteo di Caccia Altoviti's daughter, Catarina, married Francesco Guadagni in 1420.<sup>1443</sup> While no direct evidence connects Rinaldo with this branch of the Altoviti family or the Scolari in Hungary, given their geographic and personal proximity, it seems likely that they were at a minimum, aware of each other if not active partners. Further research may prove a direct connection. Multiple branches of the Altoviti, through the Scolari and Guadagni, thus had links to Central Eastern Europe.

Rinaldo meanwhile, who would come to spend time in Poland, became involved in trade in the region through his ties to the di ser Matteo family. The link between the di ser Matteo and the family of Sandro Altoviti was a strong one. Not only did they make their homes in the same district and were in the same political camp, but in 1419, Michele di ser Matteo married Sandro's daughter, Francesca.<sup>1444</sup> Given the way Florentine merchants operated, this alliance meant that Rinaldo's father soon became involved in a number of the di ser Matteo brothers' business activities. In 1427, he entered into an *accomandita* partnership with Bernado di ser Matteo, investing 1,000 fl which by 1433 had already increased significantly.<sup>1445</sup> It was further Sandro who in 1433, filed Michele's Catasto tax declaration in Florence, so that he could remain behind in managing affairs in Venice.<sup>1446</sup> That same year, Alessandro, one of Sandro's sons, carried an important letter stating that Michele was officially a citizen of Venice, for inspection by the Florentine officials.<sup>1447</sup> The two families were thus tightly linked, and it comes as no surprise that from a young age, Rinaldo was inducted into the family business and as a part of his duties, worked as a factor in Poland. Rinaldo's education in matters mercantile

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<sup>1442</sup> Prajda, *Network*, 131-5.

<sup>1443</sup> The dowry offered for Catarina's hand was the shockingly high, and technically illegal, amount of 3,300 fl. Prajda, *Network*, 134.

<sup>1444</sup> ASF, Catasto 454 (1433) S. Maria Novella – Vipera, fol. 325v- 326r

<sup>1445</sup> As uncovered by Betterani: In 1427, Michele's Cataso declared that, "Una achomanda mi truovo in Barletta di Pugla nelle mani di Bindaccio di Sandro Altoviti, lire 177 soldi 16 di grossi, e perché sono in molti debitori tristi e vechi stimogli lire 88 di grossi in Barletta. Fiorini 1.000. ASF, *Catasto*, 80, c. 217r. Meanwhile, Sandro's Catasto revealed that, Truovasi chontanti in traficho di Puglia nella chompagnia ghoverna per Michele, suo fratello, prochura detto Bernardo fiorini piccoli 1.000 abita al presente in Puglia a Barletta chon tutta la sua famiglia. ASF, *Catasto*, 365, f. 398r and again Michele's in 1433, "Portato per me, Alamanno di Sandro Altoviti, per sua chommissione. Una chasa a pigione a Barletta per suo abitare e paghane l'anno di pigione duchati dodici. Truovasi in danari chontanti fiorini piccoli milleseicento i quali si trafficha in Puglia, Fiorini 1.600." ASF, *Catasto*, 478, fol. 555r. Betterani, "The new frontier," fn. 33, 67.

<sup>1446</sup> ASF, Catasto 454 (1433) S. Maria Novella – Vipera, fol. 325v- 326r

<sup>1447</sup> ASF, Monte Comune o dell Graticole 52 (1433) S. Maria Novella – Vipera, fol. 114r

started young. He must have been considered responsible, because already at the tender age of 17, he was being sent on important missions.

In 1428 therefore, still a teenager, Rinaldo arrived in Wrocław, before traveling on to Krakow to assist in the transfer of a large shipment of cochineal dye and precious furs arranged by Antonio di ser Matteo to Venice.<sup>1448</sup> However, all did not go as planned, and as discussed previously, the shipment was soon the center of a legal battle between Antonio and his partner, the Warsaw merchant, Johannes Bank. Rinaldo was forced to testify before the Krakow City Council and later in Venice as to his involvement with the matter. Rinaldo testified that, working as Antonio's *famulus* – agent, he had written down precisely the amounts of Cochineal and vair - northern grey squirrel furs, which were to be transported to Venice by Henslinum de Larosa. With Johannes Bank's approval, these goods were to be handed over to Michele di ser Matteo to be sold in exchange for silk and taffeta that was then to be taken back to Wrocław and Krakow to be sold, but contentions arose. When the case could not be decided before the court in Krakow, the combatants took it up in Venice, and Reinaldo was once more called to the stand. During the trial, which pitted Michele di ser Matteo against Johannes Bank, Rinaldo testified among other things that Antonio di ser Matteo was good for 1,500 gold ducats, although these would have to be paid in salt rather than in coin, which while not an Italian custom, was a common and legal form of tender in Poland.<sup>1449</sup> That same year, Rinaldo delivered Michele's Catasto tax return to the Florentine authorities.<sup>1450</sup> After this however, Rinaldo fades from Polish records and it appears likely that he either stayed on in Florence or returned to Venice. The Catasto return Rinaldo had delivered, declared Antonio utterly bankrupt and no longer associated with Michele, so Rinaldo had no reason to go back to Poland. He might have gone on to a productive career following in his father Sandro's or his uncle Michele's footsteps, but unfortunately for him, just three years later his world would be turned entirely upside-down as the political faction his family backed was deposed from power. Rinaldo's father Sandro was neck deep in the conspiracy behind the Balia of 1433, that saw the Albizzi family take the reigns in Florentine politics and banish the Medici and their supporters from the city. Unfortunately for them however, their triumph was short-lived. A year later, the Medici returned and everyone involved with the 1433 coup was either executed or exiled. Thus, in 1434, Sandro di Vieri di Altoviti and his sons, including Rinaldo, were

<sup>1448</sup> [Itali] nr 50 (1428/06/19), nr 54 (1429/10/19)

<sup>1449</sup> [Itali] nr 62 (1430/11/15)

<sup>1450</sup> ASF, Catasto 361 (1430) Santa Maria Novella - Vipera fol. 361r

banished to Venice for five years.<sup>1451</sup> Sandro died soon after his arrival and two years later, Michele was dragged back to Florence in chains and beheaded. Deprived of family support, it is unclear what became of Rinaldo, and while he might have sought sanctuary with Antonio in Poland, he does not appear to have done so.

## 4.3 1450-1500

### 4.3.1 Jeronimo di Olmerio, Noble Citizen of Genoa (1440-1442) - A Passing Merchant

Jeronimo di Olmerio stands as an excellent example of a passing merchant, one who traded in Poland on a number of occasions during a brief period before vanishing from the sources, presumably moving on to other ventures. There were almost certainly far more of these men than the sources indicate; as they appear in the sources only when there was a problem. When trade was flowing well and it was considered unnecessary to register a transaction, the merchants simply paid their tolls, made their trades, and continued on their way. They plied their trade without leaving a blip on the historical radar; which is visualized only through textual remains. Jeronimo was not so lucky that his business activities proceeded without incident, and so a record of his existence comes down to us.

Jeronimo was active in Lviv and Gródek between 1440-1443; although for much of that time he was not present himself, but represented by his “*servus*”, Gregorius Ungarus, Gregory the Hungarian.<sup>1452</sup> Jeronimo stands in as the ‘passing merchant’ because he encapsulates nicely a number of themes which are present in merchants of this type, both visible and invisible. To begin, Jeronimo was originally from Genoa. While merchants from other parts of Italy were present in the East, those coming from the Ligurian coast made up the lion’s share of those who arrived in Poland. This was due to the fact that Caffa was a Genoese colony and had historically better relations with the Ottomans and the Khans of the Golden Horde. The issue of Jeronimo’s more precise base of operations in the East poses a somewhat more interesting question. Caffa was certainly the most popular site for Italian merchants who arrived in Poland to come from; and many of them held citizenship there. Others, however, might be resident in

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<sup>1451</sup> “Altoviti, Sandro” *Treccani Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, accessed October 17th, 2019, [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/sandro-altoviti\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/sandro-altoviti_(Dizionario-Biografico)/)

<sup>1452</sup> [AGZ] 14 nr 49, 59, 96-102, 114-5, 187, 255, 275, 301

Moncastro, the port which was closest to Poland, or on the numerous other smaller localities along the Black Sea. They might even operate from further afield, operating in Pera, that is, Constantinople. The sources related to Jeronimo give no certainty on this question; but a number of points of interest can be noted.

First, Jeronimo's servant was named Gregory *Ungarus*, implying that Jeronimo likely had trading ties within the Kingdom of Hungary. Jeronimo may have been more active along the route which ran from Kiliya up the Danube, or into Transylvania, and thus may have occupied a permanent home in those regions. Second, in the relatively limited number of cases in which Jeronimo was involved – three major events, he accepted or gave payment using three different currencies. The first was Hungarian gold florins, a very commonly used coinage for larger purchases. The second was Polish, or more likely Prague silver grosz, counted out in groups of sixty – “sexagena”, which were also commonly used. Thirdly and very unusually for the period, were “*flor. Turcales*” - Turkish florins, that is gold coins imitating Venetian ducats, minted in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>1453</sup> The use of Ottoman coins in Polish lands was rare during the first half of the fifteenth century, prior to the conquest of Constantinople. The use of these coins by Jeronimo which he was supposed to pay to the Genoese merchant, Paulus di Grimaldi, and whom another Genoese, Pietro Messopero di Ansaldo, agreed to stand surety for, demonstrates that not only were they considered an acceptable form of currency, but that likely Jeronimo had been in and might return to Ottoman controlled lands.<sup>1454</sup> The use of multiple currencies by merchants was standard practice, but the variation here over a relatively short period of time indicates that Jeronimo traveled frequently and could have been “resident” in any number of locations, but perhaps most likely in Pera.

Second, it should be noted that Jeronimo traded in high value goods, cloth in this case, which was the hallmark of overland long-distance international trade undertaken by Italians during the period. These goods were then not, as one might imagine, trucked towards Western markets, but were instead peddled to local Polish dignitaries.<sup>1455</sup> This made only good economic sense. Travel overland was expensive in terms of both time and money, and fraught with perils from bandits and unscrupulous toll-masters. The shorter distance a merchant had to go, the higher his potential profits; and there *was* a market. While some of the goods sent overland from the

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<sup>1453</sup> The earliest reference to such Turkish gold pieces in Moldavia comes from 1431. Halil Inalcik and Suraiya Faroqhi. *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*. vol. 1. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 288-9.

<sup>1454</sup> (1441/07/14) [AGZ] 14 nr 301

<sup>1455</sup> (1440/07/23) [AGZ] 14 nr 49

Black Sea through Poland might eventually arrive in in the West - Flanders or Italy itself, the vast majority was sold in Poland. The Polish nobility, lay and ecclesiastic, were as desirous of fine silks and other exotica as their Western counterparts, and could afford such purchases. Jeronimo thus arranged to sell his goods to Petrus Odrowansch de Sprowa, the Palatine of the district of Lviv, a powerful local lord.<sup>1456</sup>

The third point Jeronimo's life demonstrates is the important contacts Italians had with the local Armenian community; so much so, that Jeronimo was willing to loan a number of them a significant sum of money.<sup>1457</sup> At least one of the men was a textile worker; and it seems likely that this fact related somehow to Jeronimo's trade in fabric, perhaps supplying him with works of their own creation or that of the famous craftsmen of Caffa. While in this case the transaction ended up in court because the Armenians at first were unable to pay; the full sum was returned two weeks later, but by a different group of Armenians than those who had taken the original loan. The changes in payment would imply that Armenians as a group felt obliged to stand surety for some of their members; not out of noble disinterest, but because if word got round that certain Armenians were not be trusted, it would damage the credibility of the community as a whole.

This last instance brings us to the final point. Jeronimo's activities demonstrate how closely-knit the Italian merchant community tended to be; and the importance of agents within that matrix who stood as witnesses and guarantors. In Jeronimo's case, he was rarely himself present in Poland before the court; but his wishes were carried out by other Italians or his "*servus*", Gregory the Hungarian, who acted as his legal representatives and agreed to pay money on his behalf. At one point however, Gregory himself brought his master Jeronimo to court, demanding he pay money owed to him. After this case was resolved, however, he returned to serving as his agent, seemingly without problem.<sup>1458</sup> In similar ways, Paulo Grimaldi, of the famous Genoese Grimaldi clan, stood surety for Jeronimo on three occasions; and was twice forced to pay out sums, first to Jeronimo's servant Gregory and in the second instance to another Genoese, Pietro Messopero.<sup>1459</sup> Given Grimaldi's continued willingness to

<sup>1456</sup> (1440/07/23) [AGZ] 14 nr 49

<sup>1457</sup> [AGZ] 14 nr 49 (1440/07/23), nr 255 (1441/05/10), nr 275 (1441/05/29)

<sup>1458</sup> [AGZ] 14 nr 59 (1440/08/15), nr 96 - 102 (1440/10/07), nr 114-115 (1440/11/05), nr 183 (1441/01/27), nr 187 (1441/02/03),

<sup>1459</sup> [AGZ] 14 nr 96 - 102 (1440/10/07), nr 301 (1441/07/14), [PomnLw] IV nr. 666 (1442/10/17). The Grimaldi were an old Genoese family which had transformed itself into an organized clan corporation (*albergo*). Its members were actively involved in the political and administrative management of the Genoese overseas institutions in Latin Romania and the Black Sea region. It is an established fact that the Grimaldi provided four

stand as procurator and be responsible for Jeronimo's debts, the two must have had a formal business arrangement, likely partners in a large enterprise, but the surviving sources do not offer greater clarification as to their precise relationship. In any event, it was deemed extremely important that money which was owed be paid. The perception must have been that otherwise the entire group would be tarred as unreliable and unlikely to be unable to operate within the medieval marketplace, which relied heavily on credit and reputation to ensure smooth business. So it was, that we see Italians arranging matters between themselves in a Polish court of law, a public forum; so that the entire community would know that an issue had been resolved. Jeronimo appears for the final time in 1442 in a notarial registry which made Paulo Grimaldi his procurator and guarantor for all legal and business matters.

#### 4.3.2 Andrea di Venecia (1461) - A Passing Merchant or Local Trader?

In 1461, a merchant from Venice, recorded in the sources as *Andrea di Venecia*, was recorded in the notarial records of Poznań. In the records, a certain Fabianus Budnik, a citizen of Poznań, admitted that he owed 19 Hungarian florins to Andrea; and further, that should he die before the sum was repaid, the debt would fall to his wife, Jadwiga, and his legitimate heirs.<sup>1460</sup> Unfortunately, given the lack of specificity in the record, it is impossible to say much more. In 1461, Poland was only eight years into the Thirteen Year's War against the Teutonic Knights. The major cities of Prussia seeking their independence from the Knights, including Gdańsk, Toruń, and Elbląg, were facing siege conditions, and each new year brought a series of campaigns to the region. As armies were moving, trade was sluggish, and thus it is perhaps unsurprising that we have only one reference to Andrea in the records. It is also highly possible that Andrea originated not from Venice, Italy, but rather from the small Polish village of Wenecja located to the northeast of Poznań near the town of Żnin.<sup>1461</sup> The village of Wenecja, known from 1392, was allegedly so named due to the many lakes in the region. Given that Andrea appears only once in the record, it is highly likely he was a Polish subject and not an Italian at all. It is important always, when looking at primary documents, to keep in mind that names may appear very similar, but relate to completely different locations. To take another Polish example, the satellite town of Krakow – Kleparz, granted a location charter in 1366 by

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consuls to the City of Caffa and a podestà for Pera." Dimitar. V. Dimitrov, "The Italian merchant ebb from the Western Black Sea area during the 15th century," *Bulgaria Mediaevalis*, 3(1), (2012): 554.

<sup>1460</sup> [ActPoz 1] nr. 900, 901 (1461/02/26)

<sup>1461</sup> Kaczmarczyk was the first to raise the possibility that Andrea was from Poland rather than Italy. See: Kaczmarczyk, *Włosi w Poznaniu*, 39.

King Casimir the Great, it was originally named Florencja, after the Church of Saint Florian, after whom the church was named when it was erected in the twelfth century. The name Florencja appears very similarly in the records to Florentia, that used for the Florence on the Italian Peninsula. When judging such documents, a researcher needs to bear in mind small differentiations in the text; but most importantly, the inherent logic of the possibilities. As Italians were not overly common in medieval Poland, particularly in the north, it is important not to start to see them behind every leaf and folio in the archive. In this case, as there is only a single record showing the presence of Andrea di Venecia, it appears most likely that he was not an Italian at all, but instead a Polish resident from a town named after the famous lagoon city.

### 4.3.3 Paolo di Promontorio of Genoa (1480-1515) - The Unsuccessful Permanent Resident

Paolo di Promontorio was born in Genoa at an unknown date, and first appears in Polish records in the winter of 1483. At that time, King Casimir IV Jagiełło (1427-92) granted Paolo a letter of safe passage through the realm, and permission to operate within its borders as a merchant. A few months later, he had taken full advantage of his letter and arrived in the City of Poznań.<sup>1462</sup> Over the next fifteen years, Paolo and other male members of his family would make Poznań their permanent home, purchasing a townhouse on the main square and becoming full citizens of the town.<sup>1463</sup> During those years, Paolo would sell luxury silk, damask cloth, cochineal dye, and cumin, among other spices, through a network of contacts that spread from Poznań to Toruń, Krakow, Frankfurt, Wrocław, Berlin, Leipzig, Nuremberg, and Genoa itself.<sup>1464</sup> Paolo had picked a propitious moment to set down roots in Poland, as the War of the Priests (1467 – 1479) to determine the relationship of Prussia with the rest of the country had reached its conclusion only four years earlier, and peace now reigned. Still, Paolo's efforts would ultimately prove unsuccessful; as he and his companions fell into debt, were forced to sell their property in Poznań, and were never able to fully recover. Paolo's life in Poland is recorded almost entirely from mentions left in the notarial records of the City of Poznań, and

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<sup>1462</sup> 1483/02/02 *Casimirus rex Paulo Italico mercatori de Promontorio libere in regno Poloniae mercandi facultatem dat.lac.Datum: Grodno. r. [MRPS] 1 nr. 1590.*

<sup>1463</sup> (1488/03/11) - Granted Citizenship on the understanding that he would purchase property in the town. [ActaPoz] II nr 1493

(1488/07/09) – Paolo and his brother Stefano purchase a stone house on the central square in Poznań for 1500 fl. From Caspar Heida, paying in installments. [ActaPoz] II nr 1500

<sup>1464</sup> [AKapSąd II] nr. 1441, 1626. Kaczmarczyk, "Włosi w Poznaniu na przełomie," 8.



in a few scattered letters. What these documents reveal, however, is a family of four brothers or possibly cousins – Paolo, Stephano, Pelegrino, and Augustino, whose patriarch remained behind in Genoa, serving there as a lynch pin while the scions of the family went abroad to seek their fortune.

### **The Promontorio Clan as Traders in the East**

Although originally of popolani origins, the Promontorio Family was eventually listed among the twenty-eight official *albergi* – Genoese noble clans – promulgated in 1528. The Promontorio Family rose to high standing in the republic during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.<sup>1465</sup> Like most Genoese *albergi*, the Promontorio clan was deeply involved in trade and it is likely that the brothers set their eyes on Poland after hearing about it from their relatives, who had traveled to the east. For, among these relatives was Pelegrino di Promontorio the Elder, one of the preeminent Genoese merchants in the east during his day; who from 1424 to 1454, traded between Caffa and Pera, until the fall of Constantinople.<sup>1466</sup> Even after the Ottoman conquest of the heart of Byzantium, other members of the extended di Promontorio clan operated from Caffa in the 1460s and 70s.<sup>1467</sup> Another more distant relative, Jacopo di Promontorio di Campis, traded even further afield, spending eighteen years in Edirne at the court of the Ottoman Empire from 1434 – 1452. He eventually completed a chronicle of its history from 1376 to 1475.<sup>1468</sup> Given Poland's substantial trade ties with Caffa and the East, it seems likely that the Promontorio group in Poland had migrated there upon recommendation of other members of the clan. Interestingly, however, no evidence shows that Paolo or any of the other Poznań Promontorios traveled to Lviv. The answer for this may lie in the fact that in 1475, the city of Caffa fell to the Ottomans and, a few years later, Moncastro and Kiliya, the two main Italian ports on the Black Sea that supplied the Polish interior, also fell. The fall of

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<sup>1465</sup> Franz Babinger, *Die Aufzeichnungen des Genuesen Iacopo de Promontorio-de Campis über den Osmanenstaat um 1475* (Munich: Verlag der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1957), 46.

<sup>1466</sup> Peter Schreiner, Cordula Scholz, Georgios Makris, Herbert Hunger, and Sandra Origone, *Polupleuros Nous: Miscellanea für Peter Schreiner zu seinem 60. Geburtstag* (Munich: K.G. Saur, 2000), 210-11.

<sup>1467</sup> While no direct evidence of their involvement with the Promontorio group in Poznań has yet come to light, Gabrielle, Manfred, and Domenico Promontorio all worked as traders and administrators in Caffa between 1456-72 See: Amedeo Vigna, ed., *Codice diplomatico delle colonie tauro-liguri durante la signoria dell'Ufficio di S. Giorgio (MCCCCLIII-MCCCCLXXV)* Vol. 2. Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria VII/1 (Genoa: Tipografia Del R. I. De Sordo-Muti, 1871), 237, 395, 474, 484, 884; Quirini-Popławska maintains that after the fall of Caffa, Gabrielle Promontorio, together with Gianotto Lomellino, made their way to Poland, but I have been unable to access the primary sources she uses to substantiate these claims. See: Danuta Quirini-Popławska, "Attempts at Forging a Genoese-Polish-Tatar Alliance against the Ottoman Empire in 1480–1484," in *From Pax Mongolica to Pax Ottomanica: War, Religion and Trade in the Northwestern Black Sea Region (14th-16th Centuries)*, eds. Ovidiu Cristea and Liviu Pilat (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 178.

<sup>1468</sup> Babinger, *Die Aufzeichnungen des Genuesen*, 1-95.

these cities made trade much more difficult for Italians in the east; and Genoa sought long and hard to regain its possessions. Indeed, Paolo actually assisted a few years later in transferring a letter from the Genoese ambassador, Vincentio di Dominico, to the Genoese Senate, relating to the ambassador's efforts to encourage an anti-Ottoman alliance bent on recapturing the cities. The initiative sought to involve Genoa, the Crimean Khanate, and the Kingdom of Poland, but the project never really got off the ground and the attempt ended in failure.<sup>1469</sup> Paolo's involvement in transmitting notice of this scheme may have been simple patriotism; but also may indicate his family's continued involvement in the region.

The breaking of the Italian hold on the Black Sea meant that while trade continued through Lviv, most of it was now in the hands of Armenian, Greek, and Turkish traders, as well as Polish merchants from Lviv itself, who were granted free passage through Ottoman lands.<sup>1470</sup> The Promontorio were thus less inclined to head to the east, and instead focused their efforts on trading in Poland to the north and the west across the German Lands.

### **Paolo's Entry into the Polish Market**

As noted, the first reference to the Promontorios' arrival in Poland comes from the winter of 1483, with the king granting Paolo safe passage and the right to trade freely in the country. To gain such a privilege, Paolo must have had sterling references as a merchant and some kind of strong advocate at court. Later references indicate that Paolo's sponsor was likely the Bishop of Poznań, Uriel Górka (1435-1498). Uriel Górka had been born into a Polish noble family and destined for the church from a young age. He attended the University in Krakow and the University of Bologna; and upon returning home to Poland in 1473, he was appointed Royal Chancellor. This post, however, did not stop him from also acting as an ambassador; and he took a number of trips to visit the Papal Curia. During one such mission, Górka was appointed Papal Collector for the province of Gniezno, a post which he filled for the next record-breaking twenty-two years, 1475-96.<sup>1471</sup> Górka's status at court and his connections with Italy were thus both strong. It is unsurprising then, that we find him working with Paolo and Andrea Gwasko di Soldaia, a former Genoese merchant of Caffa, who after the city's fall to the Ottomans

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<sup>1469</sup> "Wincentego do Dojhinico listy o Polsce pisane do senatu genueńskiego r. 1483-1484 [Letters sent by Vincentio de Dominico from Poland to the Genoese Senate 1483-1484]," *Biblioteka Ossolińskich* vol 2 (1863): 345-8.

<sup>1470</sup> Halil Inalcik and Suraiya Faroqhi. *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire* Vol. 1. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 277-8.

<sup>1471</sup> Marek Daniel Kowalski, *Proventus camerae apostolicae debiti: opłaty duchowieństwa polskiego na rzecz papieża w latach 1417-1484* [Proventus camerae apostolicae debiti: fees paid to the Polish clergy for the papacy in the years 1417-1484] (Krakow: Towarzystwo Wydawnicze Historia Jagellonica, 2010), 196-7.

lobbied tirelessly with the Polish government to mount a campaign to retake it.<sup>1472</sup> In 1483, Górka helped arbitrate a dispute between the two men over some cloth which Andrea was to deliver to Paolo from Genoa. Two years later, Górka arranged with Andrea to retain the services of an Italian vintner who would oversee the planting of a vineyard on the bishop's estates. Given Górka's interests, high status at court, and position as bishop of Poznań, it seems highly likely that it was due to his influence that the Promontorio clan was able to find purchase in Poland, choosing to make their base in Poznań rather than the more typical trade center of Krakow.

### **Paolo in Poznań – the Successful Years**

Having found a stable base in Poznań and having managed to gain citizenship in the city gave the Promontorio clan substantial rights as local merchants. Paolo and his family members sought to turn a profit. Records of their transactions show that they had substantial wealth and over time had built up extensive trade contacts, particularly with Nuremberg, which during the period was perhaps the preeminent mercantile city of the Holy Roman Empire. Paolo Promontorio purchased silk and Venetian damask from Nuremberg merchants on a number of occasions. In one instance, Paolo had to agree to a monthly installment plan to pay off a debt of nearly 1000 Hungarian gold florins in order that his relative and associate, Peregrino Promontorio, would be released from debtors' prison.<sup>1473</sup> The group's main base continued to be Poznań, and in 1488, a few months after receiving citizenship in the city on the promise that they would purchase property there, Paolo and his brother Stephano bought a large stone house on the city's main square for the enormous sum of 1500 fl. A year later they further expanded their holdings, purchasing a garden with a pond and canal access near the Wronicka Gate.<sup>1474</sup> While Stephano at this point disappears from Polish records, perhaps dying or returning to Genoa, Paolo appears to have become more of a "settled merchant," a spider in the web of a larger association comprised of relatives and hired factors who traded abroad for him. His kinsman Peregrino worked as a factor in Nuremberg while three other non-Italians - Jan Frikel, Jacobus Fuckar and Iost Schilling acted as Paolo's agents in Nuremberg and Toruń.<sup>1475</sup> On a few

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<sup>1472</sup> [AKapSąd II] nr. 1441. *Archivio di Stato in Genova. Sezione Archivio Notarile*. [Atti del Not. Gio. Antonio Castello. Filza II, f. 130]. 1485, 8 lug. In Israel Zoller, "Tra l'Italia e la Polonia," *Archivio Storico Italiano*, serie V, 42, no. 252 (1908): 392, 395-6.

<sup>1473</sup> [ActaPoz] II nr 1623

<sup>1474</sup> [ActaPoz] II nr 1493, [ActaPoz] II nr 1500, "Święty Wojciech," *Słownik Historyczno-geograficzny Ziemi Polskich w Średniowieczu* [Dictionary of Historical-Geography of the Medieval Polish Lands] Accessed April, 1st 2020. <http://www.slownik.ihpan.edu.pl/search.php?q=promontorio&d=0&t=0>

<sup>1475</sup> [ActaPoz] II nr 1623. Kaczmarczyk, "Włosi w Poznaniu na przełomie," 8.

occasions, Paolo himself appears to have returned to Italy in order to sell cumin, which was highly prized on the peninsula, in return for expensive damask and silk cloth to be resold in Poland.<sup>1476</sup> Paolo worked from Poznań from 1480-1496, seemingly with great success. Although most of the transactions that appear in the Poznań records speak of extensive debts, the amounts which Paolo was continually able to receive on credit speak to his credit-worthiness in the eyes of others. As successful transactions were unlikely to be litigated and thus recorded, the continued willingness of other merchants to engage in high-value deals demonstrates that most of his dealings must have been fruitful. Interestingly, Paolo broke pattern with most other Italians who chose to become long-term residents in Poland; Paolo and his kin do not appear to have sought to manage any royal rents – mines or tolls. Given that these were the most obvious means by which to make significant sums in Poland and the Promontorios had the capital to permit them to purchase such rents, their reasons for declining to do so can only be guessed at. It is possible that the king declined their services but given the repeated privileges Paolo received from the king's hand, this seems unlikely, and it may simply be that the family had no interest in this particular type of work. Indeed, the Promontorio's trading enterprises appear to have flourished up until around 1495; when Paolo and his associates ran into some sort of trouble where they were no longer able to cover the debts they owed.

### **Paolo's Fall into Penury**

Seemingly due to some poor business dealings on his part, in 1496 Paolo was to be found deep in debt and unable to repay his creditors. Pushed to extremities, he was forced to sell the house in Poznań and liquify his other assets in order to avoid complete disaster. Perhaps in a bid to help Paolo, the humanist writer and king's secretary, Filippo Buonaccorsi of San Gimignano, purchased the property, saving Paolo from complete financial ruin.<sup>1477</sup> Not long after, Filippo sold the house to a widow named Barbara, demonstrating that it was likely his desire to assist the Promontorios, rather than a wish to acquire property in Poznań, which had prompted him to purchase the house in the first place.<sup>1478</sup> Yet, while Paolo had been forced to sell the house in Poznań, this did not prevent him or his kinsmen from continuing to work in Poland. Unfortunately, the sources decline at this point, but in 1505, and again in 1515, Paolo was granted further letters of safe conduct by the Polish monarch and used these junctures to try to

<sup>1476</sup> “Wincentego do Dojhinico listy 345-8. [ActaPoz] II nr 1626.

<sup>1477</sup> [ActaPoz] II nr 1664.

<sup>1478</sup> [ActaPoz] II nr 1674.

renegotiate his debts.<sup>1479</sup> Many of these debts continued to remain unpaid however, and as late as 1527, some individuals were still seeking to collect.<sup>1480</sup> Paolo had operated successfully in Poland as a merchant of fine goods for fifteen years, but in the end had fallen into financial ruin and retreated from the country. The few times when Paolo returned, he continued to be plagued by those seeking rightful restitution. Other members of the Promontorio clan, including Pelegrino and a certain Augustinio, reappear in the Polish record in 1517 and later again in the 1520s; but they appear to be seeking to settle Paolo's outstanding accounts and not to have themselves engaged much in trade in Poland.<sup>1481</sup> Paolo Promontorio thus represents an Italian merchant who sought to make his fortune in Poland, and while meeting with early success, ultimately failed to achieve his goals.

#### 4.3.4 Peregrino di Promontorio of Genoa (1494-1517) - The Factor and Heir to a Failed Venture

In an arrangement which was extremely common among large late medieval Italian companies, Peregrino di Promontorio worked as a factor for his kinsman Paolo. Kinship networks were strong bonds, and in the difficult climate of medieval commerce, which frequently included long, often perilous journeys over difficult terrain for uncertain profits, it paid to be sure of your employees. Peregrino appears for the first time in Polish records in the summer of 1496, a good sixteen years after Paolo had begun his work in Poznań. It appears likely then that Peregrino was a younger relative who was being brought up in the firm and who handled a lot of the business travel, thus sparing the aging Paolo. The company's business was certainly widespread; as Peregrino appears to have flitted frequently between Nuremberg and Poznań, where he dealt with merchants from Frankfurt, Berlin, and Wrocław.<sup>1482</sup> Unfortunately for Peregrino, Paolo's business by this time appears to have hit a rough patch and the same year Peregrino was imprisoned on charges of debt in Nuremberg. Paolo was able to obtain the assistance of the Poznań City Council in making arrangements to begin paying off in monthly

<sup>1479</sup> [MRPS] III nr 2357, [MRPS] IV nr 2402.

<sup>1480</sup> Kaczmarczyk, "Włosi w Poznaniu na przełomie," 11-2.

<sup>1481</sup> Peregrino Promontorio was active in Poznań until 1517 and Augustino Promontorio until 1521. *Stadtbuch von Posen; Die mittelalterliche Magistratsliste; Die ältesten Protokollbücher und Rechnungen*; vol. 1 ed. Warschauer Adolf (Poznań: Im Eigenthum der Gesellschaft, 1892), 303, 311. Kaczmarczyk, "Włosi w Poznaniu na przełomie," 13-14. "Święty Wojciech," *Słownik Historyczno-geograficzny Ziemi*, Accessed April, 1st 2020. <http://www.slownik.ihpan.edu.pl/search.php?q=promontorio&d=0&t=0>

<sup>1482</sup> (1494/06/23) – Peregrino di Promontorio traded with Hans Bucholcz and Caspar Crewcz of Frankfurt on Oder, Pael Blanckenfelt from Wrocław and Berlin, as well. [ActaPoz] II nr 1582.

installments the more than 1000 Hungarian florins owed to the six different traders who were baying for his blood, and Peregrino was eventually released.<sup>1483</sup> It was at this point that Paolo's debts began to overtake him and Peregrino disappears once more from the record. Likely, he returned to Genoa, or sought to support the company by pursuing opportunities in other regions. He returned to Poland only twenty years later, perhaps after Paolo's death, as the last mention of him appears in 1515. Unfortunately, he appears to have had no more success than his hapless relation; as he was brought to court by a number of Krakow merchants for bad conduct.<sup>1484</sup>

#### 4.3.5 Arnolfo di Pierozzo di Tedaldi of Florence (1464-1497) - The Successful Permanent Resident

Arnolfo di Pierozzo Tedaldi is an excellent example of the "permanent resident", an Italian who came to Poland as a trader but ended up remaining there permanently, becoming involved in the management of salt mines and tolls, and eventually marrying into the local aristocracy. A number of such men were to be found in Eastern Poland during the period.<sup>1485</sup> Arnolfo Tedaldi is another example of the type, and somewhat unusual in that his roots were not in Liguria but in Tuscany. How and why precisely he decided to move to Poland remains a mystery; but having begun as a member of a merchant partnership, he eventually became administrator of the regional salt mines and toll master in Lviv and Gródek. These positions put him in contact with the court, and he eventually married the daughter of a local Polish aristocrat and was ennobled himself. It appears that after his arrival in Poland, Arnolfo never returned back to Italy, even for short periods. Nonetheless, he remained in contact with his family there and even hosted and patronized for a time the Italian humanist, Filippo Buonaccorsi (*Callimachus Experiens*), before the two had a falling out. Although Arnolfo married, he and his wife had no children and thus a number of his nephews arrived upon his

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<sup>1483</sup> (1495/09/02) – The City Council of Poznań steps in to adjudicate the massive debt owed by Paulo: 1409 hufl owed to Iohannes Grodziczky, 230 hufl owed to Iohannes Buchholcz of Frankfurt, 735 hufl to Bernhardus Buchholcz, 230 Hufl to Paulus Blanckenfelt and Malchiar [Melchior?] Funck, as well as 30 fl owed to Paulus of Bomberga [Bamberg?]. For the debt he had incurred in trying to settle the account, Paolo agrees to start paying off the amount in monthly installments, and was thus able to organize the release of his associate in Nuremberg, Peregrino di Promontorio, who had been arrested on account of the debt, as well as protect his other agents, Jacobus Fuckar and Iost Schilling. [ActaPoz] II nr 1623.

<sup>1484</sup> (1517) – Peregrino engaged in a trade deal with Eustachy de Parentibus of Krakow and Karol Koczur, Bartholomew Gliwice, and Kasper Gratz, that goes bad and winds up being adjudicated in court in Poznań. Acta castrensia Posnaniensis. nr. 856, 455, 457. see: Kaczmarczyk, "Włosi w Poznaniu na przełomie," 13-14.

<sup>1485</sup> . For those wishing for further information on these individuals, see the work of Rafał Hryszko, who has dedicated an article and a portion of his dissertation to the affairs of Cristoforo di San. Romulo; who was resident in Lviv from 1443-1467 Rafał Hryszko, "Cristoforo z San Remo: próba portretu średniowiecznego kupca genueńskiego [Cristoforo of San Remo: an attempt at a portrait of a medieval Genoese merchant]," *Studia Historyczne* 42.3 (1999): 331-348. Rafał Hryszko, *Januensis, ergo mercator?*..

death to settle his estate. Arnolfo's life provides an interesting case study on how an Italian with good financial backing and business acumen could succeed in Poland during the late fifteenth century.

Arnolfo was born in Florence in 1438, the son of Pierozzo di Talento di Tedaldi and Ottavia di Pazzi, as the youngest of four brothers.<sup>1486</sup> Thanks to their father's poor business sense which led him to borrow heavily and eventually go bankrupt, the family was placed in somewhat difficult economic straits.<sup>1487</sup> It is perhaps for this reason that Arnolfo decided to pursue his fortune abroad. He never entered public office like so many of his kinsmen, including his brother Baldo, but instead departed Florence in search of greener pastures.<sup>1488</sup> In a pattern typical for the era, most of the remaining family property was held by Arnolfo's elder brother, Talento. Talento and his brother Baldo sent in a separate tax return in 1457, indicating that they had made a final split of the family properties.<sup>1489</sup> At this point, Arnolfo was nineteen years old and ready to set out on his own. It is likely that Arnolfo worked for a number of years as a factor in a merchant company before making his way to Poland. The full story of why and how Arnolfo chose to move to Poland remains mysterious. There are a few possible indications of what might have happened, however. To begin, throughout the 1460s, Arnolfo's cousin, Jacopo di Piero Maffeo di Tedaldi, was present and working within the Florentine

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<sup>1486</sup> Talento (b. 1432), Baldo (b. 1435) and a fourth illegitimate brother named Agnolo, who was nonetheless always included in the family accounts (b. 1427). ASF, Catasto 833, folio 185r-v (1457 San Giovanni – Viao).

<sup>1487</sup> ASF, Catasto 81 395r-396v (1427 Sa. Giovanni-Vaio) In that year, Pierozzo filed a joint return with his brother, Niccolo, which showed that they were a well-to-do family. The family had numerous holdings, including a *podere*, un *pezzo di terra*, a *poderetta*, and also some property as heirs of Lodovico Tedaldi, split with others. Further, 739 worth of monte credits, but also a long list of debtors for Pierozzo including: Tolecho di Bardo Portenari 143, Lorenzo di messer Palla and Co 493, Antonio di Scipro..di ser presoto 538, the heirs of Vieri Guadagni 150, Bartolo di Bartolo Tedaldi 120...and others, as well as a list of bad debts. The list of creditors included Nofri and Piero Tedaldi and co 128 and Antonio di Naldo Tedaldi 12. Assignments (*incharichi*) included wool purchases and trips for business, demonstrating that Pierozzo was trying to make it in Florence's competitive wool market. By 1433, however, Pierozzo appears listed as "*fallito*" (failed) in the Catasto record of his distant cousin, Tedaldo di Bartolo Tedaldi; from whom he had borrowed sums. See: ASF, Catasto 483, c. 448r-450r (1430 San. Giovanni – Vaio)

<sup>1487</sup> At least 32 members of the Tedaldi family were elected to public office, including Baldo di Pierozzo Tedaldi, who was named Prior in Florence in 1495, and *Gonfalone di Campania* in 1500. "Tedaldi," *Florentine Renaissance Resources*, *Online Tratte of Office Holders, 1282-1532* edited by David Herlihy, R. Burr Litchfield, Anthony Molho, and Roberto Barducci (Florentine Renaissance Resources/STG: Brown University, Providence, R. I., 2002) Accessed January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019. <http://cds.library.brown.edu/projects/tratte/main.php>

<sup>1488</sup> At least 32 members of the Tedaldi family were elected to public office including Baldo di Pierozzo Tedaldi, who was named Prior in Florence in 1495, and *Gonfalone di Campania* in 1500. "Tedaldi," *Florentine Renaissance Resources*, Accessed January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019. <http://cds.library.brown.edu/projects/tratte/main.php>

<sup>1489</sup> ASF, Catasto 833, fol. 278 (1457) Talento Tedaldi, ASF, Catasto 833, fol. 285 (1457) Arnolfo and Baldo Tedaldi

community in Constantinople.<sup>1490</sup> The Tedaldi family had unusually close ties between various branches, as evidenced by their living arrangements in close quarters in both the city and the hinterland. These close family ties are further demonstrated by constant loans and letters back and forth to each other. It is possible that Arnolfo sought out his cousin abroad and even partnered with him for a time, entering Poland from the East, following the trade route from the Black sea through Moldavia to Poland. He may also have been introduced to Poland by another family member, another distant cousin named Francesco di Papi Tedaldi. Francesco, who had been born in 1425, spent most of his life sailing the high seas and acting as a padrone on Florentine merchant galleys. He frequently traveled along the Northwestern route, which led from the Florentine port of Livorno to Southampton and Bruges for the Medici. After a long life of adventuring and service to the Florentine Republic, he died in Bruges around 1511.<sup>1491</sup> In Bruges, Francesco would have been likely to meet Polish merchants; whereupon knowledge of the country might then have been passed on to Arnolfo. Both of these possibilities are mere speculation however, as no solid evidence exists to confirm them.

The first evidence we have of Arnolfo's arrival in Poland comes from a letter sent in 1464 from the Venetian Doge to the King of Poland. The letter reveals that Arnolfo Tedaldi had formed a company, together with Juliano di Valetaris of Genoa and Nembrot Veluti of Venice, to sell 4300 ducats worth of goods in the Kingdom of Poland.<sup>1492</sup> None of the three appear to have

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<sup>1490</sup> Jacopo di Piero Maffeo Tedaldi, who was a distant cousin of Arnolfo (their grandfathers had been brothers), was born in 1427, the fourth child of Piero Maffeo Tedaldi and his wife Caterina. Not much is known about Jacopo's early years; but by the age of 26, he had gone to the East and was working among the small Florentine trading community in Constantinople. He was thus present as the Ottomans closed in around the city and at its fall in 1453. According to his own account, Jacopo fought on the walls of the Italian Quarter until, seeing the ramparts breached and knowing all was lost, dove from the heights into the bay, together with his 12 year-old Russian slaveboy. He is famous for recording a brief account of the siege of Constantinople, in which he stated that Mehmed II was more cruel than Nero, more ambitious than Alexander or Caesar, and having read their histories was seeking for a way to attack Venice, Milan, and the Pope where he sat in Rome. The Florentine chronicler, Benedetto Dei (1418-1492), in his discussion of events in Constantinople and the wars of the Ottomans in 1458, mentions Jacopo Tedaldi as part of a group of Florentine merchants who had come to side with the Ottomans in a bid to increase their mercantile advantage. In 1466, upon receiving word from the Venetians, Mehmed II called a group of Florentines to himself to ask their opinion on the matter, including Jacopo Tedaldi; revealing that he had returned to the city and worked there even after it had been taken by the Ottomans. ASF, Catasto 81, fol. 483r 1427 (Nofri and Piero Maffeo Tedaldi). Benedetto Dei, *La cronica dall'anno 1400 all'anno 1500*, ed. Roberto Barducci, and Anthony Molho (Florence: F. Papafava, 1984), 164.

<sup>1491</sup> Francesco's son, Lantanzio Tedaldi, composed a moving epitaph for him, recalling his love of travel and the plentiful legacy he left to his two sons. "*Francesco Thedaldo patritio Florentino mari ac terra peragratis loci amore adeo capto ut patria posthabita hic vivere et mori elegerit Lactantius e Antonius filii plentissimi posuere.*" The epitaph is recorded in a manuscript left by Lantanzio. Cod. Barb. Lat. 2031 c. 131 see: Paul Oskar Kristeller, "Una novella latina e il suo autore Francesco Tedaldi, mercante fiorentino del Quattrocento," in *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters vol. II* (Rome, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1985), 386 fn 11.

<sup>1492</sup> The letter was related to a claim by the Venetian member of the trio that while in Poland, apparently a group of Jews deprived Nembrot of some jewels worth 600 ducats, and the doge requested that the king see justice done in this matter. (1464/07/25) [CodEp] III, nr 74 pg 584



operated in Poland; but they must have learned something of the region previously from other merchants or they would not have invested so heavily in a first venture. Four months after the letter of agreement was signed, Juliano di Valetaris appears in records from Lviv as manager of the royal salt mines in Drohobych (Дрогобич), not far from Lviv, and collector of the tolls in Lviv itself. While the other two partners are not mentioned, the timing as well as later records indicate that the three Italians had pooled their financial resources in order to secure royal permission to rent the lucrative positions. Unfortunately, no charter outlining the official contract has survived that would allow a more thorough understanding of the precise conditions.<sup>1493</sup>

Arnolfo, who by this time would have been all of 26 years old, launched himself into a career in Poland as a member of a tri-part company which merchandised precious goods brought from abroad for sale at Polish courts, and managed lucrative royal rents. Just two years later, he would be the sole-surviving member of the partnership and renter not only of the Drohobycz mine and the Lviv tolls, but those of Gródek as well.<sup>1494</sup> Arnolfo was now not only a merchant of goods, but a member of staff within the Polish kingdom's administration. As long as the mines produced salt and the tolls were administered, so that the sheep were sheared but not skinned, Arnolfo was in a position to turn a tidy profit. The positions also came with a certain risk however, as the rental system, akin to tax farming, demanded that Arnolfo ensure a stated sum of money be delivered to the royal treasury. The capital risk involved was mitigated by having several partners involved in the venture. However, in quick succession, both Nembrot Veluti and then Juliano Valetaris died and their heirs soon arrived demanding Arnolfo settle accounts.<sup>1495</sup> After Nembrot Veluti died, Arnolfo was forced to pay Peter Veluti of Venice, brother of Nembrot, 600 florin up front in goods and when this was not sufficient, to hand over all the profits gained from the Lviv tolls on Thursdays and Fridays until the debt was repaid; with some money also coming from Arnolfo's rights to the Drohobycz mines and the tolls at Gródek.<sup>1496</sup> Thus, by November of 1464, Arnolfo was being forced to hand over most of his revenue to settle accounts, when his other partner, Juliano di Valetaris, suddenly shucked off

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<sup>1493</sup> (1464/11/29) [SDIR] 23, nr 13

<sup>1494</sup> (1466/03/22). "*Aynolpho, suppario drohobicensi et theloneario grodecensi et leopoliensi.*" [SDIR] 23 nr 21 (1466/03/22).

<sup>1495</sup> Petrus's brother Nembrot has died, he and his brother Bernhard and brother-in-law Francisci Frandini, have come to Lviv to recover his assets, with the kind assistance of Arnolfo Teodaldi of Florence. (1465/11/28-1466/04/23 [SDIR] 23 nr 17 (1465/11/21), Consul. Leopoliens. 1460 — 1506, p. 110, 118, 122, 140, 142 give further details on the affair as recorded by Jan Ptaśnik from his assessment of the Lviv City Council books. I have not personally accessed these volumes; but believe Ptaśnik's explanation of the events to be credible. See: Jan Ptaśnik, *Kultura Włoska*, 58-9.

<sup>1496</sup> Ibid.

his mortal coil at a most inopportune moment. On top of what he owed to Nembrot's brothers, Arnolfo was now stuck covering a debt owed to Veluti, equal to 1723 fl, of which 900 had already been repaid, leaving a still enormous sum of 823 fl to be scrounged up. To cover this, Arnolfo was forced to go out hunting for a lender. Luckily, on hand was the prominent Genoese merchant, Lawrence Lomelino "*Italicus di Pera*", who plied the trade route between Poland, Caffa, and Constantinople. From this worthy, Arnolfo borrowed 400 fl, in return for allowing Lomelino to collect part of the remaining tolls for a period of time until the debt was repaid.<sup>1497</sup> Arnolfo was thus obliged to hand over most of his revenues and borrow to cover the shortfall, turning him from a prosperous merchant on the make to a debt-ridden one in just a few short months. His troubles did not stop there. In the same difficult year of 1465, Arnolfo lost a court case with Ursula, the widow of Johan Verber, citizen of Krakow, and was forced to pay yet more money.<sup>1498</sup> In the end however, Arnolfo pulled through. The Veluti family was satisfied; and the final payments were arranged with Valetaris's heirs by 1470.<sup>1499</sup> Over the next few years, Arnolfo worked, trading pepper brought from Constantinople Via the *Via Walachiensis* to Lviv, while at the same time managing the salt mines and tolls.<sup>1500</sup> The business prospered mightily; and Arnolfo was soon able to start loaning money to others, including a large sum of 1000 florins to the historian, Jan Długosz.<sup>1501</sup> Arnolfo's 1469 Catasto tax return in Florence on the other hand, gives little indication of any change in circumstances. The return itself was delivered by Bartolomeo di Niccolo Marnegli; and while Arnolfo continued to hold a small amount of property in common with his brother Baldo, very little other wealth was declared on the return. Arnolfo invested not at all in the public Monte debt.<sup>1502</sup> As the Florentine Republic did not attempt to tax wealth kept beyond its borders, this would be the reason for the omission,

<sup>1497</sup> "*nobilis Nicolaus de Fuligo, Italicus*" stood as Arnolfo's guarantor for this transaction. [SDIR] 23 nr 27 (1467/06/04) Consul. Leopoliensis. 1460 — 1506, p. 110, 118, 122, 140, 142. Ptaśnik, *Kultura*, 58-9.

<sup>1498</sup> 200 sexagene were owed to Ursula, widow of *famosi lohan Verber*, citizen of Krakow, after a very long-running case; with Ursula suing for other damages. [AGZ] 15 nr 220 — 236 (1465/09/20-21)

<sup>1499</sup> The king demanded Antonio di Valutaris and Arnolfo of Florence come to terms and Arnolfo and *Antonius de Valetaris* agreed to come to terms in 2 weeks' time. [AGZ] 15 nr 3562 (1470/07/31), [AGZ] 15 nr. 3514 (1470/03/29).

<sup>1500</sup> Court case involving Arnolfo and Lukas de Caffa. [SDIR] 23 nr 28 (1467/04/25) Arnolfo makes a deal with David de Constantinopoli. SDIR 33 (1468/04/31), Arnolfo makes a trade deal with Dominus Arnst. Dymitr Walata de Albo Castro, son of Iurgii Walata- "*centum et XXIIIj florenos hungaricales pro quindecim et medio lapidibus piperis, quelibet lapis per octo florenos*" 124 Hufl for 15 ½ stones of pepper; with a full stone costing 8 florins. [SDIR] 23 nr 42 (1470/05/27) Debt for 106 stones of pepper at 8 florins per stone; settled between Arnolfo and Arnolfo makes a trade deal with Dominus Arnst. Dymitr Walata de Albo Castro, son of Iurgii Walata [SDIR] 23 nr 45 (1472/01/27)

<sup>1501</sup> The king backs up a pledge of 1000 marks between Arnolfo and Johannes Długosz. [AGZ] 15 nr 3527 (1470/04/02)

<sup>1502</sup> ASF, Catasto 929, 119r (San Giovanni Vaio 1469)

which further shows that Arnolfo was not investing his profits at home; but instead holding them abroad, and perhaps unlike all his other family members, not intending to return.

For the next nearly twenty years, Arnolfo served as the administrator of the salt mines in Drohobycz, occasionally renting them out to subcontractors.<sup>1503</sup> As far as we know, he never returned to Florence; but instead chose to settle down permanently in Poland. With his earnings from the mine and the tolls, Arnolfo was able to invest in land, purchasing a number of villages surrounding Lviv.<sup>1504</sup> He also expanded his social circle, becoming friends with Gregory of Sanok, the Archbishop of Lviv (1407-1477). Gregory was a vaunted student of Latin poetry and during his youth had spent three years in Italy, returning to Poland where he set up the first Humanist court in Poland at his palace in Dunajów.

Around 1469, just as Arnolfo was coming into his own in Poland, the early humanist Filippo Buonaccorsi of San. Gimignano, arrived from Constantinople. Buonaccorsi had fled Rome a year previously, after being accused of involvement in a plot to assassinate Pope Paul II. Making his way to Chios, he then became embroiled in a conspiracy to hand the island over to the Ottomans.<sup>1505</sup> When this plot too failed, Buonaccorsi left Christendom entirely; making his way to the Ottoman capital. Here, he was safe from retribution, but appears to have found his time in Turkish territory displeasing, and sought to leave as soon as possible. It is likely that during his time in Constantinople, Buonaccorsi met his fellow Tuscan, Jacopo di Piero Maffeo Tedaldi. Jacopo, with whom Arnolfo had likely worked before his move to Poland, by the age of 26 had gone to the East; and was working in the small Florentine trading community in Constantinople. He was thus present as the Ottomans closed in around the city and at its fall in 1453. According to his own account, Jacopo fought on the walls of the Italian quarter until, seeing the ramparts breached and knowing all was lost, dove from the heights into the bay. He then swam to a Venetian ship that was subsequently able to slip the Ottoman blockade and

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<sup>1503</sup> Arnolfo was active as Zupparius from 1466 to at least 1487. [SDIR] 23 nr 21 (1466/03/22), *Liber quitantiarum regis Casimiri ab a. 1484 ad 1488/Księga skarbowa króla Kazimierza Jag.* ed. Adolf Pawiński (Warsaw: Skł. gł. w księg. Gebethnera i Wolffa, 1897), 198; Arnolfo also occasionally sublet his rights to the mines and tolls see: (1471/11/15) Sampsoni de Zydacsow rents for 925 marc and one stamina of red silk, the Lviv customs, plus 1438 marks for the Gródek customs and the Drobobicens salt mine and customs for 3 years – as per the arrangement with his predecessors: Julianns de Valentariis, Christoforo di San Romelu and Arnolfo Tedaldi of Florence. [MRPS 1] nr. 730; (1476/02/11) *Aynophus Tedaldi de Florentia theloneatori Grodecensi et zuppariuo Drohobiczensi*, Charter detailing rents of the toll at Zydaczowiense (previous Jewish Zupparius - appears to have held this post earlier) and the salt mine in *Dolienses, districtus Stigensis* another site not far from Lviv, for 190 marks due March 24th -for two years. [MRPS] I 1359

<sup>1504</sup> Arnolfo came to own the villages of Mycbalyowcze, Kozienice and Jamelna. [AGZ] 18 nr. 1249, 1365; [AGZ] 15 nr 151.

<sup>1505</sup> The details and intentions behind this project, which was organized by a small group of Italians resident on the island, remains confusingly obscure.

make its way back to Venice.<sup>1506</sup> After the sack, Jacopo returned to the city and continued his work as a merchant under the new Ottoman regime.<sup>1507</sup> Given the circumstances, it appears likely that Buonaccorsi met Jacopo during his brief time in Constantinople; and it was he who recommended that Buonaccorsi follow the normal trade route from Pera to Moncastro and along the Via Wallachinesis to Lviv; where Arnolfo greeted him. With Arnolfo's backing, Buonaccorsi soon ingratiated himself with Gregory of Sarnok, the archbishop of Lviv; entering his court of humanist luminaries. Luckily for him, Buonaccorsi quickly gained Sarnok's favor; so that in October of 1470, when a papal legate arrived demanding Buonaccorsi's extradition back to Rome, Sarnok rose to his defense and was able to stop the proceedings.<sup>1508</sup> Arnolfo continued to support Buonaccorsi and at this point also introduced him to his distant cousin, Lattanzio Tedaldi, who continued to live in Florence as a prominent figure; and with whom Arnolfo kept in contact by letter. The two would come to be a life-long friends and Lattanzio would come to be Buonaccorsi's supporter and main conduit for introductions and news from Florence, putting the young man in with the likes of Pico della Mirandola. Lattanzio sent on works such as Buonaccorsi's "*Historietta Sarmathica et Barbara et piena di Barbarismi*." – a short history of Sarmatia (popular term used for ancient Poland and its peoples), to be judged

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<sup>1506</sup> Jacopo was debriefed by the Venetians upon his arrival in the Lagoon; and his subsequent account of the siege achieved a certain amount of fame. The most memorable passage being his description of the Sultan Mehmed II whom he said was, "...more cruel than Nero, more ambitious than Alexander or Caesar, and having read their histories, was seeking for a way to attack Venice, Milan, and the Pope where he sat in Rome." "*plus cruel que Néron, se delectant à respandre sang humain, courageux et ardent de seignourer et renverser tout le monde; voire plus qu'Alexandre, ne César, ne aultre vaillant qui ait esté allégué, qu'il a plus grande puissance et seignourie que nul d'eulx n'avoit: et tousjours jaisoit lire leur histoire, demande et comment est posé Venise, combien loing de terre ferme et comme on y peut entrer par mer et par terre. Et tant alloy luij seroit faire ung grand pont durant de Margara à Venise: pour pouvoir passer ses gens d'poor. Pareillement demande de Rome, où elle est assise, et du Duc de Milan et de ses vaillans, et d'autres choses que de guerre ne parle,*" Kenneth M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant (1204-1571): Vol. 2*. (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1997), 137 fn 96; *Monumenta Hungariae. Historica XXII* 1872, 889-913, 907.

<sup>1507</sup> According to the Florentine chronicler, Benedetto Dei (1418-1492), in his discussion of events in Constantinople and the wars of the Ottomans in 1458, mentions Jacopo Tedaldi as part of a group of Florentine merchants who had come to side with the Ottomans in a bid to increase their mercantile advantage. In 1466, upon receiving word from the Venetians, Mehmed II called a group of Florentines to himself to ask their opinion on the matter, including Jacopo Tedaldi. The other Florentines mentioned in the group were: Mainardo Ubaldini, Nicholo Ardinghegli and Manente Amidei. Benedetto Dei, *La cronica dall'anno 1400 all'anno 1500* ed. Roberto Barducci, and Anthony Molho (Florence: F. Papafava, 1984), 158, 164.

<sup>1508</sup> Buonaccorsi went on to write a biography of Gregory Sarnok - *la vita e mores Gregorii Sanocei* as a means of thanking his benefactor.

Jacek Wiesiołowski, Gli amici e i mecenati di Callimaco in Polonia in *Callimaco Esperiente Poeta e Politico Del '400 : Convegno Internazionale di Studi* (San Gimignano, 18-20 Ottobre 1985). Atti di Convegni (Istituto Nazionale di Studi sul Rinascimento) 16. ed. Gian Carlo Garfagnini (Florence: Olschki, 1987), 95. Harold B. Segel, *Renaissance culture in Poland: the rise of humanism : 1470-154*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 46-7.

by Verino, Ficino and Poliziano.<sup>1509</sup> Letters between the two survive in the Vatican archive and reveal an active literary dialogue, replete with classical allusions and Latin poetry. Also included are notes sent by Lattanzio to important Polish individuals, including Matias Drevizio - Bishop of Przemyśl and Chancellor of Poland, and Erasmus Ciolek - Bishop of Płock and secretary to King Alexander Jagiełło. These notes clearly demonstrate that his interest in Polish affairs spread beyond contact with Buonaccorsi.<sup>1510</sup> Buonaccorsi thus settled for a time in Dunajów (now Dunayev, Ukraine); during which he composed a set of love poems, inspired by a local Polish lady named Fannia Swentocha, and entitled them *Fannientum*. In 1472, he dedicated these poems to *Claro e Ornato viro Arnolfo Theodalo* – illustrious and honored Arnolfo Tedaldi, as a means of thanking him.<sup>1511</sup> Soon after in that same year, however, he left the court of Gregory of Sarnok in Dunajów and made his way to Krakow to try his luck in the capital.<sup>1512</sup> By this time, Pope Paul II had died and the new Pope viewed Buonaccorsi with favor rather than wrath.<sup>1513</sup> Buonaccorsi would go on to have a prominent career, teaching at Krakow University; and acting as tutor to the sons of Casimir IV Jagiełło, and thus the future King of Poland, John I. He took on diplomatic missions for the court. On one such mission to Italy, he made sure to bring gifts from the exotic North back for his friends, including a sable coat for Lattanzio. During his time in Venice, he ordered a stone seal ring made for Arnolfo.<sup>1514</sup> When Buonaccorsi died in Krakow in November 1496, he was interred next to Arnolfo Tedaldi in the Dominican church of the Holy Trinity in Krakow. Arnolfo thus created around himself a social circle that included his fellow Tuscan humanist, standing as his backer and advocate in Poland. While no writings remain penned by Arnolfo himself, he was certainly well lettered, and almost certainly had humanist interests of his own, an idea reinforced by the discovery of

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<sup>1509</sup> Filippo Buonaccorsi wrote his first letter to Lattanzio on July 9th, 1482. Harold B. Segel, *Renaissance culture in Poland: the rise of humanism : 1470-1543*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 79. (cf. Vat. Barb. lat. 2031, f. 89, quoted by Kristeller in his “Iter italicum: in vita Philippi Callimaci quam scribere aggrediemur,” *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 35, no. 2 (1973): 433.

<sup>1510</sup> The manuscript is not yet among those digitized by the Vatican archive; and I have not been able to consult it directly. Vat. Barb. lat. 1731. However a listing of the contents, including all of Lattanzio's letters, were made by Alexander Przezdziecki in an archival review undertaken in the 1840's. See: Alexander Przezdziecki *Wiadomo bibliograficzna o rękopismach zawierających w sobie rzeczy polskie przejranych po niektórych bibliotekach i archiwach zagranicznych w latach 1846-1849* [Bibliographic information about manuscripts containing Polish items, reviewed in a number of libraries and foreign archives in the years 1846-1849, (Warsaw: Nakł. I. Kłukowskiego, 1850), 79-82. See also: Ciampi, *Notizie Dei Secoli*, 11; Negri, *Istoria Degli Scrittori Fiorentini*, 347.

<sup>1511</sup> The poems are today preserved in the Vatican Codex 2869. Segel, *Renaissance culture in Poland*, 51; Ciampi, *Notizie dei secoli Xv*, 16.

<sup>1512</sup> Segel, *Renaissance culture in Poland*, 51.

<sup>1513</sup> Pope Paul II died on July 26th, 1471 and was replaced by Pope Sixtus IV. Segel, *Renaissance culture in Poland*, 50.

<sup>1514</sup> Segel, *Renaissance culture in Poland*, n81.

a copy of Josephus's History of the Jews (*Antiquitates Iudaicae*), believed to have once been in his possession.<sup>1515</sup>

Having chosen to make his life permanently in Poland, Arnolfo joined himself to the local Polish nobility, marrying Dorothea Herburt de Felsthyn, the daughter of a Polish noble family with estates in Ruthenia.<sup>1516</sup> Dorothea was one of nine brothers and sisters born to Niccolo Herburt de Felsthyn. This connection greatly raised Arnolfo's status within the kingdom; he was himself in turn ennobled and increasingly became a feature at the Polish royal court. When Arnolfo's mother-in-law, Anna Herburt de Dzidziłów, passed, Filippo Buonaccorsi wrote an epitaph for her.<sup>1517</sup> While Arnolfo and Dorothea never had children, the marriage ensured that Arnolfo would not return to Italy. The couple's lack of children further ensured that Arnolfo's relatives, the sons of his brother Baldo and that of Lattanzio, would in his later years come to Poland to help continue the now family business, and act as Arnolfo's heirs. The absence of an heir may also explain the appearance in the record of *Niccolo Justini de Fuligno*, apparently an Italian from the small town of *Foligno*, located to the south of Florence near to Perugia. In a set of property transactions made in 1479-80, Arnolfo refers to Niccolo as *fratri suo* – his brother.<sup>1518</sup> As I have found no evidence in the Tedaldi family papers of a connection with Foligno, I would assume that the Niccolo in question was likely an Italian merchant who had

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<sup>1515</sup> The book, which carries the Tedaldi arms, later came first into the hands of Tomasz Paprocki, Przemyśl bailiff (*camerarius terrestris*), then the canon of Przemyśl Cathedral, Jan Kazimierz Bryszkowski, before being transferred to the collection of Tadeusz Porycki. Jerzy Kaliszuk, *Codices deperditi: średniowieczne rękopisy łacińskie Biblioteki Narodowej utracone w czasie II wojny światowej* [Codices deperditi: medieval Latin manuscripts of the National Library lost during World War II] (Wrocław: Wrocławskie Towarzystwo Miłośników Historii, 2016), 222, 536-7.

<sup>1516</sup> [AGZ] 15 nr 4478. For more on the family see: Adam Boniecki and Artur Reiski. *Herbarz Polski. Część I. Wiadomości Historyczno-Genealogiczne O Rodach Szlacheckich. Ułożył I Wydał A. Boniecki* [Armorial of Poland: Part I. Historical and Genealogical News on Noble Families. Collected and published by A. Boniecki] (Lviv: Drukem Koruela Bissera, 1899), 211. Olga Łaszczyńska, *Ród Herburtów w wiekach średnich* [The Herburt family in the Middle Ages] (Poznań: Nakł. Poznańskiego Tow. Przyjaciół Nauk; skł. gł.: Państwowe Zakłady Wydawn. Szkolnych, 1948).

<sup>1517</sup> *Callimaco Esperiente Poeta E Politico Del*, 92.

<sup>1518</sup> [AGZ] 18 nr. 1248 (1479/10/26), Nicolaus Corythko Lord of Wroblowycze, testifies that he owes 60 Hufł to *Aynolpho Thedaldi de Florentiis zupario Russie et Nicolao de Fulgino fratri suo* " which he will pay in wool and income from households in villis Wroblowycze in distr. Drohobycien" ; [AGZ] 18 nr. 1249 (1479/10/26), Martinus alias Marcis Korawa, Lord in Ropczyce testifies that he owes 60 Hufł to *Aynolpho Thedaldi de Florentiis Zupario Russie et Nicolao de Fulgino fratri suo* to be paid by their taking possession of the village of Michalowyecze.; [AGZ] 18 nr. 1328 (1477/01/02) Nicolaus Corythko Lord of Wroblowycze, testifies that he owes 20 Hufł to *Aynolpho Thedaldi de Florentiis zupario Russie et Nicolao de Fulgino fratri suo* " which he will pay in wool and income from households in villis Wroblowycze in district Drohobycien.; [AGZ] 18 nr. 1365 (1480/04/18) Marcis Korawa, Lord in Ropczyce testifies that he sells the village - *sitam Mychalyowce* to *Aynolpho Thedaldi de Florentiis Zupario Russie et Nicolao de Fulgino fratri suo* for 300 marks, paid by Iohannem Pronycz to Marcis as intermediary for A and N. [AGZ] 18 nr 1500 (1481/06/05) Marcis Korawa, Lord in Ropczyce testifies that he owes 60 hufł to *Aynolpho Thedaldi de Florentiis Zupario Russie et Nicolao Iustini de Fulgino fratri ipsi Arnolfo* backed by his village of Slonsko.

married one of Dorothea Herbut de Felsthyn's many sisters, thus becoming a brother *in-law* to Arnolfo, and part of the family business. Niccolo disappears from the records after 1482, however, and so either died or returned to Italy. With the disappearance of Niccolo and no direct heirs of his own, other members of the Tedaldi family appear to have been invited by Arnolfo to Poland. Thus we find Arnolfo's nephew, Pierozzo, son of his brother Baldo, carrying letters back and forth from Poland to Italy for Lattanzio and Fillippo Buonaccorsi. It is likely that he ferried letters from Arnolfo as well, but these have not survived. It is also likely that he carried news and even gifts back and forth for the family, including possibly a portrait of Arnolfo himself, dressed in the Polish fashion.<sup>1519</sup> Meanwhile, Lattanzio's son, Giovanni Batista, was born only a year before Arnolfo passed away; and so never met him. All the same, the groundwork had been laid for the family to continue their activities in Poland; and so at the tender age of 17, Giovanni Batista was sent to Krakow, where he remained for the next ten years.<sup>1520</sup>

The efforts of Arnolfo thus paved the way for numerous members of the Tedaldi family to find success in Poland. Arnolfo's efforts looking over the salt mines, keeping accounts in order, and collecting tolls, paid off well. By the early 1480's, some fifteen years into his Polish sojourn, he had risen to a place of prominence in the eyes of the Polish court and was even tapped to carry on some ambassadorial duties. It was thus Arnolfo who sent official word from the Polish court to Lorenzo di Medici, known as *il Magnifico*, and the de facto ruler of Florence.<sup>1521</sup> Registers of royal expenses further show Arnolfo playing an important role in

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<sup>1519</sup> Giovanni was born around 1478, second after his brother Pieruzzo, who was born in 1475. See the 1480 Catasto of Giovanni's father, Baldo di Pieruzzo Tedaldi. ASF, Catasto nr 1023 fol. 157r-v. (San. Giovanni-Vaio) SDIR 100 (1492/03/31), "Famosus Ianoczus Thedaldi de Flurenciis, Italicus", included among creditors in Lviv. (1492/10/22) carrying letters from Fillipo Buonaccorsi in Poland to Lattanzio Tedaldi in Florence, Heinrich Zeissberg, *Kleinere Geschichtsquellen Polens im Mittelalter; eine Nachlese* (Vienna: K. Gerold, 1877), 72. The researcher, Sebastiano Ciampi, in the 1830s, reported that in the course of his research in Italy he discovered a portrait, dated on the back to 1480, of a man dressed in Polish fashion of the time and on the side, the coat of arms of the Tedaldi family. Ciampi believed the work depicted Arnolfo and had been sent from Poland to Florence as a family record. Ciampi does not reveal where precisely he made this Discovery; and so it is impossible to confirm. If true, however, it gives yet another indication of the close-knit unity of the Tedaldi family; and at the same time Arnolfo's full adoption of Polish ways and customs. Ciampi, *Notizie Dei secoli... Vol 3*, 83.

