

IMAGINING LOYALTY IN FRAGMENTED POLAND

(ca. 1200-1333)

By
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Submitted to Central European University - Private University
Department of Historical Studies

*In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Late
Antique, Medieval and Early Modern Studies*

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Vienna, Austria
2026

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Vienna, 30 January 2026

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Declaration of Generative AI

To the best of my knowledge, generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) was not used in this work. I, the author, take full responsibility for the content, claims, and references.

Acknowledgements

This thesis, conceived of all the way back during the COVID-19 pandemic, would not have been written without the help of a great number of people - to all of whom I am eternally grateful. My first and deepest thanks go to my primary supervisor, Katalin Szende, who agreed to guide me through this project. I could not imagine a better advocate for my research and a more attentive reader of any of my writing. I also want to thank my second supervisor, Balázs Nagy, whose calm trust in my abilities and helpful hand in obtaining secondary literature were and remain very much appreciated. During my time at CEU, I also became deeply indebted to Éloïse Adde, who shared with me her books, insights, and whole new theoretical perspectives. I also want to recognize the hard work of Csilla Dobos, who frequently alleviated any administrative concerns a PhD student might have.

Long research visit in Warsaw had a great impact on the shape of this work, and would not have been possible without the financial support of OeAD in the form of Marietta Blau-Stipendium. I want to thank everyone whom I had the pleasure of meeting at the University of Warsaw for the warm welcome and stimulating discussions. I extend my utmost gratitude to Marcin R. Pauk and Paweł Żmudzki, with whom I had the opportunity to discuss parts of this work. I also want to thank Antoni Grabowski for extending invitations to participate in events organized by the Polish Academy of Sciences.

With the help of the Botstiber Foundation & IAS CEU Fellowship, I was able to find more time for writing up parts of this thesis while staying at CEU's old campus. I want to thank IAS's director, Balázs Trencsényi, for this opportunity, as well as Balázs Nagy (again) and Dániel Bagi for inviting me to participate in doctoral seminars at ELTE during my stay in Budapest.

I would like to convey my appreciation to all CEU colleagues: Roman Tymoshevskyi, Daria Ageeva, Samuel Bena, Jack Wilson, Karsten Schuil, and Bernat Racz for their comments, recommendations, and daily comradeship. Special thanks to my friends, Anja Božič (for facing undergraduate students with me) and David Rockwell (for all his good advice I ignored). Finally, to my family: my parents, my sister, my partner - for cheering me on, all my thanks, and all my love.

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Note on Names

Writing about the history of Central Europe in English always poses the problem of names. I decided to opt for the names that best place the discussed figures in the context of respective national historiographies. Thus, whenever writing about Piast rulers, I will refer to them by their Polish names (Henryk not Henry, Kazimierz not Casimir). The same is true for neighboring Hungarian, Bohemian, and German rulers and their subjects: thus György (not Gregory) Baksa or Václav (not Wenceslaus).

There are two exceptions to that. The names of Saints are rendered in anglicized form (so St Stanislaus or St Hedwig rather than Bishop Stanisław or Duchess Jadwiga). I also refer to both Polish medieval authors named Vincentius (of Cracow and of Kielcza) by their Latinized, rather than Polish name Wincenty or anglicized Wincent. I feel this is excused, given the prevalence of this latinized form in most recent Anglophone historiography.

Piast rulers tend to be given nicknames, which can be traced back (at times dubiously) to medieval, but rarely contemporaneous traditions. As they are a handy tool of differentiation among the genealogical entanglements, I will be using even those that are slowly fading out of Polish historiographical practice (like Mieszko IV Tanglefoot). In cases where two translations of the given nickname already function in Anglophone historiography, I opted for those which are less confusing for the contextless reader. Thus, Bolesław II Rogatka will be called Bolesław II the Bald (and not “the Horned”), while King Władysław Łokietek will be called Władysław the Short (and not “the Elbow-high”).

Unless they have a well-established English exonym (Cracow and Warsaw), place-names are given in Polish or other modern languages, both in text and references. For pre-1945 publications, the names reflect the realities at the time of publishing (As in the cases of works published before 1945 in Breslau and Lwów).

List of Abbreviations

ACRB	<i>Archivum coronae regni Bohemiae</i>
AGZ	Akta grodzkie i ziemskie z czasów Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej
CDP	<i>Codex Diplomaticus Poloniae</i>
DKM	Dokumenty kujawskie i mazowieckie przeważnie z XIII wieku
GpP	<i>Gesta principum Polonorum</i>
KDKK	Kodeks dyplomatyczny katedry karkowskiej św Wacława
KDM	Kodeks dyplomatyczny Małopolski
KDW	Kodeks Dyplomatyczny Wielkopolski
KDW SN	Kodeks Dyplomatyczny Wielkopolski. Series Nova
KkK	Kalendarz katedry Krakowskiej
KTyn	Kodeks Dyplomatyczny Klasztoru Tynieckiego
<i>Liber Foundationis</i>	<i>Liber Foundationis Claustri Sanctae Mariae Virginis in Henrichow</i>
Lites	<i>Lites ac res gestae inter Polonos Ordinemque Cruciferorum</i>
MGH SS	Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores
MPH	Monumenta Poloniae Historica
MPH NS	Monumenta Poloniae Historica nova series
MPV	Monumenta Poloniae Vaticana
NKDMaz	Nowy kodeks dyplomatyczny Mazowsza
PAU	Polska Akademia Umiejętności
PIUB	Pommerellisches Urkundenbuch
PSB	Polski Słownik Biograficzny
PWN	Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe
RBM	<i>Regesta diplomatica nec nec epistolaria Bohemiae et Moraviae</i>
RkG	Rocznik kapituły Gnieźnieńskiej

RkK	Rocznik kapituły Krakowskiej
RkP	Rocznik kapituły Poznańskiej
RS	<i>Regesten zur schlesischen Geschichte</i>
SCP	Silesian <i>Chronica Polonorum</i>
SUB	Schlesisches Urkundenbuch
ZDM	Zbiór dokumentów Małopolskich
ZDMaz	Zbiór ogólny przywilejów i wspominków Mazowieckich

Maps and Genealogical Tables



Figure 1: Map of Fragmented Poland ca. 1250. Source: *Legitimation of the Elites in High Medieval Poland and Norway: Comparative Studies*, eds. Wojtek Jezierski et al. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2025), 15.



Figure 2: Map of the reunified Polish Kingdom of Władysław the Short. Source: Paul W. Knoll, *The Rise of the Polish Monarchy: Piast Poland in East Central Europe, 1320-1370* (Chicago- London: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 53.

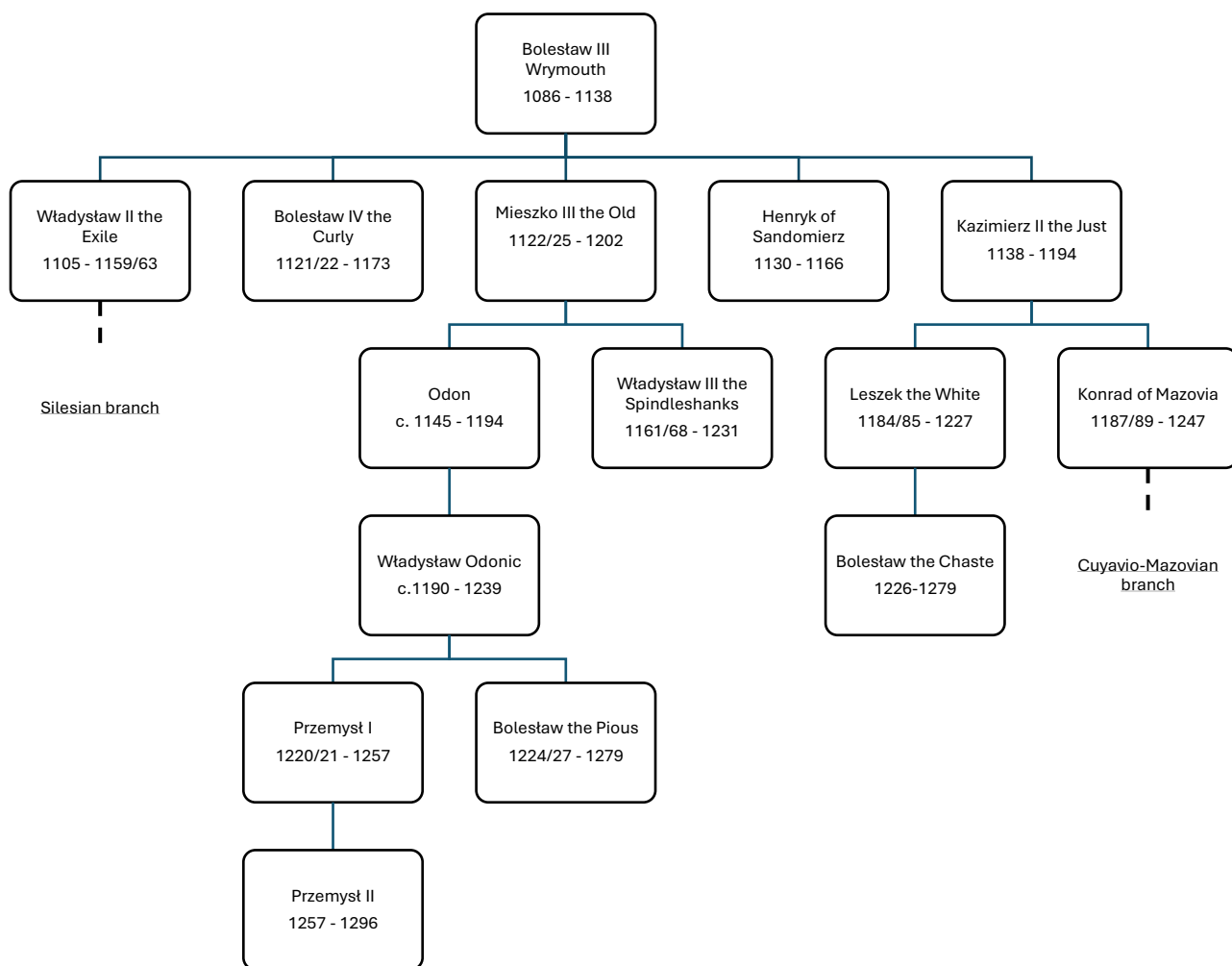


Figure 3: Simplified Genealogical Tree of the Piast Dynasty (Greater- and Lesser Polish Branches)

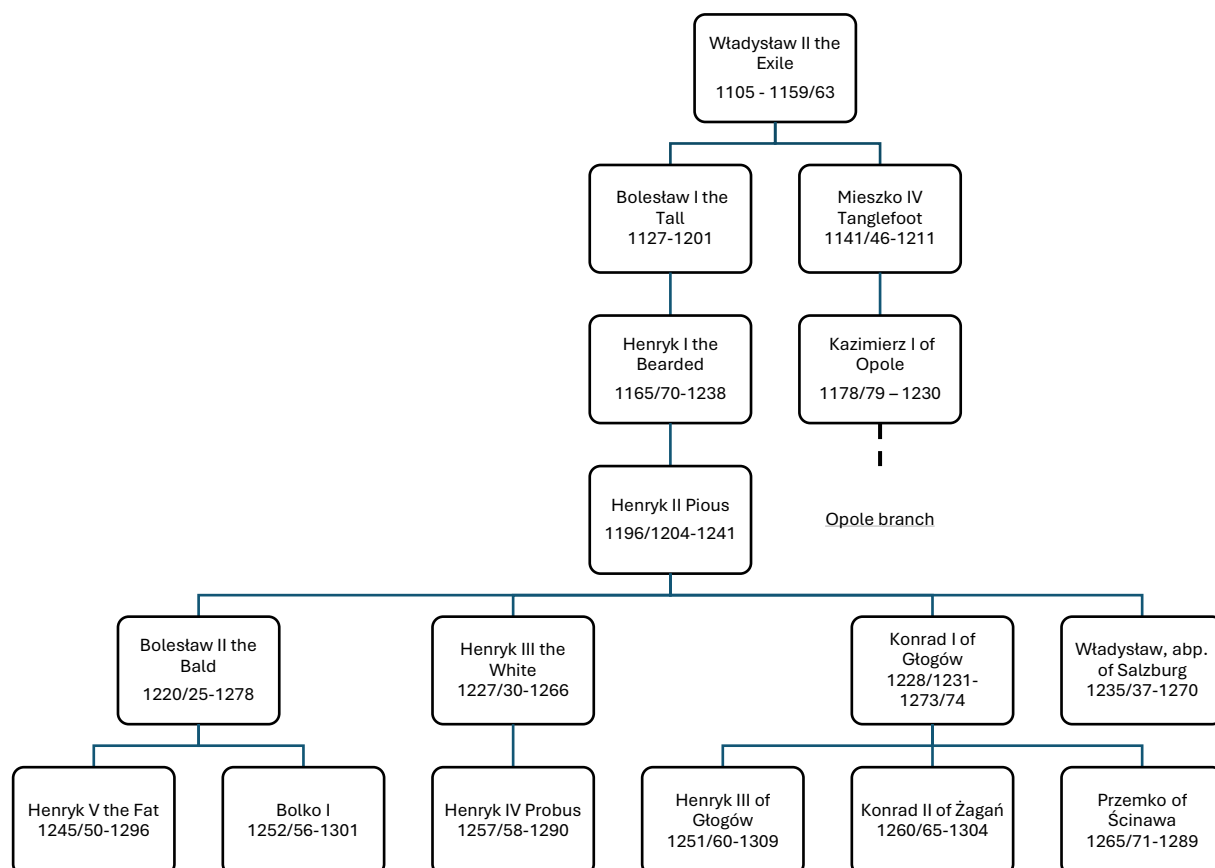


Figure 4: Simplified Genealogical Tree of the Piast Dynasty (Silesian Branches)

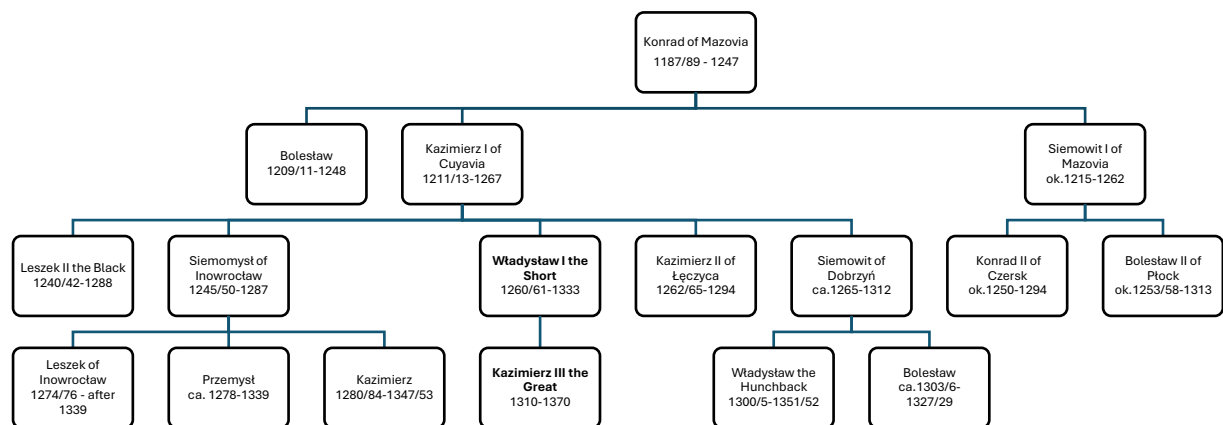


Figure 5: Simplified Genealogical Tree of the Piast Dynasty (Cuyavian and Mazovian Branches)

Introduction

In the tempest of our times, loyalty does not beget loyalty; if it conceives, it aborts it before the birth, the newborn dies before it draws breath. Thus, vipers nurse at the breasts of devout loyalty! Treacherous snakelets suck on them, by whom not only friends, but even lords are revered more with deceit than with loyalty.¹

This evocative picture was painted by Vincentius of Cracow in his turn-of-the-thirteenth-century *Chronica Polonorum*.² While representative of his highly literary style, the tempest Vincentius referred to was not a mere rhetorical figure, but an adequate reflection of the internal politics of late-twelfth-century Poland. After the death of Duke Bolesław III Wrymouth in 1138, the oldest member of the ruling Piast dynasty was to hold supreme authority as *princeps* and the main seat of power in Cracow. This rule was, however, quickly challenged, with the continuous conflicts between Bolesław III's sons and their successors leading to the effective dismantling of the central power.³ The early thirteenth century saw the entrenchment of the hereditary succession of the provinces held by different members of the ruling family, transforming Poland into a patchwork of principalities ruled by different branches of the Piast dynasty.⁴ The political turbulences of the thirteenth century coincided with the momentous transformation of the broader social life. Both secular and ecclesiastical elites became increasingly politically conscious and powerful,⁵ while the creation of chartered settlements,

¹ 1.8 in *Magistri Vincenti dicti Kadłubek Chronica Polonorum*, ed. by Marian Plezia, MPH NS, vol.11 (Cracow: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 1994) [Henceforth *Chronica Polonorum*], 14: In huiusce nostri tempusculi tempestate fides non parit fidem, set si concipit prius abortit quam pariat, prius expirat partus, quam spirare incipiat. Sic ad pia fidei ubera genimina pendent uiperarum, catuli sugunt perfidie, a quibus non modo amici, set et domini plus dolo coluntur quam fide.

² I discuss the chronicle in more detail in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

³ The political context outlined in Darius von Güttner-Sporzyński, ed., "Bishop Vincentius of Cracow and His *Chronica Polonorum*," in *Writing History in Medieval Poland: Bishop Vincentius of Cracow and the "Chronica Polonorum"*, *Cursor Mundi* 28 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 1–17; Thomas N. Bisson, "Witness to Crisis? Power and Resonance in the Chronicle of the Poles by Wincenty Kadłubek," in *Gallus Anonymous and His Chronicle in the Context of Twelfth-Century Historiography from the Perspective of the Latest Research*, ed. Krzysztof Stopka (Cracow: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 2010), 205–13.

⁴ This transformation of the inter-dynastic relations best described in Janusz Bieniak, "Powstanie księstwa opolsko-raciborskiego jako wyraz przekształcenia się Polski w dzielnicową poliarchię" [The creation of the Duchy of Opole and Racibórz as an example of the transformation of Poland into a divisional polyarchy], in *Sacra Silentii provincia. 800 lat powstania dziedzicznego księstwa opolskiego (1202–2002)*, ed. Anna Pobóg-Lenartowicz (Opole: Redakcja Wydawnictw Wydziału Teologicznego Uniwersytetu Opolskiego, 2003), 37–81.

⁵ The rising political and economic influence of the church in fragmented Poland has a broad literature. For English-language contributions painting a good picture of the thirteenth-century developments, see Sebastian Bartos, "Diplomacy and Arms. Opportunities and Obstacles in Episcopal Territorial Control in the Duchy of Krakow, 1279–1320," *Studia z Dziejów Średniowiecza*, no. 25 (2022): 15–46; Sebastian Bartos, "Post-Gregorian Episcopal Authority and the Struggle for Ducal Kraków, 1177–1210," *The Polish Review* 58, no. 3 (2013): 3–33; Jerzy Pysiak and Krzysztof Skwierczyński, "Struggles for Episcopal Legitimation during the Gregorian Reform in Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Norway and Poland," in *Legitimation of the Elites in High Medieval Poland*

urbanization,⁶ together with the influx of foreign settlers and knightly adventurers,⁷ changed the socio-political face of the divided Polish principalities.⁸ The decades-long contest to unify the realm at the turn of the fourteenth century brought forth the exhaustion of the methods of securing the loyalty of subjects previously used by the Piast rulers. The rule of Czech Přemyslids as dukes of Cracow from 1291 and later as kings of Poland (1300-1306), however brief, not only introduced innovations in the methods of exercising the lordship, but also put into question the status of the local Piast dynasty as sole representatives of sovereign power in Poland.⁹ Thus, even though it was a Piast, Władysław the Short, who ultimately emerged victorious from the contest to unify the kingdom in 1320, the relationship between him and his subjects was different than the one his predecessors had enjoyed.

This thesis examines the impact of these broader socio-political transformations on the political culture, that is discourses and practices governing political life, in fragmented

and Norway, ed. Wojtek Jezierski, Hans Jacob Orning, and Grzegorz Pac, *Comparative Perspectives on Medieval History* 3 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2025), 357–84; In Polish, most broadly recently Jacek Maciejewski, *Episkopat polski doby dzielnicowej 1180-1320* [Episcopate of Poland during fragmentation period 1180-1320] (Cracow: Societas Vistulana, 2003).

⁶ From among the broad literature of the topic, see especially Sławomir Gawlas, “Ustrojowe i społeczne uwarunkowania lokacji miejskich na ziemiach polskich w 1. połowie XIII wieku” [Political and social conditions of urban foundations in Polish lands in the first half of the 13th century], *Archaeologia Historica Polona* 23 (2015): 7–56; Roman Czaja, “Miasta i mieszczaństwo na ziemiach polskich na przełomie XIII/XV w.” [Cities and townspeople in Polish lands at the turn of the 13th and 15th centuries], in *Polska około roku 1300. Państwo, społeczeństwo, kultura.*, ed. Wojciech Fałkowski (Warsaw: Neriton, 2003), 57–72; Henryk Samsonowicz, “Miasta wobec zjednoczenia Polski w XIII/XIV wieku” [Cities and the unification of Poland in the 13th/14th centuries], in *Ars historica: prace z dziejów powszechnych i Polski*, ed. Gerard Labuda and Marian Biskup (Poznań: Wydawnictwo UAM, 1976), 425–36.

⁷ See for example Benedykt Zientara, “Die deutschen Einwanderer in Polen vom 12. bis zum 14. Jahrhundert,” in *Die deutsche Ostsiedlung des Mittelalters*, ed. Walter Schlesinger (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1975), 333–48; Tomasz Jurek, *Obce rycerstwo na Śląsku do połowy XIV wieku* [Foreign knights in Silesia until the middle of the 14th century], *Prace Komisji Historycznej - Poznańskie Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk* 54 (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskiego Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Nauk, 1996); The historiographical debates about the so-called “german colonization” summarized in Jan M. Piskorski, “The Medieval Colonization of Central Europe as a Problem of World History and Historiography,” *German History* 22, no. 3 (2004): 323–43.

⁸ This impact has been particularly insightfully underlined by Sławomir Gawlas, see Sławomir Gawlas, “‘Verus heres’. Z badań nad świadomością polityczną obozu Władysława Łokietka w początku XIV w.” [‘Verus heres.’ From studies on the political consciousness of Władysław Łokietek’s camp in early 14th century], *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 95, no. 1 (1988): 77–104; Sławomir Gawlas, *O kształt zjednoczonego Królestwa: niemieckie władztwo terytorialne a geneza społeczno-ustrojowej odrębności Polski* [For the shape of united kingdom: German territorial authority and the genesis of socio-political distinctiveness of Poland], 2nd ed. (Warsaw: DiG, 2000); I discuss his arguments in more detail in the historiographical overview.

⁹ See the overviews in Tomasz Jurek, “Der Einfluß Böhmens auf das geteilte Polen im 13. Jahrhundert,” in *Böhmen und seine Nachbarn in der Přemyslidenzeit*, ed. Ivan Hlaváček and Aleksander Patschovsky, *Vorträge und Forschungen* 74 (Stuttgart: Thorbecke, 2011), 190–99; Tomasz Jurek, “Polska pod władzą obcego króla. Rządy czeskie w latach 1291-1306” [Poland under the rule of the foreign king. Czech rule in the years 1291-1306], in *Król w Polsce XIV i XV wieku*, ed. Andrzej Marzec (Cracow: Societas Vistulana, 2006), 187–220.

Poland.¹⁰ More specifically, it focuses on the evolving ways in which bonds of loyalty between rulers and their subjects were imagined and discussed.

Since the study examines the political culture of the period the chronological framework is not clear-cut, but can be broadly defined as “the long thirteenth century.” The starting point will be marked by the turn of the thirteenth century – the time of the creation of *Chronica Polonorum* and of the final transition towards the dynastic polyarchy. Situating the chronological end-point of the deliberations is more complicated. The heirless death of Leszek the Black, duke of Cracow, in 1288 sparked a prolonged conflict that evolved into the contest for the unification of the Polish duchies.¹¹ Two of the contenders, Przemysław II of Greater Poland (1295-96), and Václav II (1300-1305), Přemyslid king of Bohemia, managed to be crowned Kings of Poland, but their rule was too short to overcome regional particularisms.¹² Even the coronation of Władysław the Short in 1320, traditionally seen as the point marking the end of the fragmentation period, should be seen as a symbolic date, which did not bring a complete

¹⁰ I am using this broad definition of political culture, despite the “fuzziness” of the concept pointed out in Jan Dumolyn, “Political Communication and Political Power in the Middle Ages: A Conceptual Journey,” *Edad Media. Revista de Historia* 13 (2012): 45–48.

¹¹ The gradual creation the unification program among the intellectual elites of fragmented Poland by the mid-thirteenth century and its later transformations discussed thoroughly in Drelicharz, Unification; Proposed there interpretation of the 1250s Vita Maior Sancti Stanislai as the basis for political program has been questioned, for example in Przemysław Wiszewski, “Rex in regno suo? Wokół wyobrażeń i propagandy władzy królewskiej Piastów (do 1296 r.)” [Rex in regno suo? Regarding the imagination and propaganda of the royal power of the Piasts (until 1296)], in *Promena sredověchodní Evropy raného a vrcholného stredoveku*, ed. Lukáš Reitingger and Martin Wihoda (Brno: Matice Moravská, 2010), 457–58; more direct polemic with Drelicharz in Paweł Żmudzki, “Liber de passione martiris i Vita maior s. Stanislai. Na marginesie książki Wojciecha Drelicharza o idei zjednoczenia królestwa” [Liber de passione martiris and Vita maior s. Stanislai. On the margin of Wojciech Drelicharz’s book about the idea of uniting the kingdom], *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 122, no. 4 (2015); Even more serious problem is posed, as noted by Marcin R. Pauk, by the gap between ideas circulating in among the narrow group of the intellectual elites and the political ambitions of the Piast rulers in Marcin R. Pauk, “Language of Power and Communication in the Piast Dynasty: Toward a Reappraisal of Polish Political Culture of the 12th–13th Century,” in *Rulership in Medieval East Central Europe: Power, Ritual and Legitimacy in Bohemia, Hungary and Poland*, ed. Grischa Vercamer and Dušan Zupka (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 179–80; Attempt of depicting the process of transforming the nebulous ideas about unification and royal crown into the actionable political program in the last decades of the thirteenth-century in Tomasz Jurek, “Polska droga do korony królewskiej 1295-1300-1320” [Polish path to the royal crown 1295-1300-1320], in *Promena sredověchodní Evropy raného a vrcholného stredoveku*, ed. Martin Wihoda and Lukáš Reitingger (Brno: Matice Moravská, 2010), 139–91; and most recently Andrzej Marzec, “Między ideą a rzeczywistością. Powstanie Królestwa Polskiego na przełomie XIII i XIV w.” [Between Idea and Reality. The Rise of the Kingdom of Poland at the Turn of the 13th and 14th Centuries.], in *Władztwo Władysława Łokietka: 700-lecie koronacji królewskiej*, ed. Wojciech Fałkowski and Przemysław Tyszką (Warsaw: Zamek Królewski w Warszawie, 2022), 15–31; Andrzej Marzec, “Piastowska korona Władysława Łokietka” [Piast crown of Władysław Łokietek], *Przegląd Historyczny* 114, no. 1 (2023): 1–21.

¹² While the political circumstances limited Przemysław’s regnum Poloniae to Greater Poland and Pomerania, in an opinion of majority of historiography his monarchy was conceived of as ‘universal’, encompassing all of the Piast lands. Václav II managed to extend his control over most of them, but this control did not translate into the clear political unity, with regional particularisms still reflected in local administration and lack of centralized Polish chancery or court. See Jurek, “Polska pod władzą,” 197–205; Jurek, “Polska droga,” 172–74; Andrzej Marzec, “Między Przemysławem II a Władysławem Łokietkiem, czyli kilka uwag o Królestwie Polskim na przełomie XIII i XIV wieku” [Between Przemysław II and Władysław Łokietek, or a few comments on the Kingdom of Poland at the turn of the 13th and 14th centuries], *Roczniki Historyczne* 78 (2012): 90–105; Marzec, “Między ideą a rzeczywistością,” 25–28.

overnight shift in the political culture. At that point, the new monarch's rule extended only as far as Lesser- and Greater Poland, as well as his familial Sieradz and Cuyavia. The rest of Władysław's reign, until his death in 1333, was spent fighting for control over the contested lands and trying to turn the patchwork of territories he ruled over into a shared polity. The chronological endpoint of my investigations is situated at this time of transition towards the new political culture of the unified Kingdom of Poland.¹³ More specifically, it can be further narrowed down to the generational change, symbolized by the passing of the monarch, with the recollections given by the old brothers-in-arms of the late monarch at the Warsaw Trial of 1339 treated as a swan's song of the political actors born into the political culture of fragmented Poland.

In geographical terms, the early parts of the thesis will focus on all the lands ruled directly by the members of the Piast dynasty. The uneven distribution of the sources, however, will naturally mean that more focus will be placed on Silesia, Lesser-, and Greater Poland, than Cuyavia and Mazovia. Discussing fourteenth-century developments, more emphasis will be placed on the lands that would come under the control of the reunited Polish monarchy, as Silesian Piasts drifted ever closer into the orbit and overlordship of the Kings of Bohemia.¹⁴

Outlining the Problem – Medieval Loyalty

The subject at the center of my thesis, the bonds of loyalty between the ruler and the subjects, requires some elucidation. Loyalty has long been understood as one of the key concepts underlying much of the medieval political culture. In the Central European context, early discussions of medieval loyalty centered around the discussion of *germanische Treue*: a freely entered, reciprocal, unconditional commitment to the mutual well-being of ruler and subjects that provided feudal institutions with not Roman, but ancient Germanic origins.¹⁵ In the thorough post-war refutation of this concept, František Graus underscored the historicity of loyalty, arguing that rather than remaining unchanging from times of Tacitus to Carolingian capitularies, the meaning of *fides* was subject to change in space and time. Thus, he argued, the legally binding obligation of mutual *fides* found in the latter was developed only under the

¹³ This feat accomplished only during the long reign of Władysław's son, Kazimierz III the Great. See Janusz Kurtyka, *Odrodzone Królestwo: monarchia Władysława Łokietka i Kazimierza Wielkiego w świetle nowszych badań* [Reborn Kingdom: monarchy of Władysław the Elbowhigh and Kazimierz the Great in the light of newer scholarship] (Cracow: Societas Vistulana, 2001), 57–105.

¹⁴ On this process, see for example Marcin Pauk and Ewa Wólkiewicz, "The Administrative Structure of Silesia as a Determinant of Legal and Constitutional Cohesion (12th–15th Century)," in *Cuius Regio? Ideological and Territorial Cohesion of the Historical Region of Silesia (c. 1000–2000) Vol. 1. The Long Formation of the Region Silesia (c. 1000–1526)*, ed. Przemysław Wiszewski (Wrocław: eBooki, 2013), 79–81.

¹⁵ Full account of the history of the concept of *Germanische Treue* in German *Verfassungsgeschichte* in Karl A. Kroeschell, "Die Treue in Der Deutschen Rechtsgeschichte," *Studi Medievali* 10 (1969): 465–90.

influence of the late Merovingian and Carolingian Church to buttress the emerging feudal society.¹⁶

The deep reassessment of feudalism, which started in 1980s and culminated with Susan Reynold's *Fiefs and Vassals*, brought with it the end of the vision of *fidelitas* as a legally-binding bond of loyalty specific to feudo-vassalic relations.¹⁷ Thus, historians interested in medieval rulership and political culture have increasingly shifted their focus away from constructed institutions and toward norms that shape a wide variety of social bonds. The study of the unwritten rules of behaviors and shared beliefs—so-called *Spielregeln*—resulted in a new vision of early medieval society, held together by common ideals and personal bonds.¹⁸ The relationships between family members, friends, as well as lords and their followers, had been argued to all based on the underlying obligation of loyalty in its negative sense – mutual prohibition from harming each other.¹⁹ This broadening perspective on loyalty led to the rejuvenation of interest in its role in medieval society, exemplified by recent thematic publications across academia.²⁰

The turn towards a more anthropological focus on the unwritten rules and norms of behavior brought more attention to the tools and rituals through which bonds of loyalty were created and reinforced.²¹ Oaths were identified as preeminent tools of managing horizontal and

¹⁶ František Graus, “Über die sogenannte germanische Treue,” in *Ausgewählte Aufsätze (1959-1989)*, ed. František Graus et al. (Stuttgart: Thorbecke, 2002), 133–79; See also František Graus, “Herrschaft und Treue: Betrachtungen zur Lehre von der germanischen Kontinuität,” *Historica* 12 (1966): 5–44.

¹⁷ Susan Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals: The Medieval Evidence Reinterpreted* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 17–34, 475–78; Recounting the previous discussions about “feudal transformation” and proposing the framing of “oath-taking” rather than “feudal” society Fredric Cheyette, “Some Reflections on Violence, Reconciliation and the ‘feudal Revolution’,” in *Conflict in Medieval Europe: Changing Perspectives on Society and Culture*, ed. Warren C. Brown and Piotr Górecki (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 287–99.

¹⁸ Gerd Althoff, *Spielregeln der Politik im Mittelalter*, 2nd ed. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2014); Gerd Althoff, *Family, Friends and Followers: Political and Social Bonds in Early Medieval Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

¹⁹ Klaus van Eickels, “Traditionierte Konzepte in neuen Ordnungen. Personale Bindungen im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert,” in *Ordnungskonfigurationen im hohen Mittelalter*, ed. Bernd Schneidmüller and Stefan Weinfurter, Vorträge und Forschungen 64 (Ostfildern: Thorbecke, 2006), 100–101; Klaus van Eickels, “Verwandtschaft, Freundschaft und Vasallität: Der Wandel von Konzepten personaler Bindung im 12. Jahrhundert,” in *Das Lehnswesen im Hochmittelalter. Forschungskonstrukte - Quellenbefunde - Deutungsrelevanz*, ed. Jürgen Dendorfer and Roman Deutinger (Ostfildern: Thorbecke, 2010), 407–9.

²⁰ See the edited volumes published in recent decade in German, English, and French Susanne Lespius and Susanne Reichlin, eds., *Fides / Triuwe* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2015); Jörg Sonntag and Coralie Zermatten, eds., *Loyalty in the Middle Ages: Ideal and Practice of a Cross-Social Value* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2016); Wojciech Fałkowski and Yves Sassier, eds., *Confiance, bonne foi, fidélité. La notion de fides dans la vie des sociétés médiévales (VIe-XVe siècles)* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2018); In Central European contexts, see Angelika Herucová and Pavol Hudáček, “Verní a neverní královi” [Loyal and Disloyal to the King], *Forum Historiae* 13, no. 2 (2019): 1–17; Jakub Razim, “Věrnost v Kosmově kronice” [Fidelity in the Chronicle of the Czechs by Cosmas of Prague], *Forum Historiae* 13, no. 2 (2019): 18–39.