<sup>1520</sup> Giovanni Batista was born to Lattanzio Tedaldi and Camilla Giudicci on January 8<sup>th</sup>, 1495, in Florence in the Quarter of S. Giovanni gonfalone Viao, in the popolo of S. Polinari. Lattanzio, requested that, Maciej Drzewicki, Bishop of Przemyśl and Grand Chancellor of Poland, who was a fellow humanist correspondent, and the former student of his friend, Filippo Buonaccorsi, recommend his son, Giovanni Batista, for a cannonry in Poland so that he might continue his studies. Ciampi, *Notizie Dei Secoli*, 16-7; Vincenzo Minuti, "Relazione del Commisario Gio. Batista Tedaldi sopra la Città e il Capitanato di Pistoia nell'anno 1569," *Archivio Storico Italiano*, serie V, 10, nr. 188 (1892): 303.

<sup>1521</sup> The letter sent by Arnolfo has not survived; but a register and brief synopsis of a return message is recorded in a regesta once kept by Lorenzo di Medici. The letter sent by Lorenzo di Medici the Magnificent to Arnolfo in Poland, on behalf of the Polish king, thanked him for an earlier epistle and the gift of some falcons who had sadly not arrived. ASF, MaP 62 fol. 83v (1481/05/01).

royal finances.<sup>1522</sup> Among other things, he organized payments made to Filippo Buonaccorsi to outfit him for his ambassadorial mission to Venice in 1486.<sup>1523</sup> Towards the end of his life, Arnolfo appears to have become somewhat magnanimous. As an example, he assented to the organization of a trade fair in Lviv to raise money to rebuild the city walls, despite the fact that this action would cut significantly into his own toll profits.<sup>1524</sup> In his last years, Arnolfo further became Zupparius of the all-important salt mine in Bochnia.<sup>1525</sup> It is likely due to this final appointment, which would have had Arnolfo living near Krakow, that upon his death, he was interned there in the Dominican Church of the Holy Trinity. His tomb slab bore the coat of arms of the Tedaldi family and the inscription, “*Ainulfus Tedaldus Tuscus. Claro et ornato viro Arnolpho Thedaldo Florentino, qui cum diu Cracoviae moratus est, obiit an. 148. [sic!] hic resurrectionem expectat.*”<sup>1526</sup> A painted epitaph depicting Arnolfo kneeling below a scene of the Annunciation, flanked on the left by St. John the Baptist, the patron saint of Florence, and on the right by St. Dominic, was hung on the wall next to his tomb. The work is today more commonly known as the *Zwiastowanie z Jodłownika* – the Annunciation of Jodłownik - after the small parish church it was at some point transferred to - and is preserved in the *Muzeum Diecezjalne w Tarnowie*, the Diocesan Museum of Tarnów.<sup>1527</sup> (Figure 66/67) Next to the kneeling figure of Arnolfo, the Tedaldi coat of arms is displayed: a brown field, cut with three horizontal stripes, with a left-facing lion rampant. Above the coat of arms there is a crowned helmet and a ribbon on which one can read the inscription: *Justus ut palma florebit*, a saying taken from the 91<sup>st</sup> psalm. In the wake of Arnolfo’s death, his widow, Dorothea, received back

<sup>1522</sup> [Rach 1484-88], 35, 37, 45, 48, 59, 60, 63, 65, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 78, 74, 75, 76, 79, 80, 83, 85, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 94, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 104, 107, 108, 110, 114, 116, 118, 123, 124, 125, 127, 130, 131, 136, 137, 138, 142, 143, 144, 147, 151, 152, 153, 154, 156, 61, 162, 163, 164, 167, 168, 173, 174, 179, 181, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 191, 192, 193, 195, 196, 197, 198.

<sup>1523</sup> *An. 1485 Wladislawie dominico Oculi quitacio data Philipo Calimac de pecuniis tantum, quantum necessarie fuerint pro comparandis necessariis regalibus usque ad centum florenos et non supra ad Aynolphum zupparium drohobiczensem* (1485/03/06). *t. feria tertia decern floreni pro nbli Philipo Calimaco pro pellicio ad rationem zupparum drohobiczensium* (1486/12/18) [Rach 1484-88], 26, 119.

<sup>1524</sup> Recorded in Charter granted to Lviv by King Jan Olbracht as nobili Annolpho Teadaldi di Florenciis Thloneatore pro nunc Leopoliensi, given mission to organize a trade fair in Lviv to raise money for rebuilding of the city walls. *MatArch* nr. 211 (1494/01/25)

<sup>1525</sup> (1494-5) Stanisław Fischer, *Dzieje Bocheńskiej Żupy Solnej* [The history of the Bochnia salt mine] (Warsaw: Wydawn. Geologiczne, 1962), 35.

<sup>1526</sup> Arnolfo’s tomb is no longer extant but a description of it has survived. Marcin Szyma, “Where is the Burial Place of Filippo Buonaccorsi, called Callimachus?: from the Research on the Topography of the Dominican Church in Cracow,” in *Forum epigrafických a sepulkralních studií*, ed. Jiří Roháček. (Prague: Artefactum, nakladatelství Ústav dějin umění Akademie věd České republiky, 2016), 63 fn 10.

<sup>1527</sup> Janusz Kozłowski and Kazimierz Kuczman, “Włoska fundacja krakowskiego malowidła cechowego: epitafijny obraz Ainolfa Tedaldiego w Muzeum Diecezjalnym w Tarnowie [Italian foundation of the Krakow guild painting: epitaph painting of Arnolfo Tedaldi at the Diocesan Museum in Tarnów],” *Folia Historiae Artium* 20 (1984):56-8.



her dowry; but given that the couple had no children, Arnolfo's nephews soon arrived to try to wind up the estate.<sup>1528</sup>



Figure 66 The Zwiastowanie z Jodłownika – the Annunciation of Jodłownik - Preserved in the Muzeum Diecezjalne w Tarnowie, the Diocesan Museum of Tarnów

Source: Wikimedia

[https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zwiastowanie\\_z\\_Jod%C5%82ownika#/media/Plik:Zwiastowanie.jod%C5%82owiec.jpg](https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zwiastowanie_z_Jod%C5%82ownika#/media/Plik:Zwiastowanie.jod%C5%82owiec.jpg) Accessed December 20<sup>th</sup> 2020

<sup>1528</sup> [SDIR] 23 nr 107 (1496), [MRPS] III nr. 1126 (1504/01/15)<sup>1528</sup>; nr 467. (1502/04/29)<sup>1528</sup> nr. 472 (1502/04/29)<sup>1528</sup>, nr. 1126 (1504/01/15)<sup>1528</sup>, nr. 1683 (1504/09/16)<sup>1528</sup>; [MRPS] IV, nr 8378 (1507/03/17)



Figure 67 Arnolfo Tedaldi – Detail from the Zwiastowanie z Jodłownika – the Annunciation of Jodłownik - Preserved in the Muzeum Diecezjalne w Tarnowie, the Diocesan Museum of Tarnów

Source: Wikimedia

[https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zwiastowanie\\_z\\_Jod%C5%82ownika#/media/Plik:Zwiastowanie.jod%C5%82owiec.jpg](https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zwiastowanie_z_Jod%C5%82ownika#/media/Plik:Zwiastowanie.jod%C5%82owiec.jpg) Accessed December 20<sup>th</sup> 2020

Arnolfo thus epitomized the settled merchant, an individual who arrived from abroad, perhaps without intending to make Poland their permanent home; but finding the possibilities rich, chose to do so. Arnolfo had the advantage of coming from an old and relatively prosperous Florentine family, a no doubt good education, and access to considerable capital upon his arrival, thanks to his partnership with Julianio di Valetaris and Nembrot Veluti. Arnolfo was then able to leverage his skills and financial resources to enter the real moneymaking area of salt mine and toll administration. These positions gave him access to the court and the local aristocracy which, after some time, he was able to enter through marriage, thus ensuring his continued stay in the region. Arnolfo continued trading but also sank his fortune into land acquisitions, another common practice of the settled merchant, as villages were a stable and solid form of income. Yet, for all that he appears to have gone fully “native”; even sending back a portrait of himself in Polish garb to grace the halls of his family’s ancestral home. Arnolfo continued to rely on his kinship network, inviting his nephew to assist him and eventually nominating him as his heir.

### 4.3.6 Perozzo (Perocius) di Baldo di Tedaldi of Florence (1492-1507)

#### - The Factor and Heir to a Fortune

Perozzo di Baldo di Tedaldi exemplifies the third category of early Italian presence in Poland, that of the factor – an agent for a more senior partner of a company, as well as a subcategory of that grouping – the heir to the senior merchant’s possessions upon his death. While spending most of his life in Italy, Perozzo traveled a great deal in his youth, back and forth from Florence to Poland, carrying letters and gifts from his uncle to his father and others. This sort of adventuresome, but relatively menial task was the work of a factor who was often a younger member of an extended family. When Arnolfo Tedaldi died without children in 1495, Perozzo was quickly on the scene and able to take over his uncle’s position as Zupparius. Perozzo held this position for a number of years, engaging in mercantile activities, settling his uncle’s debts, and winding up the estate. Eventually, he handed the business over to Ottaviano di Gucci di Cavalcanti of Florence who had been active in Poland since 1496.<sup>1529</sup>

Perozzo di Baldo di Tedaldi was the eldest son of Arnolfo Tedaldi’s older brother Baldo, named after his grandfather, as was the Florentine custom. He was born in Florence in 1475; and presumably enjoyed a standard education before being sent to Poland for the first time at the age of seventeen.<sup>1530</sup> While shockingly young by modern standards, this would have been a common age for a young man to have graduated within a company from *garzone* or *discepoloto* to the position of *fattore* – factor.<sup>1531</sup> We unfortunately do not possess any documentation which would give detail as to whether Perozzo had a written contract and a set salary, or was simply acting as a member of the family. I am inclined to believe that some form of

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<sup>1529</sup> Ottaviano di Gucci Cavalcanti (Cavalcanti) appears in the sources for the first time writing a letter to Lattanzio Tedaldi, describing the lavish funeral held for his friend, Filippo Buonaccorsi in 1496. As Arnolfo Tedaldi had died a few months earlier, it is possible that Ottaviano had been sent there to assist in helping to settle the estate. The letter has been transcribed and published by Ciampi. See: Ciampi, *Bibliografia Critica*, 30-2; [MRPS] IV, nr 8560 (1507/05/18), nr 8647 (1507/09/07), nr 8653 (1507/10/25), nr 16218 (1531/12/07), nr 17167 (1535/08/16).

<sup>1530</sup> 1480 Catasto Baldo di Pieruzzo Tedaldi ASF, Catasto 1023, fol. 157r-v. (San. Giovanni-Vaio)

<sup>1531</sup> Roover offers a concise explanation of the term. “In the parlance of the Middle Ages, the word *fattore*, or factor, did not refer to some kind of commission merchant or agent, but designated simply an employee of a trading or banking company, more specifically an employee serving in an establishment abroad. Sometimes *fattore* was used as a synonym of *giovane*. In any case, a *fattore* or *giovane* was an employee who had more experience and was older than a *garzone* or a *discepoloto*, terms reserved for office boys about twelve to fifteen years old. *Fattori* were sometimes bound to a company by a notarial contract, which determined the terms of their employment. It usually circumscribed their powers and defined their duties carefully, without impairing the employer’s rights in matters of promotion or dismissal. Factors received a salary “for the duration of their time,” but they did not participate in the profits. However, they were sometimes awarded an *onusora* or special stipend if their services had been outstanding.” Roover, *The Rise*, 79.

employment had been arranged. In 1492, we thus find him engaged in his aforementioned work as a courier between Poland and various members of the Tedaldi family in Florence. He is perhaps to be seen in the *Famosus Ianoczus Thedaldi de Flurenciis, Italicus* as one of the creditors in Lviv that same year.<sup>1532</sup> Perozzo had apparently been sent to Poland in order to learn the ropes of the business from his uncle. However, Fillippo Buonaccorsi, who by now had had his falling out with Arnolfo, wrote to his friend, Lantanzio Tedaldi, that it would be better for the boy to return home.<sup>1533</sup> Perozzo may have done so, as the next time he appears in the sources is in 1496, in the wake of his uncle's death and having taken over his position as zupparius of the Przemyśl and Drohobych salt mines.<sup>1534</sup> As the position of manager was rented for a set period from the crown, Perozzo at this point was simply fulfilling his uncle's contract. He must have served well, however, as he retained the post until 1504 when he handed it off to his younger brother, Giovanni, who had come from Florence to join him.<sup>1535</sup> During his nearly ten years in Poland, Perozzo worked to settle his uncle's large estate; which included a significant debt of 4000 fl. That was still outstanding in 1502.<sup>1536</sup> The brothers managed their business well however, and in 1504, sold off some of the villages they had inherited from their uncle for 1200 hufl, but were still owed 4200 hufl.<sup>1537</sup>

Perozzo thus stands in as the agent who worked for a more settled, wealthier merchant, learning the skills of the trade before taking on the responsibilities himself. In this case, although he spent a considerable amount of time in Poland, Perozzo did not choose to follow in the footsteps of his Uncle; although he and his brother Giovanni could conceivably had done so. Instead, they went back to Florence, leaving the business in the hands of another Italian and a family friend, Ottaviano di Gucci di Cavalcanti. The Cavalcanti family had been active in Hungary in the early fifteenth century and it was likely this connection which drew Ottaviano towards

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<sup>1532</sup> [SDIR] 23 nr 100

<sup>1533</sup> (1492/10/22) Zeissberg, *Kleinere Geschichtsquellen Polens*, 72

<sup>1534</sup> [SDIR] 23 107 (1496) *Perozzo Thedaldi de Florentia, zuparius drohobicensis*

<sup>1535</sup> Giovanni di Baldo Tedaldi was born in 1478, according to his father's 1480 Catasto. 1480 Catasto of Giovanni's father Baldo di Pieruzzo Tedaldi ASF, Catasto nr 1023 fol. 157r-v. (San. Giovanni-Vaio) MRPS 3 nr 1126 (1504/01/15), nr 1683 (1504/09/16)

<sup>1536</sup> Already by 1498, Dorothea de Felsthyn, widow of Arnolfo Tedaldi, had agreed to recognize Perozzo as the rightful heir nominated by her husband, and granted him his patrimony, all apart from her dower rights to the villages of Psari, Dolynyany, and Mychalow. [AGZ] 15 nr 4473 MRSP 4 nr. 472 (1502/04/29), nr. 1126 (1504/01/15)

<sup>1537</sup> [MRPS] IV, nr 8378 (1507/03/17)

commerce in the region.<sup>1538</sup> It was thus, Ottaviano who would follow in Arnolfo's footsteps; remaining in Poland until his death in 1535; when yet another Florentine succeeded him.<sup>1539</sup>

## 4.4 Family Structures

While the case studies above offer glimpses into the individual lives of merchants, than can be distilled from the brief source details displayed in the Appendix, the following section seeks to demonstrate more general patterns of how Italian traders and their families lived. Given the variegated and incomplete nature of the sources, even in comparison to that collected for other Central Eastern European regions such as Hungary, it is difficult to assess overall trends in family partnerships and dynamics, particularly over multiple generations.<sup>1540</sup> A few general features can be noted however. Family bonds were of obvious importance to the Italians of all stripes who settled in Poland and chain migration a distinct phenomenon. It is also clear that Italians used their family connections strategically in a bid to increase their status and wealth. Families pooled resources creating joint-firms that allowed them to trade with a larger pool of capital. It was also frequently the case that various members of a family would locate themselves strategically across the map, acting as nodes in a network of trade – one or two in Italy and the rest spread across Central Eastern Europe. Over time, brothers, sons, nephews, and grandsons were frequently brought into the fold, initiated as a general factor while still a teenager or otherwise brought into partnership in administrative posts at the salt mines or managing customs duties. Finally, in a number of cases we can see members of a family choosing to settle permanently in Poland, becoming a member of the local nobility. Such strategies can be seen being employed by Italians from all backgrounds and while family and business partnerships evolved differently in the various Italian polities, no particular group in Poland appears to have favored one over the others. Unfortunately, the source base does not

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<sup>1538</sup> Katalin Prajda, "Unions of Interest. Florentine Marriage Ties and Business Networks in the Kingdom of Hungary during the Reign of Sigismund of Luxemburg," in *Marriage in Premodern Europe: Italy and Beyond*, ed. Jacqueline Murray (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2012), 7-9; Prajda, *Network and Migration*, 104-8.

<sup>1539</sup> (1535/08/16) - Ottaviano was by this date deceased; and a certain Carolus of Florence had taken over his post as salt mine manager, per Ottaviano's will. [MRPS] IV nr 17167

<sup>1540</sup> Arany provides a detailed analysis of eight prominent Florentine families in Hungary highlighting their business strategies over multiple generations. Krisztina Arany, "Florentine Merchant Families in Hungary in the first Half of the Fifteenth Century," in *Generations in Towns: Succession and Success in Pre-Industrial Urban Societies*, eds. Katalin Szende and Eliassen Finn-Einar (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2020), 129-51.

allow for a more granular assessment of business contracts, dotal claims or final testaments that might refine our understanding. A general picture however can be given.

Already from the earliest group of Italians who arrived to Krakow in the fourteenth century, we see families selling property and businesses to each other, going so far as to create a small interconnected colony in the village of Bronowicze.<sup>1541</sup> The earliest known Genoese in Poland also all show strong family connections. Nicholas Manente worked with his brother Marsonu to send papal funds to Italy, Hugo Cavallo brought his son Paolo Cavallo to Poland followed by his nephew Pietro who worked with his uncle managing the salt mine at Bochnia, and Gotfridus Fattinante traded silk with his nephew Erasmus in Cologne.<sup>1542</sup> The Guidotti, Talenti, di ser Matteo brothers, Promontorio and Tedaldi families who how family units could work together across multiple polities and multiple generations in pursuit of profit, relying in large part on family members to meet these aims. Given that family firms had their origins in medieval Italy, it comes as no surprise to see sons assisting their fathers, nephews their uncles, and brothers each other.<sup>1543</sup> Still, just as we see in larger organizations with multiple branches such as the Datini firm or the Medici bank, which are often put forward as exempla, were ‘family’ firms in name only as they regularly employed individuals who were not members of even extended kin networks. Italian merchants in Poland were certainly more than willing to engage in trade with locals, designate them as procurators, and even on occasion employ them as agents as in the case for instance of Jeronimo di Olmerio and his “*servus*” Gregarius Ungarus [the Hungarian], family ties were still important.<sup>1544</sup> The di ser Matteo brothers provide a good example of a mixed partnership of familial and non-familial elements. They partnered with Johannes Bank of Wroclaw and employed Henselinus de la Rosa to ferry their goods from Krakow to Venice and Niccolo di Vaggio di Mazzo Giuseppe as a local factor but also included the young Reynaldus di Sandro di Altoviti, brother in-law of Michele di ser Matteo to work for them as an agent.<sup>1545</sup> The Genoese brothers Cristoforo and Domenico di San. Romulo offer another example as they ordered their agent Accursio di Calignano sending money and goods

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<sup>1541</sup> See fn. 82 and [Mag. Court 1] nr. 1682, 1705-7, 1721-22, 1725-6, (1409) 2479.

<sup>1542</sup> (1328/10/23) [APV] nr. 118; (1393/12/15) [Theiner I] DCXLVI pg 497; (1351/08/19) [NKiRMK] nr 1625; (1393/12/15) [KDKK] nr. CCCXCVI.

<sup>1543</sup> Yadira González, “Business Organization and Organizational Innovation in Late Medieval Italy,” In *Research handbook on the history of corporate and company law*, ed. Harwell Wells (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2018) 12-17.

<sup>1544</sup> (1440/10/07) [AGZ] 14 nr 96-102

<sup>1545</sup> (1428/06/19). [Itali] nr 50; (1427) ASF, Catasto 26, f.1083v; (1411) ASF, Catasto 38 (1427) fol. 671r-677v (1428/06/19) [Itali] nr 50.

to their father Pelegro in Genoa.<sup>1546</sup> The most striking example is of course the triple partnership of the Florentine Arnolfo di Tedaldi, Julianio di Valetaris of Genoa, and Nembrot Veulti of Venice which linked not only men from three different polities but also Christian and Jewish merchants together in a single joint venture.<sup>1547</sup> All three men would then later have family members arrive in Poland after them.

What we do not see in Poland used as a strategy that is to be found in other regions such as Hungary, was the pursuit of high ecclesiastical office as a means towards family advancement.<sup>1548</sup> While a number of Italians in Poland operated as papal collectors, these were not permanent positions and while they may have drawn a family's initial interest to Poland, such dealings were not the same as acquiring a local bishopric or handsome prebend.<sup>1549</sup> What we do see in Poland, that arises also in many cases elsewhere is the movement of some Italian families into marriage alliances with the local nobility as shall be discussed below.<sup>1550</sup>

#### 4.4.1 Gender

When speaking of migration, the question of gender ratios is always worth considering. Unsurprisingly, the number of males to females was highly tilted in favor of men, women making up only 4% of the total. The Italian merchants who traveled to Poland during the medieval period tended to be younger men, many of whom operated as factors, visiting the kingdom for only a brief period of time. Others meanwhile, were intent on making something of themselves in a distant land and were either unmarried before they left the peninsula or chose to leave their families behind. Those Italian females who did make their way to Poland, and more importantly into the sources, were either wives or daughters of Italian men who had settled permanently in the kingdom. The bias of the sources is a key element here as the information that has come down to us tends to be of a commercial or legal variety in which men are overrepresented. More women may have immigrated but either their names are indistinguishable in the sources from their Polish counterparts and so are not counted here or they fail to appear at all.

<sup>1546</sup> (1464/04/14- 1464/08/11) [SDIR] nr 12;(1470) [SDIR] nr 40

<sup>1547</sup> (1464/07/25) [CodEp] III nr 74

<sup>1548</sup> Arany, "Florentine Merchant Families in Hungary," 143-4.

<sup>1549</sup> The only known case of an Italian merchant family entering ecclesiastical service in Poland is that of Barnabas di Nehrono and his son Gregory where rather than gaining wealth, Barnabas endowed a special altar where his son might serve, thus losing money rather than gaining it (1464) [AGZ] 2 nr. 99

<sup>1550</sup> This can be seen in multiple cases in Hungary. Arany, "Florentine Merchant Families in Hungary," 141-2.

## 4.4.2 Wives

Given the surviving sources, it is difficult to say much about the family life of the Italians who lived in Poland. The small sample size, based on the one hundred Italians operating in Poland during the period that are registered in the Appendix, renders it difficult to make generalizations. Due to this, the marital status of Italians in Poland is also somewhat difficult to say with certainty, but from what the sources do relate, a minimum of 24% of those in Poland, were espoused as their wives are mentioned in the sources. For the other 76%, they do not have wives mentioned and therefore may or may not have been married. The records give us no obvious indication one way or the other therefore I cannot say with certainty. This number is far lower than we might expect, but can be explained in two ways. First, we know only of the wives of these men who appear tangentially in the sources. They appear in notarial records, testaments, or for some reason are involved in court cases, skewing the number downward, as many may simply have left no written trace. Secondly, for those Italians who acted in Poland as agents for others, remaining in the kingdom for only a brief period, they either had wives at home or were not yet in a position to marry. As a rule, men in the Italian communes married later than those beyond the Alps. In Florence for example, by the age of twenty only 15% of men would be married and by thirty five, still only 50%.<sup>1551</sup> It was expected for one to have developed a certain amount of wealth and reputation before taking on a wife. For the men who arrived in Poland then, it may simply have been a matter of time before they chose to settle down. For both of these reasons, we unsurprisingly find that the individuals who chose to immigrate for longer periods to Poland tend to be the ones who appear as married in the sources. This was not always the case, but is the general trend. Of those Italians we are aware of who had wives, most appear to have chosen a local woman to marry as opposed to an Italian. This tendency of Italians to marry locally was a habit to be found commonly, especially in those areas where Italian mercantile communities abroad were small and lacking formal structures such as *natione* or *fondaci*, institutions discussed further in the following chapter. In Bruges for example, where the Italian community was more numerous and better organized, the tendency was to marry endogenously.<sup>1552</sup> This was not always the case however in those places where the émigré community was smaller, greater integration into

<sup>1551</sup> Deborah Youngs, *The life-cycle in Western Europe, c.1300-c.1500* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020), 135.

<sup>1552</sup> Francesco Guidi Bruscoli, "Mercanti-banchieri fiorentini tra Londra e Bruges nel XV secolo," in *Mercatura è arte: uomini d'affari toscani in Europa e nel Mediterraneo tardomedievale*, Eds. Lorenzo Tanzini and Sergio Tognetti (Rome: Viella, 2012), 31-2.



the local populace was viewed as desirable and more exogenous marriages took place. Sometimes this meant marrying the daughters of wealthy burghers, as was the strategy of Gerardo Bueri in Lübeck, who took to wife the city Mayor's daughter and profited greatly thereby, in other cases, the policy was to wed into the local landed nobility.<sup>1553</sup>

Certainly, most of the men who settled permanently in Poland, married.<sup>1554</sup> The naming conventions of the day make it all but impossible to say if the majority of the ladies were Italian or Polish, but presumably there was a mix. In a few cases, more is known. The wife of the Genoese merchant and Zupparius, Paolo Cavallo for example, was likely Italian, given that her name was Fennena and she seems to have joined him in Poland.<sup>1555</sup> Pietro Bicherano's wife Bona on the other hand, remained behind in Venice and it appears that despite having four children together, after Pietro's transfer to Poland, the two never saw each other again. A further demonstration of their marital rupture can be seen by the fact, as it was mentioned in Pietro's case study, that of the many large bequests Bona made in her will, only five florins went for masses to be said for her husband's soul, and in her second testament, she gave nothing at all.<sup>1556</sup> This particular parting appears to have been an aberration however, as many of the other merchants' wives appear to have lived with their husbands in Poland. Elizabeth, the wife of Pietro Cavallo was one such, as was Barbara, the wife of Antonio Auecci of Florence, and Ursula, the wife of Giovanni Talenti another.<sup>1557</sup> Ursula, who very well may have been Italian, resided with her husband in Košice and even set up a small vineyard.<sup>1558</sup> Margaretha, the wife of Antonio di ser Matteo is yet another who stood by her husband in his work. Margaretha,

<sup>1553</sup> Fouquet, "Ein Italiener in Lübeck," 201-2.

<sup>1554</sup> A dedicated policy of marrying into the local elite as a means to gain profit and prestige can also be seen in the case of the Genoese Adorno family in Jerez de la Frontera, Andalusia Spain. Italians in England appear to have frequently married local women in London and Southampton. The case in Hungary is mixed. As Arany has shown, many Florentine families active in Buda did not seek to marry with other local burgher families as their South-German merchant competitors did. Instead when they chose to marry locals, rather than securing a spouse from Florence, wedding Hungarian nobility. A similar pattern or preferring to marry into the local nobility rather than prominent local burgher families appears also to have been the case in Poland. Marriage strategies could also change over time as a community developed. In France, where previously it had been a rare event, between 1570-1620 two thirds of the Italians married exogenously. Fouquet, "Ein Italiener in Lübeck," 201-3; Arany, *Florentine*, 112-3; Ruiz Pilares, Enrique José, and José Antonio Mingorance Ruiz, "La movilidad social de las naciones extranjeras en las ciudades andaluzas bajomedievales: los Adorno y la sociedad política de Jerez de la Frontera (1470-1520)," *Hispania*, 2019, vol. LXXIX, n.º 263 (2019):669-98; Lambert, "Merchants on the margins, 96-7; Alwyn A. Ruddock, "Alien merchants in Southampton in the later Middle Ages," *The English Historical Review* 61.239 (1946): 6; Fara, *Economia e Società in Transilvania nel Medioevo*, 285-300; Joanna Milstein, *The Gondi: Family Strategy and Survival in Early Modern France* (London: Routledge, 2016), 178.

<sup>1555</sup> (1350/06/27) [Bull] II nr. 499.

<sup>1556</sup> ASV, Testamenti 554 nr. 197 Notary Griffon Pietro. ASV, Notarile, Testamenti 364, nr. 398. Published in [Itali] nr. 76

<sup>1557</sup> [NKiRMK] nr 1669; [CA1] nr 823

<sup>1558</sup> [NKiRMK] nr 1625, [Kassa], 68 nr. 568.

who may or may not have been Italian, remained with her husband in Krakow until Antonio's falling out with King Władysław Jagiełło over unpaid debts. After this harrowing episode, which saw Margretha and her two children held as surety against her husband's return with money to pay the king, she returned to Wrocław, where her husband had begun his career. There, she appears to have assisted him in his work as he named her his procurator, allowing her to make binding contracts on his behalf.<sup>1559</sup> The pair were reunited permanently a few years later, when Antonio at last quit Poland for good.

A number of Italians also married into local Polish noble families. Such was for example the case for Bonagiunta, the nephew of Pietro Bicherano, who married Jadwiga, the daughter of Mirosław, the lord of Gdów. It was through this connection that they came into possession of the strategically well placed village of Myślenice, which was located on the main route connecting Krakow and Hungary.<sup>1560</sup> Cristoforo di San. Romulo also married a local lady, as did Giovanni di Paravisino of Milan, Elizabeth de Lubyny [Lubień] and Katerina, daughter of Johannes Wojsławic and owner of the estate of Kaczkowice, respectively.<sup>1561</sup> It is impossible now to say if these marriage alliances were made more for profit or passion, but marrying into a local noble family certainly carried a number of advantages. Such was demonstrably the case for Arnolfo Tedaldi, who took as his bride Dorothea Herburt de Felsthyn, the daughter of Nicolaus Herbut de Felsthyn, a Polish nobleman with estates in Ruthenia.<sup>1562</sup> The Felsthyn family were a powerful force in the region and through his marriage, Arnolfo gained status and official entry into the Polish social elite and it is not coincidental that only after his nuptials do we see Arnolfo at the royal court.<sup>1563</sup> Dorothea was further, one of nine brothers and sisters, and he thus gained a partner in his affairs, working with Dorothea's brother-in-law Niccolo.<sup>1564</sup> Arnolfo thus, gained entry into the ranks of the Polish nobility and the support of that family

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<sup>1559</sup> [Itali] nr 67, nr 70

<sup>1560</sup> [ZK] 5, 382 <http://www.slownik.ihpan.edu.pl/search.php?q=junta&d=0&t=0> Accessed December 12<sup>th</sup> 2020

<sup>1561</sup> [AGZ] 15 nr. 373; Acta terrestria Cracoviensia. Księgi ziemskie krakowskie, rps APKr nr 150 pg 208 <http://www.slownik.ihpan.edu.pl/search.php?id=7074&q=Gallika&d=0&t=0> Accessed October 23<sup>rd</sup> 2020

<sup>1562</sup> [AGZ] 15 nr 4478. For more on the family see: Adam Boniecki and Artur Reiski. *Herbarz Polski. Część I. Wiadomości Historyczno-Genologiczne o Rodach Szlacheckich. Ułożył i Wydał A. Boniecki* [Armorial of Poland: Part I. Historical and Genealogical News On Noble Families. Collected and published by A. Boniecki] (Lviv: Driekem Koruela Bissera, 1899), 211. Olga Łaszczyńska, *Ród Herburtów w wiekach średnich* [The Herburt family in the middle ages] (Poznań: Nakł. Poznańskiego Tow. Przyjaciół Nauk; skł. gł.: Państwowe Zakłady Wydawn. Szkolnych, 1948).

<sup>1563</sup> Originally from Moravia, the Felsthyn family had transferred to Poland in the late thirteenth century upon receiving a grant of lands in the region of Lviv from Duke Władysław of Opole. Reiski. *Herbarz Polski*, 211.

<sup>1564</sup> "*Aynolpho Thedaldi de Florenciis Zupario Russie et Nicolao de Fulgino fratri suo*" (1477/01/02) [AGZ] 18 nr. 1328, (1479/10/26), nr 1248, (1479/10/26), nr. 1249, (1480/04/18), nr. 1365, (1481/06/05), nr 1500; In a further sign of familial unity, Filippo Buonaccorsi, at that time a close friend of Arnolfo, was convinced to write an epitaph for his mother-in-law upon her passing *Callimaco Esperiente Poeta E Politico Del*, 92.

which translated directly into a business partner, a common practice in Italy that was here reproduced in Poland. Further evidence of Italians integrating into the Polish nobility comes in the form of Nicholas Serafino, the Polish knight -“*gladifero*” and extremely successful Zupparius, whose ancestry in Italy was close enough to the surface that he could write in Italian, but was born in Wieliczka, used the Nieczuja coat of arms, and came from a family that was thoroughly Polonized enough that it has been impossible to trace their precise Italian origins.<sup>1565</sup> At some point, one of Nicolaus’s ancestors must have married into the Polish gentry. Nicholas himself, carried on the trend of integration, purchasing the castle of Barwald and its surrounding villages, after which he and his family were known as de Barwald.<sup>1566</sup>

Given the heavy emphasis on marriage during the medieval period, it is perhaps more interesting to note the many Italians who failed to find matrimonial bliss. For those men who passed through Poland, staying only a year or so such a blank in the records is to be expected, but the number of men who resided permanently in the country who failed to marry is striking. The brothers Leonardo and Guido di ser Matteo for instance, do not appear to have joined their brothers Antonio and Michele in tying the knot, perhaps in part because they had little patrimony to offer a prospective bride. In the Italian context, this would have been the most valid reason during the age for forgoing marriage, as it was expected for a man to have prospered enough in business to have a house and income before offering for a bride. Yet, many men in Poland who had made their fortune also forwent marriage. Paolo Cavallo appears not to have taken a wife while Gotfridus Fattinante, the Genoese merchant and Zupparius, despite having acquired great status and wealth in Poland, left everything to the Church, as he had no heirs of his body to offer it to. Albizzo di Medici is another, who at the end of his life, distributed his goods to friends rather than his children. Paolo di Promontorio, despite his many years settled in Poznań appears never to have married and his patrimony was eventually recovered by his nephews.

#### 4.4.3 Sons and Daughters

The children of Italian merchants in Poland, are often even more difficult to track than their wives, but a few do appear in the sources, usually in the context of a disputed will. Some of these offspring are known to have remained in Italy, while others settled in Poland. Pietro Bicherano’s four children for example, remained in Venice, two of his daughters taking the

<sup>1565</sup> Serafino, *Corpus Epistularum*, XXIV-XXV.

<sup>1566</sup> <http://www.slownik.ihpan.edu.pl/search.php?q=Barwald&d=0&t=0> Accessed October 30<sup>th</sup> 2020

veil and one marrying into the powerful Diede family, while his son, managed the family portfolio. One of his grandsons however, Nicholas Bicherano did venture to Poland after his grandfather's death and can be found briefly managing the area of Muszyna.<sup>1567</sup> Antonio di ser Matteo on the other hand had at least two progeny who grew up in Poland. Bonagiunta, Pietro Bicherano's nephew, had three - two sons, one named Jan who died young and another named Francisco, after his cousin, as well as a girl named Helen. Both grew up in Poland, Francesco becoming a knight and Helen marrying a local lord.<sup>1568</sup> Dorothea, the daughter of Andrea Gwaska di Soldaia, a merchant of Genoa, also married well, becoming the bride of Nicolai Myloslawsky, *gladiferi Calischiensi* – Knight of Kalisz.<sup>1569</sup> While Gregory, the son of Barnabas de Nehrono of Genoa found his place in Poland, not with a woman, but in the bosom of the Church.<sup>1570</sup> Gregory's father Barnabas used his wealth secured in trade through Lviv to secure his son's career, endowing the proceeds from the village of Pikołowice (near Lviv), to the Lviv Cathedral with the understanding that his son would act as ministrant. Unfortunately, Gregory died soon after the transfer was made, and having no more living relatives in Poland, Barnabas gave the village over permanently to the Church.<sup>1571</sup> Dorothea di S. Romulo, the daughter of Cristoforo di San. Romulo, on the other hand, may have grown up in Genoa. The only evidence for her presence in Poland was her appearing after her Father's death when she sought to claim a portion of his estate.<sup>1572</sup> The case was similar for Anastasia Messopero, daughter of Pietro Messopero of Genoa, who was forced to go to court in Lviv seeking money owed to her father, which as his heir she was owed.<sup>1573</sup> Other children meanwhile, were not always left in solid financial straits, as for example the daughters of Giovanni di Paravisino of Milan who, after their father's passing, were forced to mortgage the

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<sup>1567</sup> Not much is known about Nicholas's life. He appears to have grown up in Venice and followed in his father's footsteps being involved with the Black Sea slave trade. (1448/10/04) [SPPP] 2 nr 3351; Danuta Quirini-Popfawska, *Obecność niewolników ruskich w rejonie Morza Śródziemnego w późnym średniowieczu* [Presence of Ruthenian slaves in the Mediterranean in the Late Middle Ages], *Portolana. Studia Mediterranea* 1 (2004):132.

<sup>1568</sup> [Itali] nr 67; [KDMK IV], 1472.

<sup>1569</sup> [MRPS] I nr. 2035

<sup>1570</sup> [AGZ] 2 nr. 99

<sup>1571</sup> [AGZ] 2 nr. 99. [AGZ] 6 nr. 75

<sup>1572</sup> [AGZ] 18 nr. 33

<sup>1573</sup> [AGZ] 15 nr. 3565; [AGZ] 19 nr. 2872; [SDIR] 23 nr 33

village they had received as their inheritance.<sup>1574</sup> For those children of Italians who remained in Poland, most of them were able, thanks to their parental connections, to settle into life amongst the Polish gentry, adapting so completely that their Italian connections are soon untraceable in the sources. For those who stayed behind in Italy, or traveled there later, it is impossible to say much as to their fate, given the source material.

#### 4.4.4 Brothers

Italian merchants tended to rely heavily on kinship networks in their business. Such arrangements permitted the pooling of family capital and helped ensure loyalty within the company. Such arrangements are easily observable in the case of Poland where brothers, and frequently also nephews, as will be discussed further below, frequently worked together to further the family's interests. The di ser Matteo family, is the best example of this in the Polish milieu, given the four brothers worked in concert seeking to make money in Poland trading between Krakow, Wrocław, and Venice. The di Promontorio's are another, with Paolo and Stefano working in Poznań, while sending their younger relatives further afield. The case of Cristofeo and Domenico di S. Romulo who operated as merchants a Zuppari around Lviv, managing trade from the Black Sea coast and shipping goods to their father Pelegro who remained in Genoa.<sup>1575</sup> Such organizations allowed families to spread their contacts across multiple countries. The Guidotti brothers for example, had ties with Poland, Hungary, Rome, and Bologna. Such family networks permitted the whole group to take advantage of the position of each of its members. The Guidotti, thus capitalized on their brother Jacopo di Filippo's position as papal collector to gain a footing in Poland and then Hungary, allowing them to operate as bankers between these regions and Rome from their ancestral base in Bologna. The Talenti brothers offer another example of such useful cross-border arrangements, with one working at the Polish mint and the other supplying silver from Hungary. The Milanese brothers Giovanni and Jacobo di Paravisino are yet a third example, as having

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<sup>1574</sup> In 1440, Piotr from Cikowice sold the village of Cikowice [Kaczkowice] not far from Krakow, to Giovanni di Paravisino for 400 half grosz and 400 marks. Giovanni in turn gives 300 half grosz and 300 marks as a portion of the estate of Kaczkowice to his wife Katerina, daughter of the now deceased Johannes Wojślawice, as a dower gift. Ten years later however, Giovanni had passed away and his daughters Katerina and Anna are forced due to the impoverishment of the territory to mortgage a portion of their inheritance in the village of Kaczkowice to their uncle Wydźdżycki for six years in order to pay off money owed to Zbigniew Oleśnicki the Bishop of Krakow. Their Mother's dower portion of the village meanwhile, continued to remain under her control. [ZK] nr 150 p. 208, 199 pg. 133-4; *Acta terrestria Cracoviensia. Księgi ziemskie krakowskie*, rps APKr nr 150 pg 208 <http://www.slownik.ihpan.edu.pl/search.php?id=7074&q=Gallika&d=0&t=0> Accessed October 23rd 2020

<sup>1575</sup> [SDIR] nr 40

established himself as a citizen of Krakow and later as a papal nuncio in Poland and Ambassador for King Władysław Jagiełło, his brother Giovanni joined him, gaining a position as Zupparius in Przemyśl and eventually settling down in Poland permanently and raising a family.<sup>1576</sup> It was thus, exceedingly common for brothers to work together in Poland, connecting with larger kinship networks to the benefit of all.

#### 4.4.5 Nephews

One striking family element which can be observed among the Italian community in Poland is the preponderance of nephews. Indeed, the Italian term, *nepotismo* takes on new meaning in the Polish context. While it is true, as stated above that mercantile practices of the time favored the use of family and clan members as factors and agents in business, still, the sheer abundance of nephews in Poland is surprising, but does in fact correlate to the unusually large number of unmarried Italian men who operated there. Without sons or son-in-laws of their own, many of the Italian merchants in Poland were forced to rely on more distant relations to assist in their endeavors. Paolo Cavallo invited his nephew Pietro to join him in Poland, and the two prospered together. Gotfridus Fattinante, on the other hand, made use of more distant family networks, selling silk with his nephew Erasmus, who resided in Cologne.<sup>1577</sup> Bonagiunta, on the other hand, stood as his Uncle Pietro's right hand man, acting as Vice-Zupparius and assistant in Poland. The di Promontorio and Tedaldi families meanwhile follow provide a more classic case of the younger generation being sent to learn the ropes for their older relatives abroad, eventually taking over the business. Arnolfo Tedaldi's nephews, Pierozzo di Baldo Tedaldi and Pierozzo's younger brother Giovanni Batista, were sent to Poland for seasoning while their uncle was still alive, and frequently acted as messengers between Poland and Florence carrying among other things, correspondence between the noted Humanist, Filippo Buonaccorsi and their kinsman Lattanzio Tedaldi.<sup>1578</sup> Even after Arnolfo's death, the two young men stayed on for a time in Poland, filling in their uncle's former position and unwinding his estate. A similar occurrence can be seen with the di Promontorio's where first Peregrino

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<sup>1576</sup> [LibCiv] nr 1963; [Bull] 4 nr. 854; *Scriptores Rerum Polonicarum* Vol. 9. Eds. Józef Szujski, Stefan Franciszek Medeksza, Władysław Seredyński, August Sokołowski, Jan Wielewicki, Józef Korzeniowski, Stanisław Temberski. (Krakow 1872), 97

<sup>1577</sup> [KDKK] nr. CCCXCVI

<sup>1578</sup> Pieruzzio un turn chose to stay in Poland, following his uncle in trade and salt-mine management, until 1507 when he returned permanently to Florence. 1492/10/22 - Peruzzio carried his first letter from Lattanzio to Filippo Buonaccorsi. Giovanni is then to be found in Poland in in 1505. For Peruzzio see: Heinrich Zeissberg, *Kleinere Geschichtsquellen Polens im Mittelalter; eine Nachlese* [Smaller historical sources of Poland in the Middle Ages; a gleanings.](Vienna: K. Gerold, 1877), 72. SDIR nr. 100 (1492/03/31), nr. 107 (1496), 323, (1507/03/17) MRPS IV, nr 8378. For Giovanni see: MRPS III, nr 2471 (1505/09/30).

and later Augustino Mazoni di Promontorio managed the business in Poznań<sup>1579</sup> Nephews were thus a vital part of the family and business dynamic that operated between Italy and Poland.

#### 4.4.6 Legacies

The family legacies left by Italians in Poland are difficult to judge. For those who stayed and raised their children in the country, after a generation they become invisible in the sources, blending into the Polish landscape. Only a few testaments have been left behind by Italians for us to analyze and so most of the data regarding their final wishes are known from later court cases involving debt and credit disputes with their heirs.<sup>1580</sup> Such debts that needed to be collected were frequently the reason that heirs arrived in Poland, after learning that their relative had passed. Such was the case for example with Anastasia Messopero of Genoa whose father Pietro died in 1468 and was assisted in recovering her inheritance by Johannes Odrowansch who stood in as her procurator in Lviv. Similarly, Pietro Veluti who, representing the interests of himself, his brother Bernardo, and brother in-law Francisco Frandini, when Nembrot Veluti passed away unexpectedly in 1465 moved to Poland to wind up his affairs remaining to two years until all debts were paid. Yet another example is Micheal Auecci of Florence, who journeyed to Krakow to deal with his brother Auecci's estate in 1483, employing a translator to assist him.<sup>1581</sup>

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<sup>1579</sup>cta castrensia Posnaniensis. nr. 856, 455, 457. see: [KMP] Kazimierz Kaczmarczyk, "Włosi w Poznaniu na przełomie XV na XVI wiek [Italians in Poznań at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries.]" *Kronika Miasta Poznania: kwartalnik poświęcony sprawom kulturalnym stoł. m. Poznania: organ Towarzystwa Miłośników Miasta Poznania* 6.1 (1928):13-14; *Stadtbuch Von Posen; Die Mittelalterliche Magistratsliste; Die Aeltesten Protokollbuecher Und Rechnungen vol 1*, ed. Warschauer Adolf (Poznań: Eigenthum der Gesellschaft, 1892) pg 303 nr.171.

<sup>1580</sup> The only full testament of an Italian in Poland to be preserved is that of Gotfridus Fattinante which he left in the care of the Canons of Krakow Cathedral. As a bachelor, Gotfridus ended up leaving most of his wealth to the church, and a small sum and some goods to his nephew Erasmus who traded in Cologne. (1393/12/15) [KDCK] nr. CCCXCVI. Jacob Wysmulek contends that two other wills produced by Italians survive but I contest one of these attributions. The will that is supposedly that of Paolo Cavallo, is linked to him because the short entry in the earliest Krakow notarial book records a *Pasco Zupparius* as making a death bed canon will before witnesses in 1358. The dating makes the attribution possible, but in my opinion highly unlikely due to the name modification, the lack of an identifying moniker like Gallicus, Italicus, or di Ianua which usually accompanied Paolo's name on other occasions and the brevity of the entry. The full text of the will supposedly belonging to Paolo reads thus: "*Pasco Zupparius protunc Consul rogauit instanter, ut dei intuitu duo de Consulibus ad ipsum venirent, qui interessent suo testamento et sue vltime voluntati, quod facere vellet in eadem infirmitate, Et constitutis apud eundem Pasconem duobus Consulibus, videlicet Petro Winrici et Nicolao Edlingi talem suam vltimam voluntatem et testamentum conscriptam et factam per ipsum Pasconem sub Iuramento et fide protulerunt et ordinarie conscriptam pronunciauerunt, ut subsequitur in hec verba*" NKiRMK, 1692; Jakub Wysmulek "Last Wills as Tool of Power: Development of Testamentary Practice in Krakow during Late Middle Ages", in *Planning for Death: Wills and Death-Related Property Arrangements in Europe, 1200-1600*, eds. Mia Korpiola and Anu Lahtinen (Leiden: Brill, 2018) 223-4.

<sup>1581</sup>[SDIR] 33, [SDIR] nr 17, [CA1] nr 853

Some of the earliest Italians in Poland centered their interest on the village of Bronowice, today a suburb of Krakow, but after two generations, little trace of their influence can be found.<sup>1582</sup> Stefanus Gallicus became lord of Bronowicze and his son, Ffranzisco, a knight of the crown, giving another example of the movement of long-term Italian immigrants movement into the local Polish nobility.<sup>1583</sup> While a number of Italian married noblewomen upon their arrival in the kingdom as shown above, it was not the original Italian immigrant who married into Polish ranks, but their offspring, this occurred for example with Dorothea daughter of Andrea di Soldaia married the Polish nobleman Nicolai Myloslawsky, Knight of Kalisz.<sup>1584</sup> The case of Nicholas Serafino is the best example of such an Italian family who ‘went native’ and became so indistinguishable from the surrounding Polish gentry that the details of their Italian origins remain obscured. Meanwhile, for those whose children lived permanently, or returned to Italy, the sources soon swallow them as well. The single most striking deviation from this norm, would be the case of Giovanni Batista Tedaldi, the nephew of Arnolfo Tedaldi, who upon returning to Italy after spending a decade in Poland in his youth, published a book entitled, *Discorso sopra la pianta dell’Aspalato*, a treatise describing a type of aromatic wood useful for medicinal purposes that he claimed to have seen growing near the city of “*Dravizi*” in the Lviv region of Poland during his time there.<sup>1585</sup> Other than this however, it is difficult to judge the long-term financial or social impact of the presence of Italians in Poland.

## 4.5 Religious Observance

Donations and endowments were the primary way by which Italians exhibited their piety. Pietro Cavallo founded a hospital in 1357, for the mine workers and the poor of Bochnia, where he worked as the mine manager.<sup>1586</sup> This hospital would be supported by later Zuppari including Gotfridus Fattinante, who dying without heirs, registered his will with the cannons of Krakow Cathedral, leaving most of his wealth to the Church.<sup>1587</sup> Barnabas di Nehrono of

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<sup>1582</sup> Jacobus Gallicus became the scultetus of Bronowicze and after him Stefanus Gallicus did as well while he and son Franciszco Gallicus resided there. [KLK] nr 65, [Mag.court 1] nr. 911, [KDMP I] nr. 325, 468.

<sup>1583</sup> (1400/03/02) [Mag.court 1] nr. 913

<sup>1584</sup> (1489/08/14) *gladiferi Calischensi* [MRPS] I nr 2035

<sup>1585</sup> Giovanni Tetaldi, *Discorso dell’Agricoltura*. Edited by Marco Lastri (Florence: Giuseppe Alegrini, 1776), IX-XII.; Giancarlo Breschi, “Boccaccio editore della «Commedia»,” in *Boccaccio autore e copista, catalogo della mostra: Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana 11 ottobre 2013- 11 gennaio 2014* (Florence:Mandragora, 2013), 280.

<sup>1586</sup> (1357) [KDMP] III pg 100 nr. 716

<sup>1587</sup> In particular he favored an Altar dedicated to St. Anthony the Confessor and St. Dorothy at the All Saints Church in Krakow, the hospital for mine-workers in Bochnia that had been set up by his predecessor Pietro Cavallo, Masses to be said for his soul by the Krakow Cathedral cannons, and a large sum of money for the new



Genoa meanwhile, had a more personal stake in the process as his son, Gregory, was a cleric, for whom he founded an altar in Lviv Cathedral in 1464 dedicated to, *visitacionis sancte Marie virginis, sancti Iohannis Baptiste, Barnabe apostoli, Luce evangeliste, decem milium (sic) martirum, undecim milium (sic) virginum, Helenę, Barbarę, Katherine, Agnetis, Dorothee, Margarethe virginum* – The Virgin Mary, St. John the Baptist, St. Barnabas the Apostle, St. Luke the Evangelist, the ten thousand martyrs, the eleven thousand martyrs, St. Helen, the virgins St. Barbara, St. Catherine, and St. Agnes.<sup>1588</sup> Many of the Italians who came to Poland appear to have been quite pious, and apart from donations, on occasion supplicated the pope directly. In 1350 for example, Paolo Cavallo requested a papal indulgence for himself and his wife Fenenna together with King Casimir and his wife Adlaid and a few other Krakow citizens Johannes called Romanetz and his wife, and Albertus the Cancellarius of Dobrinensis and Johannes called Jura the palatine, all named as *familiaribus* of the king.<sup>1589</sup> Leonardo di ser Matteo meanwhile, requested permission for a portable altar for personal use in 1425.<sup>1590</sup>

We know the most about the religious life of the Venetian, Pietro Bicherano. Starting from his time in Venice, it is obvious that Pietro developed a particular reverence for the Dominican Friars and the worship of Corpus Christi – the Eucharist. The festival of Corpus Christi was named an official celebration in Venice for the first time in 1295, the first of any of the Italian communities.<sup>1591</sup> It's popularity increased during the fourteenth century, gaining particular prominence in the wake of the Black Death in 1348-9. The flourishing of this faith inspired Lucia Tiepolo, a Benedictine abbess from the island of Murano in the Venetian lagoon, to attempt to set up a convent for young women on the central Venetian islands. In her endeavor, she attracted the support of the wealthy merchant, Francisco Rabia, and the fiery Dominican Friar, Giovanni Dominici (1355-1419).<sup>1592</sup> The convent was built, and dedicated to the Corpus Christi in 1394, with its sisters who soon numbered around forty, following the Dominican

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Cathedral in Przemyśl, which was being built to help, “*contra schismaticos in illis partibus*” - presumably the local Orthodox and Armenian Christians, in the name of King Casimir the Great, Queen Elizabeth, and King Louis, his patrons, who incidentally also owed him the amount of the donation. (1393/12/15). [KDKK] nr. CCCXCVI

<sup>1588</sup> His son would not long make use of the endowment however, as he died less than three years later, and Barnabas transferred the right of patronage of the altar he founded to the Lviv City Council after his death. (1467/06/11) [AGZ] 6 nr. 75

<sup>1589</sup> (1350/06/27) Granted by Pope Clement VI [Bull] II nr. 499

<sup>1590</sup> (1425/06/24) – Leonardo listed as overseeing the salt mines in Poland and applies for a portable altar - unclear of granted [BullPol IV] nr 1540/1541

<sup>1591</sup> In that year the feast was named ‘*pro patria*’ by the *Consiglio*. It is speculated that it was introduced to Venice from Cologne, and thus likely filtered through the merchants of the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*. Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in late medieval culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 181.

<sup>1592</sup> For the history of the convent see: Bartolomea Riccoboni, *Life and death in a Venetian convent: the chronicle and necrology of Corpus Domini, 1395-1436*. ed and trans. Daniel Bornstein (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

rule. Bona, Pietro's wife, became aware of the new and somewhat fashionable house, and felt moved to help the sisters. Thus, in 1397, she with Pietro's approval, donated a house with a courtyard to the Convent of Corpus Domini in the district of Santa Lucia.<sup>1593</sup> The couple remained attached to the convent, and Pietro stood as their "*sindico e procurator*", for a number of legal transactions. He stood as witness for the entrance of at least one woman into the convent and sought to supply the convent with all necessary books and spiritual materials.<sup>1594</sup> In this, he was joined by the merchant, Antonio Amadi, his fellow comrade from the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, demonstrating that the two were more than mere business acquaintances.<sup>1595</sup> Finally, Pietro's own sister, Donata, whom he was to name one of his daughters after, joined the convent herself.<sup>1596</sup> The family's attachment to the cult of Corpus Christi did not end in Venice however. Upon moving to Krakow, they worshiped at the Corpus Christi church in Kazimierz, a suburb of Krakow. The church had been founded in 1342 and over the next few decades became the center of the cult in the region.<sup>1597</sup> The entire family appears to have been dedicated to the worship of the Eucharist. Upon his death, Pietro's nephew, Bonagiunta, was buried in the church and after him, his son Francisco donated the village of Rzeszotary to the Augustinians who ran it, seeking special prayers for his soul and that of his father, from the canons who lived there.<sup>1598</sup> Interestingly, the Bicherano family were not the only Italians in Central Eastern Europe to show a particular devotion to the Corpus Christi. Arnolfo Tedaldi and the humanist Filippo Buonaccorsi appear to have been buried before the Corpus Christi altar in the Dominican Church of the Holy Trinity in Krakow.<sup>1599</sup> (Figure 70) Meanwhile, in

<sup>1593</sup> Unfortunately, the site where the house would have been located is now taken up by the Santa Lucia train station. ASV, Corpus Domini, Perg. 1, 2, 3, 4.

<sup>1594</sup> *Nos Pbr. Antoni's Renan? et Petrus Bicharan de confinio 6 Banhi- [S. Bartolomei] tamquem procuratores et procurer nostrils monastery of Corpus Christi* (1398/05/14) ASV, Cancelleria inferiore. Notai 21 book 2 fol. 83. – Pietro appears as the "*sindici e procurator*", representative for the Dominican Corpus Christi convent in their ongoing legal dispute with Francesco Rabia (1399/11/03) Pietro stood as witness as Cristina Michael entered the convent of Corpus Domini. (1402/01/21) Dominici, *Lettere Spirituali*, 115, 341-2; Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 402.

<sup>1595</sup> Petrus is recorded in the surviving *Cronaca* (vi 117) of the now dissolved convent, as a Vicar and one of its most faithful patrons. He appears there also alongside Antonio Amadi, who was also a factor for the Kress family firm. (1400/02/04) Giovanni Dominici, *Lettere Spirituali*. Ed. Maria T. Casella, and Giovanni Pozzi. Spicilegium Friburgense vol. 13, (Fribourg Switzerland: Edizioni Universitarie, 1969), 115-6.

<sup>1596</sup> ASV, Testamenti 554 nr. 197 Notary Griffon Pietro. ASV, Notarile, Testamenti 364, nr. 398. Published in [Itali] nr. 76

<sup>1597</sup> Károly Goda, "The Medieval Cult and Processional Veneration of the Eucharist in Central Europe: Festive Culture in the Royal Cities of Cracow and Buda in a Comparative Perspective," *Mediaevalia Historica Bohemica* 18/1, (2015): 142-3.

<sup>1598</sup> The church was granted to the Canon Regular of the Lateran by King Władysław Jagiełło in 1404. [ZDM] 3 nr. 635.

<sup>1599</sup> Arnolfo's tomb is no longer extant but a description of it has survived. Marcin Szyma, "Where is the Burial Place of Filippo Buonaccorsi, called Callimachus?: from the Research on the Topography of the Dominican Church in Cracow, " in *Fórum epigrafických a sepulkrálních studií*, ed. Jiří Roháček. (Prague : Artefactum, nakladatelství Ústav dějin umění Akademie věd České republiky, 2016), 68.

Bratislava in 1396, Bonaventura di Salto and his wife Katerina, originally from Florence founded a chapel dedicated to Corpus Christi.<sup>1600</sup> The devotion was continued by their son, Jacob di Ventur and grandson Caspar di Ventur.<sup>1601</sup> While not directly linked to Poland, it is interesting to note the similar dedication to the Corpus Christi Cult amongst Italians abroad during this period.

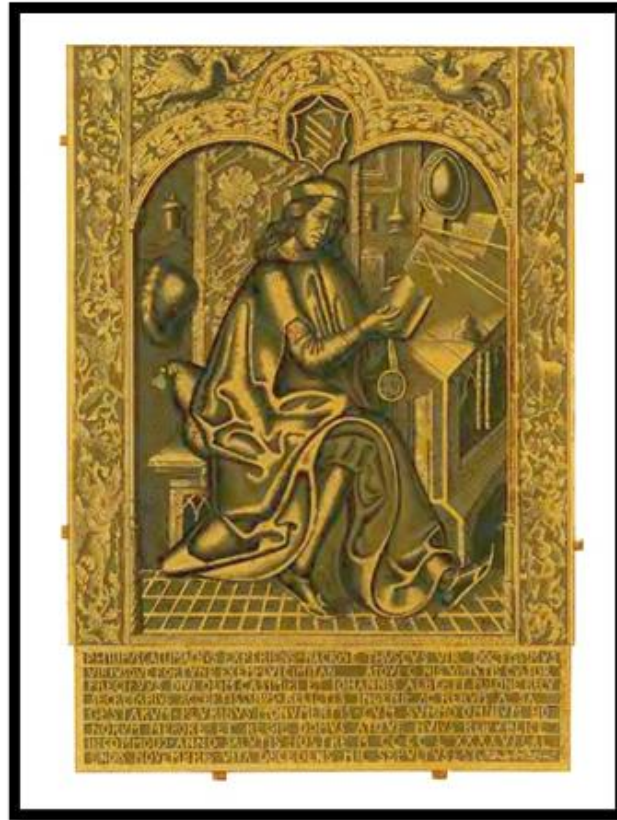


Figure 68 Bronze Epitaph of Filippo Buonaccorsi, Basilica of the Holy Trinity, Krakow.

Wikimedia

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Filippo\\_Buonaccorsi#/media/File:Epitaphy\\_of\\_Filippo\\_Buonaccorsi\\_in\\_Krak%C3%B3w.PNG](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Filippo_Buonaccorsi#/media/File:Epitaphy_of_Filippo_Buonaccorsi_in_Krak%C3%B3w.PNG) Accessed December 20<sup>th</sup> 2020

### 4.5.1 Jewish Italians in Poland

Not all the Italians who came to Poland were Christian however. The sources reveal that three Jewish Italians were welcomed to Poland during the latter half of the fifteenth century, the

<sup>1600</sup> Judit Majorossy, "A Krisztus Teste Konfraternitás helye a középkori pozsonyi polgárok életében [The role of the Corpus Christi confraternity in the life of the medieval citizens of Bratislava]," *Történelmi Szemle* xlvii (2004):75-6.

<sup>1601</sup> Majorossy, "A Krisztus Teste Konfraternitás," 76.

Valetaris brothers from Genoa and Jacob Anselmi and his family from Venice. Antonio di Valetaris first appears in Lviv in 1448 and traded on and off in the city over the next twenty years with other Christian Italians as well as local Jewish and Armenian merchants. His unique merchant mark was interestingly derived from a symbol commonly adopted by Russian gentry, demonstrating the syncretic life in the region.<sup>1602</sup> The family certainly appears to have been willing to cross boundaries as in 1464, Anselm's brother Juliano appears in Lviv following his brother's footsteps, with two business partners, a Florentine, Arnolfo Tedaldi and a Venetian, Nembrot Veluti, both Christians, rendering the partnership not only cross-confessional but also cross-communal.<sup>1603</sup> While a church synod held in Poland in 1420 had mandated that no Jews were to be permitted to collect customs duties or hold public office, in the multi-cultural mix of Lviv, this provision appears to have been regularly ignored and this Juliano Valetaris had no trouble being appointed Zupparius of the Ruthenian salt mines.<sup>1604</sup> The records further indicate no sign that the Valetaris's status as Jews in any way affected their ability to trade in Poland. The other Jewish Italian welcomed to Poland during this period was a certain Jacob Anselmi of Venice who in 1475 was granted a letter of safe conduct and permission for himself, his family, and friends to reside in the Kingdom of Poland. No other information pertaining to this individual has been uncovered so it remains unclear if he or his family ever arrived in Poland, but they were welcomed.<sup>1605</sup>

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<sup>1602</sup> Денис Тоїчкін, "Класифікація та зміст символіки на клинковій зброї XV–XIX ст. в українських музеях: геральдика, епіграфіка, орнаментика [Classification and content of symbols on blade weapons of the XV-XIX centuries. in Ukrainian museums: heraldry, epigraphy, ornamentation]." *Спеціальні історичні дисципліни: питання теорії та методики* (2010), 152.

<sup>1603</sup> (1464/07/25) [CodEp] III nr 74

<sup>1604</sup> Jurgen Heyde, "The Jewish Economic Elite in Red Ruthenia in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries," in *Polin. Studies in Polish Jewry, Vol. 22: Early Modern Poland. Borders and Boundaries*, eds. Antony Polonsky, Magda Teter and Adam Teller (Oxford: The Litman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2010), 166; (1464/06/08) [SPPP] 2 nr 3759.

<sup>1605</sup> (1475/12/30) [MRPS] I nr 1245, (1475/01/03) nr 1276

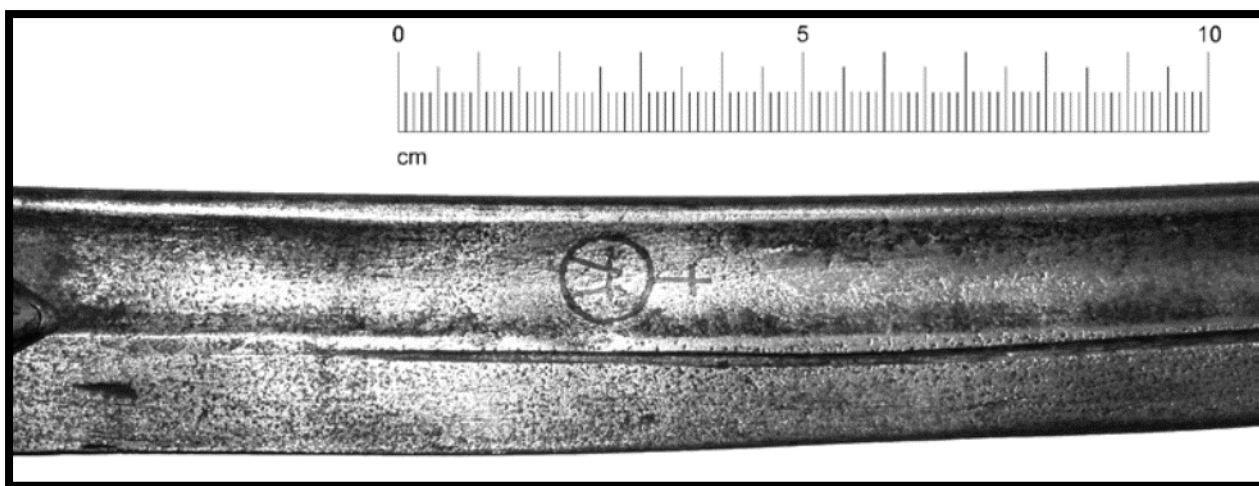


Figure 69 Sword Carrying Antonio di Valetaris's Merchant Mark

Денис Тоїчкін, “Класифікація та зміст символіки на клинковій зброї XV–XIX ст. в українських музеях: геральдика, епіграфіка, орнаментика [Classification and content of symbols on blade weapons of the XV–XIX Centuries. in Ukrainian museums: heraldry, epigraphy, ornamentation],” *Спеціальні історичні дисципліни: питання теорії та методики* (2010), 152.