²¹ The last two decades had brought a boom in studies connected to the rituals and non-verbal forms of communication, for most important see Geoffrey Granter Koziol, *Begging Pardon and Favor: Ritual and Political Order in Early Medieval France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992); Gerd Althoff, *Die Macht der Rituale: Symbolik und Herrschaft im Mittelalter.*, 2nd ed. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2013);

vertical relationships, with a complicated history of institutional development, and an important role in shaping communities and creating trust.²² Homages were shown to be a flexible ritual that represented one side as a senior (though not necessarily dominant) partner, which only gradually took on more servile implications.²³ There were also more informal ways of strengthening the bonds of loyalty, with feasts²⁴ and gifts of precious goods or land being the most common.²⁵

The mutual nature of the bonds of loyalty between the ruler and the subjects led historians to further underscore the role counsel and consensus of the ruler's powerful subjects played in medieval rulership.²⁶ It also brought attention to how medieval people saw and justified the dissolution of the bonds of loyalty. Treason appeared to be an equally multifaceted concept as fidelity, with evolving and competing ideas of what constituted the act of disloyalty.²⁷ The question of the emergence of institutions that would allow subjects to rightfully resist their bad rulers had been periodically tackled in historiography since Fritz

The main critical assesment of this aproach in: Philippe Buc, *The Dangers of Ritual: Between Early Medieval Texts and Social Scientific Theory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

²² Fredric L. Cheyette, *Ermengard of Narbonne and the World of the Troubadours* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 194 ff; Cheyette, "Some Reflections on Violence," 262–65; Althoff, *Family, Friends and Followers*, 138–39; Recent discussions on development and evolution of oath's role in political culture of early middle ages in Stefan Esders, "Loyalty Oaths and the Transformation of Political Legitimacy in the Medieval West," in *Oaths in Premodern Japan and Premodern Europe*, ed. Philippe Buc, Medieval Worlds 19 (Vienna: Institute for Medieval Research ÖAW, 2023), 119–40; For extensive treatment, see Lothar Kolmer, *Promissorische Eide im Mittelalter*, vol. 12, Regensburger historische Forschungen (Kallmünz: Michael Lassleben, 1989).

²³ Klaus van Eickels, *Vom inszenierten Konsens zum systematisierten Konflikt: die englisch-französischen Beziehungen und ihre Wahrnehmung an der Wende vom Hoch- zum Spätmittelalter* (Stuttgart: Thorbecke, 2002), 287–398; Paul R. Hyams, "Homage and Feudalism: A Judicious Separation," in *Die Gegenwart Des Feudalismus*, ed. Natalie Fryde, Pierre Monnet, and Otto Gerhard Oexle (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002), 13–50.

²⁴ See for example Lars Kjær, "Feasting with Traitors: Royal Banquets as Rituals and Texts in High Medieval Scandinavia," in *Rituals, Performatives, and Political Order in Northern Europe, c. 650–1350*, ed. Wojtek Jezierski et al. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), 269–94; The full overview of literature in Lars Kjær and A.J. Watson, "Feasts and Gifts: Sharing Food in the Middle Ages," *Journal of Medieval History* 37, no. 1 (2011): 1–5.

²⁵ Lars Kjær, *The Medieval Gift and the Classical Tradition: Ideals and the Performance of Generosity in Medieval England, 1100–1300*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought: Fourth Series (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019); Stephen D. White, "Service for Fiefs or Fiefs for Service: The Politics of Reciprocity," in *Re-Thinking Kinship and Feudalism* (London-New York: Ashgate, 2005), 63–98; Stephen D. White, "Giving Fiefs and Honor: Largesse, Avarice, and the Problem of 'Feudalism' in Alexander's Testament," in *Re-Thinking Kinship and Feudalism* (London-New York: Ashgate, 2005), 127–41.

²⁶ Gerd Althoff, "Colloquium familiare - colloquium seceretum - colloquium publicum. Beratung im politischen Leben des früheren Mittelalters," in *Spielregeln der Politik im Mittelalter*, 2nd ed. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2014), 157–85; Bernd Schneidmüller, "Konsensuale Herrschaft. Ein Essay über Formen und Konzepte politischer Ordnung im Mittelalter," in *Reich, Regionen und Europa in Mittelalter und Neuzeit. Festschrift für Peter Moraw*, ed. Paul-Joachim Heinig et al. (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2000), 53–87.

²⁷ For example, see especially Stephen White's "The Ambiguity of Treason in Anglo- Norman-French Law, c. 1150–c. 1250," in *Law and the Illicit in Medieval Europe*, ed. Ruth Mazo Karras, Joel Kaye, and E. Ann Matter (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 89–102; Stephen D. White, "Alternative Constructions of Treason in the Angevin Political World: Traïson in the History of William Marshal," *e-Spania. Revue interdisciplinaire d'études hispaniques médiévales et modernes*, no. 4 (2007): 4; Also contributions in the collected volumes like Myriam Soria and Maité Billoré, eds., *La trahison au Moyen Âge* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2010); Larissa Tracy, ed., *Treason: Medieval and Early Modern Adultery, Betrayal, and Shame* (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

Kern's *Gottesgnadentum und Widerstandsrecht*. Just like *germanische Treue*, Kern's *ius resistendi* was supposed to be rooted in the ancient Germanic past, and allow subjects to resist those leaders who failed to fulfill their obligation to God or customary law.²⁸ More recently, Björn Weiler's analysis of ideas reflected in medieval chronicles has highlighted the popularity of the belief in the contractual nature of kingship and in subjects' right to depose a bad ruler in political cultures across Europe during the High Middle Ages.²⁹

Finally, the impact of writing on norms of behavior constituting loyalty and the slow transition toward the legalized and institutionalized character of personal bonds in the High Middle Ages did not escape the attention of scholars. Klaus van Eickels traced back the origins of the trend toward systematization and universalization to the dialectical principle of scholasticism that guided jurists and theologians. In England and France, by the early thirteenth century, bonds of kinship and lordship alike underwent profound transformation, with institutions of marriage and *homagium* gaining new, more systematized legal meaning.³⁰ Stefan Weinfurter saw the crisis of trust in sacralized oaths underlying the bonds of loyalty during the Investiture Controversy as an impetus for gradually embracing the framework of feudal law in shaping bonds of lordship, with its detailed obligations and written contract.³¹ Petra Schulte pointed out that the increasing institutionalization and depersonalization of the relationship of loyalty was accompanied, paradoxically, by the emotionalization of the language used to describe it.³² The need to fix in writing clearly formulated duties associated with *fides* was visible in the practice of power by the Hohenstaufen Emperors, as observed by Knut Görich.³³ Tracing the changes in the bonds of loyalty between Hohenstaufen rulers and their subjects, Jürgen Dendorfer agreed that feudal law gave the substance to the bond previously established

²⁸ Fritz Kern, *Gottesgnadentum und Widerstandsrecht im früheren Mittelalter: zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der Monarchie*, 2nd ed. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgemeinschaft, 1954).

²⁹ Most succinctly in Björn Weiler, "Kingship as Contract in Latin Europe, c.1000–c.1250," in *Rebellion in Medieval Europe, c.1000–c.1500*, ed. Adrian Jobson, Harriet Kersey, and Gordon McKelvie (London: Boydell and Brewer, 2025), 21–55; See also Björn Weiler, *Kingship, Rebellion and Political Culture: England and Germany, c. 1215–c. 1250* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

³⁰ Eickels, *Vom inszenierten Konsens*, 287–398; Eickels, "Traditionierte Konzepte"; More detailed treating of normativisation of fidelitas in feudal law, see Carsten Fischer, "Lehnrechtliche fidelitas im Spiegel der 'Libri Feudorum,'" *Das Mittelalter* 20, no. 2 (2015): 279–93.

³¹ Stefan Weinfurter, "Lehnswesen, Treueid und Vertrauen. Grundlagen der neuen Ordnung im hohen Mittelalter," in *Das Lehnswesen im Hochmittelalter: Forschungskonstrukte - Quellenbefunde - Deutungsrelevanz*, ed. Jürgen Dendorfer and Roman Deutinger (Ostfildern: Jan Thorbecke, 2010), 443–62.

³² Petra Schulte, "Die Inszenierung von Treue. Friedrich Barbarossa Und Die Italienischen Kommunen," *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 38 (2004): 153–72.

³³ Knut Görich, "Fides Und Fidelitas Im Kontext Der Staufischen Herrschaftspraxis (12. Jahrhundert)," *Das Mittelalter* 20, no. 2 (2015): 294–310.

primarily by oath-taking.³⁴ Nevertheless, north of the Alps the content of the feudal bonds remained a subject of negotiation, often as vaguely defined as that of other bonds of loyalty well into the thirteenth century.³⁵ Outside of the studies focusing on the core of Latin *Christianitas*, Hans Jacob Orning's study on authority and exercise of power by Norwegian monarchs in the thirteenth century brings a valuable insight into the impact of writing on bonds of loyalty between ruler and subjects. Drawing on the works of anthropologists like Jack Goody or Walter Ong, Orning pointed out the difference between ways of thinking in literate and oral societies, proposing the distinction between absolute and contextual loyalty. While the former could be based on the clearly defined and consistently enforced rules set out in the normative texts, the latter was situational, guided by ambiguous norms.³⁶

Loyalty, Political Culture, and the Historiography of Fragmented Poland

Despite the widely acknowledged role that the notion of loyalty played in medieval society, the role it played in the political culture of fragmented Poland has not been a subject of dedicated study in Polish historiography. This is not, however, to say that the questions surrounding the relationship between rulers and their subjects have been completely absent from the existing scholarship. As this brief overview will demonstrate, the centrality of the problem forced scholars dealing with the social and political history of the thirteenth century to create a set of assumptions about the bonds of loyalty, which this thesis must necessarily engage with.

A rare example of the systematic approach to the bonds of loyalty linking Piast rulers with their subjects can be found in the articles of Stanisław Russocki. Just like the participants of the post-war discussion about *Germanische Treue*, he was a historian of constitutional history. Closely following international debates, Russocki argued that the institutions believed to stem from feudal culture were not a purely Western European phenomenon but had their origins in the elements shared also with the "Slavic world". Thus, for example, his 1963 article tackled the question of *ius resistendi*, pointing out that the elements of the institutionalization of the right to resist were formulated in High Middle Ages, developing independently of the feudal institutions. In doing so, Russocki summarizes and expands upon the debates

³⁴ Jürgen Dendorfer, "Die Rechte und Pflichten des Herrn und des Vasallen und die Bedeutung der Lehnbindung im hohen Mittelalter," in *Gebote - Verbote : Normen und ihr sozialer Sinn im Mittelalter*, ed. Klaus van Eickels (Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 2022), 141–204.

³⁵ Most recently Roman Deutinger, "Staufische Reichschronistik (ca. 1150-1250)," in *Leihen als soziale Praxis im frühen und hohen Mittelalter* (Ostfildern: Jan Thorbecke, 2023), 227–28.

³⁶ Hans Jacob Orning, *Unpredictability and Presence: Norwegian Kingship in the High Middle Ages*, in *Unpredictability and Presence* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 5–10.

surrounding the right to resist in Piast Poland. In his opinion, the presence of a strongly formulated idea of *ius resistendi* on the pages of Vincentius of Cracow's *Chronica Polonorum* did not find its reception in the thirteenth-century Polish political culture. This was not because of the lack of instances of subjects opposing Piast dukes, but rather because of the weak position of the latter, which meant that resistance to their rule did not have to be grounded in sophisticated institutions.³⁷

In a second important contribution, Russocki reframed in a similar manner notions of “fidelitas” and “beneficium”. Using Central European examples, he argued that the personal bond of loyalty between the ruler and nobles and knights, not unlike one of feudal vassalage, formed the basis of the socio-political system also in Central Europe. These shared European structures were rooted, with the help of gifts and benefits, in the rule of reciprocity, common among (to use Russocki's words) “primitive societies”, but differed when it came to the character of *beneficium* (unconditional gift vs conditional land grant) and forms of creating individual bonds.³⁸ In fragmented Poland, there was no established form of creating bonds, though Russocki saw some of the sources to suggest public ceremonies akin to *homagium*. The *beneficia*, given not only in reward but also to shore up future support, took the form of expensive gifts, offices, or grants of land, to be held unconditionally by the recipient and their heirs.³⁹ It was only at the time of the centralizing efforts of Kazimierz III the Great in the second half of the fourteenth century that consistent expectations of the knightly service from the land held by the subjects emerged. Similarly, the relationship between the ruler and his subjects became less personal with the emergence of political estates.⁴⁰

The topic of bonds of loyalty in fragmented Poland, briefly outlined by Russocki, have not been followed by studies that would fill in the details of the merely sketched picture. Instead, Polish historiography that touches on the political culture of the period of fragmentation remains dominated by two overlapping forms of writing about the explorations of political events and actors in fragmented Poland. Most monographs that deal with Piast rulership in fragmented Poland take the form of biographies profiling the particular Piast dukes.⁴¹ Following

³⁷ Stanisław Russocki, “Opór władcom i prawo oporu u Słowian w wiekach średnich” [Resistance against rulers and the right to resist among Slavs in middle ages], *Czasopismo Prawno-Historyczne* 20 (1968): 33–39.

³⁸ Stanisław Russocki, “Rola ‘fidelitas’ i ‘beneficium’ w ustroju państw słowiańskich” [The role of ‘fidelitas’ and ‘beneficium’ in the political system of Slavic states], in *Z polskich studiów slawistycznych, seria 4: Historia*, ed. Juliusz Bardach (Warsaw: PWN, 1973), 67–82; Stanisław Russocki, “Le rôle de la ‘fidelitas’ et du ‘beneficium’ dans la formation des états slaves,” *Acta Poloniae historica* 26 (1972): 171–88; as there are no differences between the texts, I will be citing french version.

³⁹ Russocki, “Le rôle de la ‘fidelitas,’” 179–83.

⁴⁰ Russocki, 187.

⁴¹ Listing all of the biographies published would be of little benefit for the reader. The full account of this effort of Polish historiography in Józef Dobosz, “Biografie polskich władców doby piastowskiej – historyk pomiędzy

the example set by Stanisław Smolka's *Mieszko III Stary i jego wiek*,⁴² the most ambitious of biographies contend to not only present an account of the life of their subject, but also sketch the broader picture of the social, political, and cultural developments during the ruler's lifespan.⁴³ Nevertheless, most of these publications limit themselves to the narrow descriptive history, providing little reflection on the mechanisms that guided the relationship within the dynasty or between the Piasts and their subjects.

Another form of academic writing, which often influences the described monographs, are the prosopographical and genealogical studies that intend to shed light on other members of the political elite and form the basis for better understanding of their interests and actions. The genealogical studies were always a part of Polish medieval studies, yet this particular tradition can be traced back to the critical reaction to Jan Baszkiewicz's *Powstanie zjednoczonego Państwa Polskiego* (*The creation of a united Polish state*). Baszkiewicz's saw the economic transformation and external threats as facilitating the process of unification, highlighting the differing political interests of different parts of thirteenth-century society, seeing the political loyalties of Piast subjects as dictated primarily by their social class.⁴⁴ In response to this economic determinism historians tried to move away from treating the aristocratic elites of Piast duchies as monoliths, demonstrating the existence of competing factions bound by the mixture of interests and kinship.⁴⁵ The role of the latter was particularly underlined by Janusz Bieniak, whose 1969 monograph centered on extensive kinship groups of knightly clans (*pol.* *rody rycerskie*) as collective actors, competing between each other and pursuing their own political agendas.⁴⁶ Bieniak and his followers, conducting extensive genealogical research, traced the links of kinship, land holdings, and shifting political allegiances of the most powerful knightly

propagandą, mitem, popularyzacją i nauką” [Biographies of Polish rulers of the Piast dynasty: the historian's handling of propaganda, myths, popularization and academic facts], *Historia Slavorum Occidentis* 44, no. 1 (2025): 119–36.

⁴² Stanisław Smolka, *Mieszko Stary i jego wiek* [Mieszko the Old and his times] (Warsaw: Gebethner i Spółka, 1881).

⁴³ This promise fulfilled well in Benedykt Zientara, *Henryk Brodaty i jego czasy* [Henryk the Bearded and his times], 3rd ed. (Warsaw: Trio, 2005).

⁴⁴ Jan Baszkiewicz, *Powstanie zjednoczonego państwa polskiego na przełomie XIII i XIV wieku* [The creation of a united Polish state at the turn of the 13th and 14th centuries] (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1954).

⁴⁵ Among important polemics that already gestured towards problems more fully presented by Bieniak, see Kazimierz Jasiński, “Z problematyki zjednoczenia państwa polskiego na przełomie XIII i XIV wieku” [On the issue of the unification of the Polish state at the turn of the 13th and 14th centuries], *Zapiski Historyczne* 21, nos. 1–2 (1955); Kazimierz Jasiński, “Rola polityczna możnowładztwa wielkopolskiego w latach 1284–1314” [The political role of the Wielkopolska noble elites in the years 1284–1314], *Roczniki Historyczne* 29 (1963): 215–50.

⁴⁶ Janusz Bieniak, *Wielkopolska, Kujawy, ziemia łęczycka i sieradzka wobec problemu zjednoczenia państwowego w latach 1300–1306* [Greater Poland, Cuyavia, the lands of Łęczyca and Sieradz: towards the problem of state unification in the years 1300 - 1306], 1st ed., *Rocznik towarzystwa naukowego w Toruniu* 74/2 (Toruń: PWN, 1969).

clans.⁴⁷ Furthermore, their approaches inspired historians to pursue further prosopographical work, trying to paint a more detailed picture of aristocratic elites of the particular regions,⁴⁸ competing power bases within the urban centers,⁴⁹ or to identify the members competing political factions.⁵⁰

The biographies of the rulers and prosopographies of non-dynastic elites not only form a substantial strand of Polish historiography that provides me with a valuable descriptive foundation to build my thesis on. Their work betrays two commonly held but seldom directly stated assumptions about the bonds of loyalty, which should be brought forth in this historiographical overview.

The first one concerns the clan solidarity, which would see the loyalties of the whole extended kinship group follow similar lines. Janusz Bieniak argued for the existence of strong solidarity between the members of the same clan, though still limited by other bonds of kinship and loyalty to the ruler. Thus, the transregional nature of clans could force their members to fight on the sides of competing rulers, which did not invalidate their bonds of kinship. Moreover, in Bieniak's opinion, the transregional bonds between clansmen lend themselves to

⁴⁷ See for example Jan Pakulski, "Ród Zarembów w Wielkopolsce w XIII i początkach XIV wieku" [Zaremba clan in Greater Poland in 13th and early 14th century], *Prace Komisji Historii BTN* 16 (1975): 103–37; Jan Pakulski, *Nalęcze Wielkopolscy w Średniowieczu: Genealogia, uposażenie, i rola polityczna w XII-XIV w.* [Greater-Polish Nalęcze in Middle Ages: Genealogy, possessions, and political role in 12th-14th. C.] (Warsaw-Poznań-Toruń: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1982); Marek Wójcik, *Ród Gryfitów do końca XIII wieku. Pochodzenie - genealogia - rozsiedlenie* [Gryf clan until end of 13th c. Origins - genealogy - estate distribution] (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1993); Janusz Kurtyka, *Tęczyńscy: studium z dziejów polskiej elity możnowładczej w średniowieczu* [Tęczyńscy: a study in the history of the Polish magnate elite in the Middle Ages], 2nd ed. (Cracow: Societas Vistulana, 2017).

⁴⁸ Most notably Marek Cetwiński, *Rycerstwo Śląskie do końca XIII w. Pochodzenie-gospodarka-polityka* [Silesian Knighthood up to the End of the 13th Century. Origins-economy-politics], vol. 1, *Prace Wrocławskiego Towarzystwa Naukowego. Seria A 210* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1980); Marek Cetwiński, *Rycerstwo Śląskie do końca XIII w. Biogramy i rodowody* [Silesian Knighthood up to the End of the 13th Century. Biographies and Genealogies], vol. 2, *Prace Wrocławskiego Towarzystwa Naukowego. Seria A 229* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1982).

⁴⁹ See for example Marcin Starzyński, "O mieszczańskim zapleczu Władysław Łokietka w Małopolsce" [About the burgher supporters of Władysław the Elbow-high in Lesser Poland], in *Władztwo Władysława Łokietka: 700-lecie koronacji królewskiej*, ed. Wojciech Fałkowski and Przemysław Tyszka (Warsaw: Zamek Królewski w Warszawie, 2022), 71–86.

⁵⁰ See for example Kazimierz Jasiński, "Studia nad Wielkopolskim stronnictwem książęcym w połowie XIII w. Współpracownicy Przemysła I do 1253 r." [Studies on the Greater-Polish ducal faction in the mid-13th century. The associates of Przemysł I up to 1253], in *Spółczesność Polski Średniowiecznej*, vol. 1, ed. Stefan Krzysztof Kuczyński (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1981), 161–201; Janusz Kurtyka, "Elita małopolska XIII i XIV wieku – przerwa czy kontynuacja (na przykładzie Toporów: potomstwo Żegoty wojewody i kasztelana krakowskiego)" [The elite of Lesser Poland of the 13th and 14th centuries - a break or a continuation (on the example of the Topórs: the offspring of Żegota the governor and castellan of Cracow)], in *Genealogia - kręgi zawodowe i grupy interesu w Polsce średniowiecznej na tle porównawczym*, ed. Jan Wroniszewski (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 1989), 35–60; Tomasz Nowakowski, *Małopolska elita władzy wobec rywalizacji o tron krakowski w latach 1288-1306* [Lesser-polish power elite in the face of competition for the Cracow throne in 1288-1306] (Bydgoszcz: Wydawnictwo Uczelniane WSP, 1992).

the attempts at contesting the bonds of loyalty to one of the rulers in favor of unifying land-holdings of the clan under a single duke.⁵¹

The second assumption has to do with the perceived proximity to the ruler and corresponding loyalty of the members of the elite. As often the only information we have about particular individuals is gleaned from titles noted in the witness lists, the discussed historiography prefers to interpret the changes in offices as the result of the interplay between conscious political strategies of rulers and subjects. Thus, even as the extent to which Piast dukes were constrained in freely distributing the offices remains debated, the offices are largely seen as tools in managing loyalties of the ducal subjects.⁵² Whether they were used by Piast rulers to reward loyal service, strengthen wavering commitment or outright buy loyalty of someone else's follower is, however, open to the interpretation of individual historians.

Several interesting observations about loyalty in fragmented Poland had been made by the scholars who interrogated the socio-economic transformations of the thirteenth century and their impact on political life. Henryk Łowmiański dedicated a chapter to the overview of the relationship between Piast rulers and the knightly subjects in his multi-volume *Początki Polski (Origins of Poland)*. This largely static view traces more continuities than changes over the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The bonds of loyalty were framed by Łowmiański as contractual vassalage. Created by personal oath to a particular ruler and easy to dissolve, it created an expectation of military service on the part of the subject (the details of which were informed by norms) and expectation of payment in gifts, offices, and (already from the 1130s onwards) land grants on the part of the ruler.⁵³ Łowmiański's attention was also drawn to the question of service of Piast vassals to other lords, seeing it as something that was made possible with the dynastic lords' permission, but probably a limited phenomenon.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Janusz Bieniak, "Rody rycerskie jako czynnik struktury społecznej w Polsce XIII-XV wieku (uwagi problemowe)" [Knight clans as a factor of social structure in Poland in the 13th-15th centuries (remarks on research programme)], in *Polska w okresie rozdrobnienia feudalnego*, ed. Henryk Łowmiański (Gdańsk: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1973), 184–86; Janusz Bieniak, "Knight clans in medieval Poland," in *The Polish nobility in the Middle Ages*, ed. Antoni Gąsiorowski, Polish Historical Library 5 (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1984), 151.

⁵² Problems with interpretations based on office-holding records discussed already in Jasiński, "Studia nad Wielkopolskim stronnictwem," 161–65; On the limits on ruler's ability to shape the distribution of offices in the face of powerful aristocratic interests see Nowakowski, *Małopolska elita władzy*, 113–14; The strategies rulers employed to circumvent those limits, on the example of Władysław the Short and Kazimierz the Great, discussed in Andrzej Marzec, *Elita wobec władcy i władca wobec elity w królestwie Władysława Łokietka i Kazimierza Wielkiego* [Elite towards the ruler and the ruler towards elite in the kingdom of Władysław the Short and Kazimierz the Great], ed. Jerzy Pysiak, Aneta Pieniądz-Skrzypczak, and Marcin R. Pauk (Warsaw-Cracow: Societas Vistulana, 2002), 147–68.

⁵³ Henryk Łowmiański, *Początki Polski, tom 6: Polityczne i społeczne procesy kształtowania się narodu do początku wieku XIV* [Origins of Poland, vol. 6: Political and social processes of the formation of the nation until the beginning of the 14th century] (Warsaw: PWN, 1985), 617–26.

⁵⁴ Łowmiański, *Początki Polski*, vol. 6, 625.

Tomasz Jurek's classic monograph on foreign, mostly German knights in fragmented Silesia underscores the importance of these migrants, bringing with them chivalric traditions and feudal law.⁵⁵ Describing the "push and pull" factors guiding migrations and the biographies of foreigners and their successors, Jurek made some interesting observations concerning the loyalty of those new Piast subjects. Lacking the support networks of local kinsmen, the migrating knights formed strong ties with individual Piast dukes whose service they entered. The frequent changes in the borders between the various duchies meant that, within a generation, foreign knights and their descendants could find their estates split between a growing number of Silesian Duchies. In such cases, the knights' attachment to the acquired estates was stronger than their bonds to the particular dynastic line, leading to a reshuffling or splitting of allegiances.⁵⁶

Sławomir Gawlas's scholarship, which focused on the questions of social identity, economic transformation, and the new tools used in thirteenth-century Poland to strengthen and rationalize ducal power and nascent fiscal control, ventured on occasion into the problem of the ways in which Piast subjects self-conceptualized their relationship to Polish rulers at the turn of the fourteenth century. Unsatisfied by the previous accounts of the processes of unification of the realm, which underscored the prevalence of "will to nationhood" among different social strata of fragmented Poland, in his influential 1988 article Gawlas used the testimonies of Piast subjects given during two papal trials in the fourteenth century to reconstruct the ideological beliefs upheld by the supporters of Władysław the Short leading up to his 1320 coronation. In his analysis, the strong anti-German sentiment voiced in testimonies was joined not by the appeals to the abstract concept of *regnum Poloniae*, but by expressions of belief in "patrimonial state" - Piast rulership based on hereditary rights and underpinned by personal bonds of loyalty.⁵⁷ Thus, the political crisis that culminated in the unification of Poland in the early fourteenth century was shown by Gawlas to be underlined by the deeper antagonism between two competing forces: increasingly important urban centers and traditional noble elites. The dynamics of this rivalry were elaborated upon by Gawlas several years later in the monograph *O kształt zjednoczonego królestwa*. Drawing convincing parallels between German principalities and Piast Poland, Gawlas traced back this tangle of social conflicts that fueled the

⁵⁵ Jurek, *Obce rycerstwo*.

⁵⁶ Jurek, *Obce rycerstwo*, 79–83.

⁵⁷ Gawlas, "'Verus heres,'" 100–103.

process of unification to the territorialization of sovereign authority, brought by the thirteenth-century adoption of ducal *regalia*, colonization, and urbanization.⁵⁸

This thesis exists not only in the context of past efforts to examine the concept of loyalty underlying the bonds between Piast rulers and their subjects. It also owes a significant debt to those scholars who tried to situate the political culture of twelfth and thirteenth-century Poland in the broader, European picture. Zbigniew Dalewski, inspired by the questions and methods used by Gerd Althoff, wrote extensively on the symbolic communication, rituals, and *Spielregeln* in Piast Poland. Most of his work in this vein focuses on the world described by Vincentius of Cracow's anonymous predecessor in the early twelfth century,⁵⁹ but some contributions also concern the period after Bolesław III's death.⁶⁰ They provide an important springboard for my own investigations. A more recent project of reevaluating the political culture of fragmented Poland had been undertaken by Marcin R. Pauk. Expanding on the observations about the commonalities between fragmented Piast Poland and the German principalities, Pauk traced similarities between the political cultures of Piast domains and those of German territorial princes. In doing so, he mostly focuses on the dynastic relations between competing Piast branches, highlighting family strategies of the dynasty; matrimonial practices, artificial kinship, and naming conventions. From the perspective of this thesis, the most important is the attention Pauk brings to the category of *honor* as central in communication both within the dynasty and between Piasts and their subject.⁶¹ Just like in the Hohenstaufen Empire, the *honor* of Piast dukes was understood broadly as the symbolic and material sphere

⁵⁸ Gawlas, *O kształt zjednoczonego Królestwa*.

⁵⁹ Most notably, see Zbigniew Dalewski, *Ritual and Politics: Writing the History of a Dynastic Conflict in Medieval Poland* (Leiden: Brill, 2008); Zbigniew Dalewski, "Władca i możni w Kronice Galla Anonima" [Ruler and nobles in the Gallus's Anonymous chronicle], in *Šlechta, moc a reprezentace ve stredoveku*, ed. Nodl Martin and Martin Wihoda (Prague: Filosofia, 2007), 31–44.

⁶⁰ See especially Zbigniew Dalewski, "The Knighting of Polish Dukes in the Early Middle Ages: Ideological and Political Significance," *Acta Poloniae Historica* 80 (1999): 15–43; Zbigniew Dalewski, "Książę i Biskup. Spór Bolesława Rogatki z Biskupem Wrocławskim Tomaszem I" [The Duke and the Bishop. The Dispute between Bolesław Rogatka and the Bishop of Wrocław, Thomas I], *Roczniki Historyczne* 73 (2007): 83–106; Zbigniew Dalewski, "Ritual im Wandel: Herzogserhebungen der polnischen Herrscher um die Wende vom 12. zum 13. Jahrhundert," in *Ritualisierung politischer Willensbildung. Polen und Deutschland im hohen und späten Mittelalter*, ed. Wojciech Fałkowski, Bernd Schneidmüller, and Stefan Weinfurter (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010), 79–100.

⁶¹ Marcin R. Pauk, "Regnum in se divisum. Ku syntezie kultury politycznej Piastów doby dzielnicowej" [Regnum in se divisum. Towards a synthesis of the political culture of the Piast dynasty during the period of divisions], in *Oryginalność czy wtórność? Studia poświęcone polskiej kulturze politycznej i religijnej (X–XIII wiek)*, ed. Roman Michałowski and Grzegorz Pac (Warsaw: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2020), 92–100; See also shorter, English-language version Pauk, "Language of Power."

of their authority,⁶² and it played an important role in defining the proper ways of waging a feud.⁶³

Research Aims and Questions

The goals of my thesis are twofold. The first one is to fill in the historiographical gap in the discussion of the political culture of fragmented Poland, by investigating the ways in which bonds of loyalty between Piast rulers and their subjects were imagined and conceptualized by contemporaries: authors of narrative sources, ducal chanceries, knights and townspeople of Poland. To do so, I will analyse an extensive corpus of narrative, diplomatic, and judicial sources, asking four main questions about the ways in which bonds of loyalty were depicted. Firstly, I will investigate how the bonds of loyalty were created: was their basis in the personal relationship between ruler and individual subjects, or was its source imagined to be grounded in the Piast dynasty's sacralised authority? Secondly, I will ask about the ways in which those bonds could be strengthened and communicated. Thirdly, I will inquire into the contents of these bonds of loyalty: were there attempts at defining the obligations of both sides beyond the "negative loyalty" (prohibition to harm each other)? How did the subjects known for their loyalty earn their praise? Finally, I want to examine the descriptions of the circumstances in which the bonds of loyalty dissolved: how were the disloyal subjects depicted, and were there circumstances in which breaking loyalty owed to the ruler was justified? This set of questions will be used to analyse the sources created at the beginning of the fragmentation period, at the peak of the political fragmentation in the second half of the thirteenth century, during the contest for unification of the kingdom at the turn of the fourteenth century, and not long after the coronation of Władysław the Short. This allows me to capture the diversity and transformation of the ideas about the bonds of loyalty throughout the period.

This leads me to the second, broader goal of the proposed thesis: placing the changes to the ideas about loyalty and the circumstances in which loyalty of the Piast subjects was discussed in the context of the rapid political, social, and economic transformation of Polish society during the long thirteenth century. To be more precise, there are two changes that I would like to focus on.

⁶² For the honor in Germany, see Knut Görich, *Die Ehre Friedrich Barbarossas: Kommunikation, Konflikt und politisches Handeln im 12. Jahrhundert* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2001); Knut Görich, "Ehre als Ordnungsfaktor. Anerkennung und Stabilisierung von Herrschaft unter Friedrich Barbarossa und Friedrich II.," in *Ordnungskonfigurationen im hohen Mittelalter*, ed. Bernd Schneidmüller and Stefan Weinfurter, *Vorträge und Forschungen* 64 (Ostfildern: Thorbecke, 2006), 59–92.

⁶³ In addition to the already cited contribution, see short but newest discussion in Hans Jacob Orning and Marcin R. Pauk, "Dynastic Conflicts. Civil Wars or Constant Struggles?," in *Legitimation of the Elites in High Medieval Poland and Norway*, *Comparative Perspectives on Medieval History* 3 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2025), 395–402.

The first one concerns the process of institutionalization of the bonds of loyalty and systematization of their content, linked with the transition from orality to literacy, outlined for Western Europe in the discussion of historiography above. Since the socio-economic changes in fragmented Poland have been characterized as a process of redefining and standardizing economic duties and rights along more precise lines, it bears asking: did the form and content of bonds of loyalty undergo a similar process? Did the growing importance of written communication between Piast rulers and their subjects impact the ways in which loyalty was imagined and discussed?

The second, broader set of questions concerns the changing socio-political landscape of thirteenth-century Poland: was the emergence of the new powerful groups of subjects, like migrating German-speaking knights or urban centres, reflected in the ideas about loyalty owed to the Piast rulers by inhabitants of Poland? How were the internal tensions between these groups and the old aristocratic elite, which underlined the crisis of the turn of the fourteenth century, reflected in the discourse of loyalty?

Sources

Much of the challenge in writing about the political culture of the fragmented Piast Poland is the diversity and uneven survival of the source material created in the thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century. In my dissertation, I will analyze the disparate narrative sources, ducal documents, and witness testimonies created in Poland between the early thirteenth century and the first half of the fourteenth century. Thus, I make use of the sources that were written down as late as the first years of the rule of Władysław's son, King Kazimierz the Great (1333-1370), on the assumption that their authors lived through and were shaped by the events of the early fourteenth century. At the same time, I want to avoid one of the pitfalls of writing about fragmented Poland – overreliance on the much later narrative sources.

At the core of the source material I investigate are three chronicles written in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, which are the main focus of the first two chapters of this thesis. Given their importance, I have saved the detailed introductions to these works, their authors, and the existing scholarship for the opening parts of the corresponding chapters. Here, I will only briefly present these chronicles and their relationship with the other sources.

The oldest, and most important of my narrative sources is the one I cited at the beginning of the introduction - the *Chronica Polonorum*.⁶⁴ Written at the turn of the thirteenth century by

⁶⁴ The bibliography of the studies on *Chronica Polonorum* is enormous. For the most recent, comprehensive bibliography of past research, see Andrzej Dąbrówka and Witold Wojtowicz, eds., *Onus Athlanteum. Studia nad Kroniką biskupa Wincentego* (Warsaw: Instytut Badań Literackich PAN, 2009); For the overview in English

Master Vincentius, future bishop of Cracow it is a highly erudite piece of historical writing, steeped in references to classical authors and contemporary intellectual debates of the Twelfth-century Renaissance. Vincentius was not the first chronicler of Polish history. Already in the early twelfth century an anonymous foreigner, known in historiography as Gallus, worked under the patronage of Bolesław III Wrymouth's (+1138) court to write the earliest Polish chronicle, *Gesta principum Polonorum*.⁶⁵ Vincentius knew and expanded on this established tradition, creating a grand vision of the history of the Poles from the invented, antique past, to the events of the year 1202. *Chronica Polonorum* is thus the best record of the political changes of the last decades of the twelfth century.

Whereas Vincentius's *Chronica Polonorum* marks the beginning of the period of the fragmentation of the Piast domain, the two other chronicles I will focus on in my thesis, the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*⁶⁶ and *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*,⁶⁷ mark its end, signaling the slow process of the unification of the realm. The Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* was created most likely by a Cistercian monk from Lubiąż in the 1280s, while the author of the other work, Dzierzwa wrote it in the milieu of the Cracow Franciscans sometime between 1306-1320.⁶⁸ While separated in time and space, these two turn-of-the-fourteenth-century chronicles share many similarities. A shortened outline of Vincentius's *Chronica Polonorum* forms the basis for much of the narrative of both later works, though both authors extend their accounts to cover also the more recent history of the rulers of Silesia and Lesser Poland, respectively. While not as explicit with their ideological messages as Vincentius's *Chronica*, the turn-of-the-fourteenth-century chronicles should not be dismissed as simplified abridgments or continuations of it. The authors of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* and *Dzierzwa's Chronicle* approached the shared source material in different ways, making different decisions on which parts to compress and which to focus on, as well as how to approach the task of covering the events beyond the narrative left by Vincentius of Cracow. Tracking this divergent transformation of the shared historiographical tradition, including Vincentius's ideas about bonds of loyalty, sheds additional

language, see Darius von Güttner-Sporzyński, ed., *Writing History in Medieval Poland: Bishop Vincentius of Cracow and the "Chronica Polonorum,"* Cursor Mundi 28 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017).

⁶⁵ *Gesta principum Polonorum: The Deeds of the Princes of the Poles*, transl. Paul W. Knoll and Frank Schaer (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2003) [Henceforth *GpP*].

⁶⁶ *Chronica Polonorum*, ed. by Ludwik Ćwikliński, in MPH, vol. 3 (Lwów: Akademia Umiejętności 1878): 578-656 [Henceforth SCP].

⁶⁷ *Kronika Dzierzwy*, ed. by Krzysztof Pawłowski, MPH NS, vol. 15 (Cracow: PAU, 2013) [Henceforth *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*].

⁶⁸ I dedicate the whole chapter 3.1 to the more detailed discussion of the authorship, date of creation, and the past historiography of the chronicles.

light on the social and political transformation witnessed by the authors writing at the time of the mounting crisis that would lead to the unification of the realm.

This three-way comparison between Vincentius's *Chronica Polonorum*, the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* and *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*, conducted in Chapter 2 of this thesis, will shed more light on the vision of the bonds of loyalty otherwise hard to discern in the shorter chronicles. This, in turn, will allow me to better understand the intentions and perspectives of these two authors when they narrate the episodes concerning loyalty and treachery from the more recent past, which will be analyzed, together with other narratives from the disparate thirteenth-century sources from fragmented Poland, in Chapter 3.

The group of the three chronicles that I will concern myself with in the first part of the thesis does not include one other work of medieval historiography, mentioned at times alongside other thirteenth-century narrative sources from Poland, the *Chronicle of Greater Poland*.⁶⁹ The dating of this work had, however, always been a subject of controversy, as the chronicle survived only as a part of the later-fourteenth-century historiographical compilation known as *Chronica magna seu longa*. The strongest proponent of the thirteenth-century provenance of the *Chronicle of Greater Poland* in the post-war debate was Brygida Kürbis. She believed that the chronicle, while containing later interpolations, was at its core created sometime in the last three decades of the thirteenth century, in order to express and legitimize the monarchical ambitions of Przemysł II.⁷⁰ While this position has not completely disappeared from Polish historiography,⁷¹ the growing consensus among historians places the time of the composition of the chronicle firmly in the latter half of the fourteenth century – perhaps by the hand of Janko of Czarnków (+1387).⁷² My own position on this debate is close to the one expressed once by Janusz Bieniak: while it might have drawn from the now lost thirteenth-century chronicle created in Greater Poland, it is impossible to separate those from the editorial interventions and interpolations of the late fourteenth-century author.⁷³ Thus, any visions of the relationship between ruler and subjects presented on the pages of the *Chronicle of Greater Poland* would

⁶⁹ *Chronica Poloniae maioris*, ed. by Brygida Kürbis, MPH NS, vol. 8 (Warsaw: PWN, 1970).

⁷⁰ Brygida Kürbis, *Dziejopisarstwo wielkopolskie XIII i XIV wieku* [Greater Polish historiography of the 13th and 14th centuries] (Warsaw: PWN, 1959), 168–224, 249–60.

⁷¹ See especially Edward Skibiński, “Dzierzwa i kronikarz wielkopolski. Powrót problem” [Dzierzwa and the chronicler of Greater Poland. The return to the issue.], in *Scriptura custos memoriae. Prace historyczne*, ed. Danuta Zydorek (Poznań: Instytut Historii UAM, 2001), 225–32.

⁷² The debate surrounding the time of the creation of the Chronicle of Greater Poland has been extensively summarized in Wojciech Drelicharz, *Unifying the Kingdom of Poland in Mediaeval Historiographic Thought* (Cracow: Societas Vistulana, 2019), 338–48.

⁷³ Janusz Bieniak, “Jan (Janek) z Czarnkowa: niedokończona kronika polska z XIV wieku” [Jan (Janek) of Czarnków: an unfinished Polish chronicle from the 14th century], *Studia Źródłoznawcze = Commentationes* 47 (2009): 135–41.

more readily reflect the political culture of the already unified kingdom of Poland in the wake of the death of its last Piast monarch. Contrasting these ideas about loyalty with those governing the political life of fragmented Poland would be a worthy endeavor, but one that falls beyond the chronological scope of this thesis.

The same holds true for the *Annales seu Cronicae incliti regni Poloniae* by Jan Długosz. This fifteenth-century source holds a special place among the works of Polish historiography, surpassing in its importance even Vincentius of Cracow's *Chronica Polonorum*. The extensive history of Poland from its legendary past to the recent, fifteenth-century events, Długosz's Annals cover the history of fragmented Poland in an extensive, but often unverifiable, detail.⁷⁴ As Długosz is known to have diligently built his narrative on the information gathered from the older historiographical and diplomatic sources, Polish historiography saw many attempts at identifying those parts in the narrative of the Annals concerning the thirteenth century that might be informed by the older, now lost tradition.⁷⁵ This approach, when taken carefully, can help shed some light on the basic outline of the events of the past. Nevertheless, given Długosz's tendency to shape past historiographical tradition to better reflect his own ideas about politics, there is no reason to assume that any lost source he had access to would not be accordingly transformed, telling us more about the vision of loyalty in the political culture of Late Medieval Poland than of the fragmented Piast *regnum*.

Besides Vincentius of Cracow's chronicle, both the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* and *Dzierzwa's Chronicle* drew upon the work of the bishop of Cracow's namesake, Vincentius (Wincenty) of Kielcza. In the 1250s, this Dominican hagiographer wrote two lives of St Stanislaus, former bishop of Cracow canonized by Pope Innocent IV in 1253.⁷⁶ *Vita minor* and *Vita maior sancti Stanislai* are of interest to my thesis insofar as they both aspire to place St

⁷⁴ *Ioannis Dlugossi Annales seu cronicae incliti regni Poloniae*, lib.V-VIII, eds. by Zofia Kozłowska-Budkowa et al. (Warsaw : PWN, 1973-1975) [Henceforth *Ioannis Dlugossi Annales*].

⁷⁵ The oldest, still influential attempt in Aleksander Semkowicz, *Krytyczny rozbiór Dziejów polskich Jana Długosza (do roku 1384)* [A critical analysis of Jan Długosz's History of Poland (up to 1384)] (Cracow: Akademia Umiejętności, 1887); Perhaps the most important example would be an extensive, though now dismissed, attempt by Gerard Labuda to trace the number of the detailed stories from the mid-thirteenth century contained in *Annales* to the hypothetical chronicle written in the thirteenth century by Lesser-Polish Dominicans. See Gerard Labuda, *Zaginiona kronika z pierwszej połowy XIII wieku w Rocznikach Królestwa Polskiego Jana Długosza: próba rekonstrukcji* [The lost chronicle from the first half of the 13th century in Jan Długosz's Annals of the Kingdom of Poland: an attempt at reconstruction] (Poznań: Wydawnictwo UAM, 1983); More cautious example of tracing fourteenth-century tradition in some details of Długosz's writing in Tomasz Jurek, "Notes on the Nałęcz Family of Szamotuły. A Contribution to the Lords' Historiography in Mediaeval Poland," *Quaestiones Mediaevali Novae* 12 (2007): 155–65.

⁷⁶ For the exploration of Wincenty of Kielcza's work, see Stanislava Kuzmová, *Preaching Saint Stanislaus Medieval Sermons on Saint Stanislaus of Cracow, His Image and Cult* (Warsaw: DiG, 2013), 27–42; The political context of the canonization outlined thoroughly in Stanislava Kuzmová, "The Old and the New: St Stanislaus and Other Cults in Krakow," in *Les saintes et leur culte en Europe centrale au Moyen Âge*, ed. Marie-Madeleine de Cevins and Olivier Marin (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 261–80.

Stanislaus's martyrdom at the hand of King Bolesław II the Bold in a broader context of Polish history.⁷⁷ Drawing from the historiographical tradition of Vincentius's *Chronica Polonorum*, the hagiographer expanded on several narratives from the dynastic past, offering his own interpretation of the nature of the bonds between the Piast dynasty and its subjects. Given the importance of this reinterpretation for the turn-of-the-fourteenth-century chronicles, I will examine the fragments of St Stanislaus's Lives alongside the chroniclers' narratives in a corresponding part of Chapter 2.

Alongside chronicles, thirteenth-century Poland also nurtured the annalistic form of historiographical writing, especially in the ecclesiastical centers of Greater and Lesser Poland. The aforementioned *Chronica magna seu longa* compilation contained, besides the *Chronicle of Greater Poland*, the annalistic traditions created at Gniezno's and Poznań's cathedral chapters.⁷⁸ The *Annals of Gniezno Cathedral Chapter* reconstructed on this basis covers the events of the first half of the thirteenth century.⁷⁹ The *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter* describes in greatest detail the political events of the decades between the late 1240s and the late 1260s, when it seemed to have acted as an official, contemporaneous account of the politics of the Greater-Polish dukes, Przemysł I (+1257) and Bolesław I the Pious (+1279).⁸⁰ After almost two decades of a gap in the covered material, the *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter* were picked up for continuation at the turn of the fourteenth century. Covering the events from the coronation of Przemysł II in 1295 to the rulership of the young dukes of Głogów in 1309. These notes, written during the pontificate of the influential bishop Andrzej Zaręba (+ca. 1317), are characterized by a strong ideological perspective, underscoring the need for internal order and expressing anti-German sentiment.⁸¹ Outside of the intellectual milieu of the Greater-Polish cathedrals, the thirteenth-century Franciscans of Kalisz also seemed to engage in annal-writing. Their work, dubbed in modern historiography the *Kalisz Annal*, did not survive on its own, but its notes entered the early-fourteenth-century compilation known as the *Annales Polonorum deperditi*.⁸²

⁷⁷ *Vita sancti Stanislai cracoviensis episcopi (Vita minor)*, ed. by Wojciech Kętrzyński, in MPH, vol. 4 (Lwów: Akademia Umiejętności, 1884): 238–285 [Henceforth: *Vita sancti Stanislai (Minor)*]; *Vita sancti Stanislai cracoviensis episcopi (Vita maior)*, ed. by Wojciech Kętrzyński, in MPH, vol. 4 (Lwów: Akademia Umiejętności, 1884): 319–438 [Henceforth: *Vita sancti Stanislai (Maior)*].

⁷⁸ Extensive discussion of the Greater-Polish annalistic tradition in Kürbis, *Dziejopisarstwo Wielkopolskie*, 58–73.
⁷⁹ *Rocznik kapituły gnieźnieńskiej*, ed. by Brygida Kürbis, in *Roczniki wielkopolskie*, MPH NS, vol. 6 (Warsaw: PWN 1962): 1–20 [Henceforth RkG].

⁸⁰ *Rocznik kapituły poznańskiej*, ed. by Brygida Kürbis, in *Roczniki wielkopolskie*, MPH NS, vol. 6 (Warsaw: PWN 1962): 21–78 [Henceforth RkP].

⁸¹ Kürbis, *Dziejopisarstwo Wielkopolskie*, 81–88, 246–48.

⁸² Described in Kürbis, 77–81; On its inclusion in the Lesser-Polish annalistic tradition, see Wojciech Drelicharz, *Annalistyka małopolska XIII–XV wieku: kierunki rozwoju wielkich roczników kompilowanych* [Annalistic Writings

This brings me to the annalistic traditions from Lesser Poland. Here too, the Cracow cathedral chapter produced its own historiographical tradition. The bulk of the extant redaction of the *Annals of the Cracow Cathedral Chapter* was produced at the time of bishop Prandota (+1266) or shortly afterwards, though several notes about the events of the early fourteenth century were added by continuators.⁸³ The separate, even more important tradition was established by the Cracow Franciscans in the early fourteenth century. Prior to the creation of *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*, the same intellectual milieu, inspired by Władysław the Short's attempts at restoring the Piast monarchy, created an annalistic work known in historiography as *Annales Polonorum deperditi*. It is this annalistic compilation of Cuyavian, Lesser-, and Greater-Polish traditions that formed the shared basis for the family of Annals surviving in the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century manuscripts. These include *Traska's Annals*,⁸⁴ *Annals of Sędziwój*,⁸⁵ the *Cracow Annals*,⁸⁶ and a group of four late-medieval annals of such resemblance to each other that they were once considered the separate redactions of Lesser-Poland Annals (*Annals of Kuropatnicki*, *Annals of Dąbrówka*, *Annals of Szamotulski*, and *Annals of Gesselen*).⁸⁷ The complicated history of these sources, the reconstruction of the common *stemma codicum* and tracing its transformation across subsequent annalistic redactions has been a subject of exhaustive studies by Wojciech Drelicharz, on which I rely.⁸⁸ In this thesis, I will occasionally make use of all of these annalistic sources when trying to discern how the events or characters were depicted in the original *Annales Polonorum deperditi*. Nevertheless, in the cases where there is little difference between the versions, I will mostly rely on *Traska's Annal*, which has been argued to preserve the work of the Franciscan annalists most faithfully.⁸⁹ This late-

in Lesser Poland of the 13th-15th centuries: directions of development of the great compiled annals], *Rozprawy Wydziału historyczno-filozoficznego. Polska Akademia Umiejętności* 99 (Cracow: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 2003), 372.

⁸³ *Rocznik kapituły krakowskiej*, ed. by Zofia Kozłowska-Budkowa, in *Najdawniejsze roczniki krakowskie i kalendarz*, MPH NS, vol. 5 (Warsaw: PWN 1978): 19-106. [Henceforth: RkK]; The history of this annalistic tradition is discussed in more detail in the introduction *Ibidem*, XXX-XLII.

⁸⁴ *Rocznik Traski*, ed. by August Bielowski, in MPH, vol. 2 (Lwów: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1892): 836-861 [Henceforth *Traska's Annal*].

⁸⁵ *Rocznik Sędziwoja*, ed. by August Bielowski, in MPH, vol. 2 (Lwów: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1892): 871-880.

⁸⁶ Published alongside *Traska's Annal*, see *Rocznik Krakowski*, ed. by August Bielowski, in MPH, vol. 2 (Lwów: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1892): 836-861.

⁸⁷ All of these edited as one annal, see *Rocznik Małopolski*, ed. by August Bielowski, in MPH, vol. 3 (Lwów: Akademia Umiejętności, 1878), 135-202.

⁸⁸ Drelicharz, *Annalistyka małopolska XIII-XV wieku*; The overview of this research for non-Polish readers can be found in Drelicharz, *Unifying the Kingdom of Poland*, 309-14; Wojciech Drelicharz, "Richtungen in der Entwicklung der kleinpolnischen Annalistik im 13.-15. Jh.," in *Die Geschichtsschreibung in Mitteleuropa. Projekte und Forschungsprobleme*, ed. Jarosław Wenta (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 1999), 53-72.

⁸⁹ More on the *Traska's Annal* and its role in preserving Franciscan annalistic tradition in Krzysztof Ożóg, "Studium o 'Roczniku Traski' [Study on 'Taska's Annal']," *Studia Historyczne* 23, no. 4 (1980): 517-34;

fourteenth-century edition of the Lesser-Polish annalistic tradition has an additional advantage of containing traces of two other sources that concern fragmented and recently unified Piast Poland. It is in *Traska's Annal* that we find the series of longer notes on the praiseworthy deeds of Duke Leszek the Black (+1288), hypothesized to be based on the short *gesta*-type work, so-called *Gesta Lestconis*, composed on Duke Leszek's court.⁹⁰ *Traska's Annal* also expands beyond Władysław the Short's coronation in 1320, offering a short but detailed narrative focused on military struggles with the Knights of the Teutonic Order in the last years of Władysław's reign and an account of the early rulership of Kazimierz the Great. Written at Kazimierz's court during the first years of his reign, this so-called "*Short Royal Chronicle*" offers us the official royal perspective on the tumultuous life of Władysław the Short and events of 1330-33.⁹¹ Thus, despite its solidly fourteenth-century metric, it is necessary to consult it for a clearer picture of the political culture of the recently restored Piast monarchy.

Closing the list of the narrative accounts created in the fragmented Poland which register the ideas about loyalty, straddling the line between narrative and diplomatic sources, is the cartulary known as the *Book of Henryków*.⁹² Started sometime after 1268 by the retired abbot Peter and continued after his death by an anonymous successor until 1310, it attempted to give an account of the history of the Cistercian community of Henryków in Silesia and its land holdings in the wake of the Mongol invasion of 1241. The work is divided into two "books" (*libri*) penned by Peter and his continuator, with each further divided into the accounts linked

Drelicharz, *Annalistyka małopolska XIII-XV wieku*, 374–88; Wojciech Drelicharz, "Historiograficzne inicjatywy związane z odnowieniem Królestwa Polskiego" [Historiographic initiatives related to the restoration of the Polish Kingdom], *Historia Slavorum Occidentis* 36, no. 1 (2023): 60–61.

⁹⁰ The work might have already been folded into *Annales Polonorum deperditi*, as Dzierżwa knew some of its parts. For more detail, see Drelicharz, *Annalistyka małopolska XIII-XV wieku*, 381–85; Paweł Żmudski, *Dux fabulosus: O tradycji historiograficznej osnutej wokół postaci Leszka Czarnego od "Gesta Lestconis" do dzieł Bartosza Paprockiego* [Dux fabulosus: On historical tradition surrounding Leszek Czarny from "Gesta Lestconis" to Works of Bartosz Paprocki] (Warsaw: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2023), 114–15; the similarities between Leszek's military deeds depicted in Dzierżwa's Chronicle and Traska's Annal pointed out already in Jacek Banaszkiewicz, *Kronika Dzierżwy: XIV-wieczne kompendium historii ojczystej* [Dzierżwa's Chronicle: 14th-century compendium of national history] (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1979), 108; Most recently discussed in English by Wojciech Michalski, "Two Medieval Traditions of Lublin and Their Influence on the Local Community's Sense of Identity (13th? - The Beginning of the 17th Century)," *Annales Universitatis Mariae Curie-Skłodowska, Sectio F – Historia* 72 (2017): 149–78.

⁹¹ For more on this so-called "small royal chronicle" see: Jacek Wiesiołowski, *Kolekcje historyczne w Polsce średniowiecznej XIV–XV wieku* [Historical collections in Medieval Poland of 14th-15th century] (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1967), 30, 148; Drelicharz, *Annalistyka małopolska XIII-XV wieku*, 458.

⁹² *Liber Foundationis Claustrae Sanctae Mariae Virginis in Henrichow*, ed. by Gustav A. Stenzel (Breslau: Josef Max & Komp 1854) [Henceforth: *Liber Foundationis*]; see also Polish edition with a translation: *Liber Foundationis Claustrae Sanctae Mariae Virginis in Heinrichow czyli Księga henrykowska*, ed. by Józef Matuszewski, transl. by Roman Grodecki, 2nd edition (Wrocław: Muzeum Archidiecejalne, 1991); and English translation: *A Local Society in Transition. The Henryków Book and Related Documents*, ed. and transl. by Piotr Górecki (Toronto: PISM, 2007), 91-193; Whenever I am citing the text of the Book of Henryków in English, I do so following Górecki's translation. As neither of the later published versions offers a new critical edition of the text, I will cite Latin text following Stenzel's edition.

to the localities in the monastery's possession, recounting in rich detail the circumstances in which they came to be a part of Henryków's estate.⁹³ The unique position of its authors, invested in events unfolding at the courts of the Silesian dukes on the one hand and in the everyday matters of the local community on the other, makes it a particularly valuable source for the study of relations between the rulers and their subject.

This brings me to the second type of sources I analyze in the thesis, namely charters issued by and for the Piast rulers of fragmented Poland. The increasing adoption of written documents as tools of communication and rulership was one of the important aspects of the broader transformation of the society of fragmented Poland during the long thirteenth century.⁹⁴ While we know only of 71 charters in total that were produced in Poland before the year 1200, the next century saw an unprecedented growth in the use of charters, with sometimes close to 100 new documents being issued in a single year.⁹⁵ Thus, the large number of charters issued by the Piast rulers during the period of the fragmentation, is an invaluable source for examining their relations with their subjects. For most of fragmented Poland, the long-standing efforts had created an almost comprehensive editions of the diplomatic corpus from each of the regions: Silesia,⁹⁶ Greater Poland,⁹⁷ Lesser Poland,⁹⁸ Cuyavia,⁹⁹ and Mazovia.¹⁰⁰ This main corpus of the documents will be, when the need arises, supplemented occasionally with the documents published in older or smaller editions.¹⁰¹

⁹³ For the discussion about the authorship and structure of the work, see Piotr Górecki, *The Text and the World: The Henryków Book, Its Authors, and Their Region, 1160–1310* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 2–28.

⁹⁴ Recent overviews of the expansion of the use of charters in medieval Poland during High Middle Ages in Anna Adamska, "From Memory to Written Record' in the Periphery of Medieval Latinitas: The Case of Poland in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries," in *Charters and the Use of the Written Word in Medieval Society*, ed. Karl Heidecker, Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy 5 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 83–100; Tomasz Jurek, "Stanowisko dokumentu w średniowiecznej Polsce [The position of the document in medieval Poland]," *Studia Źródłoznawcze* 40 (2002): 1–18.

⁹⁵ Anna Adamska, "From Memory to Written Record' in the Periphery of Medieval Latinitas: The Case of Poland in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries," in *Charters and the Use of the Written Word in Medieval Society*, ed. Karl Heidecker, Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy 5 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 87–88.

⁹⁶ *Schlesisches Urkundenbuch*, vol. 1, ed. by Heinrich Appelt (Vienna-Cologne-Graz: Böhlau 1963); *Schlesisches Urkundenbuch*, vol. 2-6, ed. by Winfried Irgang (Vienna-Cologne-Graz: Böhlau, 1977-1998).

⁹⁷ *Kodeks dyplomatyczny Wielkopolski*, vol. 1-2, ed. by Ignacy Zakrzewski (Poznań: Biblioteka Kórnicka 1877-78); *Kodeks dyplomatyczny Wielkopolski*, vol. 6, eds. by Antoni Gąsiorowski and Henryk Kowalewicz (Warsaw-Poznań: PWN, 1982).

⁹⁸ *Kodeks dyplomatyczny Małopolski*, vol. 1-2, ed. by Franciszek Piekosiński (Cracow: Akademia Umiejętności, 1876-86); *Kodeks dyplomatyczny katedry św. Wacława*, vol. 1, ed. by Franciszek Piekosiński (Cracow: Akademia Umiejętności, 1874); *Zbiór dokumentów małopolskich*, vol. 4, eds. by Stanisław Kuraś and Irena Sułkowska-Kuraś, (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1969).

⁹⁹ *Dokumenty Kujawskie i Mazowieckie przeważnie z XIII wieku*, ed. by Bolesław Ulanowski, in *Archiwum Komisji Historycznej*, vol. 4 (Cracow: PAU 1888).

¹⁰⁰ *Zbiór ogólny przywilejów i wspominków Mazowieckich*, vol. 1, ed. by Jan K. Kochanowski (Warsaw: Towarzystwo Naukowe Warszawskie, 1919); *Nowy kodeks dyplomatyczny Mazowsza*, eds. by Stanisław Kuraś and Irena Sułkowska-Kuraś, vol. 2 (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1989).

¹⁰¹ For example, *Codex Diplomaticus Poloniae*, vol. 1-3, eds. Leon Ryszczewski et al. (Warsaw: Stanisław Strąbski, 1847-1858).

One further example of the increasingly important role of the documents in fragmented Poland that deserves a separate mention is the formulary book linked with the chancery of Duke Henryk IV Probus of Wrocław, titled *Summa Nycolay compilata per magistrum Henricum Italicum* (simply referred to as *Summa Nycolai*).¹⁰² As suggested by the title, the formulary is a compilation attributed to an elusive *Henricus Italicus* (sometimes identified as Henry of Isernia) working in late-thirteenth-century Bohemia, claimed to be an author of formulary books, letter-writing, and rhetorical manuals.¹⁰³ Though Nicolaus cannot be identified with any known notary, the formulary book had clearly been created by someone involved in its production in the 1280s and with access to the court's archives, as 22 documents included in the formulary are both issued by and addressed to Henryk IV Probus and his immediate successors. While only a few of the presented examples are known from the corresponding originals issued by the chancery, the stylistic similarities with the surviving documents of Henryk IV and his successors suggest that the *Summa Nycolai* reflects well the language and ideas that Henryk's chancery used.¹⁰⁴ As a practical tool compiled in a way that reflected what its Silesian author thought to be most useful and worth emulating examples of political communication, I find it a uniquely valuable source for reconstructing ideas about the bonds of loyalty in late-thirteenth-century Poland.

Finally, the last type of sources I will consider in my analysis are the witness testimonies from the early-fourteenth-century trials in front of the papal legates. These include the lengthy process between the Archbishop Jakub Świnka and the bishop of Cracow Jan Muskata (1306-1310),¹⁰⁵ and two trials between Polish rulers and the Knights of the Teutonic Order: the so-called Inowrocław Trial of 1320-21, and the Warsaw Trial of 1339.¹⁰⁶ The protocols of all three trials have long been of interest to historians, including those studying political and historical

¹⁰² *Summa Nycolay*, ed. by Konrad Wutke, in *Über schlesische Formelbücher des Mittelalters*, Darstellungen und Quellen zur schlesischen Geschichte 26 (Breslau: Ferdinand Hirt, 1919): 43-106.

¹⁰³ The complicated question of the authorship of all of these works recently discussed by Libor Jan, where also a summary of the past debates Libor Jan, "Wer war Meister Heinrich der Walch? Ein fiktiver Notar in einer realen Königskanzlei," *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 73 (2017): 203-14.

¹⁰⁴ The discussion of *Summa Nycolay*'s authorship and its representative character in Tomasz Jurek, "Plany koronacyjne Henryka Probuse [Coronation plans of Henry Probus]," in *Śląsk w czasach Henryka IV Prawego*, ed. Krzysztof Wachowski (Wrocław: Uniwersytet Wrocławski, 2005), 12-15.

¹⁰⁵ Protocol published as no. 121 in *Analecta Vaticana 1202-1366*, ed. by Jan Ptaśnik, Monumenta Poloniae Vaticana, vol. 3 (Cracow: Akademia Umiejętności, 1914) [Henceforth: MPV] : 78-95.

¹⁰⁶ *Lites ac res gestae inter Polonos Ordinemque Cruciferorum*, vol. 1, ed. by Ignacy Zakrzewski (Poznań: Biblioteka Kórnicka 1890) [Henceforth: Lites I]; The protocol of 1320-21 trial had been since published in a new edition: *Lites ac res gestae inter Polonos Ordinemque Cruciferorum*, vol. 1, *Causa Junivladislaviae et Brestiae-Cuiaviae anno 1320-1321 acta*, ed. Helena Chłopocka (Wrocław-Warsaw-Cracow: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1970); The new edition had met with considerable criticism, see: Andrzej Wojtkowski, "Nowe wydanie źródeł dotyczących procesu polsko-krzyżackiego z lat 1320-1321" [New edition of the sources concerning polish-teutonic trials from years 1320-21], *Komunikaty Warmińsko-Mazurskie*, no 2-3 (1972): 426-439 ; Thus, I will be citing an older edition for the protocol of both trials.

consciousness.¹⁰⁷ While limited by the lines of questioning pursued by the procurators and transformed to some degree in translation from oral testimony to written Latin record, the testimonies offer an unprecedented access to the thoughts of the Piast subjects, including their ideas about the proper relationship between ruler and subjects. With almost a hundred witnesses interrogated, many of whom grew up witnessing the process of the unification of the realm and thus shaped by the political culture of the late fragmented Poland, the analysis of the testimonies of the Polish-Teutonic trials takes up the last chapter of this thesis, providing a coda to my interrogation.

Methods and Outline

The number and diversity of sources that I rely on in this thesis require flexibility in methodological approaches. For significant parts of the thesis, I rely on the narrative sources, be they chronicles, annals, or hagiographies. At the core of my approach lies the assumption formulated already by Helmut Beumann, who argued that medieval narratives were more revealing about the ideas and opinions held by the authors and the readers than about factual historical events.¹⁰⁸ This historical-critical analysis of the sources is especially relevant when trying to understand the functions of the acts of symbolic communication presented in the text.¹⁰⁹ Written by specific authors for specific audiences, the historical narratives can be understood not only to offer an idealized vision of loyalty held by their authors, but also to uphold already existing ideas and evoke widespread norms.¹¹⁰

Identifying each author's *milieu*, audience, and political context in which narratives were created, although a difficult task in case of some annalistic entries, is important for making

¹⁰⁷ I discuss this literature in more detail in the Chapter 5 of this thesis. For example, see Paul Milliman, *'The Slippery Memory of Men': The Place of Pomerania in the Medieval Kingdom of Poland* (Leiden: Brill, 2013); Wiesław Sieradzan, ed., *Arguments and Counter-Arguments. The Political Thought of the 14th and 15th Centuries during the Polish-Teutonic Order Trials and Disputes* (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2012); Wiesław Sieradzan, *Świadomość historyczna świadków w procesach polsko-krzyżackich w XIV-XV wieku* [Historical awareness of witnesses in Polish-Teutonic trials in the 14th-15th centuries] (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 1993); Janusz Bieniak, "Środowisko świadków procesu polsko-krzyżackiego z 1339 r." [Witnesses at the trial between Poland and the Order of the Teutonic Knights as a social group], in *Genealogia - kręgi zawodowe i grupy interesu w Polsce średniowiecznej na tle porównawczym*, ed. Jan Wroniszewski (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 1989), 1–35; Helena Chłopocka, "Tradycja o Pomorzu Gdańskim w zeznaniach świadków na procesach polsko-krzyżackich w XIV i XV wieku." [Tradition about Pomerellia in the testimonies of the witnesses of the Polish-Teutonic trials in 14th and 15th centuries], *Roczniki Historyczne* 25 (1959): 65–142.

¹⁰⁸ Helmut Beumann, "Die Historiographie des Mittelalters als Quelle für die Ideengeschichte des Königtums," *Historische Zeitschrift* 180 (1955): 449–88.

¹⁰⁹ See for example Dalewski, *Ritual and Politics*, 1–12.

¹¹⁰ For similar approach to studying political culture through narrative sources, see Björn Weiler, "Tales of First Kings and the Culture of Kingship in the West, ca. 1050-ca. 1200," *Viator* 46 (2015): 121–28; Sverre Bagge, *Kings, Politics, and the Right Order of the World in German Historiography c. 950 - 1150*, *Studies in the History of Christian Thought* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 103:12–19.

an argument about the discursive use of loyalty in fragmented Poland. In making claims about the relationship between rulers and subjects, the analyzed sources articulated ideas about political community: a vision of who belonged to the Piast-ruled polities and what bound its members together. The definition of political community varies between the analyzed accounts, changing with authors and evolving over time.

I focus my analysis on the parts of narratives that depict how those bonds were created, how they were strengthened, and when they were broken. Investigating the content of the bonds, I examine the actions taken by the subjects praised for their loyalty and those condemned for treachery. Some sources, like Vincentius's *Chronica Polonorum*, contain paradigmatic visions of the place of loyalty in the life of a political community. In most cases, however, the information about the authors' vision of loyalty is revealed through the analysis of either language or structure of longer narratives, the meaning of which conveys the authors' judgment on the presented actions and behavior.

Diplomatic sources, in turn, have long been argued to be a potent tool of political communication, the natural locus of the idealized vision of the proper rulership and social relations.¹¹¹ Just like in the case of narratives, I am interested not only in the ideas expressed by the ducal chanceries but also in the target audience of their proclamations and the political context in which they were issued. The protocols of the papal trials present their own methodological hurdles, which I address more fully in the relevant chapter. When analyzing the testimonies, I treat the interrogation of each witness as its own narrative, asking how the bonds of loyalty were created, strengthened, and resolved according to their testimonies, trying to build a combined image from their responses. Taking advantage of the level of detail provided by this source, I also ask how the social background of the witnesses impacted ways in which they (mis)remembered loyalty and disloyalty during the discussed events and thought about their own allegiances.

The thesis follows a largely chronological structure, while making some compromises to discuss similar sources together. By following the same structure across multiple chapters, asking similar questions of all the sources, I can best trace the ways in which ideas about the bonds of loyalty were transformed over time. This structure also makes it easier to place all these ideas in the specific political context, allowing me to better showcase how the discourse of loyalty was used in making ideological claims and in political struggles for the shape of the unified kingdom.

¹¹¹ For classical argument, see Heinrich Fichtenau, "Monarchische Propaganda in Urkunden," in *Beiträge zur Mediävistik. Ausgewählte Aufsätze*, 2: Urkundenforschung (Stuttgart: Hiersemann Verlag, 1977), 18–36.

Thus, the first chapter of the thesis is dedicated to the analysis of the bonds of loyalty presented in the earliest (and most extensive) narrative sources from fragmented Poland – Vincentius of Cracow’s *Chronica Polonorum*. After dedicating a subchapter to a more detailed introduction of the source, the rest of the internal structure follows different questions concerning the bonds: how were they created? What tools could be used to strengthen them? What do the depictions of loyal subjects and rulers tell us about the content of the bonds of loyalty? Finally, what do the depictions of treachery and rebellion tell us about how the bonds of loyalty could be dissolved? The second chapter introduces the reader to the two turn-of-the-fourteenth-century chronicles: the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* and *Dzierzwa’s Chronicle*. It builds on the previous analysis, focusing on the ways in which episodes used by Vincentius to discuss loyalty were adapted by the later chronicles to better fit with their worldview and ideological projects. Tracing the transformation of Vincentian narratives in two contrasting sources drawing from the same tradition puts in sharper focus the shared and differing ideas about loyalty held by an anonymous Lubiąż monk and Dzierzwa.

The third chapter, rather than focusing on a single source, extends its scope to cover the ideas about the bonds of loyalty expressed in the ducal diplomas and the fragmented narrative tradition created in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. The latter includes not only the post-Vincentian parts of the chronicles analysed in Chapter 2, but also *Book of Henryków* and the disparate annalistic traditions from Greater- and Lesser Poland. Just like in the previous chapter, I interrogate the content of the bonds of loyalty, the ways in which they were imagined to be created, strengthened, and dissolved – albeit this time, the answers present a less uniform picture of competing and complementary ideas and attitudes circulating in fragmented Poland. Furthermore, the multiplicity of sources analysed in this chapter allows me to ask more in-depth questions about the role of pragmatic literacy and the function of the discourse of loyalty.