While the limited data makes it impossible to generalize about the Italian religious experience in Poland, it appears from what is known that they followed similar religious practices as their Polish neighbors. They gave to pious institutions, purchased masses to be said for their souls, and endowed altars. Unlike in other places where larger number of Italian expats gathered, as in Bruges for instance, traders in Poland do not appear to have sought to form confraternities or engaged in particular practices inherent to their home communities. The reason for this is obvious, there were simply too few to get such a movement going. The only tendency that can perhaps be marked is a particular devotion to the Corpus Christi cult. The fifteenth century however, was arguably the high point of the cult’s popularity in Central Eastern Europe so even this, may be unremarkable.<sup>1606</sup> The inclusion of a number of Jews amongst the Italians who arrived in Poland is perhaps more remarkable, in particular considering that they appear from the available sources, to have been treated no differently from their Christian counterparts.

## Conclusion

As this chapter has demonstrated, the experiences of the Italians who came to Poland during the Late Medieval period was varied, yet some themes and commonalities can be found.

<sup>1606</sup> Károly Goda, “The Medieval Cult and Processional Veneration of the Eucharist in Central Europe: Festive Culture in the Royal Cities of Cracow and Buda in a Comparative Perspective,” *Mediaevalia Historica Bohemica* 18/1, (2015):129-31.

Unsurprisingly, given that this work is focused on the lives of traders, the reason most of these individuals arrived in Poland was in search of profit. The ‘passing merchant’ risked or found worthwhile only a single voyage. Given that the Kingdom of Poland was distant, had limited natural resources or wares that were of particular interest to Italians - beyond endemic cochineal, and was further poorly monetized during this period, it is unsurprising that of the relatively small number who made the journey, most did not return. Those who did choose to settle permanently rarely focused solely on the buying and selling of goods but also branched out, seeking posts administering various royal monopolies – salt and metal mines, customs, and mints. These positions, together with long-distance trade were more likely to lead to long-term success, although even here there was no guarantee, as can be seen in the example of Antonio di ser Matteo. Permanent immigrants also frequently moved to invest in real-estate – urban and rural. Urban property was a requirement if one wanted to acquire citizenship in a town, while the purchase of villages and rural property ensured a steady source of income. Such purposes may also have been linked to the desire to integrate themselves into the local Polish nobility, a strategy we can see reflected in marriage alliances pursued by a number of abiding Italians. The children of such unions appear to have preferred to remain in Poland, rather than attempting to return to the peninsula. Religious expression meanwhile, appears to have transferred intact from Italy where it blended with local custom. This is particularly obvious in the case of the Corpus Christi cult which was reaching its apogee in Italy and Central-Eastern Europe during the fifteenth century and was particularly favored amongst Italians abroad in the region. Jewish Italians who arrived in Poland appear to have been treated no differently than their Christian counterparts, trading on an equal basis and granted similar privileges, although admittedly the source base is limited.

For those who entered the kingdom as retainers of another Italian, such as Niccolo di Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe and Rinaldo di Sandro Altoviti, they served first their patron and then their own interests. For those who arrived in search of a patrimony - a surprising number, some chose to stay and take up the work their relative had begun, such as in the case of Perozzo Tedaldi, while others such as Pietro Veluti remained only as long as necessary to wind up their relative’s affairs. In all of these cases, the primary motivation appears to have been pecuniary. For a few, other factors may have been at play. Neri Tornaquinci for example fled extensive debt obligations in Venice while some like Gregors Wloch di Wallachia likely transferred to

Poland due to Ottoman pressure on their former Black Sea homes.<sup>1607</sup> Some were thus running towards Poland, while a few were running away from somewhere else, but finances were always at the heart of the issue. Beyond this obvious point, the question of motivation is extremely difficult to assess. Where and how various Italians became aware of opportunities in Poland also remains elusive in most cases, but occasionally can be guessed at. Pietro Bicherano joined a scheme proposed by merchants he worked with at the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* to invest in Polish mining opportunities, Albizzo di Medici was sent to the kingdom in search of debts owed to his employer, the Medici bank, and the Guidotti family sought to take advantage of the opportunity of having one of their number nominated papal collector in the region. Chain migration accounts for many later entries into the Polish sphere – the Cavallo, di ser Matteo, Tedaldi and Promontorio families are the most obvious examples, but numerous others can also be found. Increasing Ottoman pressure in the Black Sea towards the second half of the fifteenth century also accounts for a few transfers, as Italians turned their sights from now hampered sea lanes to overland trade, but for others the initial impulse remains a mystery.

Whatever their initial impulse, upon arriving in Poland, newcomers entered a complex new socio-economic environment. In whatever direction their trade interests were oriented, given the Italian Community's relatively small numbers, it is unsurprising that we find them relying heavily on both family ties and local partnerships and agents to achieve their ends. Gotfridus Fattinante relied on his brother-in-law in Krakow to help him run his business selling textiles on the city's main square, while sending silk to his nephew in Cologne. Pietro Bicherano was perfectly at ease working with the Nuremberg Amman-Kammerer-Seiler-Grau company and his nephew married a local Polish noblewoman. Arnolfo Tedaldi flipped this script, himself marrying a Polish noble and working with his brother-in-law administering Polish salt mines before inviting his nephews to Poland to carry on the business. The Promontorio family meanwhile, demonstrated a similar willingness to collaborate, working with both family and South German merchants to trade from Genoa through the German Lands to Poznań. The Talenti brothers too used their various acquired citizenships to extend a network of trade from Krakow to the Adriatic Coast. Through strategic placement for their various siblings, the di ser Matteo brothers sought to connect Florence and Venice to Wroclaw and Krakow. Those who lacked solid family connections, like Jeronimo di Olmerio, frequently relied on a mix of other Italians and local agents to assist them. As many traded through Lviv, Jeronimo had a

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<sup>1607</sup> (1485/01/12) [IurCiv] nr. 8198

wide range of contacts, local Armenians, his “Ungarus” Hungarian agent Gregorus, and his fellow Genovese, Paolo Grimaldi. Partnerships and the designation of a standing procurator for one’s affairs were especially common between various Italians on the ground in Poland, putting paid to the notion that competition outweighed cooperation between such individuals abroad. The most obvious example of this being the triple partnership involving the Florentine Arnolfo Tedaldi, the Genoese Giuliano di Valetaris, and the Jewish Venetian Nembrot Veluti but similar themes can be shown in the Florentine Niccolo di Vaggio’s employment as vice-zupparius under the Milanese Giovanni di Paravisino. The case of Antonio di ser Matteo, where Milanese, Genoese, and Florentines were pressed into guaranteeing the debt he owed to the Crown, further demonstrates that although originating from different polities, these local identities were subsumed under the larger category of ‘Italian’ externally, and likely in many cases internally as well. Even in this case however, we see that Italians did not work in isolation for Paulus Ostrosska, a Polish business associate of Antonio’s was also called upon to guarantee his debt. Italians in Poland thus worked in a complex web of interlocking social and economic relations that included family members, local partnerships, and long-distance merchants, all weaving an elaborate dance in search of profit.



# Chapter 5 - Italians, Law and Business

## Introduction

Foreign merchants were subjected to all kinds of restrictive measures when they journeyed through a region. A merchant arriving in Krakow for example, would be expected to sell only in the open market, on specific days and times (unless a fair was ongoing), use local measuring devices paying for the privilege, and then pay a sales tax on all goods sold. Not only this, but as Krakow possessed the privilege of a staple right, even should traders wish to continue their journey and offer their goods at another location, they were required by force of law to put their wares on display for a fortnight. Further, two foreign merchants who might meet at the market, were prohibited from selling to each other without the assistance of a local intermediary who was of course to be paid for their middle-man expertise. While Krakow, as the preeminent trading point in the Kingdom of Poland had the most restrictive regulations, other towns along the way were similar, and there were further tolls to be gathered at any border crossing.<sup>1608</sup> None of these restrictions were unusual and merchants across Europe were subject to similar restraints. Italians in Poland were required to follow the rules just as everyone else as Antonio di ser Matteo was forcibly reminded in 1426 when he attempted to circumvent them.<sup>1609</sup> The requirements for foreign traders was linked to their legal status within the kingdom. Unless they had acquired citizenship in a Polish city, they were considered *hospites* – guests, who were granted certain protections by the crown but lacked full legal equality and were subject to restrictions on their activities.<sup>1610</sup> The following chapter looks at the legal status of Italians in Poland and their interactions in various courts. Much of what we know about Italian activities comes from court records and thus a greater understanding of their status and actions is highly warranted as it underpinned their behavior. Indeed, numerous scholars have argued that the relatively small number of Italian traders north of the Alps was due to the lack of an agreed upon court to adjudicate disagreements and resolve disputes.<sup>1611</sup> Kurt Weissen has gone so far as to say that this explains the absence of

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<sup>1608</sup> [KDMK I] nr 1, nr 4.

<sup>1609</sup> (1426/07/09) [NZPiWMK] nr 19

<sup>1610</sup> For more on the development of the legal category of *hospites* in Central Eastern Europe see: Katalin Szende, “Iure Theutonico? German settlers and legal frameworks for immigration to Hungary in an East-Central European perspective.” *Journal of Medieval History* 45.3 (2019): 360-379..

<sup>1611</sup> Oscar Gelderblom, “The Resolution of Commercial conflicts in Bruges, Antwerp, and Amsterdam 1250-1650.” in *Law and Long-Term Economic Change: A Eurasian Perspective*, eds. Devin Ma and Jan L. Zanden (Stanford, Calif: Stanford economics and finance, 2011), 246-8.

Italian banking houses north of the Alps as both sides sought to have any legal case disputed in their home territory.<sup>1612</sup> This chapter will challenge these claims in light of Polish evidence while exploring the mechanics of mercantile justice.

As the twelfth century saw a rise in new trading relationships across Europe, it also inaugurated a host of legal issues. From these disputes arose a new, *lex mercatoria* or *ius mercatorum*, a “heterogeneous set of standards used in trade between the merchants themselves.” It involved considerable local variation, formed out of a combination of law and custom that made up the *usus mercatorum* - a group of accepted norms, and local institutions not a set of universal regulations but that were none the less generally accepted, even as great variation can be found even between neighboring cities.<sup>1613</sup> This was different from commercial law, which was territorial and united across a particular region. Indeed, arbitration of disputes could be carried out in any number of different courts. “The state” in the modern sense did not yet exist, and despite certain centralizing tendencies towards the later fifteenth century, it did not have a monopoly on justice. In this legally pluralistic environment, much was left up to the merchants themselves. As long-distance trade became more common and commercial interactions more complex, a number of institutions arose to deal with the attendant increasingly complicated problems. Guilds, were among the institutions to step into the gap, policing their own members and settling business amongst themselves. The question became harder however, when an issue involved a merchant from beyond the jurisdiction of a town, and here the City Council or a specifically nominated body was frequently elected to oversee the case. As Maria Fusaro has wisely pointed out, before embarking on an exploration of medieval court systems it is imperative to keep in mind that,

“it is impossible to give a *précis* of pre-modern jurisdictions that achieves the level of rationality expected by today’s observer, as the overlapping of competencies in early modern judicial systems was an important aspect of those societies. It is only in a given local context that this plurality of institutions and jurisdictions is historically

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<sup>1612</sup> He states that while, the Florentines, even with disputes abroad, brought their problems before the court of the *Mercanzia* in Florence which dispensed quick and efficient judgements. German merchants and clients however, desired that cases be tried in local home jurisdictions, in Nuremberg, Lübeck, or Cologne where the process was often drawn out and judgements often unfavorable. Kurt Weissen, “La rete commerciale tedesca delle compagnie fiorentine romanam curiam sequentes, 1410-1470,” *Archivio Storico Italiano* 169.4 (630 (2011): 723-5.

<sup>1613</sup> Rafał Wojciechowski, “Kilka uwag o regulacji prawnej przedsiębiorczości w późnym średniowieczu [Some remarks on the legal regulation of entrepreneurship in the late Middle Ages],” *Przegląd Prawa i Administracji* 114 (2018): 676.

intelligible, as the coexistence of several hegemonic groups – ecclesiastical, mercantile, cultural and political – all striving to carve out their own jurisdictions, mirrored the stratification and experiences of the different social ranks in each local context.”<sup>1614</sup>

## 5.1 Italians and the Courts

### 5.1.1 Poland

The political landscape in Poland during the Middle Ages was extremely variegated, a mixture of ‘Polish law’ which was customary in nature, and Magdeburg law, a code developed in the German Lands in the thirteenth century and adopted in many urban localities in Poland.<sup>1615</sup> Krakow was granted Magdeburg law in 1257 and Lviv in 1356, the same year that King Casimir the Great established The High Court of Magdeburg law in Krakow which accepted appeals cases.<sup>1616</sup> Italians appear in a wide range of Polish courts, in particular in the *ziemski* [district] and *grodzki* [castle] courts. These courts, for which there is no good English or Italian equivalent, held jurisdiction over a wide range of civil and criminal cases, including debt and inheritance, the types of cases which generally brought Italians to court. If an appeal was sought, these cases might be referred to the High Court of Magdeburg law in Krakow, where Italians appeared on a number of occasions. Disputes were also at times arbitrated before the Krakow City Council. This likely occurred in Lviv and Poznań as well, but the records are not available. Which court a case was heard in depended on the nature of the dispute, the location where it occurred, the status of the disputing parties, and to some

<sup>1614</sup> Maria Fusaro, “Politics of justice/Politics of trade: foreign merchants and the administration of justice from the records of Venice’s Giudici del Forestier,” *Mélanges de l’École française de Rome - Italie et Méditerranée modernes et contemporaines* [Online], 126-1 | 2014, Messo online il 21 juillet 2014, Accessed January 12th 2021. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrim/1665> ; DOI : <https://doi.org/10.4000/mefrim.1665>

<sup>1615</sup> Polish law was first collated and issued in a set of statutes under King Casimir the Great in the 1350s-60s, the Małopolska Statutes included 59 articles intended to be the start of a set to be used for the entire Kingdom. Those for Wielkopolska were published after a grand legal meeting of the king, nobles, and the archbishop of Gniezno and other prelates at Piotrków and included 34 articles. Later, a set drawn up with the aid of Archbishop Jarosław Bogoria. Statutes regarded Polish Law - in theory not applicable to Canons - ecclesiastical court jurisdiction or to City Burghers under German Law. They were applied to nobles, knights, and peasants under Polish law. It was again Casimir the Great who worked to spread Magdeburg law across his domains including the recently annexed territories of Volhynia, Halych, eventually granting 650 towns and villages the privilege. Mikołaj Tarkowski, “Statutes of Casimir the Great—the monument of medieval law culture in Poland.” Polish-Georgian (2015): 91; Heiner Lück, “Aspects of the Transfer of the Saxon-Magdeburg Law to Central and Eastern Europe,” *Rechtsgeschichte Legal History - Zeitschrift des Max-Planck-Instituts für Europäische Rechtsgeschichte*, no. 22 (2014): 81.

<sup>1616</sup> “Magdeburg law: A Building Block of Modern Europe,” Accessed January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021. <https://magdeburg-law.com/>

extent the desires of the individuals involved. What is fairly obvious from the sources is that Italians in particular were good at ‘jurisdiction shopping’, seeking out the court which would be most sympathetic to their plight. Italians also appear to have been as a group, extremely litigious which is why despite their relatively small numbers, they appear starkly visible in the sources appearing in outsized numbers in court documents and notarial records. From the records of cases, it does not appear that Polish courts were prejudiced against Italians. However, given the fragmentary nature of the sources and the fact that frequently the outcomes of a procedure remain unknown it is difficult to say with certainty just as it is hard to determine how long an issue might be disputed. In at least a few cases, litigation could drag on for years. Scholar’s claims that Italians preferred to seek justice in courts on the peninsula may then have some merit, but the case is not clear cut. The following sections will look at the various forums outside of Poland where trade disputes were adjudicated.<sup>1617</sup>

### 5.1.2 Consuls and Fondacos

As traders abroad were at a legal disadvantage in a foreign state, one of the means by which they sought to protect themselves was to join together in an association. These associations acted as the representative for all of its members, made rules for relations between members and outsiders, and provided a legal forum through which disagreements could be arbitrated. This last point is important and will be discussed further in another section of this chapter. Avner Greif, Paul Milgrom and Barry R. Weingast, in a joint paper have set forth a set of mathematical models applying game theory to show that these associations formed in the Late Medieval period as a way to encourage local authority of a trading center to protect the security of foreign merchants.<sup>1618</sup> According to the modeling performed, “to permit an efficient expansion of trade in the medieval environment, there was a need for an organization that would supplement the operation of a multilateral reputation mechanism by coordinating the responses of a large fraction of the merchants.”<sup>1619</sup> While the role of efficiency in the organization and expansion of the Late Medieval economy at large can be

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<sup>1617</sup> Italians, just as all others in Christendom would also be charged in canonical courts for religious crimes or secular crimes against the church. There is at least one case of excommunication of an Italian in Poland – Giovanni di Papia, doctor of medicine, actually died in this state in 1434 when he refused to pay back a debt owed to the papal collector Jacobino Rubeis. (Long-standing debts owed to the Church were amongst the most frequent reasons for an individual to be excommunicated). (1434/06/09) [CA3] nr 48.

<sup>1618</sup> Avner Greif, Paul Milgrom, and Barry R. Weingast, “Coordination, commitment, and enforcement: The case of the merchant guild,” *Journal of political economy* 102.4 (1994): 745-776.

<sup>1619</sup> Avner, “Coordination, commitment, and enforcement,” 753.

debated, as shown convincingly by Sheilagh Ogilvie, in the particular case of argued here, it is not a question of if medieval merchant organizations increased their local economies as a whole, but rather that their actions sought to benefit their individual interests.<sup>1620</sup> Long-distance merchants did not need to efficiently seek to bake a bigger pie by developing new organizational frameworks, they could equally well evolve institutions that improved only their individual slice as efficiently as possible. Framed in this way, Ogilvie's complaint that efficiency is far from the only means through which to explain the evolution of pre-industrial economic institutions overall remains standing, while allowing for its application to the activities of individual actors. The quote by Greif, Milgrom and Weingast can thus remain with only a slight modification, "to permit an efficient expansion of trade [for empowered merchant elites] in the medieval environment, there was a need for an organization that would supplement the operation of a multilateral reputation mechanism by coordinating the responses of a large fraction of the merchants."<sup>1621</sup> When such organizations were in place, backed by their respective governments, merchants abroad had far greater ability to force or at least strongly encourage foreign rulers to respect them under penalty of loss of trade, not with a single merchant, but the entire block. These organizations further moderated internal disputes and disagreements between traders abroad. At home in Italy, these associations tended to appear in the form of merchant guilds, abroad, there were different solutions. Italian merchants abroad adopted three primary solutions for self-organization.

The first, was the *fondaco*. This thesis has referenced many times the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* in Venice but Italians also used them. Adopted from the Islamic *funduq*, as Italian merchants began setting up colonies in the east from the thirteenth century, they settled themselves, often at the behest of the reigning powers, and for mutual protection into distinct quarters.<sup>1622</sup> Communal living spaces were adapted where merchant travelers could come and go at need, space too was set aside to store merchandise and meeting spaces where arranged where deals could be struck. The pilgrim Alesandro Anselmi for example, described the city of Tunis in 1471, as having separate *fondaci* for the Genoese, Venetians, Pisans, Florentines, and

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<sup>1620</sup> Ogilvie argues very convincingly that increased efficiency as an explanation for institutional development is an overly simplistic and optimistic paradigm. She instead suggests that historians and economists should look to other models: accidental, cultural, and in particular, conflict distribution, models to better explain this phenomena. Sheilagh Ogilvie, "Whatever is, is right"? Economic institutions in pre-industrial Europe 1," *The Economic History Review* 60.4 (2007): 649-684.

<sup>1621</sup> Avner, "Coordination, commitment, and enforcement," 753.

<sup>1622</sup> Other Europeans, such as the Spanish and the Portuguese adopted a similar system. Louis Sicking, "The Medieval Origin of the Factory or the Institutional Foundations of Overseas Trade: Toward a Model for Global Comparison." *Journal of World History* 31.2 (2020): 295-99.

Catalans where the merchants slept and did business, each carefully enclosed by four square walls and accessible by a single entrance.<sup>1623</sup> Local powers were of course, interested in these *fondaci* and often made strict rules regarding their appearance and the contacts permitted with its residents and the rest of the population, but internal matters were settled by the members of the *fondaco* themselves. Having these foreign merchants collected in a single location made them easier to control and collect taxes from, while simultaneously providing the merchants themselves with a place to store their goods and a sense of safety behind their high walls, making them more likely to travel there to trade, a winning solution all round. The Black Sea colonies of Caffa, Kiliya, and Moncastro, had originally developed as *fondaci*, in Poland however, such a system never materialized. The Italian presence was too small and while Polish merchants went back and forth regularly from the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* in Venice, they had no such arrangements in their own lands.

The second way that merchants abroad regularly sought to organize themselves was into *nazione*, from the Latin *natio*, meaning nation or people, in the Italian case these groups usually oriented around one's city of origin rather than a larger abstract "Italian" identity. These *nazione* might have a settled headquarters around which they gathered but they were not as restrictive as the *fondaci*. Whereas *fondaci* were somewhat coercive in that the local power required merchants make use of them or lose their right to trade in the region, *nazione* were more self-organized, with statutes written and voted upon by members who elected their representatives.<sup>1624</sup> That said, the local authorities were deeply concerned with such arrangements, as the statutes frequently included local privileges regarding customs duties, taxes owed by the community, and legal extra-territoriality.<sup>1625</sup> Such *nazione* were originally set up in other cities of the Italian Peninsula itself, but were soon present beyond its borders as well, those organized in Bruges being the most famous example, there, the Genoese, Venetians, Florentines, Lucchese, and Milanese, each formed their own separate *nazione*.<sup>1626</sup>

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<sup>1623</sup> Ingrid Houssaye Michienzi, "La 'nation' et les milieux d'affaires florentins aux xiv<sup>e</sup> et xv<sup>e</sup> siècles," in *Nation et nations au Moyen Âge*. (Paris: Éditions de la Sorbonne, 2014), 299-300. <https://doi.org/10.4000/books.porsorbonne.2175>

<sup>1624</sup> Prajda, Justice in the Florentine." Accessed March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2716>

<sup>1625</sup> Giovanna Petti Balbi, "I rapporti tra Genova e il mondo fiammingo," *Reti Medievali* (2003): 4-5.

<sup>1626</sup> In 1440 for example, past the peak of Italian involvement in Bruges, there were registered with the five major *nationes* - 136 Hanseatics, 48 Catalanians, 36 Genovese, and 40 Venetians, while in the same year in Poland there are only 5 known Italians. Petti Balbi, "I rapporti tra Genova," 5 ; Prajda, Justice in the Florentine." Accessed March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2716>; Raymond De Roover, *Money, Banking and Credit in Medieval Bruges: Italian Merchant-Bankers, Lombards and Money-Changers* (Cambridge Massachusetts: The Medieval Academy of America, 1948) 13-14.

Here again however, the Italians in Poland were denied this avenue due to their small numbers.

The final means by which Italians tended to structure themselves abroad was to have a consul. This post was at times elected by the merchants on the ground and at others sent by the metropole as an official representative. As the importance of the position changed over time, the elected consul's faded and mandated ones became ever more common until by the fourteenth century they were nearly always agents sent from the metropole.<sup>1627</sup> Depending on the size of the merchant community in question, all Italians in a region might share a single consul or each *nazione* might elect their own.<sup>1628</sup> The former was the case for example in Valencia and Aragon, where a single joint-consul was shared by Genoese, Lucchese, Sienese, Venetian, and Florentine merchants and the later in London, Bruges, Pera (Constantinople), Rhodes, and Alexandria.<sup>1629</sup> The duties of these men was to speak for the merchant communities, oversee that regulations were followed and act as a lynch pin between the metropole, the merchants abroad, and the local authorities. They could also act when called upon, as judges in disputes between merchants during their time abroad.

Like the *fondaci*, the system of consuls had evolved in the east. Evidence of this actually appears in Poland itself in the form of Pietro Messopero di Ansaldo, "*heredem Licostomi Consulem Francorum*", who was a Genoese merchant active in Poland between 1441 and 1445.<sup>1630</sup> Pietro Messopero's family had previously settled in the Genoese Black Sea colony of Licostomo, an island settlement located very close to Kiliya.<sup>1631</sup> The names of eight previous consuls of Kiliya and Licostomo are known, and Pietro was no doubt the decedent of one of the men who filled this position.<sup>1632</sup> Other than this mention however, there appears

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<sup>1627</sup> Garrett Mattingly, "The first resident embassies: Mediaeval Italian origins of modern diplomacy," *Speculum* 12.4 (1937): 425.

<sup>1628</sup> Florentines in particular, tended to piggyback off of other nation's consuls. Agents of the Datini company, at the turn of the fifteenth century for example, used the services of the Venetian consul in Tunis and Majorca, and the Genoese consul in Majorca. Michienzi, "La 'nation' et les milieux," 306.

<sup>1629</sup> Prajda, "Justice in the Florentine," Accessed March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2716> ; DOI : 10.4000/mefrm.2716; Francisco Apellaniz, "Florentine networks in the Middle East in the early Renaissance," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 30.2 (2015): 120; Roover, *Money, Banking and Credit in Medieval Bruges*, 13-5; Helen Bradley, "Nostri fratelli da Londra": The Lucchese Community in Late Medieval England," in *Anglo-Italian Cultural Relations in the Later Middle Ages*, eds. Helen Fulton and Michele Campopiano, (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2018), 90-1.

<sup>1630</sup> (1441/07/14). [AGZ] 14 nr 1340

<sup>1631</sup> Олександр "Нарис освоєння генуезцями," 16-21.

<sup>1632</sup> Antonio de Castro (1360), Nicolao Brancaloneo (1360–1361), Bernabo de Carpena (1361), Pietro Embrono (1372 and 1382), Paolo de Podio (1373), Corrado Donato (1381), Luca Uzodimare (1384) and Niccolo de Fieschi (1403) Олександр "Нарис освоєння генуезцями," 21.

no sign that there was ever an elected or mandated merchant consul in Poland. The closest then, would have been the one in Buda. While the Italian community in Hungary was larger than that in Poland, it was still small in comparison to other regions and it therefore comes as somewhat of a surprise that there existed a consul there at all. Yet, evidence points to one possibly in residence from at least 1379. In that year, King Louis Anjou, in a bid to link himself more closely to his Genoese allies as they fought the Venetians in the War of Chioggia (1378-81), offered to Genoese merchants a very favorable charter of privilege. Included among other provisions, was the right to have a consul or even multiple consuls who would look after the Genoese community, located primarily in Buda. The consul would be responsible for adjudicating both civil and criminal cases involving Genoese citizens in Hungary.<sup>1633</sup> Reference, perhaps to this same posting appears again in 1392, in a letter sent by the Florentine *Mercanzia* Court addressed to, Giovanni Seracino, the “ex-Latin consul in the Kingdom of Hungary”.<sup>1634</sup> The use of the term “Latin” consul implies that this was a joint-post he was not only responsible for the Florentine community in Hungary but all Italian merchants in the kingdom, and thus may have been a holdover from the Genoese privilege. How active this individual was in the daily affairs of Italians in Hungary and potentially also in Poland is hard to say as few records survive. The post existed until at least 1433, but after that, the records fall silent.<sup>1635</sup> In any event, given that the timeframe covered the most flourishing period of Italian activity in Hungary, it is unsurprising that if one was to be present, they would appear during this period. Italian merchants in Poland therefore, who as we have seen did have ties with Hungary, could have sent requests or sought dispute settlement with the consul in Buda as their nearest representative, but we have no evidence to support that this was ever the case. Assistance might also have been sought through the Florentine Consul in Venice, who at least in the early 1430s had direct ties to Poland as the

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<sup>1633</sup> “*quod ipsi Ianuenses habeant et habere debeant in Buda nova vel veteri sive alibi in toto regno nostro ubi eis melius placuerit et videbitur consulem unum aut rectores in et contra Ianuenses habeant et habere possint omnimodam iurisdictionem et gladii testamentum tam in civilibus quam etiam in criminalibus.*” (1379/06/24) *Historiae patriae Monumenta: edita iussu Regis Caroli Alberti. Vol II*, eds. Baudi di Vesme, Carlo, Cornelio Desimoni, and Vittorio Poggi (Turin: Augusta Taurinorum Regium Typographeum, 1857), 856-7.

<sup>1634</sup> (1392/06/03) The requested the consul’s assistance in dissolving a partnership between two Florentine businessmen at work in the kingdom. Katalin Prajda, “Justice in the Florentine Trading Community of Late Medieval Buda,” *Mélanges de l’École française de Rome - Moyen Âge* [En ligne], 127-2 | 2015, mis en ligne le 30 septembre 2015, consulté le 12 mars 2018. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2716> ; DOI : 10.4000/mefrm.2716

<sup>1635</sup> “Besides this document, only a declaration from the 1433 Florentine tax survey, the *Catasto*, refers to the existence of the “Italians’ judge in Buda”,<sup>11</sup> Consuls of the Florentine *nazioni* often acted as local judges; therefore, both sources would likely refer to an officer of an organization established by Italian merchant groups, probably of various proveniences, in the City of Buda.” Prajda, “Justice in the Florentine Trading Community.”



position was held by Michele di ser Matteo.<sup>1636</sup> So far, no evidence suggests that this was ever the case, but further research into the Venetian archives may reveal more. Instead of applying to Consuls in either Buda or Venice, Italian merchants in Poland appear to have applied as a rule, directly to local courts or taken their disputes all the way back to the metropolises, a situation that will be discussed in a further section of this chapter.

The final place where Italian consuls can be observed bearing a direct influence on affairs in Poland is in the east where various Genoese consuls corresponded with the Polish king. In 1444, for example, The Genoese Doge sent a letter to the Genoese Consul in Pera, ordering him to petition the King of Poland about a case involving Genoese merchants who had apparently been robbed of their goods while making their way to Lviv.<sup>1637</sup> This particular case, as it eventually called down an act of *rapressaglia* will be discussed in further detail in a following section. While due to a lack of source material it remains unclear how the case was eventually resolved, this was the sort of work consuls were responsible for managing. Another case in 1462 saw roles reversed as the Genoese consul Raphael di Monte Rubro of Caffa sent a letter to King Casimir IV Jagiełło responding to a case involving Clementis de Cadim, a citizen of Lviv, which had fallen to the judgement of the Caffa Consul some three years prior.<sup>1638</sup>

An investigation into the matter was called for and it was uncovered that Clementis and his brother traded regularly between Caffa and Lviv. During one such journey, having left port at Moncastro in route to Caffa, the ship carrying Clementis's goods had wrecked near Soldaia [Судак], off the coast of the Crimean peninsula. All the property recovered from the wreck had thereafter wound up in the hands of the consul of Soldaia and it was decided by him that all the goods were to be handed back to Clementis as the consuls sought to keep excellent relations between themselves and the Polish merchants of Lviv.<sup>1639</sup> Here, it becomes obvious

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<sup>1636</sup> *Notes et extraits pour servir à l'histoire des croisades au XVe siècle*. Series 2 vol 1 ed. Nicolae Iorga (Paris: Leroux, 1899). 301

<sup>1637</sup> (1444/06/11) *Acte și fragmente cu privire la Istoria Românilor adunate di depozitele de manuscrite ale apusului*. Vol. 3 [Acts and fragments on the History of the Romanians gathered from the manuscripts of the west Vol 3.] ed. Nicolae Iorga (Bucurest : Imprimeria Statului, 1897), 22-3.

<sup>1638</sup> [MRPS I], nr. 610.

<sup>1639</sup> Danuta Quirini-Popławska, "Z powiązań Polski z Kaffą, kolonią genueską na Krymie w drugiej połowie XV wieku [Links between Poland and Kaffa, the Genoese colony in the Crimea in the second half of the fifteenth century.] in *Cracovia – Polonia – Europa. Studia z dziejów średniowiecza ofiarowane Jerzemu Wyrozumskiemu w 65-rocznicę urodzin i 40-lecie pracy naukowej*, (Krakow: Wydawn. i Druk. "Secesja" 1995), 551, 554.

that consuls not only represented their own communities but could work in concert as well. It is interesting however, to note the delay or even more importantly, the timing of the answer to the original petition.

King Casimir IV Jagiełło had originally contacted the Caffa consul in 1459, but received a full accounting of the incident only three years later, a significant delay even taking into consideration medieval travel conditions. What points to the 1462 response being more than it seems is that fact that, at that same moment, Raphael di Monte Rubro was requesting the protection of King Casimir IV Jagiełło for his city against the Ottomans.<sup>1640</sup> Pressure on the region had increased steadily since the Ottomans had conquered Constantinople and try as they might, Christian forces were unable to keep them at bay. The people of Caffa had grown desperate, and searching for a protector, one more closely located than the mother city of Genoa so far away, the requested aid from Poland. Here, the importance of the position of the consul is made plain as he was the primary spokesman for the community in dire need of Polish support. The sudden quick fix to Clementis of Lviv's case is also put into a new light in this instance. The consul had the power to ease the way, and here he used it, seeking favor with the king whose good will he dearly needed. King Casimir IV Jagiełło did in the end grant their petition, placing Caffa under Polish protection, but it did them little good. The Ottomans would take the city anyways.

### 5.1.3 The *Mercanzia* Court in Florence

The *Mercanzia* Court in Florence is an example of a more elaborate guild court that arose to fill the need to adjudicate reprisal cases between merchants. Founded in 1308 by the five leading guilds of the city, "The original role of the court was to provide expeditious judgments in disputes between Florentines and their international trading partners in order to protect the city's merchants living abroad from the *rappresaglie*, or trade reprisals, that threatened the continuity of international commerce," although it soon gave rulings on a number of other types of business disputes as well.<sup>1641</sup> Neri Tornaquinci for example, was

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Código diplomático delie colonie tauro-liguri, ed. A. Vigna, vol. II, p. 2: Supplement al código diplomático, [w:] Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria, vol. VII, p. 2, nr 16, s. 472 Codice diplomático delie colonie, vol. II, p. 2: Supplemento...,nr 15 (s. 470—471);

<sup>1640</sup> [MRPS I], nr. 587, nr 609.

<sup>1641</sup> At various times these included: bankruptcy, litigation between partners, disputes between management and their employees, financial records, cases of banditry, usury, fraud, as well as administration of the various *gabelles* – the city gate taxes, and the city mint. Antonella Astorri and David Friedman, "The Florentine *Mercanzia* and its palace," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 10 (2005): 14-5, 22.

prosecuted before the *Mercanzia* Court by Giovanni di Medici for debts owed to the Medici Bank and was eventually stripped of all his possessions in Florence, including his house and garden which were sold off and the money given to Giovanni.<sup>1642</sup> No cases involving Polish merchants have yet been uncovered within the *Mercanzia* records but a number have been unearthed involving Florentines active in Hungary. This comes as little surprise given the much greater Florentine presence in Hungary, particularly in the first few decades of the fifteenth century. While twelve companies are known to have been registered their headquarters in Buda in 1427, none have been identified in Poland.<sup>1643</sup> Florentines active in Hungary tended to form themselves into limited liability companies using *accomandita*, - a contract that, “allowed outsiders to invest in a partnership and share profits on the same terms as the other partners, without, however, risking anything beyond their investment.”<sup>1644</sup> This type of contract was first made legal in Florence in 1408, and quickly grew in popularity as it was particularly well-suited to the more risky pursuit of long-distance trade. An example of this form of partnership contract used in Poland can be seen with the di ser Matteo brothers who together with Niccolo di Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe invested significant capital into their business in Krakow.<sup>1645</sup> The *Mercanzia* records post 1408 are full of litigation surrounding failed *accomandita* contracts but none so far have been identified for Poland. Of the 461 *accomandite* registered with the Florentine *Mercanzia* between 1450-1530, only three related to Central Eastern Europe - two in Hungary and one in Germany, none dedicated to the Polish market.<sup>1646</sup> Due to the nature of the *Mercanzia* records however, which are numerous and at times in very poor condition, I was unable to do more than a basic sample

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<sup>1642</sup> (1419/20/01/06) – Neri’s brother Adovardo Tornaquinci/Ghiachinotti represented him before the *Mercanzia* Court for the case which was first brought against him by Giovanni di Bicci di Medici in June of 1409. Neri lost his house and gardens in Florence which were sold for a little over 1000fl. Archive of the Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore, nr. o0201077.013a. <http://archivio.operaduomo.fi.it/cupola/ENG/HTML/S011/C025/T001/TBLOCK00.HTM> Accessed September 3rd 2020

<sup>1643</sup> Katalin Prajda, “Florentine merchant companies established in Buda at the beginning of the 15th century,” *Mélanges de l’École française de Rome - Moyen âge* [En ligne], 125-1 | 2013, mis en ligne le 21 octobre 2013, Accessed March 12<sup>th</sup> 2018 URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/1062> ; DOI : 10.4000/mefrm.1062; John F. Padgett-McLean and Paul D.McLean. “Census of firms in 1427 Catasto.” <http://home.uchicago.edu/~jpadgett/data.html> Accessed January 11th, 2021.

<sup>1644</sup> Goldthwaite, *Economy of Renaissance Florence*, 67.

<sup>1645</sup> In 1430, Guido di ser Matteo and Niccolo di Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe invested an additional 3,120 fl. into their company in the form of an *accomanditia* contract.. (1430) Catasto, 39, fol. 338v (1430); Arany, Florentines, 25.

<sup>1646</sup> Bruno Dini, *Saggi su una economia-mondo: Firenze e l'Italia fra Mediterraneo ed Europa (secc. XIII-XVI)* (Pisa: Pacini, 1995), 275.

survey of their contents during my time researching in the Florentine Archives. It is hopeful that a proper study conducted in the future may reveal cases related to Poland.<sup>1647</sup>

#### 5.1.4 The Giudici del Forestier and the Giudici di Petizion in Venice

Another court to which Italians active in Poland brought disputes before was the *Giudici del Forestier* in Venice. This court, formed in the thirteenth century, was designed, like that of the *Mercanzia* in Florence, to handle cases dealing with foreign merchants.<sup>1648</sup>

Unfortunately, due to the perfidy of a custodian of the archive in the eighteenth century, nearly all the records of the *Giudici del Forestier* produced prior to the mid-sixteenth century were sold off as pulp and lost, almost certainly taking cases related to Poland with them.<sup>1649</sup>

The Venetian judiciary was a convoluted and overlapping carpet however, and only a few years after the *Giudici del Forestier* had been formed, another magistracy – the *Giudici di Petizion* was created and intended to take on some of the increasing case load. Among the responsibilities delegated to the *Giudici di Petizion* were particular types of cases involving foreigners, including critically, all those related to debt disputes – a large portion of commercial disagreements.<sup>1650</sup> The *Giudici di Petizion* was further charged with particularly complex cases, ones which required the application of more flexible *iustitia*. rather than the defined juridical norm *ratio*.<sup>1651</sup> Thankfully, this magistracy's cases were not robbed and mashed into pulp and it is here that we find example related to Poland. The case in question related to the activities of the di ser Matteo brothers and their business partner, Johannes Bank of Wrocław. The details of the case are complex and will not be delved into here, but an explanation of the various court appeals will be as it illuminates the way in which Italian

<sup>1647</sup> Prajda, *Network and Migration*, 59-61; Arany, *Florentine Families in Hungary*, 31-2; Katalin Prajda, « Justice in the Florentine Trading Community,» Accessed January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021. URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrim/2716> ; DOI : 10.4000/mefrim.2716; Susanna Teke, «Operatori Economici Fiorentini in Ungheria nel Tardo Trecento e Primo Quattrocento,» *Archivio Storico Italiano* 153, no. 4 (566) (1995): 697-707.

<sup>1648</sup> The statutes underpinning the court's jurisdiction were promulgated in 1229-31 by Doge Jacopo Tiepolo. Maria Fusaro, «Politics of justice/Politics of trade: foreign merchants and the administration of justice from the records of Venice's Giudici del Forestier,» *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome - Italie et Méditerranée modernes et contemporaines* [Online], 126-1 | 2014, Messo online il 21 juillet 2014, Accessed January 12th 2021. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrim/1665> ; DOI : <https://doi.org/10.4000/mefrim.1665>

<sup>1649</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1650</sup> The *Giudici di Petizion* was formed in 1244 by the Doge Jacopo Tiepolo. Fusaro, «Politics of justice/Politics of trade,» Accessed January 12th 2021. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrim/1665> ; DOI : <https://doi.org/10.4000/mefrim.1665>; Mattia Viale, «Consumer Behaviour And Material Living Standards In A Transition Economy: Venice (Ca. 1650-1800),» (Ph.D Diss., University of Antwerp, 2017), 41.

<sup>1651</sup> Fusaro, «Politics of justice/Politics of trade,» Accessed January 12th 2021. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrim/1665> ; DOI : <https://doi.org/10.4000/mefrim.1665>;

merchants sought to navigate through various jurisdictions attempting to find one that would be favorable to them.<sup>1652</sup>

Johannes Bank was a successful whole-sale merchant from Wrocław who had been trading in partnership with the di ser Matteo brothers since at least 1427 and on good enough terms that Antonio di ser Matteo permitted Bank to make use of his house in Wrocław.<sup>1653</sup> In 1429 however, the relationship devolved with Antonio accusing Bank of stealing some important papers from him and both sides accused the other of not repaying their full part in the partnership. Of greatest contention were the debts and profits obtained from a deal involving a large load of cochineal dye and *vair* – silver squirrel pelts worth 3,650 fl.<sup>1654</sup> The case was first brought before the Krakow City Council who organized for six of the leading citizens of the city to act as, “*arbitri seu arbitratore et amicales compositores inter Anthonium supparium ex una et Johannem Bank*” – arbitrators and friendly arrangers between Antonio Zupparius on one side and Johannes Bank on the other.<sup>1655</sup> The case was recorded in extensive detail over four days in April 1429 but did not end the dispute as Antonio claimed Italian documents produced by Bank were not currently in his possession and further evidence in the case would have to be supplied by his brother Michele.<sup>1656</sup> With the documents produced by this first trial in hand, the action moved to Venice and in October of 1429, the first of at least four trials before the *Giudici di Petizion* began.<sup>1657</sup> At some point in late October/early November 1429, between the first and second trial before the *Giudici di Petizion*, a second attempt at arbitration was made before two other merchants agreed upon by both parties, and they found in favor of Johannes Bank.<sup>1658</sup> Michele di ser Matteo, who now joined the fray moved quickly however, and likely using his political connections was able to have the verdict annulled by the Venetian Senate.<sup>1659</sup> The stated reasoning for the decree was that as the case was already being processed by the *Giudici di Petizion*, the

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<sup>1652</sup> More about the case can be found in Chapter 4. Francesco Bettarini also does a good job of explaining many of its particulars. Bettarini, “The new frontier,” Accessed December, 8<sup>th</sup> 2017. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2648>

<sup>1653</sup> Johannes Bank appears in the 1427 Catasto of Michele di ser Matteo owing 470fl.: *Da Giovanni Bancho de Brasillavia per testo gofini sua tagiani a baldassarei suo fattore e la sua vai venditi er sua afari vagliono in Firenze – 470fl.* ASF Catasto 38 717r-722v; (1429/04/13) [Itali] nr 52.

<sup>1654</sup> (1429/04/13) [Itali] nr 52.

<sup>1655</sup> (1429/04/13) [Itali] nr 52.

<sup>1656</sup> (1429/04/13) [Itali] nr 52, (1429/04/16) nr 53.

<sup>1657</sup> (1429/10/19) [Itali] nr 53, (1429/11/18-1429/12/14) nr 55, (1430/02/13) nr 57, (1430/12/16-1431/01/15) nr 63

<sup>1658</sup> The arbitrators were Pisanello di Pisanelis and Giovanni di Ursinis.

<sup>1659</sup> The senate voted, “*De parte 100, de non 16, non sinceri 22*” - 100 in favor, 16 against, and 22 abstaining. Marrella Fabrizio and Andrea Mozzato, *Alle Origini Dell'arbitrato Commerciale Internazionale: L'arbitrato a Venezia Tra Medioevo Ed Età Moderna* (Padua: CEDAM, 2001), 102-3.

opinions of the arbitrators could not be considered binding as the court's eventual decision took precedence. The act of involving the Senate, the primary deliberative and legislative body of the Venetian Republic in this case reflects both the seriousness with which Venetian politicians took commercial disputes and Michele di ser Matteo's personal clout. The case thus returned to the *Giudici di Petizion*, and after two further trials and the collection of various testimony they too eventually found in favor of Johannes Bank. Michele was required to pay 135 lire di grossi, 17 solidi, 6 grossi and 12 piccoli, the equivalent of a little over 1,350 ducats for damages and the cost of the trial.<sup>1660</sup> The case had lasted three years and the brothers would not complete paying off the debt until 1432.<sup>1661</sup>

The case in question is interesting for a number of reasons, not least of which being the fact that despite everything, Johannes Bank, the merchant from Wrocław came out the victor against the powerful political figure of Michele di ser Matteo on his home ground. This, implies that Venetian justice at least was not unfairly biased towards its own, and instead offered fair judgement.<sup>1662</sup> Johannes Bank, also appears to have had no issue with the removal of the trial to Venice, as opposed to continuing it in Krakow or Wrocław, this flies in the face of the assumption that most merchants in East-Central Europe preferred to have disputes adjudicated at home. Finally, while the trial did eventually reach a conclusion, it was far from swift. Part of the supposed benefit of the trials in Italian mercantile courts was their speed, yet here the case can be seen to have dragged on for years.<sup>1663</sup> It is hopeful that greater research into the books of the *Giudici di Petizion* will offer further examples to further test existing theories.<sup>1664</sup>

## 5.2 Citizenship

Citizenship as a legal category during the Late Medieval period was quite different from that of our modern age. Rather than being linked to a nation, citizenship was tied to a single urban polity and while the right to political participation was implied, it was generally not the

<sup>1660</sup> Judged using the ratio 1 ducat = 1/10<sup>th</sup> lire di grossi. Reinhold C. Mueller, *The Venetian money market: banks, panics, and the public debt, 1200-1500* (Baltimore: JHU Press, 2019), 291.

<sup>1661</sup> (1430/12/16-1431/01/15) nr 63.

<sup>1662</sup> While born in Florence, Michele became a citizen of Venice in 1420. MICHAEL QD IOHANNIS SER MATHEI, Cives Veneciarum, <http://www.civesveneciarum.net/dettaglio.php?id=2522>, versione 56/2017-02-01 Accessed September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2019

<sup>1663</sup> Fusaro, "Politics of justice/Politics of trade," Accessed January 12th 2021. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrim/1665> ; DOI : <https://doi.org/10.4000/mefrim.1665>

<sup>1664</sup> During my time in Venice, I was only able to make a brief survey of a few of the large number of volumes making up the *Giudici di Petizion* and uncovered no relevant cases.

primary goal of membership.<sup>1665</sup> Rather, as Peter Riesenbergh, has demonstrated in his study of the Italian legal conception of citizenship they were principally concerned with, “those benefits of citizenship which advanced his and his family’s social status, facilitated his business life, gave him an edge over the resident non-citizen within the walls and which protected him as he maintained banking or commercial operations abroad.”<sup>1666</sup> For this reason, a number of Italians chose to take up citizenship in Poland. While citizenship carried with it a number of duties and a specific initial cost, it also provided many material benefits. Indeed, gaining citizenship in a town, was one of the means by which medieval merchants might make increase their fortunes, as while there was an initial cost for membership, the benefits of reduced trade tariffs and direct market access were frequently enough to offset any initial costs if the arrangement was intended to be long term. The Italians who took up citizenship in Poland therefore, tended to be those who were settling, if not permanently, then at least for a significant period of time. Citizenship could also help insulate one from political pressures. In 1457, for example, merchants from Nuremberg suffered a major setback when King Casimir IV Jagiełło, forbid them, but also other foreign merchants, from trading or residing in Polish cities where they do not have citizen status as their activities are “impoverishing the locals”.<sup>1667</sup> The ban turned out to be unsustainable and was soon lifted, but similar protective measures were frequently employed by royal or regional officials against any ‘foreigner rivals’ they deemed to be cutting into their trade. Citizenship in an important Polish city like Krakow or Lviv, made avoiding these bans possible, giving one an upper-hand with the competition.

Of the individuals reviewed in this study, only 13 can be said with absolute certainty to have taken urban citizenship in Poland, 8% of the total. Of these, 8 became citizens in Krakow, 2 in Kazimierz, 2 in Poznań, 1 in Olkusz, and 1 in Lviv. These numbers however, are likely misleading due to document bias. The book recording Krakow citizens for example, is extant only from 1392.<sup>1668</sup> Those enumerated here, have been taken from that source and other documents where they appear explicitly named as citizens of a community or were members of the citizen council which de facto implied previous citizenship. The number of Italians invested in political office increased with time as the work of Zdzisław Noga into the

<sup>1665</sup> Peter Riesenbergh, “Citizenship at Law in Late Medieval Italy,” *Viator* 5 (1974): 333-346.

<sup>1666</sup> Riesenbergh, “Citizenship at Law,” 335.

<sup>1667</sup> (1457/03/06) KDMK I nr. 164 pg. 231

<sup>1668</sup> *Libri iuris civilis Cracoviensis 1392-1506 /Księgi przyjęć do prawa miejskiego w Krakowie 1392-1506*, ed. Kazimierz Kaczmarczyk (Krakow: Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 1913).

presence of Italians among Krakow city officials reveals. While during the Late Medieval period only 1.2% of city councilors were Italian, entry into such offices became far more common during the Early Modern period, reaching 14% between 1500-1800.<sup>1669</sup>

Unlike modern citizenship which is attached to an entire Nation State, and frequently exclusionary of other ties, medieval citizenship was tied to urban localities and individuals were permitted to hold membership in more than one simultaneously. The three Talenti brothers of Florence, for example who traded in Krakow in the 1390s, held between them citizenship in four Hungarian towns - Zadar, Pest, Pecs, and Košice.<sup>1670</sup> Such double, or even triple associations allowed merchants to spread a network of locations where they could sell their goods without undue interference. Italians abroad, further retained their citizenship back in their own communes, calling upon it at times when they sold goods directly from Poland to the peninsula, or more frequently when they requested assistance from their home community in the form of letters of recommendation or in settling disputes, topics which will be further explored in subsequent sections.

Italians thus leveraged their connection to their home communities while making new ones abroad. The strategic choice of where to take up citizenship, was at times linked directly to political changes of circumstances which affected trade for better and for worse. For example, the merchant Francisco Cantello bringing with him letters of introduction from Caffa, applied for and was granted citizenship in Lviv in 1409.<sup>1671</sup> Francesco's becoming a citizen in Lviv corresponds neatly with the changing political currents as only a year prior, the Moldavian Prince, Alexander the Good, had granted Lviv merchants the right to trade freely through his territory. This privilege forged a direct link that ran from Caffa to Moncastro to Lviv along the *Via Walachiensis* which Francesco was but the first of many to take advantage of. In the opposite way, Gregors Wloch [the Italian] of Wallachia became a citizen of Krakow in 1485, a move almost certainly prompted by the fact that in that same year, the ports of Moncastro and Kiliya were captured by the Ottomans.<sup>1672</sup> In one case, changing politics eased the route between Poland and the Italian port of Caffa, prompting

<sup>1669</sup> The reason for this upsurge was due in large part to the influx of Italians into the region in the wake of the reign of Bona Sforza as Queen of Poland 1518-1548. Zdzisław Noga, "Italians in the City of Cracow's Authorities in the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries," *Acta Poloniae Historica* 119 (2019): 193.

<sup>1670</sup> Arany, *Florentines*, 127

<sup>1671</sup> (1409/11/20) [PomnLw] II nr. 225

<sup>1672</sup> (1485/01/12) [IurCiv] nr. 8198



Francisco to become a citizen of Lviv while the other made it much more difficult to Italians to access, forcing Gregors to turn his sights instead towards Krakow.

In Poland, the granting of citizenship frequently required the verbal, or more frequently, written commendation of at least two other known and respected individuals and the ownership of property in the town. Both qualifications could at times be difficult for Italians to produce. Jacobo di Paravisino of Milan applied to become a citizen of Krakow in 1408, but was given only provisional membership. It was recorded in the city's rolls that he knew no one in the region who could vouch for him and was therefore required to produce a written letter of recommendation from Milan within the year.<sup>1673</sup> For others, letters were simpler to come by, as they could be furnished by family members already active in the region. Such was the case for Antonio Tron of Venice, whose brother-in-law Antonius di Puteo stood as his guarantor when Tron became a citizen of Krakow in 1409.<sup>1674</sup> The Promontorio brothers on the other hand, had issues with the property requirement, and were forced to purchase a house in Poznań for an outrageous sum in order to retain their citizenship status.<sup>1675</sup>

Given all the possible benefits of citizenship, it is surprising the number of Italians who resided in Poland long-term but never became citizens. Pietro Bicherano, from Venice for example who lived in Poland for twenty years appears never to have become a citizen, neither did anyone in the Tedaldi family who combined remained in Poland for over sixty years. The most obviously odd example of a refusal to become a citizen can be seen in Antonio di ser Matteo. Antonio had first come to the region in 1410, when he was granted permission by King Sigismund of Hungary to settle in Wrocław and soon after became a citizen of the Silesian town.<sup>1676</sup> A decade later, Antonio turned his sites to Poland and was resident in Krakow, from 1422 to 1434, much of that time acting as manager of the Krakow salt mines, yet he never applied for citizenship, even when in 1426 he was reprimanded by the Krakow City Council for selling cloth directly to other *hospites*, which was a type of business transaction that was illegal for non-citizens to engage in. The council went so far as to enumerate the other activities that Antonio was forbidden to do, implying he likely had been

<sup>1673</sup> (1408/12/14) [LibCiv] nr 1963

<sup>1674</sup> It remains unclear if Antonius de Puteo was himself also of Italian origins. (1417/02/26) [IurCiv] nr. 2994

<sup>1675</sup> (1488/03/11) Paolo di Promontorio was granted citizenship in Poznań on the understanding that he would purchase property in the town and a few months later Paulo and his brother Stefano purchase a stone house on the central square in Poznań for 1500 fl. from Caspar Heida, paying in installments. [ActaPoz] II nr 1493, 1500.

<sup>1676</sup> Codex diplomaticus Silesiae 20 Schlesiens Bergbau und Hüttenwesen. Urkunden, 1136-1528, ed. Conrad Wutke (Wrocław: Max, 1900), 87.

involved in at least some of them.<sup>1677</sup> These included, that he would measure on his own any spices or measure out any cloth in ells as both of these were to be done and paid for in the city's central market square. He was further forbidden to engage in the retail trade or directly take part in the transit trade against the staple rights of the city. None of these rules applied however, if Antonio was to make a direct sale to the royal court, which was what he likely focused his efforts on doing as despite the censure laid upon him by the Krakow City Council he chose not to become a citizen. Perhaps Antonio's ties to Wrocław were too strong, and it was the place to which he returned even becoming there a member of the City Council when his business ventures in Poland eventually failed, but the lack remains a mystery.

Citizenship was a useful business tool wielded by Italians in their business ventures abroad, and in this Poland was no exception. When and where it appeared profitable, Italians frequently made arrangements for letters of recommendation and purchased local property in order to be accepted on equal legal terms with the local Polish merchant community. When they chose not to become citizens, despite residing long-term, it was presumably either because for some reason they could not meet the requirements, or as a calculated move that the current source base does not allow us to decipher.

### 5.3 Letters of Recommendation

While the middle ages were, unlike our modern day, an overwhelmingly oral culture, letters, in particular between two distant parties, in terms both geographical and social, were an important means of communication. Particularly in the merchant world that grew ever more complex in the wake of the increased commercial exchange from the twelfth century onwards, letters took on an increasingly important role. Many discreet types of business letters evolved, relaying important information about the state of the market in a particular city, orders for goods, receipt of goods, and *lettere di cambio*, among others. As merchants became increasingly involved in trade abroad, diplomatic correspondence at times overlapped with that of business and increasingly, "a strong correlation between private trade and public diplomatic interests," was to be found in the letters sent to foreign powers by the Italian Merchant Republics.<sup>1678</sup> Such notes included: letters of introduction, letters of recommendation, requests for *salvus*

<sup>1677</sup>(1426/07/09) [NZPiWMK] nr 19

<sup>1678</sup> Katalin Prajda, "Trade and Diplomacy in Pre-Medici Florence: The Case of the Kingdom of Hungary (1349-1434)," *Das Konzil von Konstanz und Ungarn* (2015): 104.

*conductus*, and letters of complaint, all of which acted, together with oral proclamations, to assist Italian merchants in their dealings abroad.

As Paul McLean and Francis Kent have shown, within the increasingly sophisticated social world of the early Renaissance, such letters were also used between various parties as a way to expand and take part in extended patronage networks. Together with personal interactions, these letters, “engineered a flow of patronage, of reciprocal services between the grandees whom contemporaries called the ‘gran maestri’ and their friends (*amici*) and ‘friends of friends.’”<sup>1679</sup> The authors in this case were speaking of personal private patronage rather than official relations between states, but the mechanisms were largely the same. In a sense, all of these letters can be considered as a subtype of the letter of recommendation. The functionality of such letters lay in the tri-part bond of trust between the recommender, the recipient and the recommendee. “*Raccomandazione* was equally, but more profoundly, a plea for recognition. To recommend oneself to another, as Florentines so formulaically did in the conclusions of their letters, was to ask to be remembered by another, to be kept in mind by another, to respect and be respected by another.”<sup>1680</sup>

The recognition of one state by another and through that, the guarantee of its citizens, was a powerful thing in the absence of other means to perform a background or credit check, attesting to the reliability, probity, and solvency of an individual. For this reason, as related above, for an outsider to become a citizen, apart from making a financial investment in the town, he was required to produce at least two witnesses who could attest for him or provide a letter doing the same. This type of letter was required for example, from Jacobo di Paravisino of Milan when he desired to become a citizen of Krakow in 1408, as he knew no one in the city who could attest for him verbally, he was granted only provisional citizenship status until the letter was delivered.<sup>1681</sup> Apart from such introductory letters of recommendation, others which promoted a merchant at different moments in his career, usually one of change or difficulty were also sent.

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<sup>1679</sup> Francis W. Kent, *Bartolommeo Cederni and His Friends: Letters to an Obscure Florentine. Introductory essay by F. W. Kent and texts edited by Gino Corti with F. W. Kent.* (Florence: Olschki, 1991), 10; Paul D. McLean, *The art of the network: Strategic interaction and patronage in renaissance Florence.* Durham N.C.: Duke University Press, 2007), 151.

<sup>1680</sup> McLean, *The art of the network*, 151.

<sup>1681</sup> (1408/12/14) [LibCiv] nr 1963

While numerous studies have parsed the domestic sphere of recommendation letters, particularly those penned by Florentines, surprisingly few have looked into this phenomenon abroad. The need to research this topic in greater depth is further underlined by the fact that Florence appears to have made use of such letters in their foreign diplomacy to an unusual degree, as the case in Poland demonstrates. While ambassadorial contacts and letters of complaint which will be addressed in the next section were received from Genoa, Venice, and Milan, only the Florentine *Signoria* issued letters of recommendation. As the records of the city's chancery demonstrate, by the late fourteenth century it was standard practice for a merchant encountering some difficulty, usually in recovering funds in a foreign locality, to write home requesting a letter of support. The *Signoria* in turn, frequently responded to these requests. Katalin Prajda has done some work using examples of Florentine letters of recommendation in Hungary, where she found that, indeed, as a merchant republic, much of Florence's political strategy was designed to support its merchant community abroad, and such letters were an important if understudied aspect of this program. Starting in the 1380s, Italian merchants in Hungary wrote home requesting letters of recommendation, most frequently when they were having difficulty recovering funds from high-ranking debtors in the kingdom.<sup>1682</sup> At other times, letters were requested when a company had undergone restructuring or a major backer had left, and were intended to reassure the recipient that despite any changes they were as fit as ever. Such letters were also provided when merchants had run into trouble, as for example in 1428 in Hungary, when three Florentine merchants were placed under arrest for supposed support of the Ottomans.<sup>1683</sup> The cases in Poland were similar.

The first known letter that might be considered under this category was issued by the Florentine *Signoria* to King Władysław Jagiełło in 1406, and recommended Leonardo Bartoli and Pietro Bicherano.<sup>1684</sup> This letter however, as discussed in greater detail in chapter one was highly unusual in form and function and as I argue, likely never sent to Poland. It is therefore not discussed here except to say that it marks the first time the Florentine government wrote directly to a Polish King. Previous letters had been sent to King Louis Anjou, but these were sent primarily in recognition of his role as king of Hungary. During the time period under

<sup>1682</sup> Katalin Prajda, *Rapporti tra la Repubblica Fiorentina e il Regno d'Ungheria a livello di diplomazia, migrazione umana, reti mercantili e mediazione culturale nell'età del regime oligarchico (1382-1434), che corrisponde al regno di Sigismondo di Lussemburgo (1387-1437)*, (Ph.D diss. European University Institute, Department of history and civilization, 2011), 93-7.

<sup>1683</sup> Prajda, "Trade and Diplomacy," 103.

<sup>1684</sup> (1406/06/24) ASF, Signoria, Missive, Cancancellaria 27, fol 1 reproduced in: *Codex epistolaris saeculi decimi quinti 1384-1496* Vol. 1 edited by August Sokołowski and Józef Szujski (Krakow: Akademia Umiejętności, 1876), nr 25; [Itali] nr. 18.

consideration, a further ten letters of recommendation were sent by the *Signoria* to officials in Poland. Of these, eight were issued between 1424 and 1430 and related to the dealings of the di ser Matteo family. Apart from these ten letters, as reported by Katalin Prajda, who has undertaken an extensive survey of the relevant documents within the Florentine archives, no embassies or other official correspondence occurred between the two states.<sup>1685</sup> Such letters of recommendation therefore, stand as the single means by which Florence effected diplomacy with the Kingdom of Poland. The letters therefore, deserve some attention.

Similarly to those sent to Hungary, the letters of recommendation sent to Poland, while roughly standardized in form, were individualized in purpose and produced at a specific moment upon the request of the merchant in question.<sup>1686</sup> The first was sent in 1424 in support of Leonardo di ser Matteo.<sup>1687</sup> Leonardo had been active in the region since 1414, when he became a papal collector for Pope/Anti-pope John XXIII and was actively working in Poland from 1422, two years before the letter was sent.<sup>1688</sup> The reason Leonardo requested the letter was that he was at that moment in jail.

The reason Leonardo ended up in this predicament is unclear, but it almost certainly had to do with unpaid debts – the usual problem of the di ser Matteo family. At the time of his arrest, Leonardo was the active partner in Krakow, while his brother Antonio concentrated on Wrocław, and their other brother Michele acted as the lynch-pin in Venice.<sup>1689</sup> Finding himself in difficulty, Leonardo appears to have written to the *Signoria*, who sent back a letter in January 1424 to King Władysław Jagiełło, requesting his release. The letter itself, requested in the usual sycophantic manner of the genre that the, “*Serenissime atque gloriosissime princeps et domine benefactor noster singularissime*” - Most high and glorious prince and our greatest lord and benefactor, King Władysław Jagiełło, continue his favorable attitude towards Leonadro and his brothers who have been trading in his, “*amplissimo regno*” - vast realm, and that Leonardo be freed and the brothers and indeed all Florentine citizens be “*favorabiliter commendatos*” – favorably recommended to his majesty.<sup>1690</sup> The letter however, despite its nice styling appears

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<sup>1685</sup> Katalin Prajda surveyd: ASF, Missive, I Cancelleria, vols. 36-49 ; Signori, Legazioni e Commissarie vols. 10-21 ; Dieci di Balia, Legazioni e Commissarie, vols. 4-10; Otto di Pratica, Responsive, vols. 1-5; Signori, Minutari, vols. 7-13. Prajda, *Network and Migration*, 37 fn. 59.

<sup>1686</sup> Prajda, “Trade and Diplomacy,” 102.

<sup>1687</sup> (1424/01/05) ASV, Signoria, Missive I Cancelleria, reg. 50, c. 80. [Itali] nr. 39

<sup>1688</sup> [Theiner II ] nr 12, nr 13; [Itali] nr. 25; [KDUK I] nr 71.

<sup>1689</sup> (1423/03/27) Antonio, Leonardo’s brother names him as his procurator in Krakow. [CA2] nr 200

<sup>1690</sup> “*Cum mirabili quidem humanitate Leonardum lohannis ser Mathei, mercatorem et dilectissimum civem nostrum, maiorum suorum meritis nostre reipublice acceptissimum, ex non digne per eum gestis detentum, libertati pristina donatum et gratia restitutum Serenitatis Vestre benignitas dimicti imperavit : pro quibus Maiestati Vestre uberrimas humilitas nostra gratias agit, devotissime supplicans,*” [Itali] nr. 39.

to have had limited affect, as eight months later Leonardo was still being held prisoner.<sup>1691</sup> He was finally released only when a group of four Italians, “*Magister Iohannes, medicus Italicus uxoratus, Lodvicus de Florentia zupparius, Urbanus de Zenowa [Genoa] et Papius de Florentia, Italici*”, agreed to stand surety for Leonardo for 20 marks each.<sup>1692</sup> It is likely no coincidence that two days later, Leonardo paid 80 fl and 6 talents of ginger to Albizzo di Medici.<sup>1693</sup> Leonardo’s brother Antonio meanwhile had been busy in Wrocław seeking to sell three bars of un-minted gold and so upon returning to Krakow he appears to have paid off his brother’s creditors.<sup>1694</sup> Five months after these events, in January of 1425, a third letter of recommendation arrived, this one recommending the entire Florentine community to the king. A fourth letter came six months later, in May of 1425, almost a full year after Leonardo’s release, thanking the king for his graciousness in assisting in Leonardo’s case.<sup>1695</sup> Francesco Bettarini has interpreted these events as representing a replication in miniature of the Albizzi/Medici political conflict that was then occurring in Florence. While it is true that Michele di ser Matteo was deeply involved with the Albizzi faction, who were then at the forefront of Florentine politics, the di ser Matteo family also had ties to the Medici.<sup>1696</sup> The eldest di ser Matteo brother, Giuliano for example, had worked for the Medici Bank as a clerk before eventually rising to the position of partner, for a time, laboring side by side with Albizzo di Medici’s brother, Antonio.<sup>1697</sup> While it is possible that animosity rooted in internal Florentine politics was at the core of the conflict, precipitating a dispute as Bettarini suggests, I am hesitant to accept this assessment.<sup>1698</sup>

Looking more deeply at the issue, Bettarini proposes that the letters of recommendation were sent as a result of a conflict which, “was totally internal to the Florentine community that was unable to solve it on their own or with the help of the institutions responsible for it at home.”<sup>1699</sup>

<sup>1691</sup> “*Leonardo Italico de captivitate dominorum statuere*” [Itali] nr. 41.

<sup>1692</sup> (1424/08/05) [Itali] nr 41

<sup>1693</sup> (1424/08/07) [SPPP2] nr. 1986

<sup>1694</sup> (1424/04/26) [Bresbook] 7 pg 355

<sup>1695</sup> (1425/01/01) (1425/05/12) The letters in question are cited by Bettarini as appearing in volume 30 of the books of the *Cancelleria* in the Archivio di Stato di Firenze. I have not personally seen this volume in order to verify its existence, dating and content and I therefore rely on Bettarini’s summation. ASF, *Missive I Cancelleria*, 30, c. 87v; 94r, May 12th, 1425. Francesco Bettarini, “The new frontier: Letters and merchants between Florence and Poland in the fifteenth century.” *Mélanges de l’École française de Rome - Moyen ge* [En ligne], 127-2 | 2015, mis en ligne le 07 octobre 2015, Accessed December, 8th 2017. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2648> (1425/05/12)

<sup>1696</sup> For more on these connections see Chapter 4

<sup>1697</sup> Roover, *The Rise*, 44.

<sup>1698</sup> Bettarini, “The new frontier,” URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2648>

<sup>1699</sup> Bettarini, “The new frontier,” URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2648>

Firstly, it is important to note that the ‘Florentine community’ active in Poland at this time consisted of the di ser Matteo brothers and their retainers, and Albizzo. This may have been a simple interpersonal problem. Even this however is suspect, as Leonardo’s insolvency was a perfectly valid reason, according to the laws of the time, for him to be imprisoned until he could pay. No particular animosity was required, furthermore, a few years down the line, Albizzo di Medici would stand on the opposite side of the line, offering surety for Leonardo instead of demanding payment.<sup>1700</sup> Finally, while the *Signoria* was fully willing to write letters requesting their citizen’s release as they would also be forced to do in Hungary, it may have felt that its merchants’ status at large had been damaged by Leonardo’s actions and therefore a general letter of recommendation encompassing all Florentines was necessary.<sup>1701</sup> Without more data, it is difficult to know what was really happening, but it is hopeful that further study into the Florentine diplomatic archives will reveal more information. Whatever the precise behind the scenes maneuverings, the letters had a significant effect, or else the brothers had done something drastic to raise their status in the eyes of the royal court. For surprisingly, in less than a year after he was released, Leonardo was granted, together with his brother Antonio, the rights to manage the critically important and potentially lucrative Krakow salt mines.<sup>1702</sup>

Previously, the mines had been managed with great success for a decade by the Venetian, Pietro Bicherano. In July of 1424 however, Pietro died and as his nephew had predeceased him, there was no obvious heir to take his place.<sup>1703</sup> In March of 1425 therefore, the di ser Matteo brothers were granted the right to manage the Krakow mines, but on far less favorable terms than their forbearer.<sup>1704</sup> Whereas Pietro Bicherano had been obliged to pay 17,000 marks of the mine’s profits over to the king, the di ser Matteo brothers were required to shell out 18,500.<sup>1705</sup> Competition to manage the royal mines was fierce, and it is likely a bidding war had erupted causing the brothers to promise more in hopes of gaining the contract. In this, they succeeded, but unfortunately the bid price turned out to be too steep and the brother’s had great difficulty in turning a profit. It was the brothers’ inability to pay in full the quarterly installment owed to the king, that precipitated the next letter of recommendation sent on their behalf in the second month of 1427.<sup>1706</sup>

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<sup>1700</sup> (1431/05/23) [Itali] nr 67

<sup>1701</sup> Prajda, “Trade and Diplomacy,” 103.

<sup>1702</sup> (1425/03/04) [Itali] nr 43; [ZDM] 7 nr 1980

<sup>1703</sup> The di ser Matteo brothers had also had contact with Bonagiunta’s widow. (1423/02/19) [CA2] nr 191

<sup>1704</sup> The mines were briefly rented in 1423 by Abraham Niger, [CA2] nr 209, 210, 229.

<sup>1705</sup> [Itali] nr 33, nr 43.

<sup>1706</sup> (1427/02/07) [Itali] nr 45

This lengthy letter sent by the *Signoria*, after praising the king in the most exalted terms, explained that due to an outbreak of pestilence the year prior that had devastated the land, the brothers could not come up with all of the money by the agreed upon date.<sup>1707</sup> While an outbreak of illness certainly could have occurred, the issue was also very helpfully included amongst the ‘acts of God’ clauses of the mine rental contract, together with war and famine, that could excuse non-payment.<sup>1708</sup> The di ser Matteo brothers must have been explicit in their request to the chancery as to the wording of the letter of recommendation they required, perhaps even enclosing a copy of the rental agreement. As well as sending the letter to the king, the *Signoria* also sent a shorter note to the *Consiliari regis* together with a copy of the letter that they had sent to the king, requesting their support as well.<sup>1709</sup> The vagueness of the term *Consiliari regis*, speaks volumes as to the Florentine’s awareness of the power-brokers in Poland. Knowing the wording of the rental agreement however, it is most likely that this second letter was directed to the Krakow City Council, who had the power to determine if indeed the pestilence had been virulent enough to warrant the Zupparii being unable to make the required payments.

These letters may have had some affect, as evidenced by the fact that while the king demanded a full accounting of the mine’s activities in the spring of 1428, by the fall, the brothers had set about opening an entirely new mine shaft to be named “*Florianus*” in honor of their home city.<sup>1710</sup> Soon after however, Leonardo appears to have died.<sup>1711</sup> Unable to handle both his mercantile activities and management of the mines alone, the family’s retainer, Niccolo di

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<sup>1707</sup> *Asseveratur etiam ipsos rationem et compotum suum, ut administrata per eos omnibus essent nota, summa cum instantia revidcri petiisse et adhuc non potuissepetita iuxta eorum desiderium optinere. Nec tacetur, ipsos ob pestem, que priori anno eorum officii regnum vestrum et alia loca finitima miserabiliter infecerat, fuisse maximis damnis affectos, nec eis deinde secundum factas pactiones esse de debito satisfactum, sed non humane secum in solutione gestum esse, cum ad id solvendum non sint obnoxii, hi quidem cives nostri, si vera nobis referuntur, in tantum artantur, quod, si Vestra Serenitas eorum non miserebitur nec providerit, ipsos, ut promissum extitit, cum iustitia iractari, non libenter sed inviti cogentes famam pariter et honorem amittcre, nec poterunt eorum fratribus et sociis aliisque mercatoribus satisfacere, quibus pro mercantiis et habitis denariis sunt obli[ga]ti, dictas zuppas reformandi causa et pro solutionibus Serenitati Vestre factis ultra debitum eius, quod vere facere tenebantur. [Itali] nr 45*

<sup>1708</sup> *Item volentes, ut zupparii predicti a dampnis gravibus redderentur immunes, cum ex officio ipsorum non debent incommoda sentire sed profectus, ordinamus, disponimus per presentes, quod si divina permissione, durante arendacione ipsorum, in regno nostro gwerre, pestilencie vel fames orerentur, propter que ipsi zupparii dampnis non carerent, extunc debent eis hec dampna in rationibus nostris per octo personas, videlicet quatuor nobiles et totidem consules civitatis Cracoviensis, quos hineinde cum dictis zuppariis elegimus, compensari, prout illi octo deum habentes pre oculis diffinient et decident, quorum pronunciacioni tam nos, quam zupparii predicti obedire debemus et parere. [SPPP10] nr 156.*

<sup>1709</sup> [Itali] nr 46.

<sup>1710</sup> Jan Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae incliti regni Poloniae vol. 11*. eds. Ioannes Dąbrowski, and C. Baczkowski (Warsaw:: Wydawn. Naukowe PWN, 2000), 230-1; (1428/09/01) [ZDM 7] nr 2024

<sup>1711</sup> No further mention of Leonardo appears in the sources after the letter of recommendation sent in 1427. His death is confirmed from his brother Michele’s 1430 Catasto tax return, where he is listed as deceased, leaving behind only a debt of 90 fl. ASF, Catasto 361, fol. 364r-365v (1430).



Vaggio Giuseppe, was dispatched together with Guido di ser Matteo to assist Antonio.<sup>1712</sup> Both arrived with letters of recommendation already in hand and even more welcome, an infusion of cash sent by Michele di ser Matteo amounting to over 3,000 fl.<sup>1713</sup> These letters were much shorter and more generalized than the ones that had preceded them. Guido carried two, one intended for the king and another for “*Consilio euis*”, both requesting in essence the same thing, “*ut intuitu nostro ipsum Guidonem habere velit, favorabiliter recomisum et in rebus ac negotis suis promptam ac liberalem gratiam benignitatemque illi impartiri*” – That our citizen Guido might be looked upon with favor and grace in his person, goods, and business affairs.<sup>1714</sup> The letters and the cash influx could only do so much however, and by 1431, the di ser Matteo brothers’ fortunes in Poland had gone from bad to worse. In May of that year, unable once again to pay the rent on the mines and this time without the excuse of pestilence to help, the entire Italian community in Krakow was called in to stand surety for Antonio upon pain of imprisonment and heavy fines should he not return with the money.<sup>1715</sup> Included in the group were also Antonio’s wife and children, so the situation was dire. Yet, in this moment of greatest need, no letter of recommendation was forthcoming because already a year earlier, Antonio had been declared publicly, “*disfatto e questo e plobicho me a disfatto del mondo*” – bankrupt before the whole world.<sup>1716</sup> The Florentine government might support its citizens abroad, but an obviously bankrupt merchant, fallen so due apparently to his own poor judgement, was not someone the *Signoria* would recommend. Yet, despite this blacklisting, Antonio was somehow able to come up with the funds required and able to save the Polish Italian community.<sup>1717</sup> Yet,

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<sup>1712</sup> The letter in question was cited by Bettarini as appearing in volume 32 of the books of the *Cancellaria* in the Archivio di Stato di Firenze., I have not personally seen this volume in order to verify its existence, dating and content and I therefore rely on Bettarini’s summation. ASF, Missive I Cancellaria, 32, c. 80v, June 8th, 1429. Bettarini, “The new frontier,” URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2648> see also: *Notes et extraits pour servir à l’histoire des croisades au XVe siècle*, series 2 part 1 ed. Nicolae Iorga (Paris: Leroux, 1899), 251.

<sup>1713</sup> (1430/02/23) ASF, Signoria, Missive, I Cancellaria. 52 f. 183V-184. [Itali] nr 58, nr 59; The money sent with Niccolo and Guido is recorded in Michele di ser Matteo’s 1430 tax return. - (369.12.6) 3,120 fl. ASF, Catasto, 39, fol. 338v (1430).

<sup>1714</sup> (1430/02/23) [Itali] nr 58.

<sup>1715</sup> (1431/05/23) – The Italian community in Krakow including: Giovanni di Papia, Doctor of Medicine, Albizzio di Talento di Medici, Guido di Giovanni di ser Matteo, brother of Antonio and Leonardo di Giovanni di ser Matteo, Paulus Ostrosska, Giovanni di Paravisino de Mediolano of Milan, Niccolo di Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe of Florence, Pietro di Giovanni of Florence, Jacobo of Florence, and Margaretha, the wife of Antonio di Giovanni di ser Matteo, together with their children, all stand as guarantors for Antonio in his capacity as Zupparius of the Krakow salt mines. Antonio must return and pay the debt owed to King Władysław Jagiełło, upon pain of the loss of all their property and imprisonment, should he fail. [Itali] nr 67

<sup>1716</sup> ASF, Catasto 361, 364v (1430)

<sup>1717</sup> Antonio had already sold his rights to the new Florianus mine shaft in Bochnia for 1,400 marks (1430/06/12) ASK, Castr. Crac. 4 fol. 98-9 nr. 648; [ZDM] 7 nr 2055, on (1432/02/08) Antonio was himself under arrest but Nicolaus de Tarnawa now Zupparius of Krakow, Jeorgius Kieczera de Wyeliczka. Andreas Bankel de Wyeliczka, Nicolaus Zawrzikray, Paulus Pensator and Andreas Szczypiecz de Wyeliczka stand surety for Antonio with King

even after he had rehabilitated himself, securing the favor of King Sigismund of Hungary and upon returning to Krakow, being accepted as a joint partner by Nicholas Serafino to run the Krakow and Russian salt mines, no other letters were sent on his, or his family's behalf.<sup>1718</sup> In part, this may have been due to his brother Michele's fall from grace in 1434, but also stands as a sign of the seriousness with which the Florentine government took questions of solvency. To recommend a merchant who could not be trusted to pay his debts would undermine all Florentines working abroad, and in this case they appear to have had the right of it as already by 1435, Antonio was back in the red with his goods being sequestered by the Krakow City Council.<sup>1719</sup>

After the spate of letters sent in support of the di ser Matteo family, no more were sent until the 1440s. In 1442, a letter was issued on behalf of Guglielmo Rucellai, and sent to Władysław III, King of both Hungary and Poland.<sup>1720</sup> The Rucellai family appeared in Florence in the fourteenth century and by the fifteenth were a sprawling and prosperous clan who made their money in Florence's booming wool industry.<sup>1721</sup> Guglielmo was born in 1417, one of the twelve children of Cardinale Rucellai.<sup>1722</sup> It is unclear what drew Guglielmo's interest to Poland, the family had some loose ties to Hungary, but no other obvious interests in the region.<sup>1723</sup> Apart from the letter of recommendation issued by the Florentine *Signoria*, there is no evidence of his presence in Poland, and it is even possible he never made it to the kingdom. From 1453, he served in numerous posts in the Florentine government, including as ambassador to Pope Pius II and Vicar under the *Dieci di Balìa*, and in 1459, he purchased a

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Władysław Jagiełło. Each part stood for 200 fl of the debt owed to the king and was to be paid by the feast of St. John's day (June 24th) - a month and a half later. [SPPP2] nr 2431. Antonio appears to have kept this date, managing somehow to pay the money, and by August of 1432, his wife Margaretha and presumably also his children were back in Wrocław. [Itali] nr 70; Antonio himself appears in Siena a month later. [RI XI/2] nr 9252

<sup>1718</sup> (1432/09/20) [RI XI/2] nr 9252; (1434/10/25) - Together with Nicholas Serafino, Antonio is named Zupparius of both the Krakow salt mines and the and Russian ones, for a 6-year lease. [KDMP] IV nr 1312 pg 293-296; [Itali] nr 72

<sup>1719</sup> (1435/10/19) Antonio's goods located in Nova Civitate Stiriensi (Wiener Neustad) - are ordered sequestered by the Krakow City Council in order to pay off debts he owed in Poland. [Itali] nr 74

<sup>1720</sup> (1442/03/18) Guillaume de Oricellariis in Latin. *Notes et extraits pour servir à l'histoire des croisades* series 2 part 1, 392.

<sup>1721</sup> "Rucellai" Treccani, <https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/rucellai/> Accessed December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

<sup>1722</sup> Online Catasto of 1427. Version 1.3. Edited by David Herlihy, Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, R. Burr Litchfield and Anthony Molho. [Machine readable data file based on D. Herlihy and C. Klapisch-Zuber, Census and Property Survey of Florentine Domains in the Province of Tuscany, 1427-1480.] Florentine Renaissance Resources/STG: Brown University, Providence, R.I., 2002. [http://cds.library.brown.edu/projects/catasto/newsearch/sqlform.php?referred=yes&drilldown=yes&stg\\_id=50005397](http://cds.library.brown.edu/projects/catasto/newsearch/sqlform.php?referred=yes&drilldown=yes&stg_id=50005397). Accessed December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

<sup>1723</sup> Prajda, *Network and Migration*, 181; Arany, *Florentine Families*, 230-1.

house in Florence. If he did spend time in Poland, it was not for the long haul.<sup>1724</sup> Perhaps Guglielmo intended to try his luck in Poland but never made it, or stayed too short a time to leave traces in the sources, it remains a mystery.

The final letter of recommendation was sent in 1445 to the newly crowned Polish King Casimir IV Jagiełło, recommending Niccolo Gazzetto who was acting as the procurator for the Zati brothers – Giulliano, Simone, and Niccolo. The Zati brothers were hoping to secure an inheritance owed to them after the death of their older brother, Umberto d'Amerigio Zati.<sup>1725</sup> The Zati family were Florentines, but with strong ties to Venice and links to Hungary, which went back to the fourteen-teens.<sup>1726</sup> Like the di ser Matteo brothers, they used their ties to both Florence and Venice to supply their main business in Central Europe. Umberto and his brothers had worked in Hungary since at least 1425, trading textiles and horses between Buda, the Dalmatian coast, and Venice.<sup>1727</sup> The family did very well for themselves, and made a considerable amount through their various ventures.<sup>1728</sup> When Umberto died in 1444 however, the Hungarian Count Palatine Lawrence of Hedervar confiscated his remaining goods.<sup>1729</sup> In March of that year, the Florentine *Signoria* sent a letter to King Władysław III of Hungary and Poland, requesting the money and goods be returned. Unfortunately, in November of that year, Władysław III died at Varna, before the issue was resolved.<sup>1730</sup> With Hungary then entering a period of civil war, as various claimants sought the throne, the *Signoria* apparently thought it their best bet to approach the King of Poland hoping he might somehow be able to alleviate the situation. As far as the records demonstrate, the Zati had no obvious ties to Poland and the *Signoria* appears to have been grasping at straws. The outcome of the case remains unclear, but the sending of a letter of recommendation in such a situation demonstrates that the *Signoria* attempted, even in cases where success was unlikely, to assist its citizens abroad.

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<sup>1724</sup> N. Iorga, *Notes et extraits pour servir à l'histoire des croisades au XVe siècle*, 2 vols., (Paris: 1899), 392; Luigi Passerini, *Genealogia E Storia Della Famiglia Rucellai* (Florence: Coi tipi di M. Cellini, 1861), 105-6; Marco Bicchierai, *Ai confini della Repubblica di Firenze* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2005), 27, 46; The deed happened to be notarized by Pietro di Antonio di ser Pietro di Vinci, the father of Leonardo da Vinci. Mirella Ferrari, *Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts at the University of California, Los Angeles*. Vol. 7 (Los Angeles: Univ of California Press, 1991), 4.

<sup>1725</sup> *Il Carteggio sella Signoria Fiorentina all'epoca del Cancellierato di Carlo Marsuppini (1444-1453)*, ed. Raffaella Zaccaria (Rome: Ministero dei beni e le attività culturali e del turismo, Direzione generale archivi, 2015), nr 241.

<sup>1726</sup> Prajda, *Network and Migration*, 141; Arany, *Florentine Families*, 240-1.

<sup>1727</sup> Arany, *Florentine Families*, 241.

<sup>1728</sup> Zsuzsa Teke, "Az 1427. évi firenzei catasto, 44.

<sup>1729</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1730</sup> (1444/03/13) Ibid.

This review of the letters of recommendation sent to Poland reveals a number of interesting points. First, the Florentine government appears to have relied overwhelmingly on this form of address for managing their diplomatic interests in East Central Europe. While Milan, Venice, and Genoa all sent personal embassies from time to time, Florence did not, instead relying on letters to supply the lack. To Hungary as well, the letters of recommendation were requested, often by letter, from the *Signoria* and frequently related to a specific event or issue the recommendee was experiencing. Leonardo di ser Matteo wished to be released from debtor's prison, the di ser Matteo brothers wanted the money they owed to the king from the salt mines to be reduced, the Zati brothers wished to recover their property. When more generalized letters were given, they spoke of the individual's probity, and requested favorable treatment in terms of taxes and business opportunities in broad terms. The unifying theme in all of these letters was money. Florentine letters of recommendation revolved entirely around business men, their debts, and potential trading opportunities. Florence thus supported its citizens abroad by claiming them as creditworthy, acting as a sort of medieval crediting agency, one which could be relied upon by foreign governments. The Polish letters also demonstrate that the *Signoria* likely did not send letters recommending everyone who requested one. This is clear from their apparent refusal to provide further letters to Antonio di ser Matteo, after he had been declared bankrupt. The letters that arrived in Poland sought to build a bridge of interactive trust, a request to acknowledge the recommendee as competent, trustworthy, and able to pay their debts. If the *Signoria* failed to properly vet those it recommended, in the future their legitimacy would be damaged, and in the long-run produce negative effects for all Florentines abroad.

The letters discussed above include all those I have found in the course of this research related to Poland, further hunting in the archives however may turn up more examples. It is my hope that in coming years more studies, in particular comparative ones across regions, and deeper linguistic analysis than I have offered here, will be made.

## **5.4 Letters of Complaint**

While Florence was the only Italian polity to send letters of recommendation, others were less hesitant to send letters of complaint. Four of these letters survive, three sent by the doge of Genoa and one from the doge of Venice. Each deals with a commercial dispute on Polish territory involving Italian citizens and requests for the reigning monarch to intervene on the

Italian's behalf. The letters are of further interest as they provide a window into the sometimes intricate exchanges that underlay medieval trade. The following section reviews these letters and their contents in detail.

The first letter is from 1446, sent by the Genoese Doge, Raffaele Adorno, to the King of Poland regarding a group of three Genoese merchants from the Island of Chios. The letter complained that in Lviv, Poles had seized their goods - a large amount of Malmsey wine, that was being conducted towards the west in the hands of their factor, their Genoese Angelo Lercario.<sup>1731</sup> The seizure was apparently an act of reprisal for a citizen of Lviv, Nicholas Zyndrich who was owed 800 hufl for contracted goods Angelo had failed to deliver to Pera. The case was arbitrated before the Lviv court, and it appeared that a settlement was reached in March of 1445, wherein Angelo agreed to pay to Nicholas the money owed within six months.<sup>1732</sup> Two months later however, Angelo can be found in the Lviv notarial records contesting the settlement. Angelo complained that Nicholas, together with a group of Armenian merchants from Caffa, had testified falsely against him, and that in fact, he had given over the 1,200 hufl worth of goods in Pera. Due to their testimony, Angelo had been found guilty, forced to pay, and had his *salvus conductus* letter revoked, causing him great damage, despite the fact that the Pera consuls backed him up. The case was to be sent all the way to the Krakow High Court of Magdeburg Law, and until a verdict was reached, the Armenian's goods were to be placed under seal. They protested loudly, claiming that the whole matter had been previously worked out back in March.<sup>1733</sup> The case had obviously not been resolved by the time the unlucky Chios merchants arrived in Lviv, and had their property seized in turn. In 1448, the case was still ongoing with tit for tat *rapressaglia* – reprisals against each other's merchants playing out on both sides, as a second letter sent from the Genoese Doge to the consul of Pera demonstrates.<sup>1734</sup> It is unclear from the sources how the case was eventually resolved, but

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<sup>1731</sup> Div. Filze, nr. 16, 18th February 1444 ad 11 March 1446 (acte nr. 50). See: Jacques Heers, *Genes au Xv Siecle: Activite Economique et Problemes Sociaux* (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N, 1961), 383 fn. 9; *Acte și fragmente cu privire la Istoria Românilor adunate di depozitele de manuscrite ale apusului*. Vol. 3 [Acts and fragments on the History of the Romanians gathered from the manuscripts of the west Vol 3.], ed. Nicolae Iorga (Bucharest : Imprimeria Statului, 1897), 23 fn 1.

<sup>1732</sup> (1445/03/23) [AGZ] 14 nr 1340

<sup>1733</sup> (1445/05/04) [PomnLw] IV nr 1446-52.

<sup>1734</sup> (1448/03/18) "nobiles viri Jacobus de Oliva nomine Nicolai de Porta et Thome Spinule" were now bound up in the case with Angelo. L.T. Belgrano, "Prima serie di documenti riguardanti la colonia di Pera adunati dal socio," *Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria*, XIII (1877): nr. 128

given that Angelo Lecari continued to trade in Poland for years to come, he either paid the money or managed to vindicate himself completely.

The second letter of complaint was sent by the Genoese Doge, Lodovico di Campofregoso, to the Genoese Consul in Pera, ordering him to petition the king of Poland about a case involving Genoese merchants who traded along the *Via Wallachienses*. A certain Nicolaus Parau Polanus had apparently been robbed of his money and a load of silk he was transporting through Polish territory on his way to Lviv. The silk was owned by Dominico di Rippa, a Burgher of Pera.<sup>1735</sup> Dominico di Rippa had for many years worked sending goods from Suceava to Lviv, and they wanted the goods or the money to be restituted. The Consul in Pera was directed to write to the King John I Albert requesting him to look into the matter, but it remains unclear how the case was resolved. The tone of the letter sent by the doge demonstrates a strong sense of outrage that such a thing could occur to a Genoese citizen. The doge further told the consul to threaten the king of Poland that should Dominico's goods not be returned to him, he was authorized to undertake an act of *rapressaglia* – a right of reprisal, directed against Polish merchants. It is unclear if the threat worked, but as no other mention of the case appears in Polish records, it seems perhaps that it had the desired effect.

A third case involving Genoese citizens was addressed in a letter of complaint in 1462, but this occasion saw roles reversed. The Genoese consul Raphael di Monte Rubro of Caffa sent a letter to King Casimir IV Jagiełło responding to a letter of complaint from the Polish monarch. The case in question revolved around Clementis de Cadim, a citizen of Lviv, which had fallen to the judgement of the Caffa consul some three years prior.<sup>1736</sup> An investigation into the matter was called for and it was uncovered that Clementis and his brother traded regularly between Caffa and Lviv. During one such journey, having left port at Moncastro in route to Caffa, the ship carrying Clementis's goods had wrecked near Soldaia [Судак], which was another Genoese colony located on the Crimean Peninsula. All the property recovered from the wreck had thereafter wound up in the hands of the Consul of Soldaia. The goods were to be handed back to Clementis as the consuls sought to keep excellent relations between themselves and the

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<sup>1735</sup>(1449/06/11) *Acte și fragmente cu privire la Istoria Românilor adunate di depozitele de manuscrise ale apusului*. Vol. 3 [Acts and fragments on the History of the Romanians gathered from the manuscripts of the west Vol 3.], ed. Nicolae Iorga (Bucharest : Imprimeria Statului, 1897), 22-3.

<sup>1736</sup> [MRPS] I nr. 610.

Polish merchants of Lviv.<sup>1737</sup> Here, it becomes obvious that consuls not only represented their own communities but could work in concert as well. It is interesting however, to note the delay or even more importantly, the timing of the answer to the original petition. King Casimir IV Jagiełło had originally contacted the Caffa consul in 1459, but received a full accounting of the incident only three years later, a significant delay even taking into consideration medieval travel conditions. What points to the 1462 response being more than it seems is that fact that, at that same moment, Raphael de Monte Rubro was requesting the protection of King Casimir IV Jagiełło for his city against the Ottomans.<sup>1738</sup> Pressure on the region had increased steadily since the Ottomans had conquered Constantinople and try as they might, Christian forces were unable to keep them at bay. The people of Caffa had grown desperate, and searching for a protector, one more closely located than the mother city of Genoa so far away, they requested aid from Poland. Here, the importance of the position of the consul is made plain as he was the primary spokesman for the community in dire need of Polish support. The sudden quick fix to Clementis of Lviv's case is also put into a new light in this instance. The consul had the power to ease the way and here he used it, seeking favor with the king, whose good will he dearly needed. King Casimir IV Jagiełło did in the end grant their petition, placing Caffa under Polish protection, but it did them little good. The Ottomans would take the city anyway.

The fourth and final letter was sent in 1464 by the Venetian Doge Cristoforo Moro, to King Casimir IV Jagiełło. The case is a particularly intriguing one, as the individuals for whom the complaint was registered made up an unusual business partnership that united a Genoese, Florentine, and a Venetian - Juliano di Valetaris of Genoa, Arnolfo Tedaldi of Florence and Nembrot Veluti of Venice. The three traders had formed a joint company that same year worth in total 4,300 ducats, intent primarily on selling goods in the Kingdom of Poland. While there apparently, a group of Jews "*Hebreos furtive subtracta fuerint*", stole some of these goods from Nembrot worth 600 ducats, and the trio was seeking their restoration. Doge Cristoforo Moro

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<sup>1737</sup> Danuta Quirini-Popławska, "Z powiązań Polski z Kaffą, kolonią genueską na Krymie w drugiej połowie XV wieku [Links between Poland and Caffa, the Genoese colony in the Crimea in the second half of the fifteenth century.] in *Cracovia – Polonia – Europa. Studia z dziejów średniowiecza ofiarowane Jerzemu Wyrozumskiemu w 65-rocznicę urodzin i 40-lecie pracy naukowej*, (Krakow:Wydawn. i Druk. "Secesja" 1995), 551, 554; *Códice diplomático delie colonie tauro-liguri*, ed. A. Vigna, vol. II, p. 2: Supplement al código diplomático, [w:] *Atti delia Societá Ligure di Storia Patria*, vol. VII, p. 2, nr 16, s. 472; *Codice diplomático delie colonie.*, vol. II, p. 2: Supplemento.,nr 15 (s. 470—471).

<sup>1738</sup> [MRPS] I nr 609.

of Venice wrote to the king asking that he see justice done in this matter.<sup>1739</sup> The letter was written with all due respect to the monarch and while the Venetian citizen Nembrot was placed as the primary individual in the case, aid was requested also for his Genoese and Florentine partners. While the letter is light on detail, reading between the lines, it appears that the Jews in question did not steal the goods in the sense that they ran off with them into the night, but rather had failed to pay in full for what they had received. This transformed the matter into a more typical debt issue that was a common feature of letters between merchant republics and authorities abroad.<sup>1740</sup> Again, the effect and outcome of this letter is unknown, but in this case given Arnolfo Tedaldi's subsequent long career in the kingdom, it is almost certain that arrangements were made. The Genoese partner, Giuliano di Valetaris of Genoa, was himself also Jewish so perhaps he had better luck convincing his co-religionists to fully pay their dues. His Venetian partner Nembrot on the other hand, may never have seen his investments returned as he died little more than a year after the letter was sent on his behalf.<sup>1741</sup>

These letters reveal a great deal about the physical and contractual relationships undertaken by Italian merchants in Poland at this time. First, it should be noted that all of the letters were sent in the 1440s-60s, addressed issues that occurred in the environs of Lviv, and involved connections to the Black Sea and *Via Wallachiensis* trade. No letters from an earlier period or concerned with different regions of Poland have so far come to light. The first two letters demonstrate how interconnected were the trading systems and the various merchant communities who interacted in the Black Sea region. Merchants resident in Lviv ordered goods funneled through Suceava on the *Via Wallachianses* with payment to be rendered in Constantinople. When problems occur, merchants from the Island of Chios are threatened. In response, letters are sent to the doge in Genoa, who responds back to officials in Constantinople, who are told to write to the King of Poland in order to sort out the matter. Such trade deals thus spanned physically three polities and impacted a further two. The third letter addresses in the Polish/Italian context the perennial problem of shipwreck finders claims. Despite common regulations that stated that if a merchant could identify his cargo, usually from his merchant mark emblazoned on some part of the recovered items, then the goods were

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<sup>1739</sup> [CodEp] III, nr. 74 pg 583-4.

<sup>1740</sup> Prajda, "Rapporti tra la Repubblica Fiorentina e il Regno d'Ungheria," 93-7.

<sup>1741</sup> (1465/11/21) [SDIR] nr 17. The third partner, Giuliano de Valetaris of Genoa, was also not long for this world, dying at some point before June of 1467. (1467/06/17) [SPPP2] nr. 3872



to be returned to him, the mechanisms for this were often far from simple. This third case also demonstrates the importance of political circumstance to the speed at which problems might be dealt with, a factor that remains current in political life down to this day. The fourth letter is interesting, not simply because it represents the only Venetian case, but also because it highlights the possibility of joint-partnerships being formed across political lines on the Italian Peninsula, partnerships that were in turn recognized as valid and assisted by at least Venetian authorities. Finally, all the cases demonstrate that a letter was sent only when the complaint was egregious and a great deal of money was at stake. The ruling figures of Genoa and Venice did not bestir themselves for petty complaints. It also appears to have been a measure of last resort, that having failed to find a solution in local courts, complaints were forwarded to the Italian Peninsula in search of greater leverage than that which could be brought to bear by those present on the ground. The key role of the Genoese cases or the local consul is also important to note.

## 5.5 The Right of Reprisals

The right of reprisal, also referred to also as the community responsibility system, was a form of medieval mercantile customary law whereby individuals from one community were granted the right to seek redress from members of another community for a wrong done by one of their own. Bonds of trust fostered between merchants were essential to the medieval trading system, and on the whole these bonds kept the ship afloat ensuring mutual profits for all. On occasion, greed or simple accident could prevent a merchant from meeting his obligations.<sup>1742</sup> For long-distance traders, the risk of loss due to bad debts was significantly higher; and so the right of reprisal arose as one of the means to ensure accountability within the overall system. While sometimes confused, the right of reprisal should not be conflated with war reprisals or the issuing of a letter of mark. The order granted by a sovereign power to take action against another party engaged in a state of war is its own unique legal category and not equitable to the reprisals taken by merchants. Rather, the use of reprisals in civil cases among merchants sought to address the problem of debt security. As long-distance trade became ever more common from the eleventh century onwards, the issue of how to ensure proper payment for goods given in good faith or loans arranged between traders from a different community, became increasingly problematic. The right of reprisal authorized merchants to seize the person and or

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<sup>1742</sup> Edward Muir, "Trust among Merchants circa 1400: A Research Note," *Southern African Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 22/23 (2012): 1-9.

property of other traders from a different locality, in retribution for acts committed by members of the offending community.

Unknown in ancient times, and therefore not to be found in the *lex Romana* which acted as the standard basis for canon law and much of the civil law across western Europe, the Right of Reprisals appears to have evolved as a customary law around the eleventh century. In this way, traders were discouraged from leaving unpaid debts in a distant town, as they would receive pressure both from that polity and their own, as their poor behavior affected the entire group. In 1262, we find evidence in Venice of the legal sanction of reprisals, and as early as 1290, Florence did the same.<sup>1743</sup> The thirteenth century saw similar arrangements being made in the kingdoms of France, England, and Spain.<sup>1744</sup> For all its initial somewhat unofficial status, the right of reprisal was widely known and applied across Europe by the Late Middle Ages, and in this Poland was no exception.

Who precisely had the right to issue letters of reprisal, entitling the bearer to sequester the goods of another, was also an issue that had to be addressed. Over time, this sovereign right was increasingly claimed by the most powerful individuals in a polity – Kings of France, England, and Spain, the Doge in Genoa and Venice, and the City Council in Florence.<sup>1745</sup> Yet, given the usefulness of the law to cut down on bad debtors and regulate commerce, others too sought a legitimate right to this authority, and powerful local lords and City Councils across Europe continued to claim it as theirs into the fifteenth century.<sup>1746</sup>

The *Mercanzia* Court in Florence was originally tasked from 1308 with managing disputes amongst the city's international community and handling all cases of *rappresaglia*. However, in 1389, the right to arbitrate *rappresaglia* cases was taken from the court and invested instead in the Florentine central government.<sup>1747</sup> Despite this provision however, the court frequently continued to adjudicate in such cases. In Genoa on the other hand, the ability to authorize and

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<sup>1743</sup> René de Mas-Latrie, "Du droit de marque ou droit de représailles au Moyen Âge [premier article]," *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes* 27.1 (1866): 538.

<sup>1744</sup> Mas-Latrie, "Du droit de marque ou droit de," 538-40.

<sup>1745</sup> In 1443 for example, King Charles VI of France issued a decree that all letters of reprisal were to be granted only by himself or the French parliament. For specifics on the English case see: Grover Clark, "The English Practice with Regard to Reprisals by Private Persons," *The American Journal of International Law* 27.4 (1933): 694-723; René de Mas-Latrie, "Du droit de marque ou droit de représailles au Moyen Âge [premier article]," *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes* 27.1 (1866): 540-1.

<sup>1746</sup> English kings first sought to prohibit inter-city reprisals in 1275, but the City of London, for example, continued to make use of them, citing local legal precedent until at least 1370. Grover Clark, "The English Practice with Regard to Reprisals by Private Persons," *The American Journal of International Law* 27.4 (1933): 704.

<sup>1747</sup> Antonella Astorri and David Friedman, "The Florentine Mercanzia and its palace," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 10 (2005): 25-6.

adjudicate *rappresaglia* cases always lay with the central authorities and the doge. As the cases in Poland demonstrate, local consuls who were handling them were required to apply to the metropole for authorization, and they were hesitant to permit such a drastic step unless other avenues of settlement had previously been tried. The use of the right of reprisals, after all, involved not inconsiderable risk. If not managed properly, it could devolve into all out trade war, which was not to anyone's benefit and actively threatening to a merchant republic whose life-blood was trade. An example of the dangers of the unauthorized use of *rappresaglia* can be seen in a case where a Genoese merchant, Lucas Sacheris, making his way from Caffa to Gallipoli through Ottoman territory, was taken prisoner in retaliation for an unauthorized *rappresaglia* instigated against a group of Ottoman merchants in Moncastro a year previously.<sup>1748</sup> As the Caffa merchants who had not sought prior authorization before depriving the Ottoman merchants of their goods were the party clearly in the wrong, Lucas Sacherius requested permission from the doge of Genoa to go after them in retaliation for the funds he had lost to the Ottomans, and his request was granted.<sup>1749</sup> The Genoese authorities were thus seemingly non-partisan in their retributions when it came to acts which could endanger the entire trading system everyone depended upon. *Rappresaglia* were thus to be used with due caution, as a sword of Damocles in normal times and a rapier of justice when all else failed, but never as a club. Cases thus had to be egregious, a great deal of money had to be at stake, and other methods of arbitration had to have already failed to solve the problem.

In Poland on the other hand, acts of reprisal were sanctioned on a city level, or in rare cases directly by the monarch. In some ways, the position of strong urban centers like Krakow and Lviv, reflects that of the Italian communes. However, these cities were still embedded in a larger monarchical structure and ultimately governed by the laws of the kingdom, rather than having full autonomy. Still, in regard to day-to-day mercantile law, they were left to largely govern themselves. This is very different from the status of the Italian Black Sea towns, which were essentially colonial possessions of a metropole on the Italian Peninsula. The Genoese in particular, held tight rein on the political autonomy and the mercantile practices of these communities, not permitting them to execute rights of reprisal without higher authorization. While many more cases likely occurred, I have found among the surviving records two cases

<sup>1748</sup> (1449/05/07) The Genoese merchant in question was Lucas Sacherius, the former consul of Sinope. He and his cargo of twelve slaves, worth 500fl, were taken hostage against the return of the wealth stolen from the Ottoman merchants attacked in Moncastro. Ștefan Andreescu, "Un act Genovez din 1453 sau despre limitele metodei cantitative [A Genoese Document of 1453 about the limits of the quantitative method]," *Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie* (SMIM) XXI (2003): 131-2.

<sup>1749</sup> Andreescu, "Un act Genovez din 1453," 132-3.

in which a letter of reprisal was granted by an Italian court against Polish merchants, and two in which Italian traders in Poland had their property seized in an act of reprisal. Three of these cases involved Genoese, and the fourth a Florentine. The fourth, was a very special case involving the retention of hostages as a coercive means to secure a debt, and will be discussed in detail.

The first case, which has been discussed previously in the section related to letters of complaint, began in 1446, and involved the invocation of the right of reprisal on both the Polish and Italian sides. In that year, officials in Lviv sequestered the goods of three Genoese merchants from the Island of Chios who had been making their way through the city.<sup>1750</sup> This was done in response to a claim made by the Lviv citizen, Nicholas Zyndrich, that the Genoese merchant, Angelo Lercario, whom he had employed as a factor to deliver 1,200 hufl. worth of goods to Pera, had failed in his mission and still owed Nicholas 800 hufl. In a series of court battles which played out before the civic authorities in Lviv, Angelo at first appeared to acquiesce but then later denied these claims. In the interim, he was pressed to hand over the money so that the Chios merchants could get their goods back and return on their way. After wrangling which lasted over two years, Angelo brought the matter to the attention of the Genoese Consul in Pera, who wrote to the doge explaining the situation and asking for authorization to process in turn an act of reprisal. Before taking such a drastic step however, the doge advised the Pera consul to first write a letter to the king of Poland verifying the facts and intimating that should the matter go unaddressed, then retribution might be taken. The consul was to wait and weigh the king's response and only if it arrived in the negative was he to take further action towards authorizing a *rappresaglia*.<sup>1751</sup> Here is proof that the Genoese authorities sought very hard to avoid confiscation of goods as a punishment and used it only in the most extreme circumstances. It is unclear from the sources how the case was eventually resolved, but the initial letter threatening further reprisals sent to the Polish king did perhaps have the intended effect as no more is heard about the case in the sources. Furthermore in later years, Angelo Lercario continued to trade in Poland, so a settlement of some kind must have been reached.

This case demonstrates the often reciprocal nature of *rappresaglia*, a dangerous precedent that two polities could easily be pulled into. The case also demonstrates how the Genoese held a

<sup>1750</sup> Div. Filze, nr. 16, 18th February 1444 ad 11 March 1446 (acte nr. 50). See: J Heers, *Genes Au Xv Siecle*, 383 fn. 9; *Acte și fragmente cu privire* Vol. 3, 23 fn 1.

<sup>1751</sup> "Documenti riguardanti la colonia Genovese di Pera. Prima serie di documenti riguardanti la colonia Genovese di Pera," ed. L. T. Belgrano, *Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria* 13 (1877): nr. 128.

much tighter hold, or at least attempted to, on when such punitive actions were legal to pursue. In Poland on the other hand, no higher authority than the city courts had to be consulted. The reasons for this difference are obvious. Genoa relied on trade to a much higher degree than the Kingdom of Poland, and so was more concerned with anything that threatened to harm good relations. The structural differences of rulership were also essential, as the colonial nature of Genoese rule abroad, where its urban holdings were imbedded within larger regional power structures left them in a more vulnerable position. Good relations with the local powers that be were essential to continuing trade. Local authorities were thus tightly joined to the metropole and required to turn to it for advice before pursuing local policies which might affect the merchants across an entire region. Urban citizens in Poland on the other hand, had no such handicaps, as the more decentralized nature of the monarchy gave far broader authority to local powers, urban centers like Lviv in particular.

The second case of *rappresaglia* has also been discussed in the section dealing with letters of complaint. In this case, in the Genoese Doge, Lodovico di Campofregoso, ordered the Genoese Consul in Pera, to petition the King of Poland about a case involving Genoese merchants who traded along the *Via Wallachienses*. This case is different than the one before, in that rather than an at least quasi-legal sequestration of goods, this one involved outright theft. As protection of merchants along a kingdom's designated roadways from brigandage was one of the primary functions of a medieval ruler, the Genoese had a right to expect that traders in Polish territory would be protected. Thus, when the doge was informed that the factor of a Genoese resident of Pera, Dominico di Rippa, had been robbed of his money and a load of silk he was transporting through Polish territory on his way to Lviv, he was understandably put out and the tone of the letter exchanged between him and the Consul of Pera demonstrates this fact.<sup>1752</sup> Again, the sources do not inform us as to the outcome of the case. Nonetheless, here we see once again the Genoese policy to use the threat of *rappresaglia* to try to gain results as the doge told the consul to threaten the King of Poland that should restitution not be made, a right of reprisal would be authorized against Polish merchants.

The third case is by far the most convoluted of the bunch, and demonstrates again the dangers of the use of such a blunt instrument as *rappresaglia* in seeking to settle international debts. The case transpired in 1452 when Johannes Simiefal of Lviv was accosted in Pera and his cargo

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<sup>1752</sup> The factor was a Polish subject - Nicolaos Paraui Polanus. (1449/06/11) *Acte și fragmente* Vol. 3, 22-3.

was seized by a group of Italians whose agent was again Angelo di Lercario.<sup>1753</sup> The cargo in question was a large amount of black pepper, which Johannes had recently brought from Bursa, that was seized as a punishment and means of leverage against a group of Polish merchants who had not paid their debts to Angelo and his associates. The case became complicated when it was revealed that Johannes was merely acting as a shipping agent for a Petrus Manus of Wallachia, “*habitor*” of Suceava, but resident in Moncastro, thus not a Pole at all. Johannes claimed that as the goods belonged to a Wallachian, they could not be impounded as “Polish”. Another turn then came in the case with it was revealed that neither was Petrus Manus of Wallachia the real owner of the pepper, but that it was instead owed to Petrus di Gravaigo, burgher of Pera, who had already paid in kind for it - “*sachi XVIII cotonorum, capelli pilosi centum et sachi duo tefticorum*” - 18 sacks of cotton, 100 furry hats, and two sacks of taffeta cloth. Becoming aware of what had transpired, Petrus Gravaigo, petitioned Angelo Giovanni Lomellino, the Podesta of Pera, to have his pepper turned over to him. The case was complicated enough that its adjudication was sent back to the metropole with Franciscus Cavallo drawing up the complaint and acting as procurator for Petrus di Gravaigo in the matter.<sup>1754</sup> As with the other cases, we unfortunately do not know the outcome, which might reveal much as to how Genoese authorities untangled such a gordian knot. The case itself though, provides an interesting view into the frequently convoluted nature of medieval long-distance trade. Trade was complicated for many reasons, as it relied on agents, many of whom in the Black Sea context would be another nationality, to ferry goods long distances where they might be used to barter for yet other items to make payments to yet a third individual. As long as all debts were paid in good faith and on time, the system ran well, but given transportation

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<sup>1753</sup> (1452/05/05) The Italians directing Angelo di Lercario were, *Nicolai Gateluxi de Porta, Thorne Spinule quondam domini Gasparis* and *Imperialis de Grimaldis. Acte și fragmente* vol 3, 27-30.

<sup>1754</sup> Angelo Giovanni Lomellino, was born to a prominent Genoese family active in trade in Pera. Upon the death of his father in 1430, he inherited a silk store, a small exchange-bank, and a share in several merchant shipping operations. He took control of his own ship in 1435 and would spend the next twenty years as a successful merchant seaman, occasional pirate, and official for the Genoese Republic. In 1451 he was named Podesta of Pera, and served in this role for three years all the while continuing to pursue his own mercantile activities until. In April of 1453 the Ottomans under Mehmed II began their siege of the city. On May 29<sup>th</sup>, as news reached Pera of the breach of the walls, Angelo sent an ambassador to Mehmed II offering him the keys to the quarter, in hopes that the Genoese, safe in their district could escape the pillage currently underway in the rest of the city. This surrender was accepted and Angelo, his position as Podesta now moribund in the face of Ottoman reorganization of the political map, returned back to Genoa. He faced no censure for his conduct however, and was elected to a series of offices until in 1457 he was asked to lead a flotilla to fight Catalan Corsaires who were harrying Genoese shipping along the French coastline. Returning from this successful mission on a merchant ship loaded with grain, his vessel was attacked by three Barcelonan galleys and during the fight he was killed. *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, “Lomellini, Angelo Giovanni.” by Riccardo Musso. Accessed June 19, 2019. [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/angelo-giovanni-lomellini\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/angelo-giovanni-lomellini_(Dizionario-Biografico)/)

difficulties and the more often than not long-term payment schedules, issues arose. The use of *rappresaglia* was one of the means by which debt-payment-seeking merchants sought to apply some control over the system, yet as this case demonstrates, it was a tool which had to be used with care or grand entanglements could ensue.

The final case in question has also been discussed previously in the section dedicated to letters of recommendation. This case is of a very different nature than the ones above, as it involves Italian citizens from numerous polities and the King of Poland himself as the individual seeking retribution. As Jaco Zuijderduijn has discussed in his exploration of the topic in other European contexts, there are two means by which debts could be secured by creditors that can be linked to the right of reprisals, both of which were employed in Poland in cases involving Italian and Polish merchants.<sup>1755</sup> The first, is the type we have seen in the examples above where a debt is owed, by one party to a second party, goods are taken from the compatriots of the first party in recompense for the amount owed and either held until the first party has paid or sold off to pay the original debt. The second type, involved the taking of human hostages, as opposed to sequestering goods. The single case of this involving Italians in Poland occurred in 1431 and involved Antonio di ser Matteo. As Chapter 4 describes in detail, Antonio di ser Matteo, together with his brother, Leonardo di ser Matteo, had rented the right to manage the Krakow salt mines in 1425 for a term of six years.<sup>1756</sup> Leonardo had passed away by 1430, but his brother Antonio continued to manage the mines.<sup>1757</sup> Pestilence and then the decision to open up a new shaft named after their home city of Florence cost time and money.<sup>1758</sup> From the start however, the brothers had trouble meeting their financial obligations to the king. The original contract required them to pay 18,500 marks per annum to the crown and any amount over that they were permitted to keep as profit. This amount was 1,500 marks higher than that charged to their predecessor and appears to have been an overestimation of either the brother's management abilities or the capacity of the mines themselves.<sup>1759</sup> The troubles finally

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<sup>1755</sup> Jaco Zuijderduijn, "Prison Bound? Merchants, Loan Guarantees, and Reprisals in Medieval Dordrecht (c. 1300)," *Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial-und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 106.1 (2019): 10-28.

<sup>1756</sup> (1425/03/04) - Antonio and his brother Leonardo rent the Krakow salt mines for six years for 18,500 marks per annum. [Itali] nr 43; [ZDM] 7 nr 1980

<sup>1757</sup> (1430) - Leonardo is dead as confirmed by his brother Michele's 1430 tax return in Florence whom he left with a debt of 90 fl. *Lionardo di Giovanni fu mio Fratello* ASF, Catasto 361, fol. 364r-365v

<sup>1758</sup> (1427/02/07) - A third letter of recommendation sent by the Signoria of Florence to King Władysław Jagiełło on behalf of Antonio and his brother Leonardo explaining why the pair, due to pestilence in the land, had not been able to meet that year's quota. [Itali] nr 45; (1428/09/01) - Charter dealing with Antonio's authorization to build and his rights over the workers at the new 'Florianus' mine shaft, named after his home city, in the salt mine in Bochnia. [ZDM 7] nr 2024

<sup>1759</sup> [SPPP10] nr 154 pg. 78-9; [Itali] nr 43; [ZDM] 7 nr 1980.

culminated in 1431, when having granted the di ser Matteo brother numerous chances, King Władysław Jagiełło reached the end of his patience and demanded an accounting in full of all the money owed to the royal treasury. This put Antonio di ser Matteo in a bit of a tight spot, as already a year previous he had been declared publicly bankrupt in Florence and in seeking to recoup his losses had by now sold his rights over the new *Florianus* mine shaft that might have been generating income.<sup>1760</sup> The king was not amused and in a radical step, claimed a right of reprisal by pressuring the entire Italian community in Krakow into acting as surety against Antonio repaying the full amount owed to the crown.<sup>1761</sup> These individuals were forbidden from leaving the kingdom, they would not be released until the money Antonio owed had been repaid. Such hostage taking as a means to insure repayment of debts was a tactic used rather frequently in certain regions of Europe, but was rare in Poland.<sup>1762</sup> The king however, was extremely interested in seeing his money returned and so took this rather drastic step which in the end, appears to have paid off. It is entirely unclear how Antonio di ser Matteo came up with the money necessary to avert disaster, but he managed it. The hostages were released and only three years later, he was back in the game of salt mine management, having formed a partnership with Nicholas Serafino.<sup>1763</sup>

The right of reprisal was thus used by both Polish authorities and Italian ones against each other in a bid to insure the repayment of debts owed to their merchant communities. As these examples demonstrate however, *rappresaglia*, could on occasion create more problems than they solved, and so needed to be used with caution. Even the Genoese, who had a more elaborated system of control in place, certifying when and where *rappresaglia* was to be applied, could run into problems. These cases further demonstrate the complexity of

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<sup>1760</sup> (1430/02/10) – Michele di ser Matteo’s Catasto reveals that Leonardo di ser Matteo is dead, while Antonio is bankrupt in Krakow “disfato e questo e plobicho e me a disfato del mondo” – he is bankrupt and this is public and before me his is bankrupt before the whole world. ASF, Catasto, 39, fol 338V – 339r; (1430/06/12) – Antonio sells the rights to the new Florianus salt mine shaft in Bochnia to the furrier, Kunczy of Krakow, for 1400 marks of Prague grosz. ASK, Castr. Crac. 4 fol. 98-9 nr. 648

<sup>1761</sup> (1431/05/23) – The Italian community in Krakow including: Giovanni di Papia, Doctor of Medicine, Albizzio di Talento di Medici, Guido di Giovanni di ser Matteo, brother, of Antonio and Leonardo di Giovanni di ser Matteo, Paulus Ostrosska, Giovanni di Paravisino de Mediolano of Milan, Niccolo di Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe of Florence, Pietro di Giovanni of Florence, Jacobo of Florence, and Margaretha, the wife of Antonio di Giovanni di ser Matteo, together with their children, all stand as guarantors for Antonio in his capacity as Zupparius of the Krakow salt mines. Antonio must return and pay the debt owed to the King Władysław Jagiełło, upon pain of loss of all their property and imprisonment, should he fail. [Itali] nr 67

<sup>1762</sup> Zuijderduijn, “Prison Bound? Merchants, Loan Guarantees, 10-28.

<sup>1763</sup> (1434/10/25) - Together with Nicholas Serafino, Antonio is named Zupparius of both the Krakow salt mines and the Russian ones, for a 6-year lease. The partnership did not last long however, and less than a year later, Antonio was back to having his goods sequestered for debt. He retreated to Wrocław, where he lived out the rest of his life. [KDMP] IV nr 1312 pg 293-296; [Itali] nr 72, (1435/10/19) [Itali] nr 74



interactions, the ease with which individuals of various polities, Genoese, Polish, Wallachian, and Ottoman, interacted with one another, working as factors and crossing borders with seeming impunity, as long as all debts were paid. At the same time, it is also interesting to note how on the occasions where problems arose, the definition of what ‘community’ was responsible became contentious. Example two shows how, although a Polish factor carried goods, it was considered unacceptable for them to be taken in an act of reprisal because they were owned by a Wallachian and ultimately by an Italian, differentiation was thus made along political lines.<sup>1764</sup> At the same time however, the final example shows that at other times these differentiations could be ignored, as King Władysław Jagiełło appears to have held the entire ‘Italian community’ culpable, regardless of their citizenship, lumping together Milanese, and Piavese together with Florentines, without a qualm. These cases, while small in number, reveal interesting facets as to how the right of reprisal operated in practice. It is hoped that further archival discovery and comparative research will allow even greater understanding in the future.

## Conclusion

Long distance trade was a risky venture during the medieval period, with skill and the touch of providence one could reap great rewards or without die indebted in a foreign land. This chapter demonstrates how Italian traders adapted to the local *usus mercatorum* in Poland, the various court systems they came into contact with, and the measures they employed to improve their position in the kingdom through adopted citizenship or appeal to their home polity for aid. Given their profession, it is unsurprising that the majority of our sources regarding these individuals surface in notarial registers and court records. Italians appeared frequently during this period before Polish civil courts and in a few instances before Italian authorities - further archival research will hopefully reveal additional cases for analysis. While there is some evidence of ‘jurisdiction shopping’, Italians do not appear to have feared having their cases adjudicated in Poland and simultaneously even when a suit was overseen in Italy, as was the case between the di ser Matteo brothers and Johannes Bank, they were not guaranteed to prevail. As the Italian community in Poland was too small during the Late Medieval period to support a *fondacho*, *nazione*, or even a consul, they were forced to rely on other measures to

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<sup>1764</sup> As we do not know how the case was finally resolved, it remains unclear if the court accepted these arguments as valid, but the merchants making them at least assumed they would gain them a hearing, it seems likely that such origin disputes were familiar to the court and acknowledged as underwriting the law of reprisals.

help protect their business interests. For some, this meant taking on citizenship in a Polish town, thereby insulating themselves from certain tax obligations and incurring the town's economic and legal privileges. At other times, Italians sought assistance from their home polity by requesting letters of recommendation, complaint, or permission for an act of reprisal. Florentines produced the greatest number of letters of recommendation, a point of interest, given that otherwise Florence had comparatively looser diplomatic relations with the Poland than Genoa, Venice, or Milan. Further research will likely determine whether this was a uniquely Florentine strategy of advocating for their merchant citizens abroad. Letters of complaint meanwhile, were a more universal form of address. Unfortunately, gaps in the surviving record make it difficult to ascertain the direct effects of such letters on events, but there are indications in at least some cases that they contributed positively to the merchant's position in Poland. On a related note, contemporary political events also appear as determining factors. Evidence of acts of reprisal appear in only a few cases involving Italians in Poland, those that exist however, are highly enlightening as the complicated maneuverings underlying long-distance exchange and the way individuals abroad were lumped into larger categories of identity that they may or may not have felt they belonged to.

# Conclusion

This thesis has presented the story of two hundred years of Italian trading interests in Poland, putting forward a number of answers to the research questions laid out in the introduction. The Italian merchants who traveled to Poland between 1300 and 1500 were small in number, but diverse in circumstance. A little over one hundred individuals can be identified, all of them originating from the northern Italian city-states, primarily Genoa, Florence, Venice, Milan, and their integrant domains

## **Poland's Diplomatic Connections with Italian Polities**

As covered in Chapter 1, all of these polities were conscious of the existence of Poland, but did not really become interested in the kingdom until the turn of the fifteenth century. They really taking notice only with the surprise Polish victory against the Teutonic Knights at the battle of Grunwald/Tannenberg in 1410. Even after this, direct political contact between Poland and the states of the Italian Peninsula remained loose throughout the period. Genoa was the most involved, seeking and being granted trade concessions by the Polish crown. Towards the end of the fifteenth century, colonial citizens in Caffa, staring down the rising might of the Ottoman Empire, requested Polish aid which they were granted. Polish intervention had a limited effect, but it was at least granted, demonstrating a level of political cohesion that was lacking with the other Italian polities. Genoa's relationship with Poland was thus a mixture of trade agreements and defense arrangements for its threatened Black Sea colonies. Venice on the other hand, was less interested in trading privileges than in a direct political alliance with Poland. First Venice sought an alliance with Poland against their nemesis the Hungarian King Sigismund who from 1411, sought to embargo the Lagoon City, and later against the Ottomans, who threatened Venetian interests in the Black Sea. Despite the many overtures however, Poland continued its peaceful alliance with Hungary, and after the disastrous project with culminated with King Władysław III being killed at the battle of Varna, stayed out of Venetian plans for Crusades against the Ottomans. The two polities kept up cordial, but distant relations and Venice made no attempt to extract trade concessions for its merchants. While the Venetians were ever prone to calling upon their citizens to act as on the ground ambassadors in foreign localities, including those in Poland, the political ties between Venice and Poland affected Venetians traders in the kingdom very little. Florence meanwhile, made contact with the Polish crown almost entirely at the behest of its citizens resident in the kingdom. Apart

from exchanging the occasional gift and sending letters of recommendation on its citizen's behalf, in contrast to Genoa and Venice, the Florentine Signoria had little to no direct contact with the Polish monarchy. This disinterest was due no doubt to Florence's lack of colonial holdings in the Black Sea region. Milan's interest in Poland meanwhile, were personal to the Visconti family who took over the Duchy at the end of the fourteenth century. Seeking recognition for their new dynasty amongst the crowned heads of Europe, Gian Galeazzo Visconti first approached Queen Jadwiga and King Władysław Jagiełło, to whom he was very distantly related, in the late 1380s. This first overture sparked a relationship between the house of Visconti and the Jagiellonians that would continue over the coming century, complete with continual exchanges of ambassadors and gifts, but remained a largely personal affair, not affecting trade or politics or Milanese citizens operating in Poland. Apart from the pope and the papal curia resident during the period in Rome and Avignon, which is an entirely different topic not considered in this thesis, little evidence shows the Polish monarchy having a relationship with any of the other polities on the Italian Peninsula that might have affected their citizens present in the kingdom. This lack of diplomatic connections no doubt contributed to the small number of Italian traders who ventured to Poland during the fourteenth century and also tracks with the small rise seen in the fifteenth century as greater connections were made.

### **Italian Movement to Poland**

Also discussed in Chapter 1, were the various places of origins of the Italians who made their way to Poland between 1300 and 1500. From the surviving records, it is clear that Genoese predominated in Poland for much of the fourteenth century until the 1380s when Italians from other regions began arriving. The section dedicated to the movement of money and banking in Chapter 3, puts to bed the persistent myth that it was the presence of papal collectors in Poland who first drew Italian interest to the region by demonstrating that Genoese merchants were active in the kingdom separately from the papal tax officers. Indeed, rather than acting as a vanguard to a wave of Italian immigration, papal collectors approached Italians already resident in Poland, seeing their connections with Italian banks abroad as a useful means by which to move papal funds faster and more safely. The truth of this is underlined by the fact that schemes to introduce Italian banks to Poland, for the Bardi and later the Guadagni and the Medici, were brief and met with very limited success. Italian banks did not see Poland as a good investment given its low level of monetization and the general trade imbalance between North and South. This imbalance affected all of Europe and prevented Italian banks from

demonstrating much interest in opening branches north of the Alps. Also debunked is the proposal that the first Genoese to settle in Poland did so due to their interest in trading with the Italian colonies lining the Black Sea ports. It is certainly true that a significant number of Genoese and other Italians settled or worked through the region of Lviv in the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and were focused on the overland trade with these ports. Nevertheless, the earliest Genoese to settle in Poland did so in the environs of Krakow, and showed little to no interest in trade through a region that until the 1340s was not even a part of the Kingdom of Poland. The evidence instead suggests that the first Genoese who settled in Polish territory entered from the west through Silesia and were part of a more general trend of Italians seeking ever wider trade horizons and the leveraging of their skills to rent royal monopolies abroad.

Italian settlement patterns can also not be said to have been dominated in waves by groups from different origins. Genoese were the first to arrive in the kingdom, to be joined by Milanese, Florentines, Venetians, and the occasional individual from Lucca, Bologna, or Pavia, but the Genoese never disappeared and no single group became dominant. Indeed, when looking at the numbers present in the kingdom overall, which might include a maximum of twenty individuals at any given time, the term ‘wave’ or even ‘group’ appears rather ridiculous. The Italians who appeared in Poland during the Late Medieval period are characterized most of all by their small numbers. This isolation from members of their individual communities appears to have fostered or perhaps forced upon them, a sense of community, of being an ‘Italicus’ before Genoese or Florentine, as the identifiers they are granted in the sources frequently demonstrate. A new sense of belonging arose amongst these individuals far from home, who while still attached to their home communities by ties of blood, business, and culture, finding themselves a small minority within the larger Polish/Germano sphere, they defaulted to a larger regional identity. For this reason, we repeatedly see in Poland Italians of various origins working in concert far more often than in competition. One of the most obvious examples of this would be the trading partnership between Juliano di Valetaris of Genoa, Arnolfo Tedaldi of Florence and Nembrot Veluti of Venice. Another would be the case of royal reprisal against Antonio di ser Matteo of Florence which caused seemingly the entire Italian community of Krakow, which included individuals from Florence, Pavia, and Milan, to be roped into standing surety against his debts. These are merely the most outstanding incidents in a general trend which saw individuals from the Italian Peninsula subsumed into a larger group identity in the face of their small numbers. While Italians in other places like Bruges, Majorca, or Pera, might have enough members to form various *nationes* or have their own local

consul, those in Poland did not, and it impacted their behavior, rendering them more open to partnership and cohesive as a collective. The key to this willingness to work together then, which might not otherwise have been considered due to tensions between various polities on the ‘home’ peninsula, was the small number of Italians who traded in Poland.

Why Italians arrived in Poland in numbers never large enough to reach the critical mass required to form a stable population that might develop multiple *nationes*, was due to a number of factors. As discussed in Chapter 1, Poland simply did not match with most of the criteria looked for by Italian merchants when contemplating a new trading post. It’s climate was not considered salubrious, it was sparsely populated, at constant war with itself and its neighbors, and poorly monetized. On top of this, geographically, it was far from Italy, and more critically, centered a good distance from any body of water where Italians had a major presence. Poland’s only seaport was located on the Baltic coast and even here, they only had direct control over it for a quarter of the period under discussion. Given these factors, it appears the initial question posed in this thesis of why Italians came to Poland ought to be flipped on its head. Why, given the described circumstances did Italians during the period, on average at least two per year, go to Poland at all? While the reasons were likely multiple and unique to each individual, Poland was not entirely without charms as a trading site.

### **Goods Traded and Routes Taken**

As Chapter 3 demonstrate in its description of the types of goods Italians involved themselves in dealing, traders in Poland had access to a number of desirable natural resources, cochineal dye, furs, salt, and lead were all products native to the region. Copper meanwhile, while originating in Upper-Hungary was a valuable commodity which was a transit good through the Kingdom of Poland. Precious textiles, wine, fruits, alum, and spices from the East entered Poland through its connections to the Italian Black Sea ports which ran through Lviv. These goods might be sold within the kingdom or carried through to be sold in markets even further west. Slaves were the posterchild for this type of commerce, as they were valuable commodities in other parts of Europe, but not frequently employed within Poland itself. As Ottoman pressure mounted throughout the second half of the fifteenth century, the transit trade increased as Poland’s overland route briefly rose in popularity. Polish monarchs encouraged this trend, offering trade concessions and privileges to Genoese merchants in particular, to trade through Polish territory. The increased flow remained until the 1490s. By then, the last of the Black Sea ports were taken by the Ottomans and hope for their recovery had been largely

abandoned. No doubt as a result of this, a marked decrease in the number of Italians settling in Poland can be seen from the 1490s, a trend that was only to be reversed with the arrival of Queen Bona Sforza in the second decade of the sixteenth century. Poland was thus a good place to acquire a number of valuable commodities and to engage in a lucrative transit trade, particularly after the Ottomans made the faster water-route from the Black Sea more perilous. The reorientation of Italian merchants, particularly Genoese and Venetians away from Black Sea commerce, led towards the end of the fifteenth century to fewer Italians arriving in Poland from those cities. Those that did still choose Poland as their destination, such as the di Promontorio clan, settled in Poznań rather than Lviv, and traded with merchants from Wrocław, Nuremberg, and Frankfurt instead of Caffa and Constantinople.

The details of the various shifts in routes taken by Italian merchants over time, and how this affected Italian settlement and choice of trade goods, is detailed in Chapter 2. It describes the numerous routes used by Italian traders to move goods in and out of Poland, and the underlying geo-political trends which impacted these courses. Politics, war, and geography had an enormous impact on where and when Italians traded across Poland. Very few Italians can be found moving along the northern route that ran through Poland to the Baltic Sea for example. This, despite the fact that navigable waterways were the superhighways of their day and at the other end of the Baltic lay Bruges, a trading entrepôt with a major Italian presence. The lack of Italians following this route can be explained by one, the near constant state of war which encompassed it, as the Teutonic Knights fought the Kingdom of Poland for supremacy in the region, and two the strength of the Hanse trading consortium which sought and largely succeeded in preventing Italians from poaching on their territory. Only in the final decades of the fifteenth century, after the Polish kingdom had reconquered the Baltic Ports, did a group of Italians settle in the City of Poznań. Even then they traded primarily towards Nuremberg and towns in the German Lands to the west. The route headed South meanwhile, was used primarily by Italian traders interested in the mineral wealth of Upper-Hungary. Some textiles and salt also made their way across the border in Italian hands, but the road through the Carpathian mountains was hard and at times dangerous, so it was not as popular a path as one might otherwise expect, given the much larger Italian presence in the Kingdom of Hungary.