Since the corpus of sources analysed in Chapter 3 is large, I decided to narrow down its focus, asking only about the bonds of loyalty between the ruler and the traditional base of his power – Polish nobles and local knights. Questions about how the same sources framed the new groups of subjects, that is, German-speaking knights and townspeople, and the ways in which their otherness was weaponised in the discourse of loyalty at the turn of the fourteenth century, will be addressed in Chapter 4. Finally, Chapter 5 moves firmly into the political culture of the recently reunified Polish Kingdom, investigating the protocols of the early-fourteenth-century Polish-Teutonic Trials. By analyzing how the testimonies of the witnesses—a diverse group of subjects from different parts of Poland— fit into the ideas about loyalty painted in the previous

chapters, I aim to ask how transformative Władysław's coronation was for this aspect of Polish political culture.

Chapter 1: *There was virtue in this republic!* Loyalty in the Chronicle of Vincentius of Cracow

This chapter examines the concept of loyalty presented on the pages of *Chronica Polonorum* by Vincentius of Cracow. Written at a time when Piast competitors jostled for the support of changing coteries of increasingly powerful secular elites, *Chronica Polonorum* provides many vivid accounts of faithfulness and betrayal in the political culture of medieval Poland on the brink of political fragmentation. Like many chroniclers, Vincentius does not merely depict the past, but is also actively trying to shape the present. Writing for the well-educated elites, he interwove historical narrative with moralizing digressions, making strong ideological statements on the proper relationship between elites and their sovereign. This makes his *Chronica Polonorum* a particularly promising source for finding attempts at laying down the set of norms constituting the idealized concepts of loyalty. Moreover, Vincenitus's work was broadly read by the intellectual elites of fragmented medieval Poland. As such, the picture of loyalty presented in his chronicle will serve as an inevitable point of comparison for all other conceptualizations of this bond that I will discuss in later parts of this thesis.

I divided my work on *Chronica Polonorum* into five parts. I precede the analysis of the ideological contents of the chronicle with a brief outline of its author's biography and the influences he was shaped by. As a part of further necessary stage-setting, I describe how Vincentius presented the origins of the Polish political community and legitimized ducal authority, laying the ground for the proper relationship between ruler and subjects. In the third chapter, I proceed to investigate different methods through which the bonds of loyalty could have been strengthened, from oaths through feasts to gifts. The last two subchapters are dedicated to the analysis of the selected examples of narratives. First, I focus on the depictions of individual praiseworthy loyalty or unfaithfulness and its consequences. Then, I examine the narratives of subjects rebelling—justifiably or not—against their Piast rulers.

1.1 The Author and his Chronicle

Despite the position Vincentius (also known in historiography as *Master Vincentius*, or Wincenty Kadłubek) holds in Polish historical imagination as the first native to write a history of Poland, his biography can only be outlined in rough detail. The exact time of his birth is unknown, though the historiographical consensus has placed it around the 1150s. While

contemporary historians convincingly placed Vincentius's background somewhere among a broad category of landowning knightly clans, his closer affiliation with any of the noble kin groups remains a subject of speculation.¹¹² His education likely began at the cathedral school in Cracow. However, Vincentius's familiarity with the intellectual currents of the twelfth-century Renaissance, evident in the *Chronica Polonorum*, must have been acquired at a major Western European center of learning. Of the two institutions most often proposed in historiography, Bologna and Paris, the latter seems to be a more likely candidate.¹¹³

The university education proved advantageous in boosting Vincentius's clerical career upon return to Poland, sometime before 1189. Good standing at Kazimierz II the Just's court and a close relationship with Piotr, the archbishop of Gniezno, allowed Vincentius to become the first provost of the newly established collegiate chapter at Sandomierz in 1191.¹¹⁴ It was also sometime around that time, in the late 1180s or early 1190s that he started to compose his chronicle, with the encouragement of Duke Kazimierz. Vincentius continued to write well after the death of his patron in 1194, covering contemporary events almost up to his election to the bishopric of Cracow in 1208.¹¹⁵ With no other chronicler to cover his episcopal deeds, we cannot tell much about his time in office. Thus, sources are silent on any possible involvement of Cracow's new bishop in the political life during his episcopate. He attended the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, and most probably continued his support for the efforts led by the Archbishop of Gniezno to implement Gregorian reforms in Poland, which he previously

¹¹² Following the belief traditionally held by Polish historiography, Brygida Kürbis affiliated Vincenitus with the clan Lis, dominant in the politics of Lesser Poland by the mid-twelfth century, see Brygida Kürbis, "Wstęp [Introduction]," in *Kronika Polska*, by Mistrz Wincenty (tzw. Kadłubek) (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1997), x–xiv; More recently, the investigations of Janusz Bieniak provided a strong counter-thesis, according to which Vincentius belonged to the Łabędzie clan. More specifically, Vincentius was to be a descendant of Bogusław, brother of the powerful palatine Piotr Włostowic, who features prominently on the pages of the chronicle. Janusz Bieniak, "Mistrz Wincenty w życiu politycznym Polski przełomu XII i XIII wieku" [Master Vincentius in the political life of Poland at the turn of the 12th and 13th centuries], in *Mistrz Wincenty Kadłubek: człowiek i dzieło, pośmiertny kult i legenda: materiały sesji naukowej: Kraków, 10 marca 2000* (Cracow: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 2001), 29–30.

¹¹³ Zenon Kałuża, "Vincentius's Chronicle and Intellectual Culture of the Twelfth Century," in *Writing History in Medieval Poland: Bishop Vincentius of Cracow and the "Chronica Polonorum"*, vol. 28, ed. Darius von Güttner-Sporzyński, Cursor Mundi 28 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 139–74.

¹¹⁴ An overview of the discussions about the beginning of Vincenitus's career upon his return to Poland in: Jacek Maciejewski, "Vincentius's Background and Family Origins," in *Writing History in Medieval Poland: Bishop Vincentius of Cracow and the "Chronica Polonorum"*, ed. Darius von Güttner-Sporzyński, Cursor Mundi 28 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 26–27.

¹¹⁵ Maciejewski, 33–42; Wojciech Baran-Kozłowski, *Arcybiskup gnieźnieński Henryk Kietlicz (1199 - 1219): działalność kościelna i polityczna* [Archbishop of Gniezno Henryk Kietlicz (1199 - 1219): ecclesiastical and political activity], Poznańskie Studia Historyczne (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2005), 63–64.

expressed on the pages of his work.¹¹⁶ Three years after returning from Rome, Vincentius retired to the monastery of Jędrzejów, where he died in 1223.¹¹⁷

Vincentius's biography shaped his personal loyalties, which in turn gave shape to his work. The *Chronica* is divided into four books. The first three, which cover Polish history from the mythical past to the 1160s, are clothed in the classical robes of a feast-time dialogue between Mateusz and Jan, easily identifiable with the bishop of Cracow and archbishop of Gniezno. In the attempt to weave together Polish and broader universal history, Vincentius lets Mateusz present the Polish past, while his interlocutor comments on the events by recalling didactic *exempla* from Biblical and classical tradition. As the narrative approaches the contemporary events, the chronicler retires this framing device for the last book of his chronicle, aligning this change with the deaths of real-life counterparts of his narrators around the turn of the 1170s. The last, fourth book of the chronicle is written in a more matter-of-fact style. It is also here where Vincentius reveals himself as the author of his work, a humble servant present at the now-ending feast, prompted to writing by its host.¹¹⁸ In the prologue to the chronicle, it was the "bravest of princes" who tasked Vincentius with writing down the deeds of the predecessors and contemporary Poles for their ancestors.¹¹⁹

For most Polish historians the patron hidden under both of those expressions is Kazimierz II the Just. This case is relatively straightforward to make, given the aforementioned proximity of Vincentius to Kazimierz's entourage and the lavish praise and exaltation with which the ruler of Lesser Poland was presented on the pages of the chronicle.¹²⁰ The most recent challenge to this traditional view came from Janusz Bieniak who argued that Vincentius's ambiguity was calculated, as he was ready to write the history of the Poles irrespective of which of the Piast contenders to the throne in Cracow would be victorious, and might have started his work under the patronage of Mieszko III, Kazimierz's rival.¹²¹ Even tempered down under the

¹¹⁶ Baran-Kozłowski, *Arcybiskup gnieźnieński Henryk Kietlicz*, 127, 205, 238.

¹¹⁷ On the theories explaining Vincentius's decision to retire, see Maciejewski, "Vincentius's Background and Family Origins," 35–36.

¹¹⁸ 4,1 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 129.

¹¹⁹ Prologus.4 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 5: Intellexit nimirum strennuissimus principum omnimode strennuitatis experimenta, omnimoda honestatis insignia ex maiorum exemplaribus uelut ex quibusdam speculis resultare. [...] Auitarum itaque uirtutum posteris dilargiens participium, calamo fragili, axi harudineo, humeris Pygmei onus inposuit Athlanteum.

¹²⁰ Kürbis, "Wstęp," XXIX–XXXII; Güttner-Sporzyński, "Bishop Vincentius of Cracow and His *Chronica Polonorum*," 2; Józef Dobosz, "Motives and Inspirations: An Exploration of When and Why the *Chronica Polonorum* Was Written," in *Writing History in Medieval Poland: Bishop Vincentius of Cracow and the "Chronica Polonorum"*, ed. Darius von Güttner-Sporzyński, *Cursor Mundi* 28 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 51–53, where also an outline of the debate between Janusz Bieniak and Edward Skibiński.

¹²¹ Bieniak, "Mistrz Wincenty w życiu politycznym Polski"; With some aspects toned down in: Janusz Bieniak, "Jak Wincenty rozumiał i przedstawiał ustrój państwa polskiego" [How Vincentius understood and presented the

criticism, Bieniak's theory did not take hold in historiography.¹²² Nevertheless, it testifies to the temperature of the debates still surrounding *Chronica Polonorum* and serves as a reminder of many nuances and ambiguities of its text.

The political context in which the *Chronica* was commissioned is reflected in the aims Vincentius set out for his work. The most pressing one was to strengthen the claim to Cracow's throne held by Kazimierz and his progeny by laying out the vision of a proper relationship between the rulers and the rest of the Polish elites.¹²³ The second, much broader in scope, was to ground Kazimierz's polity in a long history of the Poles that reached back to the invented antique past.¹²⁴ By providing the readers with a carefully crafted vision of Polish history, interwoven with parallels from classical literature and morality tales, Vincentius aimed to shape the moral models for his contemporaries to follow.¹²⁵

Much of the nuance of Vincentius's work, and of the challenge in reading it, is due to its style. Deliberately placed by the author in the context of the intellectual renaissance of the twelfth century, the *Chronica* was written in a heavily metaphor-laden, rhetorically challenging style, full of poetic digressions and didactic admonitions. The catalog of literary sources on which Vincentius directly or indirectly drew is very broad. As one would expect from any work of medieval Latin historiography, it includes frequent references to the Bible and the writings of the Church Fathers.¹²⁶ Just like other intellectuals of the twelfth-century Renaissance, Cracow's bishop had a strong appreciation of the authors of the pagan Greco-Roman past.

Polish constitutional system], in *Onus Athlanteum. Studia nad Kroniką biskupa Wincentego*, ed. Andrzej Dąbrówka and Witold Wojtowicz (Warsaw: Instytut Badań Literackich PAN, 2009), 41–43.

¹²² Edward Skibiński, "Walka o władzę w kronice Mistrza Wincentego. Mieszko Stary i Kazimierz Sprawiedliwy [The Power Struggle in the Chronicle by Vincentius of Cracow: Mieszko the Old and Kazimierz the Just]," in *Onus Athlanteum. Studia nad Kroniką biskupa Wincentego [Onus Athlanteum. Studies on the Chronicle of bishop Vincentius]*, ed. Andrzej Dąbrówka and Witold Wojtowicz (Warsaw: Instytut Badań Literackich PAN, 2009), 47–56; Dobosz, "Motives and Inspirations: An Exploration of When and Why the *Chronica Polonorum* Was Written," 52–54; see also all of the other contributors in this volume who raise the issue.

¹²³ The emphasis on political aims of Vincentius in Przemysław Wiszewski, "The Power of a Prince: Vincentius on the Dynasty's Source of Power," in *Writing History in Medieval Poland: Bishop Vincentius of Cracow and the "Chronica Polonorum"*, ed. Darius von Güttners-Sporzyński, *Cursor Mundi* 28 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 199–220; Skibiński, "Walka o władzę w kronice Mistrza Wincentego."

¹²⁴ The exhaustive analysis of the function played by the legendary ancient past invented by Vincenitus in Jacek Banaszkiewicz, *Polskie dzieje bajeczne Mistrza Wincentego Kadłubka* [Polish legendary history by Master Wincenty Kadłubek], 2nd ed. (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2002).

¹²⁵ Brygida Kürbis, "Jak Mistrz Wincenty pisał historię Polski" [How Master Vincent wrote the history of Poland], in *Mistrz Wincenty Kadłubek. Człowiek i dzieło, pośmiertny kult i legenda*, ed. Krzysztof Prokop (Cracow: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 2001), 59–78; Jerzy Korolec, "Ideal władcy w Kronice mistrza Wincentego. Rola cnót moralnych w legitymizacji władzy" [Ruler's ideal in the chronicle of Master Vincentius. The role of moral virtues in the legitimization of power], in *Pogranicza i konteksty literatury polskiego średniowiecza*, ed. Teresa Michałowska (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1989), 71–87.

¹²⁶ Katarzyna Chmielewska counts almost 140 references to the Bible, mostly to the Book of Kings and Book of Psalms, see Katarzyna Chmielewska, "The Impact and Influence of Antiquity and the Bible in the *Chronica Polonorum*," in *Writing History in Medieval Poland: Bishop Vincentius of Cracow and the "Chronica Polonorum"*, ed. Darius von Güttners-Sporzyński, *Cursor Mundi* 28 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 122–23.

Plato's *Timaeus* directly influenced the dialogue form chosen for the first three books of the *Chronica Polonorum*.¹²⁷ Vincentius also knew Aristotle's *Topics* and *On Sophistical Refutations*, along with the popular commentaries by Boethius and the latter's *Consolation*.¹²⁸ From Latin historians, Polish chronicler most frequently borrowed from Justin's epitome of Trogus's *Historiae Philippicae*.¹²⁹ Vincentius further embellished his chronicle with references to Roman poetry,¹³⁰ and rhetorical and philosophical authorities. Along with the real works of Cicero, the chronicler often followed the Pseudo-Ciceronian *Rhetorica ad Herennium* in constructing the most elaborate speeches of his heroes.¹³¹ Finally, Macrobius's *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis* has traditionally been linked to Vincentius's interest in the fourfold division of virtues.

Among the contemporaries whose influence on Vincentius's thought had been discussed the most is John of Salisbury. The commonalities start with the biographies of both bishops and extend to the interests in virtuous rulership, Roman law, and ancient *auctores*. Whether these shared characteristics were a result of direct influence or just a similar intellectual *milieu* of both authors remains a subject of debate.¹³² No matter its outcome, *Policraticus* remains a valuable point of comparison with Vincentius's thought. The other strand of twelfth-century thoughts that the Polish chronicler could have been inspired by were writings of St. Bernard of Clairvaux and other Cistercians, preoccupied with the importance of *humilitas*.¹³³

¹²⁷ Kałuża, "Vincentius's Chronicle and Intellectual Culture of the Twelfth Century," 140–41; Zenon Kałuża, "Kadłubka historia mówiona i historia pisana ('Kronika' I 1-2, I 9 i II 1-2) [Kadłubek's oral history and written history ('Chronicle' I 1-2, I 9 and II 1-2)]," *Przegląd Tomistyczny* 12 (2006): 61–120.

¹²⁸ Zenon Kałuża and Dragos Calma, "The Philosophical Reading of Master Vincent," *Acta Poloniae Historica* 112 (2015): 95–101.

¹²⁹ Chmielewska, "The Impact and Influence of Antiquity," 124; Ignacy Lewandowski, "Mistrz Wincenty a Justyn – epitomator Pompejusza Troga" [Master Vincent a Justin - epitomator of Pompei Trogus], *Studia Źródłoznawcze* 17 (1976): 28–34.

¹³⁰ Katarzyna Chmielewska, "Recepcja rzymskiej literatury antycznej w Kronice polskiej Mistrza Wincentego" [[The reception of ancient roman literature in Master Vincent's Polish Chronicle], in *Onus Athlanteum. Studia nad Kroniką biskupa Wincentego*, ed. Andrzej Dąbrowka and Witold Wojtowicz (Warsaw: Instytut Badań Literackich PAN, 2009), 218–19.

¹³¹ Kałuża and Calma, "The Philosophical Reading," 65–70.

¹³² The discussion thoroughly summarized in Robert Bubezyk, "Wpływ pisarstwa Jana z Salisbury na kronikę Wincentego na przykładzie wybranych fragmentów utworu (literacki portret Kazimierza Sprawiedliwego)" [The influence of the writings of John of Salisbury on the Vincentius's on the example of selected fragments of the work (literary portrait of Casimir the Just)], in *Onus Athlanteum. Studia nad Kroniką biskupa Wincentego*, ed. Andrzej Dąbrowka and Witold Wojtowicz (Warsaw: Instytut Badań Literackich PAN, 2009), 450–55; The author himself leans towards the Vincenitus's direct knowledge of John of Salisbury's thought. For an opposite view, see for example Kałuża, "Vincentius's Chronicle and Intellectual Culture of the Twelfth Century," 145–48.

¹³³ Danuta Borawska, "Mistrz Wincenty w nowym wydaniu i opracowaniu. W stronę cystersów i św. Bernarda z Clairvaux" [Master Vincent in a new edition and study. Toward the Cistercians and St. Bernard of Clairvaux], *Przegląd Historyczny* 68 (1977): 341–66; Bubezyk, "Wpływ pisarstwa Jana z Salisbury," 455; Contrary opinion in Edward Skibiński, "Źródła erudycji Kadłubka" [Sources of Kadłubek's erudition], *Roczniki Historyczne* 60 (1994): 169.

Vincentius had an interest in Roman law and often used the language and reasoning of learned jurisprudence in his writing. He knew all parts of *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, often explicitly referring to its authority, as well as the *Code of Theodosius* and *Epitome Iuliani*. He was similarly familiar with canon law, though his citations from *Decretum Gratiani* are not as common as those referring to *ius civile*.¹³⁴ These references were not only erudite flourishes, but they were clearly meant to add to Vincentius's political arguments a legal dimension.

Finally, no list of texts that influenced Vincenitus's chronicle would be complete without the earliest work of Polish medieval historiography, the *Gesta principum Polonorum*. The *Gesta* were written by an anonymous foreign monk, traditionally referred to as Gallus, sometime in the second decade of the twelfth century. His patron, Bolesław III the Wrymouth (1107–1138), found himself in a political crisis due to the uproar caused by the bloody end of his feud with his older stepbrother Zbigniew. Thus, Gallus's chronicle was primarily devoted to strengthening the legitimacy of the Piast dynasty in general and Bolesław III in particular, by telling the stories about the glorious deeds of the duke and his illustrious ancestors.¹³⁵ While he never mentions the work of his predecessor explicitly, there is no doubt that Vincentius was intimately familiar with Gallus's chronicle, which was his main literary source of information about the Polish past. When stripped of the similes and erudite digressions, the narrative thread of books II and III of *Chronica Polonorum* follows closely the *Gesta principum Polonorum*. Vincentius, however, does not simply rewrite the narrative of the *Gesta* in his own style. While respecting the structure of Gallus's tales, he often alters or rearranges their details in order to put their moralizing message into sharper focus.¹³⁶ Having this in mind, I will refer to Gallus's work at times where the comparison between the two works will make the meaning and intent behind Vincentius's version of the narrative clearer.

1.2 Virtue, Res Publica, and its Hereditary Princes

In order to explore the way in which the bonds of loyalty between Piast rulers and their subjects were—according to Vincentius—established in the first place, we need to take a broader look at how the chronicler presented and legitimized the origins of the Polish political

¹³⁴ Janusz Sondel, "Rola 'Kroniki' Wincentego zwanego Kadłubkiem w upowszechnianiu prawa rzymskiego w średniowiecznej Polsce" [The role of the 'Chronicle' by Wincenty called Kadlubek in the dissemination of Roman law in medieval Poland], *Zeszyty Prawnicze* 11, no. 1 (2011): 39–68.

¹³⁵ Zbigniew Dalewski, "A New Chosen People? Gallus Anonymus's Narrative about Poland and Its Rulers," in *Historical Narratives and Christian Identity on a European Periphery*, ed. Ildar Garipzanov (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 148–49; Marian Plezia, *Kronika Galla na tle historiografii XII wieku* [The Gallus's Chronicle in the context of the twelfth century historiographical writing] (Cracow: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 1947), 62–76.

¹³⁶ Paweł Żmudzki, "New Versions of the Tales of Gallus Anonymus in the Chronicle of Master Vincentius," *Acta Poloniae Historica*, no. 112 (2015): 141–57.

community and ducal authority. Like many chroniclers before him, Vincentius uses the legendary past to paint the idealized picture of society and politics, which can serve as a guideline and measuring stick for his contemporaries.¹³⁷ Departing from the historiographical tradition established by Gallus, Vincentius does not begin his tale with the legendary origins of the Piast dynasty. Instead, he constructs even older Polish antiquity, which occupies completely the narrative of the first book of the chronicle.

The *Chronica* opens with the Ciceronian exclamation: *Fuit, fuit quondam in hac re publica uirtus!*¹³⁸ Ancient Poles, *Lechites*, were, according to Vincentius, full of virtues. Among those the most important ones were bellicose courage and disdain for riches and power, which allowed Poles to expand their *res publica* into a vast empire.¹³⁹ While initially, ancient Poles did not have monarchs, *res publica* in Vincentius's understanding did not exclude the existence of kingship.¹⁴⁰ Nevertheless, even as the legendary Gracchus became the first monarch of their *res publica*, he was seen „not as a king, but a partner in kingship”.¹⁴¹

It is this participation of the subjects in actively shaping the political life of the realm that had been pointed out as central to the idea of the Polish *res publica* presented by Vincentius. In ancient past all of the Poles were the active members of the political community, but with time this group narrowed down to the aristocratic elites.¹⁴² As the chronicler observes on other occasion, “For it is not by himself that *princeps* administers the commonwealth, but through *administratorias potestates*.”¹⁴³ The powerful subjects are thus to take part in exercising the ruler's authority.

The chronicler presents the most obvious way in which this participation unfolded by depicting the transition of power after Gracchus's death. His only surviving son was quickly exiled when the Poles learned about the fratricide he committed prior to becoming their king.¹⁴⁴ With no obvious heirs, “senate, magnates, and all commoners” moved by the love of their first

¹³⁷ For multiple examples see Weiler, “Tales of First Kings.”

¹³⁸ 1.1 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 6.

¹³⁹ 1.3-1.4 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 8-9.

¹⁴⁰ As pointed out by Żmudzki, Vincentius saw the gradual shift away from the nonhierarchical society of ancient Poles towards monarchy was a part of natural „maturation” of their society. Paweł Żmudzki, “Vincentius's Construct of a Nation: Poland as Res Publica,” in *Writing History in Medieval Poland: Bishop Vincentius of Cracow and the “Chronica Polonorum,”* vol. 28, ed. Darius von Güttner-Sporzyński, Cursor Mundi 28 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 175–97.

¹⁴¹ 1.5 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 9: *Se non regem sed regni socium pollicetur, si se deligant. Non sibi sed toti natum se credere mundo.*

¹⁴² Żmudzki, “Vincentius's Construct of a Nation,” 185.

¹⁴³ 4.21 in *Chronica Polonorum: Nec enim per se principes rem publicam administrant, set per administratorias potestates.*

¹⁴⁴ 1.5-1.6 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 10-11.

ruler decided to entrust the throne to his only daughter, Wanda.¹⁴⁵ As she herself was heirless, her two immediate successors, both named Lestek, also became rulers through elections.

Importantly, the elected and electors share the same virtues as the Poles of the most distant pre-Gracchus past. Lestek II demonstrated his martial prowess through constant duels, giving away all of the riches he won in the gestures of extreme largess. Uncaring for material wealth, he also never forgot about his humble roots. He would sit on his throne only in simple clothes, or sear at the footstall beneath.¹⁴⁶ Vincentius praises this display of *humilitas* which, the chronicler claims “becomes the king more than conspicuous purple”.¹⁴⁷ Similarly, the competition in which Lestek II wins the throne was devised by honest ordinary men (*privati*), by whom *longe relegata esset omnis ambitio*. Tasked with choosing the ruler in order to prevent further in-fighting between power-hungry magnates, they swore to be guided by the public benefit (*commodum publicum*) and not political pressures.¹⁴⁸ Vincentius clearly contrasts *ambitio*—the lust for power for power’s sake—of bad participants in political life, with *humilitas* that legitimizes the rule of the virtuous. The former brings an end to Gracchus II, while the latter rewards men of humble origins, like both Lesteks, with the royal crown.¹⁴⁹ The same mechanism was responsible for the rise to power of the Piast dynasty. Transitioning from the legendary past of his own creation towards the tradition of the dynastic origins established already in *Gesta principum Polonorum* of Gallus Anonymous, Vincentius underscores the humble background of Piast, a simple *agricola*. Siemowit is elevated not in spite, but because of these origins, with humility allowing for better cultivation of other virtues, for “often the height of the cedars grows from the common field bushes”.¹⁵⁰

While some of the greatest of the legendary rulers of Poland came from elections, Vincentius repeatedly emphasizes the advantages of hereditary rulership. The ancient Poles

¹⁴⁵ 1.7 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 12: *Tantus autem amor demortui principis senatum, procures, uulgi omne deuinxerat, ut unicam eius uirgunculam, cuius nomen Vanda, patri imperio subrogarent.*

¹⁴⁶ 1.16 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 21: *Quotiens namque regalibus eum insiniri regia, ut assolet, poposcisset dignitas, originarie non immemor condicionis in habitu sordido prius orchestram conscendit, regalium ornatum scabello pendum suppressens, subinde regis decussatus insignibus scabello insedit, illi exreme paupertatis panniculis in subremo orchestre suggestu reuerentissime collocatis.*

¹⁴⁷ 1.16 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 21-22: *Ex hoc sane perdocuit regem plus humilitate decorum quam purpura conspicuum [...].*

¹⁴⁸ 1.13 in *Chronica Polonorum* 18-19: *Diuque non sine periculo ea conflictione agitati, eligendi tandem censuram principis privatorum deferunt arbitrio, utpote quorum insuspecta uideretur simplicitas, et a quibus longe relegata esset omnis ambitio. Seque iure iurando utrique obstringunt: eligentes quidem, ne fauore personali declinent, ne deuio emolumentum exorbitent, ne atrocioris metu potentie distorqueantur ab eo quod publicis perspexerint commodis expedire; reliqui uero, ne cui ab eligentium liceat arbitrio discedere.*

¹⁴⁹ On particular role played by ambitio and humilitas in Vincentius’s Chronicle see most recently: Edward Skibiński, “The Narrative in Vincentius’s Chronicle,” in *Writing History in Medieval Poland: Bishop Vincentius of Cracow and the “Chronica Polonorum,”* vol. 28, ed. Darius von Güttners-Sporzyński, *Cursor Mundi* 28 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 107–9.

¹⁵⁰ 2.4 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 33: *Sepe namque de agrestium fructibus cedrina surgit proceritas [...].*

were full of virtues and glory because “they were not ruled over by the plebeian aborigines, nor by the self-elected powerful, but hereditary princes (*principes succedanei*).”¹⁵¹ Vincentius strongly believed that the loyalty to the good monarch should be extended to his chosen successor. When describing the election of Wanda, the chronicler praises the subjects who did not let “the good deeds of the dead die with their offspring” and embraced the rule of Gracchus’s daughter, her gender notwithstanding.¹⁵²

The term *principes succedanei* used by Vincentius is evocative—though by no means synonymous—of the idea of *domini naturales*, appearing frequently on the pages of early twelfth-century *Gesta principum Polonorum*. The anonymous author of the first work of Polish historiography had, however, a different perspective on the relationship between rulers and their subjects. In his view, the Piasts were chosen by God to be the natural lords of Poland. Its inhabitants could prosper only under the dynasty’s rule, participating as subjects in some of Piast’s divine favor.¹⁵³ The world-tuning disasters that befell upon Poland during the exile of Kazimierz the Restorer are presented as links between the fates of the dynasty and the land. These created a generalized expectation of loyalty towards all members of the ruling family – unless they proved to be fundamentally unsuitable to be rulers.¹⁵⁴ The concept was known to Vincentius, but he refers to it directly only on one occasion. In an episode that I will analyze in more detail later in this chapter, the exiled Mieszko III the Old warns his competitor Kazimierz II the Just to beware of the “faction of traitors who, out of hate towards the natural lords (*domini naturales*)” once already tried to hand over the throne to the enemies.¹⁵⁵ It is, however, clear given the message of the legendary pre-Piast past, that Vincentius imagined the relationship between hereditary rulers and subjects quite differently. Rather than a matter of supporting the rights of God-chosen family, the recognition of the dynastic successor was grounded in the selfless loyalty to their great ancestor. While God’s grace could have blessed certain bloodlines

¹⁵¹ 1.6 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 6: *Non enim plebei aborigines, non uendicarie illi principate sunt potestates, sed principes succedanei.*

¹⁵² 1.8 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 14.

¹⁵³ Zbigniew Dalewski, "A New Chosen People? Gallus Anonymus's Narrative about Poland and Its Rulers," in *Historical Narratives and Christian Identity on a European Periphery*, ed. Ildar Garipzanov (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 160–65.

¹⁵⁴ See for example, the case of Bolesław II the Bold, as discussed in Edward Skibiński, “Biskup i monarcha” [Bishop and monarch], in *Docendo discimus: studia historyczne ofiarowane Profesorowi Zbigniewowi Wielgoszowi w siedemdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin*, ed. Zbigniew Wielgosz, Krzysztof Kaczmarek, and Jarosław Nikodem (Poznań: Instytut Historii UAM, 2000), 99–109; I analyse the impact of the idea of “*domini naturales*” on the bonds of loyalty imagined in Gallus’s *Gesta* in more detail in Michał Machalski, “Bonds of Loyalty in the *Gesta Principum Polonorum*,” *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* 27 (2021): 37–51.

¹⁵⁵ 4.10 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 151: *Cuius incunctanter imperium factio proditiōnalis naturalium odio principum hostibus prostituere intendebat, eodem forsitan proditiōnis ingenio contra te intentatura.*

with virtuous nature, the ultimate foundation of Piast power did not lay exclusively in God-given *sacrum*.¹⁵⁶ Hence, the use of much more ambiguous term like *principes succedanei*.¹⁵⁷

The seemingly paradoxical embrace of the rights of the broader members of the political community to elect their virtuous ruler and advocacy for the hereditary rights of the dynasty becomes more understandable when placed in the political context in which Vincentius created his work. There are clear parallels between Wanda and Leszek the White, son of the chronicler's patron Kazimierz II the Just. Just as Poles of the past overlooked Wanda's gender, so should Vincentius's contemporaries in Cracow overlook Leszek's young age and let him succeed his great father.¹⁵⁸ In turn, Kazimierz became the Duke of Cracow by completely different means. Recognized for his virtuous character, he was invited by the Lesser Polish elites to overthrow his tyrannical brother Mieszko III. Vincentius's political affinities caused him thus to mount in his chronicle a defense of Kazimierz's coup, justified by his moral superiority, and of hereditary rights of young Leszek, contested by Mieszko III and his successor. If one had to narrow down the chronicler's views on proper succession, it could be said that prosperous *res publica* was to be ruled by *principes succedanei*, but on occasions circumstances justified abandoning bad rulers in favor of candidates of exceptional moral character.¹⁵⁹

The circumstances in which the first two changes of power took place in this manner are also illustrative of Vincentius's ideas about the proper relationships within the ruling families. Both Gracchus II and Pompilius II lose their throne as an outcome of murdering their closest kinsmen in pursuit of power. The chronicler also lamented the lack of reverence for the bonds that bound the members of the family. Thus, he decried the battle at Mozgawa in 1195 as a shameful violation of proper relations, stating that on the battlefield "No son pays the respect to his father, respect, no father recognizes the son, nor brother his brother, nor relation his relations."¹⁶⁰ By contrast, the rulers praised by Vincentius were full of love and reverence

¹⁵⁶ Brygida Kürbis, "Sacrum i profanum: dwie wizje władzy w polskim średniowieczu" [Sacrum and profanum: two visions of power in the Polish Middle Ages], *Studia Źródłoznawcze* 22 (1977): 28-31, 35; Korolec, "Ideal władcy," 85; Slightly differently Przemysław Wiszewski, who in focusing only on fourth book of the chronicle underlines stronger the Vincenitus's belief in Piast's natural charisma. See Wiszewski, "The Power of a Prince."

¹⁵⁷ Grischa Vercamer, "The Origins of the Polish Piast Dynasty as Chronicled by Bishop Vincent of Kraków (Wincenty Kadłubek) to Serve as a Political Model for His Own Contemporary Time," *The Medieval Chronicle* 11 (2018): 220-47; I agree to the large extend with Grischa Vercamer's analysis, safe for the conclusion he reaches about Vincenitus's goals. According to Vercamer, the rejection of the idea of the domini naturales was to serve as a warning to the ruling dynasty, highlighting that Polish *res publica* could function without them. As I explain in the body of the main text, I see the ambiguity as stemming from a more prosaic political influences.

¹⁵⁸ Wiszewski, "The Power of a Prince," 201-2.

¹⁵⁹ Similar conclusions for example in Bieniak, "Jak Wincenty," 45-46; Żmudzki, "Vincentius's Construct of a Nation," 193.

¹⁶⁰ 4.23 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 180: *Non hic filiatio paternitati reuerentiam exhibet, non filiationi paternitas ignoscit, non fraternitatem fraternitas, non consanguinitas consanguinitatem [...]*.

for their family members, with whom they shared their power.¹⁶¹ Similar reverence was expected by the chronicler in the relationship between the father and his children, stemming from the well-rooted ideal of paternal stern but loving authority.¹⁶² Just like in *Gesta principum Polonorum*, Bolesław III was portrayed as an epitome of filial piety. Creatively expanding on the work of his anonymous predecessor, Vincentius writes that Bolesław was so devoted to his father Władysław that he always wore a golden necklace inscribed with his name, and that “so strongly did he bind himself up with such veneration that you would think he was not venerating his father, but the Holy Spirit.”¹⁶³ This was in stark contrast with his step-brother Zbigniew, whose constant rebellions against his father led archbishop Jan to compare him to the patricidal son of the king of Bactria Eucratides II.¹⁶⁴

The bonds of loyalty within the family were also expected to be, in general, stronger than the ones between Piasts and their other subjects. In the episode cited above, Mieszko III pleaded with his younger brother Kazimierz II the Just to allow him to return to the country, citing the father-like care he took of his brother when he was an adolescent. He also suggested that Kazimierz could trust other Piasts more than his subjects, saying “It is therefore safer and more in keeping with honor for you to be supported by your obedient nephews, rather than be surrounded by insidious traitors.”¹⁶⁵ The credibility of claims made by notoriously scheming Mieszko notwithstanding, the actions taken by the Polish elites suggest that they also believed that the ruler’s loyalty to the dynastic kin was often stronger than that to other subjects – as I will explore at a later point.

Returning to Vincentius’s commentary on the election of Wanda, we can see that loyalty was as much a value unto itself, as much as it was the measurement of moral suitability to rule. Just like the virtues, *fides* was abundant among the ancient Poles but much rarer among chronicler’s contemporaries. Just like the virtue of military courage could turn into vice when conquerors of Carinthia gave into the lust for material possessions, so could loyalty be debased into purely economic transactions if pursued out of greed or self-interest. The importance of loyalty among other virtues was further directly elaborated upon by Vincentius by the very end of his chronicle. In the episode closing the work, the Cracow elites decide to invite Władysław

¹⁶¹ Wiszewski, “The Power of a Prince,” 203.