Apart from Krakow, the Polish Kingdom's *de facto* capital, the greatest amount of Italian interest was centered on Lviv, and the roads that ran to the east through Tartar lands and Wallachia to the Italian colonies dotted along the Black Sea coast. This route was run primarily

by Genoese traders, but Florentines and the occasional Venetian used it as well. As described above, the expansion of the Ottoman Empire through the fifteenth century, and especially after their conquest of Constantinople in 1453, caused major repercussions in Italian trading efforts in the region until at last by the end of the fifteenth century they had largely retreated, leaving much of the trade in the hands of local Armenian, Jewish, and Polish merchants. Trade to the west ran mostly through Wrocław, which had a strong Italian presence dating as far back as the late thirteenth century. Wrocław's trade oriented towards Venice and the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, as did that of Nuremberg, whose merchants stood as both rivals and partners to Italian and Polish traders alike. The loss of Silesia, of which Wrocław was the most important town, to the Kingdom of Bohemia in the 1330s, would remain an open wound in the Polish imagination until modern times. Importantly for this story, the transfer affected trade, as Italian and Polish merchants enjoyed different legal standing and tax obligations, as they passed between the two kingdoms. Krakow and Wrocław retained close ties despite these differences however, closeness which Italian traders took advantage of as through Wrocław, trade was easier with Venice. The Hussite wars and disputes over the Bohemian crown in the second half of the fifteenth century put a damper on this linkage, but never quite snuffed it out. Still, fewer merchants were willing to risk themselves in wartime and so, as was the case in the north, trade was slowed. Combined with all of these macro level changes were the individual initiatives of various monarchs to improve or disrupt trade relations with their neighbors and individual groups of merchants, by offering them privileges. These privileges usually took the form of *salvus conductus* rights to trade freely through a region, the power to ignore local staples, and reduced tax obligations. Such concessions for example, were granted to Genoese and Florentine traders by King Louis Anjou in the 1370s for the Kingdom of Hungary. This privilege likely stimulated their interest also in trading through Poland. The Genoese were favored once again by a Polish monarch in 1477, when King Casimir IV Jagiełło granted them free passage through Polish territory. Privileges could also be revoked and blockades put in their place, affecting the flow of trade. Thus it was that during the first half of the fifteenth century, King Sigismund of Hungary sought to embargo Venetian trade entirely, a move which had knock-on effects in Poland. In another case, in 1457, King Casimir IV Jagiełło briefly sought to enforce a decree forbidding most foreign traders from operating in Poland because they were 'impoverishing the locals'. For a period of time, no Italian merchants who had not adopted citizenship in a Polish town were permitted to engage in long-distance trade. Political decisions such as these affected trade on the ground, long-distance merchants who were most vulnerable to such pronouncements.



## Merchant Profiles

While Chapters 2 and 3 offer some insight into what goods Italians might find worth trading into and out of Poland, tied to the various ever-shifting set of routes, the question of why Italians traveled to Poland in the first place still remained open. Greater insight into this can be gained by exploring the various case studies presented in Chapter 4, which describe in as much detail as possible given the source base, the lives and activities of sixteen individuals and one family group who traded in Poland. These personages were selected in an attempt to give as broad a range as possible to the origins and experiences of Italians in Poland during the Late Medieval Period. The Italian merchants who appeared in Poland during the Late Medieval period, can be broken into three basic categories - first, those who passed through briefly leaving only a small blip in the sources as they took part in perhaps a single trading mission, second, those who settled permanently, and third, those who operated as factors or were heirs to settled individuals. It is difficult to say much about those who appear in the sources only briefly, but these men were likely frequently acting as factors for other merchants. Some of them were active in the east, working out of the Italian Black Sea ports and others in the south and west with contacts in Buda, Wrocław, or Nuremberg, orienting their affairs towards Venice and the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*. Much more can be said about the second category, those who settled in Poland for years, many of them permanently. For these individuals, trade was important, but in concert with this, many sought to acquire royal monopolies, administering the royal mint, customs tolls, metal mines and above all, the lucrative salt mines. Poland was hardly unique in this, as Italians were frequently to be found in such positions across Europe, but they were extremely abundant in these roles. Italian access to capital to purchase the rent of these positions, combined with their superior education, made them uniquely suited to the roles. Italians from every origin engaged in these activities, some succeeding in amassing small fortunes while others met with failure. Those who found permanent success in Poland, frequently established families, either bringing their spouse from Italy or marrying a local girl, nearly always eventually invested their earnings in land. From the earliest named Italian, Nicholas Manente, who purchased the rights to the town of Wieliczka, Italians invested in local real estate. Over time, their children frequently entered the ranks of the local gentry, eventually leaving their Italian backgrounds behind and blending into the Polish landscape. Such was the case of the various *Gallicus* who took over the village of Bronawicze outside of Krakow, the children of the Venetian Bonagiunta, and most spectacularly, that of Nicholas Serafino, together with many less well documented examples.

Not all Italians however, were equally successful in their ventures, and the difference between success and failure appears to have been a mixture of ability and circumstance. Monaldo of Lucca and Simone Talenti of Florence worked successfully for a few years running the Krakow mint, until a change in management on the Hungarian side of the border disrupted the silver trade to the point where coining money ceased to be profitable and the two abandoned the project. The Krakow salt mines meanwhile, were run at a profit by the Genoese Paolo and Pietro Cavallo, Gotfridus Fattinante, and the Venetian Pietro Bicherano before being taken over by the Florentine, Antonio di ser Matteo, who almost immediately ran into financial difficulties. An outbreak of the plague and pressure from King Władysław Jagiełło for the mine to produce enough to fund his ongoing campaigns against the Teutonic Knights, can be blamed for some of the difficulties, but Antonio also appears to have made poor choices. He appears to have overextended himself, seeking to open up an expensive new shaft at the mine which did not bring in sufficient profits in time for the investment to pay off. Problems inherent in Antonio's other trading ventures likely also contributed to his crippling loss of capital which saw him giving up his role as Zupparius after having his family threatened with imprisonment for his debts. The other Zuppari with Italian connections who took the position after Antonio, Nicholas Serafino, and Arnolfo Tedaldi did not have similar problems despite facing their own sometimes difficult circumstances, demonstrating that a certain talent for the job may also have been required. Italians who focused solely on trade could also have their ups and downs, as is noticeable in the case of the di Promontorio family, who made their home in Poznań in the last quarter of the fifteenth century. They were focused entirely on trade in precious cloth, cochineal dye, furs, and other goods, rather than involving themselves with royal monopolies, and saw great initial success. The downturn in trade in the 1490s however, appears to have hit them hard and their most prominent member, Paolo di Promontorio was forced into the expedient of selling his home in Poznań to the humanist diplomat Filippo Buonaccorsi, to pay off debts. His heirs however, continued to have a presence in Poland for the next twenty years despite these losses. This brings us to the third category of Italian to reside in Poland, the factors and heirs of Italians who settled in the kingdom permanently. Medieval commerce was nearly always a family affair. Parents, brothers, sons and nephews all supported each other, while marriages were frequently contracted for the sake of alliances which would further the family's commercial goals. On numerous occasions, the heirs to Italians who died in Poland arrived in the kingdom to wind up their affairs. In some cases the heirs were sons or daughters but just as often they were nephews or brothers. The settling of an estate could on occasion be wound up quickly, but far more frequently, it was a lengthy affair lasting years, as complicated

partnerships needed to be unwound and debts collected from multiple parties. At times, it required the king's assistance to see affairs finally settled. That the king himself would step in to arbitrate Italian disputes on more than one occasions, points to their outsized importance within the Polish economy and the rule of law which operated in Poland and sought to arrange that propertied individuals were not deprived of their goods upon death simply because they were of foreign extraction.

## **Law and Business**

The legal status and their business related to the law is the topic of Chapter five. One of the important categories outlined by Italian merchant manuals when recommending a place to trade was the presence of a well-functioning, swift, and impartial legal system. Part of the reason we know as much about the Italian presence in Poland as we do, is that they were extremely litigious, appearing frequently in notarial records and accounts of court cases. Unless an Italian had taken up citizenship within a Polish city, which only a small minority did, as foreigners, Italians in Poland frequently found themselves in both local castle (*grodzki*) courts and district (*ziemski*) courts, which were otherwise frequently the court of the nobility. At other times, if a debt was disputed with a local burgher, the city court would be the arbitrator of justice. As a rule, Italians appear to have made great use of these courts and found themselves satisfied with the results. On a few occasions however, most notably when a long-distance business transaction involved direct contact with an Italian polity, the case was moved to an Italian court. Such was the case for example between the Wrocław merchant, Johannes Bank, and the di ser Matteo brothers, Michele and Antonio, who after having a first hearing in Krakow, eventually settled their differences after a drawn-out trial in Venice. In certain cases, an Italian's home government might also be convinced to try to intervene on their citizen's behalf. This occurred most frequently in the case of Florence, whose primary political interaction with the kingdom of Poland came in the form of various letters of recommendation requested by her citizens. The Florentine *Signoria*'s reliance on letters of this type was not confined to Poland, as numerous examples also from Hungary demonstrate. These letters were addressed to both the King of Poland and his counselors, and were issued upon the request of a Florentine who was anticipating or had run into difficulties in the kingdom. The effects of these letters are debatable, but they do demonstrate an interesting approach taken by an Italian polity seeking to assist their merchant citizens abroad. Florence was not the only polity to issue letters on behalf of its citizens. Letters complaining about the treatment of their citizens were sent to

Poland from both Genoa and Venice. The most outstanding form of legal action between the Polish kingdom and Italian polities came in the form of *rapressaglia* – acts of reprisal, whereby goods belonging to the inhabitants of a certain locality were sequestered to pay for debts incurred by one of their countrymen. Such acts were precipitated by Polish merchants against Italians and vice-versa on a number of occasions. The records of these events reveal the frequently convoluted and multi-step nature of medieval commerce, as well as the perception of who constituted an Italian and who a Pole.

### **Further research**

While this thesis has pushed forward our understanding of Italian migration to Poland during the Late Medieval Period, there is always more to be learned on any subject. The most obvious avenues for further research would be the unearthing of new primary documents, and possibilities for this exists in both Poland and Italy. In Poland, further exploration could be made of available notarial records, which while well-thumbed by scholars, may yet hold unnoticed treasures, particularly those from Lviv, which are today in Ukrainian archives and I have not had the chance to view. To this can be added the substantial church records related to Poland, that of ecclesiastical courts in particular, which so far have remained almost entirely in manuscript, many of them in the hands of ecclesiastical authorities and as yet uncatalogued. In these, one might expect to uncover further final testaments, donations, and court proceedings in which Italians were involved. From the limited published sources that exist, we know that Italians in Poland did leave their wills with the church, endowed churches, and on at least a few known occasions, were excommunicated due to debts owed to the church. Greater exploration of church records would therefore be expected to hold a bountiful harvest of further details. In Italy meanwhile, the most obvious lacuna in this thesis are unpublished documents from the Genoese archives. As stated in the introduction, these were not accessed due to time constraints and the generally confused state of the archive itself which to date, is sorely lacking in catalogues and finding aids. It is hoped that in the future, research will be made easier by improvements in these areas and digitization of holdings. As the Genoese were the most numerous Italians in Poland during the period, greater access to these sources would almost certainly prove fruitful. After Genoa, Venice, with its extensive records relating to the activities of the merchants of the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, would be the next site where further archival gleanings are nearly assured to be found. Apart from these, further work in the Florentine, Milanese, and indeed any other Italian archive, would potentially provide useful information.

How these documents would change our understanding of the activities of Italian merchants abroad, and in Poland in particular, will of course depend on the nature of the find, and therein lies the joy of unfolding research.

In conclusion, this thesis has continued the work of Jan Ptaśnik, begun over a hundred years ago, by providing a fuller and more detailed image of the lives and activities of the Italians traders who travelled to Poland during the Late Medieval period. While the number of Italians who arrived in Poland during this time were relatively small in number, their outsized place in the sources speaks to their importance. They provided luxury cloth for the well to do, wine for the church, managed salt mines and the royal mint, while also selling human beings into bondage and cheating on their taxes. This thesis has sought to contextualize their lives through an explanation of the large-scale forces such as geography and the availability of raw resources that shaped the environment in which they traded. Layered on top of this I have placed the many political changes that frequently impacted them directly, blockades, wars, rumors of wars, brigands, alliances, marriages, and untimely deaths - all changed the social landscape in which these individuals lived and worked. This was done in order to render the case studies more vibrant, to allow the reader to glimpse, if only for a moment, a bit of the world in which these individuals made their way. While there are many fascinating analytical discussions dealing with the legal aspects of business, the impact of diplomacy and family structures, the true aim of this work is for the human element to shine through and a hint of the lived experience of persons far from home so long ago to be felt. I hope in this, it has succeeded.

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# Appendix

## I. Index of Place Names

Place names in Croatian (C) Czech (CZ) German (G), Hungarian (H), Italian (IT), Latin (L), Polish (PL), Russian (R), Slovakian (SK), Turkish (T), Ukrainian (UK)

Baia de Arieş (now in Romania): Aranyosbánya/ Offenbánya (H) Offenburg (G)

Banská Bystrica (now in Slovakia): Neusohl (G) Besztercebánya (H)

Bardejov (now in Slovakia): Bartfeld (G) Bártfa (H) Bardejów (PL)

Bratislava (now in Slovakia) Preßburg (G) Pozsony (H)

Brno (now in the Czech Republic): Brünn (G)

Buda (Hungary, now part of Budapest): Ofen (G) Novus mons Pestiensis (L)

Caffa (now a disputed territory between Ukraine and Russia): Феодосия/ Feodosia (R) Феодосія Теодосія (UK)

Esztergom (now in Hungary): Gran (G) Ostrihom (SK) Strigonio (IT) Strigonium (L)

Gdańsk (now in Poland): Danzig (G)

Jihlava (now in the Czech Republic): Iglau (G)

Košice (now in Slovakia): Kaschau (G), Kassa (H)

Kremnica (now in Slovakia): Kremnitz (G), Körmöcbánya (H)

Kutná Hora (now in the Czech Republic): Hory Kutné (CZ) Kuttenberg (G)

Lviv (now in Ukraine): Lemberg (G) Leopoldis (L) Lwów (PL)

Moncastro (now in Ukraine): Mauro Castro (IT) Album Castrum (L) Cetatea Albă (R) Akkerman (T) Białogród/Bilogrodum (PL) Білгород-Дністровський (UK)

Rab (now in Croatia): Arbe (C) Arba (L) Arbe (IT) Arbey (G)

Pera (now in Turkey - the Karaköy district of Istanbul): Galata (IT)

Poznań (now in Poland): Posen (G) Posnania (L)

Prešov (now in Slovakia): Eperies/Preschau (G) Eperjes (H) Preszów (PL)

Senj (now in Croatia): Segna (IT) Senia (L) Zengg (G/H)

Sibiu (now in Romania) Hermannstadt (G) Nagyszeben (H) Cibinium (L)

Soldaia (now in Crimea a disputed territory between Ukraine and Russia): Судак/Sudak (R)

Spiš (now in Slovakia): Zips (G) Szepesség (H) Spisz (PL)

Suceava (now in Romania): Suczawa (G) Szucsáva (H)

Tana (now in Russia): Tanis (L), Азов/Azov (R)

Toruń (now in Poland) Thorn (G)

Wrocław (now in Poland): Vratislav (CZ) Breslau (G) Boroszló (H) Vratislavia (L)

Zagreb (now in Croatia): Agram (G) Zágráb (H) Zagabria (IT) Zagrzeb (PL)

## II. Prosopographical Dataset

*The following is a prosopographical dataset including information on the Italian individuals I discovered during my research. Each entry reflects a primary source document involving the Italian individual and offers a brief synopsis organized in chronological order. Unlike the rest of the thesis, this section does not limit itself only to ‘traders’, but also includes all professions. For that reason, some of the individuals contained will be new to the reader as they otherwise do not appear in the primary text. The individuals are categorized in alphabetical order by personal name.*

### **Accursio di Calignano (1464-1470) Factor – Genoa district of Calignano [Carignano]**

(1464/04/14- 1464/08/11) – Cristoforo di San Romulo, acting as Zupparius of the salt mines at Drohobycz and renter of the Lviv customs office, sends 295 sable pelts into the hands of his factor, Accursio, to be taken to his father in Genoa [SDIR] nr 12

(1470) – Domenico di S. Romulo sends 200 zeliolis (coins?) to his father, Pelegro, in Genoa through the hands of Accursio di Calignano. [SDIR] nr 40

### **Alberto di Paulo di Padua (1410-1433) Notary - Padua**

(1410/09/23) - Witness to a court case involving Nicolaus, Presbyter of Varta, and Johannes Nicolai de Woly. [SPPP 7] nr 1390

(1410/09/23) – A witness, together with Nicolao de Bystra in a case involving Jacobo di Paravisino of Milan, Magister Monaldo di Lucca, and a large number of other Italians. [SPPP] 7 nr 1430

(1427) - Charter written by Alberto for the Archbishop of Lviv “*Scriptum vero manu honorabilis Alberti de Padua Cancellarie nostre prothonotary publici Apostolica et Imperiali Auctoritatibus.* [AGZ] 2 nr. 47 pg 81

(1433/05/04) - Charter written by Alberto for “*Wincenciis de Schamotuli, castellanus Myedzyreczhiensis et capitaneus terre Russie generalis et Dobko de Zprowa, subcamerarius prefate terre Russie eciam generalis.*” [AGZ] 5 nr. 50 pg 71

### **Albizzo di Talento di Medici (1410-1439) Merchant and Zupparius - Florence**

(1390) – Albizzo is born in Florence. ASF, Catasto 382, 128r, 765rv

(1410/10-1412/02) – Albizzo is sent to Krakow on behalf of the Medici bank, where he worked with Pietro Bicherano of Venice for almost two years (21 months), traveling during that time also to Venice and Vienna. For his efforts he was paid a salary of 80 fl per year, and granted 50 fl for expenses, 24 fl of which was given to the Bishop of Freising as a gift. ASF, MaP Filza 153, doc. 1, fol. 80rv

(1414) – Albizzo is employed as a factor in the Florentine Tavola branch of the Medici bank.<sup>1765</sup>

(1414/09/28) – Conrad, Decan of Wrocław, along with Franciscus Flosser, Canon of Wrocław, and Matteo di Lamberto of Naples, Archdeacon of Wrocław and long-time papal collector in Poland, seek to send the money owed for Peter's Pence through Albizzo's hands to the Medici bank.<sup>1766</sup>

(1415/05/08) – Paid a further 30 fl by the Medici bank for unspecified services rendered. ASF, MaP Filza 153, doc. 1, fol. [81r](#)

(1415/10/28) – Pope/Antipope John XXIII requests that monies sent from Wrocław and collected by Matteo di Lamberto of Naples, Archdeacon of Wrocław, papal collector for Poland, be sent through the hands of Albizzo [Itali] nr 88

(1416) – Albizzo sells a certain amount of his landed inheritance to Averardo di Medici and Giovanni di Bicci di Medici, as reflected in his later Catasto declarations which show Averardo owning 1/3rd of that property which had formally belonged to Albizzo. [Edler] box 8 card 807

(1418-1425) - Pawel from Łapanów brings Albizzo, now *Tholneator* - customs collector of Krakow, to court over alleged denial of his rights in the Olkusz lead mines, which cost him 100 marks. [GK] 2, 165.

(1419/06/25) – Albizzo, together with Jacobo di Paravisino of Milan, stand surety for Isidoro di Amiono of Milan up to 100 marks in his case with Sbigneus Lapoanowsky, who claimed that Isidoro was not a noble. [Itali] nr 30

(1419/11/18) – Albizzo di Medici stands surety for Antonio Tron of Venice before the Krakow City Council in a case involving 60 marks owed to Jan Rzeszowski, the Bishop of Lviv, which Antonio then paid. [Itali] nr. 31

(1419/12/20) – 500 fl of an old debt totaling 1500 fl owed to the Medici banking house by the Pope Martin V - contracted originally in Florence between Giovanni di Medici and the Papal Camera in August 1413, was paid back to them, with 1000 fl remaining outstanding. The Papal *Camerarius* thus writes on December 20th 1419 to the collector in Poland - Petrus Fabiano de Wolfram of Lviv - asking him to use Polish revenues to resolve the debt. A subscript notes that on November 6th 1420, *Albicius de Medici* picked up the 1000 fl in Krakow, resolving the debt with notification of this fact arriving at the Curia over two years later on June 23<sup>rd</sup> 1422. [Theiner II] nr 28

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<sup>1765</sup> Roover, *The Rise*, 385.

<sup>1766</sup> *Johannes XXIII Innocent IV Acta summorum pontificum res gestas bohemicum* ed. Jaroslav Eršil (Prague : Academia, 1980), nr. 997

(1421/07/07) - Paulus de Cleczow has an unspecified dispute before the Krakow court with Albicius, and makes Stephanus Janussi, a cleric of Łowicz and student in Krakow his procurator to settle the case before the court in Krakow. [CA 2] nr 110

(1422/11/28) - Johannes Saffranecz, Deacon of Krakow Cathedral, asserts that despite what the Cardinal of S. Vito believed, he had in fact paid the amount required to receive the Prebendship of the Church of St. Egedius in Krakow before the date required, and so the subsequent edict of excommunication he had received ought to be lifted. The money had been, according to Johannes, handed over to be remitted to Rome by Albizzo and Leonardo di Medici, but the transfer appears to have been held up. [CA3] nr 48.

(1423/05/15) – Albizzo once again stands surety for Antonio Tron of Venice, this time against the charge made by Pyethucboni and his brother Jacobo de Dzadussicze, who claim that Antonio is not of noble blood. Antonio was to produce documents brought from Venice proving his nobility by Pentecost or otherwise Albizzo would be liable for 60 marks. [SPPP 2] nr 1923

(1424/08/07) - Leonardo *Italicus* [di Giovanni di ser Matteo] is absolved in a dispute with Albizzo over 80 gold florins and 6 talents of fresh ginger. [SPPP 2] nr 1986

(1425/05/03) – All debts related to undisclosed dealings between Albizzo and Lodovicus *Italicus* are cleared before the court in Krakow. [SPPP 2] nr. 2039

(1425/07/19) – Albizzo, in his capacity as *Tholneator* – customs collector of Krakow, sends as his deputy Johannes Trensberger, a notary, to bring to court Antonio and Leonardo di Giovanni di ser Matteo, Zuppari of the Krakow salt mines, on charges of unfair dealing. The brothers had arranged to sell 300 stamina of cloth at the annual St. Stanislaus fair in Krakow, agreeing to pay Albizzo 2 grosz for each stamina left unsold. At the end of the fair however, the brothers claimed to have sold everything, a fact which Albizzo disputed. A number of notarial documents issued by the toll master in Będzin, a small but important trading town on the boundary between Poland and Silesia, indicates that the textiles were likely brought from Wrocław. Everything was checked, and it was concluded in the end that the brothers had not sold everything as they claimed and a proper toll needed to be paid. [SPPP 2] nr 2043

(1426/05/07) – Albizzo, no longer working as *Tholneator* – customs collector of Krakow, comes before the court in Krakow together with Gebel, citizen of Krakow, who holds that Albizzo owes him 46 marks for a load of sugar “*czuccaro et farina czuccarij*” – whole and grated. Albizzo makes an oath before the court stating before God and the Holy Cross that he had repaid the debt and the court orders Gebel to be satisfied and never to bring up the matter again. [SPPP2] nr. 2097

(1427) - Albizzo owes a sum of money to Giovanni di Bicci di Medici. ASF, Catasto 49, fol 1193v<sup>1767</sup>

(1428/08/20) - Mathias Dlugos of Olkusz testifies before the court in Krakow that Albizzo, now Zupparius of the Olkusz lead mines, had not given him a promised shipment of lead. [SPPP2] nr 2232

(1429) – Albizzo named procurator in Krakow by Jacobino di Rubeis of Genoa, the papal collector, who further purchases a letter of exchange for 300 fl to send his collected Peter's Pence from Krakow to Rome via the Medici bank, now run by Cosimo and Laurencio di Medici, with a surcharge of 30 fl for the service. [Rationes JR], 77.

(1430) – Albizzo is “*detto nella magnia*” – in the German lands, and more explicitly “*si trova in Charchovia*” – is to be found in Krakow, according to the 1430 Florentine Catasto tax return made in his name. It was also related that, “*di anni non ne sentono noveste*” – it had been years since anyone had news of him or his brother Antonio, who was believed to be in Palermo. The brothers owed Averardo di Medici 650 lire but were also owed in turn 376 lire by Giuliano di Bardo di Medici. ASF, Catasto 382, 128r, 765rv

(1431/06/23) – Albizzo, together with most of the Italian community in Krakow including: Giovanni di Papia, doctor of medicine, Guido di Giovanni di ser Matteo, brother of Antonio and Giovanni di ser Matteo, Paulus Ostrosska, Giovanni di Paravisino of Milan, Niccolo di Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe of Florence, Pietro di Giovanni of Florence, Jacobo of Florence, and Margaretha, the wife of Antonio di ser Matteo, together with their children, all stand as guarantors for Antonio in his capacity as Zupparius of the Krakow salt mines, that he will return and pay the debt owed to the King Władysław Jagiełło, upon pain of loss of all their property and imprisonment. [Itali] nr 67

(1433) - According to his 1433 Florentine Catasto tax return, Albizzo “*si trova in carecovia*” – is to be found in Krakow, where he has been for many years and although “*non ne sentimo novette*” – no one has heard any news of him for years, he still retains property in Florence and owes a few debts. His brother Antonio on the other hand, has fled to Sicily and is to be found only with great difficulty, as he is in deep debt to Averardo di Medici and Lorenzo di Medici and their wool business. The properties and taxes are being looked after by “*Guiliomo da quostudo di Medici*”, who otherwise had not heard from either brother for many years. ASF, Catasto 474, fol 48r-v<sup>1768</sup>

(1433/08/28) - Albizzo pawns three *lodices* – coverlets and 1 cloak of *popelicze* - dormouse fur worth 6 marks, to Andrea de Kokorzyno, Archdeacon and Professor of Philosophy at

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<sup>1767</sup> Albizzo di Medici di Charchovia 27 L 101 s 14

<sup>1768</sup> *Albizio si trova in carcovia redre detor dammi nacha 48 fl De stato in detto luogho grantempo R- de pui anni non ne sentuno.*

Krakow University. Should he not repay the sum within one month, Andrea may keep the articles. [Ca 3] nr 3

(1433/10/19) - Francesco di Giuliano di Medici sends a letter to his grandfather Averardo di Medici, from his place of exile in Venice, telling him that he had heard of the death of Antonio's di Talento di Medici, Albizzo's brother. Francesco had heard the news from his cousin in Sicily whom Antonio had recently left. Francesco had then written to Albizzo and gotten his consent that Antonio's testament should be carried out. A group of executors were nominated in the will including: Truffa Tommaso della Truffa, Lorenzo de Vopera, factor for Giovanni Abategli, and Nicholao di Salone da Pisso. Albizzo asked Francisco him to notify and oversee the executors to ensure that the will was respected as a family favor. ASF, MAP, filza 5, 245

(1433/11/16) Nicolaus Laszskii Skarbinienensis, Canon of Krakow Cathedral, sent 37 fl Through the hands of Albizzo for the Bishop of Płock, to pay fees owed to the Curia. Witnessed by Nicolaus Radzckii, Johannes de Kamyen, Giovanni di Paravisino of Milan, and Batholomeus Johannis Graffonis, notary of Krakow.<sup>1769</sup> [Edler] box 8 card 807

(1434/06/09) – Albizzo, is named executor, together with *Florenzia Bernhardus magister arcium*, is named executor of the will of Giovanni di Papia, Doctor of Medicine. They respond that they are not responsible for the sentence of excommunication given by Jacobino di Rubeis, the papal collector, for monies owed by Giovani to pay Peter's Pence, as stated by Stanislao de Grabowa, Albizzo's procurator before the court. [CA3] nr 48

(1435/01/18) – Albizzo is involved in a large case over his dealings as Zupparius of the lead mine in Olkusz, along with the *Scabini* of the Olkusz mine, and *Jhannem Swiadniczer dominus Castellanus et Capitaneus Cracouiensis* [SPPP 2] nr 2612

(1435/01/19) – Albizzo is involved in a case involving many people, including Bernard Hese Doctor of Medicine, Petrus *Italicus* [Vice-Zupparius of Krakow], Gregori de Misłowicze, Hermani de Przeworsko, Augustus Pleban de Rudolthow, Gniezno Diocese. and Hericus de Strzelcze. The record does not state what the case is about, only that all were called to view a number of documents. [CA3] nr 87

(1435/07/12) – Ongoing case between Albizzo and the *Scabini* of Olkusz, *Jhannem Swiadniczer dominus Castellanus et Capitaneus Cracouiensis* in Olkusz; now also involving the Olksuz City Council. [SPPP 2] nr 2614

(1435/07/16) - Ongoing case between Albizzo and the *Scabini* of Olkusz, *Jhannem Swiadniczer dominus Castellanus et Capitaneus Cracouiensis* in Olkusz now also involving the Olksuz City Council; Four of the council members and 7 aldermen take Albizzo's side. [SPPP 2] nr 2615

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<sup>1769</sup> *I Documenti Commerciali del Fondo Diplomatico Mediceo nell'archivio di Stato di Firenze (1230-1492)*, ed. Giulia Camerani (Firenze: Olschki, 1951), pg 45 nr 95.

(1436/01/27) – Albizzo's *familiaris* Stephan brought in to testify in a trial involving Bernhard of Hess. [CA3] nr 136

(1438/04/25) – Nicholas Bochsmeister, the mint master of Krakow, required by the court to leave the house owned by Albizzo and pay him for a year's back rent. [CA1] nr 33

(1439/01/23) – Albizzo recognizes that he owes a debt of 57 fl for ½ to Stano Streicher on the house he is living in, located between that of Ielgine and Petri Edlinger, behind the church of St. Mary in Krakow. [Itali] nr 77

(1439/03/13- 1439/05/15) *Johannes de Skala filius Chmyelonis* appears before the court in Krakow, repeatedly bringing charges against Albizzo for money owed for beer, but Albizzo keeps failing to appear in court. [SPPP 7] nr 745-48

(1439/10/18) - Albizzo is dead. He had named Paulus, Capellanus of St. Mary's church, to be his executer. However, not feeling up to the task, the priest turned the role over to Michael the goldsmith, who owned the other half of the house Albizzo lived in behind the church. Michael appears to have been on good terms with the priests of St. Mary's.<sup>1770</sup> ANK, Crac Acta Scabinalia 1431-1446 fol.191.

#### **Anastasia Messopero (1468-1474) Daughter and Heir – Genoa**

(1468) - An agreement is reached between the *nobilis virginis Anastasio de Ianua, olim nobilis domini Missopero de Ansaldo filie legitime* – the noble maiden Anastasia of Genoa, daughter of the deceased Pietro Messopero di Ansaldo, and *Illustri duce Iwan, prefati ducis Iurgi Langwinowicz* – the illustrious Duke Iwan Iurgi Landowinowicz with Juliano Gebeletus of Caffa acting as Anastasias's procurator. [SDIR] 33

(1470/02/31) – Anastasia and Johannes Odrowansch come to terms before the city court in Lviv. [AGZ] 15 nr. 3565

(1474/06/07) - Anastasia names Johannes Odrowansch as her procurator who stands before the court in Lviv requesting the 600 sexagene owed to her from her father's estate as witnessed by King Casimir IV Jagiellon. [AGZ] 19 nr. 2872

#### **Andrea der Wale (1446) Merchant – Genoa**

(1446/08/11) - Andrea, an Italian from Genoa, accused Matis Forman before the court in Lviv of causing damage to his load of camcha silk, worth 300 *pagan* [Ottoman?] guilders. Matis

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<sup>1770</sup> Two of Michael's works survive, one of which is a chalice inscribed with an inscription in the cup. "*Ave verum corpus Christi natum ex Maria Virgine vere* " It is the first Polish gothic a chalice with an architectural nodus. For more see: Przybyszewski, Bolesław. *Złoty dom królestwa: Studium z dziejów krakowskiego cechu złotniczego od czasu jego powstania (ok. 1370) do połowy XV w* [Gold House of the Kingdom: A study of the history of the Kraków goldsmith's guild from its inception (around 1370) to the mid-15th century] (Warsaw: Akademia Teologii Katolickiej, 1968), 81-3



Forman denied this charge. The court decided that Matis would be required to swear an oath with one hand and then the Italian would withdraw the case. [PomnLw] IV nr 1937

### **Andrea di Venecia (1461) Merchant - Venice?<sup>1771</sup>**

(1461/02/26) – Fabianus! Budnik, citizen of Poznań recognizes that he owes 19 hufł to Andrea of Venice. Should he die before the debt is paid, his wife Hedwiga, or her legitimate successors, must pay the debt. [ActPoz 1] nr. 900, 901

### **Andrea Gwasko di Soldaia (1480-1489) Merchant Ambassador - Genoa**

(1480/12/06) - A Charter issued in Vilnius is received by Andrea, the contents of which relate that the Crimean Khan Mengli Giray, offered to the Genoese, specifically to the Banco di San Giorgio, their previous territorial possessions in the region of Caffa. The letter then went on to say that should the Banco refuse, the Khan was prepared to offer the lands to the pope, the Venetians, the King of Hungary, or the Duke of Milan. [Grasso] nr 20

(1481/06/21) – Andrea is sent to Genoa from Venice on commission by the King of Poland Casimir IV Jagiellon, carrying a message speaking on behalf of the former Italian residents of Caffa and encouraging the Genoese to participate in an anti-Ottoman alliance. Saying “*O magnifici signori , si svegli la potenza de' Genovesi, le marinare milizie de' Genovesi si sveglino, il nome gloriosissimo e la fama un di preclara rinnovinsi. Non vedemmo forse a' di nostri le navi genovesi penetrar nel Mar Nero a dispetto di quel terribilissimo Re dei turchi? Perchè nol potranno adesso , che n' è spento il nome tremendo ?*” – Oh mighty men, awaken the power of the Genoese, awaken the maritime martial might of the Genoese, in the name of glory and fame to be renewed. Have we not seen our Genoese ships enter into the Black Sea in the face of the most terrible Turkish King? For if they are not able now to sail, then is our great name not extinguished? The Genoese officials took up the offer with enthusiasm, appointing a committee to look into the matter and sending a letter to Casimir IV Jagiellon, requesting safe conduct for any Genoese soldiers who might come through his lands in the event that war came. [Grasso] nr 27

(1481/07/07) - The Genoese appoint Bartolomeo di Campofregoso and Lodisio di Flisco as ambassadors equipped with a long letter to be sent to the King of Poland and the Crimean Khan, to discuss the possible Genoese return to Caffa, which had been transmitted to them by Guasco. Gifts for all parties were included and the letter was to be translated also into Greek. [Grasso] nr 45

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<sup>1771</sup> It should be noted here as it is in chapter three, that it is highly possible that Andrea originated not from the Venice in Italy but rather from the small Polish village of Wenecja located to the north-west of Poznań near the town of Znin. Wenecja, is Polish for Venice and the village, known from 1392, was allegedly so named due to the many lakes in the region. Given that he appears only once in the records, it is highly likely he was a Polish subject and not Italian at all. For this interpretation, which I heartily second, see: Kazimierz Kaczmarczyk, "Włosi w Poznaniu na przełomie XV na XVI wiek [Italians in Poznań at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries.]" *Kronika Miasta Poznania: kwartalnik poświęcony sprawom kulturalnym stol. m. Poznania: organ Towarzystwa Miłośników Miasta Poznania* 6.1 (1928): 39.

(1481/07/08) - Andrea writes again to the Genoese authorities stating that the Crimean Khan, Mengli Giray, had written not once, but several times to him about how he would desire the Genoese to return to Caffa and asks for their decision on the matter so that a summit between the interested parties might be arranged. (Obviously, he had not yet been informed that the day previous, the Genoese had nominated 3 ambassadors to look into the issue.) [Grasso] nr 50

(1481/07/14) - Andrea is described by the Genoese informant Lucas Massola in a letter to his brother as a worthy man who had worked in Poland, but who had also been associated for a long time with Gentili di Camila and Jacobo di Cassanova. [Grasso] nr 58

(1481/08/02) - Throughout July and August, Guasco remained impatiently waiting in Venice transmitting his fears through Lucas Massola, a Genoese resident in Venice who kept the Republic abreast of the latest news, that the Spanish King Ferdinand II was planning to make moves to secure Caffa for himself. [Grasso] nr 80

(1481/08/17) - Throughout July and August, Andrea remained impatiently waiting in Venice. [Grasso] nr 90

(1481/09/10) - At long last, Andrea receives a letter directly from the Banco di San Giorgio requesting that he conduct two ambassadors sent from Genoa and carry a letter for them to the King of Poland. [Grasso] nr 105, 106

(1481/09/20) - Genoese Ambassadors send a letter back from Mancreman (Kiev) – outlining the situation, that the Tartars will not let them pass without letters of safe conduct, nor engage in mercantile business, and that the King of Poland is currently residing far away in Vilnus. What news they had from Caffa related that currently 6-7000 Christians were still resident in the city. [Grasso] nr 103

(1482/08/09) – King Casimir IV agrees that *Adree Gwaskoni Januenti[s] olim domino Soldagie* and his heirs, are owed 100 hufl from the estate of the now deceased Mylan [Mikolaj Lilaj z Miloslawia]. – The king appears to have guardianship of the estate from Mylan's widow/children. [KMKAO] nr 103

(1483/09/27) – Andrea, *Tentuarius* – customs collector of Gniezno, appears before the court of the Bishop of Poznań, *Uriel Górka's*, in a contract whereby Andrea acts as an agent in a complicated delivery of cloth from Genoa for Paolo di Promontorio in the amount of 484 hufl. The cloth is to be sold on Paolo's behalf. 70 hufl of the debt was alleviated by Andrea giving some silk-satin to Paolo. The next 207 hufl of the debt was to be paid back in the form of 14 ulna of golden silk-satin whose worth was to be verified by two merchants who were experts in the cloth trade, being outsiders either from Nuremberg or elsewhere. Should the 14 ulna not amount to 207 hufl, then the difference was to be made up in a measure of black silk. For the rest of the debt, amounting to 207 hufl, 91 hufl was to be taken by Paolo from the Frankfurt merchant Bucholz, resolving a debt owed to Andrea. A further 60 hufl would be collected by Paolo from Władysław, doctor of law and canon of Gniezno who owes Andrea. The remaining debt of 56 hufl would then be paid by Corpus Christi by Andrea to Paolo in the form of 14 ulna

of black damask. Andrea was also to give back to Paolo a horse which he had loaned him. The horse was to be returned in a verified good condition or further payment would be necessary. 207 hufł worth of silk cloth in a variety of colors and lengths were to be sold or given back to Paolo in as good a state as when they left. The two were further involved in the selling of cochineal dye. Should either part break the contract, they would owe 300 hufł. [\[AKapSad II\]](#) nr. 1441 (1483/09/27)

(1484/05/22) – Andrea is granted the position of customs collector of Gniezno by King Casimir IV Jagiellon. [MRPS] I nr 1661

(1486/06/07) – Andrea organizes for *Uriel* Górka, the Bishop of Poznań, that Nicolao di Noali son of Paulo di Villacosta Riparolli in the province of Polceve, would move to Poland and work there for four years. Nicolao would be tasked with planting and organizing a vineyard and other agricultural duties for the bishop being paid in addition to room and board, 24 libras of Genoese standard coin or otherwise 8 ducats and 1 libra of Genoese standard coin. Andrea, for his services in organizing the contract was to be paid 3 gold ducats.<sup>1772</sup>

(1489/04/28) – Andrea has passed away and so, upon the request of Gregori de Ludbrancz, Vice-Chancellor of Poland, King Casimir IV Jagiellon agrees to grant the *tribunatum terrae Calischiensis* to Martino Borzimowski. [MRPS] I nr 1982

(1489/08/14) – Dorothea, daughter of Andrea married the Polish nobleman Nicolai Myloslawsky, *gladiferi Calischiensi* and was owed 2,100 hufł by Ambrosio Pampowski *castellano Rosperienti*, as acknowledged by the crown after her father's death. [MRPS] I nr 2035

### **Angelo di Lercario (1440-1452) Merchant - Genoa**

(1440/12/12-1441/02/13) – Angleo, takes Calef the Jew of Pera hostage for 100 marks that were supposed to be paid to him by Sancho, the Jewish customs collector of Lviv for whom Calef was supposedly standing surety. Calef then appeals to the court against Sancho for the funds which Sancho, producing more paperwork denies he must pay. [AGZ] 14 nr 141-2, 161

(1441/03/29) – A certain Petrus brings Angelo to court in Lviv requesting that he pay him for services rendered over the last half year with an agreed rate of *duos flor. Turczien* - two Turkish florins per month and extra for a horse he used during his travels on Angelo's behalf. [AGZ] 14 nr 228

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<sup>1772</sup> "... *supra et eidem Nicolao dabit et solvet pro eius salario libras viginti quinque Ianuinorum monete currentis sive ducatos octo et libram unam Ianuinorum et ultra eidem Nicolao tam sano quam infirmo dabit expensas videlicet cibi et potus toto dicto tempore dictorum annorum quatuor necnon sibi fieri faciet expensas in itinere et donec fuerit per iter videlicet victus tantum. Insuper confitens dietus Nicolaus ex nunc a dicto domino Andriolo habuisse et recepisse ducatos tres auri largos in solutione dieti eius salarii.*" Archivio di Stato in Genova. Sezione Archivio Notarile . [Atti del Not. Gio. Antonio Castello. Filza II, f. 130]. 1485, 8 lug. In Isreal Zoller, "Tra L'Italia E La Polonia," *Archivio Storico Italiano*, serie V, 42, no. 252 (1908): 392, 395-6.

(1441/04/05) – Angelo involved in the selling of ginger with a number of Jewish merchants in Lviv. [PomnLw] IV nr 90

(1443/10/21) – Angelo is involved in trading sugar with merchants from Lviv, including the Armenian, Iwan der Sortcz. [PomnLw] IV nr 705

(1443/01/23) – Angelo is trading in Lviv. [PomnLw] IV nr 824

(1445/03/23) - Angelo appears in court against Nicholas Zyndrich, citizen of Lviv, defended by Nicoulaus *Iuvenem scultetus* and preconsul, and Clement Cadyn, City Councilor of Lviv. Taking up Angelo's part were three Italians, Cristoforo di San Romulo, customs collector of Lviv, Pietro *heredem Licostomi Consulem Francorum*, and Carlo di Bozzolo. Nicholaus agreed to a contract with Angelo, for - *Borman* worth 1,200 hufł; agreed to in front of officials and valid within the bounds of the Polish Kingdom. It was agreed that Angelo would deliver the *Borman* to Galeta – Pera Constantinople. He did so, but for some reason, not the full amount. The parties together mutually agreed that Angelo was obliged to pay Nicholas 800 fl within 6 months. [AGZ] 14 nr 1340

(1445/05/04) — Anglelo has a long court case brought under Magdeburg law involving Nicholas Zyndrich and Bathu, Yolbey, Owaneis, Awackparon, Mardansa, Marrarey, and Gidigar, Armenians of Caffa in the court of Lviv. Angelo complains of a false testimony given by them in Galeta related to 1,200 hufł worth of goods supposedly taken by him and possibly 4 other Italians from Nicholas Zyndrich. Due to their testimony, he was found guilty and forced to pay and have his *salvus conductus* letter revoked, causing him great damage, despite the fact that the Galeta consuls backed him up in stating that he was not even in the city at the time of the incident. The case is sent all the way to the Krakow High Court of Magdeburg Law, and the Armenian's goods are put under seal – they say unfairly, until the whole issue was settled. [PomnLw] IV nr 1446-52

(1446) – While carrying goods for three merchants from Chios through Polish lands, Angelo finds his burden seized in Lviv in an act of reprisal. In this case, the Chios merchants were well connected enough to secure a formal letter of complaint from the Doge of Genoa to King Casimir IV of Poland. We do not know the exact nature of the cargo, but given the merchant's origins in Chios, it is very likely that they were involved in the wine trade coming through the Greek Islands. The goods were seized due to money still owed by Angelo to the Lviv merchant Nicholas Zyndrich <sup>1773</sup>

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<sup>1773</sup> Div. Filze, nr. 16, 18th February 1444 ad 11 March 1446 (acte nr. 50). See: Jacques Heers, *Genes Au Xv Siecle: Activite Economique Et Problemes Sociaux*. Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N, 1961), 383 fn. 9.

(1448/03/18) – Angelo is included in a complaint made by the Genoese Consul in Pera against the King of Poland together with “*nobiles viri Jacobus de Oliva nomine Nicolai de Porta et Thome Spinule*” - Jacobo di Oliva Nicolaus Gateluzi di Porta and Tomaso Spinule.<sup>1774</sup>

(1452/05/05) - Johannes Simiefal of Lviv is accosted in Pera and his cargo of pepper, which he had just brought from Bursa, is seized by a group of Italians: Jacobo di Oliva, Nicolaus Gateluzi di Porta and Tomaso Spinule, led by Angelo as their agent, in an act of reprisal and as a punishment and a means of leverage against a set of Polish merchants who had not paid their debts. The case is complicated further, when it is revealed that Johannes was merely acting as a shipping agent for a Petrus Manus of Wallachia, “*habitoris*” of Suceva in Wallachia but resident in Moncastro. Johannes claimed that as the goods belonged to a Wallachian, they could not be impounded as “Polish”. Another turn then comes when it is revealed that Petrus Manus of Wallachia was not real owner of the pepper either, but that it was instead owed to Pietro di Gravaigo, an Italian burgher of Pera, who had already paid him for it with “*sachi XVIII cottonorum, capelli pilosi centum et sachi duo tefticorum*” - 18 sacks of cotton, 100 “*capelli pilosi*”, and two sacks of tafata cloth. Pietro di Gravaigo petitioned then to have his pepper turned over to him, but the case was complicated by the fact that the individual holding it hostage was in fact the Podesta of the city, Angelo Giovanni Lomellino, the most powerful governmental official in Pera, who could not be judged by anyone other than the higher authorities back in Genoa. The case was thus referred back to the Mother City with Franciso Cavallo drawing up the complaint and acting as procurator for Pietro di Gravaigo in the matter.<sup>1775</sup>

(1455/09/28) – Angelo flees Caffa, commanding a ship bound for Genoa to warn of impending danger to the colony from an Ottoman flotilla. Having just gotten news of 2 other Genoese vessels being permitted to pass the Bosphorus unopposed by the Ottomans, he decides to make a run through the blockade. The ship carrying Angelo and a large number of other merchants arrives in Genoa the 20<sup>nd</sup> of February to great cheering from the populace.<sup>1776</sup>

(1458/01/31) – Signing documents as witness in a case in Caffa.<sup>1777</sup>

(1461/04/20) – Elected one of the Councilors of Caffa.<sup>1778</sup>

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<sup>1774</sup> “Documenti riguardanti la colonia Genovese di Pera. Prima serie di documenti riguardanti la colonia Genovese di Pera,” ed. L. T. Belgrano, *Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria* 13 (1877): nr. 128.

<sup>1775</sup> *Acte și fragmente cu privire la Istoria Românilor adunate di depozitele de manuscrise ale apusului*. Vol. 3 [Acts and fragments on the History of the Romanians gathered from the manuscripts of the west Vol 3.]. Edited by Nicolae Iorga (Bucurest : Imprimeria Statului, 1897), 27-30.

<sup>1776</sup> Amedeo Vigna, *Codice diplomatico delle colonie tauro-liguri durante la signoria dell'Ufficio di S. Giorgio (MCCCCLIII-MCCCCLXXV) Vol. 1*. Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria, Vol 6 (Genoa: Tipografia Del R. I. De Sordo-Muti, 1868), 71-2.

<sup>1777</sup> Sets back out towards Caffa with a few ships going via Candia - commanding the ship Leone. Vigna, *Codice diplomatico* Vol. 2, 444.

<sup>1778</sup> Vigna, *Codice diplomatico* Vol. 1, 111.

(1463/09/28) – Elected as an official in Caffa.<sup>1779</sup>

(1464/11/28) – Elected as an official in Caffa.<sup>1780</sup>

### **Antonio Auecci? (1482-1483) Merchant - Florence**

(1483/06/06) – Micheal Auecci of Florence comes to Krakow to wind up his brother Antonio's estate together with the honorable Sir Vincencius who acts as his interpreter, clearing a debt owed to Sefrido Bethman, Johannes Thurso, Johannes Clethner, and Johannes Shultis, related to a dedicatory painting of the Virgin Mary. [CA1] nr 853

(1482/06/12) – Barbara, Antonio *Italico*'s wife declares her dower goods in Krakow. [CA1] nr 823<sup>1781</sup>

### **Antonio di Giovanni di ser Matteo (1410 – 1443) Merchant Zupparius - Florence**

(1395) – Antonio is born in Florence. ASF, Catasto, 80 fol. 217r

(1410) - Granted permission by King Wenceslaus IV of Bohemia to settle in Wrocław.<sup>1782</sup>

(1411/10/08) – Antonio, together with Sigismund Poznaw, and with the assistance of the Wrocław merchant Nicholaus Bunzalau, transfers money via a *lettera di cambio* from Wrocław for the Procurator the Teutonic Knights, Peter von Wormditt, to the papal curia via the banker Filippo Gucciozzo di Ricci.<sup>1783</sup>

(1412/04/08) – Antonio's brother Michele appears as a partner of Filippo Gucciozzo di Ricci, the brother of Saminiato di Ricci, to trade in the *Magna* – the German Lands<sup>1784</sup>

(1413/04/18) – Gorges Lankush acknowledges he owes 142 marks and 21 grosz to Antonio and will pay it on St. John the Baptist's day. [Bresbook 6], 350

(1413/09/05) - Barbara Tansenbergerin acknowledges in Wrocław that she owes Antonio 19 marks. [Bresbook 6], 352

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<sup>1779</sup>Vigna, *Codice diplomatico Vol. I*, 182.

<sup>1780</sup>Vigna, *Codice diplomatico Vol. I*, 216.

<sup>1781</sup> The list of her belongings was an expensive and impressive one including: „*duos picarios argenteos, unus deauratus alter non; item 12 coclearia argentea; duo cinguli argentei, que sibi premissa donaverat; item peplum contextum ex auro et argento cum fimbria consutarum margaritarum, que sua fuere propria; item culcitram viridem damasci propriam matris eius; item anulus aureus cum diamante acuto pro 10 florenis, quem sibi in sponsalibus contractis dederat; item 6 anulos aureos et catena aurea, que fuere matris eius*”

<sup>1782</sup> *Codex diplomaticus Silesiae 20 Schlesiens Bergbau Und Hüttenwesen. Urkunden, 1136-1528*, edited by Conrad Wutke (Wrocław : Max, 1900), 87.

<sup>1783</sup> Kurt Weissen, *Die Marktstrategien der florentinischen Banken bei der Kurie*, (Heidelberg: Heidelberg University Press, Forthcoming 2021), 245.

<sup>1784</sup> While Bettarini reveals where he found this information in the Venetian Archive ASV, Cancelleria inferiore, Notai, 227, in checking through the Venetian Archive myself, I found no evidence of this partnership. See: Bettarini, „The new frontier,” <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2648>

(1415/05/12) - Peter Beyersdorf acknowledges in Wrocław, that Nicholas Shadendorf paid him 22 marks that were then given to the di ser Matteo brothers, Leonardo in his capacity as papal collector, and Antonio. The payment was made on behalf of Nicholaus Kefern. [Bresbook 6], 353

(1416/03/17) - Dissolution of a partnership between the di ser Matteo brothers and Antonio di ser Francesco da Pescia, made before the *Mercanzia* Court in Florence.<sup>1785</sup>

(1417/02/16) - Antonio di ser Francesco da Pescia accuses Antonio and Michele di ser Matteo in front of the *Mercanzia* Court in Florence for breach of contract. Antonio claims that in April of 1412, he had signed a contract with Michele in Venice, agreeing that he, Antonio da Pescia, would move to Prague, and there act as their agent servicing *lettere di cambio*, for the brothers – Michele from Venice and Antonio from Wrocław. For this work, his expenses were to be reimbursed and he was to be paid a stipulated salary. However, in over two years they never sent him any business, indeed, except for a pen and ink, they sent him absolutely nothing. On May 17<sup>th</sup>, 1413, Antonio da Pescia received 2,200 hufł from the Archbishop of Prague, and issued a *lettera di cambio* that was sent through the bank of Filippo Gucciozzo di Ricci to the Papal Curia. Unfortunately for Antonio, in the midst of the transaction the bank went bankrupt after having only issued 1,400 hufł.<sup>1786</sup> Antonio da Pescia was left on the hook for the rest. Demanding his money, the Bishop of Prague threw Antonio into a terrible prison - “*tennelo in una salvaticha et aspra prigione*”. From captivity, he wrote of his plight to Michele and Antonio di ser Matteo, requesting assistance but received no response. However, his brother Leonardo da Pescia, who was then a professor at the University of Padua, raced to his aid, approaching both Michele di ser Matteo in Venice and Adovardo Tornaquinci, but no money was forthcoming. Finally, ½ of the required amount was cobbled together, but this was still insufficient and so Leonardo da Pescia travelled to Constance where he pressured the clerics who were meeting there for the necessary funds. Finally, with the guarantee of Aldighiero di Francesco Biliotti in hand, Leonardo was able to secure his brother Antonio’s release after 14 months in prison. He then returned to Florence where he sued the di ser Matteo brothers for 725 fl, in travel expenses and damages. There the *Mercanzia* Court upheld the charge.<sup>1787</sup>

<sup>1785</sup> Antonio di ser Francesco da Pescia worked for the Medici bank, in Florence from 1416-18, in Venice from 1418-19, in Rome from 1420-34, and was made General Manager of the bank in 1435, a post he filled until 1443. Saminiato De' Ricci, *Il Manuale Di Mercatura*, ed. Antonia Borlandi (Genova: Di Stefano, 1963), 160; Roover, *The Rise*, 53, 377.

<sup>1786</sup> “*Dinanzi a Voi messeri ufficiali et Corte et a Vostri et della decta Università suy consiglieri expone et dice Antonio di messer Francescho da Pescia che gli è vera cosa che a dì tre d'agosto 1412 esso Antonio s'aconciò nella città di Vinegia cum Michele di Giovanni di messer Matheo facente allora per se et per gli suoy frategli non divisi ad andare et stare nella Magna in Praga per atendere a cambi et ad altre cose che fossino di bisogno secondo che volessino decto Michele et Antonio suo fratello che stava a Bradislaio nella Magna cum pacti et modi che se contengono in una scripta la quale à decto Antonio di mano del decto Michele soscripta, et fra l'altre cose è che alle spese loro doveva decto Antonio andare nella Magna infino che fosse cum Antonio fratello di decto Michele et in quello di chetrovasse decto Antonio doveva cominciare il salario di decto Antonio da Pescia.*” ASF, Mercanzia 1264, c. 203r-205v, hier c. 203r: See: Weissen, *Die Marktstrategien der florentinischen*, 331 fn 5.

<sup>1787</sup> The *Mercanzia* Courts’ verdict was recorded by Antonio da Pescia in Merchant Manual of Sanminiato de’ Ricci “*1416 a dì XV di marzo, a Richordanza che a dì detto di sopra ebbi la sentenza da Sei della Merchantantia di Firenze per le differenze e quistioni àvi tra Michele e Bernardo e Antonio di Giovanni di ser Matteo e altri loro*

(1418/08/05) – The brothers di ser Matteo - Michele, Leonardo, Guido, Bernardo, and Antonio split their property. Thuerinus, son of Andree Thyery, a Florentine living in Venice, adjudicates the settlement. Michele keeps the majority of the property, including a slave, while each of the other brothers gains 500 fl. Their mother Thedea meanwhile, keeps her dower-funds. ASV, Cancelleria inferiore, Notai, 228 fol. 432-5 (Venetia de Angeletto)

(1419/03/15) - Michael acknowledges that he received 250 ducats from Jeromino Paruta of Venice, money which Beda [Piero Bede] of Wrocław had instructed him to hand over as the 250 ducats had been given to him [presumably in Wrocław] by Antonio via a *lettera di cambio* to be sent to his brother Michael in Venice. Michael acknowledges that the *lettera di cambio* worked, and that he received the money. ASV, Cancelleria inferiore, Notai, 228, fol. 87 (Venetia de Angeletto)

(1420/03/16) – Antonio named as a *familiaris* of King Sigismund of Hungary in Wrocław . [RI XI/1] nr 4062

(1421/03/04) - Antonio is a burgher in Wrocław. Giovanni Bindi of Lucca, appears before the court because of a case he has with the noble Herhart von Felstein and a certain Anthonio von Pys [Pisa?], relating to King Sigismund from whom they had a *lettera di cambio*, with Albrecht von Coldicz, the captain of Wrocław, standing as a witness. The trial sought to confirm that Antonio who had travelled to Venice that same year, had purchased there some Venetian products, thereby breaking the royal embargo. Antonio declared that he did not know anything about the embargo, when it was called to his attention that he had defied the king's order, which would mean a punishment of both life and limb. The City Council was in session in the presence of Albrecht the Captain, Johannes Strelin the Provost of the cathedral, and Thomas Mass, a canon of Wrocław, and other notable individuals who are well known to Giovanni Bindi. They attest that had he known that Antonio had business in Venice, then he would not have been in contact with him. And that his enemies, those who were envious of him and wished him harm spread these rumors about him and asked that they should not have Antonio standing surety, and he would clear himself in front of the king, and explain what happened, and free himself from all accusations. [Bresbook 7], 344-5

(1421/10/16) - Heinrich Rymer and Bartusch Wache Rymer representing Merten Roheupt in Wrocław declare that he wished to send “*sachen*” – stuff, with 4 fellows, one of whom was

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*fratelli, miei maestri che per adrieto sono stati, e chome per quella fu chiarito che fine generale facessero l'uno e l'antro di ciò che avessimo auto a fare insieme per qualunque chagione o modo avessi auto del loro, io et eziandio mio fratello, e per lo simile io a loro ; excetto rimase in pandette (?) una partita di f. 70 mi restavano a dare di panni di meo dosso, che io lasciai a Michele a Vinegia quando mi mandò nella Mangnia. Della quale partita elleno dicono esserne finiti, e questo farne pruove. E di ciò sono cho' llo in chompromesso per questo dì 17 di marzo 1416 a mesi 4 che veggimo in ser Piero Chalchangni e Iachopo Tani, chome apare nelli Ati della detta Merchatantia, in questo dì XVII marzo. E questo dì 17 è stata portata la sentenza negli Atti della detta Chorte. Richordanza che io ò i libri e ongni scrittura tenuti a pratigha in uno forzeretto serato a chiave di messer Lionardo, il quale è in chamera de' ... E detti libri ò voluto più volte consengniare a Ber(o)nardo di Giovanni di ser Matteo, che a llo attenghano, con questo, che lui m'abbia fatto chiarezza di sua mano, chome detti libri abbia ricevuti. No llo à voluto fare, e per ciò no li à avuti, chome ser Pietro Chalchangni è informato di tutto.” Bettarini. “The new frontier,” fn 42. Accessed February 28<sup>th</sup> 2021 URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2648>; Weissen, *Die Marktstrategien der florentinischen*, 331-2.*



Antonio, to Rome, and that Merten now wished to put down the cross because his lord the king did not declare a crusade. [Bresbook 7], 347

(1421/11/13) - Antonio testifies in Wrocław that he had earlier received from Andris Cantor of the Bishopric of Lubus, 100 hufl and 100 Rhienish gilders for a lettera di cambio from the Bishop Johannes von Borsnicz, Bishop of Lubus, to be remitted to the papal curia. Antonio stated that he sent the lettera di cambio to his company at the court in Rome, where the transaction would be completed. Antonio declared that between November and mid-Lent (Feb.), Andris should write to his company, those who received the exchange, and even travel there to check if the money had gone through. If it was found not to have gone through, Antonio obliged himself to return the money, giving it to those to whom it rightfully belongs. [Bresbook 7], 347

(1422/10/18) - Charter outlining the payment system for teachers at Krakow Uni - 4 Italians listed as signatories including Antonio, his brother, Leonardo di Giovanni di ser Matteo, Isidoro Anono of Milan, and Giovanni di Sacchis di Pavia, Doctor of Medicine, all signed under Andrew Łaskarz, who had studied in Padua and was a figure in the University before being nominated Bishop of Poznań, very likely a friend to the Italians. [KDUK] I nr 71 pg 143

(1423/02/19) – Jadwiga, widow of the Venetian, Bonagiunta, "*italici de Jawczicze*" has a dispute with Antonio. She names Johannes Brest as her procurator while the notary Czyborii de Wola and Martino de Ossek stand as witnesses. [CA2] nr 191

(1423/03/27) - Antonio names his brother Leonardo as his procurator in Krakow instead of Mathie de Czosnow, and apparently that day pays off a debt to Bernhardo Preben of Dalyowicze before the witnesses Paulo de Borowno and Petro de Racziborowicze, both clerics. [CA2] nr 200

(1424/01/05) – Letter of recommendation for Leonardo di ser Matteo and his brothers from the *Signoria* of Florence to King Władysław Jagiełło . [Itali] nr 39

(1424/04/26) - Pawel Hornyng comes before the city court in Wrocław, bringing 3 pieces of un-minted gold which he owes to Johannes Bank and Antonio. These pieces of gold were given in Vienna to Hannos Hamfutengel on Antonio and Johannes's behalf. The issue is about how many golden Florins could/should be minted from these gold bars. To discover the worth of the bars, it is advised that the group should write to the merchants in Hungary, and see how they calculate it, and accepting this expert opinion, if in Venice it would be worth less, then Pawel Hornyng must pay them the difference and if it is worth more, then Antonio and Johannes can keep the profits. [Bresbook] 7 pg 355

(1424/05/10) - Hannos Schult in Wrocław acknowledges that Piero *fetter* - nephew of Antonio, paid to him - Schult 173 ½ marks on behalf of Antonio. He has Antonio's credit contract regarding the sale and wants that neither ecclesiastical nor secular persons should ask for it back. [Bresbook] 7 pg 355.

(1424) - Fricze Poppel collected 100 fl from Antonio and David Rosenfeld in Wrocław for the Venetian Francisco Amadi.<sup>1788</sup>

(1425/01/30) – Antonio gave satisfaction in Krakow for having called the brothers Pyetuch and Iacobo de Dzusdzic sons of a whore, paying their procurator Petrus Peczeneczky. [SPPP 7] nr 474

(1425/03/04) - Antonio and his brother Leonardo rent the Krakow salt mines for six years for 18,500 marks per annum. [Itali] nr 43; [Zbior] 7 nr 1980

(1425/06/12) – Letter of Recommendation sent by the Florentine *Signoria* in support of Antonio and Leonardi di ser Matteo.<sup>1789</sup>

(1425/07/19) – Albizzo di Medici, as *Tholneator*, - customs collector of Krakow, in this capacity, sends as his deputy Johannes Trensberger, a notary, to bring to court Antonio and his brother Leonardo who during their time as Zuppari of the Krakow salt mines also engaged in the cloth trade. The brothers di ser Matteo had arranged to sell 300 stamina of cloth at the annual St. Stanislaus fair in Krakow agreeing to pay Albizzo 2 gros. for each stamina left unsold. At the end of the fair however, the brothers claimed to have sold everything which Albizzo disputed. A number of notarial documents issued by the customs collector in Będzin, a small but important trading town on the boundary between Poland and Silesia, indicating that the cloths were likely brought from Wrocław. After everything was checked, it was concluded that Albizzo's complaint was justified and that a proper toll needed to be paid. [SPPP 2] nr 2043 and [Itali] nr 44

(1426/06/04) – Antonio stands before the court in Krakow involved in a dispute over 38 loads of salt which were to be delivered to *nobilis Petrus alias Koszucliowsky*. [SPPP 2] nr 2103

(1426/06/06/15) – Before the court in Krakow Antonio accuses the Duchess Ann of Mazowia of interfering with the delivery of the 38 loads of salt. [SPPP 2] nr 2105

(1426/07/09) - Antonio apparently tries to sell a load of cloth to some other *hospites* in Krakow, and the City Council comes down on him - putting officially into the statutes that such sales were not to be allowed without the intermediation of a citizen of Krakow. The city of Krakow required that Antonio declare that he will abide by certain rules in front of the councilor, Nicolai Sanomirski Hauptman:

First, that he would measure out any spices, or retail trade –in small or large amounts using any kind of weights so that he will not give out any quit receipts – except for the King's cook and

<sup>1788</sup> Kurt Weissen, *Die Marktstrategien der florentinischen Banken bei der Kurie*, (Heidelberg: Heidelberg University Press, Forthcoming 2021), 249 fn 4.

<sup>1789</sup> The letter in question is cited by Bettarini as appearing in volume 30 of the books of the *Cancelleria* in the Archivio di Stato di Firenze. Unfortunately, I have not personally seen this volume in order to verify its existence, dating and content and I therefore rely on Bettarini's summation. ASF, Missive I Cancelleria, 30, c. 94r, May 12th, 1425. Bettarini, "The new frontier," Accessed December, 8th 2017. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2648>

the Queen's cook if the King or Queen request his wares. Antonio is thus permitted to sell spices to the court but then to no one else. Whatever else he trades, he must weigh on the town scales.

Second, Antonio is not permitted to measure out any cloth in ells, neither Polish, nor nice cloth, nor silk. He is forbidden to give quit receipts apart from the king, if the king requests them from him. Should anyone desire a receipt from him for textiles he must go to the main Cloth-hall and offer it only there. Should he fail to do so, he will be acting against the city law and the common good and will be considered a public enemy.

Third, Antonio is not allowed to deal in transit trade against the staple right of the city, apart from what he must send with Oxen from the salt mine once a year. With the salt market, he must sell as previous Zuppari have done. [NZPiWMK] nr 19

(1426/08/24) - Dispute over the contents of a "*libro*" - a book of recorded accounts and money owed to Antonio and the City Council of Bochnia, by Nicolaum Subagazonem of Wieliczka representing the now deceased Materna Avenatur of the salt mine of Bochnia amounting to 73 marks [SPPP 2] nr 2113

(1427/02/07) – A third letter of recommendation sent by the *Signoria* of Florence to King Władysław Jagiełło, on behalf of Antonio and his brother Leonardo, explaining why, due to a pestilence in the salt mines, the pair had not been able to meet that year's rental payment quota. [Itali] nr 45

(1427/02/07) – A fourth brief letter of recommendation sent on behalf of Leonardo and Antonio di ser Matteo by the *Signoria* of Florence to the *Consiliaris regis*. [Itali] nr 46

(1427/04/02) – Antonio writes a letter to the City Councilors of Wrocław about his recent meeting with King Władysław Jagiełło in the town of Nowy Korczyn. He met with the king to discuss the ongoing turmoil in Silesia. Antonio related and relating to the councilors the king's plans for the coming months and Antonio's own endeavors to win his favor toward the city in subsequent meetings.<sup>1790</sup>

(1427/06/11) – Antonio appears in his brother Michele di Giovanni di ser Matteo's 1427 Florentine Catasto tax record, stating that he is working on the family account in Poland selling goods to the Polish court and other nobles and that he has been busy there for a number of years together with a working capital of 4,400 fl. ASF, Catasto 38 fol, 717r.-722v

(1428) – Jan Długosz records King Władysław Jagiełło arriving in Bochnia and demanding from Antonio the full account from the salt mines.<sup>1791</sup>

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<sup>1790</sup> (1427/04/02) Przyczynek Jurek, "Do życiorysu żupnika Antoniego z Florencji [The Biography of the Zupparius Antonio of Florence]," *Teki Krakowskie* 5 (1997): 47–52.

<sup>1791</sup> Jan Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae incliti regni Poloniae* vol. 11. eds. Ioannes Dąbrowski, and C. Baczkowski (Warsaw:: Wydawn. Naukowe PWN, 2000), 230-1.

(1428/06/19) - Reynaldus di Sandro Altoviti of Florence, a relative and factor of the di ser Matteo brothers, writes into the Krakow council books that he had made an agreement with Antonio in Wrocław. He asserts that the agreement stipulated that Hanselinus de la Rosa ferry a certain amount of red Cochineal dye to Venice, on behalf of Antonio and his partner Johannes Bank to be bartered there by Michael di ser Matteo for brocades and other cloth. [Itali] nr 50

(1428/09/01) - Charter dealing with Antonio's authorization to build, and his rights over the workers at the new 'Florianus' mine shaft, named after his home city, in the salt mine in Bochnia. [ZDM 7] nr 2024

(1428) – Iazovia *familiaris* of master Swytriglonis brings suit against the Zupparius of Bochnia – Antonio, for 30 marks.<sup>1792</sup>

(1428/12/23) – A letter written by Antonio from Krakow to the Master of the Teutonic Order, Paul von Rusdorf, about a shipment of salt sent towards Nowa Nieszawa asking for him to loan Antonio some funds so he can purchase back the salt shipment worth 400-500 fl. He states that he had been friends with the previous Marshal of the Order Walrabe von Hunsbach who had loaned money to him in the past. He promises that he would repay the loan in Rome, Wrocław or Marienberg.<sup>1793</sup>

(1429/02/23) - Letter of recommendation sent by the *Signoria* of Florence to King Władysław Jagiełło in support of Antonio and his brother Guido. [Itali] nr 52

(1429/04/16) -The City Council of Krakow seeks to arbitrate between Antonio and Johannes Bank over lost property and the set of goods sent to Venice. [Itali] nr 53

(1429/10/19) - The Council of Venice seeks to arbitrate between Antonio and Johannes Bank over the goods the two had sent to Venice and *Johannes de Bandessen* gives evidence. [Itali] nr 54

(?) - Bishop of Krakow writes to the City Council of Wrocław about his and their debts owed by Antonio - asking that they pressure Antonio to pay up. [CodEp III] nr 97 pg 598

(1430/02/10) – Michele di ser Matteo's Catasto reveals that Leonardo di ser Matteo is dead, while Antonio is bankrupt in Krakow "*disfato e questo e plobicho e me a disfato del mondo*" – he is bankrupt and this is public and before me he is bankrupt before the whole world. Their brother Guido meanwhile, has been sent to try to collect debts in Krakow together with the brother's company factor, Nicholo di Viaggio di Mazza Giuseppe, but he no longer takes up a place in the family holdings. Among the list of debtors owing Michele money are his brother Leonardo and Simone di Charchovia who still owed him 6 5fl. Michele's brother Bernardo

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<sup>1792</sup> "Zapiski sądowe województwa sandomierskiego [Notes from the County Court of Sandomierz]," ed. Franciszek Piekosiński *Archiwum Komisji Prawniczej* 8 (1907): nr 1100.

<sup>1793</sup> Michalina Duda and Sławomir Józwiak, "Nowa Nieszawa (Dybów) in the late Middle Ages according to new research. The town on the border of countries, cultures and nations," *Klio-Czasopismo Poświęcone Dziejom Polski i Powszechnym* 43.4 (2017): 34-5.

meanwhile, sells his share in the family patrimony to Michele for 500 fl and moves to Barletta in Puglia Italy. ASF, Catasto, 39, fol 338V – 339r

(1430/06/12) – Antonio sells the rights to the new Florianus salt mine shaft in Bochnia to the furrier Kunczy of Krakow for 1400 marks of Prague grosz. ANK, [Castr. Crac.] 427 fol. 98-9 nr. 648

(1430/10/02) – A second charter demonstrating that Antonio has sold his rights to the new Florentine shaft in Bochnia to the furrier Kunczy of Krakow for 1400 marks of Prague grosz. [ZDM] 7 nr 2055

(1431/01/31) – Michele di ser Matteo's Catasto of 1431 tax declaration by Michele essentially repeating that declared a year prior. ASF, Catasto, 361, fol. 364v

(1431/01/12) - Rights over the miners working in the Florianus shaft traded to Petrus iunior Saffranyecz de Pyeskowa Skala *subcamerarius Cracoviensis* - implying that by this point Antonio is fully out of the game. [ZDM 7] nr 2431

(1431/05/23) – The Italian community in Krakow including: Giovanni di Papia, Doctor of Medicine, Albizzio di Talento di Medici, Guido di Giovanni di ser Matteo, brother of Antonio and Leonardo di Giovanni di ser Matteo, Paulus Ostrosska, Giovanni di Paravisino de Mediolano of Milan, Niccolo di Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe of Florence, Pietro di Giovanni of Florence, Jacobo of Florence, and Margaretha, the wife of Antonio di Giovanni di ser Matteo, together with their children, all stand as guarantors for Antonio in his capacity as Zupparius of the Krakow salt mines. Antonio must return and pay the debt owed to King Władysław Jagiełło, upon pain of loss of all their property and imprisonment for those left in Krakow, if he fails. [Itali] nr 67

(1432/02/13) - The Krakow City Council gives a final verdict of Antonio and Johannes Bank's fight over their contentious Venetian trade expedition, in Johannes's favor. [Itali] nr 68

(1432/02/08) – Antonio is being held under arrest for debts owed to the king. A group of locals however, including: Nicolaus de Tarnawa, now Zupparius of Krakow, Jeorgius Kieczerar de Wyeliczka. Andreas Bankel de Wyeliczka, Nicolaus Zawrzikray, Paulus *Pensator* and Andreas Szczypiecz de Wyeliczka stand surety for Antonio with King Władysław Jagiełło. Each pledges 200 fl for money owed by Antonio on the feast of St. John's day (June 24<sup>th</sup>) - a month and a half later. [SPPP2] nr 2431

(1432/04/03) - *Petrus Italicus*, Vice-Zupparius of the Krakow salt mines under Antonio during his time as Zupparius, brought to court by Nicolaus Abbas Brzesenensis, *tutor monasterij Zwerzinensis*, for 140 hufl which the Abbot had given to Guido di ser Matteo, Antonio's brother on the understanding that he would transport the sum to the Papal Curia and for which Pietro had agreed to stand as guarantor. [SPPP 2] nr 2437, [Itali] nr 69

(1432/08/08) - Margaretha, the wife of Antonio, nominates Johannes Swedniczer as her procurator in Wrocław. [Itali] nr 70

(1432/09/20) – Antonio named *familiaris* to King Sigismund of Hungary while in Siena. [RI XI/2] nr 9252

(1432/10/08) – Antonio, described as “*alias in Crakovia Supparius*” – Zupparius of Krakow, authorized by King Sigismund to take reprisals against the citizens of Poland. [RI XI/2] nr 9270

(1433/03/21) - Mentioned as former Zupparius in a charter issued by King Władysław Jagiełło for his wife Sophia, granting a sexagena of salt from 1 week of work done by 6 *famuli* at a part of the mine that had been opened by Antonio. The labor of these men was purchased from Kunczy furrier of Krakow who had the contract previously. This was all to go to help enlarge the chapel of the Holy Trinity in Wawel Cathedral for the souls of the queen and the king. [ZDM 7] nr 2137

(1433/05/13) - Michele di ser Matteo's Catasto of 1433 tax declaration makes no mention at all of Antonio. It declares that his brother Guido had passed away 3 months prior, leaving only 100 fl owed to Piero Giolanni, and that Michele had been forced to pay, plus the funeral expenses. ASF, Catasto 454, fol. 325v-326r

(1434/10/25) - Together with Nicholas Serafino, Antonio is named Zupparius of both the Krakow salt mines and the and Russian ones, for a 6-year lease. It is noted however, as part of the charter, that Antonio still owes King Władysław III, who had ascended to the throne four months earlier, 1,500 hufl, which Antonio had borrowed “*mihi mutuatis*” from the king's predecessor King Władysław Jagiełło . The charter made clear that the money was owed only by Antonio, not his partner Serafino, and that it would be repaid in three instalments on the day of St. John the Baptist, over the next three years. [KDMP] IV nr 1312 pg 293-296, [Itali] nr 72

(1435/10/19) – Antonio's goods located in *Nova Civitate Stiriensi* (Wiener Neustad), are ordered sequestered by the Krakow City Council in order to pay off debts he owes. [Itali] nr 74

(1437/02/04) – King Sigismund of Hungary writes to the City Councilors of Wrocław, since he had not yet received a response to an earlier message, that Antonio should be granted freedom from his debts. [RI XI/2] nr 11659

(1438) - Antonio acknowledges in Wrocław that he owes Hannse Lewfer 24 hufl, and promises to repay him by *mitfasten* - mid-Lent. No one should come to his aid, against the will of the king and the town. [Bresbook] 8 pg 438

(1439) – This document, appearing as set of loose leaves in the notarial register, appears to be a type of draft for a note declaring that Antonio had to do something in 4 weeks, then again in 4 weeks, and again that Antonio should appear before the court. King Albert the Magnanimous of Bohemia (r. Bohemia 1438-39), charged him with an unknown crime and events digressed. He was found to be disobedient, and there was a quarrel and because of this quarrel he left the City Council and can/should not come to see them until they ask. [Bresbook] 8 pg 441

(1441/01/19) – Antonio again stands as a witness for as a City Council member in Wrocław, signing documents with others. [Silesia15] nr 80 pg 80

(1441/03/06) – Antonio and others check Nicolaus Gramis's accounts he has kept for the City of Wrocław 's treasurer against the cash on hand, and then they have the bishop of the city ratify the amount. [Silesia15] nr 91 pg 100

(1441/04/19/20) – Antonio gives testimony regarding Nicolaus Gramis's salary when he attended the Council of Basel as a representative of the Wrocław City Council. [Silesia15] nr 93 pg 105

(1441/04/19) - Recorded that Antonio along with 3 others - two clerics and Henrycus Kemmerer of Wrocław, were deputized to audit the city account books of Wrocław. [Silesia16] nr 149 pg 210

(1441/04/20) – Antonio signs off on money to given to Nicolaus Gramis, Wrocław canon and indulgence collector. Antonio and others register that they agree with his work and have seen the money he presented. [Silesia15] nr 100 pg 120

(1441/05/22) - Statement that Antonio, along with two others, had seen and agreed to the amount of money in Nicolaus Gramis's accounts. [Silesia15] nr 118 pg 159

(1441/06/18) – Nicolaus Gramis approached about using some of the indulgence money to redeem 9 villages for Wrocław Cathedral, which had previously been alienated, and to pay off their debts. Antonio stands as witness among others to this possible transaction. [Silesia15] nr 118 pr 163

(1441/09/19) - Nicolaus Gramis continues under suspicion of embezzlement and deposits his belongings with members of the Wrocław elite – including stashing a silver belt and a *pera* of silver with Antonio.[Silesia15] nr 121 pg 171

(1441/09/22) - Opitz von Tschirn presses charges against the cathedral chapter of Wrocław claiming damages for Nicolaus Gramis, mentioning all of the goods that he was forced to give into the hands of others, including those held by Antonio. [Silesia15] nr 123 pg 178

(1442/05/20) – Antonio is named in a letter sent to the Council of Basel protesting the situation in Silesia where a number of church officials plus Antonio and Henrycus Kemmerer of Wrocław, have conspired to imprison Nicolaus Gramis. It claims that they have abused him, and that he is in jail and failing and that all his goods and the 22,000 fl plus additional *lettere di cambio* of funds he had collected in his capacity as papal collector, have been seized. It implores the council to do something. [Silesia15] nr 147 pg 206

(1442/09/02) - Another letter complaining about Nicolaus Gramis's ill-treatment and naming Antonio among many others as culprits, and asking that the Council in Basel send a representative to ameliorate the situation. [Silesia15] nr 155 pg 218

(1442/10/08) – A letter sent to the Council of Basel by their representative - Rudolphus de Rudesheyn *Decretum Doctores*, stating that Anthonio along with most of the other men named

in the previous letter were innocent in this case, and that the true culprits were the bishop of Wrocław and a certain Nicolaus Golczberg. [Silesia15] nr 159 pg 223

(1443/08/26) - 300 hufł given by Antonio to Bishop Konrad IV of Wrocław, through his wife. [Silesia15] nr 167 pg 233

(1443/09) – A beautifully written defense of Nicolaus Gramis is brought before the Wrocław City Council stating that, unlike what Rudolphus de Rudsheim had said, Antonio and all the others were accomplices of Konrad IV, the Bishop of Wrocław. It claims that they had held onto the property he had been forced to cede to them, and that the council should take heed of this horrible deed, as Nicolaus had been injured by both his imprisonment and the pillaging of his benefice in Olomouc. It urges the council to take action, as their authority had been trampled on and a good man harmed. [Silesia15] nr 176 pg 246

(1455) – A “*Walenbücher*”, supposedly written by Antonio, detailing points in the Sudeten Mountains where treasure and good sites to mine could be found. [Silesia20] nr 198 pg 83<sup>1794</sup>

#### **Antonio Gallicus (1384-1388) - Merchant**

(1384) – Antonio sells wool to the tailor, Nickoni Hummel, and a certain Ludmar in Lviv. [PomnLw] I nr. 153, 154

(1388) – Antonio and Giovanni Gallicus sell ginger in Lviv. [PomnLw] I nr 608

(1388/08/26) – Mobile and immobile goods owned by Antonio in Lviv worth 15 marks, are sold to Curtus Paulus on behalf of Bartholomeo called Kruz. [PomnLw] I nr 648

(1388) - Antonio and Giovanni Gallicus sell ginger in Lviv. [PomnLw] I nr 679, 680

(1388) - Antonio and Giovanni Gallicus trade with Shloma the Jew in Lviv. [PomnLw] I nr 709

#### **Antonio di Valetaris (1448-1470) Jewish Merchant – Genoa**

(1448/01/28) – Steffan the swordsmith’s wife is freed after she accused Antonio’s servant/apprentice of theft. Peter the mead-brewer and his wife are freed after having accused Antonio’s servant/apprentice, of theft. [PomnLw] nr 2439, 2440

(1448/05/29) – Antonio appears again in court in Lviv with Peter the mead-brewer and his wife Anna. [PomnLw] nr 2509

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<sup>1794</sup> For more on this see: Philippe Braunstein, “Leggende «Welsche» E Itinerari Slesiani: La Prospezione Mineraria Nel Quattrocento,” *Quaderni Storici*, Nuova Serie, no. 70 (1) (1989): 25-56.



(1453/02/21) – Antonio, recorded as, *Anthonius de Yalateriis lanuansis Ytalicis et ludeis*, is included amongst a large group of other jurors: *Christoforo de san Romulo*, *Raphael de San Romulo*, *Iulianus de Dzubolch de Capha*, *Durinus Cathenius lanuansis*, in a Jewish dispute involving Sancho, among others. [AGZ] 14 nr. MLXXXIX

(1466/11/21) – Antonio is running a ship between Pera and Caffa on which loads belonging to other Genoese merchants are stored.<sup>1795</sup>

(1467/06/17) – It is agreed in a debt case brought before the court in Krakow involving 1,803 marks owed to *Antonius Italicus de Valetarris*'s now deceased brother Juliano, is to be handed over by *Dominico Italicus*. [SPPP] 2 nr. 3872

(1468/08/14) - Antonio does business with a large group of Armenians in Lviv. SDIR nr. 34

1470/03/29 – King Alexander Jagiellon demands Antonio and Arnolfo Tedaldi of Florence come to terms in Lviv. [AGZ] 15 nr. 3514

1470/07/31 – Arnolfo Tedaldi and Antonio agree to come to terms before the court in Lviv in 2 weeks' time, [AGZ] 15 nr 3562

The merchant mark of Antonio di Valetaris was recently identified on a sword (Figure 71), deriving from a symbol commonly adopted by Russian gentry, demonstrating the syncretic life adopted in the region.<sup>1796</sup>

### **Antonio di Recia (1418-1422) Apothecary - Milan**

(1418/07/17) - Antonio returns 70 marks to Gabriel the Apothecary and his wife Barbara. Consol. Crac. 428, fol. 102

(1422/06/17) - Janussius *auritextor* in Krakow, servant of Master Myeischtsky, makes Johannes de Sczpanouicze his procurator in a court case he is bringing against Antonio in Krakow. [CA2] nr 161

(1422/12/15) - Janussius *auritextor* in Krakow, servant of Master Myeischtsky, makes Paulus de Cleczow his procurator in a court case he is bringing against Antonio in Krakow. [CA1] nr 229

(1422/12/18) - Antonio names Mathias de Czsnow as his procurator in his case with Janussius *auritextor* in Krakow, servant of Master Myeischtsky. [CA2] nr 179

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<sup>1795</sup> *Notai Genovesi in Oltremare. Atti rogati a Pera e Mitilene, vol. 1: Pera, 1408-1490*, ed. Ausilia Roccatagliata (Genoa: Università di Genova: Istituto di paleografia e storia medievale 1982) nr 67.

<sup>1796</sup> Денис Тоїчкін, "Класифікація та зміст символіки на клинковій зброї XV–XIX ст. в українських музеях: геральдика, епіграфіка, орнаментика [Classification and content of symbols on blade weapons of the XV-XIX centuries. in Ukrainian museums: heraldry, epigraphy, ornamentation]." *Спеціальні історичні дисципліни: питання теорії та методики* (2010), 152.

### **Antonio Tron (1417-1423) Merchant Citizen of Krakow - Venice**

(1417/02/26) – Antonio becomes a citizen of Krakow, promising to bring a letter of recommendation by St. Michael's day upon pain of paying 10 marks.<sup>1797</sup> [IurCiv] nr. 2994

(1419/11/18) – Albizzo di Medici stands surety for Antonio before the Krakow council in a case involving 60 marks owed to Jan Rzeszowski, the Bishop of Lviv, which Antonio then paid. [Itali] nr. 31

(1419/12/05) – Antonio comes before the court in Krakow to clear up all matters with Jan Rzeszowski, the Bishop of Lviv, about money owed by Antonio to Iwasckoni Sadoffsky. [Itali] nr. 31; [SPPP 2] nr. 1681

(1420/11/02) – Antonio is to come to terms before the court in Krakow with Marcus the *familiaris* of Johannes Pilczy, son of Elizabeth Granowska, third wife of Władysław Jagiełło and Queen of Poland.[SPPP2] nr 1769

(1422/05/25) - Money owed by Antonio to Iwasckoni Sadoffsky. [Itali] nr. 35

(1423/05/15) – Albizzo di Medici stands surety for Antonio Tron of Venice against the charge made by Pyethuchboni and Jacobo, the brothers de Dzadussicze, that Antonio is not of noble blood. Antonio was to produce documents brought from Venice proving his nobility by Pentecost; or otherwise Albizzo would have to pay 60 marks. [SPPP 2] nr 1924 1923.

### **Antonio Gallicus (1388) – Merchant**

(1388) –Antonio Gallicus and Giovanni Gallicus sell ginger in Lviv. [PomnLw] I nr 608

(1388) - Antonio Gallicus and Giovanni Gallicus sell ginger in Lviv. [PomnLw] I nr 679, 680

(1388) - Antonio Gallicus and Giovanni Gallicus trade with Shloma the Jew in Lviv. [PomnLw] I nr 709

### **Arnolfo di Pierozzo di Tedaldi (1465-1495) Merchant Zupparius - Florence**

(1438) - Arnolfo is born in Florence in 1438, the son of Pierozzo di Talento Tedaldi and Ottavia di Pazzi, as the youngest of four brothers.<sup>1798</sup>

<sup>1797</sup> The line in question refers confusingly to the item above where Anthonius de Puteo was also inducted as a citizen of Krakow and pledged to bring a letter by the same date and is indicated as Antonio di Tron's brother in-law. "*Anthonius de Trono de Weneciis h. i. et predictus Anthonius [Anthonius de Puteo?] pro eo fidussit similiter ad festum sancti Michaelis literam fame portare sub pena 10 marcarum et sunt frates germani.* [IurCiv] nr. 2994

<sup>1798</sup> Arnolfo's older brothers were: Talento (b. 1432), Baldo (b. 1435) and a third illegitimate brother named Agnolo (b. 1427), who was none the less always included in the family accounts. The household also included their young cousin Ridolfo Altoviti (b. 1443) ASF, Catasto 833, fol. 185r-v 1457 San Giovanni – Viao

(1457) - *Arnolfo di Petrocii di Thedaldi* is resident in Florence in the Quartiere S. Giovanni, Gonfalone Vaio, listed in the Catasto tax return of his brother, Talento di Pierozzo di Talento Tedaldi. Arnolfo and his other brother Baldo, are registered in the Catasto as each owning 1/3rd of the household property, while there is a long list of debtors - no debts or notes are related to Poland, but they do appear close with the Altoviti family. ASF, Catasto 833 fol. 279

(1464/07/25) - *Arnolfo di Petrocii di Thedaldi Florentino*, is mentioned in a letter sent by the Venetian Doge, Cristoforo Moro, together with *Iuliano de Valetaris* of Genoa and *Nembrot Veluti* of Venice. They are described as forming a company around 1464 to sell 4,300 ducats worth of goods in the Kingdom of Poland. While there, apparently a group of Jews deprived Nembrot of some goods worth 600 ducats. The doge writes to the King Casimir IV Jagiellon asking that he see justice done in this matter. [CodEp] III nr 74

(1465/09/20-21) – Arnolfo owes 200 sexagene to Ursula, the widow of Johannes Verber, citizen of Krakow, as shown in a very long-running case before the court in Lviv as Ursula sues for other damages, and eventually appears to win. [AGZ] 15 220 — 236

(1466/03/22) - Arnolfo appears as, “*Aynolpho, suppario drohobicensi et theloneario grodecensi et leopoliens*” Zupparius of the Drohobych [Дрогобич] salt mine and renter of the toll of Gródek [Городок] and Lviv. SDIR 27

(1467) - Arnolfo borrows 400 hufl from *Laurentiu Lomellino “Italicus de Pera”* with “*nobilis Nicolaus de Fuligo, italicus*” his future brother-in-law, standing as his guarantor in order to pay off funds owed to the heirs of his now deceased partner, Nembrot Veluti of Venice. SDIR nr 28

(1467/04/25) – Arnolfo is involved in a court case in Lviv with Lukinas de Caffa. SDIR nr 21

(1468/04/31) - Arnolfo makes a deal with David de Constantinopoli in Lviv. SDIR nr 33

(1470/03/29) - King Casimir IV Jagiellon demands Antonio di Valetaris and Arnolfo come to terms in Lviv. [AGZ] 15 nr. 3514

(1470/07/31) - Arnolfo and Antonio di Valetaris agree to come to terms in 2 weeks’ time.

(1470/04/02) - King Casimir IV Jagiellon backs up a pledge of 1000 marks between Arnolfo and Johannes Dlugosz. [AGZ] 15 nr 3527, 3562

(1470/05/27) - Arnolfo makes a trade deal with Dominus Arnst and Dymitr Walata de Albo Castro, son of Iurgii Walata, involving, “*centum et XXIIIj florenos hungaricales pro quindecim et medio lapidibus piperis, quelibet lapis per octo florenos*” - 124 hufl for 15 ½ stones of pepper with a full stone costing 8 florins. SDIR 42

(1471/11/15) - Sampson de Zydcasow rents for 925 marks and one stamina of red silk, the Lviv customs tolls, plus 1,438 marks for the Gródek [Городок] customs tolls and the

Drohobych [Дрогобич] salt mine and customs tolls for 3 years – as per the arrangement with his predecessors: Juliano di Valetaris, Cristoforo di S. Romulo and Arnolfo. [MRPS] 1 nr. 730

(1472/01/27) – Arnolfo settles a debt for pepper in Lviv. SDIR 45

(1473/01/09) - *Aynophus Tedaldi de Florentia*, is listed in a charter as Zupparius of the Drohobych [Дрогобич] salt mine and renter of the Gródek [Городок] toll (note, no longer also renter of the Lviv customs). [MRPS] I nr. 991

(1473/04/27) - Arnolfo is *zuppario nostro Drohobiczensi*, - Our Zupparius of Drohobych [Дрогобич] salt mines. King Casimir IV Jagiellon permits the continued selling of some salt by people in Lviv, against what Arnolfo would prefer. [AGZ] 6 nr. 113

(1473/04/28) – The City Council of Lviv grants permission to sell salt from the Drohobych [Дрогобич] salt mine, leaving aside some as a stipend for Arnolfo and his heirs. [MRPS] I nr. 1005

(1476/02/11) - *Aynophus Tedaldi de Florentia theloneatori Grodecensi et zuppariuo Drohobiczensi*, - Arnolfo is still Zupparius of Drohbicensis and *Tholneator* of Gródek [Городок]. The charter details rents of the customs at Zydaczowiense (previously a Jewish Zupparius held this post) and the salt mine at Dolienses, *districtus Stigensis* for 190 marks, due March 24th - for two years. [MRPS] I 1359

(1477/01/02) - Nicolaus Corythko, Lord of Wroblowycze, testifies that he owes 20 hufll to *Aynolpho Thędaldi de Florentiis zupario Russie et Nicolao de Fulgino fratri suo* – to Arnolfo, Zupparius of the Russian salt mines, and his brother in-law Nicolao Felsthyn, which he will pay in wool and income from households in the village of Wroblowycze in the district of Drohobycien. [AGZ] 18 nr. 1328

(1478/01/01) – Anna, *Tenutaria* de Michalovicze, widow of Marcissius Corava de Ropczicze, testifies to a 100 mark debt backed by the village of Michalovicze owed by her late husband to Arnolfo. However, she asserts that the village is her dotal property and therefore should never have been pledged in the first place. [AGZ] 18 nr. 1016

(1479/10/26) - Nicolaus Corythko, Lord of Wroblowycze, testifies that he owes 70 hufll to *Aynolpho Thędaldi de Florentiis zupario Russie et Nicolao de Fulgino fratri suo* – to Arnolfo, Zupparius of the Russian salt mines, and his brother in-law Nicolao Felsthyn, which he will pay in wool and income from households in the village of Wroblowycze in the district of Drohobycien. [AGZ] 18 nr. 1248

(1479/10/26) – Martinus, otherwise known as Marcis Korawa, Lord of Ropczyce, testifies that he owes 60 hufll to *Aynolpho Thędaldi de Florentiis zupario Russie et Nicolao de Fulgino fratri suo* – to Arnolfo Zupparius, of the Russian salt mines, and his brother in-law Nicolao Felsthyn, which he will pay in wool and income from households in the village of Wroblowycze in the district of Drohobycien. [AGZ] 18 nr. 1249

(1480/04/18) - Marcis Korawa, Lord in Ropczyce testifies that he is selling the village of Mycbalyowcze to *Aynolpho Thedaldi de Florenciis Zupario Russie et Nicolao de Fulgino fratri suo* – to Arnolfo Zupparius of the Russian salt mines, and his brother in-law Nicolao Felsthyn for 300 marks, paid by Johannes Pronycz to Marcis as intermediary for Arnolfo and Nicolao. [AGZ] 18 nr. 1365

(1481/04/12) – Arnolfo is Zupparius of the Drohobych [Дрогобич] and Przemyśl salt mines. – King Casimir IV, admits that Arnolfo has held these posts well for many years and rents them to him for the next 4 years for 200 m Pol. [KMKAO] nr 29

(1481/04/12) – Arnolfo Tedaldi rents the Drohobych [Дрогобич] salt mine and the Grodek customs for 2 years for 1,500 m. Pol. The very long charter outlining the deal includes information on the customs rates related to of cattle and horses through Grodek. Also mentioned also is a war in Rus and an ongoing pestilence. [KMKAO] nr. 30

(1481/04/12) – King Casimir IV recognizes that 263 marks, 16 grosz, and 50 hufł, given by Arnolfo to the Bishop of Przemyśl through Nicolaus Grmaczky the factor of Przemyśl are still owed to him. The sum is to be repaid over the next year. Together with money equalling 100 marks, used to back the purchase of a bunch of cattle, each worth 1 mark per head sent by the royal notary Piotr Lyeszyowsky.. [KMKAO] nr 50

(1481/05/01) - Letter sent by Lorenzo di Medici the Magnificent to Arnolfo in Poland, thanking him for the letter he had sent and the gift of some falcons who had sadly not arrived. ASF, MaP 62 fol. 83v

(1487) - *Aynolphum zupparium Drohibiczensem*, Zupparius of the Drohobych [Дрогобич] salt mine, listed in the royal account books as monies attached to various personages, are being handed over to Arnolfo, presumably for delivery. [Rach 1484-88] 125, 185

(1487/04/21) – Arnolfo is still active as Zupparius of the Drohobych [Дрогобич] salt mine, Iwascu, the Armenian diplomat, pledges the villages of Kozienice and Jamelna to Arnolfo for 237 hufł. [AGZ] 15 nr 151

(1481/06/05) - Marcis Korawa, Lord in Ropczyce, testifies that he owes 60 hufł to *Aynolpho Thedaldi de Florenciis Zupario Russie et Nicolao Iustini de Fulgino fratri ipsi Arnolfo* "– to Arnolfo Zupparius of the Russian salt mines, and his brother in-law Nicolao, backed by his village of Słońsko.. [AGZ] 18 nr 1500

(1482/03/26) - Raphael de Crzywczu lodges a complaint against Arnolfo involving his status as Zupparius and letters issued by the king. [AGZ] 18 nr. 1595

(1482/04/30) - The king steps in to resolve issues between Raphael de Crzywczu and Arnolfo regarding the issuance of a set of letters. [AGV] 18 nr 1647, 1660

(1489/08/28) - Arnolfo is recorded as *Castellano Carcoviense*, in a letter from Lorenzo di Medici the Magnificent, sent to the King Casimir IV Jagiellon, thanking him for a letter he had

previously sent. The letter was written in Latin and the correspondence was handled by Arnolfo. ASF, MaP 63 99v

(1494/01/25) – Arnolfo is recorded in a charter granted to Lviv by King Jan Olbracht as *nobili Annolpho Teadaldi di Florenciis Thloneatore pro nunc Leopoliensi*, - Arnolfo is now a nobleman and once again renting the toll in Lviv. He is given the mission to organize a trade fair in Lviv to raise money for rebuilding the city walls. [MatArch] nr 211

(1494-95) – Arnolfo is Zupparius of Bochnia.<sup>1799</sup> In 1495, he concludes a contract for timber exploitation in Lednica, today a district of Wieliczka, likely for use in the mines.<sup>1800</sup>

(1497/01/05) – Arnolfo is dead and his widow, Dorothea Felsthyn, is given back her dowry. [AGZ] 15 4478

### **Augustino Italicus (1468) Merchant – Genoa**

(1468/01/04) – Juliano Gebeletus di Caffa is engaged in business in Lviv with *Augustinus mercator et Italicus Ianuensis*. [SDIR] nr 32

### **Augustino Mazoni di Promontorio (1503-1523) Merchant - Genoa**

(1503/03/11) – Augustino and a Eustachio Walen appear in the Poznań notarial register, involved with Erazmo Kreydler of Krakow and Gygnat Krelewycz.<sup>1801</sup>

(1503/07/27) – Augustino trading in Poznań with his brother, Sebastino di Promontorio.<sup>1802</sup>

(1512) – A property in Poznań - a garden in front of the Wroniecka Gate, between the gardens of Burchard and Grzegorz Strosberg, together with a pond and water flow from the moat to a canal to this garden, previously owned by Jan, a sheerer from Poznań, and sold to Paolo and Stefano di Promontorio in 1489, is transferred to Augustino.<sup>1803</sup>

(1523) – Augustino is deceased by this year.<sup>1804</sup>

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<sup>1799</sup> Stanisław Fischer, *Dzieje Bocheńskiej Żupy Solnej* [The history of the Bochnia Salt mine], (Warsaw: Wydawn. Geologiczne, 1962), 35.

<sup>1800</sup> "Lednice," *Słownik Historyczno-Geograficzny Ziemi Polskich W Średniowieczu* [Dictionary of Historical and Geographical Polish territories in the Middle Ages], Accessed December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019, <http://www.slownik.ihpan.edu.pl/search.php?q=tadaldi&d=0&t=0>

<sup>1801</sup> *Stadtbuch Von Posen; Die Mittelalterliche Magistratsliste; Die Aeltesten Protokollbuecher Und Rechnungen vol 1*, ed. Warschauer Adolf (Poznan: Eigenthum der Gesellschaft, 1892) pg 303 nr.171.

<sup>1802</sup> *Stadtbuch Von Posen; Die Mittelalterliche Magistratsliste; Die Aeltesten Protokollbuecher Und Rechnungen vol 1*, ed. Warschauer Adolf (Poznan: Eigenthum der Gesellschaft, 1892) pg 311 nr 224.

<sup>1803</sup> *Słownik Historyczno-Geograficzny Ziemi Polskich W Średniowieczu* [Dictionary of Historical and Geographical Polish territories in the Middle Ages], Accessed December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019, <http://www.slownik.ihpan.edu.pl/search.php?q=tadaldi&d=0&t=0http://www.slownik.ihpan.edu.pl/search.php?id=29028&q=italicus&d=0&t=0>

<sup>1804</sup> <http://www.slownik.ihpan.edu.pl/search.php?id=29028&q=italicus&d=0&t=0>

### **Baldewino Gallicus (1322)**

(1322/04/02) - The son of the *aurige domine regine*, sells ½ of a lot in Krakow to Baldewino Gallicus. [NKiRMK] nr 654

### **Baltazar Italicus (1450) Merchant**

(1450/03/23) – *Baltazar Ytalicus* sells a *pallium italicum de xamito rubeo cum auro texto* – a red damask and gold embroidered Italian pallium, to Margaretha Begina in Krakow. [CA1] nr 422

### **Barnabas di Nehrono (1441-<1488) Merchant - Genoa**

(1441/10/04) – Barnabas trades with Simon Korsner in Lviv.

(1444/01/08) - In notarial records in Lviv, Barnabas frees Bubackr [Abubakar] the Muslim from the oath that he was ordered to take concerning the 70 rubles of profit/interest that Barnabas accused him of withholding. Abubakar and Barnabas opened in front of the notary a Muslim [Arabic] letter about the capital sum that he was supposed to have in this business. [PomnLw] IV 1374

(1445/01/27) – Before the City Council of Lviv, Barnabas admits that Bubackr [Abubakar] Bessermani of Damascus, the brother and heir of Haczachmeth, with whom Barnabas had made a business transaction worth 305 sexagene, had paid him in full for this amount. Further, Barnabas is forced before the court to recognize that Bubackr is under no further obligation to pay him 70 silver rubles, for which he held a letter released in Novgorod. Barnabas, could not in fact produce the letter in court and the City Council further agreed that should the letter be produced in the future, it was invalidated, and Bubackr could not be made to pay the 70 silver rubles to Barnabas. [PomnLw] nr 1386, 1387

(1455) - A very ill Barnabas, while on a trading mission in Wallachia, has Simon the Furrier make out for him a last will authorized by the Lviv City Council.<sup>1805</sup>

(1455) - Cristoforo di San. Romulo buys 1100 fl worth of silk from Barnabas through the intermediation of Nicholas of Pyzdry, working as the procurator of Piotr Swidwa. In exchange for the silk, Cristoforo gives 800 barrels of salt to Nicholas under Piotr Swidwa's seal to take by the next water ferry to Toruń to sell, using the proceeds to pay Barnabas. [AGZ] 14 nr. 3319

(1459) - Barnabas is permitted by King Casimir IV Jagiellon to purchase the village of Pikulowice (Pykulovychi), close to Lviv. In 1469, his son Gregorio, a *capellamo capitulo*, was

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<sup>1805</sup> Karol Badecki, “Zaginione księgi średniowiecznego Lwowa [Fragments from the Medieval books of Lviv],” *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 41,(1927): 563.

given the property and ownership was eventually turned over to the Lviv Cathedral Chapter upon Gregorio's death.<sup>1806</sup>

(1464) – Barnabas gives the village of Pikulowice to the Lviv Cathedral to found an altar dedicated to: *visitationis sancte Marie virginis, sancti Iohannis Baptiste, Barnabę apostoli, luce evangeliste, decem milium (sic) martirum, undecim milium (sic) virginum, Helenę, Barbarę, Katherine, Agnetis, dorothee, Margarethe virginum* – The Virgin Mary, St. John the Baptist, St. Barnabas the Apostle, St. Luke the Evangelist, the ten thousand martyrs, the eleven thousand martyrs, the virgin St. Helen, St. Barbara, St. Catherine, St. Agnes, St. Dorothy, and St. Margaret the virgin, to be administered by his son Gregorio as presbyter. [AGZ] 2 nr. 99

(1467/06/11) - Barnabas organizes the transfer of the right of patronage of the altar he founded in Lviv Cathedral to the Lviv City Council upon his death, as his family members will no longer be living in Poland. [AGZ] 6 nr. 75

(1488/06/15) - By now, Barnabas has died and none of his line continue to live in Lviv, so patronage of the altar he founded is taken over by the Lviv City Council. [AGZ] 7 nr. 90

#### **Bartolomeo di Filippo di Guidotti (1395- 1401) Merchant Banker - Bologna**

(1395/08/20) - Bartolomeo and Jacobo Guidotti receive a house in *plathea Speculatorum* in Krakow from the sons and heirs of Peter the Apothecary, together with 100 sexagene from Paulus Karbari, clearing all debts between them. [KLK] nr 2172

(1401/03/07) – Bartolomeo is involved with a Venetian company, overseeing with the help of Konrad Seiler as their factor, the transfer of money from Krakow to the Pope. [Les Allemands], 226 fn 104

#### **Bernardo di Bonacursi (1394-1396) Weaver, Merchants – Florence**

(1394) - Bernardo and his brother Jacobo take citizenship in Kazimierz, where they work as weavers. [KRKaz] 301

(1395) – Bernardo and his brother Jacobo have a cloth stall on the central square in Kazimierz. [KRKaz] 301

(1396/02/27) - Johannes de Szarnowecz recognizes before the court in Krakow that 6 rolls of superior cloth, each worth 3 marks, and 6 rolls of inferior cloth, each worth 1 1/2 marks, and paper worth 15 marks of the local currency were purchased by the honorable magister Monaldo, Indeed the cloths and paper were given to him, he recognizes before the court, in order to pay off the debt owed by the *Pannafices Latini* of Kazimierz [NKiRMK] nr 146

<sup>1806</sup> Tomasz Pirawski, *Thomae Pirawski relatio status Almae Archidioecesis Leopoliensis : accedunt testamenta eiusdem Th. Pirawski et Ioannis Zamoiscii, archiepiscopi leopoliensis*. edited by Korneli Juliusz Heck (Lviv: Sumptibus Societatis Historicae, 1893), 56.



### **Bonagiunta [Bona Juntha] (1409-1423) Merchant Vice-Zupparius - Venice**

(1409/01/29) - Bonagiunta and his uncle, Pietro Bicherano of Venice, as Zuppari of the Krakow salt mines, purchase land and working rights in the village of Myślenice, with Michael Long acting as intermediary, for 220 *marcis latorum grossorum*, and a further 52 *marcis communis pecunie*. [SPPP] 2 nr. 1191

(1409/02/01) – Bonagiunta, as the Vice-Zupparius of Wieliczka is called before the High Court of Magdeburg Law in Krakow, but none appear to contest him. [Mag.court 1] nr. 2445

(1410/03/11) - Further transactions over the Myślenice land purchase, a fire having broken out on some of the land and destroyed a grove of trees, the Bicheranos request a reduction in the sale price. [SPPP] 2 nr. 1243

(1411/10/22) - Michael Long agrees to sell Bonagiunta *an alodium* called *Thur* – a piece of land just outside of Wieliczka - for 150 marks Prague grosz [Mag.court 1] nr. 2812

(1414/01/03) - Andree Czarnissa sells the village of Rzeszotary (Górne and Dolne), located to the southwest of Wieliczka for 202 fl to “*domino Bono Junthe*”.<sup>1807</sup>

(1419) - Bonagiunta marries a local Polish lady named Jadwiga, the daughter of Mirosław, the Lord of Gdów, and the owner of part of the village of Myślenice, taking her with a dowry of 300 grosz.<sup>1808</sup>

(1423/02/19) - Bonagiunta has passed away, leaving Jadwiga a widow. [CA2] nr. 191

(1442/08/27) - Bonagiunta’s son, Francisco heads off to Hungary to participate in the war against the Ottomans organized by King Władysław III. Preparing to go to war, he has a charter written in which it is revealed that that his father is buried in the church of Corpus Christi in Kazimierz. Francisco donates the village of Rzeszotary to said church. [ZDM] 3 nr 635

(1445/10/11) – Jadwiga, the widow of Bonagiunta, in the name of herself and her three children – Jan, Francisco and Helena, confirms the giving of the village of Rzeszotary to the Church of Corpus Christi in Kazimierz. [KDMK IV], 1472

### **Carlo di Bozzolo (1445) Merchant – Bozzolo**

(1445/03/23) - Carlo is a witness in the defense of Angelo Lercario of Genoa in a case between Nicholas Zyndrich, citizen of Lviv, defended by Nicoulas *Iuvenem scultetus* and preconsul, and Clement Cadyn, City Councilor of Lviv. Taking up Angelo’s part are Cristoforo di S. Romulo, customs collector of Lviv, Pietro *heredem Licostomi Consulem Francorum*, and Carlo. The case stated that Nicholas agreed to a contract with Angelo for *Borman* worth 1,200

<sup>1807</sup> Marcin Starzyński, “Andrzej Czarnysza († 1416) i jego autograf [Andrzej Czarnysza († 1416) and his autograph]” *Średniowiecze Polskie i Powszechne* 6 (2014): 87.

<sup>1808</sup> Słownik Historyczno-Geograficzny Ziemi Polskich W Średniowieczu [Dictionary of Historical and Geographical Polish territories in the Middle Ages], Accessed December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019, <http://www.slownik.ihpan.edu.pl/search.php?q=junta&d=0&t=0> Accessed December 15<sup>th</sup> 2020

hufl. This agreement was alleged to have been made in front of officials and valid within the bounds of the Polish Kingdom. It was agreed that Angelo would deliver the *Borman* to Pera. He did so, but for some reason, not the full amount. The parties together mutually agreed that Angelo was obliged to pay Nicholas 800 florins within 6 months. [AGZ] 14 nr 1340

(1453/01/30) – Carlo is witness to a notarial act in Pera between Georgici Inpano, a Wallachian, who named him as his procurator, and Inofio Lineilo, who was tasked to arrange a business deal with his business partner, *Giovanni Vasilico Greco*, and his socio, *Tommaso Pirolo greco*.<sup>1809</sup>

(1453/08/23) – Carlo is witness to a notarial act in Pera, where in the immediate wake of the conquest of Constantinople by the Ottomans, he sought to offload a large amount of Malmsey wine.<sup>1810</sup>

(1453/08/09) – Carlo is witness to a notarial act in Pera, whereby Nicola Testa, due to the taking of the City of Constantinople by the Turks and the uncertain political situation, manumitted his Russian slave Iuane, with the agreement that he would continue to serve him a further 2 years.<sup>1811</sup>

(1454/01/29) – Carlo is now to be found on the Island of Chios, where he appears to have fled after the Ottomans took full control of the City of Constantinople.<sup>1812</sup>

(1467/05/13) – Carlo is now deceased, as is his brother Guliano. His brother's son, Antonio di Bozzolo, is named as Carlo's heir and appears in a notarial record admitting that a debt of 400 ducats had been repaid him to him in Moncastro by the heirs of the late Ettore Mansano, which had been owed to Carlo. Giacomo Berguchius, Girolamo di Zoagli and Branca di Oliva, stood as witnesses.<sup>1813</sup>

### **Conradus di Porthu (1448-1449) Merchant - Genoa**

(1448/10/02) – Conradus, with Petrus Odrownach de Sprowo *Palatinus Rusiae* acting as his procurator, is brought to trial in Lviv by Cristoforo di San. Romulo for not delivering a large batch of alum which Cristoforo had paid him for – this perfidy was to be read out from every street corner. [AGZ] 14 nr 1340, 2127

<sup>1809</sup> *Notai genovesi in Oltremare. Atti rogati a Pera e Mitilene, I, Pera, 1408-1490*, edited by Ausilia Roccatagliata, Collana Storica di fonti et studi, ed. G. Pistarino, 34, 1 (Genoa: Universita di Genoa, Istituto di Paleografia e Storia medievale, 1982), nr. 25.

<sup>1810</sup> Stefan Andreescu, "Pe Marginea Unui Act din Arhivele din Genova [On the Margins of an Act From the Archives of Genoa]," in *Studii i Materiale de Istorie Medie Volumul Xv* ed. Paul Cernovodeanu (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Romane, 1997), 165-66.

<sup>1811</sup> *Notai genovesi in Oltremare. Atti rogati a Pera e Mitilene, I, Pera, 1408-1490*, edited by Ausilia Roccatagliata, Collana Storica di fonti et studi, ed. G. Pistarino, 34, 1 (Genoa: Universita di Genoa, Istituto di Paleografia e Storia medievale, 1982), nr. 55.

<sup>1812</sup> Andreescu, "Pe Marginea Unui Act Din Arhivele din Genova, 165-66.

<sup>1813</sup> Andreescu, "Pe Marginea Unui Act Din Arhivele din Genova, 165.

(1449/01/23) – A complex case involving violence in Gródek [Городок] which affected both Cristoforo di S. Romulo and Conradus. [AGZ] 14 2180, 2181

**Cristoforo Italicus (1398) Apothecary - Ferrara**

(1398/08/16) - *Cristophorus Italicus de Farraria, nunc apotecarius* in Krakow accuses Petrus de Cadano the *familiaris* of Monaldo of Lucca of owing him 50 marks for his expenses and financial injury incurred while in the service *in termino curie regie* [SPPP2] nr 273

**Cristoforo Gwardia di S. Romulo<sup>1814</sup> (1443- 1467) Merchant Zupparius - Genoa**

(1443/08/28) Hannos the son of Bartholomew authorized Nicloz Eberke to recover all the things and debts [to him] wherever he has them, namely to forward 200 mark grosz to Cristoforo to do and act as if he had been present in person and also to authorize someone else. [PomnLw] IV nr 981

(1443/11/14) – While Cristoforo is working as *Tholneator*, renter of the tolls in Lviv, he and Gentico Gentili of Genoa are brought before the court by the Armenians Skamdar and Asswadur, over a mercantile transaction originating in Bursa. The suit was disregarded. [AGZ] 14 nr 896

(1447/10/05) - Cristoforo is *Theloneatore Grodecensi* – customs collector in Gródek [Городок]. [AGZ] 14 nr. DCCXXXIV

(1444/01/28) – Stanislaus, who was town notary at Rubischaw acknowledged in front of the Mayor of Lviv and the city jurors that he owes the Cristoforo 40 schock Bohemian grosz that be promised to repay by the next shrove Tuesday in a year's time. [PomnLw] IV nr 1390

(1447/10/02) - Cristoforo mediated between Nicolaus the customs collector and Niclos Fleyschmawl concerning a half [bolt of] cloth that is with a certain Procop. [PomnLw] IV nr 2242

(1448/02/22) – The rights to manage Lviv's custom tolls secured by Cristeforo and Nicolaus de Stradow. [AGZ] 14 nr. 2105.

(1448/09/30) - Cristoforo and Nicolaus de Stradow work together renting the Lviv customs tolls, and are involved in a suit against Augustinus Craczmar, citizen of Camyenez. [AGZ] 14 2124

(1448/10/04) - Cristoforo and Nicolaus de Stradow take over management of the salt mines at Drohobycz from the Archbishop of Lviv for 130 marks. [AGZ] 14 2129

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<sup>1814</sup> For a full accounting of Cristoforo's activities see: Rafał Hryszko, "Cristoforo z San Remo: próba portretu średniowiecznego kupca genueńskiego [Cristoforo of San Remo: an attempt at a portrait of a medieval Genoese merchant]," *Studia Historyczne* 42.3 (1999): 331-348.

(1452/08/22) - Cristeforo and Dorinus Cathenus appear in the Lviv City Court over some toll amounts charged. [AGZ] 14 nr. 2676

(1453/02/21) - List of jurors overseeing a case with City Councilors in Lviv, including a number of Italians - *Vincencio Christoforo de sancto Romulo, Iuliano de Dzubolch de Capha, Durinus Cahenius lanuansis, Raphael de Sancto Romulo, Anthonius de Valateriis lanuansis Italicis et ludeis*. [AGZ] 14 nr. MLXXXIX

(1453/06/11) - Cristoforo is granted freedom from all Lviv customs duties by King Casimir IV Jagiellon. [AGZ] 14 nr. 2868

(1454/03/23) – Cristorforo rents the rights to manage the Przemyśl salt mine together with Jullianus Waltaris of Genoa, for 2,000 marks, 10 stones of pepper and 1 stone of Saffron. He further rents the Lviv customs toll for 900 marks, together with management of the Drohobycz salt mine and Gródek [Городок] toll for 1,400 marks. [AGZ] 9 nr. 58

(1455/04/25) - Cristoforo is both manager of the customs toll in Lviv and Zupparius of Przemyśl. He testifies before the Lviv court that he had bought from Barnabas di Nehrono, Italian merchant from Genoa, silk fabrics and others for 1,100 fl.. Barnabas had ordered Cristoforo to make his payment to Piotr or his servant (*servitor et commissarius*), Nicholas of Pyzdry. In payment, Cristoforo separated out 800 barrels (*vasa*) of salt. This salt was marked with the seal of Piotr from Nałęcz. The salt was then to be delivered by log raft to Toruń, where it would be sold and thus pay to Barnabas 1,100 fl. [AGZ] 14 3319 <sup>1815</sup>

(1457/03/04) - Cristoforo meets Hriczkonem de Pomorzani, Palatine of Podole, in court in Lviv. [AGZ] 15 nr 83

(1461/06/23) - Cristoforo is *Zupparii Droliobicensis et theolonatoris nostri Leopoliensis, fidelis dilecti*, - the Zupparius of the salt mines at Drohobycz and renter of the Lviv customs tolls, most faithful servant of the king. In order to bolster trade in Lviv, King Casimir IV Jagiellon abolishes the fairs of Tymienice, Rohatyn, Gogóra, Trembowla and Jazowiec. [AGZ] 6 nr. 43

(1462/12/03) - *Nobili Cristoforo de Santo Romulo, zuppario “Drohobiciensis et theloneatori Leopoliensis, tideli nostro dilecto, graciam regiam cum favore. Nobilis fidelis noster dilecte!”* – Cristoforo is the Zupparius of the salt mines at Drohobycz and renter of the Lviv customs tolls, most faithful servant of the King – There is a major issue involving the charging of the Lviv tolls to the Krakovians. Cristoforo agrees that they can pass without paying the regular fares, as was their right, but they must have their proper documentation as proof. [AGZ] 6 nr. 50

<sup>1815</sup> Słownik Historyczno-Geograficzny Ziem Polskich W Średniowieczu [Dictionary of Historical and Geographical Polish territories in the Middle Ages], Accessed January 2<sup>nd</sup> 2020, <http://www.slownik.ihpan.edu.pl/search.php?q=Sancto+Romulo&d=0&t=0>

(1463/01/28) - Cristoforo purchases the villages of: Crynycza, Malkowycze, Czerlany and Kathy, located near Gródek (Городок) from the nobleman Slabossi. [AGZ] 9 nr. 65

(1464/04/14- 1464/08/11) - Cristoforo, still acting as Zupparius of the salt mines at Drohobycz and renter of the Lviv customs tolls, sends 295 sable pelts into the hands of his factor, Accursio di Calignano to be taken to his father in Genoa [SDIR] nr 12

(1464/06/08) – Cristoforo, named as renter of the Lviv customs together with Juliano di Valetaris, Zupparius of the Russian salt mines, are given a quit receipt for funds owed by the king. [SPPP2] nr 3759

(1466/10/10) – A court case between Cristoforo, his wife Elizabeth de Lubyny [Lubień], involved and Giorgio Strumilo postponed as Cristoforo is involved in a delegation going to Wallachia. [AGZ] 15 nr. 373

(1466/11/04) – A charter regarding the administration of the mortgage on the village of Lubyny [Lubień] by Cristoforo, his brother Domenico, and his wife Elizabeth. [AGZ] 19 nr. 2849-50

(1466/12/13) – Cristoforo comes before the court in Lviv, arguing over financials with Martino Burza, citizen of Lviv, both sides eventually agree to meet later and see their affairs judged by the Genoese authorities and under their law – (*iam Ministerialem ius addidit lanusium*). [AGZ] 15 nr 414

(1467/01/12) - Cristoforo has died. Lanuschkowa, citizen of Lviv, claims 50 marks owed to him by Cristoforo, which Domenico, his brother, contests. [AGZ] 15 nr 423

(1467/04/07) - By now Cristoforo has died, and his brother Domenico is dealing with settling his estate. Fredericus of Lviv states that Cristoforo and his widow owed him 140 marks and 67 hufl, plus 2 heavy silver vases, one decorated with gold. [AGZ] 15 477

### **Domenico di San Romulo (1467-1483) – Genoa**

(1467/01/12), Lanuschkowa, citizen of Lviv, claims 50 marks are owed to him by the deceased Cristoforo di S. Romelo. Domenico, Cristoforo's brother, contests this before the court in Lviv. [AGZ] 14 nr 423

(1467/04/07) - Domenico deals with settling his deceased brother Cristoforo's estate. Fredericus of Lviv states that Cristoforo and his wife owe him 140 marks and 67 hufl. plus 2 heavy silver vases, one decorated with gold. [AGZ] 15 477

(1469/02/13) - Domenico appears before the Lviv court recognizing the pay-off of a loan from *Johannes Odrowasch de Sprowa Capts. Sambor*. His niece, Dorothea di S. Romulo appears in court the same day. [AGZ] 18 nr 26

(1470) - Domenico sends 200 zeliolis (coins?) to his Father Pelegro in Genoa through the hands of Accursio di Calignano. [SDIR] nr 40

(1471/05/02) - Domenico is still in Poland, renting a set of small salt mines near Sambor, not far from Lviv. [AGZ] 17 nr 592

(1483) – Domenico is living in Poland near Gródek [Городок].<sup>1816</sup>

### **Dominico Italicus<sup>1817</sup> (1467) - Merchant**

(1467/06/17) - Debt case of 1,803 marks owed to *Antonius Italicus de Valetarris*'s now deceased brother Juliano - to be handed over by *Dominico Italicus* as agreed before the king's bench in Krakow. [SPPP] 2 nr. 3872

### **Dorothea di Andrea di Soldaia (1489) - Genoa**

(1489/08/14) – Dorothea, daughter of Andrea Gwaska di Soldaia, is married to the Polish nobleman, Nicolai Myloslawsky, *gladiferi Calischiensi* and owed 2,100 hufł by Ambrosio Pampowski *castellano Rosperiensi*, as acknowledged by the Crown after her father's death. [MRPS] I nr 2035

### **Dorothea di San. Romulo (1469) – Genoa**

(1469/02/14) – Dorothea is seeking to gather in debts owed to her now deceased father Cristoforo di San. Romulo, from Johannes Odrowansch, the Capitan of Sambor, with the assistance of Andreas de Sprowa in Lviv. [AGZ] 18 nr. 33

### **Durinus Cathenius (Cathcinensis) (1452-1465) - Genoa**

(1452/08/22) - Cristeforo di San. Romulo and Durinus appear before the court in Lviv over some custom toll amounts charged. [AGZ] 14 nr. 2676

(1453/02/21) – Durinus is included amongst a group of other jurors overseeing a case with City Councilors in Lviv, including a number of Italians: *Vincencio Christoforo de sancto Romulo, Iuliano de Dzubolch de Capha, Durinus Cahenius lanuansis, Raphael de Sancto Romulo, Anthonius de Valateriis lanuansis Italicis et ludeis*. [AGZ] 14 nr. MLXXXIX

(1465/08/16) – Georgius Pollo di Albo Castro and the Lviv notary, Georgius Gael, stand as witnesses to a statement made about a transaction in Lviv involving Durinus working as *camerarius* and toll-master for the land of Moldavia and the Armenian Cokcza of Soczavia. [SDIR] nr 14

### **Fenenna Cavallo (1350) - Genoa**

<sup>1816</sup> Jan Ptaśnik records that in 1484, Dominicus was to be found living in Gródek. "*Dominicus Italicus, nunc moram agens in Grodek*", citing a passage from Por. Archiwum 1 m. Lwowa, Libri, resignationum 1473 — 1486, p. 425. Ptaśnik, *Kultura Włoska Wieków*, 56 fn. 129.

<sup>1817</sup> Possibly to be identified with Domenico di San. Romulo, but as the San. Romulo family were involved in Eastern Poland and this is the only document placing Domenico in Krakow, the identification is not assured.

(1350/06/27) - Papal indulgence granted by Pope Clement VI to Paulo Cavallo and his wife Fenenna along with King Casimir the Great and his wife Adelaide and a few other Krakow citizens: Johannes called Romanetz and his wife, Albertus the Cancellarius of Dobrinensis and Johannes called Jura the Palatine, all named as *familiaribus* of the king. [Bull] II nr. 499

### **Ffredericus Gallicus (1324 )**

(1324/08/17) Henus called Ketzser and Ffridericus Gallicus sell ½ of a cloth stall in the main square of Krakow to Petro, the son of Heynmanni de Edel. [NKiRMK] nr 728

### **Francesco di Cantello (1409-1423) Merchant – Genoa?**

(1409/11/20) – Francesco becomes a citizen of Lviv - entered into the book with letter of recommendation from Caffa. [PomnLw] II nr. 225

(1413/06/19) - 4 sexagene given to Francesco for pepper and fruits to be delivered by him to King Władysław Jagiełło, as a gift from the Lviv City Council. [PomnLw] II nr 331

(1413/12/24) 1 sexagene and 24 grosz given to Francesco for 4 stones of pepper given to the King Władysław Jagiełło by the Lviv City Council. [PomnLw] II nr 332

(1414) – Francesco is living on the central square in Lviv, next to Nicolaus Gregorii Gromęrs. [PomnLw] III nr. 28

(1414/10/28) - Payment made to Francesco for 2 carpets and 10 sturgeon to be given to King Władysław Jagiełło by the Lviv City Council as a gift. [PomnLw] III nr. 60

(1417) – Francesco is living on the central square in Lviv next to Nicolaus Gregorii Gromęrs. [PomnLw] III nr 191

(1423/12/24) – Francesco is renting a wine cellar in Lviv. [PomnLw] III nr 341

### **Francesco di Filippo di Guidotti (1393) - Merchant Ban ker- Bologna**

(1393/01/29) - Francesco Guidotti names his brother Pietro as his procurator in Krakow. [KLK] nr. 1651

### **Francesco di Stefano Gallicus de Bronowice (1387-1400) – Genoa?**

(1387/03/20) - *Wenceslao Perupctke de Praga* accuses *Franciscus Gallicus*, along with a fellow Prague merchant, a host of Krakow citizens and a bunch Italians including: *Monaldo* [di Lucca], *Johannes Perlini*, *Johannes Thamme*, *Jacobinus Gallicus de Sale*, *Laurencius Gallicus*, *Dominicus Judeorum servitor*, *Herman Jenconis Stygcri servitor*, *Franciscus aurifaber*, of attacking and robbing him of his merchandise. [KsProscrKrakow] nr. 785

(1394/07/10) – *Franciscus Gallicus* names his friend Andrea as his procurator in Krakow. [KLK] nr 1921

(1396/01/11) – Nicholaus the Miller of Bronowice, brings Kerman and Francesco, *scultetus* of Bronowice, before the High Court of Magedeburg Law in Krakow Castle for two marks and 8 scot. [KSN] nr 431

(1396/04/12) – Nicholaus, the Miller of Bronowice, again calls Francesco and his mother, who has since remarried the man Paschconis de Bronowice, before the High Court of Magedeburg Law in Krakow Castle for two marks. [KSN] nr 452

(1400/02/05) - *Ffranzisco*, son of Stephano Gallicus di Bronowice, comes before the High Court of Magdeburg Law in Krakow Castle, but his opponent Swantheslao does not appear in court. [Mag.court 1] nr. 911

(1400/03/02) - *Ffranzisco* appears before the High Court of Magdeburg Law in Krakow and presents documents from two nobles, Andrea de Rabschicz and Dobkonis de Konske, proving that he was with them in two military campaigns, one against Holstein and another near the castle of Krzepicze. [Mag.court 1] nr. 913

### **Fredericus Gallicus (1324-1351)**

(1324) - 1/2 cloth stall sold by Fredericus and Henricus Keczer to Petrus. [NKiRMK] nr. 728

(1337/02/28) – Krakow City Council member [NKiRMK] nr 1218

(1337/06/26) - Krakow City Council member [NKiRMK] nr 1229

(1338/01/30) - Krakow City Council member [NKiRMK] nr 1254

(1339/02/05) – Fredericus sells a house in Krakow to Pesconi Landro. [NKiRMK] nr 1303

(1340/03/03) - Krakow City Council member [NKiRMK] nr 1340

(1340/06/26) - Krakow City Council member [NKiRMK] nr 1362

(1341/02/16) - Krakow City Council member [NKiRMK] nr 1384

(1343/11/18) - Krakow City Council member [NKiRMK] nr 1504, 1512

(1350/02/19) - Chunco *Capellanus domine Regine*, sells his house on *platea figliorum* [Gołębia Street] in Krakow to Nicholas, the son in-law of Fredericus Gallicus. [NKiRMK] nr 1609, 1612.

(1351/04/29) – Nicholas, the son in-law of Fredericus Gallicus, is elected *Advocatus* – Mayor of Krakow. [NKiRMK] nr 1619, 1623

### **Frederico di Oppizis di Monelia (1328) – Merchant Genoa**



(1328/10/23) - Frederico di Oppizis di Monelia, merchant of Genoa, who was stopping at Nemausum, and Giovanni di Carminano, merchant of Saonensem (Savona) *auctoritate apostolica comissarius deputatus*, agree to assist in carrying out the transfer of 550 fl from Krakow to Rome. This was the first of two such transfers to complete the movement of 1000 fl for the papal collector Andrea de Verulis, given by the Bishop of Krakow, Walter, *scolasticus* of Wrocław. The transfer was arranged by Petrus called Miles, Canon of Krakow, Marsonu Manente of Genoa and his brother Nicholas who was the Mayor of Wieliczka. [APV] nr. 118

### **Giovanni di Baldo di Pierozzo di Tedaldi (1504-1505) - Florence**

(1504/09/16) - Giovanni and his brother Pierozzo are recognized as Arnolfo Tedaldi's rightful heirs. Giovanni has taken over as Zupparius of the Przemyśl salt mine and his rights there together with a village, amount to an inheritance of 1,200 fl. A further 4,200 fl is owed to the brothers from the rest of Arnolfo's incomes. [MRPS] III nr. 1683

(1505/09/30) – Giovanni is owed a considerable sum of money for administration of the Krakow salt mines from his uncle Arnolfo Tedaldi's estate. [MRPS] III nr 2471

### **Giovanni di Carminano (1328) – Genoa (Savona)**

(1328/10/23) - Giovanni di Carminano, merchant of Saonensem (Savona) *auctoritate apostolica comissarius deputatus*, and Frederico di Oppizis di Monelia, merchant of Genoa who was stopping at Nemausum, agree to assist in carrying out the transfer of 550 fl to Rome. This was the first of two such transfers to complete the movement of 1000 fl for the collector Andrea de Verulis as given by the Bishop of Krakow, Walter, *scolasticus* of Wrocław, as arranged by Petrus called Miles, Canon of Krakow, Marsonu Manente of Genoa and his brother Nicholas who was the Mayor of Wieliczka. [APV] nr. 118

### **Giovanni di Paravisino<sup>1818</sup> (1433-1450) Vice-Zupparius – Milan**

(1433/08/22-1434/11/12) – “*Johannis de Medulano, quondam vicezuppari de Wyeliczka*” – Giovanni of Milan, formally Vice-Zupparius of Wieliczka together with “*Jacobi medici regalis de Kazimiria*” – the king's physician of Kazimierz, is called before the court in Krakow in a long-running case whose details are not revealed by the sources. [CA] 3 nr 3, 6, 8, 9, 13, 15, 79.

<sup>1818</sup> Scriptores Rerum Polonicarum Vol. 9, eds. Szujski, Józef, Stefan Franciszek Medeksza, Władysław Seredyński, August Sokołowski, Jan Wielewicki, Józef Korzeniowski, Stanisław Temberski, (Krakow: Nakładem Akademii Umiejętności. Z księgarni spółki wydawniczej polskiej, 1872) 97; “Jan (Giovanni) Parawicini (de Parawasinis), son of John of Milan, brother of Jacob of Milan. He served as a diplomat for King Władysław Jagiello. Initially, in the service of the salesman Antoniego from the He was renounced in 1431, then by Mikofaj Serafin as his borough from Przemyśl in Sól 1436-1443. He was the owner of the reeve in Tyrawa near Sanok in 1436 and Krzywca in the Przemyśl region in 1437 and heir of Kaczkowice in the district of Proszów 1440-1443, d. before 1450.” Nicholas Serafino, *Corpus epistularum Nicolai Seraphin zupparii Cracoviensis (1437-1459)*, ed. Waldemar Bukowski (Krakow: Towarzystwo Naukowe Societas Vistulana, 2006), 6 fn 14.

(1433/11/16) – Giovanni is involved as a witness in a transfer of funds from Poland to the papal curia, made with the help of Albizzo di Medici, for the Bishop of Płock involving 37 fl.<sup>1819</sup> [Edler] box 8 card 807

(1436-42) - Vice-Zupparius of Przemyśl<sup>1820</sup> [SRP] 97

(1437/04/16) – A letter sent by Giovanni to Nicholas Serafino in his capacity as Vice-Zupparius of Przemyśl, informing him of some of the current difficulties in delivering salt to the district of Sandomierz. The salt was to be moved by water, but the rafts used to carry it were unstable and kept falling apart making transport impossible. The water-level in the river then dropped, again making for trouble. Giovanni promises however, that as soon as the rains come, he will send the salt.<sup>1821</sup>

(1440) - Piotr from Cikowice, sells the village of Cikowice [Kaczkowice] not far from Krakow, to Giovanni for 400 half grosz and 400 marks. Giovanni in turns gives 300 half grosz and 300 marks as a portion of the estate of Kaczkowice, to his wife Katerina, daughter of the now deceased Johannes Wojśławice, as a dower gift. [ZK] nr 150 p. 208<sup>1822</sup>

(1450) – By this year, Giovanni has passed away and his daughters Katerina and Anna are forced, due to the impoverishment of the territory, to mortgage a portion of their inheritance in the village of Kaczkowice to their uncle Wydździycki for six years, in order to pay off money owed to *Zbigniew Oleśnicki*, the Bishop of Krakow. Their Mother's dower portion of the village meanwhile, will continue to remain under her control.<sup>1823</sup>

### **Giovanni di Sacchis di Pavia (1398-1434) Doctor of Medicine and University Rector - Pavia**

(1398) -While residing in Krakow in 1406, Giovanni copies a manuscript – number 805 in the Jagellonian Library, which includes two horoscopes, one of which was for the daughter of Queen Jadwiga and King Władysław Jagiełło, Elizabeth Bonafacia, who was born in 1389 and lived for only three months.<sup>1824</sup>

(1406) – Present in Krakow.<sup>1825</sup>

<sup>1819</sup> *I Documenti Commerciali Del Fondo Diplomatico Mediceo Nell'archivio Di Stato Di Firenze (1230-1492)*, ed. Giulia Camerani (Firenze: Olschki, 1951), 45 nr 95.