¹⁶² For the evolution of the concepts surrounding father-son relationships see for example Christoph Dette, “Kinder und Jugendliche in der Adelsgesellschaft des frühen Mittelalters,” *Archiv Für Kulturgeschichte, Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 76, no. 1 (1994): 1–34.

¹⁶³ 2.24 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 69.

¹⁶⁴ 2.23 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 67.

¹⁶⁵ 4.10 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 150–51: *Tutius ergo est et magis honestati consentaneum, te tuorum fulciri nepotum obsequiis, quam stipari proditorum insidiis [...]*.

III Spindleshanks onto the throne after the death of his father, Mieszko III the Old. In the letter that the grateful Greater Polish duke was to send in response, Vincentius places the laudation of loyalty:

For it is loyalty alone that closes and opens, extends and limits, strengthens and upholds the governments. It alone suits not only kingdoms but also their kings, not less in ruling than being ruled; it alone is a light in a dark, sunray in a clear weather, calm in the storm, security in the calm. It is the basis of the royal rights (*regalium*), the diadem of a king's head, the jewel of a bejeweled diadem, the most excellent of excellences, the most distinguished of all distinctions. When it is extinguished, all friendship, all association, all alliances, all allegiance, all favor, and lastly all beauty and strength of all of the virtues weakens and expires. Without loyalty, whomever one is, one is nobody, for the just live by loyalty. The scarcer it is today, the better regarded.¹⁶⁶

What bears highlighting in this quote by Vincenitus is not only the fundamental nature of loyalty as the basis underlying all types of interpersonal relationships, but also its reciprocal nature. Just like in the case of military virtues or humility, *fides* ought to be exhibited by both the ruler and his subjects. While this exaltation seems to reflect Vincenitus's general opinion on the role played by loyalty, it also has a specific function in its narrative context – one that shines additional light on the reciprocity chronicler describes here. Władysław praises the loyalty of the powerful of Lesser Poland, even though he was not the candidate of their first choice. The magnates first turn towards Leszek the White who, as I will argue in more detail at a later point, refuses their offer guided exactly by loyalty to his subjects. This thematic consistency can hardly be a coincidence. By having Władysław deliver this message, Vincentius has him unknowingly praises his dynastic rival. At the same time, it is hard not to see it as the exhortation aimed at chronicler's contemporaries, so fickle in their allegiances.

To conclude this section, Vincentius placed the origins of the Polish political community in the legendary, glorious past. The creation of the ducal authority was for him a natural consequence of the maturing of the ancient Polish society. The ruler was to share his power not only with the members of his dynasty, but also with the broader circle of political elites. The relationships within the family were ideally characterized by mutual love and reverence. In turn, the relationship between the ruler and his subjects should be guided by the

¹⁶⁶ 4.26 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 192-93: *Sola enim fides est, quae claudit et aperit, propagat et artat, firmat et conservat imperia. Haec sola non solum regna, sed et ipsos reges non minus regere quam regi decet, haec sola est lucerna in obscuro, radius in sereno, tranquillitas in turbine, securitas in tranquillo. Regalium hoc est fundamentum, regii capitis diadema, diadematis gemmarum gemma, prestantissimorum prestantia, omnium insignium preinsigne. Hac extincta omnis amicitia, societas omnis, omne feudus, omnis obsequela, omnis gratia, omne denique omnium virtutum et decus et rebur languet et expirat. Sine fide quisquis est, nullus est, quia iustus ex fide vivit. Que hodie quanto est rarius tanto gratiosior.*

concern for the virtuous character of their *res publica*. Loyalty played an important role in allowing these virtues—like military courage or humility—to flourish. Just like them it should be displayed by all members of the political community, ruler and subjects alike – though as Vincentius was quick to add in his criticism, it was in short supply among his contemporaries. Not just a value in itself, loyalty could also be used as a measuring stick for others’ virtue. The rulers who stepped outside of the moral boundaries could be justifiably replaced with the candidates from more modest backgrounds, but of virtuous character. In these circumstances, the reciprocal bonds of loyalty between a ruler and his subjects can be said to have their source in the mutual recognition of the other’s virtuous character.

1.3 Strengthening the Bonds of Loyalty

This subchapter is dedicated to the methods through which rulers depicted by Vincentius strengthened the bonds of loyalty. The practices described on the pages of *Chronica Polonorum*—rituals, feasts, and gifts—belonged to the pan-European medieval repertoire of managing the interpersonal relationships I mentioned in the thesis’s Introduction. Interested in elaborating on his vision of a well-functioning political community, the Polish chronicler paid attention to their nature and proper use. Examining Vincentius’s thoughts on these practices of rulership will set the stage for the analysis of the narratives built around loyalty and its lack. One of the most powerful tools for managing the bonds of personal relationships in medieval society was an oath. Allowing parties to summon God as a witness and guarantor of the obligations, oaths linked the personal bonds with the Christian divine order.¹⁶⁷ By the time Vincentius was writing his chronicle, the similar importance of oath-swearing was already a well-grounded feature of the political culture of Piast Poland. Perjuries committed were seen as a grave sin. As convincingly demonstrated by Zbigniew Dalewski, by the twelfth century there was a real expectation that the powerful who broke their oaths would undergo public penance or face the ecclesiastical sanctions and breaking of political order.¹⁶⁸ Coincidentally, the perjuries of Piotr Włostowic and Władysław II used by Dalewski in his argument are given a different treatment by Vincentius, who unlike other sources does not mention explicitly the oaths both perjurers took. Nevertheless, oaths appear on the pages of the *Chronica Polonorum* on several other occasions.

¹⁶⁷ See footnote 22 above.

¹⁶⁸ Dalewski, *Ritual and Politics*, 167–88.

Oath-taking was described by Vincentius twice in the context of the contested transition of power. In the first, legendary episode, the magnates competing for the throne after Lestek I's death turned towards the ordinary people to choose the new ruler, who eventually conceived of the sports contest as the best way of settling the matter. Just before that, however, both sides swore an oath to each other: the people promising to be unbiased, magnates promising to respect the results of the election.¹⁶⁹

The second episode takes place in Vincentius's time, just after the death of Kazimierz II the Just. The chronicler presents the debate taking place among the grieving Lesser Polish elites, who were initially uncertain about who should succeed Kazimierz on Cracow's throne. As Bishop Pełka convinces the nobles to support the rights of Kazimierz's son Leszek, the gathering erupts with acclamations for the new duke. The chronicler paints the picture of the emotionally charged political moment, with all the participants, seized by "great joy and elevated mood," promising that nothing will be able to sway their support away from the young duke. Trying to further capitalize on these emotions was *comes* Mikołaj, who:

reminds and instructs all on firmness and fidelity; and so no one could change their will to the opposite, he binds them with the sanctity of the oath. For the prudent man knew that the vehicle of reason is usually fleeting, and soul's emotions are flimsy on a slippery ice.¹⁷⁰

Admonishing the political reflexes of *comes* Mikołaj, Vincentius depicts an oath as the tool used to further secure loyalty in times of uncertainty. The vague promises of the exuberant nobles are given more durable form through the scrupulous oath. The emotions, however strong, are fleeting, but with oath can be transformed into a lasting obligation. Vincentius does not name the addressee of the oath. It could have been Leszek or both sons of Kazimierz. The Lesser Polish nobles could have, just like their ancient counterparts who found themselves in a similar conundrum, sworn the oaths to each other.

In the situations of transition of power, Piasts could also swear oaths to secure the throne. So does Mieszko III the Old when finally returning to Cracow upon Kazimierz II the Just's death. Mieszko reaches an agreement with Cracow nobles and Kazimierz's widow Helen of Znojmo, who represents her two adolescent sons. Mieszko will be recognized as the ruler of Cracow, but he is to adopt young Leszek, and when Kazimierz's son reaches adulthood, he is

¹⁶⁹ 1.13 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 19: *Seque iure iurando utrique obstringunt: eligentes quidem, ne fauore personali declinent, ne deuio exorbient, ne atrocioris metu potentie distoqueantur ab eo quod publicis perspexerint commodis expedire, reliqui uero, ne cui ab eligentium liceat arbitrio discedere.*

¹⁷⁰ 4.21 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 177-78: *omnes de constatia, de forma fidelitatis et ammonet et instruit omnesque, ne cui suam in contrarium mutare liceat voluntatem, iuris iurandi religione obstringit. Noverat enim vir prudens, volatile semper esse mentis vehiculum et petulantes esse ac in lubrico glaciari animi affectus.*

to be given the throne and the position of *princeps*. The old duke and the Greater and Lesser-Polish elites meet at an assembly, where they swear to each other to uphold the terms of this agreement, under the threat of being excommunicated by the whole Polish ecclesiastical hierarchy in case they breach it.¹⁷¹ Mieszko, as it turns out, does not keep this promise. This perjury and general greed turn the nobles of Cracow against the older Piast, who must flee in humiliation.¹⁷²

This is not the first, nor the last time Mieszko III the Old is depicted by Vincentius as breaking his promises. This tendency plays an important role in the chronicler's depiction of the flawed Piast ruler that more often ends up being abandoned by his own followers, as I explore in more detail in the next subchapter. It should be pointed out, however, that the depiction of Mieszko III the Old is by no means the only instance in which notorious oath-breaking is used by Vincentius to paint the dynastic rival in an unflattering light. Similar examples can be found in the story of the rivalry between Bolesław III and his step-brother Zbigniew.

The story told by Vincentius follows closely the narration of the century *Gesta principum Polonorum*. Facing the series of escalating threats, young Bolesław has to defeat the external enemies threatening Poland while dealing with the schemes of their internal ally, Zbigniew. First Zbigniew tries to trick Bolesław by feigning cooperation. Thus, “with oath’s swearing they bind each other that neither one will decide about peace or war against anybody without the other, each will as faithfully as possible attend to the other with the soundness of advice and promptness of support.” When the time comes to strike at the Pomeranians, however, Zbigniew not only does not join the campaign, but manages to convince some of the step-brother’s followers to abandon him.¹⁷³ Shortly afterward, Zbigniew is forced to swear another oath. When Bolesław defeats his Pomeranian and Bohemian allies, pursued Zbigniew drops to his knees and „finally, through the intervention of magnates he barely procures, that he will be recognized at least as his brother’s knight but not a co-heir of the realm.” In this instance then, an oath is connected with the broader ritual supplication for grace and forgiveness meant to reconcile the brothers.¹⁷⁴ As is to be expected, also this promise also turns out to be

¹⁷¹ 4.25 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 188.

¹⁷² 4.25 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 189.

¹⁷³ 2.26 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 71: *Iurisiurandi exsecratione se invicem obstringunt, neutrum sine altero de pace vel hostilitate cum quibuspian decernere, utrumque alteri salubritate consilii, adminiculorum promptitudine quam fidelissime suppetere.*

¹⁷⁴ The rituals of submission and reconciliation as depicted in *Gesta principum Polonorum* were analyzed extensively in Dalewski, *Ritual and Politics*, 41–84; For broader context from other parts of latin christendom, see for example: Gerd Althoff, “Das Privileg der dedictio. Formen gütlicher Konfliktbeendigung in der mittelalterlichen

false – the *perfidia* of Zbigniew is thoroughly ingrained in his character, becoming his second nature.¹⁷⁵ Just like in the case of Gallus's telling of the rivalry, the chronicler draws attention to the oaths primarily to paint a more convincing picture of Zbigniew as the villain of this part of the chronicle. Just like in other places where he draws on *Gesta principum Polonorum*, Vincentius makes explicit what his predecessor strongly suggests – that Zbigniew's perjuries were the sign of a character deeply unfit to rule.¹⁷⁶

While in Mieszko's or Zbigniew's case the oath-breaking is used to underscore the characterization of a dynastic rival, in a different part of the chronicle Vincentius launches into more theoretical meditation on taking and breaking an oath. The chronicler found the pretext to do so in the story of the miraculous intervention that saved the archbishop of Gniezno Marcin when the Pomeranian raiding party attacked the church at Spycimierz. Just like the ones discussed above, this episode is lifted from the work of the anonymous author of *Gesta*. He was the first one to describe the attack on unsuspecting churchmen, the divine intervention whisking the archbishop into the safety of the church's ceiling, the archdeacon that fell into Pomeranian captivity in his stead, and the curse of madness sent onto raiders as punishment.¹⁷⁷ Vincentius weaves into this narrative, presented in the fictionalized dialogue by bishop Jan, details of his own invention. Thus, when Pomeranians seize the archdeacon, mistaking him for the head of the Polish church, they unsuccessfully try to make him renounce tithes and swear an oath exempting them from all tributes to the church and promising eternal peace.¹⁷⁸ In turn, once they suffer the consequences of their blasphemous actions, Pomeranians return all of the stolen goods and swear to pay the price they were trying to extort.¹⁷⁹

This story of the archdeacon prompts bishop Mateusz to ask if the oath taken in duress should still be kept. Through archbishop Jan, Vincentius argues that such an oath is invalid. Following the authority of *Decretum Gratiani* and Justinian's *Digesta*, as well as Isidor of

Adelsgesellschaft," in *Spielregeln der Politik im Mittelalter*, 2nd ed. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2014), 99–125; Koziol, *Begging Pardon and Favor*.

¹⁷⁵ 2.28 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 75: *donec humillime prouolutus uix optimatum tandem inpetrat interuentu, ut miles saltem fratris non regni coheres estimetur. Illud quoquoque satisfactione pollicetur, ne quas Boleslao suspectas munitiones aut nouas erigat aut dirutas resciat. Set nec tunc inolite fomes perfidie in illo sopiri potuit nedum extingui. Non enim est facile a consuetudine revocari, cum sit consuetudo altera natura.*

¹⁷⁶ For the analysis of ideological messages in the description of Zbigniew's perfidy in *Gesta principum Polonorum* see: Dalewski, *Ritual and Politics*, 178–82; 293–95 Przemysław Wiszewski, *Domus Boleslai: Values and Social Identity in Dynastic Traditions of Medieval Poland (c.966–1138)* (Leiden: Brill, 2010).

¹⁷⁷ 2.43 in *GpP*, 196–99.

¹⁷⁸ 3.10 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 96: *Illi cateruatim irrumpunt, sacris non parcut, sancta diripiunt, quondam diocetem qui stupore totus dirigerat, prostratum secus aram conspicantur, achipresulem rati comprehendunt, non sine tripudio absportant. Nec modo illum decimis ac primitiis abrenuntiare iubent, set omnibus catholice fidei deirare muneribus.*

¹⁷⁹ 3.10 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 96.

Seville, he advises: “In evil promises then break faith, in shameful vow change your intent. That promise is unjust which must be kept by crime,” and “what is done out of fear, cannot be considered.”¹⁸⁰ Then, the chronicler adds an anecdote of unknown origin. In it, the Pope absolves the archbishop of Trier and his *prepositus* from the promise they were forced to give to the robbers, ordering the hierarch to retake the stolen church goods from the thieves. The only sacrament that cannot be reneged on, even if it was taken under duress, is baptism – an exception convenient for the Church, less so for the still partially pagan northern neighbors of Poland.

Why did the chronicler pause his narrative to address the question of the validity of forced oaths? Both the heroes of the stories (members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy) and the subject of the forced oaths (the economic privileges of the church) suggest an answer. Vincentius, deeply invested in the Polish church’s struggle for political and economic emancipation, provided his readers in the ecclesiastical hierarchy with a useful tool for defending their rights.

It seems then that the author of *Chronica Polonorum* believed in the binding power of oaths, which make for a more reliable measure than simple promises. Only a person of a morally compromised nature—like Mieszko III or malicious Zbigniew—would commit perjury. It is the deep concern with perjury and its consequences that motivates bishops Mateusz’s question about the validity of immoral oaths. At the same time, the answer given by archbishop Jan defines circumstances that render the sworn oath invalid quite broadly. The coercion is, after all, in the eye of the beholder. Indeed, the very same argument is used by Mieszko III justifying his perjuries when he fights against Kazimierz II. Whenever he faces larger opposing army, he swears to renounce his claim to be the *princeps*, only to renew the conflict at a more opportune moment, dismissing his oaths as forced.¹⁸¹

The discussion about oaths is not the only part of the *Chronica* in which sacrament of baptism and loyalty appear to be closely intertwined. Slightly earlier in his narrative, following the information found in the *Gesta principum Polonorum*, Vincentius describes how the Pomeranian godson of Bolesław III turned against the Piast ruler. Gniewomir of Czarńków, defeated during one of the Piast’s northern campaigns, was baptized and made the duke’s

¹⁸⁰ 3.13 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 99: *Verum tamen in malis promissis rescinde fidem, in turpi voto muta decretum. Iniqua est promissio quae scelere adimpletur. Ad omnem ergo sponsionem, quam vel scelus, vel etiam scandalum concomitatur, omnino non teneor. Sponsio vero pecuniaria obligat, nisi iustus metus intercesscrit. Lustus autem metus non est, ubi metus mortis non est, vel cruciatus corporis, vel id, quod pro his habetur; De quo habetur: quod metus causa fit, ratum non habetur.*

¹⁸¹ 4.12 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 152-53: *Nam quotiens intensius amra uidet imminere, iurat patrimonium sibi sufficere, deierat principatum; cum autem arcus belli remittitur, ait coacta iuramenta robur non habere.*

representative in Pomerania. Nevertheless, when Bolesław III was with his army in Bohemia, Gniewomir spread a rumor among the Pomeranians that Polish forces were defeated and the duke killed, starting a rebellion. Very much alive, Bolesław returned to deal with the Pomeranians. Gniewomir, besieged in the stronghold of Wieleń, abandoned all hope of reconciling with his godfather, stating himself that his crime was too big to be deserving of mercy. When he was finally forced to surrender, Gniewomir was sentenced to be clubbed to death, while other defenders died by a sword.¹⁸² This differs from the Gallus's version of the story, in which the Polish warriors murder the surrendering defenders despite Bolesław's attempts at granting mercy.¹⁸³

For Vincentius, the treason committed by Gniewomir and other Pomeranians was grave enough to completely justify a harsher punishment. In betraying Bolesław, Gniewomir had violated the bond that linked him with his godfather.¹⁸⁴ Without investigating in detail Vincentius's ideas about proper familial relations, it suffices to say that the Polish chronicler had strong opinions on filial obedience and familial obligations of loyalty.¹⁸⁵ Being a sponsor at the baptism could thus serve as one way of extending these expectations along the new bonds of spiritual kinship to the most important subjects and allies.

Chronica Polonorum also describes a variety of less formal tools through which Piast rulers managed relationships with their subjects to strengthen or reward their allegiance. As discussed in the previous subchapter, in Vincentius's vision the ruler did not rule alone, but with the help of *administratorias potestates* recruited from among the aristocratic elites. One of the preconditions for the participation of the extended political community in rulership was proximity to the ruler, which let the most powerful of the subjects influence and advise him.

On some occasions, Vincentius implies that the wishes of the advisors could not be outright defied by the good ruler, who ought to find a way to at least be seen as accommodating them. This is for example the case with Bolesław IV the Curly. His nefarious advisors tried to convince him to crush the sons of Władysław III, his older brother, whom Bolesław had exiled. Bolesław, praised by the chronicler for his sympathy to the younger kinsmen, "but in order to be seen as acting on the advice, feigning distress he fought with them [newphews] not as he

¹⁸² 3.4-6 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 91-92.

¹⁸³ 2.47-48 in *GpP*, 202-06.

¹⁸⁴ Brief discussion of the role of baptism in creating bonds of loyalty in: Dalewski, *Ritual and Politics*, 171; See also more broadly: Joseph H. Lynch, *Godparents and Kinship in Early Medieval Europe* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986).

¹⁸⁵ For overview, see: Matthew Koval, *Childhood in Medieval Poland (1050-1300): Constructions and Realities in a European Context* (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 51-72.

could, but only insofar he was forced.”¹⁸⁶ Piast rulers were not only to listen to the advice, but also to properly manage how accessible they were to their subjects. While Vincentius does not comment on this issue directly, he twice presents Polish nobles led to sedition by what they saw as powerful palatines—Sieciech and Mikołaj—restricting their access to the duke and offices of power. Hence, it was important for rulers to prevent tensions between competing followers and to remain personally approachable.¹⁸⁷

None would cultivate a personal relationship with his subjects better than Vincentius’s patron Kazimierz II the Just. In most of his appearances on the pages of *Chronica*, Cracow’s ruler is surrounded by his subjects.¹⁸⁸ As noted by the chronicler, Kazimierz often organized grand feasts. Duke’s goal was explicitly “To win over favor with favor, which is everyone’s reason to feast, he indulges for a time in dignified feasts.”¹⁸⁹ According to Vincentius these revelries, when engaged with in moderation, had many merits. Drunken subjects spoke their mind more openly and were quicker to point out the ruler’s flaws and share their honest opinions. This could lead to the uncovering of schemes and malicious intentions among the Piast followers. Finally, it was easier to judge the trustworthiness of the ruler’s potential close collaborators.¹⁹⁰ Vincentius’s observations on the role of banquets as a tool for strengthening and probing subject’s loyalty are strikingly direct. He was not alone in noticing the merits of ruler’s measured participation in revelries, as similar advantages of joined drinking appeared in the contemporary treatises on rulership.¹⁹¹ While the arguments used by Vincentius’s observations were grounded in the twelfth-century discourse, the noted importance of feasts in political culture was obviously of much older origins.¹⁹² Harkening back to the pre-Christian ideal of a nourishing ruler, the importance of feasting in Piast Poland was already noted by

¹⁸⁶ 3.30 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 126: *Quibus ille non mouetur quidem, nec enim sue plantationis surculose eradicare studuisset, set ut consulentibus morem gerere uidetur, motum animi simulat nec qualia potest, set qualia cogitur illis prelia infligit.*

¹⁸⁷ Similarly Eduard Mühle, though the example he chooses are not always convincing. See Eduard Mühle, ““Przezornie bowiem powinni władcy władać”, czyli jak funkcjonowała monarchia piastowska w XII-XIII w.” [“Prudential should be the rule of the rulers”, or how the piast monarchy functioned in the 12th-13th centuries], *Roczniki Historyczne* 79 (2013): 43–45, 48.

¹⁸⁸ Brygida Kürbis, “Sacrum i profanum,” 35.

¹⁸⁹ 4.5 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 143: *Gratia igitur conciliande gratie, que communis est apud omnes conuiuandi ratio, conuiuiorum honestati pro tempore indulget [...].*

¹⁹⁰ 4.5 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 142–43.

¹⁹¹ Robert Bubczyk points out similarities between Vincenitus’s depiction of proper feasts and advice given in *Policratus* and *Secretum Secretorum* Robert Bubczyk, “Values and Virtues: Church Life and Courtly Culture,” in *Writing History in Medieval Poland: Bishop Vincentius of Cracow and the “Chronica Polonorum,”* ed. Darius von Güttner-Sporzyński, *Cursor Mundi* 28 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 228.

¹⁹² For recent overview on importance of feasting in pre-Modern Europe, see for example Kjær and Watson, ‘Feasts and Gifts: Sharing Food in the Middle Ages’.

Gallus Anonymous.¹⁹³ Among other things, they provided a stage for ruler's followers to publicly reaffirm their commitments.¹⁹⁴ The iconographic depictions of rulers at the table found on the coinage of Bolesław IV the Curly provide further evidence of the importance of commensality in Piast rulership in the twelfth century.¹⁹⁵

With that being said, not all rulers depicted by Vincentius could partake in feasts in an equally dignified and useful manner as Kazimierz. In the portrayal of tyrants like Pompilius II or Władysław II the banquets would only highlight the ruler's vices, becoming a setting in which they meet divine retribution.¹⁹⁶ The motive of the feast ruptured by violence, utilized by Vincentius on these occasions, works so well precisely because of the feeling of trust and closeness that commensality is meant to evoke.

By far, out of all of the tools for managing personal bonds, gift-giving is the one to which Vincentius's approach is most interesting. Social anthropologists and historians inspired by their approaches have seen the gift as the fundamental tool for shaping social relationships. This stayed true, even as the scholarship shifted in the last thirty years away from the idea of the singular, archaic culture of gift-giving, with scholars exploring diverse influences that shaped its practice and perception in the Middle Ages.¹⁹⁷ The twelfth and thirteenth-century authors themselves were deeply interested in gift-giving, anxious about ethical dimensions of practice so deeply rooted in the material world.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹³ Jacek Banaszkiewicz, *Podanie o Piaście i Popielu. Studium porównawcze nad wczesnośredniowiecznymi tradycjami dynastycznymi* [Story of Piast and Popiel. Comparative study on early medieval dynastic traditions] (Warsaw: PWN, 1986), 40–84; Jacek Banaszkiewicz, "Trzy razy uczta" [Three times a feast], in *Spółczesność Polski Średniowiecznej*, vol. 5, ed. Stefan Krzysztof Kuczyński (Warsaw: DiG, 1992), 104–8; More on christological inspirations behind the depictions of the feasts of Gallus's ideal ruler, Bolesław I the Great, in Marian Dygo, "Uczty Bolesława Chrobrego" [Feasts of Bolesław Chrobry], *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 112, no. 3 (2005): 41–54.

¹⁹⁴ According to Gallus, Bolesław the Great encouraged his closest followers before the battle by reminding them about oaths and promises they had made at his table. See 1.7 in *GpP*, 44–46: *Sed de Dei misericordia vestraque probitate comperta confido, quod si viriliter in certamine resistatis, si more solito fortiter invadatis, si iactancias et promissiones in predis dividendis et in conviviis meis habitas ad memoriam reducat, hodie victores finem laboris continui facietis et insuper famam perpetuam ac triumphalem victoriam acquiratis*; Paweł Żmudzi, *Władca i Wojownicy: Narracje o Wodzach, Drużynie i Wojnach w Najdawniejszej Historiografii Polski i Rusi* [Ruler and Warriors. Narrations about Leaders, Hosts and Wars in the Oldest Historiography of Poland and Rus] (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2009), 335.

¹⁹⁵ Banaszkiewicz, "Trzy razy uczta," 98–104.

¹⁹⁶ 1.19 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 24–28; 3.28 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 121; more on the use of the motive's use by Vincentius in Jacek Banaszkiewicz, "Uczta rozrachunku (Quentin Tarantino, Wincenty Kadłubek, Bruno z Kwerfurtu, Richer z Reims). Krótko o pewnym schemacie narracyjnym racjonalizującym przedstawianą rzeczywistość" [The Feast of Reckoning (Quentin Tarantino, Wincenty Kadłubek, Bruno of Querfurt, Richer of Reims). Briefly on a certain narrative pattern that rationalizes the presented reality], in *Świat Średniowiecza: Studia ofiarowane Profesorowi Henrykowi Samsonowiczowi*, ed. Agnieszka Bartoszewicz et al. (Warsaw: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2010), 637–42.

¹⁹⁷ See for example: Gadi Algazi, Valentin Groebner, and Bernhard Jussen, eds., *Negotiating the Gift: Pre-Modern Figurations of Exchange* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003); Wendy Davies and Paul Fouracre, eds., *The Languages of Gift in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

¹⁹⁸ See for example Kjær, *The Medieval Gift*; White, "Giving Fiefs and Honor."

So was Vincentius of Cracow. According to the chronicler, magnanimity belonged to the catalog of virtues exhibited already by the ancient Poles, who “regarded nothing as great as generosity.”¹⁹⁹ In the depiction of Lestek II, generosity went arm in arm with his legendary humility:

And such was his lavish generosity (*prodigalitas*) in everything, so that he preferred to fall into poverty out of virtue than into abundance out of parsimony; he would sooner allow himself to suffer lack, than lessen the support (*subsidia*) for those in need or bestow what their due (*stipendia*) to those well deserving.²⁰⁰

While the *prodigalitas* with which Vincentius chooses to describe Lestek could have been also taken for the vice of thoughtless, problematic largess, the chronicler praises the ancient monarch for it.²⁰¹ The chronicler also makes clear that the ruler’s generosity is not limited to charity to those in need. It also extends to those who deserving of it. Presumably, they would demonstrate that in the service to the ruler – though importantly it would be a reward, not an incentive.

Similar generosity is exhibited by Bolesław II – a figure much more complicated than the legendary Lestek II. Vincentius frames the story of this Piast monarch and his conflict with St Stanislaus as the tale of a great warrior who eventually loses himself in bellicose madness, turning against his own subjects.²⁰² Just like Poles of the legendary past, Bolesław was a successful warrior because he fought for glory, disregarding material wealth.²⁰³ Thus, his generosity was a perfect outlet for distributing all of the riches brought to him during the military campaigns waged in Rus and Hungary. Vincenitus writes that:

To Bolesław the glory of riches seemed so fleeting, that he saw no joy in them except the possibility of giving away. He said that the purse full of holes is the best protection, and that he is completely unworthy of rulership who prefers to be a purse for things rather than a ruler.²⁰⁴

On another occasion, Bolesław underscores that the generosity should be quick preempting any petitions: “The gift should come before the plea, so that no petition is a reproach of our tenacity, so that no gracious gift is given without gratitude.”²⁰⁵ Vincentius is thus of the

¹⁹⁹ 1.2 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 7: *ut preter magnanimitatem nihil magnum estimarent.*

²⁰⁰ 1.15 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 21: *Tantaque fuit illi prodigalitas in omnes, ut sibi mallet ex virtute nasci egestatem, quam ex tenacitate abundantiam, ut se prius egere pateretur, quam egenis degenerare subsidia, uel bene meritis non dependere stipendia.*

²⁰¹ For the medieval discussions around dangers of ruler’s *prodigalitas* see Kjaer, *The Medieval Gift*, 75-85.

²⁰² Skibiński, “Biskup i monarcha.”

²⁰³ Żmudzki, *Władca i Wojownicy...*, 249–52.

²⁰⁴ 2.18 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 52: *Adeo perfunctoria uisa est Boleslao opum gloria, ut nihil in illis iocundum putauerit preter dandi facultatem. Quarum potissimam ait custodelam saccum pertusum omnique omnino indignum principatu, qui se rerum sacciperium esse malit quam principem.*

²⁰⁵ 2.16 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 50: *Prius enim dari conuenit quam peti, ne cuiusquam petitione nostra nobis exprobetur tenacitas, ne gratie beneficium sine gratia inpendatur.*

opinion that the anticipation of requests is important for the proper display of generosity – one which cannot be mistaken for motivated by anything else but the virtue of the giver.²⁰⁶

Not all of those who were on the receiving end of Bolesław's magnanimity ended up happy with the king's gift. Vincentius draws upon the story of a certain poor cleric being generously rewarded by the Piast king but transforms it from an illustration of royal generosity into a macabre morality tale.²⁰⁷ In his version, Bolesław II is approached by "some wretch (*quidam exilem*)" as he is dividing received taxes. The king overhears the sighs of the poor man and offers him his coat and as much gold as he can carry. When the happy man tries to haul his riches, he suddenly dies crushed by the gold's weight. Archbishop Jan spells out the moral of this story to the readers, comparing greed that leads some to value wealth over their lives to madness.²⁰⁸

The real danger of gifts lay in their proximity to mercantile transactions. When praising Bolesław III's palatine Piotr Włostowic for refusing to accept a reward for his service, Vincentius writes that the wise man must have known that "in giving and receiving gifts there is no trading, but the shade of it is there."²⁰⁹ It was easy for the relationship built on gifts to degenerate into the sort of transactional *negotiatio* Vincentius scolded his contemporaries for at the beginning of his chronicle. Given properly out of virtuous largess, gifts could strengthen the existing bonds but could not create a reciprocal obligation. Just like Bolesław II had to emphasize that he gave without being expected to, so Piotr Włostowic had to emphasize that he served without expecting to receive anything. Buying the loyalty of subjects was a domain of bad, greedy rulers, like Mieszko III the Old, and—as the examples in the following subchapters will illustrate—never worked in the long term.²¹⁰

²⁰⁶ Such outlook can be found in Seneca's *De beneficiis*, which according to Chmielewska was a source of Vincenitus's inspiration, see Katarzyna Chmielewska, *Rola wątków i motywów antycznych w Kronice Polskiej mistrza Wincentego zwanego Kadłubkiem* [The role of antique themes and motifs in the Polish Chronicle by master Wincenty called Kadłubek] (Częstochowa: Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej w Częstochowie, 2003), 101; Zenon Kałuża was more sceptical, pointing out the lack of verbal affinity between two works, Kałuża and Calma, "The Philosophical Reading," 87; Given the twelfth-century resurgence of interest in *De beneficiis* reflected in the textual history of its medieval manuscripts, I believe that Kałuża's criticism was overstated. See: Kjaer *The Medieval Gift and the Classical Tradition* (Cambridge 2019), 42-65.

²⁰⁷ For Gallus's version, see 1.27 in GpP, 94-96; Przemysław Wiszewski had argued that ambiguity of word "obire" suggests that already anonymous version of the tale ended up with the death of the cleric. Given the liberties Vincentius takes in interpreting the older chronicle, I do not find Wiszewski's argumentation convincing. Wiszewski, *Domus Boleslai*, 233.

²⁰⁸ 2.16-17 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 50-51.

²⁰⁹ 3.21 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 109: *Nouerat, ut uideo, uir prudens in dandis accipiendisq[ue] muneribus etsi desit commercium, umbram tamen commercii non deesse. Virtus autem uenaliitate censeri non potest; quod si posset, non haberet emptorem, quia ut scientie sic uirtutis nulla est estimatio.*

²¹⁰ See for example 4.22 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 178-79.

1.4 Presenting Loyalty

Having learned about the ways in which bonds of loyalty between a ruler and his subjects were cultivated, I now turn towards their content. On the pages of *Chronica Polonorum* Vincentius left the depictions of individuals whose loyalty he praised, as well as those who in his opinion fell short of promised loyalty. What actions did those loyal or unfaithful subjects take? By analyzing the narratives that center on faithful and unfaithful subjects I hope to uncover what kinds of obligations did loyalty entail according to the Polish chronicler.

First, I would like to return to the mentioned briefly above Piotr Włostowic, whose refusal to accept gifts from Bolesław III was highlighted by Vincentius. Piotr was doubtlessly one of the most powerful magnates of the twelfth-century Piast Poland. A generous supporter of the church and influential political figure, he served as palatine of Bolesław III and Władysław II until falling out of favor shortly before the latter's exile (ca. 1146).²¹¹ His political exploits and generous foundational activities birthed a tradition that, as I will explore in the next chapter, secured Piotr a prominent place in the memory of medieval Poland.

The positive characterization of Piotr by Vincentius is even more significant, considering that the episode that the chronicler casts him as a hero in tells a story of the deceitful kidnapping of duke Volodar of Przemyśl. The audacious operation caused quite a stir, with both outrage and praise reverberating in the sources created outside of Poland. The tradition about the translation of the arm of St Stephen added to the *Zwiefalten Chronicle* sometime around 1141 presents Piotr (*princeps Patricius*) as a man “infected by the poison of unfaithfulness (*perfidiae veneno infectus*)”: he absconds with the bride he was supposed to deliver to the groom, he pretends to be a sworn man of *quendam regem Rusziae*, becomes god-father to his son, only to kidnap him during a feast for a large ransom. In penance, ordered by the Pope himself, Piotr is forced to get rid of all of his ill-gotten riches.²¹² The same event was judged differently by Herbord. In his hagiography of Otto of Bamberg (written ca. 1158-60) Piotr plans to kidnap Volodar to bloodlessly prevent the destruction of Christian Poland. By pretending to be a political exile, he ingratiates himself with the Ruthenian duke and seizes him unexpectedly

²¹¹ Piotr has for a long time been a subject of interest for Polish historiography. For the most recent, extensive (though not uncontroversial) profile, see Janusz Bieniak, “Polska elita polityczna XII wieku, Część III A. (Arbitrzy książąt – krąg rodzinny Piotra Włostowica)” [Polish political elite of the 12th century: Part III A (Arbiters of princes - family milieu of Piotr Włostowic)], in *Spółczesność Polski Średniowiecznej*, ed. Stefan Krzysztof Kuczyński (Warsaw: PWN, 1990), 13–107.

²¹² *Ortliebi Zwifaltensis Chronicon*, ed. by August Bielowski, MPH, vol. 2 (Lwów: Zakład narodowy imienia Ossolińskich, 1872), 2-4.

during a hunt in the forest. The concessions that the kidnapped Volodar is forced to make bring a guarantee of peace in the east and riches of ransom to the country.²¹³

Vincentius's description similarly spins the morally questionable act of the Polish magnate into a valiant, almost self-sacrificing deed. His version of the events resembles Herbord's closely, drawing either on Herbord's work or from the same tradition.²¹⁴ Here too, Piotr's plan is born out of the threat posed to Piast Poland. The successful interventions of Bolesław III in Bohemia, Hungary, and Kievan Rus covered him in glory, but also made him a target. Among many who "wanted to throw off the shackles of servitude" was Duke Volodar. Biding their time, he and his co-conspirators "bound themselves with an oath that they will extinguish Bolesław's glory like a common fire," rebelling when the opportunity presents itself. When the news of this sedition reaches Bolesław and his advisors, the deliberations on what to do are cut short by Piotr Włostowic, described as "a high born prince, and next in rank to a ruler, a man of magnanimity and generosity, both active in hand and active in the chest, man of noble generosity, quick hands, and diligent heart."²¹⁵ Comparing the Rurikovich duke to a tree trunk from which stem the branches of rebellion, Piotr advocates for striking against Volodar, who apparently already bought off many Poles with gifts. To that end, without informing others about the details of his plan, he arrives with a small entourage at Volodar's, pretending to flee Bolesław's tyranny. Volodar, overjoyed to be joined by such an important ally, is easily deceived and receives the supposed exile. Then, Piotr Włostowic seizes the unexpected duke during the feast and delivers the leader of the plot to Bolesław III. As Vincentius comments "Thus, he cuts off the head of rebellion, he trades away his safety for his country's safety, he brings all of the Bolesław's kingdom to peace."²¹⁶ For this feat, Bolesław offered Piotr the highest rewards, but the latter crucially dismissed them all. As archbishop Jan underlined in his commentary, this demonstrated that Piotr was aware that receiving a reward would put into question his pure motivations. These in turn were the only reason why his actions were judged as deceptive but virtuous, rather than deceitful and immoral.

²¹³ *Herbordi Dialogus de vita s. Ottonis episcopi Babenbergensis*, eds. Jan Wikarjak and Kazimierz Liman, MPH NS, vol. 7 (Cracow: Polska Akademia Umiejętności 1976), 64-68.

²¹⁴ Marek Cetwiński, "Podstępem czy siłą? 'Działania specjalne' i ich moralna ocena w kronikach śląskich" [By deception or by force? 'Special operations' and their moral evaluation in Silesian chronicles], *Średniowiecze Polskie i Powszechne* 2 (2002): 145; Knowledge of Herbord's work by Vincenitus suggested by Żmudzki, *Władca i Wojownicy...*, 412.

²¹⁵ 3.20 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 108: *alti sanguinis princeps et principi dignitate proximus, vir magnanimitas generose, tam strenuus manu quam pectore industris.*

²¹⁶ 3.20 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 109: *Sic seditionis caput amputat, sic sue salutis dispendio patrie salutem mercatur, sic omne Boleslai regnum tranquillitati conciliat.*

Just how close Piotr Włostowic's actions were to condemnable deceit is illustrated by comparing them with a similar intrigue by the Persian nobleman Zopyrus. The commander of Darius's forces mutilated himself and pretended to be exiled by the Persian king to ingratiate himself with rebellious Babylonians. Once he was made their commander, he deliberately sabotaged the city's defenses, allowing Persians to retake it. However, as explained by Vincentius, while Zopyrus's stratagem was a *simulatio fallacie*, Piotr's was *simulatio cautele*, because the latter was acting in a just cause. It is the noble intention behind the act, rather than the deed itself, that counts.²¹⁷

Going beyond the comparison with King Darius's commander, the Polish chronicler immediately presents readers with a similar ploy being deployed by Ruthenians against Bolesław III. Volodar's son Volodymyrko wants to avenge the kidnapping of his father, but, unable to confront the Piast ruler openly, he comes up with a scheme. Using promises, gifts, and gold, he persuades certain noble Pannonian to pretend to be a similar exile. The nobleman manages to convince the Poles that he escaped Volodymyrko's clutches after baseless accusations of *crimen laese maiestatis*. Trustful Bolesław III believes in Pannonian's lies and even makes him a commander in the border town of Wiślica. When Bolesław is away, the traitor secretly calls upon Volodymyrko. He also issues a command to all the Piast's subjects to seek refuge in Wiślica, only to trap them in the city to be slaughtered by Ruthenian forces. For this, the Pannonian noble meets a fitting end. At first, Volodymyrko rewards him with a plentitude of gifts and favor, only to blind, castrate, and tear off the tongue of the traitor, so that "from this serpentine lineage, this monster of treachery, even more destructive monster is not born."²¹⁸ This action by Volodymyrko meets with Vincenitus's approval. He provides readers with similar examples of traitors punished rather than rewarded by the rulers whom they helped in classical antiquity. The wisdom of ancient rulers who punished treachery even if it benefited them is sadly increasingly lost on chronicler's contemporaries, who more often court this kind of behavior than punish it.²¹⁹

This time, the contrast between motivations guiding Piotr and Pannonian is much clearer. While the former was guided by higher loyalty and refused any rewards, the latter was

²¹⁷ Marek Cetwiński notices here the reflection of Peter Abelard's ethical thought. See Cetwiński, "Podstępem czy siłą?," 153.

²¹⁸ 3.22 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 110-12: *Ceterum proditore nihil in sinistrum suspicante, ut in prouisum iaculum grauius feriat, ut celsior gradus celsius precipitet, eodem pene momenti puncto et extollit et deicit ac deiectum orbat lumine, lingua capulat, genitalia eneruat; absit, inquiens, ne de radice colubri, ne de prodigio perfidie pestilentius prodigium propagetur.*

²¹⁹ 3.23 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 112-13: *Cuius quis aput prudentes fuerit exitus, ex hiis uides, quamuis hec lucifuga inter uolucrum reges sub luce uolitet plausu discolore quam nonnulli hodie non modo non reprimuntur, set uirtute profligate premiis inuitant.*

motivated purely by gold and the perspective of future wealth and favor. By praising Piotr Włostowic's behavior, Vincentius sets a high bar for Piast subjects. He serves selflessly, motivated by the wellbeing of his country. In doing so, he disregards his life and, more controversially, norms of proper conduct. The latter, as pointed out by Piotr Żmudzki, was often a feature of the narratives about palatines, whose transgressions were seen as justified as long as they acted against the enemies of the ruler or realm.²²⁰ Volodar was certainly a justified target. He was a traitorous subject who through conspiracy and bribery was trying to undermine Piast's rulership. Violating Volodar's trust at the feast, Piotr carried out a retribution for Rurikovich's own violations of loyalty.

The described narratives are meant, after all, also to illustrate what happens to those who abuse the bonds of loyalty. Neither Volodar nor Pannonian escapes the consequences of their treachery, with the brutal punishment of the latter described with particular satisfaction by the chronicler. Moreover, Volodomryko—an architect of the second ploy—ends up punished as well. Putting the more satisfying coda to the story than Piotr's deceit, Vincentius describes how Bolesław III disposed with any further deception and openly entered Ruthenia with all his might, justly laying waste to Rurikid land.²²¹

The anecdote that directly follows the description of Piotr Włostowic and Pannonian noble's deceptions further informs us about the expectations of loyalty and the consequences of failing or raising to meet them. Just like before, Vincentius uses comparison and contrast between two characters to make his point.

The massacre at Wiślica causes the chronicler to reflect on the gullibility of tricked Bolesław. Defending the father of his patron, Vincentius argues that occasional *credulitas* was just a result of the ruler's virtues of *innocentia* and *confidentia*. Even if the guileless ruler allowed himself to be deceived by those less honest than him, the same virtues allowed him to overcome scheming adversaries. This is precisely what, according to Vincentius, happened when Bolesław was lured into Hungary in order to put the exiled prince Boris on the throne. Pannonian nobles, knowing about Piast's trustfulness, falsely pleaded with Bolesław to intervene, pledging the support of the whole country. In fact, however, the nobles were acting with the knowledge of their king, Boris's rival, setting a trap for Bolesław and the exile. Only

²²⁰ Paweł Żmudzki, "Wojewodowie w Polsce i na Rusi. Współbrzmienie narracji historiograficznych a problem polsko-ruskich relacji kulturowych we wczesnym średniowieczu [Voivods in Poland and Rus. The resonance of historiographical narratives and the problem of Polish-Rus cultural relations in the early Middle Ages]," in *Granica wschodnia cywilizacji zachodniej w średniowieczu*, ed. Zbigniew Dalewski (Warsaw: Instytut Historii PAN, 2014), 460–65; Żmudzki, *Władca i Wojownicy...*, 408–13.

²²¹ Cetwiński, "Podstępem czy siłą?," 155–56; 3.24 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 113.

once he entered Pannonia, Bolesław sees through the deceit, observing that the crowds that celebrate their new ruler quickly took up positions at the army's rear, ready to backstab the Poles. Despite this, Bolesław decides to fight the overwhelming Pannonian forces. He is able to resist the attackers for some time, until one of his nobles flees from the battlefield. While, according to Vincentius, this only threw some shade on an otherwise decisive Polish victory, he admits that Bolesław was forced to retreat. In leaving the battlefield, the Polish duke was helped by some *originarius*, who offered dismounted Piast his own untrained horse.²²²

Bolesław returned the favor to both the unfaithful noble and helpful peasant, “for he neither wanted to disregard unrecognized virtue, nor ignore unpunished cowardice.” He gifted the noble sliver, spindle, and hare's skin – symbols of femininity, slyness, and cowardice.²²³ The symbolism of the gifts, explained explicitly to the reader by the chronicler, gives us a good idea of the characterization of the nobleman's actions. He endangered Bolesław's life and diminished the glory of Polish victory. By abandoning his ruler at a time of need, he failed to live up to the obligations of his station, acting in an effeminate, cowardly, and disloyal manner. Having received the pay for his bad deeds, the nobleman, just like Judas, commits suicide by hanging.²²⁴

The *originarius*, in turn, was lifted out of the servitude, showered with wealth, and made a knight.²²⁵ The actions of the commoner, for which he received such plentiful gifts, fit into a larger narrative trope in description of military confrontations. For example, in an episode portrayed in *Gesta principum Polonorum* Duke Kazimierz I finds himself in danger while fighting rebellious Mazovians, he is recognized and saved by a rank-and-file warrior from the enemy ranks, whom he rewards in the same way.²²⁶ In the later episode from *Chronica Polonorum*, Vincentius describes a similar thing happening during the battle of Mozgawa (1195). Mieszko III, trying to wrestle the throne of Cracow from the adolescent Leszek and Lesser-Polish nobles, has his son killed in battle, almost dying himself. Wounded by a rank-and-file warrior, Mieszko took off his helmet and identified himself. Even though Mieszko,

²²² 3.26 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 114-17.

²²³ 3.26 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 117: *At uero non indignis illum fuge principem donariis dignatur Boleslaus. Nec enim aut irrepremiatam dissimulare uirtutem, aut inpunitam uoluit negligere ignauiam. Tribus illum donat muneribus: colo, fuso et leporum pellicia. Colus feminam, pensum uersutum, lepus meticulosum significat. Quibus ille intellectis, in oratorio proprio campane loramento suspensus, miserum permisere spiritum exalat. Et sic in colo patibulum, in penso laqueum, in lepore fugam spiritus intelligo.*

²²⁴ Przemysław Pazik, “Opowieść o samobójstwie pewnego rycerza z 26 rozdziału III księgi Kroniki Polskiej mistrza Wincentego” [The story of a knight's suicide from chapter 26 of the third book of Master Wincenty's Polish Chronicle], *Rocznik Antropologii Historii* 2, no. 3 (2012): 205–6.

²²⁵ 3.26 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 117-18: *Illum autem, illum originarium ob liberalitatis insigne seruituti emancipat, emancipatum locupletat, locupletatum equestrium pretexta nobilitat.*

²²⁶ 1.20 in *GpP*, 83-84.

unlike Kazimierz, was not fighting in just cause,²²⁷ his assailant, “having recognized him [Mieszko], asked forgiveness for his insolence, and shielding from the other’s attacks made them leave the battlefield.”²²⁸

The shared goal of these and similar anecdotes is to convey the strength of a ruler’s charisma.²²⁹ Doubtlessly, this was also the case with *originarius*, who recognized the authority of courageous Bolesław. The qualities of the Piast ruler contrasted starkly with the deceitful character of the Hungarian king and nobles, making the humble peasant the last virtuous man in Hungary. By saying that Bolesław could not disregard the peasant’s unrecognized virtue, Vincentius asks the reader to not consider the wealth and titles bequeathed to Pannonian as transactional *quid pro quo*. Rather, we are meant to see his social promotion as similar to that of both Leszeks, being born out of virtue. Those who did not stand by the ruler deserved to be excluded from the nobility, those who recognized the importance of virtue deserved to belong to it.

All the examples discussed thus far concerned the loyalty of subjects to their rulers. To cite again, however, from the words that Vincentius puts into the mouth of Władysław III Spindelshanks, loyalty “suits not only the ruled, but also the ruler.”²³⁰ How did the chronicler imagine then the loyalty of Piast dukes towards their subjects?

Some answers to this question can be found in one of the very same episodes in which Władysław shares his remarks on loyalty. As Vincentius writes, upon Mieszko III the Old’s death in 1201, the Cracow throne became vacated once again. The Cracow magnates once more turned towards Kazimierz II’s son, Leszek the White, offering him their loyalty and the position of *princeps*, but not without demands. Leszek’s palatine Goworek, a virtuous man of noble family who valiantly fought for young Leszek in the battle of Mozgawa,²³¹ and the powerful

²²⁷ Perhaps the death of his son Bolesław was seen by the chronicler as punishment enough. On characterisation of Mieszko in the wake of the battle of Mozgawa, see: Rafał Rutkowski, “Dwuwersz o Mieszku III Starym. Przyczynek do erudycji Mistrza Wincentego Kadłubka (IV, 22,5)” [A distich about Mieszko III the Old. A contribution to the erudition of Master Vincentius Kadłubek (IV, 22,5)], *Studia Źródłoznawcze. Commentationes* 57 (2019): 31–45.

²²⁸ 4.23 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 180: *Hic Mesconem quidam gregarius miles uulnerat, quem cum occidere uellet, ille detecta casside se esse principem exclamat quo ille cognito ueniam inprudentie petit eumque ab aliorum inpetu conseruans, prelium declinare facit.*

²²⁹ Żmudzki, “Wojewodowie na Polsce i Rusi,” 216–19; Further examples of the same motive in other contemporary sources discussed mentioned also in Jacek Banaszkiewicz, “O nowym łacińsko-anglojęzycznym wydaniu Galla i o samej jego Kronice” [About the new Latin-English edition of Gallus and about his Chronicle itself], *Roczniki Historyczne* 70 (2004): 213–14.

²³⁰ 4.26 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 192.

²³¹ 4.23 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 180–81: *Cum quibus licet in pauca manu comes Gouoricus congregitur, confligit et frendentis instar fulminis inpetum una cum uiribus nequicquam effundit. Dispari namque hostium numerositate tandem fatigatus, non sine gloria quadam succumbit, capitur captusque abducitur et captiui nomine diu tentus, uix demum a captiuitate amicorum interuentu absoluitur.*

palatine of Cracow Mikołaj were in conflict. Vincentius does not know how the conflict came to be but suggests that it was because of some insidious whisperers, envious of the virtues of both great men. Mikołaj then promises his obedience only if Leszek first dismisses and exiles Goworek.²³² This precondition leads to a debate among Leszek and his advisors, forced to choose between the harmful and the objectionable. Goworek himself speaks out, stating that in this situation, in which the common good is weighted against the individual, he is happy to go into exile. Some other man decided to contribute to the discussion in a less direct manner, sharing a tale of a griffin and a fox. A griffin, king of birds and quadrupeds, tried to take down an oak in which some birds were hiding from him, but only managed to hurt one of his wings. In pain, he asked the passing-by she-fox for advice. The sly animal advised him to break his other wing, since only with two wings on the same level he would be able to fly. This, naturally, does not work, and the maimed griffin is quickly torn apart by foxes and vipers.²³³ Any further deliberations are cut short by Duke Leszek himself, who is deeply angered that it has been suggested that he would even consider the Cracow magnate's proposal. He rejects the offer, saying:

Let all manner of bargaining be far from the duke, far away from the honest a dishonest trading! For what offer those whose price is the most innocent man, when the selling of dignities is full of lamentable consequences, and there is no putting price on the free man's head.²³⁴

The stances taken by both Goworek and Leszek are clearly approved of by Vincentius. The former was a loyal subject, ready to sacrifice his position for the benefit of the whole political community. The latter, with the same goal in mind, refuses to consider the offer that would see him dismiss such a virtuous man to gain more power. The fable illustrates well what would happen if Leszek were to accept the offer of the Cracow nobles. It is the great men, like Goworek and Mikołaj, on whom the ruler depends like the griffin on his wings. If he were to discard one just because of the problems with another, he would fall prey to scheming foxes and vipers. Just like their subjects, Piast rulers should not treat loyalty as a transactional relationship that can be easily bought or discarded. Paradoxically, by rejecting this indecent proposal Leszek proved that he was well suited to be the ruler of Cracow, matching the virtue of his father. Thus, on the very last pages of the chronicle, Vincentius manages to both praise

²³² 4.26 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 190.

²³³ 4.26 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 191-92.

²³⁴ 4.26 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 192: *Set omne absit a principe negotiationum genus, inhonesta procul absint honestorum commercia! Quid enim offerunt, qui hominis innocentissimi pretium querunt, cum luctuosi plena sit euentus dignitatum uenalitas et liberi capitis nulla sit estimatio.*

the young duke as well as criticize his Lesser Polish contemporaries, who saw loyalty as something that could be bought and sold.

To conclude this section, in the cited narratives about the service of Piast subjects, Vincentius focuses more on the nature of the bonds of loyalty, rather than its content. Committed moralist, the chronicler repeatedly underscores that real loyalty is emphatically non-transactional. Disloyalty is met with harsh punishment, while those loyal were elevated to the social station that would better reflect their character. Vincentius is, however, much vaguer on what loyal service would entail. Both Piotr Włostowic and Goworek are depicted as offering council at times of deliberation and leading during military confrontations. They are both praised for their readiness to sacrifice either their life or position – the sacrifice that could not be made by the cowardly nobleman who abandoned Bolesław III in Pannonia. This gives us an idea about some obligations of the loyal subjects. One could expect, however, that such high expectations were addressed to men who, like Piotr Włostowic, palatine Mikołaj, or Goworek, were elite members of the active political community of Polish *res publica*. Even less can be said in concrete terms about the obligations of commoners, though the stories of *gregarii milites* saving lives of Bolesław III and Mieszko III suggest that they were at least expected to recognize the charismatic authority of all members of the ruling dynasty.

Interestingly, the praised *procere*s were also described to act less in the service of the individual ruler, but rather in the interest of the whole political community. Piotr Włostowic endangers himself for the peace of Bolesław's kingdom, Goworek is ready to sacrifice himself for the *publica utilitas*. Even the disloyalty of the cowardly nobleman was seen as particularly hurtful not to the ruler, but rather to the battlefield glory of all Poles. The loyalty to the individual ruler, it seems to me, was seen by Vincentius as a part of the broader set of obligations Piotr and Goworek had towards the whole political community.

1.5 Dissolving the Bonds – Narrating Rebellions

What happened then, when the virtuous character of Poland was threatened by the very rulers the subjects were meant to be loyal to? In the following part of the chapter, I will look for the answer to this question, investigating Vincentius's depictions of subjects rebelling against their rulers. I am interested not only in how they unfolded, but also in the moral judgment of those who rose against their rulers: if, when and how could such a drastic break in loyalty be justified? In order to answer these questions, I will focus on two sets of longer narratives. The first set focuses on the rebellions that belonged to the Piast past, known to

Vincentius through the anonymous *Gesta principum Polonorum*. The second one concerns the conflicts between the sons of Bolesław III that unfolded during Vincentius's life, with particular attention paid to the uneasy relationship between Kazimierz II the Just and some of the Lesser-Polish elites.

1.5.1 Rebellions from the Piast Past

In looking for the tales of subjects rebelling against their rulers, I would like to turn first towards two episodes from the Piast past: the banishment and heroic return of Duke Kazimierz I, and the fall from grace of his son, Bolesław II the Bold. Both events, taking place over a century before Vincentius started writing his *Chronica*, were known to the Polish chronicler through *Gesta principum Polonorum*. There, they played an important role in the depiction of loyalty, illustrating the dire consequences of abandoning the Piast rulers, and the rare occasions in which such actions might be justifiable. Vincentius, while following the narrative outlines of his anonymous predecessor, introduces changes that are telling of the way he understood loyalty.

In the work of Vincentius's predecessor, the expulsion of Queen Mother Richeza and the adolescent Duke Kazimierz by some traitors and villains (*traditores, maliciosi*) leads to a series of disasters, a direct consequence of not remaining faithful to the *domini naturales*.²³⁵ The subsequent story of Kazimierz's return from exile, the support he finds among common people, and the opposition he faces from his father's cupbearer Masław further emphasizes the unbreakable nature of the bonds of loyalty between the Poles and the Piast dynasty.²³⁶ Vincentius, despite adding his own alternative tradition about Kazimierz's stepmother, followed closely the plot structure outlined in *Gesta*.²³⁷ Nevertheless, the small changes he introduces substantially shift the focus of the story away from the question of loyalty owed by subjects to the Piast dynasty.

Vincentius presents two different stories on how young Kazimierz ended up in exile. In the first version, upon the death of Mieszko II the power in Poland falls into the hands of the mother of the adolescent hero, Emperor Otto III's sister Richeza. Her regency, marked by hastiness and favoritism towards Germans, was opposed by the populace (*cives*) of Poland, who forced her into exile. Kazimierz grows up under the protection of loyal *procures*, but upon reaching adulthood, is also forced to join his mother abroad. This time, the exile is seen as

²³⁵ The description of the desolated country even ends with direct warning, 1.19 in *GpP*, 80: *Haec autem dixisse de Poloniae destructione sufficiat, et eis qui dominis naturalibus fidem non servaverunt ad correctionem proficiat.*

²³⁶ I have analyzed this and other episodes from the oldest Polish chronicle in my MA work. For the summary, see: Machalski, "Bonds of Loyalty in the *Gesta Principum Polonorum*," 41–43.

²³⁷ Żmudzki, "New Versions," 154–57.

unjust punishment of the young Piast by the same elites who were afraid that he would seek to avenge the wrongs done to his mother. In the second version of the tale, Kazimierz's mother dies in childbirth, and the young child draws the ire of the ambitious and scheming step-mother. The unnamed woman, wanting to secure the succession for her offspring, tries to convince a certain trusted man with promises and gold to kill the prince. The man, however, full of God and prudence (*Deo quam prudentia perplenus*), only pretends to follow the stepmother's wishes, while in reality entrusting Kazimierz to the monastery.²³⁸

When upon the death of Mieszko II the country falls apart consumed by a rebellious populace and plundering enemies, it is the same loyal man that reminds the biggest friends of *res publica* about Kazimierz, who might be their only salvation.²³⁹ Thus, the small crew of stalwart defenders of the last Polish stronghold was able to bring Kazimierz back to his fatherland. With their help, the young Piast eagerly recovers the homeland. While most of the Poles gladly recognize Kazimierz's rule, he is resisted by Mazovians and their leader Masław. Masław is described as a man coming from the lowliest of servile families (*de sordido famulitii genere*), but eloquent and vigorous (*facundus et strenuus*). He twice mustered great force against Kazimierz, though Vincentius makes sure to note that his warriors "followed fortune, not the man (*fortunam secuti non hominem*)."²⁴⁰ Defeated despite the numerical advantage, Masław seeks refuge among his pagan allies. There, he meets a fitting end – in retribution for the death of their comrades, pagans hang Masław from a tall tree saying "You desired heights, so stay high."²⁴¹

Even if the general structure follows Gallus's version of events, the changes in the narrative make Vincentius's message about loyalty strike a different tone. As pointed out by Paweł Żmudzki, the Polish chronicler paints a much harsher picture of Richeza's regency, which leads him in turn to a sympathetic attitude towards those who would force her into exile. It is only the banishment of Kazimierz himself that is seen as unjust.²⁴¹ By focusing on bad female rulership, however, Vincentius blunts the critique of disloyalty towards the Piast dynasty, which sharply underlines Gallus's tale. Even the most catastrophic consequences of banishing Kazimierz—the burning of churches, slave rebellion, and the complete reversal of the social order—have been omitted from the description of the collapse of Mieszko's kingdom

²³⁸ 2.14 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 45-46.

²³⁹ 2.14 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 46: *Ceterum ille fidelis non immemor depositi quibusdam huius rei publice amicissimis de puero suggerit.*

²⁴⁰ 2.14 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 47: *Alta petisti, alta tene.*

²⁴¹ Żmudzki, "New Versions," 153.

in *Chronica Polonorum*.²⁴² This sidelining of the theme of loyalty is even more pronounced in the second version of Kazimierz's childhood. There, the allegiance of the man who, rather than kill the abducted prince decides to hide him in a monastery, is dictated by his role as a compassionate executioner in a well-trodden narrative scheme.²⁴³

Another subtle but telling difference between Vincentius's and Gallus's version of events is Kazimierz's agency in his return to Poland. In the latter's narrative, the young Piast makes a risky decision to return to his patrimony, where he is recognized as the rightful ruler by the crew of the single stronghold, with most of the country—safe for Masław—following shortly after. In Vincentius's version, it is this small crew, made up of civic-minded defenders of *patria*, whose efforts allow Kazimierz to return to his homeland in the first place. The restoration of the Piast rulership in the name of the common good owes as much to Poles who clung to the idea of *res publica* as to the young Duke.

This change has a further impact on the role Masław plays in both chronicles. For Gallus, Masław's story was one of Mieszko II's cupbearer stubbornly failing to recognize Kazimierz as the natural master of Poland. This set the leader of Mazovians apart not only from those who welcomed the young Piast as he entered his first stronghold, but even from his own warriors. The anonymous chronicler describes how during battle with Masław's forces, Kazimierz's life is saved by a simple soldier from Mazovian's ranks, who recognized the Piast among combatants.²⁴⁴ Vincentius disregards this theme, focusing instead on Masław's perverted urge to rise above his natural station. Masław's servile background is more emphasized than in Gallus's version, while his rise and death are commented upon with two examples of ancient Scythians and Macedonians coming to their senses and disposing of similar slave-born usurpers. The ease with which these "unnatural" leaders are dealt with brings attention to the tenuous loyalties of their followers. Masław's soldiers did not fight for him but for themselves, seeking fortune. His Macedonian counterpart Hippander bought the good will of naïve populace by lowering the taxes and abolishing the dues. These were not proper methods of securing the loyalty of subjects.

Vincentius, along with the structure of Gallus's version of the events, keeps the message of the dangers faced by Poland in the absence of the ruler. Nevertheless, he is much more understanding of the Piast subjects, partially justifying their decision to exile Richeza and

²⁴² The slave rebellion described by Gallus has been, in turn, used by Vincentius to construct a vision of the social anarchy that was a result of prolonged military campaigns of Bolesław II the Bold.

²⁴³ Banaszkiewicz, *Polskie dzieje bajeczne*, 166–68.

²⁴⁴ 1.20 in *GpP*, 83–84.

making them instrumental in Kazimierz's return. Under the chronicler's pen, Masław's role becomes much more general, as his fate becomes a moralizing tale about the fate of those who rise above their station.

Even more dramatic are the changes that Vincentius makes to the tradition about the other Piast exiled by their own subjects, Kazimierz I's son Bolesław II. The picture painted in *Gesta principum Polonorum* presents a narrative about the generous and audacious ruler whose lack of moderation and pride led to his tragic downfall.²⁴⁵ Gallus only briefly mentions the regrettable conflict between the two anointed men, in order to explain how Bolesław ended up exiled in Hungary.²⁴⁶ He refuses to outline the conflict, defend either of its sides, or say who was responsible for Bolesław's exile and if it was justifiable. Provided only with this vague outline, Vincentius was free to construct his own version of the story – one in which the exile and infamous death of Bolesław II was made a just punishment for the ruler-turned-tyrant who martyred the bishop of Cracow, Stanislaus.

At the centre of Bolesław's slide towards tyranny, Vincentius explicitly places the question of the limits of loyalty. Presented at first as embodying the virtues of the ancient Poles—magnanimity and military prowess—Bolesław's multiple military campaigns eventually led to trouble. With the monarch and Polish men away on one in the series of the long military expeditions, back in Poland some slaves took possession of their masters' houses, coercing or convincing their bored wives and daughters. Having learned about it, the husbands return home, and after vicious fighting restore social order. However, the returning king sees the victorious men as deserters who placed *causa feminea* above obedience to their ruler, abandoning him at the mercy of the enemies.²⁴⁷

Thus, Bolesław began the cruel persecution of the perceived traitors and their wives, which led him to the confrontation and killing of bishop Stanislaus, who tried to defend his parishioners. With the country and its elites united against a hated monarch, Bolesław flees to

²⁴⁵ Edward Skibiński, "Biskup i monarcha" [Bishop and monarch], in *Docendo discimus: studia historyczne ofiarowane Profesorowi Zbigniewowi Wielgoszowi w siedemdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin*, ed. Zbigniew Wielgosz, Krzysztof Kaczmarek, and Jarosław Nikodem (Poznań: Instytut Historii UAM, 2000), 99–109; For other historians accepting Skibiński's thesis, see: Skwierczyński, *Recepcja Idei...*, 140; Wiszewski, *Domus Boleslai*, 234–35.

²⁴⁶ 1.27 in GpP, 96: *Qualiter autem rex Boleslauus de Polonia sit eiectus longum existit enarrare, sed hoc dicere licet, quia non debuit christus in christum peccatum quodlibet corporaliter vindicare. Illud enim multum sibi nocuit, cum peccato peccatum adhibuit, cum pro traditione pontificem truncacioni membrorum adhibuit. Neque enim traditorem episcopum excusamus, neque regem vindicantem sic se turpiter commendamus, sed hoc in medio deseramus et ut in Vngaria receptus fuerit disseramus.*

²⁴⁷ 2.20 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 56: *Ait non placere sis uiros uxorios, quibus plus causa placeat feminea, quam principis obsequela. Queritur se non tam apud hostes ab ipsi desertum, quam hostibus ultro expositum.*

Hungary.²⁴⁸ In exile, he tries to present himself as the victim of a conspiracy headed by the treasonous bishop. Bolesław and his son Mieszko die shortly after due to illness and poison, which Vincentius sees as a just punishment for the murderous king and his offspring.²⁴⁹

In Vincentius's mind, the concerned husbands did the right thing by returning to Poland after learning about the social upheaval. Just like in Gallus's depiction of the banishment of Kazimierz, from where Vincentius had lifted it, the slave revolt is a result of a prolonged absence of the ruler.²⁵⁰ This time, however, the absence is Bolesław's fault. The moral dilemma the men campaigning with Bolesław in a distant land faced was not new. Commenting on the events, archbishop Jan brought in two similar examples from the ancient past, lifted from Justin's *Epitome*. The story of a similar rebellion of slaves and abandoned wives defeating a long-absent Scythian army illustrates the seriousness of the threat facing Bolesław II's subjects.²⁵¹ The second example recalls Spartans who, having sworn to each other not to abandon the decade-long siege, allowed their wives to have sex outside of wedlock. While conceding that there was some virtue in oath-keeping, archbishop Jan thrice shuns the decision made by the Spartans.²⁵² The Poles who decided to abandon their ruler did so to protect a much more important bond of marriage. Even more directly than in the previously discussed episode, it is the Polish subjects who take upon themselves the task of restoring the proper social order and, like bishop Stanislaus, defend it against the transgressions of returning Bolesław II. The latter's claims about the treachery are discredited by his own behavior. Even campaigning subjects should not follow blindly their ruler but should rather keep in mind the proper and virtuous functioning of their political community.

According to Vincentius, similar concern for the political community was claimed by rebellious Piast subjects as they allied with Bolesław III's stepbrother Zbigniew in the early

²⁴⁸ 2.20 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 58: *Quo facto turculentissimus ille exterritus, non minus patrie quam patribus inuisus, in Ungariam secedit.*

²⁴⁹ 2.20 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 59.

²⁵⁰ Paweł Żmudzki, "Mieszko I i Amazonki. Wspólnoty wojownicze i normy życia rodzinnego w relacji Ibrahima ibn Jakuba" [Mieszko I and the Amazons: warrior communities and norms of family life in the account of Ibrahim ibn Ya'qub], in *Tekst źródła - krytyka, interpretacja*, ed. Barbara Trelińska (Warsaw: DiG, 2005), 105.

²⁵¹ 2.19 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 55: *Quosquam vero tante animositas intuetor, ut non minus turpe putauerint uiros constantia destituti quam feminas pudicitie pati dispendia.*

²⁵² 2.19 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 56: *Tanti aput isos odium hostile tanti amor patrie, tanti fuit iuris iurandi religio. Execracione namque sese obstrinxerant, nolle reverti, donec urbem hostium expugnassent. Set pietas istrorum in pia et irreligiosa fuit religio, quia nihil temerius, nihil sordidius, quam iura matrimonii non modo non coli set confundi. [...] Hec speciem pietas impietatis habet. [...] Igitur hic et uirtus quendam fuit et simia non defuit uirtutis;* Safe for the last comment, Vincentius emphasizes the corrupt nature of Spartan oath. Thus, I cannot agree with Stanisław Trawkowski's remark that chronicler's position on proper resolution of the dilemma facing Spartans is „enigmatic”, see Stanisław Trawkowski, "Monarcha wobec ludu w świetle Kroniki mistrza Wincentego" [The monarch vis-à-vis the people in the light of the Chronicle of Master Vincent], in *Człowiek w społeczeństwie średniowiecznym*, ed. Roman Michałowski (Warsaw: DiG, 1997), 371.

twelfth century. The rivalry between these two Piasts takes up much of the narrative of the second and third books of the contemporaneous *Gesta principum Polonorum*. For Gallus, the political events starting from young Zbigniew's return from his studies abroad, the confrontation between Zbigniew and his brother Bolesław III on the one hand and their father Władysław I and powerful palatine Sieciech on the other hand, and the final struggle between the allied brothers belonged to the recent and complicated past. The author of *Gesta principum Polonorum* had to introduce Zbigniew as the main antagonist of the latter half of his work, while at the same time accounting for the unlikely alliance between both princes against villainous Sieciech, and underplaying the involvement of the old Duke Władysław.²⁵³

Further removed from the described events, Vincentius systematizes Gallus's narrative, putting Zbigniew and Sieciech's villainy in more certain terms. From the very start, Zbigniew is likened to the biblical traitor Achitophel, characterized as an illegitimate son of a harlot whose ambition was to usurp the throne from his father and half-brother.²⁵⁴ Zbigniew is able to return to Poland due to the support of the noble exiles, driven out of Poland by Palatine Sieciech. Vincentius hastens to underline that the nobles' grievances were legitimate—Sieciech was a bad man, who valued avarice over public virtue—and that it was the concern about a powerful palatine rather than love for the illegitimate upstart that guided the rebels. The exiles made a successful appeal to Magnus, Silesian *praeses provinciae*, arguing that only Zbigniew would be able to end Sieciech's rule. Whereas Gallus describes the confrontation between Wrocław's inhabitants and envoys accused of defending Sieciech,²⁵⁵ the angered nobles and all-powerful palatine disappear from Vincentius's narrative as soon as Zbigniew enters Wrocław. The rest of the conflict is presented as a purely familial struggle.