<sup>1820</sup> Archiwum Komisji Historycznej. Vol. 8, 228.

<sup>1821</sup> Serafino, *Corpus epistularum*, nr 1.

<sup>1822</sup> Acta terrestria Cracoviensia. Księgi ziemskie krakowskie, rps APKr nr 150 pg 208 <http://www.slownik.ihpan.edu.pl/search.php?id=7074&q=Gallika&d=0&t=0> Accessed October 23rd 2020

<sup>1823</sup> Acta terrestria Cracoviensia. Księgi ziemskie krakowskie, rps APKr nr 150 pg 208 <http://www.slownik.ihpan.edu.pl/search.php?id=7074&q=Gallika&d=0&t=0> Accessed October 23rd 2020

<sup>1824</sup> Krzysztof Ozog, "University Masters at the Royal Court of Hedwig of Anjou and Wladyslaw Jagiell," in *Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages: A Cultural History : [essays in Honour of Paul W. Knoll]* ed. Piotr Górecki and Nancy Deussen (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2009), 154.

<sup>1825</sup> Ozog, "University Masters at the Royal Court", 154.

(1412/08/27) - Martin, the servant of *Johannes Gallicus medici de Papyra*, was injured in a duel by Wyda Szschedrowsky, who was banished for the affront. [KsProscrKrakow] nr 1127

(1421/05/28) - *Johanne Italico medico de Cracovia* is brought to court in Krakow in a case involving Johannes Bem of Kazimierz who names as his procurators, Mathiam de Czosnow and his *familiaris* Nicolaus. [CA2] nr 105

(1422/10/18) – Giovanni is a signatory to a charter outlining the payment system for teachers at Krakow University – 3 other Italians are listed as witnesses: Antonio di ser Matteo, Leonardo di ser Matteo, Isidoro di Amiono of Milan. All signed under the purview of Andrew Łaskarz. [KDUK I] nr 71 pg 143

(1424/03/25) – Giovanni agrees, along with three others, to stand surety for Leonardo di ser Matteo for 20 marks, or face imprisonment. [Itali] nr 52

(1429/03/08) – Giovanni's wife - *Agnethi de Poborouice uxori Magistri Johannis Italiczi et medicy* owes *Pacossius quondam de Bistrzonow alias de Pobednik* 6 marks. [SPPP 2] nr 2252

(1430) Giovanni stands as a witness to a charter from Pope Martin V to the Cistercian Abbey of Mogiła. [KMog], 112

(1433) – Giovanni teaches medicine at the University of Krakow.<sup>1826</sup>

(1434/06/09) – Giovanni has passed away. Albizzo di Medici is named as executer of his will, together with Florencia Bernhardus *magister arcium*.. They respond that they are not responsible for the sentence of excommunication given by Jacobino Rubeis, papal collector, for monies owed by Giovani to pay Peter's Pence, as stated by Stanislao de Grabowa Albizzo's procurator before the court. [CA3] nr 48

### **Giovanni di Talenti (1403-1406) Merchant – Bologna**

(1381) - Giovanni rents the salt chamber in Dalmatia, together with a certain Taddeus Jacobi of Florence, from the Croatian Ban Emerik Bubek Drijeva.<sup>1827</sup>

(1394/02/14) - Giovanni is present and trading in Kosice as *Johannes Gallicus de Talentis* [Kassa], 50 nr. 129.

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<sup>1826</sup> Sebastiano Ciampi, *Bibliografia Critica delle antiche reciproche Corrispondenze, politiche, ecclesiastiche, etc., dell'Italia, colla Russia, colla Polonia ed altre parti settentrionali* (Florence: Per Guglielmo Piatti, 1834), 331.

<sup>1827</sup> Historijski arhiv u Zadru B. 11/17, fol. 16vo, 18. VII 1381. As described by Tomislav Raukar, "Zadarska trgovina solju u XIV. i XV. stoljeću [The Zadar Salt Trade in the 14th and 15th Centuries]." *Radovi Filozofskog fakulteta: Odsjek za povijest* 7-8 (1970): 38 fn 103.

(1394/03/09) - Giovanni owes 38 gold florins, two bolts of cloth, 100 measures of wheat, and 4 cows to *Junta* [Bonagiunta?] and *Jacobo Gallicus* – two other Italian merchants in Kosice. [Kassa], 53 nr. 181

(1395/01/10) - Ursula, Giovanni's wife, requests 109 fl. From the widow of Knol over a vineyard of hers calling two witnesses to recognize her rights in the matter. [Kassa], 68 nr. 568

(1396) – Giovanni is named *lucrcum camerae* – chamber count of the royal tax, by the Hungarian King Sigismund. [ZsO I] nr 4225.

(1397/08/27) - *Johannes Gallicus* – most likely to be identified with Giovanni Talenti, owes a certain Stephano 36 fl. and 16 rolls of cloth in Kosice. [Kassa], 124 nr. 1967

(1399) – Giovanni becomes a citizen of Kosice and succeeds in getting King Sigismund of Hungary to agree to grant Kosice the same trading privileges as Buda. [ZsO I] nr. 5645

(1399/11/29) – Giovanni is trading in Kosice with Johannes Polner. [Kassa], 177 nr. 3090

(1400/04/26) – Giovanni owes Thomas de Galla 15 florins in Kosice. [Kassa], 190 nr. 3391

(1400/04/26) – An attempt is made to reconcile Johannes Polner and Giovanni, as Polner is in his debt for 40 florins and a measure of wax. [Kassa], 191 nr. 3411

(1400/05/10) – Johannes ,the *famulus* of Giovanni, is owed 47 florin by Johannes Polner. [Kassa], 192 nr. 3431

(1401/09/29) – Phillipio Pellifici puts up his house as collateral for a debt owed to Giovanni. Should the money not be repaid within 9 months, Philipo will forfeit the property. [Kassa], 221 nr. 4083

(1403/03/31) – Simone Talenti sends 505 marks worth of goods with Andree Czarnissa to his brother Giovanni in Kosice to purchase silver for the Krakow mint. ANK, Consl. Crac. 427, 176.

(1403/12/01) – Giovanni is identified as *Johannes Wal* [Wal being the German term used to denote Italians] as owing 92 fl. to Michael Wal in Kosice. [Kassa], 289 nr. 5485

(1403/12/01) – Giovanni, identified as *Johannes Wal* [Wal being the German term used to denote Italians], is owed 42 flor. by Gobel Janusch who purchased Giovanni's house in Kosice. [Kassa], 289 nr. 5486

(1404/03/17) - *Johannes Gallicus* owed 42 fl by Niclos von der Olcza in Kosice. [Kassa], 295 nr. 5604

(1404/04/24) - Johannes Goebel sells a house formally purchased by him in Kosice from Giovanni for 547 fl. [Kassa], 298 nr. 5676

(1406/01/04) – *Johannes Gallicus* of Kosice, together with a number of other traders, are granted special letters of safe conduct, exempting them from certain trade taxes within the Kingdom of Hungary. [ZsO II] nr. 4393

(1406/05/25) - Giovanni is ordered in Kassa to hand over money/goods to Andree Czarnissa, the mint master of Krakow, by King Sigismund of Hungary. [ZsO II] nr. 4749

### **Giovanni Gallicus (1388) – Merchant**

(1388) –Giovanni Gallicus and Antonio Gallicus sell ginger in Lviv. [PomnLw] I nr 608

(1388) - Giovanni Gallicus and Antonio Gallicus sell ginger in Lviv. [PomnLw] I nr 679, 680

(1388) - Giovanni Gallicus and Antonio Gallicus trade with Shloma the Jew in Lviv. [PomnLw] I nr 709

### **Gotfridus Fattinante (1366-1393) Merchant Zupparius - Genoa**

(1366/06/05) - Gotfridus mentioned in a housing transaction regarding a house next to the Sutorum gate in Krakow. [KLK] nr. 55

(1367/04/03) - Gotfridus purchases the rights to 3 villages near Bochnia: Lapczyca, Cohanow, (Kolanów) and Mniszkowice, from their former *scultetus*, Jaszco called Pegza of Bochnia, and his sister Bethca, the widow of Heynconis, son of Pesconis of Sandomierz, who had it previously from their father Stephano called Pegza, who had it from his brother Michael, the Abbot of Tyniec. [ZDM] 4 nr. 985

(1367/10/29) - Gotfridus has become Zupparius of Bochnia and purchases a house from Jacobo Gallicus, on the corner of *platea Hospitalensi* in Krakow, located opposite that of Pesszconis Swarcze [KLK] nr. 209

(1368) – Gotfridus is mentioned as Zupparius in the Great Salt Mine Ordinance issued by King Casimir the Great, that would remain in effect for the next two-hundred years. [SPPP I], 217-8

(1369/08/31) - Gotfridus sells his house in Krakow, which used to belong to Ileinconis Snellonis, to Alberto Fochczagil. [KLK] nr. 410

(1372/01/12) – Gotfridus, together with the Krakow mint master Barthko are briefly arrested and held in Krakow Castle by Bodzatha, King Louis Anjou's representative in Krakow. [Proscript] nr. 45

(1373/01/28) - Gotfridus sells his house on *platea Castrense* [Grodzka street] in Krakow. [KIL] nr. 802

(1373/02/18) - Peace is made in Krakow between Gotfridus and Margaret, the widow of Thome. [KLK] 816

(1373/06/13) – Gotfridus pays a 44 mark pledge on a house "Otlonis" made by Petrus Winkinberk, for which Gotfridus had agreed to sign as guarantor. [KLK] nr. 843

(1373/9/9) - Jacobo Pexa, brother of Gotfridus gives up 1/2 of his house and the room of Gotfridus to his sister. [KLK] nr. 885

(1373/10/29) - Jacobus Pexa, brother of Gotfridus, sells his 1/2 of a house, of which the other half belongs to Jacobus Gallicus, to Johannes Temilfelt. [KLK] nr. 891

(1375/12/13) - Bartfal sells his shop in Krakow's main square to Gotfridus. [KLK] nr. 1151

(1390/9/30-1390/10/14) - Gotfridus mentioned as owning the large house on the corner of *plathea Wislensi* on Krakow's main square. [KLK] nr. 1260, nr. 1276

(1393/12/15) - Gotfridus's final will and testament left in the care of Krakow Cathedral. [KDKK] nr. CCCXCVI

### **Gregorio di Nehrono (1459 - < 1467) - Genoa**

(1459) – Barnabas di Nehrono is permitted by King Casimir IV Jagiellon to purchase the village of Pikulowice (Pykulovychi) in Western Ukraine close to Lviv. In 1464, his son Gregorio, a *capellamo capitulo* inherited the property and ownership was eventually turned over to the Lviv Cathedral Chapter.<sup>1828</sup>

(1464) – Barnabas di Nehrono gives the village of Pikolowice (near Lviv), to the Lviv Cathedral to found an altar dedicated to: *visitacionis sancte Marie virginis, sancti Iohannis Baptiste, Barnabę apostoli, luce evangeliste, decem milium (sic) martirum, undecim milium (sic) virginum, Helenę, Barbarę, Katherine, Agnetis, dorothee, Margarethe virginum* – The Virgin Mary, St. John the Baptist, St. Barnabas the Apostle, St. Luke the Evangelist, the ten thousand martyrs, the eleven thousand martyrs, the virgin St. Helen, St. Barbara, St. Catherine, St. Agnes, St. Dorothy, and St. Margaret the virgin, to be administered as presbyter by his son Gregorio. [AGZ] 2 nr. 99

(1467/06/11) – Gregorio is deceased. His father Barnabas transfers the right of patronage of the altar he founded to the Lviv City Council after his death, as his family members will no longer be living in Poland. [AGZ] 6 nr. 75

### **Gregors Wloch di Wallachia (1485)**

<sup>1828</sup> Tomasz Pirawski, *Thomae Pirawski relatio status Almae Archidioecesis Leopoliensis : accedunt testamenta eiusdem Th. Pirawski et Ioannis Zamoiscii, archiepiscopi leopoliensis*. edited by Korneli Juliusz Heck (Lviv: Sumptibus Societatis Historicae, 1893), 56.

(1485/01/12) – Gregors Wloch [the Italian] of Wallachia becomes a citizen of Krakow, his letter of introduction was given by Jacobus Glasir and Kwnisch. In that year, the ports of Moncastro and Kiliya were captured by the Ottomans, likely leading to Gregor's removal to Krakow. [IurCiv] nr. 8198

### **Guglielmo Rucellai (1442) Merchant - Florence**

(1442/03/18) - Florence sends a letter of recommendation King Władysław III of Hungary and Poland, regarding their citizen Guillaume de Oricellariis [Guglielmo Rucellai].<sup>1829</sup>

### **Guido di Giovanni di ser Matteo (1429-1433) Merchant - Florence**

(1418/08/05) – The brothers di ser Matteo - Michele, Leonardo, Guido, Bernardo, and Antonio split their property. Thuerinus, son of Andree Thyery, a Florentine living in Venice, adjudicates. Michele keeps the majority of the property including a slave while each of the other brothers gain 500 fl. Their mother Thedea meanwhile, keeps her dower-funds. ASV, Cancelleria inferiore, Notai, 228 fol. 432-5 (Venetia de Angeletto)

(1429/02/23) – A letter is sent by the *Signoria* of Florence to King Władysław Jagiełło in support of Guido and Antonio di ser Matteo. [Itali] nr 52

(1429/06/08) – A letter of recommendation written by the Florentine chancellor Leonardo Bruni in support of Guido and Niccolo di Vaggio Giuseppe Mazza as the two came to Poland. ASF, Missive I Cancelleria, 32, fol. 80v

(1430) – The Catasto portata of Michele di Giovanni ser Matteo for the year 1430, relates the fact that Michele's brother, Guido, and Niccolo di Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe had been sent on a trip to Krakow with an additional 3,120 fl. of investment capital to pay off accumulated debts. ASF, Catasto, 39, fol. 338v (1430). ASF, Catasto 361, 3fol. 64v (1430)

(1430/02/10) – Michele di ser Matteo's Catasto reveals that Leonardo di ser Matteo is dead while Antonio is bankrupt in Krakow "*disfato e questo e plobicho e me a disfato del mondo*" – he is bankrupt and this is public and before me his is bankrupt before the whole world. Guido meanwhile has been sent to try to collect debts in Krakow, together with the brother's company factor, Nicholo di Viaggio di Mazza Giuseppe, but he no longer takes up a place in the family holdings. Among the list of debtors owing Michele money are his brother Leonardo and *Simone di Charchovia*, who still owed him 65 fl. Michele's brother Bernardo meanwhile, sells his

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<sup>1829</sup> The Rucellai (Ruccellai o Oricellari) were a prosperous Florentine merchant family. Guglielmo di Cardinale di Rucellai was born in 1417. Apart from the letter of recommendation issued by the Florentine Signoria, there is no evidence of his presence in Poland, and it is possible he never made it to the kingdom. From 1453, he served in numerous posts in the Florentine government, including ambassador to Pope Pius II. He died in 1470; and his impressive tomb is located in the church of Santa Maria Novella. Other members of the Rucellai family however, were knowledgeable about the area. Francisco di Filippo Rucellai had taken over the business of Gerardo Bueri, having originally inherited it in Lübeck after the latter's death in 1449, leaving the city only around 1470. N. Iorga, Notes et extraits pour servir à l'histoire des croisades au XVe siècle, 2 vols., (Paris: 1899), 392; Luigi Passerini, Genealogia E Storia Della Famiglia Rucellai (Florence: Coi tipi di M. Cellini, 1861), 105-6; Prajda, Network and Migration, 181; Fouquet, "Ein Italiener in Lübeck," 220.

share in the family patrimony to Michele for 500 fl and moves to Barletta in Puglia Italy. ASF, Catasto, 39, fol 338V – 339r ASF, Catasto 361, 3fol. 64v (1430)

(1431/06/23) – Guido, together with most of the Italian community in Krakow including Giovanni di Papia, Doctor of Medicine, Albizzo di Talento di Medici of Florence, Paulus Ostrosska, Giovanni di Paravisino of Milan, Niccolo di Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe of Florence, Pietro di Giovanni of Florence, Jacobo of Florence, and Margaretha the wife of Antonio di Giovanni di ser Matteo, together with their children, all stand as guarantors for Antonio di ser Matteo in his capacity as Zupparius of the Krakow salt mines. Antonio must return and pay the debt owed to King Władysław Jagiełło, upon pain of loss of all their property and imprisonment for those left in Krakow, should he fail. [Itali] nr 67

(1432/04/03) - Petrus Italicus, Vice-Zupparius of the Krakow salt mines under Antonio di ser Matteo during his time as Zupparius, is brought to court by Nicolaus Abbas Brzesenensis, *tutor monasterij Zwerzinensis*, for 140 hufł which the Abbot had given to Guido on the understanding that he would transport the sum to the papal curia and for which Pietro had agreed to stand as guarantor. [SPPP 2] nr 2437; [Itali] nr 69

(1433/05/13) - Michele di ser Matteo's Catasto of the 1433 tax declaration declares that his brother Guido had passed away 3 months prior, leaving only a debt of 100 fl owed to Piero Giolanni that Michele had been forced to pay, plus the funeral expenses. ASF, Catasto 454, fol. 325v-326r

### **Hugo Cavallo (1317-1327) Merchant - Genoa**

(1317/06/10) - Hugo sells a 1/2 plot near the hospital in Krakow to Meczce, the widow of Martin, the brother of Nicholas, the Plebanus of St. Nicholas Church. [NKiRMK] nr 438

(1327/06/26) - Hugo sells a plot in Krakow to Gerlac the Miller, located near the property belonging to the Cistercian brothers of Mogiła Abbey. [NKiRMK] nr 881

(1346/08/03) – Hugo is by now deceased, but his son, Paolo Cavallo, mentions him as his progenitor in a contract moving papal funds from Krakow to Bruges. [Theiner I] DCXLVI pg 497

### **Isidoro di Amiono di Mediolano (1419-1422) Vice-Zupparius – Milan**

(1414/08/09) – *Yesidero filio quondam Francisci de Amiono cive Mediolanensi*, witness to a charter written out in Bologna by a Milanese notary, together with Jacobo di Paravisino of Milan, brother of the ambassador, Giovanni di Paravisino, granting three villages to the Gniezno Cathedral by the Roman Bishop – *Angelus episcopus Penestrinus*. [KDWP] nr. 241

(1419/06/25) - *Sbigenus Lappanowsky juvenis* claims that Isidoro, acknowledged as a former Vice-Zupparius, called him a thief and impugned his nobility - Isidoro denied the charges and brought in two other Italian friends, Jacobo di Paravisino of Milan and Albizzo di Medici of Florence to support him in court. [SPPP2] nr 1664, 1665.



(1421/09/24) – Johannes, Rector of Zathor, names Paulus his procurator in a case against *Yzydore Italico* and Johannes de Szczpanouicze in Krakow [CA2] nr 113

(1422/01/07) – Isidoro involved in a court case in Krakow. Johannes Rector of Zathor and Materus Vicarious, together name Mathias de Czosnow as their procurator in the unnamed issue they have with Isidoro and Stanislao Magistri, with Johannis de Szczpanouicze serving as notary. They call in Michaelae Czczyborii de Wola, Laurencio de Rosprza, Martino de Ossek, and Johannes Brzest, notary, as witnesses. [CA2] nr 125

(1422/01/22) - Continuing court case against Isidoro brought by Johannes, Rector of Zathor, and Materno Vicarious, who name as their procurator Johannes de Szczpanouicze “*in facto causa scolastrie ecclesoe Cracoviensis, habentes rata et grata per magistrum Johannem in ante gesta* [CA2] nr 132

(1422/01/26) – Isidoro is a witness in a case in Krakow, together with Jacobo di Pravaisino and Johannes de Sacz. - procurator of Jadwiga, widow of *Junczna heres de Jawczicze* [Bonagiunta of Venice] against Andrea Prior of the Benedictine Abbey of Tyniec. [CA2] nr 134

(1422/10/18) – Isidoro signs as a witness to a charter outlining the payment system for teachers at Krakow University - 4 Italians in total are listed as signatories - *Antonio di ser matteo, Leonardo di ser matteo, Isidorius Italicus and Giovanni di Pavia doctor in medicine*, all signed under the purview of Andrew Łaskarz. [KDUK I] nr 71 pg 143

### **Jacob Anselmi (1475) Jewish - Venice**

(1475/01/03) - King Casimir IV signs a letter granting permission for the family and friends of Jacob Anselmi to reside anywhere in the Polish kingdom. [MRP] I nr 1276

(1475/12/30) - King Casimir IV gives permission for Jacob Anselmi, Jew of Venice, and his family and friends to reside anywhere in the Polish kingdom. [MRP] I nr 1245

### **Jacobo di Bonacursi (1394-1396) Weaver, Merchants – Florence**

(1394) - Jacobo and his brother Bernard take citizenship in Kazimierz, where they work as weavers. [KRKaz] 301

(1395) – Jacobo and his brother Bernard have a cloth stall on the central square in Kazimierz. [KRKaz] 301

(1396/02/27) - Johannes de Szarnowecz recognized before the court that 6 roles of *stamina meliora* - superior cloth, each worth 3 marks, 6 roles of *stamina leviora* - inferior cloth, each worth 1 1/2 marks, and paper worth 15 marcs of the local currency were purchased by the honorable magister Monaldo of Lucca. He recognizes before the court that the cloths and paper were given to him in order to pay off the debt owed by the *Pannafices Latini* of Kazimierz [NKiRMK] nr 146

### **Jacobo di Filippo di Guidotti (1391-1395) Papal Collector - Bologna**

(1391/12/04) – Jacobo is named papal collector in Poland.<sup>1830</sup>

(1393) – Jacobo is named papal collector in Poland. [Theiner] I nr MXXXVI

(1395/08/20) - Bartolomeo and Jacobo Guidotti receive a house in *plathea Speculatorum* in Krakow from the sons and heirs of Peter the Apothecary, together with 100 sexagene from Paulus Karbari, clearing all debts. [KLK] nr 2172

(1395/12/23) – The papal curia asks for a credit draw of 4,000 fl from *Phillipo dei Guidottis*, Jacobo's father in Bruges - sent via the Medici bank. In order to cover the loan, the curia agrees that 2,000 fl from the funds collected by Fillipo's son Jacobo, who is papal collector in Poland plus a further 2,000 fl from those collected in his home area of Bologna shall be given to his father to pay off the debt.<sup>1831</sup>

### **Jacobo di Florentia (1431) Merchant -Florence**

(1431/06/23) – Jacobo, together with most of the Italian community in Krakow including Giovanni di Papia, Doctor of Medicine, Albizzo di Talento di Medici of Florence, Guido di Giovanni di ser Matteo, Paulus Ostrosska, Giovanni di Parvisino of Milan, Niccolo di Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe of Florence, Pietro di Giovanni of Florence, Jacobo of Florence, and Margaretha the wife of Antonio di Giovanni di ser Matteo, together with their children, all stand as guarantors for Antonio di Giovanni di ser Matteo in his capacity as Zupparius of the Krakow salt mines. Antonio must return and pay the debt owed to King Władysław Jagiełło, upon pain of loss of all their property and imprisonment for those left in Krakow, should he fail. [Itali] nr 67

### **Jacobo di Paravisino di Mediolano (1408 – 1439) Ambassador - Milan**

(1408/12/14) - Jacobo becomes a citizen of Krakow. [LibCiv] nr 1963

(1410/07/12) – Jacobo, described as a citizen of Krakow, becomes involved in a court case against Magister Monaldo di Lucca, together with many other Italians including: Marco Morisino of Venice, Neri di Toranquinci of Florence, Giovanni di Cambio of Florence, and Jacobo Meterom, as well as the papal curia. Jacobo is as yet so new in town he can find none to vouch for him before the court. Nicolao de Bystra and Alberto of Padua acted as notaries and witnesses in the case which continued for a large number of court sessions with Jacobo and Monaldo di Lucca arguing over an unspecified circumstance. [SPPP 7] nr 1390-95

(1412/05/01) - Appointed papal nuncio to Hungary, Poland and Bohemia. [Bull 3] nr 1367

<sup>1830</sup> “*Iacobum Philippi de Guidottis, clericum Bononiensi, in regno Poloniae proventuum camerae apostolicae collectorem...*” (December 4th 1391) Arch. Vat. Anii. XXXIII, vol. 12, f. 134 and 142. reproduced in [Itali] nr. 4 fn.1 and [Theiner] I nr. 1056 where the name is incorrectly recorded as Guidonis.

<sup>1831</sup> Arnold Esch, “Bankiers der Kirche im Grossen Schisma,” *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken*, 46. (1966): 393.

(1411/01/27) – Master Monaldo di Lucca appoints Johannes Brest as his procurator for all cases involving himself and Jacobo. [CA2] nr. 28

(1414/08/09) - Witness to a charter from the papal curia to the bishop of Gniezno returning 3 Polish villages to the diocese. In this document it is revealed that Jacobo was the son of the now deceased Giovanni, who had been a *familiaris* and ambassador for King Władysław Jogalia. - *fillium quondam domini Johannis familiaris et ambassiatoris prefati serenissimo principis Władysław Regis*. [KDWP] V nr. 241

(1418/07) – Jacobo is mentioned in a letter from Pope Martin V related to the Council of Constance and the collector, Petrus Wolfram, who is being sent with a letter to Duke Vytautas of Lithuania. [CodEsII] nr 90

(1419) - Sent by King Władysław Jagiełło to the papal curia as his ambassador – *familiaris meo fideli delecto*, in a dispute with the bishop of Łódź. [Cod Vit] 1039 nr 8

(1421/07) - Named papal nuncio to *Italiae, Germaniae, Ungariae, Boemiae, Poloniae, Lithuaniae*. [Bull 4] nr. 854

(1421/10/29) - Remittance of funds to the papal curia from the bishop of Wrocław through the hands of Jacobo and Bartholomeo di Bardi. [Itali] nr 34

(1421/11/24) - Named papal nuncio to *Italiae, Germaniae, Ungariae, Boemiae, Poloniae, Lithuaniae*. [Bull 4] nr 939

(1421/11/24) - Letter of safe conduct written out by Pope Martin V, electing Jacobo as his nuncio and granting him safe passage and freedom from taxes through all lands. [Itali] nr 84

(1421/12/) - Clemens Nicolai de Strzelcze, plebanus in Lapczicza and familiaris of Jacobo *regis Poloniae ambassiatoris*, asks for help getting funds from his prebendship. [Bull 4] nr 947

(1422/01/22) - Court case together with Isiodor Amiono of Milan naming Johannes de Szczepanowicze as their procurator against Johannes rector of the church in Zathor and Materno Vicarius “*in facto causa scolastrie ecclesie Cracoviensis, habentes rata et grata per magistrum Johannem in ante gesta*.” [CA2] nr 132

(1422/01/26) - Jacobo is a witness in case together with Johannes de Sacz. - procurator of Jadwiga, widow of Bonagiunta of Venice, against Andrea the Prior of Tyniec. [CA2] nr 134

(1423/01/26) – Jacobo is a witness, along with 2 other Milanese – Pietro and Francesco, in front of a Milanese notary, Magistro Gabriele Antonio di Bossis, in the house of Jacobo in Krakow – of a dispute involving the papal notary, Antonio Zeno, who had exceeded his authority. [Bull 4] nr 978

(1423/08/21) - Letter of safe-conduct as papal nuncio to *Italiae, Germaniae, Ungariae, Boemiae, Poloniae, Lithuaniae*. [Bull 4] nr 1205

(1423/10/31) - Remittance of funds to the papal curia from the bishop of Krakow, through the hands of Jacobo and Bartholomeo di Bardi. [Itali] nr 38

(1425) - Jacobo chosen to stand in as procurator for Guillaume de Filiastre, Dean of Rheims and cardinal-priest of St Mark's in Venice, at the baptism of King Władysław Jagiełło's son and heir in 1425. [KodWit], 689-90

(1425/06/26) - Jacobo working as an ambassador for King Władysław Jagiełło to Pope Martin V. [KodWit], 701 nr 1200

(1431/05/23) – Jacobo, together with the rest of the Italian community in Krakow, agrees to stand surety for Antonio di Giovanni ser Mateo of Florence, who is having troubles meeting his financial obligations as Zupparius of the Krakow salt mines and is forced to find the funds or Jacobo and the rest of the community will face severe punishment. [Itali] nr 67

(1439/03/27) – Jacobo is brought to court by Johannes the Plebanus of St. Ann's church in Krakow. [CA3] nr 225

### **Jacobino Gallicus Apotecario Regis (1366-1373) Royal Apothecary**

(1366/11/18) - Jacobino acknowledges that he is obligated to pay 44 marks by St. Gall's Dy for the rental of a cloth stall, located on the Krakow market square, from Ulcrie Passcuzy, and should he not, then Ulcrie Passcuzy can rent out the stall to anyone, be they Christian or Jewish. [KLK] nr 94

(1367/08/06) – Katherine, daughter of Ceiglini the goldsmith and wife of Jori, hands over her part in the inheritance of a stone house on *platea Castrensi* [Grodzka Street] in Krakow, located next to Frenczlone the goldsmith, to her uncle Jacobino. [KLK] nr 182

(1367/08/06) - Jacobino buys 1/2 of a stone house on *platea Castrensi* [Grodzka Street] in Krakow near Rotenbecher, from Nela, the daughter of Hencone the goldsmith. [KLK] nr 183

(1367/08/13) – Jacobino buys the other 1/2 of the stone house on *platea Castrensi* [Grodzka Street] in Krakow from Adalbertus Fuchsczay [KLK] nr 185

(1367/08/13) – Jacobino gives 1/2 of his new stone house to his wife Dorothy, daughter of the deceased Petri Roma[n]cii, in which she will live. [KLK] nr 186

(1367/08/13) - Jacobino owes 60 marks groschen to Anne, the widow of Petrus Roma(n)ci, his mother in law, for 1/2 of his stone house on *platea Castrensi* [Grodzka Street] in Krakow, which is located between Rotenbecher and *Hanconem cum nutrice*. [KLK] nr 187

(1367/08/13) - Jacobino's wife Dorothy and mother-in-law Anne, are in hock for 22 marks plus interest to Vlrico Pacusszi to be paid by next St. Bartholem's Day. The house on *platea*

*Castrensi* [Grodzka Street] in Krakow as collateral, to be sold to either a Jew or a Christian should they fail to pay. [KLK] nr188

(1367/08/20) – Anne, Jacobino’s mother in-law, puts 1/2 of the house on *platea Castrensi* [Grodzka street] in Krakow again in hock to Mathie Quasszenina *doctori decretorum* for 32 marks 10 marks groschen plus interest. [KLK] nr 192

(1373/01/19) – Anne, Jacobino’s mother in-law, has died, and 20 marks are still owed on the house on *platea Castrensi* [Grodzka street] in Krakow. [KLK] nr 795

### **Jacobinus Gallicus di Sale (1387)**

(1387/03/20) -*Wenceslao Perupctke de Praga* accuses *Jacobinus Gallicus de Sale*, along with a fellow Prague merchant, a host of Krakow citizens, and a bunch of Italians including: *Monaldo* [di Lucca], *Johannes Perlini*, *Johannes Thamme*, *Dominicus Judeorum servitor*, *Herman Jenconis Stygcri servitor*, *Franciscus Gallicus*, *Laurencius Gallicus*, *Franciscus aurifaber* of attacking him and robbing him of his merchandise. [KsProscrKrakow] nr. 785

### **Jacobo di Sancto Salvatore (1466) Merchant – San Salvatore**

(1466/03/05) – Jacobo stands witness, together with *Pascalis Walacha* and *Colojani Walata de Albo Castro*, to a transaction involving the exchange of 205 hufl between *Michel Koler de Soczavia* and *Lukinus de Caffa*, *fideiussor* for *Iacobo Italico de Sancto Salvatore*. [SDIR] 20

### **Jacobo Gallicus (1366-1397) Merchant**

(1366/06/05) – Jacobo sells a cloth stall on the Main Square in Krakow. [KLK] nr 56

(1366/06/26) - Jacobo sells lead to Stephano Gallicus of Bronowice, part of which was used to pay a debt owed, related to a property on St. Crucis Street in Krakow. [KLK] nr 65

(1366/10/09) – Stephano Gallicus sells a house, presumably that on St. Crucis Street in Krakow, in which Jacobo was residing, to Jacobo. [KLK] nr 78

(1367/05/17) – Jacobo stands witness to a transaction in Krakow. [KLK] nr. 133

(1367/10/29) – Jacobo sells his house in Krakow on the corner of *Platea Hospitalensi* [Szpitalna] opposite that of *Pesszconis Swarcze*, to Gotfridus Fattinante of Genoa. [KLK] nr 209

(1368/12/29) – Jacobo acknowledges his friend Nicholas as free of all debts owed to him in Krakow. [KLK] nr 341

(1373/10/29) – Jacobus Pexa, the brother in-law of Gotfridus Fattinante of Genoa, sells half of a house, the other half being owned by Jacobo Gallicus, to Johannes Tempilfelt. [KLK] nr 891

(1375-1402) - Jacobo acts as the mayor of Bronowicze [KDMP I] nr. 325, 468.

(1395/10/20) - Jacobus Mordbir, the guardian of the children of Peter the apothecary sells on their behalf a house to *Jacobus Batholomei Gallici* on *plathea Speculatorum* [W. section of Sw. Tomasza] in Krakow, for a debt owed. [KLK] nr 2172

(1397/05/03) - Jacobo, together with his “*socios*” – partners, called before the High Court of Magdeburg law in Krakow by Stanoni Czay and Pasconi Scultetus of Bronowicze over water rights. [Mag Court 1] nr. 532

### **Jacobo Gallicus (1421-1440) Royal Physician**

(1421/12/11) – Jacobo is present as a witness to a court proceeding involving Petrus, Rector of Zalanszye, and his procurator, Martium Ossek, in a dispute he is having with Jacussio *scultetus* and Alberto *herede de Dobyeshyn*. [CA2] nr 121

(1423/07/10-12) - Jacobo is mentioned for the first time as *medico domini regis de Kasimiria* as together with Michael Crupka, he acts as *tutores* for Nicolao *filio olim Wislicze scolteti* in a case involving fields and forests near Bodzanów. [CA2] nr 225, nr 226.

(1433/08/22-1434/11/12) - A long-running debt case between Jacobo and the Vice-Zupparius of Wieliczka, Giovanni Italicus. [CA 3] nr 3, 6,8,9,13,14,79.

(1440/06/13) - Jacobo has passed away and there is a legal dispute over his will. [CA 3] nr 254.

### **Jacobus der Wale (1443) Merchant**

(1443/07/21) – Jacobus and Phillipus der Wale run into trouble with their shipment of pepper and Malmsey. While making their way towards Lviv through Moldavia, their load was confiscated in Kolomyia by Elias, an officer of the Moldavian Prince Stefan II. They complain to the court in Lviv about this treatment. [PomnLw] IV nr. 841.

### **Jeronimo di Olmerio (1440-1442) Merchant - Genoa**

(1440/07/04) – Jeronimo stands as a guarantor for Clement of Vislicia in 1440. [AGZ] nr 14 nr 21

(1440/07/23) – A court cases is brought against him by Gregarius Ungarus regarding the sale of some cloth to the Palatine, Petrus Odrowansch de Sprowa. [AGZ] 14 nr 49

(1440/08/15) - A court case between Jermino and Gregarius Ungarus, the two are to appear in court in two weeks, baring the launching in the region of a war expedition. [AGZ] 14 nr 59

(1440/10/07) - Gregarius Ungarus now listed as the “*servus*” of Jeronimo, will trade on his behalf as long as war is not declared. A few months later Gregarius is again complaining in

court now about 30 fl Jeronimo promised him. Eventually, Paulus Grimaldi stands surety for Jeronimo and gives Gregarius the cash. [AGZ] 14 nr 96-102

(1440/11/05) - Gregarius Ungarus and Jeromino come to terms before the court in Lviv. [AGZ] 14 nr 114-5

(1441/01/27) –Jeronimo, with Gregorus Ungarus acting as his procurator, claims he loaned 20 sexegana to Martinus Suranyn, the Armenian Tailor, and the Armenian *Minconem*, and they have failed to pay him back. The Armenians deny this, and ask to bring forward three witness to testify in their defense. [AGZ] 14 nr 187

(1441/02/03) – Continuing court case of Jeronimo against Martinus Suranyn, the Armenian Tailor, and the Armenian Minconem – over 20 sexegana owed to Jeronimo. The Armenians ask for more time and request that a group of three Aremnians – Gyragos Surannyk, Kotlubyey Textor, and Chaczyk *Tholneator Castrensis*, become involved. [AGZ] 14 nr 187

(1441/05/10) – Jeronimo is still owed by a large group of Armenians – Gregorus Ungarus stands as his procurator before the court in Lviv. [AGZ] 14 nr 255

(1441/05/29) – Paulo Grimaldi stands as procurator and fiduciary agent for Jeronimo in Gródek [Городок], where within 4 weeks Jeronimo is supposed to appear before the Captain of Gródek. Paulo agrees to stand as his guarantor should he not come, upon pain of 270 fl. “Turcales”. [AGZ] 14 nr 275

(1441/07/14) - We find that Paulo Grimaldi has not paid the 270 Turkish florins and that the debt is apparently owed to the Italian, Pietro Messopero, to whom Paolo Gimaldi is forced to pay. [AGZ] 14 nr 301

(1442/10/17) – Jeromino names Paulo Grimaldi as his procurator in Lviv. [PomnLW] IV nr 666

### **Juliano di Valetaris (1464-1467) Jewish Merchant – Genoa**

(1464/07/25) - *Iuliano de Valetaris* of Genoa, is mentioned in a letter sent by the Venetian Doge, Cristoforo Moro, together with *Arnolfo di Petrocii di Thedaldi Florentino* and *Nembrot Veluti* of Venice, as forming a company around 1464, to sell 4300 ducats worth of goods in the Kingdom of Poland. While there, apparently a group of Jews deprived Nembrot, Juliano’s partner, of some goods worth 600 ducats. The Doge writes to King Casimir IV, asking that he see justice done in this matter. [CodEp] III nr 74

(1464/06/08) – Cristoforo di San. Romulo named as *Tolneator*, customs official of Lviv, together with Juliano, named as Zupparius of the *Zupparium Russie* Russian salt mines, are given a quit receipt for funds owed by the king. [SPPP] 2 nr 3759

(1467/06/17) - Debt case of 1803 marks owed to Juliano, the brother of the now deceased *Antonius Italicus de Valetarris* to be handed over by *Dominico Italicus*, as agreed before the king's bench in Krakow. As Antonio is recorded as being Jewish in another document, it stands to reason that his brother Juliano was the same.<sup>1832</sup> [SPPP] 2 nr. 3872

### **Juliano Gebeletus di Caffa (1468) Merchant – Genoa**

(1468/01/04) – Juliano is engaged in business in Lviv with *Augustinus mercator et Italicus Ianuensis*. [SDIR] nr 32

(1468) - Agreement reached between *nobilis virginis Anastasio de Ianua, olim nobilis domini Missopero de Ansaldo filie legitime* – the noble maiden Anastasia of Genoa, daughter of the deceased ser Messopero de Ansaldo, and *Illustri duce Iwan, prefati ducis Iurgi Langwinowicz* – the illustrious Duke Iwan Iurgi Landowinowicz with Juliano Gebeletus of Caffa acting as Anastasias's procurator. [SDIR] nr 33

### **Laurencius Gallicus (1387)**

(1387/03/20) - *Wenceslao Perupctke de Praga* accuses *Laurencius Gallicus*, along with a fellow Prague merchant, a host of Krakow citizens and a bunch of Italians, including: *Monaldo di Lucca, Johannes Perlini, Johannes Thamme, Dominicus Judeorum servitor, Herman Jenconis Stygcri servitor, Franciscus Gallicus, Jacobinus Gallicus de Sale, Franciscus aurifaber* of attacking him and robbing him of his merchandise. [KsProscrKrakow] nr. 785

### **Leonardo di Giovanni di ser Matteo (1414-1430) Merchant, Papal Collector, Zupparius - Florence**

(1414/03/16) – Pope/Anti-Pope John XXIII names Leonardo papal collector in Poland to collect Peter's Pence - citing need to fight the schism. [Theiner] II nr 12

(1414/03/17) - Banking transaction of 1000 *fl. di camera* sent by Leonardo from collections made in Gniezno and Culm provinces to the Curia through the hands of *Caroli Geri et Adonardi de Tornaquintii*. [Itali] nr. 25

(1414/04/16) – A very long letter of introduction produced by Pope/Anti-Pope John XXIII informing all and sundry that Leonardo will be the new collector in Poland for the next 3 years in order to fight the perfidious Ladislaus Durazzo and Sicilian traitors who are attacking the papal states. The document further recaps all those who, under the Council of Vienna, who can be taxed. [Theiner] II nr 13

(1415/05/12) - Leonardo, written here as *Lenharden von Florencz*, found in Wrocław working with his brother Antonio. [Bresbook 6], 353 nr. 52

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<sup>1832</sup> [AGZ] 14 nr. MLXXXIX



(1418/08/05) - The di ser Matteo brothers agree to splitting the family property with a formal legal instrument in Venice. - The *laudum* was sentenced by Tieri di Andrea, a Florentine merchant living in Venice. ASV, Cancelleria inferiore, Notai, 228

(1422/10/18) - In a charter outlining the payment system for teachers at Krakow University, 4 Italians are listed as signatories, including: Antonio di ser matteo, Leonardo di ser matteo, Isidorius Italicus and Johannes pavia, doctor in medicinis, all signed under the purview of Andrew Łaskarz, who had studied in Padua and was a figure in the University before being nominated bishop of Poznań. [KDUK I] nr 71 (1423/03/27) – Antonio, Leonardo's brother, names him as his procurator in Krakow instead of Mathie de Czosnow, in order to pay off a debt owed to Bernhardo, the Preben of Dalyowicze. [CA2] nr 200

(1424/01/05) – Letter of recommendation issued for Leonardo from the *Signoria* of Florence to King Władysław Jagiełło. [Itali] nr 39

(1424/08/05) - *Magister lohannes, medicus Italicus uxoratus, Lodvicus de Florentia zupparius, Urbanus de Zenowa et Papius de Florentia, Italici*, agree to stand surety for Leonardo, now in prison, for up to 20 marks. [Itali] nr 41

(1424/08/07) - Leonardo paid Albizzo di Medici, customs collector of Krakow, for 80 gold florins and 6 talents of ginger [SPPP II] nr. 1986

(1425/01/01) – A second letter of recommendation sent by the Florentine *Signoria* in support of Antonio and Leonardi di ser Matteo.<sup>1833</sup>

(1425/03/04) - Leonardo and his brother Antonio rent the position of salt mine administrator for the mines at Bochnia and Wieliczka for 4/6 years from King Władysław Jagiełło. [Itali] nr 43; [Zbior] 7 nr 1980

(1425/06/24) – Leonardo is listed as overseeing the salt mines in Poland, and he applies to the pope to be able to use a portable altar - unclear if granted. [BullPol IV] nr 1540/1541

(1425/07/19) – A court case between Leonardo, his brother Antonio, and Albizzo di Medici, the customs collector of Krakow. Albizzo claimed that the di ser Matteo brothers had imported and sold a large volume of fabric for which they had failed to pay the proper amount of customs toll. [Itali] nr 44

(1427/02/07) – A third letter of recommendation sent by the *Signoria* of Florence to King Władysław Jagiełło on behalf of Leonardo and his brother Antonio, explaining why the pair, due to a pestilence in the salt mines, had not been able to meet that year's quota. [Itali] nr 45

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<sup>1833</sup> The letter in question is cited by Bettarini as appearing in volume 30 of the books of the *Cancelleria* in the Archivio di Stato di Firenze. Unfortunately, I have not personally seen this volume in order to verify its existence, dating and content, and I therefore rely on Bettarini's summation. (1425/01/01) ASF, *Missive I Cancelleria*, 30, c. 87v. Bettarini, Francesco. "The new frontier: Letters and merchants between Florence and Poland in the fifteenth century." *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome - Moyen ge* [En ligne], 127-2 | 2015, mis en ligne le 07 octobre 2015, Accessed December, 8th 2017. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/mefrm/2648>

(1427/02/07) – A fourth brief letter of recommendation sent on behalf of Leonardo and Antonio di ser Matteo by the *Signoria* of Florence to the *Consiliaris regis*. [Itali] nr 46

(1430) - Leonardo is dead as confirmed by his brother Michele's 1430 tax return in Florence whom he left with a debt of 90 fl. *Lionardo di Giovanni fu mio Fratello* ASF, Catasto 361, fol. 364r-365v

### **Lodovico (1495) Doctorem Italicum**

(1495/09/20) – A dispute between *Lodowicum doctorem Italicum* and *Petrum Adam consulem Poznańiensem* mediated by a commission made up of the City Council officials of Poznań, is ordered by King John Albert. [ActPoz II] nr 1637

### **Lodovico Baglioni di Lucca (1406-1420) Merchant, Banker - Lucca**

(1406/10/05) – A letter of safe conduct issued for Lodovico as, *nuntio apostolico ad partes*, for Germany, Bohemia, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Poland. The same day, Lodovico is also issued a letter of "*Fidei puritas*", naming him not as papal collector in the region, but one who is able to transmit funds to the camera.<sup>1834</sup>

(1410/01/15) – A letter of safe conduct is issued by the papal curia for Lodovico as *nuntio apostolico* in Germany, Bohemia, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and the Kingdom of Poland.<sup>1835</sup>

(1411/09/01) – A letter of safe conduct is issued by the papal curia for Lodovico as *nuntio apostolico* in Germany, Bohemia, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and the Kingdom of Poland.<sup>1836</sup>

(1413) - Gerardo di Niccolö di Francesco di Jacopo Bueri, the cousin of Piccarda Bueri the wife of Giovanni di Bicci di Medici becomes Lodovico's *socio* in Lübeck.<sup>1837</sup>

(1420) - Lodovico leaves his business in Lübeck to carry out a special mission to Poland for Giovanni di Medici, for which he is paid 180 fl. As the event was recorded later in the Medici secret account books, "*Baglioni per lui a Ghoschalcho quando lo mandamo in Carchovia a rischutare i danari dobbiamo avere per la ragion vecchia di Vinegia*"<sup>1838</sup> – Baglioni, for him to Ghoschalcho, when we sent him to Krakow to recover the money we were owed from that - old issue in Venice, referring to the perfidy of Neri Tornaquinci, which saw money placed into the hands of among others, Pietro Bicherano in 1406, that was never properly repaid.<sup>1839</sup>

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<sup>1834</sup> Jaroslav Eršil, *Acta summorum pontificum: res gestas Bohemicas aevi praehussitici et hussitici illustrantia*. (Pragae: In aedibus Academiae scientiarum Bohemoslovacae, 1980 nr 234 pg 148 a further similar letter issued 1406 December 23; [Bull Pol IV] nr 1098-1099.

<sup>1835</sup> Eršil, *Acta summorum pontificum*, nr. 425 pg 281; [Bull Pol IV] nr 1227

<sup>1836</sup> Eršil, *Acta summorum pontificum*, nr. 557 pg 360; [Bull Pol IV] nr. 1317.

<sup>1837</sup> Fouquet, "Ein Italiener in Lübeck," 200.

<sup>1838</sup> ASF, MAP, f. 153, 1, c. 100. See: Kurt Weissen, "Florentiner Bankiers und Deutschland (1275–1475). Kontinuität und Diskontinuität wirtschaftlicher Strukturen." PhD diss., dissertazione, Basel, Universität Basel, 2001, 282-3. And Roover (1963), p. 455, note 91.

<sup>1839</sup> ASF, MaP Filza 153, doc. 1, fol. 80rv; Raymond De Roover, *The rise and decline of the Medici Bank: 1397-1494*, (Washington DC: Beard Books, 1999), 245 fn 91.

### **Lodovico di Florencia (1411- 1441) Merchant – Florence**

(1411/06/08) - A large group in Krakow accuse Lodovico of *contumaces* - but his procurator responds that the charges are silly and ridiculous "*contradixit, quia sunt predictae duplicaciones frivole, frustratorie et innanes' et petit cras repelli ut tales*" the issue was to be resolved in the next 14 days. [CA2] nr 49

(1424/08/05) - Lodovico is Zupparius of Olkusz and agrees to stand surety for Leonardo di ser Matteo, now in prison, for up to 20 marks. together with *Magister lohannes, medicus Italicus uxoratus, Urbanus de Zenowa et Papius de Florentia, Italici*, [Itali] nr 41

(1424-1425) – Lodovico is Vice-Zupparius of Bochnia and Wieliczka<sup>1840</sup>

(1434/12/11) – Lodovico, now a citizen of Olkusz, admits to a debt of 34 marks owed to Heynrico Wcyssinburg and his son, citizens of Krakow, together with Andream de Brick, *baccalarium sancta theologie, conservatorem universitatis Cracoviensis an Petrum Bohem, civem Cracoviensem*, standing as surety. [Itali] nr 73

(1440/10/21) - Lodovico recognizes that he owes 2 marks to Stanislao *mansionario ecclesie Cracoviensi*, which he, in front of witnesses, promises to repay on St. Stanislaus's Day in May - around 6 months later. [CA 3] nr 288

(1441/06/24) – Lodovico, now a citizen of Olkusz, transfers a debt of 20 hufl. owed to him by Michaeli Edrar of Krakow, to be paid instead to the Monastery of St. Maria in Arena in Krakow. [CA 4] nr 68

### **Lucinus di Caffa (1466-1467) Merchant – Genoa**

(1466/03/05) – Pietro Veluti stands witness, together with Pascalis Walacha and Coloiani Walata de Albo Castro, to a transaction involving the exchange of 205 hufl between Michel Koler de Soczavia and *Lukinus de Caffa, fideiussor for Iacobo Italico de Sancto Salvatore*. [SDIR] nr 20

(1467/04/25)- *Lykinas Italicus de Caffa* is involved in a court case in Lviv with Arnolfo Tedaldi. [SDIR] nr 21

### **Marsonu Manente (1328) - Genoa**

(1328/10/23) – 550 fl is moved in the first of two operations to complete the transfer of 1000 fl from Karkow to Rome for the papal collector, Andrea de Verulis, given by the Bishop of Krakow, Walter, scolasticus of Wrocław. The transfer was arranged by Petrus called Miles, Canon of Krakow, Marsonu Manente of Genoa and his brother Nicholas, who was the Mayor of Wieliczka. The two batches are sent through the hands of Giovanni di Carminano, merchant

<sup>1840</sup> CastroCrac.II.228,23941,244,247,25154,25759,262,265,270,272,277,281,291,294,298,299,301,3°6,307,312,315,322,334,341,345,349,354,357,360,365,368,370,372,390,397,415. *Archiwum Komisji Historycznej*. Vol. 8, 162.

of Saonensem (Savona) auctoritate apostolica comissarius deputatus, and Frederico di Oppizis de Monelia, merchant of Genoa, who was stopping at Nemausum. [APV] nr. 118

**Matteo di Medici<sup>1841</sup> (1428) Merchant - Florence**

(1428/04/19) - *Dominus Nicolaus Jaroczskv* received 17 ½ ducats from *Matheo de Medicis mercatore Florentino* in a *cambio* exchange for N. Thomasconis [Neri Toranquincis?]

**Micheal Auecci (1483) - Florence**

(1483/06/06) – Micheal Auecci of Florence comes to Krakow to wind up his brother Antonio's estate, together with the honorable sir Vincencius, who acts as his interpreter, clearing a debt owed to Sefrido Bethman, Johanni Thurso, Johanni Clethner, and Johanni Shultis, related to a dedicatory painting of the Virgin Mary. [CA1] nr 853

**Monaldo di Lucca<sup>1842</sup> (1387-1428) Mint master, Doctor of Medicine – Lucca**

(1387/03/20) - *Wenceslao Perupctke de Praga* along with a fellow Prague merchant accuses Monaldo, a host of Krakow citizens and a bunch of Italians including: *Johannes Perlini, Laurencius Gallicus, Johannes Thamme, Dominicus Judeorum servitor, Herman Jcnconis Stygcri servitor, Fran-ciscus Gallicus, Jacobinus Gallicus de Sale, Franciscus aurifaber* of attacking him and robbing him of his merchandise. [KsProscrKrakow] nr. 785

(1393) - Dining with the King Władysław Jagiełło and Queen Jadwiga in Niepołomice. [RdKWJiKJ] nr 52

(1393) - Honors from the City Council of Krakow given to Monaldo [NKiRMK] nr 243

(1393) - Dining with King Władysław Jagiełło, Queen Jadwiga and Duke Skergelonis of Lithuania in Bochnia [RdKWJiKJ] nr 53-4

(1393) - Payment from the Krakow City Council given to Monaldo for nuncio duties undertaken on their behalf. [NKiRMK] nr 244

(1393) -Payment made to Monaldo of 24 fl on behalf of the king. [NKiRMK] nr 246

(1393) – Monaldo given 2 stones *smigmati*s in Krakow by King Wladyslaw Jagiełło. [RdKWJiKJ] nr 190

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<sup>1841</sup> Note however, that during this time period no Matteos appear in the Medici family tree. Very likely, the use of the cognomen was here a reference to Matteo's role in the Medici Bank.

<sup>1842</sup> Monaldo's two manuscripts are today preserved in the Jagiellonian Library - *Medicinalia praecepta*, in BJ 792, fols. 33r–42r, and *Monaldus de Luca, De pestilentia*, in BJ 849, fols. 161r–162v. For a published version of these texts see: Mieczysław Markowski, "Les manuscrits des listes de docteurs en médecine à l'Université de Cracovie entre 1400 et 1611", *Mediaevalia Philosophica Polonorum* 20 (1974): 121-40; Benedek Láng, *Unlocked Books: manuscripts of learned magic in the medieval libraries of Central Europe*, (Philadelphia: Penn State Press, 2010), 217.

(1393) – Monaldo paid 5 marks by King Władysław Jagiełło in Niepołomice. [RdKWJiKJ] nr 193

(1394/06/25) - 181 marks paid to Monaldo and Peter Bork by the king. [RdKWJiKJ] nr 194

(1394) – Summary of the money given by the royal treasury for the year to Monaldo and Peter Bork in their capacity as mint masters in Krakow *magistro Monaldo et a Petro Borg monetariis Cracouiensibus*,. [RdKWJiKJ] nr 194

(1395) – Monaldo granted an honorary gift of 11 measures of oil by the Krakow City Council [NKiRMK] nr 247

(1396) – Monaldo granted an honorary 16 marks by the Krakow City Council to pay off the taxes owed on Monaldo's home in the city. [NKiRMK] nr 250

(1396/02/27) - Johannes de Szarnowecz recognized before the court that 6 roll of superior cloth, each worth 3 marks, and 6 rolls of inferior cloth, each worth 1 1/2 marks, and paper worth 15 marks of the local currency were purchased by the honorable magister Monaldo of Lucca. He recognizes before the court that the cloths and paper were given to him in order to pay off the debt owed by the *Pannafices Latini* of Kazimierz [NKiRMK] nr 146

(1397) – 1 1/2 marks given to Monaldo as an honor by the Krakow City Council [NKiRMK] nr 254

(1397) - Wine given to Monaldo as an honor from the Krakow City Council [NKiRMK] nr 255

(1397) – Money given to the servant of Monaldo for serving as a messenger for the Krakow City Council [NKiRMK] nr 259

(1398/08/16) - *Cristopborus Italicus de Farraria, nunc apotecarius* in Krakow accuses Petrus de Cadano, Monaldus's *familiaris*, of owing him 50 marks for his expenses and financial injury incurred while in the service *in termino curie regie*. [SPPP2] nr 273

(1410/07/12) - Magister Monaldo di Lucca, together with many other Italians including: Marco Morisino of Venice, Neri di Toranquinci of Florence, Giovanni di Cambio of Florence, and Jacobo Meterom, as well as the papal curia, involved in a case with Jacobo di Paravisino of Milan, described as also a citizen of Krakow. As Jacobo is as yet so new in town he can find none to vouch for him before the court. Nicolao de Bystra and Alberto of Padua acted as notaries and witnesses in the case, which continued for a large number of court sessions with Jacobo and Monaldo di Lucca arguing over an unspecified circumstance. [SPPP 7] nr 1390-95

(1411/01/27) - Monaldo appoints Johannes Brest as his procurator for all cases involving himself and *Jacobus de Paravicino de Mediolano* [Milan]. [CA2] nr. 28

(1411/07/09 – 1412/09/22) –Stanislaus Dolanga Scultetus of Raczslauicze is called by Monaldo before the High Court of Magdeburg law in Krakow castle; by but he fails to appear

multiple times and is found guilty of owing Monaldo 16 marks. [Mag.Court 1] nr 2766, 2779, 3038

(1412/09/22) – Bodzantha de Moldnicza failed to answer a summons to the High Court of Magdeburg law in Krakow when Monaldo accused him of having been robbed in his mill. [Mag.Court 1] nr 3039

(1412/12/01) - Bodzantha de Moldnicza is not permitted to stand for Stanislaw Dolanga Scultetus of Raczslauicze in court. Monaldo names two procurators to stand for him in this case – his *familiaris* Nicholas, and a certain Bernadus the notary. [Mag.Court 1] nr 3094, 3111

(1413/02/02) – Monaldo agrees to sell his rights as Scultetus of Raczslauicze to Johannes Grella, heir to Raczslauicze. [Mag.Court 1] nr 3167

(1414/01/25) - Stanislaw Dolang, a former Scultetus of Raczslauicze, recognizes that he has sold his right to the *scultetus* position to Monaldo, who in turn sells them to Johannes Grella, heir to Raczslauicze, for 100 marks. [Mag.Court 1] nr 3394

(1422/03/05) - Servants - *Familiaribus* of Monaldo show up as witnesses in a case between Monaldo and Margatha Barthossi a widow of Kleparz and Marco, her heir, in Gniezno. [CA2] nr 139

(1422/11/16) - Johannes Brest named procurator in a case between Johannes Lelowski of Olkusz and Monaldo [CA2] nr 171

(1428) – Monaldo is named in the trial of Henry the Bohemian as an alleged accomplice to his magical rights attempting to uncover treasure through necromancy in the king's garden and at other sites in Kazimierz and Krakow, together with Nicolaus Hinczonis.

(1428/02/20) -The bishop elect of Gniezno asks for a money for a settlement over the robbery and abduction of Monaldo of Lucca by two *armigeros* of Wrocław. [Bull 4] 2084

### **Nembrot Veluti (1464 -1465) Merchant - Venice**

(1464/07/25) - Cristoforo Moro, the Venetian Doge, writes to King Casimir IV about the case of Juliano di Valetaris of Genoa, Arnolfo Tedaldi and Nembrot Veluti of Venice, who had formed a company around 1464 to sell 4300 ducats worth of goods in the Kingdom of Poland. While there, apparently a group of Jews deprived Nembrot of some goods worth 600 ducats. The Doge writes to the king, asking that he see justice done in this matter.<sup>1843</sup>

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<sup>1843</sup> *Codex Epistolaris Saeculi Decimi Quinti ; Vol. 3: 1392-1501*. Edited by Anatolius Lewicki. Monumenta medii aevi historica res gestas Poloniae illustrantia vol 14. New York u.a.: Johnson, 1965, nr. 74 pg 583-4.

(1465/11/21) - Nembrot has died, and his heirs, his brothers Petrus, Bernhard, and brother in-law Ffrancisci Frandini, have come to Lviv to seek to recover his assets with the kind assistance of Arnolfo Tedaldi of Florence. [SDIR] nr 17

### **Neri di Cipriano di Tornaquinci (1409-1424) Merchant, Banker - *Florence***

(1398-1401) – Neri is working as a salaried employee of the Medici in Venice for which he was awarded 1,600 fl for his salary and as a bonus for outstanding work.

(1402/03/05-04/1406) – Named as the first branch manager of the Venetian branch of the Medici bank.<sup>1844</sup>

(1407/06/21) – Neri writes a letter from Venice to the company of Francesco Datini in Majorca in the name of himself and his partner Tommaso di Giovanni, mentioning the possibility of a trade deal involving copper.<sup>1845</sup>

(1407/09/16) - Neri writes a letter of exchange for 383 fl from Venice to the company of Francesco Datini in Barcelona in the name of himself and his partner Tommaso di Giovanni.<sup>1846</sup>

(1407/09/24) Neri writes a letter of exchange of 380 fl from Venice to the company of Francesco Datini in Barcelona, in the name of himself and his partner Tommaso di Giovanni.<sup>1847</sup>

(1408/04/08) - Letter from Neri and his partner Tommaso di Giovanni in Venice to the company of Francesco Datini in Majorca.<sup>1848</sup>

(1408/07/31) - Letter from Neri and his partner Tommaso di Giovanni in Venice to the company of Francesco Datini in Majorca.<sup>1849</sup>

(1409/03/12) - Michele di Giovanni ser Matteo appointed by Neri as his factor and procurator in Venice. ASV, Cancelleria inferiore, Notai, 226

(1409/06) – Neri's brother represents him before the *Mercanzia* Court in Florence in a debt case which was first brought by Giovanni di Bicci di Medici. Neri loses the case and his house and gardens in Florence, which are sold for a little over 1,000 fl.<sup>1850</sup>

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<sup>1844</sup> Neri was later replaced in this position by Giovanni di Francesco da Gagliano (April 25, 1406). Roover, *The rise*, 41.

<sup>1845</sup> ASPo, *Datini*, busta 1083, inserto 42, codice 123922

<sup>1846</sup> ASPo, *Datini*, busta 1145.03, inserto 267, codice 11704

<sup>1847</sup> ASPo, *Datini*, busta 1145.03, inserto 267, codice 11705

<sup>1848</sup> ASPo, *Datini*, busta 1083, inserto 42, codice 123921

<sup>1849</sup> ASPo, *Datini*, busta 1083, inserto 42, codice 123924

<sup>1850</sup> Archive of the Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore, nr. o0201077.013a.  
<http://archivio.operaduomo.fi.it/cupola/ENG/HTML/S011/C025/T001/TBLOCK00.HTM>

(1410/05/04) - Strenuus miles Johannes de Tulischow, *castellanus Calissiensis* [Kosice], paid 1,900 fl to Neri for his boss *Pypo de Ozora* [Fillipo Scolari], *comes Tymischwariensis* [Temes], along with another 300 fl to Antonio di Piero di Fronte. ANK, Consul. Crac. 427, fol. 370

(1410/07/12) - Magister Monaldo di Lucca, together with many other Italians including: Marco Morisino of Venice, Neri di Toranquinci of Florence, Giovanni di Cambio of Florence, and Jacobo Meterom, as well as the Roman curia are involved in a case with Jacobo di Paravisino of Milan, described as also a citizen of Krakow. As Jacobo is as yet so new in town he can find none to vouch for him before the court. Nicolao de Bystra and Alberto of Padua acted as notaries and witnesses in the case which continued for a large number of court sessions, with Jacobo and Monaldo di Lucca arguing over an unspecified circumstance. [SPPP 7] nr 1390-95

(1414/08/09) - Martinus Beserabsky, in the name of his ward, Jacobus Nutricis borrows 200 *florenis de camera*, from Neri, putting up a house located in Kazimierz behind the church of St. Katherine and before that of St. Stanislaus [*Szczepanowski*] on the Rock church. Should the money not be repaid within 2 years, the house will be forfeited to Neri.<sup>1851</sup>

(1420) - Money sent from Giovanni Medici to Lodovico Baglioni di Lucca to compensate him for money spent trying to collect Neri's bad debts in Krakow. ASF, MAP, filz.153, 1, 100.

(1421/05/21) - A Krakow student names a procurator in a case he has against two of Neri's *familiaris* [CA2] nr 104

(1422/04/06) - Neri names Johannes Brest as his procurator for the many court cases which he has with the laicus of Florencia [Kleparsz] [CA2] nr 147

(1422/05/25) - Court case involving Petrus called Rybka, a cleric, and Neri. [CA2] nr 153

(1422/10/22) - Court case involving Neri and Przechna called Schumowa, a woman of Wieliczka [CA2] nr 170

(1423/02/22) - Court case between Neri and Elizabeth, a woman of Krakow [CA2] nr 191

(1423/03/22) – Continuing court case between Neri and Elizabeth, a woman of Krakow, Neri names Johannes Brest as his procurator [CA2] nr 199

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<sup>1851</sup> “”*Item dominus Martinus Beserabsky per tutorem suum Jacobum Nutricis obligavit domum, que est sita retro Sanctam Katherinam eundo as Sanctum Stanuslaum ad Rupellam, Domino Neri thelenatori Tornophincis de Florencia in ducentis florenis de camera, cum omni iure et domino, prout solus tenuit, tali condicione, si ipse dominus Martinus infra biennium predicto domino Nerio predictos 200 florenos in anno non solverit, extunc ipse dominus Nerius predictam domum cum omni iure et domino perpetue possidebait, habens et retinens in eade, omnem facultatem vendendi, donandi, alienandi, commutandi, usufruendi et prout sini placuerit convertandi. Księga ławnicza kazimierska 1407-1427/Acta scabinalia Casimiriensia 1407-1427, ed. Bożena Wyrozumska (Krakow: Drukrol, 1996), nr 1550.*



(1423/04/19) -Neri makes Mathiam de Czosnow his procurator in a case with Nicolao Sobotha, Johannes Garbarzs de Cracovia and Petro called Cleschny de Wieliczka [CA2] nr 206

(1424/05/15) - Court case involving Katherine, wife of Neri's cook with Nicholaus the *familiaris* of Neri - also Italian? whom she claims is the father of her child [CA2] nr 238

(1424) – Giovanni di Bicci di Medici hears that Neri is now living in poverty in Krakow and despite the fact that he had, “behaved badly” chooses to send him 36 florins.<sup>1852</sup>

### **Niccolo Bicherano (1448) Tentuarius - Venice**

(1448/10/4) - Niccolo works for the bishop of Krakow as *tentuarius*- customs official in Muszynka *Nicolaus Pykaran tenutarius in Muschyna*, is recalled to Krakow to pay the 2000 marks he owes to the bishop, plus an additional fine. [SPPP 2] nr 3350

### **Niccolo di Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe (1427 –1434) Factor - Florence**

(1427) – Catasto portata sent in by Niccolo’s father, Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe in Gonfalone Santo Spirito-Drago, in which he states that his son Niccolo, age 27, was then *al a cocahvia*., *working in Krakow*. ASF, Catasto 26, f.1083v

(1429/06/08) – A letter of recommendation is written by the Florentine chancellor, Leonardo Bruni, in support of Niccolo and Guido di Giovanni di ser Matteo, as the two came to Poland. ASF, Missive I Cancelleria, 32, fol. 80v

(1430) - Catasto portata of Michele di Giovanni di ser Matteo for the year 1430, relates the fact that Niccolo and Michele’s brother Guido di Giovanni di ser Matteo had been sent on a trip to Krakow with an additional 3,120 fl. of investment capital to pay off accumulated debts. Catasto, 39, fol. 338v (1430).