The later confrontation between Palatine Sieciech and Władysław's sons Zbigniew and Bolesław III, is summarized by Vincentius in a similar manner. Instead of the complicated narrative that sees Władysław's sons hesitantly confronting their father's advisor depicted by Gallus, Vincentius writes simply about Sieciech's conspiracy against only Bolesław III. In his version of the story, palatine's actions are motivated by the prophecy – Sieciech is foretold that he will be brought down by adolescent Bolesław.²⁵⁶ Indeed, the rebellion of palatine, who tried

²⁵³ On the interpretation of these part of *Gesta*, see for example: Wiszewski, *Domus Boleslai*, 258–79.

²⁵⁴ 2.22 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 63: *Erat enim illi naturalis quidem set illegitimus filius, nam ex scorto susceptus, qui ob materni notam pudoris uel ut nouercales declinaret insidias, in latebris exilii perdiutissime delituit, qua ex causa Sbineuus est nuncupatus. Hic Achitophel consilio ducis uidelicet Bohemie Brentislai in paternum subornatur excidium. Ultro licet se ipsam omnibus insuadeat ambition, auget illi fiduciam pater descriptus, frater immaturus, ut regni rapiat gubernacula.*

²⁵⁵ 2.4 in *GpP*, 124–128.

²⁵⁶ This inventive addition to the depiction of Sieciech noted also in Żmudzki, *Władca i Wojownicy...*, 426–27; Katarzyna Chmielewska, *Rola wątków i motywów antycznych*, 41.

to set the old duke against his son, is quickly dealt with by Bolesław, who drives Sieciech into exile and out of the pages of the *Chronica*.²⁵⁷

Sieciech's characterization and role in the narrative presented in *Chronica Polonorum* did not change, but simply became diminished, as Vincenitus found him a less compelling adversary for Władysław and Bolesław III than Zbigniew. This relative disinterest is worth noting. While in the later parts of Vincentius's chronicle there is no shortage of bad advisors and malicious nobles surrounding Piasts, none of them are explicitly named, nor hold the position of palatine. On the contrary, the strong position of contemporary holders of this title—Mikołaj and Goworek—is seen by Vincenitus in positive light. Vincentius's belief in participatory role of broader elites in Piast rulership can explain why he is less interested in dwelling on the example of a malicious holder of the same title as contemporary palatines he praised.

This shift in the importance of Palatine Sieciech for the plot of the narratives told by Gallus and Vincentius of Cracow results in one more change worth noting. While both earlier chronicles are not interested in describing the lineages of the non-Piast elites surrounding Polish rulers, Gallus does so on one occasion. Comes Wojsław, a guardian of the young Bolesław III, is revealed to be the kinsman of palatine Sieciech. Thus, as the palatine turns against the prince, Wojsław becomes seen with suspicion by other companions of young Piast. While the chronicler never discloses if the suspicions were true, he notes that they were found credible by Bolesław III and Zbigniew, who did not accept Wojsław's attempts to reaffirm his loyalty.²⁵⁸ It stands to reason that the audience of the *Gesta principum Polonorum* would share in the prince's assumption. This episode is treated off-handedly by Gallus, and because of that, was probably not seen as deserving of attention by the chronicler from Cracow. Thus, while we might assume that the expectations of loyalty within the kin group presented by Vincentius extended beyond the members of the ruling family, we do not see those bonds between different Polish subjects mentioned explicitly in *Chronica Polonorum*.

Zbigniew, on whom Vincentius focuses instead, met a similar fate to Sieciech. After presenting many acts of perfidy against Duke Władysław and later Bolesław III, the illegitimate Piast is caught among the Pomeranian raid party that attacked Bolesław's army camp at night. Zbigniew, who claimed that he put on the invader's armor only to alert the Poles, was put on trial for a high treason.²⁵⁹ In a display of his rhetorical and legal knowledge, Vincentius presents

²⁵⁷ 2.24 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 68-69.

²⁵⁸ 2.16 in *GpP*, 142-143.

²⁵⁹ 2.28 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 75-84.

both the accusations leveled by Zbigniew and his defence.²⁶⁰ In the end Zbigniew is convicted of disobedience, as he did not obtain the consent of commanding Bolesław, blinded and exiled.²⁶¹ Both the prosecutor and the members of the court were importantly described as the other members of the political community – *principis dignitate satrapa Proximus* and *patres conscripti* respectively. Unlike in Gallus's version, in which it is Bolesław who bears the responsibility for maiming and exiling his stepbrother, in *Chronica Polonorum*, it is a legal decision made by the broader political community concerned with the presence of the deceitful and immoral Zbigniew among their midst.²⁶²

Reviewing the way in which Vincentius approaches the tradition about the rebellious Piast subjects surviving in *Gesta principum Polonorum*, one can see that he makes some consistent changes. On all examined occasions, Vincentius found a way to emphasize the concern Piast subjects had for the virtuous character of their political community. The chronicler sympathizes with the nobles who rebelled against Sieciech and Rycheza, whose rule is characterized by favoritism and arbitrariness. He also justifies the deposition of King Bolesław II, whose prolonged campaigns caused social upheaval. The main anxiety that can be linked to all discussed instances of past rebellions was the fear about upturning of the natural social order. It was something that Rycheza, Masław, and Sieciech were all accused of doing. Several structural elements of these narratives about justified rebellions from the distant Piast past—like plotting stepmother of interventions by bishop of Cracow—will play, as we will see, an important role in Vincentius's depiction of contemporary events.

1.5.2 Contemporary Piasts

Conscious of the ways in which Vincentius justified and criticized the examples of subjects rebelling against Piast rulers in a more distant past, let us turn toward events that were still recent at the time of his writing. While free from the constraints of the narrative outline dictated by *Gesta principum Polonorum*, the future bishop of Cracow now had to navigate the political reality of shifting loyalties and allegiances.

Vincentius's description of the conflict between Władysław II and his younger brothers is short. Upon the death of Bolesław III in 1138, the realm was divided among his sons, with

²⁶⁰ It is here that the disproportionate amount of citations from and allusions to *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and Roman Law can be found. For a detailed analysis of the trial's speeches, see: Kałuża, "Vincentius's Chronicle and Intellectual Culture of the Twelfth Century," 153–55.

²⁶¹ 2.30 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 86.

²⁶² The participation of broader political community in Zbigniew's trial pointed out already in Żmudzki, "Vincentius's Construct of a Nation," 179.

the oldest Władysław II receiving Silesia and the *princeps*'s throne of Cracow. Władysław, however, was opposed by his younger brothers and the subjects and was quickly forced into exile. In Vincentius's telling, it was the Austrian wife of Władysław (described as *in se humanissimus*), Agnes of Babenberg, who turned her husband against his brothers in the first place. The "unbearable yoke (*inportabile iugum*)" of Agnes's reign and her unexplainable hatred (*inexorabiles odium*) for her brothers-in-law caused archbishop Jakub and other important nobles, like palatine Wszebór, to come to the aid of the younger Piasts.²⁶³ Just like in the case of the rebellion against Mieszko II's wife, Rycheza, Vincentius sides with the Polish elites who rise against abuses of a woman in power. Further condemnation of Władysław's behavior takes the form of a description of the improper way in which he tried to secure the loyalty and favor of followers and friends. Rather than relying on his own men to fight the rebellion, he preferred to coerce foreigners through promises and bribery.²⁶⁴

The overthrow of Mieszko III the Old and the elevation of Kazimierz II the Just to the throne of *princeps* was, unsurprisingly, described in more detail by Vincentius. Given the importance of this event for the legitimacy of his patron's rule, the chronicler was particularly cautious in deploying the same figures and narrative schemes as the ones he used to describe other justified rebellions in his chronicle.

According to the chronicler, even though Mieszko's glory was 'the envy of the neighbouring countries', his fortunes led him to the 'shortsighted stupor'.²⁶⁵ Following the suggestions of bad advisors, wicked 'men of Belial', Mieszko became a punitive enforcer of exclusive ducal rights, going as far as accusing those who would kill a wild bear in self-defence of a *crimen laesae maiestatis*.²⁶⁶

Unable to stand idly by this mistreatment of his parishioners, bishop Gedko confronts the *praeses provinciae* of Cracow. The use of the anonymized title offers strategic ambiguity to Vincentius, who does not accuse the duke directly, but highly implies that the official is just a

²⁶³ 3.28 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 120.

²⁶⁴ 3.28 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 120-22: *Proinde suorum aliquantsiper minus fidens Wladislaus exterorum turmas contrahit [...] Munitissime tamen presidatis urbibus, imperatoriam adit serenitatem, cuius erat sorore uxorius, a quo subsidiari supplicat et que emandicare nequit, emercari studet suffragia.*

²⁶⁵ 4.2 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 131: *iste siquidem tot prerogatiuarum fretus pruillegio, cuiusdam, proh dolor, securitatis insolentia in quendam incircumspectionis torporem prolabitur [...].*

²⁶⁶ Mieszko's actions have been interpreted as an attempt to introduce new practices of rulership, based on the models of territorial lordship functioning at that time in the Empire. See Sławomir Gawlas, "Das Problem der Fürstenmacht zur Zeit von Vincentius Kadlubek," in *Macht und Spiegel der Macht. Herrschaft in Europa im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert vor dem Hintergrund der Chronistik*, ed. Norbert Kersken and Grischa Vercamer (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2013), 287-93.

stand-in for Mieszko.²⁶⁷ In an echo of the conflict between Bolesław II and Stanislaus of Cracow, the intervention of the bishop only further escalated the persecutions. These prompt the Lesser-Polish elites to act against Mieszko. Unwilling to see their land, *regina provinciae*, suffer more indignities, they agree that “It is shameful to be seen as rebels, but even more shameful to live as cowards”.²⁶⁸ During deliberations, they are reminded about the many virtues of Kazimierz II, duke of the neighboring Sandomierz, and decide to turn to him with an offer to overthrow his older brother.

Virtuous Kazimierz is hesitant to accept this offer. He initially scolds the petitioners, reminding them that he already refused their *temptationis cauillatio*, when nobles led by Jaksa of Miechów and his son Świętosław tried to turn Kazimierz against Bolesław IV the Curly. The virtuous Piast refused them back then—and considered refusing the pleas again—comparing turning against a brother to suicide.²⁶⁹ Petitioners, however, insist that only the rebels (*factionis*) rose against Bolesław without a good cause, but this time “a different reason alters the pact” - a threat to *res publica* is real and only Kazimierz can save it from stranglehold it is in.²⁷⁰

This dramatic picture convinces the young Piast. Any qualm that Kazimierz—or for that matter the reader—might have had about his rightfulness was ultimately undercut by the reception given to him by the inhabitants of Cracow. Duke and his small company of followers are immediately greeted by armies and crowds of people, all cheering for Kazimierz. Moreover:

[...] the gates of the city, though guarded by the most invincible garrison, are opened from inside, moreover, those whom Mieszko tasked with guarding the city run out of the castle, and with bowed necks throw themselves to Kazimierz’s footstool. And thus, wishes of all converge, pursuits of all conspire, the duke is revered by all.²⁷¹

²⁶⁷ The older belief that the title *praeses provinciae* refers directly to Mieszko has been challenged by Janusz Bieniak, who claimed it referred to Duke’s representative in Cracow, identified by him with Henryk Kietlicz, see Bieniak, “Mistrz Wincenty w życiu politycznym Polski,” 39–42; Not all of Bieniak’s arguments are convincing. Most importantly, within the context of chronicle’s narrative, the tyranny of Mieszko’s representatives would still be understood as the reflection of ruler’s shortcomings, see Skibiński, “Walka o władzę w kronice Mistrza Wincentego,” 51–52.

²⁶⁸ 4.4 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 138: *Turpe, inquiunt, est factiosos uideri, set turpis ignauos existere. Indignum est ingenuitatem ancillari, longe indignius reginam prouinciarum inter scorta prostitui.*

²⁶⁹ 4.6 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 144: *Antiqua, inquit, immo antiquata penes nos non est huius temptationis cauillatio. Nec enim tam repente a uestra potuit excidisse memoria, qualiter primi principum Ajax uidelicet et famosus ille Suentoslaus, cuius gloriosa hodie uiget posteritas et concti pene procures, me licet renitentem ad ideam regni pertrahebant fastigium, ut propulsato piissimo principe fratre meo Boleslao, infausta uendicatione securius imperarem. Set malui fraterne pietatis amplexus omni preferre imperio, nam qui fratrem odit sui homicidia est.*

²⁷⁰ Ibidem: *Sane, inquiunt, princeps serenissime, Boleslai parcendum erat pietati, quia tunc nulla honestas causae intercessit, solo factionis impetu contra illum perstreptente. Nunc alia ratio pactum reformat, cum omnes extrema urget necessitas. Quibus nisi tua succurrant miseratio, nisi tam obstranulate rei publice relaxetur per te spiraculum, suffocari necesse est, cum nulla sit aliorum transmigrandi facultas.*

²⁷¹ 4.6 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 145: [...] *ualue quoque ciuitatis licet inuictissimis instructe presidiiis, ultro patefiunt, ultro ab arce desiliunt, quos Mesco urbis presidio prefecerat, cunctique prona ceruice scabello Kazimiri aduoluuntur. Omnium itaque concurrunt uota, omnium coniurant studia, princeps ab omnibus adoratur.*

Kazimierz's arrival in Cracow bares all hallmarks of ceremonial *adventus regis*, framing the Piast duke as the Christ-like savior of the Polish community.²⁷² Out of all who recognized entering Kazimierz as their real ruler Vincentius deliberately underscores the garrison left by Mieszko, whose quick submission he sees as particularly important.

The ease with which Mieszko's garrison in Cracow switched its allegiance is a portent of things to come. When the oldest of Piasts tries to react to the coup, but it is too late. As Mieszko examines the advice, loyalty, courage, and strength of his men, he finds out that:

At the very moment when they swore with a sacred oath that they would steadfastly die for him, they forgot about both fealty and their duke. And even those dearest to him, forgetting so many benefits, left him. Among them his first-born duke Odon, as the fiercest enemy tries to remove the root of his own trunk, on his own head he brings fire, most determined to end his father.²⁷³

Mieszko loses control over all Lesser and Greater Poland and is forced to flee to his last *oppidulum*. None of his illustrious foreign allies can help him. Even Pomeranians switch their allegiance to Kazimierz, turning their weapons against Mieszko. The cause for such quick fall is obvious for Vincentius, who writes that "Mieszko was overthrown not as much by brother's arms, but rather by the perfidy of his own men."²⁷⁴

At first glance, the narrative about Mieszko III's fall shares broad similarities with the structure of Bolesław II's story. Both are introduced as good rulers with character flaws that ultimately lead them to turn into tyrants. Both stories also feature a bishop of Cracow who takes it upon himself to defend his suffering parishioners, and whose prosecution becomes the last straw that leads to the ruler's exile.²⁷⁵ Upon closer inspection, however, we can see that the picture Vincentius paints is much more ambiguous.

To begin with, Mieszko is insulated from the direct responsibility for the suffering of his subjects. He is not cruel by nature but rather becomes convinced to rule through terror by bad advisors. Similarly, the person directly confronted by bishop Pełka as responsible for the

²⁷² Dalewski, *Ritual and Politics*, 15–16; Zbigniew Dalewski, *Władza, przestrzeń, ceremonia. Miejsce i uroczystość inauguracji władcy w Polsce średniowiecznej do końca XIV w.* [Power, space, ceremony. The place and ceremony of the ruler's inauguration in medieval Poland until the end of the 14th century] (Warsaw: Neriton, 1996), 121.

²⁷³ 4.7 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 145: *Eodem namque momento, quo iurisiurandi religione illi sese obstrinxerant, pro illo constantissime morituros, et fidei obliuiscuntur et principis. Set et carissimi eius, tantorum prorsus beneficiorum immemores, ab eo dilabuntur. Inter quos dux Odo eius primogenitus, hostis atrocissimus, proprii radicem stipitis eradicare contendit, in proprium uerticem flammis congerit, in patris excidium pertinacissimus.*

²⁷⁴ 4.7 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 146–7: *Igitur Mescio non tam fraternis eiicitur armis, quam suorum perfidia.*

²⁷⁵ As pointed out by Edward Skibiński, Gedko embodies the same role of admonishing bishop as St Adalbert or Stanislaus on previous pages of *Chronica Polonorum*, see Skibiński, "Walka o władzę w kronice Mistrza Wincentego," 53.

worst persecutions was Cracow's *praeses provinciae*. The introduction of an anonymous representative of the duke allowed the chronicler to distance Mieszko III from the cruelest excesses of his men in Lesser Poland. This does not mean that the Piast duke was not at fault. While Pelka might be confronting his representative, the comparison he makes with the son who is guilty by negligence applies to the ruler as well. Mieszko's *insolentia* led him to fall into some kind of torpor, to follow bad advice, and prevented him from intervening as the tyranny of his men continued to escalate until becoming unbearable. Even if their decisions were not his own, Mieszko should bear the consequences of the evil deeds of his subordinates.²⁷⁶ While this is unremarked on by Vincentius, it can be seen that just like in previously discussed cases, the source of problems facing Cracow's inhabitants is exacerbated by the ruler's physical absence.

Despite seeing Mieszko as responsible for the tyranny the people of Cracow faced, the chronicler presents the decisions to overthrow him as uneasy. The members of the opposition are painfully conscious of the odium that follows those seen as rebels and are reminded about it by Kazimierz's scolding. They, however, feel that the danger facing *res publica* is too great not to break with the norms mandating loyalty to the ruler. The images of the degradation brought upon the "queen among provinces" and its inhabitants, now little more than enslaved servants, bring to mind the previously discussed examples of social upheaval that threatened Poland. Besides this new *ratio*, there is also another difference between this attempt to unseat Mieszko III and the plot previously unmentioned by the chronicler against Bolesław IV. The latter was a plan hatched not only without proper reason, but also by a small faction of seditioners. The former is discussed by the assembly of the consuls and greatest men in Cracow, and as illustrated by the celebrations of Kazimierz's arrival, expresses the will of the whole political community.

In these circumstances, Vincentius sees the break in loyalty as completely justified. Perhaps the most important confirmation of the rightfulness of the coup and the clearest exposition of justifications behind it is voiced by Kazimierz II the Just himself. Once his power was firmly established, defeated Mieszko sent him a letter. In it he pleaded with the younger brother, relinquishing the position of *princeps* on account of his decrepitude and weakness caused by age, but asking to be allowed to return to his patrimony. When deliberating about his answer, Kazimierz states:

Their demand is not illegitimate, as far as it concerns only the return of their due patrimony. For he has no right to claim supreme authority: for he deserves to

²⁷⁶ Skibiński, "Walka o władzę w kronice Mistrza Wincentego," 53.

lose the privilege who abuses the power given to him, if it was established that it had been persistently abused. The good of the republic requires that no one uses his power maliciously. However, I do not see what could prevent him from effectively claiming his inheritance.²⁷⁷

The distinction between the principate and patrimony highlighted by Kazimierz has broader implications for the analysis of Mieszko's loss of power. Historians had long argued that the old ruler had to face a succession of two unrelated rebellions.²⁷⁸ The narration about the first one, against Mieszko's rule in Cracow as *princeps*, would end with Kazimierz's entrance to the city, with later events taking place in Greater Poland. While this distinction was introduced to better understand the political mechanisms behind the events Vincentius depicted, it also colored the interpretation of Vincentius's narrative. For example, Janusz Bieniak once suggested that while Vincentius might have approved of Kazimierz bringing an end to the rule of *praeses provinciae* in Cracow, he criticized those whose infidelity led to his exile from the Greater Polish patrimony.²⁷⁹ Were Vincentius's assessments of actions taken by those acting against Mieszko in both phases of the conflict really that different?

Vincentius certainly does not celebrate those who abandoned older Piast, but it is difficult to tell if their actions condemn them, Mieszko, or both. The strongest critique seems to be leveled at the duke's son Odon, whose rebellion against the father is likened to setting one's head on fire. As I have briefly illustrated in the previous subchapter, Vincentius often refers to the importance of filial piety. Even the anecdote about the son of the king of Bactria lifted from Justin's *Epitome*, referred to here by Vincentius, was already used by the chronicler earlier, to denigrate the patricidal impulses of Zbigniew.²⁸⁰ This time, however, the chronicler elaborates on the fate of the murderous son. Eucratides's grandson, appalled by the patricide committed by his father, flees to the woods. There, he consumes poisonous root but is saved by

²⁷⁷ 4.11 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 151: *Nec iniusta est eorum postulatio, que non nisi debitam patrimonii restitutionem continent. Nam principatum repetendi forsitan nullum illi ius competit: quia priuilegium meretur amittere, qui permissa sibi abutitur potestate, si tamen pertinaciter abusum fuisse constiterit. Expedit enim rei publice, ne quis re sua male utatur. Quid autem ab efficacissima hereditatis petitione illum retardare uideatur, prorsus non uideo.*

²⁷⁸ Gerard Labuda, "Dwa zamachy stanu w Polsce (1177-79, 1202-1206)" [Two coups d'état in Poland (1177-79, 1202-1206)], *Sprawozdania Poznańskiego Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Nauk* 82, no. 1 (1971); Stanisław Szczur, "Udział Odon w buncie przeciwko Mieszkowi Staremu w 1177 roku" [Odon's participation in the rebellion against Mieszko the Old in 1177], *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Prace Historyczne* 74 (1985): 47-55.

²⁷⁹ Janusz Bieniak, "Mistrz Wincenty o współczesnych mu Piastach" [Master Vincenitus on the contemporary Piasts], in *Europa środkowa i wschodnia w polityce Piastów*, ed. Krystyna Zielińska-Melkowska (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 1997), 48; Later, Bieniak would suggest that the tryannical measures described by the chronicler were employed only in Cracow, Bieniak, "Mistrz Wincenty w życiu politycznym Polski," 42.

²⁸⁰ 2.23 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 67.

a snake that enters his mouth causing him to vomit. As the boy is found by his father, the same snake kills the Bactrian. Thus, the reverence of the grandson and the patricide of the son are rewarded and punished by the same serpent.²⁸¹ The moral of the story would then serve as a warning for those who—like Odon—would rebel against their own father.²⁸² Comparing Odon to the patricidal Bactrian would serve as a satisfying contrast for the filial-like reverence Kazimierz II shows to Mieszko III, allowing him to return to Greater Poland.²⁸³

There is, however, one important detail that speaks against such an interpretation. Vincentius himself writes that Odon fought against his father “not to imitate certain aforementioned Bactrian in killing his father, but to keep the stepmother’s sons, to whom his father promised succession, from rulership.”²⁸⁴ Odon then had an important reason for rebelling against his father. Vincentius does not elaborate on thus introduced conflict between Mieszko’s firstborn and his second wife Eudoxia of Kyiv, refusing to reveal his sympathies. Nevertheless, throughout the chronicle he repeatedly asked the reader to cheer against stepmothers plotting against the firstborn (as in the case of Kazimierz I’s stepmother), and delegitimized rulers who put the advice of their ambitious spouses above the interests of their kinsmen (Pompilius II, Władysław II).²⁸⁵ Odon could have played the role of the Bactrian’s son – someone appalled by the transgressions of his father, whose actions led to the just punishment of the bad ruler. Moreover, Odon’s actions were post-factum sanctioned by the just ruler Kazimierz II, who is said by Vincentius to grant Greater Polish Poznań to the rebellious son of Mieszko III.²⁸⁶ These arguments convince me that the chronicler was, despite the violation of the proper family relations, presenting Odon’s actions in commendable, or at least favorable light.

What about the *perfidia* of others who abandoned Mieszko? Given the importance of oath-taking, the fact that they so quickly forgot their oaths certainly does not paint them in the best light. Nevertheless, even if they were not suffering under Cracow’s *praeses provinciae*, they were still ruled by the same indolent Mieszko, and his bad advisors. In fact, Vincentius

²⁸¹ 4.7 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 146: *Quorum ex altero pensandum, quantum gratie mereatur filialis deuotio, ex reliquo autem quantum supplicii timere debeat contempta parentum religio.*

²⁸² See for example Koval, *Childhood in Medieval Poland*, 61; Chmielewska, *Rola wątków i motywów antycznych*, 186; Janusz Bieniak, “Polska elita polityczna XII wieku. Część I: Tło działalności” [Polish political elite of the 12th century: Part I: background], in *Spółeczeństwo Polski Średniowiecznej*, vol. 2, ed. Stefan Krzysztof Kuczyński (Warsaw: DiG, 1982), 27.

²⁸³ Mieszko convinces Kazimierz to allow him to return to Greater Poland by appealing to the child-like affinity Kazimierz felt for his older brother in his youth, when he could count on Mieszko’s tutelage and favor. 4.10 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 150.

²⁸⁴ 4.7 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 145: *Non ut quendam Bactrianensem, quod absit, imitetur parricidam, set ut nouerce filios, quibus pater post se successionem spoponderat, a regno arceret.*

²⁸⁵ This recently noticed also by Paweł Żmudzki, *Dux fabulosus*, 49–50.

²⁸⁶ 4.8 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 147.

paints a picture of a ruler too deep in a torpor to notice the loyalty of even his closest followers is paper-thin, a captain of a ship who acts only after it has already sunk.²⁸⁷ Not justified but unsurprising, the disloyalty of Mieszko's men is a result of the same flaws of character that led the Piast ruler to ignore the suffering of his Cracow's subjects.

When depicting the events that brought the collapse of Mieszko III's rule and Kazimierz's rise to the principate, Vincentius's foremost priority was to present the latter in the good light. The chronicler focused on depicting his patron both as a good ruler who justly responded to the problem facing Polish political community, and as the younger brother conscious of fraternal obligations. In contrast to the decisively stylized positive picture painted of Kazimierz II the Just, Vincentius is admittedly less direct in his assessment of Mieszko III. Nevertheless, in my opinion Mieszko III is characterized consistently (if sometimes less bluntly) throughout the whole narrative as a bad ruler who faces justifiable opposition.

The depiction of the rebellion against Mieszko III even utilizes some of the same narrative elements as the past examples of the Piast subjects opposing a tyrannical rule. Similarly to Bolesław II, Mieszko is presented as the absent ruler, who is unfazed by the injustices and social upheavals faced by his subjects back in (Lesser) Poland. Here too, the plight of the parishioners causes the bishop of Cracow to intervene on their behalf. The bad influence of the *men of Belial* can be compared to the advice given to Władysław II by power-hungry Agnes, while the figure of a stepmother who tries to get rid of the firstborn son links Kazimierz I with Odon. Finally, the panicked reaction of the Polish nobles to the suggestion of Kazimierz II allowing his brother to return to his patrimony has its precedence in the actions taken by the Piast subjects in past rebellions. Those who exiled Queen Rycheza were so concerned with the revenge that her son could have enacted that they exiled him as well, while Bolesław IV's advisors were concerned about Władysław II's sons avenging their father's fate. Those who guided by the fear of retribution wanted to follow one scheme with another were judged harshly by the chronicler. It needs to be however underlined that these overreactions clearly did not put the judgment about the moral validity of rebelling against Rycheza, Władysław II, or Mieszko III in question.

²⁸⁷ Vincenitus on futility of Mieszko's attempts at mustering advice and loyalty of his subjects 4.7 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 145: *His imperterritus Mesco, summae magnanimitatis princeps, suorum consilia, fidem, animos et robur explorat, set sero, quia neglecto diu languori non facile succurritur, nec est in maris fundo consultatio naufragii.*

1.5.3 Ideal Ruler of Disloyal Subjects

Vincentius did not shy away from applauding Piast subjects for standing up to those of their rulers who endangered the proper functioning of their political community. Nevertheless, with Kazimierz II the Just, the chronicler's ideal of a good ruler, seizing the throne of Cracow, Vincentius became much more critical of the fellow members of the Lesser-Polish political elites performing their role as the arbiters of Piast rule.

According to *Chronica*, shortly after the overthrow of Mieszko III the Old, Kazimierz is faced with a choice between the loyalty owed to his older brother and the one owed to his subjects. While Kazimierz entertains the idea of allowing the exile to return to Poland, the Cracow noblemen are worried that Mieszko's return would herald a reckoning for those responsible for his expulsion.²⁸⁸ The new plot aimed at dethroning another Piast is, however, quickly defused by Kazimierz. Better at assessing the loyalty of his subjects than insolent Mieszko, the young Piast changed the tack. He reassured the seditious nobles that "he did not say this [propose Mieszko's return – MM.] with the intention to restore his brother, but to test their spirit, and that their steadfastness (*constantia*) was most dear to him."²⁸⁹ Navigating the demands of his subjects and fraternal obligations, Kazimierz puts on a show of continuing the family conflict, while secretly allowing Mieszko to retake his patrimony.²⁹⁰ In describing this crisis of Kazimierz's nascent rule, Vincentius focuses on his patron's ability to successfully navigate between competing obligations. Not for the first time in *Chronica* the logic that led Polish elites to justifiably oppose bad rulership almost found its more extreme, immoral conclusion.²⁹¹

The year 1191 saw another challenge to Kazimierz's rule, with Lesser-Polish conspirators using Kazimierz's absence to hand over control of Cracow back to Mieszko III the Old and his son. The outrage leading to the rebellion was sparked by the controversy surrounding Kazimierz's involvement in Ruthenian politics. The cause of the two Ruthenian

²⁸⁸ 4.11 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 151.

²⁸⁹ 4.11 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 151-52: *Intellecto autem Kazimirus tam discriminose seditionis exitum ad se deuolui, asserit non animo restituendi fratrem hec a se dicta, set studio experiendi animos ipsorum acceptissimamque sibi esse eorum erga se constantiam.*

²⁹⁰ 4.12 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 152: *Qua presidata, omnes omnes patrimoniales quam breuiuscule munitiones eadem pene facultate qua perdiderat recuperat, fratre, ut aiunt, occultiore illi recuperandi oportunitatem suggerente.*

²⁹¹ In addition to the decision to exile Kazimierz I after the tyrannical regency of his mother described earlier in this paper, one can also point to the example of Bolesław IV the Curly and his Silesian nephews. When the sons of Władysław II, justly exiled for antagonizing the rest of the dynasty, returned to Poland, some malicious advisors of Bolesław IV tried to convince him that his young nephews should be dealt with, so that they would not pose the same problem as their father. Just like Kazimierz II, Bolesław found a way to navigate between family bonds and appeasing his followers, pretending for some time to wage a phony war against his nephews. See 3.30 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 126.

princes supported by the Piast ruler was judged unworthy by Polish subjects. Thus, they turned against Kazimierz's close advisor and the leader of military campaigns, palatine Mikołaj.²⁹² During both campaigns, the powerful nobleman was accused of degrading the glory (*decus*) of the kingdom by lending the Polish support to illegitimate or immoral foreign rulers, disregard towards the other nobles, avarice, and deceitfulness.²⁹³ While Vincentius unequivocally treats these claims as falsehoods spread by the envious rivals of Mikołaj, the listed transgressions could be, in other circumstances, a just cause for the rebellion. The argument about the damage made to the glory and moral standing of the whole community echoed the justifications raised in the past, while the rest of the claims matched the twelfth-century depictions of palatines as masters of underhanded tactics and political intrigue.²⁹⁴

Even though the rebels express no criticism of Kazimierz himself, the strong support of the Piast ruler for his powerful advisor makes ousting the duke a main aim of the conspirators.²⁹⁵ The leader of the rebels, *praesidens Cracoviensis*, was sent to Mieszko III in Greater Poland, where he was to wait for an opportune moment to strike. Shortly after, when Kazimierz was occupied somewhere away, conspirators lie that the duke was killed. Having called upon Mieszko's forces, they try to capture Cracow, left by Kazimierz's friends. Despite the resistance mounted by bishop Pełka, the inhabitants of Cracow commit the shameful crime (*flagitium*) of treason, surrendering the city to the approaching army. Vincentius describes how the treacherous monsters (*monstra proditorialia*) usurped all the dignified offices and their symbols.²⁹⁶ By doing so, the rebels do precisely what they accused palatine Mikołaj of – undermine the virtuous character of *res publica* out of lust for personal power.

The triumph of the rebels does not last long. Kazimierz, having learned about their perfidy, calls upon his allies and returns to Cracow. The news of his sudden resurrection is enough to make most of Mieszko's men flee into the night. The chronicler then describes the quick retaking of the city, which he attributes to the help of divine providence. Cracow was guarded by an impressive force of rebels, who were determined to fight knowing that they would not be given quarter, commanded by the ambitious son of Mieszko III and *civis praefectus* behind the rebellion. These hardened warriors were tricked into believing that the

²⁹² 4.14–15 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 156–59.

²⁹³ 4.16 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 160: *Allegant per ipsum omne huius regni decus pessundatum, omne decoris firmamentum enuruatum. Asserunt regis Pannoniorum federe solutio, prorsus huius regni securitatem expirasse. Aiunt Galiciensis hostis restitutione omnem Lechitarum gloriam expirasse, quem potius deceret patibulo suffigi, quam regno sublimari.*

²⁹⁴ Żmudzki, *Władca i wojownicy*, 430–32.

²⁹⁵ 4.16 *Chronica Polonorum*, 160: *Nouerat enim stante Kazimiro illum cadere non posse.*

²⁹⁶ 4.16 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 160: *fascēs, prefecturas, tribunatus, consulare decus ac senatorias dignitates omnesquem magistratuum potestates proditorialia monstra usurpant.*

city was on fire by an ingenious camp follower of Kazimierz, and surrendered their posts in panic. The repercussions met by the rebels as described by Vincentius were rather mild. The anonymous leader of the conspirators, *ingeniosus arti magister*, was dragged out of the *basilica* where he was hiding and handed over Kazimierz's Ruthenian allies. His exile in Ruthenia and Hungary was supposedly prophesized to him by bishop Gedko. Mieszko's son and his men were set free to return to Greater Poland, thanks in large part to the intercession of the venerable archbishop Piotr. While others wanted to see the captives exiled, imprisoned, tortured, or otherwise punished in order to destroy all of the hotbeds of rebellion (*omnino tolli seditionis seminaria*), the archbishop convinced them to show mercy – especially since the easy victory over them was given by God. Indeed, the magnanimous gesture of Kazimierz reportedly made a strong impression on Mieszko III, burying for good the conflict between the last living sons of Bolesław III.

Just like the accusations spun by the Lesser-Polish satraps resemble the legitimate grievances voiced by nobles elsewhere in the chronicle, so does the depiction of the rebellion itself draw on the descriptions of similar events. Just like the Pomeranian rebels of Gniewomir, the satraps begin their rebellion by spreading lies about the death of the ruler absent on the military campaign. Here too, the besieged rebels are said to be motivated by fear of the punishment they will face for their treachery – even if this time they do not end like their Pomeranian counterparts.

One of the most striking features of the descriptions of 1191 rebellion are the lengths to which Vincentius goes to obfuscate and diffuse the responsibility for the attempt at overthrowing his patron's rule. Mieszko III appears only as a distant ally, and while the defense of the city is coordinated by his son, we are led to believe that most of the Greater Polish forces abandoned the rebels once they learned about Kazimierz's return. The passivity of the leader of the rebels, the unnamed *praefectus* of Cracow, is also quite unexpected. Rather than coordinating the action of the satraps, it is he who is sent away to Mieszko to await orders. Rather than being punished by Kazimierz, he is without much explanation given away to the Ruthenian allies of the Piast ruler.