(1431/03/13) - Attempting to work in Nuremberg as a factor on behalf of Michele di Giovanni di ser Matteo and Antonio di Giovanni di ser Matteo, dealing with a transfer of goods between them and Venceslao Venetias and Johannes Bank. [Itali] nr 65, 66

(1431/06/23) – Niccolo, together with most of the Italian community in Krakow, including: Giovanni di Papia, Doctor of Medicine, Albizzio di Talento di Medici, Guido di Giovanni di ser Matteo, Paulus Ostrosska, Giovanni di Paravisino de Mediolano of Milan, Pietro di Giovanni of Florence, Jacobo of Florence, and Margaretha, the wife of Antonio di Giovanni di ser Matteo, together with their children, all stand as guarantors for Antonio in his capacity as Zupparius of the Krakow salt mines. Antonio must return and pay the debt owed to King Władysław Jagiełło, upon pain of loss of all their property and imprisonment for those left in Krakow, should he fail. [Itali] nr 67

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<sup>1852</sup> Roover, *The Rise*, 54.

(1433/05/10) – Recorded in the Catasto tax return of Michele di Giovanni di ser Matteo under bad debtors “*Nicholo di Vaggio Giuseppe sta a Charchovia e nulla torna maj 79 fl.*”<sup>1853</sup> Catasto 454, 326r (1433)

(1433/08/28) – Niccolo is brought to court by a certain Katherine, a lady of Wieliczka, at the behest of Petrus, Vicar of Przeczicza, on unstated charges. Mathias Ducz stands as Niccolo’s procurator. [CA] 3 nr 3

(1434/05/28-1434/06/30) – Niccolo is involved in a long protracted debate before the court in Krakow with the Krakow Zupparius, Nicholaus Tarnaw, over his salary for 14 months of work and other monies owed. [SPPP7] nr 1304-1332

(1434/04/30) – Niccolo, working as Vice-Zupparius in Wieliczka, is involved in a case with Katherine, a woman of Wieliczka, where he brings forward as *witnesses Johannes vicarius de Omnibus Sanctis. Paulus Pensatores de Wyelicka, and Johannes de Parusino.* [CA 3] nr 39

(1450/12/20) – Niccolo is sent as an orator by the king of Hungary to treat with Pope Nicholas V.<sup>1854</sup>

(1450) – Niccolo serves under Johannes Hunyadi in Hungary.<sup>1855</sup>

(1454) – Made Buda Chamber Count<sup>1856</sup>

(1454-1457) – Made Count of the Hungarian Salt Chamber.<sup>1857</sup>

(1456/10/31) – Made the first *Monetarius* - Mint Master in Sibiu, together with *Christophorus de Florentia* and Oswaldus Wenzel, City Judge of Sibiu, who together also form a joint company to manage the silver mines at Baia de Arieş and Zlatna<sup>1858</sup>

(1459) – Made count of the salt chamber in Sic, Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>1859</sup>

(1464) – Niccolo is now deceased, but the Florentine *Signoria* writes a letter to the king of Hungary and the Buda City Council, requesting assistance be given to Niccolo’s heirs.<sup>1860</sup>

<sup>1853</sup>ASF, Catasto 454, 326r (S. Maria Novella - Vipera 1433)

<sup>1854</sup>*Scriptores rerum hngaricarum veteres, nunc ac genuini, partim primum ex tenebris eruti; partim antehac quidem editi, vero ex MSS. codicibus, et rarissimis editionibus, Bibliothecae auggustae vindobonensis, ab innumeris mendis vindicati, plurimis variantibus lectionibus, et necessariis, hinc inde, quibusdam notis illustrati, partim etiam ad nostra usque tempora continui, multisque in locis avctiores reddit, antiquissimis demum icunculis exornati*, Eds. Johann Georg Schwandtner, and Mátyás Bél (Vienna: impensis I.P. Kravs, 1751), 5.

<sup>1855</sup> Arany, *Florentines*, 209.

<sup>1856</sup> Arany, *Florentines*, 209.

<sup>1857</sup> Arany, *Florentines*, 209.

<sup>1858</sup>*Verein für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde* vol 6. Archiv des Vereins für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde (Kronstadt: Verein, 1863), 167; Andrea Fara, *Economia e Società in Transilvania nel Medioevo (secoli XIV-XVI)* (Rome: nella sede dell’Istituto Palazzo Borromei, 2021), 287; Samuel Goldenberg “Notizie del commercio italiano in Transilvania nel secolo XVI,” *Archivio Storico Italiano* 121.2 (438 (1963): 257.

<sup>1859</sup> Arany, *Florentines*, 209.

<sup>1860</sup> Arany, *Florentines*, 209.

### **Nicholas Manente (1306-1339) Merchant, Hereditary Mayor– Genoa**

(1306) – Nicholas is granted by Duke Władysław Łokietek the title of hereditary mayor of the important salt-mining town of Wieliczka, located a few kilometers outside of Krakow. Łokietek, who was campaigning to become King of Poland, had stripped the rights to the town from Gerlach von Kulpen, the brother-in-law of the Jan Muskaty the Bishop of Krakow, who was opposing his claim to the throne. In a strategic move, Łokietek instead granted them to Niccolo and his heirs. [KDMP] III nr 657

(1325/06/10) – Nicholas serves as ambassador for King Władysław Łokietek of Poland to Pope John XXII. The pope sends him back to the Polish court with warm recommendations for his work on the king's behalf as nuncio at the papal court, with apologies for his delayed stay at the curia. [Theiner I] nr. 313 pg 204

(1328/10/23) – 550 fl are sent in the first of two operations to complete the transfer of 1000 fl from Krakow to Rome for the papal collector, Andrea de Verulis, given by the Bishop of Krakow, Walter, scolasticus of Wrocław. The transfer was arranged by Petrus called Miles cAmiono of Krakow, Marsonu Manente of Genoa and his brother Nicholas, who was the Mayor of Wieliczka. The two batches are sent through the hands of Johannes de Carminano, merchant of Saonensem (Savona) auctoritate apostolica comissarius deputatus, and Frederico de Oppizis de Monelia, merchant of Genoa who was stopping at Nemausum. [APV] nr. 118

(1329/03/09) – 450 fl are sent as the second of two operations described above to complete the transfer of 1000 fl from Krakow to Rome; arranged, facilitated, given, received, and handled by the same persons as with the first operation. [APV] nr. 123

(1336/01/09) -Mikolaj Wierzynek [Nicholaus Wirsingi] named in a charter as *advocat* of Wieliczka [KDMP] I nr 202 pg. 238

(1339/01/29) – Nicholas sells the hereditary rights to the *advocat* of Wieliczka, to Mikolaj Wierzynek [Nicholaus Wirsingi], for the sum of 1100 marks large Prague grosz. Wieliczka had originally belonged to the Krakow Vojt Albert and his family members. After Albert's downfall, it had belonged to the brother-in-law of Johannes Muscat, Bishop of Krakow, Gerlach von Kulpen, who had worked against Łokietek and lost. [KDMP] III nr 657

### **Nicolao di Noali (1486-1490) Viticulturist - Genoa**

(1486/06/07) – Andrea Gwasko di Soldaia organizes for Uriel Górka (1435-1498), the Bishop of Poznań, that Nicolao di Noali, son of Paulo di Villacosta Riparolli in the province of Polceve, would move to Poland and work there for four years. Nicolao would be planting and organizing a vineyard and performing other agricultural duties for the bishop. He would be paid, in addition to room and board, 24 libras of Genoese standard coin or otherwise 8 ducats and 1

libra of Genoese standard coin. Andrea, for his services in organizing the contract was to be paid 3 gold ducats.<sup>1861</sup>

### **Nicoros der Wale (1443)**

(1443/07/07) - Nicoros the Italian takes three oaths, denying the claims of Anastasia, the widow of master Peter Cziszcowsky. Nicoros took these oaths in front of the court first about 30 Hungarian florins, second about five ells of pearls [probably they were fixed to a girdle or string?], and third about four golden finger rings. Anastasia had accused him three times that she had given him all this in a box for safekeeping and he lost everything. The same Nicoros cleared himself with the three oaths [PomnLw] IV nr 827

### **Ottaviano di Gucci di Cavalcanti (1496-1531) Merchant, Zupparius - Florence**

(1496) - Ottaviano di Gucci di Cavalcanti (Cavalcanti) appears in the sources for the first time writing a letter to Lattanzio Tedaldi, describing the lavish funeral held for their mutual friend, Filippo Buonaccorsi in Krakow in 1496.<sup>1862</sup>

(1507/05/18) - Ottaviano is granted the right to sell royal salt in Hungary and over the Carpathians by the Vice-chancellor of Poland and Bishop of Przemyśl Maciej Drzewicki. [MRPS] IV nr 8560

(1507/05/18) – Ottaviano is granted, together with partner Johannes Gladash, the right to search for and mine minerals in the entire region of Krakow and Byec. [MRPS] IV nr 8560

(1507/10/25) – Ottaviano is granted a letter of safe conduct by King Sigismund the Old for a return trip to Italy. [MRPS] IV nr 8653

(1531/12/07) - Ottaviano still managing the salt mines in Ruthenia. [MRPS] IV nr 16218

(1535/08/16) - Ottaviano by this date is deceased, and as per his will, a certain Carolus of Florence has taken over his post as Zupparius. [MRPS] IV nr 17167

### **Paolo Cavallo (1338-1353) Merchant Zupparius – Genoa**

(1338/09/31) - Galhardus de Carceribus, papal collector, suggests in a letter to Pope Benedict XII that it would be helpful if the Bardi bank could be persuaded to open up a branch in Poland. Galhardus noted that Paolo Cavallo, who had worked with the previous papal collector, Andrea

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<sup>1861</sup> “... *supra et eidem Nicolao dabit et solvet pro eius salario libras viginti quinque Ianuinorum monete currentis sive ducatos octo et libram unam Ianuinorum et ultra eidem Nicolao tam sano quam infirmo dabit expensas videlicet cibi et potus toto dicto tempore dictorum annorum quatuor necnon sibi fieri faciet expensas in itinere et donec fuerit per iter videlicet victus tantum. Insuper confitens dietus Nicolaus ex nunc a dicto domino Andriolo habuisse et recepisse ducatos tres auri largos in solutione dieti eius salarii.*” Archivio di Stato in Genova. Sezione Archivio Notarile. [Atti del Not. Gio. Antonio Castello. Filza II, f. 130]. 1485, 8 lug. In Isreal Zoller, "Tra L'Italia E La Polonia," *Archivio Storico Italiano*, serie V, 42, no. 252 (1908): 392, 395-6.

<sup>1862</sup> Ciampi, *Bibliografia Critica*, 30-2.

de Verulis, was present on the ground in Krakow and willing to act as a factor for the bank. [Theiner] I nr 545

(1344) - Paolo Sells his *Area cum fundo* across from the cemetery of St. Mary's Church to Nicholaus Romancij [NKiRMK], nr 1523

(1346) - Pesco Stolczel sells his house on the central square in Krakow to *Paulus Gallicus*, the Zupparius of Bochnia. [NKiRMK] nr 1504

(1346/09/07) – Paolo signs a statement regarding papal funds transferred to Bruges, as *Paulino Cavallo filio quandam Hugeti Cavalli cives Iuaniensis et Cracoviensis* [Theiner] I nr. 646

(1350/06/27) - Papal indulgence granted by Pope Clement VI to Paulo and his wife Fenenna along with King Casimir the Great and his wife Adelaide and a few other Krakow citizens: Johannes called Romanetz and his wife, Albertus the Cancellarius of Dobrinensis and Johannes called Jura the Palatine, all named as *familiaribus* of the king. [Bull] II nr. 499

(1350/08/07) - Sinco sells a house with a foundation in Krakow on *platea vltima siue figulorum* [Gołębia] to Paolo, who is Zupparius of Bochnia. [NKiRMK] nr 1607

(1350) - *Honesta Matrona domina* Katherina, daughter of Johannis de Altadomo, together with Hensling Edlingi, sell their house on the central square in Krakow to Paulo, Zupparius of Bochnia [NKiRMK] nr 1610

(1350/07/24) - Henselinus the goldsmith sells his house on the central square in Krakow to *Paulino Gallico Suppario domini Regis* [NKiRMK] nr 1617

(1351/03/11) - Johannes de Altadomo and Francus Frederici sell the cloth stall that had once belonged to Johannis de Muchov, to Paulo. [NKiRMK] nr 1624

(1351/08/19) Nicolaus Spiczmiri, together with his son Petro and daughter Helena, hand over 1/2 of the stall which was had from Heynczco de Colonia, along with a house at the corner of St. Francis street for certain unspecified debts to the nephew of Paolo, Pietro Cavallo, and his wife Elizabeth the nephew of Paulo. [NKiRMK] nr 1625

(1353) - Henco Gobelonis sells his house in Krakow on the corner of *vico sancta Crucis* [Sw. Krzyża] to Paulo. [NKiRMK] nr 1650

### **Paulo di Grimaldi (1429-1453) Merchant - Genoa**

(1439/12/22) – Paulo, son of Mathew, is mentioned in Genoese documents as having lived abroad from Genoa for the last ten years in Poland.

(1440/10/07) - Gregarius Ungarus “*servus*” of Jeronimo di Olmerio of Genoa, who had agreed to trade on his behalf, as long as war was not declared, complains to the court in Lviv about 30

florins Jeronimo promised him. Eventually Paulo Grimaldi stands surety for Jeronimo and gives Gregarius the cash. [AGZ] 14 nr 96-102

(1441/05/29) – Paulo Grimaldis stands as procurator and fiduciary agent for Jeronimo di Olmerio of Genoa in Gródek [Городок], where within 4 weeks Jeronimo is supposed to appear before the capitan of Gródek. Paulo agrees to stand as his procurator, upon pain of 270 fl. “Turcales” should he not come. [AGZ] nr 275

(1441/07/14) - Paulo Grimaldi has not paid the 270 Turkish florins he agreed to stand surety for Jeronimo di Olmerio of Genoa and that the debt is apparently owed to the Italian Pietro Messopero. [AGZ] nr 301

(1442/10/17) – Jeronimo di Olmerio of Genoa names Paulo his procurator for all his affairs in Lviv. [PomnLw] IV nr. 666

(1453/08/04) - Paulo made procurator for Imperiali Grimaldi in Pera <sup>1863</sup>

### **Paulo di Promontorio (1483-1515) Merchant - Genoa**

(1483/02/02) - Granted a letter of safe conduct and permission to engage in trade throughout the Kingdom of Poland by King Casimir IV. [MRPS] I nr. 1590.

(1483/09/27) – Andrea, tentuarius – customs collector of Gniezno, appears before the court of Uriel Górka, Bishop of Poznań, regarding a contract whereby Andrea acted as a factor in a complicated delivery of cloth from Genoa for Paolo, valued at 484 hufł. This cloth was to have been sold by Andrea on Paolo’s behalf. 70 hufł of the debt was alleviated by Andrea giving some silk-satin to Paolo. The next 207 hufł of the debt was to be paid back in the form of 14 ulna of golden silk-satin, whose worth was to be verified by two merchants who were experts in the cloth trade, being outsiders either from Nurnberg or elsewhere. Should the 14 ulna not amount to 207 hufł, then the difference was to be made up in a measure of black silk. For the rest of the debt, amounting to 207 hufł, 91 hufł was to be taken by Paolo from the Frankfurt merchant, Bucholz, resolving a debt owed to Andrea. A further 60 hufł would be collected by Paolo from Władysław, doctor of cAmiono law and Canon of Gniezno, who owes Andrea. The remaining debt of 56 hufł will then be paid by Corpus Christi by Andrea to Paolo in the form of 14 ulna of black damask. Andrea was also to return to Paolo a horse which Paolo had loaned him. The horse had to be returned in a verified good condition, or further payment would be necessary. 207 hufł worth of silk cloths in a variety of colors and lengths were to be sold or given back to Paolo in as good a state as when they left. The two were further involved in the selling of red cochineal dye. Should either party break the contract, they would owe 300 hufł.

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<sup>1863</sup> *Notai Genovesi in Oltremare. Atti rogati a Pera e Mitilene, Vol. 1 Pera, 1408-1490*, ed. Ausilia Roccatagliata, (Genoa: Collana storica di fonti e studi diretta da Geo Pistarino, 1982), nr. 52.

(1484/04/05) – A letter is sent through the hands of Paulo from Vincenzo di Domenico of Genoa to the Genoese Senate relating events in Poland. Vincenzo seeks to formulate an anti-Ottoman alliance involving Genoa, the Crimean Khanate, and Poland.<sup>1864</sup>

(1487/04) - Paulo, Italian and merchant citizen of Poznań hands over 100 fl to the keeper of the royal accounts from Cristino of Bowanthow, Canon of Wrocław, for money collected from the “*theloneo aquatico dobrinensi et bobrownicensi*” - Money owed from the taxes on the waters of Dobrzyń and Bobrowic, clearing Paulo of any debts. Cristino, meanwhile, paid 300 fl through the hands of another individual and had previously paid a further 300 fl in taxes from this source the same day. [Rach 1484-88] 146

(1488/03/11) - Granted full citizenship rights by the Poznań City Council, together with his brother Stefano, on the condition that within two years they purchase a proper house on the central square, and failing this will pay to the city 200 fl. [ActaPoz] II nr 1493

(1488/07/09) – Paulo and his brother Stefano purchase a stone house on the central square in Poznań for 1500 fl. from Caspar Heida, paying in installments. [ActaPoz] II nr 1500

(1489) – Jan, a sheerer from Poznań, sells to Paolo and his brother Stefano a property inherited from the dower of his wife Barbara Heyda - a garden in front of the Wroniecka Gate in Poznań, between the gardens of Burchard and Grzegorz Strosberg, together with a pond and water flow from the moat through a canal to this garden. In 1521, ownership of this property would be transferred to Augustino Mazoni di Promontorio, who held it until his death in 1523.<sup>1865</sup>

(1493/04/08) - As recorded before the notary in Krakow, Jan Gleywicz owes Paulo 200 marks for Damask silk purchased in Toruń from the hands of Ludwik Gruber of Nuremberg, with Le'Onarda Ungettumma, Adam Swarcz and Jan Kezinger - all important Krakow merchants having an interest in the proceedings. Jan Gleywicz arranges to pay back 100 marks to Jan Frickel, Paulo's factor in Toruń, and the rest at a later date.<sup>1866</sup>

(1494/06/23) – Paulo is trading from Poznań with Hans Bucholcz and Caspar Crewcz of Frankfurt on Oder, Pael Blanckenfelt working from Wrocław and Berlin, and his kinsman, Peregrino di Promontorio, who is working out of Lublin and Nuremberg. [ActaPoz] II nr 1582

(1495/08/05) – Paulo owes 338 fl to Vito Schach and *famoso* Claws Fincke de Magdeburga. [ActaPoz] II nr 1614

<sup>1864</sup> “Wincentego do Dojhinico listy o Polsce pisane do senatu genueńskiego r. 1483-1484. [ Letters sent by Vincenzo de Dominico from Poland to the Genoese Senate 1483-1484],” *Biblioteka Ossolińskich* (1863 vol 2): 345-8.

<sup>1865</sup> “Święty Wojciech” <http://www.slownik.ihpan.edu.pl/search.php?q=promontorio&d=0&t=0>

<sup>1866</sup> Acta consularia Cracoviensia, nr. 430 fol. 364 see: Kazimierz Kaczmarczyk, "Włosi w Poznaniu na przełomie XV na XVI wiek [Italians in Poznan at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries.]" *Kronika Miasta Poznania: kwartalnik poświęcony sprawom kulturalnym stoł. m. Poznania: organ Towarzystwa Miłośników Miasta Poznania* 6.1 (1928):8.

(1495/08/05) –An accord is reached before the royal judge in Poznań that Paulo will pay back Mathiam Ende and Claws Wolff 340 fl within 2 years. If this should not happen, then in 4 years, Paulo would repay the amount either in measured gold or in silk of any color brought from Italy. [ActaPoz] II nr 1615

(1495/08/30) – Paulo admits to a debt of 338 marks to Viet Schach. In order to pay this debt, Paulo gives Schach 100 stones of cumin worth 200 marks, which he will have the opportunity to sell before February. Paulo will then pay the remaining 138 marks in March and should he not do so, Schach has a claim on Paulo's property. [ActaPoz] II nr 1621

(1495/09/02) – The City Council of Poznań steps in to adjudicate the massive debt owed by Paulo, 1,409 hufl owed to Iohannes Grodziczky, 230 hufl owed to Iohannes Buchholcz of Frankfurt, 735 hufl owed to Bernhardus Buchholcz, 230 hufl owed to Paulus Blanckenfelt and Malchiar Ffunck, and 30 fl owed to Paulus of Bomberg for the debt he had incurred in trying to settle the account on Paolo's behalf. Paulo agrees to start paying off his debt in monthly installments, and was thus able to organize the release of his kinsman and agent in Nuremberg, Peregrino di Promontorio who had been arrested on account of the debt, as well as to protect his other agents, Jacobus Fuckar and Jost Schilling. [ActaPoz] II nr 1623

(1495/09/02) – Paulo admits to owing 1000 hufl to Hanns Witowsky and Lorencz Mordeysen of Leipzig, which he will seek to repay in four installments. [ActaPoz] II nr 1624

(1495/09/02) – Paulo admits to a debt of 320 fl owed to Heinezen Orteilen for Mechelen cloth he had purchased which he will seek to repay by selling 140 stones of cumin in Italy at a rate of 1 fl per stone. Should he fail to do so, he promises to pay Heinezen back with 140 ulna of altlassy cloth or damask and the residual in cash. [ActaPoz] II nr 1626

(1496/02/29) – Paulo owing a significant amount of money to Hanusz Blode of Nuremberg for 150 cubits of venetian damask and several dozen different lengths of cloth as well as spices. [ActaPoz] II nr 1657.

(1496/03/08) – Paulo sells his house on the main square in Krakow to Filippo Buonaccorsi the Humanist and King John Albert's secretary. [ActaPoz] II nr 1664

(1496/05/06) – Barbara, the widow of Johannes Canya, seeks to purchase the former house of Paulo from Filippo Buonaccorsi for 1,250 fl. [ActaPoz] II nr 1674

(1505/08/09) – Paulo receives a letter of safe conduct within the Kingdom of Poland lasting one year issued by King Sigismund I. [MRPS] III nr 2357

(1515/02/20) – Paulo receives a letter of safe conduct within the Kingdom of Poland lasting one year issued by King Sigismund I [MRPS] IV nr 2402

**Peregrino di Promontorio (1494-1517) Merchant – Genoa**



(1494/06/23) – Peregrino di Promontorio is working in Lublin and Nuremberg as an agent for his kinsman, Paulo di Promontorio, who is trading from Poznań with Hans Bucholcz and Caspar Crewcz of Frankfurt on Oder and Pael Blanckenfelt who is operating from Wrocław and Berlin. [ActaPoz] II nr 1582

(1495/09/02) – The City Council of Poznań steps in to adjudicate the massive debt owed by Paulo: 1,409 hufl owed to Iohannes Grodziczky, 230 hufl owed to Iohannes Buchholcz of Frankfurt, 735 hufl owed to Bernhardus Buchholcz, 230 hufl owed to Paulus Blanckenfelt and Malchiar Ffunck, and 30 fl owed to Paulus of Bomberga for the debt he had incurred in trying to settle the account on Paulo's behalf. Paulo agrees to start paying off his debt in monthly installments, and was thus able to organize the release of his kinsman and agent in Nuremberg, Peregrino di Prementorio, who had been arrested on account of the debt as well as protect his other agents, Jacobus Fuckar and Jost Schilling. [ActaPoz] II nr 1623

(1517) – Peregrino engaged in a trade deal with Eustachy de Parentibus of Krakow, Karol Koczur, Bartholomew Gliwice, and Kasper Gratz, that goes bad and winds up being adjudicated in court in Poznań.<sup>1867</sup>

### **Perozzo di Baldo di Tedaldi (1492-1507) Merchant, Zupparius - Florence**

(1492/03/31) – "*Famosus Ianoczus Thedaldi de Flurenciis, Italicus*", included among creditors in Lviv. [SDIR] nr 100

(1492/10/22) – Perozzo is carrying letters from Filippo Buonaccorsi in Poland to Lactanius Tedaldi in Florence.<sup>1868</sup>

(1496) - *Perozzo hedaldi de Florencia*, named as *Zuparius Drohobicensis*. [SDIR] nr107

(1502/04/29) - Perozzo is recognized as the nephew of Arnolfo, residing in Przemyśl and dealing with 4,000 marks owed by King Alexander to his uncle's estate. [MRPS] III nr 467.

(1502/04/29) - King Alexander acknowledges a debt of 4,000 marks owed to Perozzo, Zupparius of Przemyśl, to be paid back by Pentecost, May 15<sup>th</sup>. [MRSP] III nr. 472

(1504/01/15) – Perozzo, as Zupparius of Przemyśl, is paid 122 fl by Mathiae de Drzewicza, Bishop of Przemyśl, for the lodgings of the bishop of Wrocław, who had been staying at the mine. [MRPS] III nr. 1126

(1504/09/16) - Perozzo and his brother Giovanni are recognized as Arnolfo's rightful heirs. Giovanni has taken over as Zupparius of Przemyśl and his rights there, together with a village,

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<sup>1867</sup> Acta castrensia Posnaniensis. nr. 856, 455, 457. see: Kazimierz Kaczmarczyk, "Włosi w Poznaniu na przełomie XV na XVI wiek [Italians in Poznan at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries.]" *Kronika Miasta Poznania: kwartalnik poświęcony sprawom kulturalnym stol. m. Poznania: organ Towarzystwa Miłośników Miasta Poznania* 6.1 (1928):13-14.

<sup>1868</sup> Heinrich Zeissberg, *Kleinere Geschichtsquellen Polens im Mittelalter; eine Nachlese* [Smaller historical sources of Poland in the Middle Ages; a gleanings.](Vienna: K. Gerold, 1877), 72.

amount to an inheritance of 1200 fl. A further 4,200 fl is owed to the brothers from the rest of Arnolfo's incomes. [MRPS] III nr. 1683

(1507/03/17) - Perozzo sells his rights to the villages near Przemyśl, which he inherited from his uncle Arnolfo, for 60 marks with the funds sent to Italy. [MRPS] IV nr 8378

**Petrus Italicus<sup>1869</sup> (1431-1450) Vice-Zupparius - Florence**

(1431/05/23) – Petrus, together with most of the Italian community in Krakow, including: Giovanni di Papia, Doctor of Medicine, Albizzo di Talento di Medici, Guido di Giovanni di ser Matteo, Paulus Ostrosska, Giovanni di Paravisino of Milan, Niccolo di Vaggio di Mazza Giuseppe of Florence, Petro di Giovanni of Florence, Giovanni di ser Matteo, Jacobo of Florence, and Margaretha, the wife of Antonio di Giovanni di ser Matteo, together with their children, all stand as guarantors for Antonio in his capacity as Zupparius of the Krakow salt mines. Antonio must return and pay the debt owed to King Władysław Jagiełło, upon pain of loss of all their property and imprisonment for those left in Krakow, should he fail. [Itali] nr 67

(1432/04/03) - Nicholas *Abbas Brzesenensis tutor monasterij Zwerzinensis* requests 140 fl from Petrus Italicus who stood as surety for Guido di ser Matteo for money that was to have been taken to the papal curia - [SPPP 2] nr 2437

(1434/06/24) – Petrus stands as executor of the will of Johannes *medicus de Cracovia* together with Bernadus Hesse and Hermanus, *medicus* of Krakow, involved with a number of cases regarding the will of Johannes and his widow, Katherine [SPPP 2] nr 2580

(1443/11/06) – Nicholas Serafino the Zupparius of the salt mine in Wieliczka, agrees with the Corpus Christi monastery to sell a *gay* near the village of Swoschowycze, in exchange for a bunch of salt - Petrus stands in as representative of the mine for the sale. [CA 4] nr 243

(1443-45) – Petrus is mentioned in a letter from Nicholaus Suchorabski to Nicholas Serafino related to his position working as Vice-Zupparius in Wieliczka.<sup>1870</sup>

(1444/06/12) - Falibo Strigar of Wieliczka agrees to split the residual funds from that year's salt on St. Johns day between himself and his partners - Petrus, Jacobo Vicezuppario, and Joahnnes Bankyel [CA 4] nr 307

(1444/11/08) - Petrus signs in the name of John the Vice-Zupparus of Wielicka, selling 40 loads of salt to Nicolao Gadialek - 20 of which will be his and 20 of which he will deliver to the bishop of Chełm from Krakow, all for the price of 22 marks. [CA 4] nr 342

<sup>1869</sup> "Piotr Italik (Gallicus, Italy) from Florence, writer of the Wieliczka mine 1439-1444, Vice-Zupparius of Wieliczka 1445-1451 and personal secretary of Seraphim 1451," Nicholas Serafino, *Corpus epistularum Nicolai Seraphin zupparii Cracoviensis (1437-1459)*, ed. Waldmar Bukowski (Krakow: Towarzystwo Naukowe Societas Vistulana, 2006), 46 fn 15.

<sup>1870</sup> Serafino, *Corpus epistularum*, nr 5.

(1450/09/19)<sup>1871</sup> – Nicholas Serafino, Zupparius of the Krakow salt mines and Petrus's boss, writes to him that the king is expected to be visiting them at the Wieliczka salt mines soon, and he is to do a number of things to ensure everything is prepared.<sup>1872</sup>

(1451/07/11) - Johannes Rey de Shumsko venator of Krakow, brings Petrus to trial over the loan of a horse made to him by Nicholas Serafino, Zupparius of the Krakow salt mines. Johannes arrived at the mine seeking to return the horse and asked to be allowed in to do so, but Petrus refused to honor the request, declaring rudely that he was not a Porter. Petrus loses the case and has to pay a fine. [SPPP 2] nr 3461

### **Philippus der Wale (1443) Merchant**

(1443/07/21) – Philippus and Jacobus der Wale run into trouble with their shipment of pepper and Malmsey wine. While making their way towards Lviv through Moldavia, their load was confiscated in Kolomyia by Elias, an officer of the Moldavian Prince Stefan II. They complain to the court in Lviv about this treatment. [PomnLw] IV nr. 841.

### **Pietro Bicherano (1404 – 1424) Merchant, Zupparius, Ambassador - Venice**

(1379-1381) – Pietro, when he was a young man, at the behest of his father, serves during the battle of Chioggia.<sup>1873</sup>

(1392/11/04) - A letter is sent from Venice by Pietro to Hilpolt Kress, merchant of Nuremberg, responding to another letter of Antonio Amadi, merchant of Venice, relaying information on the current market in Venice and the arrival of a ship from 'Romanya' - the Black Sea by way of Syria, carrying cargo of interest to the firm. The cargo consisted of: 3,500 sacks of raw cotton, 400 boxes of sugar, and 380 boxes of powdered sugar.<sup>1874</sup>

(1394) – The register of the del Maino bank of Milan marks an exchange between Petrus and Guielmo [William] Rummel, merchant of Nuremberg of 588 lb. Imp.<sup>1875</sup>

(1395/12/16) – Pietro stands as witness as Konrad Grau, merchant of Nuremberg, is registered to act as procurator for Johannes Siefel of Nuremberg in Venice.<sup>1876</sup>

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<sup>1871</sup> Date also possibly: (1451/09/18)

<sup>1872</sup> Serafino, *Corpus epistularum*, nr 19.

<sup>1873</sup> *Storia Della Repubblica Di Venezia Dal Suo Principio Sino Al Giorno D'oggi. Volume Quinto* (Venezia : G. Antonelli, 1850), 45

<sup>1874</sup> Philippe Braunstein, *Relations d'affaires entre Nurembergeois et Vénitiens à la fin du XIVe siècle*. *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire* 76 (1964): 269; See also: Eliyahu Ashtor, *Levant Trade in the Middle Ages*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 182; Stromer, Wolfgang. *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz, 1350-1450*. vol 1 (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1970), 121; Kurt Weissen, "Ci scrive in tedesco! The florentine merchant-banker tommaso spinelli and his german-speaking clients (1435-72)," *The Yale University Library Gazette* 74, no. 3/4 (2000): 12.

<sup>1875</sup> Archivio della Fabbrica del Duomo di Milano, Archivio del Mayno, Mastro 27, f. 232 and 241 (1394/11/VII-15/VII) see: Stromer *Oberdeutsche* vol 1, 121; Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 276.

<sup>1876</sup> According to Braunstein, ASV, Cane. Inf. 91, notary Giorgio de Gibellino should have held a number of procurations involving German merchants, and with Pietro Bicherano acting as a witness, or being named himself

(1396/01/20) - Pietro stands as witness as Konrad Plorer of Constance names Konrad Grau, *qui nunc residet hic Venetiis in fontico Theotonicorum*, - who is resident in the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* in Venice, as his procurator.<sup>1877</sup>

(1397) – Bona, Pietro’s wife, donates a house with a courtyard to the Convent of Corpus Domini in the district of Santa Lucia, with his approval. At this point they are married and living in San. Bartolomeo Parish. ASV, Corpus Domini, Perg. 1

(1398/05/14) - Pietro named co-procurator for the Convent of Corpus Christi in Venice. ASV, Cancelleria inferiore. Notai 21 book 2 fol. 83

(1399/11/03) – Petrus appears as the “*sindici e procurator*”, representative for the Dominican Corpus Christi convent in their ongoing legal dispute with Francesco Rabia.<sup>1878</sup>

(1399/11/22) - Nicolaus Mendel, Merchant of Nuremberg, who regularly lived and worked from the Fondaco dei Tedeschi in Venice, names Johannes Ebager of Nuremberg, as his procurator, with Pietro standing as witness.<sup>1879</sup>

(1400/02/04) - Pietro helps to supply books, along with the Venetian merchant Antonio Amadi, to the Dominican Corpus Christi Convent in Venice.<sup>1880</sup>

(1400/11/04) – Pietro named “*vardian*” of the Scuola grande de la Misericorde in Venice.<sup>1881</sup>

(1401/12/01) – Pietro is among the signatories of a request made to the Pope, together with other Venetians, for the return of the Church of St. Bartolomeo in Venice, that frequented by the Fondaco dei Tedeschi community, from its concession to be under the Patriachate of Grado, back to what it had before under Venice.<sup>1882</sup>

(1402/01/21) - Pietro is in Venice involved as a witness as Cristina Michael entered the convent of Corpus Domini<sup>1883</sup>

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procurator. In searching these files however, I found none of the documents indicated - the box was full of pregame and loose paper sheets, many of them wills, others involving family property disputes. No obvious German names were present and the dates suggested by Braunstein did not appear in the annotated records. I believe Braunstein to have discovered the documents he cites but having erred in writing down the appropriate archival documentation. I have therefore left the reference in place because I believe the documents authentic, even if I was unable to view them myself. Braunstein *Les Allemands*, 225 fn 103

<sup>1877</sup> Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 225 fn 103

<sup>1878</sup> Giovanni Dominici, *Lettere Spirituali*, ed. Maria T. Casella, and Giovanni Pozzi. (Fribourg Switzerland: Edizioni Universitarie, 1969), 341-2; Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 402.

<sup>1879</sup> Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 263 fn 252

<sup>1880</sup> Pietro is recorded in the surviving *Cronanca* (vi 117) of the now dissolved convent, as a Vicaron and one of its most faithful patrons. He appears here also alongside Antonio Amadi, who was also a factor for the Kress family firm. Dominici, *Lettere Spirituali*, 115-6.

<sup>1881</sup> ASV, Cane. Inf. 91 (1400/9/IV) Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 402.

<sup>1882</sup> *I Libri Commemorativi Della Repubblica Di Venezia*, eds. Riccardo Predelli and Pietro Bosmin. (Venice: a spese della Società, 1876), book 9 nr. 224.

<sup>1883</sup> Dominici, *Lettere Spirituali*, 115.

(1402/11/11) - Guilmus Rumel of Nuremberg is engaged in business with Pietro in Venice. ASV, Cancelleria inferiore. Notai. 225, fol 110<sup>1884</sup>

(1402/05/26) – Konrad Grau, merchant of Nuremberg, designates Pietro and the Venetian merchant Thomas Sayner of S. Cassian as his procurators in Venice.<sup>1885</sup>

(1402/05/13) – Konrad Seiler, merchant of Krakow working in the Fondaco dei Tedeschi in Venice, nominates Pietro and Tilman Sraiber (Schreiber) of Wrocław as his procurators.<sup>1886</sup>

(1404) – Pietro is in Wrocław collecting on debts for Ulrich Kammerer.<sup>1887</sup>

(1404/10/01) – Pietro is working now in Krakow with Albertus Rybniker, citizen of Krakow owing 300 fl.<sup>1888</sup>

(1404/10/07) – *Petro Pykaran de Veneciis* mentioned in the Lviv archives.<sup>1889</sup>

(1406) – Pietro borrows a large sum of money from Neri Tornaquinci, manager of the Venetian branch of Medici Bank in order to secure rental of the Krakow salt mines. He was later able to pay Neri back, but Neri failed to remit the money on to his Medici patrons. Recorded in the Medici secret accounts book (1419/05/24) *per nostro di qui per detto perche detto denari --- a noi per ragione che questa sot?zia avremo contro di Neri me detti sui beni.fu per danari avea rischoso per noi di ser Piero Bichierano in Carcovia, nostro debitore, i quali ci avea tenuti oculti piu. tenpo. Come per la franzia che di magnia somma a pari ordinata minte.*” ASF, MAP, filze 153, nr. 1, fol. 102v<sup>1890</sup>

(1406) – Pietro is owed 35 marks by the Krakow City Counselors for money borrowed from him to be given to Joahannes Tassonis – five marks per year for the remainder of his life. A further 22 fl given to Pietro which had again been borrowed by the Krakow City Council and given to Johannes Tassonis to pay for expenses incurred during his trip to the papal curia. Johannes had made the trip to complain on the council’s behalf against the presbyter Michaellem Korics. It was further noted that the expenses had amounted to 20 fl with an extra 2 being added as the cambium charge, so that the funds could be transferred presumably to Rome. ANK, Consol. Crac 427, fol 436; [Itali] nr 17

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<sup>1884</sup> *Guilmus Rumel de Norenbergo Rogavit Cantam comiss Set Petro Bicharano confinio Snc. Bartolomiu*

<sup>1885</sup> Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 225 fn 103.

<sup>1886</sup> Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 225 fn 103.

<sup>1887</sup> [APWr] Lib.exc.sign, vol. 15, p. 65 (1404). See: Grzegorz Mysliwski, “Venice and Wrocław in the later Middle Ages.” in *Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages: A Cultural History:[essays in Honour of Paul W. Knoll]*, Eds. Piotr Górecki and Nancy Deussen. (London: Tauris Academic Studies), 2009, 114 fn. 161.

<sup>1888</sup> ANK, Consol. Crac. 427, fol. 200.

<sup>1889</sup> *Studii si documente privind istoria romanilor*, vol. 23 Edited by Nicolae Iorga, (Bucharest: Editura Ministeriului De Instructie Publica, 1913), 293.

<sup>1890</sup> (1419/05/24) Roover is in error when he state that the middle line of the reading is to be found on folio 103 when in fact it is located on folio 102v. Roover, *The Rise*, 241 fn. 76.

(1406) – Dorathea Puslbanyne testifies that she owes Pietro 7 marks in Krakow. ANK, Consol. Crac 427, fol 438.<sup>1891</sup>

(1406/05/24) – Pietro, together with Leonardo Bartoli and Johannes Doctor Decretus, is involved in a project to send a pair of lions as a diplomatic gift from the Signoria in Florence to King Władysław II Jagiełło of Poland [John Śledź of Lubień].<sup>1892</sup>

(1406/09/03) - Pietro gives his son Francesco the right to act as his procurator in all matters in Venice. ASV, Cane. Inf. 96, (Griffon Pietro), book 1 fol. 24.

(1406/11/21) - Pietro signs a charter renting the Krakow salt mines from King Władysław Jagiełło for 17,000 marks for four years, with the first twenty months free of any payment after which 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the sum was to be paid in the local currency and 1/3<sup>rd</sup> in either Prague grosz or florins. [SPPP] 10 nr 154 pg. 78-9.<sup>1893</sup>

(1407/11/2-1407/12/04) - Pietro, identified as *Petrus Gallicus monetarius in Cracovia*, loans 200 fl to the City of Lviv, to be then taken by Peter Strechir the City Notary, to the papal curia around November second. He is then dually repaid by the 4th of December - St. Barbara's day - he is paid 1 sexagene for the instrument. [KsLwow 1], 28-9 nr 113

(1407/09/07)<sup>1894</sup> - Pietro, identified as Pietro Pykaran, is mentioned for the first time in Krakow sources as Zupparius in the city's notarial register "*Domini consules concesserunt d. Jesschkoni capitaneo Cracoviensi nomine regis petenti 22 mr. communis monete, quos magister Nicolaus muratoris receipt, promisit solver – per Petrum Picaranum supparium*. ANK, Consul Crac. 427, fol. 291; [CA1] nr 140

(1408/04/24) - Sale of 4,000 centars of lead from Pietro to Lucas Kerzener and Ulrich Reze, representatives for the Nuremberg Kammerer-Seiler-Grau Company for 2,000 shock grosz. The lead was then shipped from Krakow to Wrocław, and from there on the Vistula towards Toruń, and eventually to the Baltic Sea and onwards to Flanders. ANK, Consul Crac. 427, fol. 315<sup>1895</sup>

(1409/01/29) - *Pascbek de Doluszice* and *Johannes Aduocatus de Mislimicze* [Myślenice] gives up the village of Siercza, located not far from Wieliczka, of which a part was owned by Michael

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<sup>1891</sup> *In nomine dominus tentur ad testamentum domina Dorathea Puslbanyne 46 marc gros. Praugensis de quibus solverunt primo pro debito domine Petro Pykeran 7 marc gros Praugensis. Liter mendico magister Mythadi in..*

<sup>1892</sup> ASF, Signoria, Missive, Cancancellaria 27, fol 1 reproduced in, *Codex epistolaris saeculi decimi quinti 1384-1496* Vol. 1 edited by August Sokołowski and Józef Szujski (Krakow: Akademia Umiejętności, 1876), nr 25; [Itali] nr. 18.

<sup>1893</sup> For a proper dating of the event see: Jerzy Zatycki, "Ze źródeł do dziejów walki klasowej w żupach krakowskich. Pamiętnik Biblioteki Kórnickiej Z. 5." [From sources to the history of the class struggle in the Cracow villages. Diary of the Kórnicka Library Vol 5]. *Biblioteka Kórnicka* (1955); 178-80.

<sup>1894</sup> The Saturday before the Nativity of the Virgin is September 7<sup>th</sup> according to the Julian calendar in use at the time. According to the modern Gregorian calendar the date would be reckoned as September 20<sup>th</sup>.

<sup>1895</sup> Strommer cites the record of the original agreement between Pietro and Ulrich incorrectly stating that it is to be found on ANK, [Consul Crac.] 427, folio 245 when in fact it is on 315. Strommer, *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz*, vol 1, 10 fn 184

Long, citizen of Krakow, to Pietro and his nephew, Bonagiunta, for 220 marks *latorum grossorum* and a further 52 marks in the common currency. [SPPP] 2 nr 1191

(1409/05/26) – Pietro appears for the first time in the secret accounting book of Giovanni di Bicci di Medici, in relation to the scandalous affair of Neri di Cipriano Tornaquinci and collection of related debts. ASF, 153 nr 1 fol. 48r

(1409/12/07) – Mentioned as Zupparius in the notarial records of Wrocław . [Breslau], 245

(1410/03/11) – Pietro and Bonagiunta, his nephew, rent the other half of the village of Siercza, redeeming it from Michael Long from Paulus de Doluszyce and his wife Helena, seemingly to supply wood for burning and use at the mines in Wieliczka. [SPPP] 2, nr 1243.

(1410/03/12) – Pietro makes a deal with Konrad Seiler to supply gold and silver brought from the Kingdom of Hungary for transport to Flanders. ANK, Consul Crac. 427, fol. 363.

(1410/05/26) – A controversy arises with Paschconi and his wife over the village of Siercza and Pietro is brought before the court in Krakow. [SPPP] 2 nr 1253

(1410/11/02) – Albizzo di Medici was sent to Krakow on behalf of the Medici Bank, where he sought to get some of the money owed to Neri Tornaquinci and the Medici Bank paid by Pietro Bicherano. Albizzo succeeded in convincing Pietro to pay a portion of the debt, which was recorded in the yellow book of the Medici accounts after the event - on February 28<sup>th</sup>, 1412. ASF, MaP Filza 153, doc. 1, fol. 80rv

(1411/05/18) – Pietro is tapped to be an “Ambassador” by the Venetian Senate at Zannachius Quirino’s suggestion, who having just come himself from Poland, recommends that they seek to use Pietro’s influence with King Władysław Jagiełło, in order to get the Polish King on their side in their brewing troubles with King Sigismund of Hungary [FRPolVen], nr 1

(1411/08/28) – Pietro receives 10 marks from Nicolaus Schraw *concivem de Frawenstat* and Johannes Schirmer. [Itali] nr 21

(1411/09/24 – 1412/01/23) – Pietro is tapped to be an “Ambassador” by the Venetian council at Zannachius Quirino’s suggestion who having just come himself from Poland, recommends that they seek to use his influence with King Władysław Jagiełło, in order to get the Polish King on their side in their brewing troubles with King Sigismund in Hungary. [FRPolVen], nr 2, nr 3, nr 4, nr 5, nr 6, nr 7

(1412/01/18) – Pietro is involved in a case before the court with Alberti, Cleric of Bochnia. [CA2] nr 98

(1412/03/12) - Petrus gives 25 florin worth of cochineal dye to Jorge Hutter for him to take to Italy and sell - 1/3rd of profit or loss is to accrue to Jorge Hutter. When Peter hears back that the load has been sold from his acquaintances in either Florence or Venice then he will consider him relieved of the debt. [Ital.] nr 22

(1412/05/06) – Pietro appears in the secret Medici account books *Giovani di Bicci di Medici*, mentioning his earlier payment of debts to Albizzo di Medici.<sup>1896</sup>

(1413/05/04) - King Władysław Jagiełło orders Pietro, as Zupparius of the Krakow salt mines, to supply the new Carmelite Monastery in Krakow with a certain amount of salt annually. [KDKK] nr 545 pg. 382

(1413/05/15) – Pietro is to be paid back 20 marks by Janusch Formen von Kaschen (of Kosice), by November 11<sup>th</sup>, who will only be able to pay 13 marks at this juncture.<sup>1897</sup>

(1413/07/03) – Stanislaus, heir of Lednycza, sells a meadow and a horse in Chorangwiczka to Bonagiunta, nephew of Pietro, for use by the salt mines, for 58 marks ½ grosz and 10 measures of grain. [SPPP] 2 nr 1322-23

(1414/02/02) – Gifts presented by Pietro, jointly with the *Advocat Drohobicensis* from the City of Lviv to King Władysław Jagiełło in Lublin. [PomnLW] I nr 337 pg. 131

(1414/07/12) - Francesco Bicherano, son of Pietro writes included in a letter of complaint from the Venetian Council directed toward their ambassador Nicolaus Comte of Senj about various problems, including that Francesco had been unduly taxed and 1.5 gold marks taken from him which had been sent by his father Petrus. This money had been sent to Francesco from Krakow to Senj where it had illegally taken from him. The council requested that the money be returned to the Council's Rectors in either Zadar or the town of Arbe on the Island of Rab.<sup>1898</sup>

(1415/02/02) – Pietro is mentioned in the city books of Wrocław . [Breslau], 245

(1419) – The Venetian Senate agrees to pay William Rummel 94 marks, which he had loaned to Pietro in a letter of exchange taken to Poland by the Venetian notary, Francisco de la Senj. William had loaned the money to Pietro to pay for expenses incurred on the Serenissima's behalf during Pietro's time working as their ambassador to the King of Poland. The

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<sup>1896</sup> e Benedetto di Bardi ppi- Oro anno ad VI di Maggio dl di Mila cento sesanta an queste di Ser XXVIII aff preo li debino dare a lib al et 57 Il quali rimaste I nostri di Venezia con Fl. 296 dl per – 27 Ser 10 d 1 pre 12 6 Che in salva avere misser P. Bicherano che saper atrnta a noi pro una ragione Vecchia tenuta aldeto misser P. / let fl. 9CCC fl in Ser CVIII a fl pro C 125

Ser 12 d 9 daver la h o bono ldn dva per noi di Franchescho Banici per parte

Di fl con de Se rischossi di avere Ser. P Bicherano il detto Franchescho Banici e fl CCCC

--- da Ser Biagio da soma

-----da la companifa di Ser Piero Bicherano detto per una conta che Balbani di Lucha dobbiamo avere che a noi ssapere nostra.

C di XX! Di Maggio 1414 fl. Con ile otto cento di avemo dano sui di Dze

Preo debino dare o gsto 86

<sup>1897</sup> *lawnicza kazimierska 1407-1427/Acta scabinalia Casimiriensia 1407-1427*, ed. Bożena Wyrozumska (Krakow: Drukrol, 1996), nr 1400.

<sup>1898</sup> *Monumenta Spectantia Historiam Slavorum Meridionalium: vol 20* (Zagreb: Župan Albrecht et Fiedler, 1882), 160.



reimbursement was made through a letter of exchange, and Rummel was eventually paid for his services in January of 1422.<sup>1899</sup>

(1420) - Part of the mine at Bochnia is sublet from Peter, with the King Władysław Jagiełło's approval, by Nicolaus de Galarnino, Przeclao and Nicolao de Czacz, knights of the king for 900 marks and 60 gosz to be paid over 4 years, to help improve issues with the mine shafts. [EFEII] nr 13

(1420) – The 170 marks given by Pietro to Nicholas, citizen of Krakow thesaurus of the king in charge of both the mills and the salt mines' work, is audited by Johannes de Tęczyn and Clemens de Maskorzew *auditores regis*. [EFEII] nr 30

(1423/05/14) - Pietro named as procurator for Margaretha woman of Stradom in a case she has with Mathia Laico of Olkusz - he is named here as master of the stronghold of Proszowice. [CA2] nr 203

(1423/04/19) - Pietro named as *procurator et signatur* by Nicolaus de Moskorzow Canon of Krakow, in a case with Nicolao Morawka *fabro de Weliczka*, Stanisław de Wolya and Clemente de Zaczow *kmethonibus* - [CA2] nr 205

(1424/07/31) – Pietro's death noted in the Krakow city books "*hoc nocte defuncti*" by Tilman von Bruke, Petrus Edlinger, and Johannes, Pietro's procurators. ANK, Consul Crac. 428 pg. 213

(1427) – The Catasto of Giovanni di messer Bartolomeo Panciatichi indicates that he did business with *Ser Piero Biccherano di Charchovia*, likely involving the textile trade.<sup>1900</sup>

(1428/12/28) – Bona, wife of Pietro, leaves 5 ducats for prayers to be said for his soul in her first will. ASV, Testamaneti 554, notaio Griffon Pietro, doc. nr. 48.<sup>1901</sup>

### **Pietro Cavallo (1347-1369) Zupparius - Genoa**

(1347) - *Petro Gallico* assists in transporting 305 fl worth of papal funds to Bruges. [MPV] II pg 34 nr 39

(1351) - *Petro Gallico*, son of Fredericus helps transfer 1,371 fl worth of papal funds to Bruges [MPV] II pg 57-8 nr 83

(1351/08/19) - For certain unspecified debts, Nicolaus Spiczmiri, together with his son Petro and daughter Helena, hand over 1/2 of a stall in the central square of Krakow, which they had

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<sup>1899</sup> *Der Fondaco Dei in Venedig Und Die Deutsch-Venetianischen Handelsbeziehungen*, ed Henry Simonsfeld, (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1887), nr 330; Braunstein, *Les Allemands*, 277.

<sup>1900</sup> Giovanni di messer Bartolomeo Panciatichi was, according to his 1427 tax return, the 5th wealthiest man in Florence. He and his extended family had significant interests in Hungary; where they traded primarily in textiles. ASF, Catasto 53, cc. 332r-343v (1427), see: Weissen, *Die Marktstrategien der florentinischen Banken*, 251 fn 5; Arany, "Florenties," 225-6; Prajda, *Network and Migration*, 172-4.

<sup>1901</sup> Laso Ducati cinque per mandar un latra persona al dicto pride- per anima de mio marido Ser Piero Bicharan

from Heynczco de Colonia, along with a house at the corner of St. Francis Street, to Pietro Cavallo the nephew of *Paulini Gallici Zuppari*, and his wife Elizabeth. [NKiRMK] nr 1625

(1350's?) – A document describing a formula for the salary, and a receipt attested to by the royal tailor that was paid by the Zupparius – Peter – here used as the example. The tailor was to be paid 5 marks in salt for the autumn term of a 4-quarter annual cycle, so 20 marks per year. [SPPP] 10 pg 16 nr. 23

(1355) - Pietro and his wife Elizabeth sell their house on the corner of St. Francis Street in Krakow to Nicholas Wigandi [NKiRMK] nr 1669

(1357) – Pietro founds a hospital in Bochnia. [KDMP] III pg 100 nr. 716

(1369)- Pietro is dead - *Peterlinus de Ianua olim nostrum zupparium Bochnensem*, but a charter recognizes his donation of a house in Krakow to the Cistercian Abbey of Mogiła. [KMog], 83

(1370) – Per the will of the deceased Pietro - *Peterlinus de Ianua zuppari divae memoriae*, the executor of his will, Petrus Winrichi, sees to it that a *curia* in *via sancte Crucis* near a spot already owned by the monks of Mogiła is given to them. [KMog], 71

### **Pietro di Filippo di Guidotti (1393) – Bologna**

(1393/01/29), Francesco Guidotti names his brother Pietro as his procurator. [KLK] nr. 1651

### **Pietro Messopero di Ansaldo (1441-1470) *heredem Licostomi Consulem Francorum* – Genoa**

(1441/05/29 1441/07/14) – Paulo Grimaldi stands as procurator and guarantor for Jeronimo di Olmiero in Gródek [Городок], where within 4 weeks Jeronimo is supposed to appear before the Captain of Gródek. Paulo agrees to stand as his procurator should he not come, upon pain of paying 270 fl. “Turcales” owed to the Italian, Pietro Messopero. [AGZ] 14 nr 275, nr 301

(1445/03/23) – Angelo Lercario of Genoa brings a case at the court in Lviv against Nicholas Zyndrich, citizen of Lviv, defended by Nicoulaus *Iuvenem scultetus* and preconsul, and Clement Cadyn, City Councilor of Lviv. Taking up Angelo's part were Cristoforo di San. Romulo Customs Officer of Lviv, Carlo di Bozzolo, and Pietro Messopero listed as *heredem Licostomi Consulem Francorum*. Nicholas had agreed to a contract with Angelo, for some amount of *Borman?*, worth 1,200 hufl. agreed to in front of officials and valid within the bounds of the Polish Kingdom. It had been agreed that Angelo would deliver the *Borman* to Galata (Constantinople). He did so, but for some reason, not the full amount. The parties together mutually agreed that Angelo was obliged to pay Nicholas 800 fl within 6 months. [AGZ] 14 nr 1340

(1442/10/31) – The Apprentices Hannus Czweweler from Rathibor, Thomas Wynniger's son from Newenkirchen; Hannos, Hannos Becken's son from Lubschicz; Mert Koffner's son from Markenhaws; Bartosch, Mend's son from Sokolnik, are all quit of the oath that they were

ordered to take regarding the manslaughter of Pietro's servant called Heyncze. [PomnLw] IV nr 773<sup>1902</sup>

(1444/1223) - Pietro stood among those present as witnesses at the court in Lviv. [AGZ] 14 CDXXX

(1445/06/25-07/23) - Pietro is engaged in a dispute with Sancho, the Jew of Lviv, over monies owed to Sancho, who holds a charter declaring this. Pietro claims that he holds another charter signed by a supposedly higher authority – Cristoforo di San. Romulo in his capacity as “*Iudicum Iudeorum*” – Jewish Judge, claiming the opposite. The group agree to meet again in 2 weeks and this Pietro does, sending his *familiarus* Stanislaus before the Lviv court to deal with the Sancho case, but nothing is decided. Sancho then appears in court but Pietro fails to appear – all wait until candles are lit and still no Pietro, therefore Sancho wins the case. [AGZ] 14 nr 1406, 1411, 1412, 1436.

(1470/02/31) – Pietro is dead before this date and his daughter Anastasia seeks to claim his estate in Lviv. [AGZ] 15 nr 3565

### **Pietro Veluti (1465-1467) Merchant - Venice**

(1465/11/21) - Pietro's brother Nembrot has died. Pietro, his brother Bernhard and brother in-law Ffrancisci Frandini, have come to Lviv, to seeking to recover Nembrot's assets, with the kind assistance of Arnolfo Tedaldi of Florence. [SDIR] nr 17

(1465/11/28-1466/04/23) - To settle outstanding debts on Nembrot Veluti's estate owed to his heirs from the company created by him, Arnolfo Tedaldi and Juliano di Valetaris, an arrangement is made. By this arrangement, all customs revenue from the Lviv customs would be given to Pietro, with Arnolfo Tedaldi paying Pietro 600 fl up front in goods. When the revenue was not sufficient, the deal was modified so that only Thursday's and Friday's take of each week would be given to Pietro until the debt was repaid; with some money also coming from Arnolfo's rights to the Drohobych [Дрогобич] salt mines and tolls at Gródek [Городок].  
1903

(1466) - Johannes Kinar de Wratislavia sold unspecified goods in Lviv and paid the tariffs owed on the goods to Pietro, who was now in charge of collecting such customs duties.<sup>1904</sup>

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<sup>1902</sup>[off seyner nesten frimde halferede – I am not sure of this term, maybe it refers to the fact that someone spoke up on their behalf?].

<sup>1903</sup> Consul. Leopoliensis. 1460 — 1506, p. 110, 118, 122, 140, 142. As recorded by Jan Ptaśnik from his assessment of the Lviv City Council books. I have not personally accessed these volumes; but believe Ptaśnik's explanation of the events to be credible. See: Ptaśnik, *Kultura Włoska*, 58-9.

<sup>1904</sup> Mysliwski, “Venice and Wrocław,” 106 fn. 63.

(1466/03/05) - Pietro stood witness, together with Pascalis Walacha and Colojani Walata de Albo Castro, to a transaction involving the exchange of 205 hufl between Michel Koler de Soczavia and Lukinus de Caffa, guarantor for Iacobo Italico de Sancto Salvatore. [SDIR] nr 20

(1467/06/04) – The other partner involved with Nembrot Veluti and Arnolfo Tedaldi - Juliano di Valetaris, dies. Arnolfo is now stuck covering a debt owed to Pietro Veluti equal to 1,723 hufl of which 900 hufl has already been repaid, leaving a remainder of 823 fl. To cover this, Arnolfo takes a loan of 400 hufl from Lawrence Lomelino in return for allowing him to collect the customs for a period of time and is thus able to settle the debt to the Veluti Family. Arnolfo borrows 400 hufl from *Laurentiu Lomellino "Italicus de Pera"* with the *nobilis Nicolaus de Fuligo, Italicus* standing as his guarantor, in order to pay off funds owed to Pietro as the heir of Nemrot Veluti of Venice.<sup>1905</sup> [SDIR] nr 27

(1467/06/04) – Pietro and Arnolfo Tedaldi seek in Lviv to come to terms over Nembrot Veluti's will. [SDIR] nr 30, 31

### **Raphael di Sancto Romulo (1453)**

(1453/02/21) - List of jurors overseeing a case with the City Councilors in Lviv including a number of Italians - *Vincencio Christoforo de sancto Romulo, Iuliano de Dzubolch de Capha, Durinus Cahenius lanuansis, Raphael de Sancto Romulo, Anthonius de Valateriis lanuansis Italicis et ludeis*. [AGZ] 14 nr. MLXXXIX

### **Rinaldo di Sandro di Altoviti (1428-1430) Factor - Florence**

(1411) – Rinaldo was born in Florence to Sandro di Vieri Altoviti, the future father-in-law of Michele di ser Matteo, and Eletta Albizzi. ASF, Catasto 38 (1427) fol. 671r-677v

(1428/06/19) – Rinaldo is sent to Wrocław and Krakow to assist in the transfer of a large shipment of cochineal dye and precious furs to Venice, as arranged by Johannes Bank, Antonio and Michele di ser Matteo. [Itali] nr 50

(1429/04/16) – Rinaldo testifies before the court in Krakow to his part working as a *famulus* for Antonio di ser Matteo, in his trial with Johannes Bank over the transfer of furs and cochineal dye to Venice. [Itali] nr 53

(1430/11/15) – Rinaldo testifies before a court in Venice as part of the ongoing legal battle between Antonio and Michele di ser Matteo and Johannes Bank, stating that Antonio was able to pay over 1,500 ducats, not in coin, but in salt as was a legal custom in Poland if not in Italy. [Itali] nr 62

<sup>1905</sup> Consul. Leopoliensis. 1460 — 1506, p. 110, 118, 122, 140, 142. As recorded by Jan Ptaśnik from his assessment of the Lviv city council books. I have not personally accessed these volumes but believe Ptaśnik's explanation of the events to be credible. See: Ptaśnik, *Kultura Włoska*, 58-9.

(1431/01/31) – Rinaldo submitted Michele di ser Matteo's Catasto tax return that had been compiled in Venice, to Florence. ASF, Catasto 361 (1430) 361, 364v<sup>1906</sup>

### **Rinaldo Italico (1440)<sup>1907</sup>**

(1440/10/25) – King Władysław III requests that Zweridus, member of the Krakow City Council, take care of an amount of silver owed by King Sigismund of Hungary, the king's predecessor, to be taken from Buda to Krakow and given to Nicholaus Camencz and Nicolaus called Molner. [CA1] nr 360

### **Simone di Talenti (1403) Merchant – *Bologna/Florence***

(1403/03/31) - Simone sends 505 marks worth of goods with Andree Czarnissa to his brother John in Kosice to purchase silver for the Krakow mint. ANK, Consl. Crac. 427, 176.

### **Simone Gallicus (1315 -1318)**

(1315/05/13) – *Symoni Gallico* sells ¼ of a lot in the region of St. Florian's church in Krakow. [NKiRMK] nr 364

(1318/11/18) - *Gotfridus dictus septemhospes*, sells ½ of a lot to Simone Gallicus on St. Florian's Street in Krakow. [NKiRMK] nr 52

### **Stefano di Promontorio (1488-1489) Merchant - *Genoa***

(1488/03/11) – Stefano is granted full citizenship rights by the Poznań City Council together with his brother Paolo on the condition that within two years they purchase a proper house on the central square. Failing this, they must pay to the city 200 fl. [ActaPoz] II nr 1493

(1488/07/09) – Stefano and his brother Paolo purchase a stone house on the central square in Poznań for 1,500 fl. from Caspar Heida, paying in installments. [ActaPoz] II nr 1500

(1489) – Jan, a sheerer from Poznań, sells to Stefano and his brother Paolo a property inherited from his wife Barbara Heyda's dowry - a garden in front of the Wroniecka Gate in Poznań, between the gardens of Burchard and Grzegorz Strosberg, together with a pond and water flowing from the moat through a canal to this garden. In 1521, this property would be transferred to Augustino Mazoni di Promontorio, who held it until his death in 1523.<sup>1908</sup>

### **Stephanus Gallicus (1366-1380)**

(1366/06/26) – Stephanus purchases a house in Krakow [KLK] nr 62

<sup>1906</sup> As the Florentine calendar marked the start of the new year from March 1<sup>st</sup>, in the register, the date is read as 1430 rather than 1431.

<sup>1907</sup> Rinaldo di Dego Rinaldeschi? See Arany, 229.

<sup>1908</sup> "Promontorio," Słownik Historyczno-Geograficzny ziem Polskich w średniowieczu Edycja elektroniczna <http://www.slownik.ihpan.edu.pl/search.php?q=promontorio&d=0&t=0> Accessed January 2021

(1366/06/26) – Jacobus Gallicus gives Stephanus a load of lead to pay off a debt. [KLK] nr 65

(1366/10/09) – Stephanus sells his home in Krakow to Jacobus Gallicus [KLK] nr 78

(1367/02/19) – Stephanus sells 1/4<sup>th</sup> of a plot of land he owns in Krakow to Jacobo de Zamboczin. [KLK] nr 112

(1367/06/26) – Stephanus sells a plot of land in Krakow to Martin the Organist [KLK] nr 155

(1367/10/12) – Stephanus stands surety for Petro Kegeler for three marks owed to Hanco Monachus. [KLK] nr 216

(1370/12/07) – Stanislaus, son of the deceased Bertholdi Swarcze de Sandomiria, gives over his house with a foundation in *platea Sügassa* to his brother in-law, Stefanus Gallicus. [KLK] nr 515

(1371/04/18) - Stephanus agrees to pay off a loan of 7 marks made to him by Tutpetro in installments throughout the coming year. [KLK] nr 558

(1372/01/23) - Stephanus rents a stone house and adjacent malt house, located on the corner opposite St. Stephan's Church, from Niczco Wirsingi. - [KLK] nr 658

(1375/05/18) - Stephanus is in court in Krakow over a loan of 10 marks and 5 scot. to Johannes Jegndorf. [KLK] nr 1080

(1375/06/01) - Miczco de Mislowicz recognizes a debt of 5 marks minus 1 scot. owed to Stephanus. [KLK] nr 1087

(1376/04/25) - Miczco de Mislowicz owes Stephanus money for a house he is renting on *platea Figulorum* in Krakow. [KLK] nr 1199

(1377/01/16) – Stephanus is named in the sources as *Scultetus de Brunowicze, civis Cracoviensis, advocatus supremii iudici supremo Teutonico in Castro Cracoviensi* - hereditary mayor of Bronowice Polskie [Bronowice Małe] a modern district of Krakow, citizen of Krakow, and supreme judge of the High Court of German Law in Krakow Castle. [KDMP III] nr. 889 pg. 303

(1377/06/20) –Stephanus Gallicus de Bronowicze appears as a signatory to a charter involving property transfer in Michałowice. [KDMP III] nr 892 pg. 310

(1380/10/17) –Stephanus is the witness in a charter issued by the High Court of Magdeburg Law with Iacussius called Pegza presiding, on a property division case. [KDMP III] nr 916 pg 334

**Thomas Italicus di Placencia (1457) Merchant - Piacenza**

(1457/10/02) - Thomas brings Marcus Craschowsky de Cracovia to court over a debt in *literis cambi* – letter of exchange, worth 120 fl, which he presents to the court, winning the case. [SPPP 2] nr 3593

**Urbanus de Zenowa (1424) – Genoa?**

(1424/08/05) - *Magister Iohannes, medicus Italicus uxoratus, Lodvicus de Florentia zupparius, Urbanus de Zenowa et Papius de Florentia, Italici*, agree to stand surety for Leonardo di ser Matteo, who is sitting in prison, for up to 20 marks. [Itali] nr 41