This peculiar way of describing the head of the rebellion can be explained by uncovering his identity. The anonymous author of the late-thirteen-century Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*, on which I will focus in more detail in the subsequent chapter, expanded on Vincentius's description by pointing at Kietlicz as the treasonous *praefectus*.²⁹⁷ The name Henryk Kietlicz

²⁹⁷ SCP, 638.

was also given when describing the events of 1191 in the Lesser-Polish annalistic notes from the fourteenth century.²⁹⁸ Bearing the same name as the archbishop of Gniezno Henryk Kietlicz (+1219), the leader of the rebellion against Kazimierz had thus been identified in Polish historiography as the father of the church hierarch.²⁹⁹ It is this familial connection of Vincentius superior's with the leader of the rebels that could have led the chronicler to be less direct about the identity and the role of Cracow's *praefectus* in the unsuccessful rebellion.³⁰⁰

The exile of the leader of the rebels was predicted by bishop Gedko, who were to prophesize that *alioquin absportabere sicut gallus gallinaceus, qui nidi matrem arcet a nido pullos fouens alienos*.³⁰¹ This is not the first of secular officials whom a bishop of Cracow warned while using the figure of a rooster. During their courtroom confrontation, Gedko warned Mieszko III's official that if he does not acknowledge and repent his sins, his opponents "will put an axe to the root, take you out like a rooster."³⁰² It is this similarity that led Janusz Bieniak to put his trust in the tradition surviving in the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*, which identifies both men as Henryk Kietlicz.³⁰³

Nevertheless, I do not think that this similarity alone proves that both Mieszko's *preaes provinciae* and Cracow's *praefectus* necessarily were, within the realm of narrative spun by Vincentius, the same person. While both were to be disposed of like a rooster, the exact ends they were to meet are not exactly the same – the first prophecy suggests death, the second one exile. The link that Vincentius draws between both men is one of thematic similarity, but not necessarily one of personal identity.³⁰⁴

Leaving the task of confirming the identity of *preaes provinciae* who led the rebellion of 1191 to more ambitious scholars of political history, I want to suggest further possible explanation for the chronicler's ambiguity. While avoiding naming names might have been a part of cautious strategy of the politically involved writer like Vincentius, I am not convinced that the chronicler was at all interested in singling out individuals as malicious rebels. As I have

²⁹⁸ *Traska's Annal*, 835.

²⁹⁹ See for example: Baran-Kozłowski, *Arcybiskup gnieźnieński Henryk Kietlicz*, 57–58, where also older literature.

³⁰⁰ Thus for example Baran-Kozłowski, *Arcybiskup gnieźnieński Henryk Kietlicz*, 58; Differently Maciejewski, who argues that inclusion of the tradition about archbishop's rebellious kinsman testifies to the cold relationship between the chronicler and the archbishop Maciejewski, "Vincentius's Background and Family Origins," 32.

³⁰¹ 4.16 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 162.

³⁰² 4.3 in *Chronica Polonorum* 137: *Alioquin dum securis ponetur ad radicem, absportabere, quod absit, sicut gallus gallinaceus*.

³⁰³ See footnote no. 267 above.

³⁰⁴ Similarly Błażej Śliwiński, "Henryk Kietlicz i krakowski zamach stanu w 1177 roku, [Henryk Kietlicz and Cracow coup d'état in 1177]," in *Miasta, ludzie, instytucje, znaki. Księga jubileuszowa, ofiarowana Profesor Bożenie Wyrozumskiej w 75 rocznicę urodzin*, ed. Zenon Piech (Cracow: Societas Vistulana, 2008), 191–92.

demonstrated above even in the case of Sieciech, in which he could draw on ample material left by his predecessor without much fear of political consequences, Vincentius was disinterested in individual treachery. Instead, he preferred to make more generalized, critical statement about his own social *milieu* – the Lesser-Polish elites. The main thrust of his criticism is leveled, after all, at the purposefully figurative 70 satraps of Lesser Poland. They represent the moral decay of the contemporary political community that Vincentius bemoaned through his work.

1.6 Conclusions

Befitting of his erudite ambitions and reflecting on the multiple agendas he pursued, Vincentius created on the pages of *Chronica Polonorum* a complex vision of relationships between rulers, their family, and their subjects. Vision in which, as he explicitly states, *fides* played crucial role, serving as a fundament of rulership and all personal relationships. The direct interest in loyalty of both rulers and subjects came from Vincentius's broader preoccupation with virtue and its role in politics. The first Polish chronicler imagined the ideal polity as the *res publica* governed by virtuous political community of hereditary princes, their dynasty, and the *administratorias potestates*. Not only the ruler but also the subjects should strive to protect the moral character of their polity.

The strong belief in the participatory role of the broader Polish elites in the power exercised by their Piast dukes had significant impact on the way in which Vincentius presented bonds of loyalty. Since all members of the political community were held to the same virtuous standard, the requirement to be loyal to each other bound the rulers and subjects alike.

As the chronicler repeatedly highlighted when describing past and contemporary events, the loyalty to the individual rulers hinged on their ability to embody the catalogue of virtues established in legendary Polish antiquity. The most important of these included martial prowess, disdain for material riches, and rejection of power for power's sake. If they did not live up to that ideal, threatened the natural order of the Polish *res publica* or the lives and position of their family members, they could be justly deposed and replaced by a more suitable candidate by their subjects.

The narratives about the subjects breaking their bonds of loyalty often featured recurring tropes and structures. The person who focused the initial anger of the rebelling subjects was not the ruler, but their close advisor—like duchess Agnes, anonymous *praeses provinciae*, or comes Mikołaj—though these proxies rarely stayed at the center of the chronicler's attention. Interested more in the decision of the whole political community than named individuals, the

chronicler rarely focuses on the individual traitors. The disloyal subjects are motivated by the reverse of the virtues that should animate the citizens of *res publica* – greed and ambition to rise well above their station. More than once the justifiable rebellion against the transgressing ruler is preceded by the final warning issued by the member of the Polish episcopate.

One similarity that I want to underline is the way in which Vincentius treats the stories of the rebellions from the Piast past that were left to him by his anonymous predecessor, author of *Gest principum Polonorum*. As it is the case with other parts of his chronicle, Vincentius followed closely the basic narrative structures left in *Gesta*, but shifted its details, giving the stories new meaning. The changes he introduced to the depictions the exile and return of Kazimierz I the Restorer and the fall of Bolesław I the Bold justified or omitted the disobedience of Piast subjects, presenting those who led to the exile of the dynasty members in significantly more positive light. Most importantly, these changes dulled the vision of the unilateral loyalty all Poles were required to exhibit towards the Piasts due to their status as *domini naturales*.

Nevertheless, one needs to acknowledge that Vincentius did not completely abandon the idea of a certain natural charisma shared by all members of the Piast dynasty. Hence, for example, the inclusion of the anecdote of Mieszko III being ushered to safety during the battle at Mozgawa by the rank-and-file soldier from the opposing side. Moreover, the discontent of the subjects, justified or not, was often deflected by the chronicler towards the figures of ruler's advisors and close ones – as in cases of anonymous *praeses provinciae*, comes Mikołaj, Rycheza or Agnes.

The relationships within the family were to be characterized, according to Vincentius, by mutual love and reverence. While this is never stated directly, the chronicler suggests that his contemporaries believed that bonds of loyalty between kinsmen were stronger than those between the ruler and his other subjects. This logic was followed by the Piast subjects who feared the retribution that Kazimierz I, the Silesian princes, or Kazimierz II were to take on them for the offenses suffered by their parents or brothers. Similarly, one can see the perceived strength of the bonds of loyalty between fathers and their children in the attempts at extending the pseudo-paternal bonds and connected expectations of loyalty through rituals like baptism or knighting noted on the pages of *Chronica Polonorum*.

Most interestingly, the bonds of loyalty that were meant to bind rulers and subjects were to be mutual, but not reciprocal. The rule of *do ut des* was antithetical to the Vincentius's ideological project, as it put into the question the virtuous character and underlying motivations of all parties. Piasts and their subjects had to demonstrate the selflessness behind the acts of magnanimity and loyalty. This led the chronicler to be strongly suspicious of the role of things

that could have been construed as perverting the incentives to serve - like gifts and rewards of offices.

Even as he took a strong stance against the idea of transactional, reciprocal loyalty, Vincentius's observations on bonds binding subjects to the ruler could be surprisingly pragmatic at times. Especially when describing the rulership of contemporary Piasts, the chronicler presents the bonds of loyalty as something that good rulers should inspect and actively manage. Thus, for example, the feasts were used to "win favor with favor," while cautious rulers like Kazimierz II carefully probed the loyalty of his subjects during revelries and at assemblies. The chronicler's approach to oaths is a further example of the unresolved tension between moralizing ideals and pragmatism. Vincentius believes that they give a more durable form to the otherwise malleable promises and allegiances, strengthening the bonds of loyalty. Nevertheless, he also notes that the breaking of oaths—permissible in some circumstances—is a common occurrence. Perjurers did not always meet a deserved punishment (be it earthly or divine). For some, like Mieszko III, oath-breaking was a part of deliberate political strategy.

While Vincentius underlined the rights of Piasts as hereditary princes and even at times hinted at their natural charisma, the loyalty to the individual members of the dynasty hinged on their ability to embody the virtues of the ideal ruler. The higher loyalty of the arbiters of Piast rule - ecclesiastical and secular elites of Lesser Poland—as we have seen in the cases of Goworek, Piotr Włost, or Cracow rebels—was to the *res publica* or *patria*, which allowed Vincentius to justify and explain all sorts of morally dubious acts and shifts in loyalty.

Unsurprisingly, it was this message that resonated with Vincentius's readers most strongly, and not the rejection of material rewards and incentives. In 1206, just a few years after Vincentius lost the impetus for writing his chronicle, the death of *comes* Mikołaj led to another shift of allegiances in Cracow – Władysław III was out, Leszek the White was in. In 1210 some Lesser-Polish party saw it fit to oust Leszek and bring in elderly Mieszko IV of Opole, who died in 1211. The Lesser-Polish elites continued to strengthen their influence over the ducal throne, becoming increasingly responsible for the election of the new rulers of Cracow.

Chapter 2: Transforming Vincentian Loyalty in Turn-of-the-Fourteenth-Century Historiography

Almost a century after Vincentius of Cracow and his *Chronica Polonorum*, a new crop of chronicles appeared: the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* and the Lesser-Polish *Chronicle of Dzierzwa*. Their authors drew substantially on Vincentius's work, following the outline of the Polish history it provided from the ancient *Lechites*, past the adulthood of Duke Leszek the White.

In the following chapter, I focus on the question of the transformation of the historiographical tradition concerning loyalty, examining these parts of the *Silesian Chronica Polonorum* and *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*, which are also covered by Vincentius of Cracow's *Chronica Polonorum*. While the authors of both turn-of-the-fourteenth-century chronicles avoided straightforward statements on proper political or moral order, the changes they introduced to the moralizing narratives lifted from Vincentius offer many insights into the shifting ways in which they envisioned bonds of loyalty linking Piasts and their subjects. The direct comparison of the illustrative episodes that make the shared appearance in the analyzed chronicles will allow me to uncover finer details in language and narrative structure that mark differences in the depictions of loyal service or treachery.

Since I aim to draw comparisons with the analysis undertaken in the previous chapter, I will follow its structure here. Thus, after introducing both new sources, I will ask about the reception of Vincentius of Cracow's vision of the ancient *res publica* and the corresponding ideas about the ways in which bonds of loyalty between Piast rulers and their subjects are created. Then, I will ask if the methods of strengthening the bonds outlined by the bishop of Cracow were still considered appropriate by his turn-of-the-fourteenth-century successors. Following that, I will examine the transformation of the depictions of the unfaithful subjects. Finally, I will ask if the idea about the possibility of dissolving bonds of loyalty that linked the subjects with rulers who themselves endangered the virtuous character of the polity expressed by Vincentius found its resonance in Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* and *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*.

2.1 Two Chronicles

The Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*, often called in the older historiography *Polish-Silesian Chronicle* is seen as the younger of the two works. Clearly unfinished, it is divided into

two parts. Part A covers the history of Poland from the legendary past to the reigns of Leszek the Black in Cracow, ending in 1285. Part B focuses on the Silesian Piasts, following the lives of Władysław I the Exile and his descendants up to the death of Bolesław II the Bald in 1278. Despite their order, part B is considered the older part of the work written down sometime between the early 1280s and 1285, with part A added sometime before 1287.³⁰⁵

Both parts were written by the same author and are included in all known manuscripts of the chronicle. One of the surviving texts, found in the Królewiec (Königsberg) Manuscript, contains five additional fragments unknown from the other two versions of the Silesian *Chronica*. These had been sometimes seen in the older historiography as later interpolations made by the author himself; a sign of the unfinished nature of the work or the shift in the chronicler's political outlook.³⁰⁶ Nowadays they are, rightfully, taken to be changes made by a later interpolator sometime in the fourteenth century. As such, I will bring them in only to mark the contrast between the chronicler's interpretation and that of his later reader.

The anonymous chronicler was a monk, affiliated in the 1280s with the Cistercian monastery in Lubiąż.³⁰⁷ The chronicler clearly knew the tradition connected to the Silesian foundation and the works produced in its scriptorium, like *Versus Lubenses* and the earliest *vita* of St Hedwig.³⁰⁸ The similarities between the Silesian *Chronica* and the latter had led Konstanty Klemens Jażdżewski to posit that the chronicle was penned by St Hedwig's hagiographer, Engelbert. Probably a foreigner from Rhineland, Engelbert left Lubiąż after 1282 to lead the convents in Lesser-Polish Mogiła (1283-87), and Pomeranian Byszewo (ca. 1288-1290).³⁰⁹ It needs to be noted, however, that the theory about Engelbert's authorship is impossible to prove definitively.

³⁰⁵ The discussion on the chronology of different parts of Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* summarized in Drelicharz, *Unifying the Kingdom of Poland*, 195.

³⁰⁶ Jerzy Mularczyk, "'Kronika Polska' i jej relacja o bitwie pod Studnicą" [The Polish Chronicle and its account of the battle of Studnica], *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 85, no. 2 (1989): 25–56.

³⁰⁷ Alternative proposals include Dominican provenance of the Dominican affiliation of the chronicler suggested by Brygida Kürbis in Kürbis, *Dziejopisarstwo Wielkopolskie*, 209–10; or less likely identification of the author of the chronicle with Franciscan Henry von Brehna, son of a Piast princess by Jerzy Mularczyk in: Mularczyk, "Kronika Polska," 51–52.

³⁰⁸ The place of the chronicle in the intellectual milieu of the Lubiąż Monastery exhaustively described in: Zbigniew Wielgosz, "'Kronika polska' w twórczości dziejopisarskiej klasztoru lubiąskiego" ["Polish chronicle" in the historiographical works of Lubiąż monastery], in *Scriptura custos memoriae. Prace historyczne*, Publikacje Instytutu Historii UAM 44 (Poznań: Instytut Historii UAM, 2001), 233–52.

³⁰⁹ Biography reconstructed in Konstanty Klemens Jażdżewski, "Engelberci czy Engelbert? W związku z autorem pierwszego żywota św. Jadwigi śląskiej" [Engelberts or Engelbert? In connection with the author of the first life of St. Hedwig of Silesia], in *Mente et litteris: o kulturze i społeczeństwie wieków średnich*, ed. Helena Chłopocka and Brygida Kürbis (Poznań: Wydawnictwo UAM, 1984), 188–94.

As I signaled above, the main source used by the anonymous chronicler in writing the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* was Vincentius's work under the same title. The Silesian author followed closely the outline of events presented by the bishop of Cracow, though he was much more concise with his descriptions and used simpler language. The learned commentary of archbishop Jan, together with much of Vincentius's open philosophizing and moralizing, was abandoned by the Lubiąż monk together with the dialogued form of the work of his predecessor.³¹⁰ The author of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* also knew the text of the earliest work of Polish historiography, the anonymous *Gesta principum Polonorum*.³¹¹ Besides chronicles, the Lubiąż monk also used hagiographical works – the already mentioned lost *vita* of St Hedwig, possibly some writings on St Adalbert (like *Miracula St Adalberti* or *Tempore illo*), and *vita maior* or *minor* of St Stanislaus by Vincentius of Kielcza. These last references are of particular importance to this chapter, as it is these works from the 1250s that served as the basis of the tale of Kazimierz I the Restorer's monastic past presented in the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*.

The Lubiąż chronicler himself wrote of his goal only that he wanted to present to the general public (*ad noticiam simplicium quedam*) the genealogy of the Polish princes in a short and clear manner.³¹² This expression of a limited ideological program was taken in good faith by some scholars. Thus, Gerard Labuda classified the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* as a “chronicle of genealogy”, claiming that the sole aim of its author was to plot the web of family connections linking Silesian Piasts and trace it back to the glorious Polish past.³¹³ Konstanty Klemens Jażdżewski agreed that the chronicle's primary function was to provide genealogical information that can support dynastic interests, and not to propagate any specific ideas or

³¹⁰ See for example: Jacek Banaszkiewicz, “Kruszwica w średniowiecznej tradycji kulturowo-historycznej – od Cruswicz do pogańskiej metropolii” [Kruszwica in the medieval cultural and historical tradition - from Cruswicz to a pagan metropolis], in *Mit, tradycje i rzeczywistość materialna. Kruszwica. Od wczesnopiastowskiego grodu do zamku kazimierzowskiego. Część I. Gród*, ed. Wojciech Dzieduszycki and Joanna Sawicka (Poznań: Instytut Archeologii i Etnologii Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 2022), 13–32.

³¹¹ Wojciech Mrozowicz, “‘Sicut eadem narrat cronica’. W sprawie recepcji Kroniki Anonima zwanego Gallem na średniowiecznym Śląsku” [“Sicut eadem narrat cronica”. On the reception of the Chronicle of Anonymus called Gall in medieval Silesia], in *Nobis operique favete. Studia nad Gallem Anonimem*, ed. Andrzej Dąbrówka, Edward Skibiński, and Witold Wojtowicz (Warsaw: Instytut Badań Literackich PAN, 2017), 308–11.

³¹² SCP, 604-605: [...] *de cronicis Lechitarum sive Polonorum, ad solam principum ipsorum genealogiam pandendam [...] ad noticiam simplicium quedam, secundum estimationem plurium sive autumacionem fide digna excerpere studui ac sine propria adiectione noscere volentibus simplici calamo breviuscule perorare.*

³¹³ Gerard Labuda, “Kroniki genealogiczne jako źródła do dziejów rozbitcia i zjednoczenia monarchii w Polsce średniowiecznej” [Genealogical chronicles as sources for the history of the fragmentation and unification of the monarchy in medieval Poland], *Studia Źródłoznawcze* 22 (1977): 48–50; Gerard Labuda, “Nowe spojrzenie na śląską Kronikę polską” [A new look at the Silesian Polish Chronicle], in *Ojczyzna bliższa i dalsza. Studia historyczne ofiarowane Feliksowi Korytkowi w sześćdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin*, ed. Michał Śliwa, Andrzej Chrobaczyński, and Andrzej Jureczko (Cracow: Secesja, 1993), 31–40.

claims.³¹⁴ In Elżbieta Wilamowska's judgment the Silesian monk ignored universal—eschatological or moral—concerns of medieval historiography, focusing on the genealogy of Silesian Piasts that strengthened their claims in region and Poland.³¹⁵ Others went further than Wilamowska, seeing in the recounting of the Silesian Piast's family claims an expression of a more ambitious political project. Brygida Kürbis believed that the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* was created under the patronage of Henryk IV Probus of Wrocław, reflecting the duke's aspirations to the throne of Cracow and the royal crown.³¹⁶ While not the only Silesian duke with whom the chronicler might have been connected, Henryk garnered the most attention and praise from all contemporary Piasts that the work depicted.³¹⁷ The idea that the Lubiąż chronicler was lending his voice to the political vision of a unified Poland ruled by the monarch (coming from the Silesian Piasts) was also embraced by Jerzy Mularczyk, Roman Michałowski, and, most recently, Wojciech Drelicharz.³¹⁸

I am inclined to agree with those scholars who see in the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* a work that went beyond the dry information on dynastic past and connections. The Lubiąż monk was clearly concerned with the state of the entire Piast *monarchia* and the leading role the Silesian branch of the family should occupy within it. While not as direct in presenting his ideals and judgments as Vincentius of Cracow, he had his own vision of proper rulership and politics. The most conspicuous element of this vision was the role that the Cistercian chronicler assigned to the Holy Roman Emperors as the patrons and suzerains of Piast rulers. The most praiseworthy of the Piast rulers all cultivated close links with the Empire and received their royal crowns from the hands of its Emperors.³¹⁹ This vision was created in a political context

³¹⁴ Though, as Jażdżewski pointed out, the information provided by the chronicler could have been used as the basis for the later claims, especially as the anonymous chronicler expressed concern with whole Polish *monarchia*. See: Konstanty Klemens Jażdżewski, *Lubiąż: losy i kultura umysłowa śląskiego opactwa cystersów (1163-1642)* [Lubiąż: the fate and intellectual culture of a Silesian Cistercian abbey (1163-1642)], *Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis* 1081 (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1993), 102.

³¹⁵ Elżbieta Wilamowska, "Kronika polsko-śląska: zabytek pochodzenia Lubuskiego" [Polish-silesian Chronicle: the historical resource from Lubusz], *Studia Źródłoznawcze. Commentationes* 25 (1980): 88–94.

³¹⁶ Brygida Kürbis, "Wizerunki Piastów w opiniach dziejopisarskich" [Images of the Piasts in historical accounts], in *Piastowie w dziejach Polski. Zbiór artykułów z okazji trzechsetnej rocznicy wygaśnięcia dynastii Piastów*, ed. Roman Heck (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1975), 222.

³¹⁷ Alternatively, Gerard Labuda suggested that the chronicle might have been created under the patronage of Piast rulers of Legnica: Gerard Labuda, "Zajęcie Ziemi Lubuskiej przez margrabiów brandenburskich w połowie XIII wieku" [Seizure of Lubusz Land by the Brandenburg margraves in the mid-13th century], *Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka* 28 (1973): 311–22.

³¹⁸ Mularczyk, "Kronika Polska"; Roman Michałowski, *Princeps fundator: Studium z dziejów kultury politycznej w Polsce X-XIII wieku* [Princeps fundator: Study in the history of political culture in Poland of the 10th-13th centuries.], 2nd ed. (Warsaw: Zamek Królewski w Warszawie, 1993), 121–27; Drelicharz, *Unifying the Kingdom of Poland*, 220–24.

³¹⁹ Mularczyk, "Kronika Polska," 42–46; Zbigniew Wielgosz, "'Kronika Polska' - Metoda Prezentacji Dziejów" ["Polish Chronicle" - Method of Presenting the Past], in *Dawna Historiografia Śląska. Materiały Sesji Naukowej Odbytej w Brzegu w Dniach 26-27 Listopada 1977*, ed. Krysytyna Gajda (Opole: Wydawnictwo Instytutu Śląskiego,

in which the Silesian Piasts were increasingly drawn closer into the orbit of imperial politics. In the aftermath of the battle of Dürnkrut, Henry IV found himself in the orbit of Rudolf Habsburg, perhaps even becoming the Emperor's vassal, receiving Wrocław and Silesia as a fief.³²⁰ The chronicler's sympathy also extended to the German speakers and burghers living in the lands ruled by Piasts – something that I will explore in more detail in Chapter 4.

The younger of two sources, *Dzierzwa's Chronicle* was written in Cracow sometime between the return of Władysław III the Short to Cracow in 1306 and his coronation in 1320.³²¹ Besides his name, we do not know much about the chronicle's author Dzierzwa. Given the attention paid in his chronicle to Cracow and its Franciscan community, he is widely regarded to have been a local friar. The same intellectual *milieu* of the Lesser-Polish Franciscans was responsible during that time for compiling the annalistic tradition from across the Piast domains now in control of Władysław the Short, known as the *Annales Polonorum deperditi*, which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. Some—perhaps yet unfinished—redaction of these annals was used by Dzierzwa in his work, especially in telling the story of Cracow's throne after Kazimierz II's death.³²² When describing a more distant past, the Franciscan author relied not only on Vincentius's *Chronica Polonorum*, but also on both shorter and longer versions of *Vita sancti Stanislai*.³²³

Dzierzwa's Chronicle covers the history of the Poles since their *origo gentis*, up to the death of Leszek the Black in 1288. The largest part of the chronicle is a close abbreviation of Vincentius of Cracow's *Chronica Polonorum*, which follows its narrative from the legendary Gracchus to the capture of Halych by the Ruthenian Duke Roman in 1198. From this point to the death of Leszek the Black, Dzierzwa continues his work through annalistic notes. These focus on the successors of Kazimierz II the Just – the dukes of Cracow who came from the Lesser-Polish and Cuyavian branches of the Piast dynasty established by Kazimierz's

1980), 54; Przemysław Wiszewski, "Dlaczego cesarz został kuchnikiem a Piastowie przestali być królami? Przyczynek źródłoznawczy z historii mentalności i polityki XIII-wiecznych Ślązaków" [Why did the emperor become a cook and the Piasts cease to be kings? A source contribution from the history of the mentality and politics of 13th-century Silesians], in *Klio viae et invia. Opuscula Marco Cetwiński dedicata*, ed. Anna Odrzywolska-Kidawa (Warsaw: DiG, 2010), 95.

³²⁰ Mularczyk, "Kronika Polska," 42, 51; Jurek, "Plany koronacyjne Henryka," 16; Differently Přemysl Bar, "Nieudana próba opanowania księstwa wrocławskiego przez Wacława II w latach 1289–1290" [The unsuccessful attempt to take over the Duchy of Wrocław by Wenceslaus II in 1289–1290], in *Pierwsze polsko-czeskie forum młodych mediewistów. Materiały z konferencji naukowej, Gniezno, 27–29 września 2005 roku*, ed. Józef Dobosz, Jakub Kujawiński, and Marzena Matla-Kozłowska (Poznań: Instytut Historii UAM, 2007), 208–9.

³²¹ Ever since its publication, the fundamental monograph on Dzierzwa's Chronicle remains Jacek Banaszkiewicz's *Kronika Dzierzwy*; there the discussion on the time and authorship, 114–16. See also Drelicharz, *Annalistyka małopolska XIII-XV wieku*, 456–60; Drelicharz, *Unifying the Kingdom of Poland*, 279–82.

³²² Drelicharz, *Unifying the Kingdom of Poland*, 281–82; Drelicharz, *Annalistyka małopolska XIII-XV wieku*, 333–73, 454–60.

³²³ Banaszkiewicz, *Kronika Dzierzwy*, 82–87.

descendants. Just like in the case of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*, the lack of a uniform form suggests that *Dzierzwa's Chronicle* in its surviving version is an unfinished work.³²⁴

What were the motivations behind Dzierzwa's work? According to Jacek Banaszkiewicz, a Franciscan monk aimed to create a compendium of the Polish past, which would present it in a comprehensive, structured, and easy-to-follow manner. This goal was reflected in Dzierzwa's approach to the text of Vincentius's *Chronica*.³²⁵ Just like his Silesian counterpart, Dzierzwa abandoned the dialogue form and stripped the historical narrative presented by Vincentius of the erudite *exempla* and most of the moralizing commentary. At the same time, the Franciscan chronicler followed the outline of Polish history presented in *Chronica Polonorum* closer than the Silesian monk, only discarding these episodes and information noted by Vincentius that he saw as inconsequential or too detailed. Dzierzwa limits his interventions into Vincentius's narrative, relying mostly on omissions. As pointed out by Jacek Banaszkiewicz, it is at times difficult to tell if there were ideological differences or editorial choices behind the interventions made by Dzierzwa when abbreviating Vincentius's text.³²⁶ This caveat notwithstanding, it is important to note what the Franciscan monk decided to keep from the *Chronica Polonorum* and what he omitted.

With these difficulties in mind, the ideological tendencies of Dzierzwa's work can be described only in the most general terms. Given the time of its creation, it is hardly surprising that Dzierzwa's work has been seen as forwarding the case for the unification of the realm. For the Franciscan author, the Poland of ancient Lechites and competing Piast dukes is the same *regnum*, gravely suffering from its contemporary political division.³²⁷ Dzierzwa excluded those parts of Vincentius's text that might have justified the continuous fragmentation of the power of the Piast dynasty.³²⁸ He also included in his chronicle the prophetic vision composed by Vincentius of Kielcza – an image of the kingdom restored to its past condition.³²⁹ The

³²⁴ Banaszkiewicz, *Kronika Dzierzwy*, 115.

³²⁵ Detailed overview of Dzierzwa's approach to Vincentius of Cracow's text in Banaszkiewicz, *Kronika Dzierzwy*, 10–28.

³²⁶ Banaszkiewicz, *Kronika Dzierzwy*, 28.

³²⁷ On use of the term *regnum* in the Chronicle, see Drelicharz, *Unifying the Kingdom of Poland*, 290–92.

³²⁸ Banaszkiewicz, *Kronika Dzierzwy*, 29–31; 122; 154, note 111.

³²⁹ *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*, 29–30: *Sicut igitur hic Boleslaus corpus sancti Stanislai in multas partes secuit et in omnem ventum dispersit; sic Deus regnum suum scidit et plures principes in eo dominari permisit. Et sicut idem corpus Deus reintegravit, sic futurum est, ut idem regnum Deus in statum pristinum restauret. Require in Vita sancti Stanislai.*

chronicler, through highlighting important links in the genealogies of the rulers of divided principalities, signaled that it were the Cuyavian Piasts who were best suited to this task.³³⁰

In stark contrast to the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*, Dzierzwa seemed to have held the imperial authority over Poland for naught.³³¹ The animosity towards the Empire was accompanied by the broader anti-German sentiment – a sign of the broader ethnic tensions of the turn of the fourteenth century that I will examine in more detail in Chapter 4. One can also note another difference between the works of the Cistercian from Lubiąż and the Franciscan from Cracow. While the former did not pay much attention to the matters of the church, the latter, just like Vincentius of Cracow before him, was invested in safeguarding the privileges that allowed for the economic emancipation of the Polish church.³³²

2.2 Loyalty and Imagined Past

I began the previous chapter's exploration of loyalty in the *Chronica Polonorum* by examining the picture of the glorious Polish ancient past painted by Vincentius of Cracow. In that part of the chronicle, independent of the previous historiographic tradition, Vincentius was free to construct a vision of an idealized, virtuous political community to serve as a guideline for his contemporaries. Grounded in this ancient past was the idea of the *res publica* in which the *proceres* share not only the ruler's power but more importantly a concern for the good and virtuous character of their polity. As explained in the previous chapter, this idea had serious ramifications for the vision of the bonds of loyalty linking rulers and their subjects. While the Piasts did not lack certain dynastic charisma, their ability to embody the ancient virtues was subject to oversight by the (Lesser) Polish elites, whose highest loyalty was to their political community.

The treatment of the legendary past by turn-of-the-fourteenth-century chronicles reveals much about their stance on the political vision of participatory politics presented by Vincentius. Both the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* and Dzierzwa's *Chronicle* follow the outline of the legendary past envisioned by Vincentius of Cracow. The reader learns about the military exploits of the ancient *Lechites*, their first king Gracchus and the founding of Cracow, the rule of his daughter Wanda, how the clever paupers Leszek I and Leszek II were elected rulers, and

³³⁰ Banaszkiewicz, *Kronika Dzierzwy*, 112–16; Drelicharz, *Unifying the Kingdom of Poland*, 294–95; This relation between genealogical information gathered by Dzierzwa and the political program of unification reversed in Labuda, "Kroniki genealogiczne," 50–52.

³³¹ Banaszkiewicz, *Kronika Dzierzwy*, 28; 122; 153–54, endnote no. 110.

³³² Banaszkiewicz, *Kronika Dzierzwy*, 123.

how Pompilius II lost his throne and was eaten by mice in punishment for killing his uncles.³³³ In recounting these events, the chroniclers omitted much of the erudite parallels and rhetorical flourishes Vincentius used to give the presented past strong moralistic undertones.

Nevertheless, the main points of the bishop of Cracow's characterization of ancient Poles still come through in shortened retellings of the legendary past. *Lechites* remain audacious in martial exploits and dismissive of material wealth and power.³³⁴ Dzierzwa even included the praises of loyalty heaped by Vincentius on ancient Poles who chose to follow Wanda, contrasted with contemporary fourteenth-century Poles.³³⁵ Virtuous men like Leszek I or Leszek II who display humility, magnanimity, and respect for their kinsmen can—with some cleverness—overcome their humble origins and become good monarchs.³³⁶ Those rulers who, conversely, turn against their own family out of lust for power are punished by exile or death.³³⁷ Out of the small changes to Vincentius's vision of the legendary Polish past made by later chroniclers only one suggests a slightly different outlook on the place of loyalty among *Lechites*. Unlike Vincentius of Cracow or Dzierzwa, the monk from Lubiąż believed that this ethnonym deserved an explanation to his audience. Thus, he noted that the ancient Poles were called Lechites because “in wars they relied more on deception and cunning, than force.”³³⁸ It is not hard to see how the Silesian monk could reach such a conclusion. The etymology suggested by the chronicler is linguistically sound – both “Leszek” and “*Lechites*” are thought to be derived from the adjective *łściwy* – meaning “crafty, insidious.”³³⁹ In the tradition invented by Vincentius, the ancient Poles often used cunning stratagems to defeat their enemies, while both legendary Leszeks demonstrated their ability to rule by feats of clever trickery. Was this short comment just an etymological curio, or was it tinged with disapproval of the deceptive *Lechites*? The latter interpretation was proposed by Sławomir Gawlas, who saw the proposed

³³³ SCP, 606-16; *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*, 4-19.

³³⁴ See for example SCP, 606; *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*, 4.

³³⁵ The fragment had been even slightly reworded by Dzierzwa, in order to make the accusation of his contemporaries clearer, see *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*, 8: *Non tantum ergo in femina Wanda virilem admiror industriam, sed multo amplius in viris nobilibus Polonorum fidei constanciam: licet enim bonis videatur moribus dissonum feminam principibus imperare, pietati tamen addecenicus visum est et paternis prolem iuvare meritis et mortuorum apud posteros non mori beneficia. Moderni autem nostri tempestate tempusculi apud modernos Polonos, in quos fines seculorum devenerunt, fides non parit fidem, sed si concipit prius paritat, ptius exspirat partus quam spirare incipat [...].*

³³⁶ SCP, 611-12; *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*, 10, 12-15.

³³⁷ Such is a fate of Gracchus II and Pompilius II. The latter's story drew the particular attention of both chroniclers, with Dzierzwa heavily editing the scene in which the ruler's wife convinces him to poison his uncles, while the Silesian monk was the first one to specify the place of the subsequent demise of kin slaying ruling pair, locating it in Cuyavian Kruszwica. Banaszkiewicz, *Kronika Dzierzwy*, 29–30; Banaszkiewicz, “Kruszwica,” 13.

³³⁸ SCP, 605: *Lechi autem [dicti] fuerunt Poloni eo, quod magis deceptionibus et calliditate in bellis utebantur, quam viribus.*

³³⁹ „Leść” in *Słownik etymologiczny języka Polskiego*, ed. by Aleksander Brückner (Cracow: Krakowska spółka wydawnicza, 1927), 296.

etymology as a jab towards the local Poles who did not share the superior chivalric culture brought by German-speaking knights who found warm reception at the court of the Silesian Piasts.³⁴⁰ This interpretation of what is a small comment might be too far-reaching – though as we will see, the author of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* was more critical of the use of deception in warfare than Vincentius or Dzierzwa.

Both of the turn-of-the-fourteenth-century chroniclers were less interested in the polity of the ancient Poles and its political system than in the origins of the dynastic power wielded by the Piast rulers. It is when recounting the story of their rise to power that both authors introduced changes that clearly speak to their investment in presenting the dynasty in a proper light.

Thus, for example, Dzierzwa paid particular attention to the story of the visit that two mysterious guests paid to the humble eponymous Piast. According to this established element of the dynastic legend, the visitors rewarded Piast for his hospitality by multiplying his food and drinks, as well as foretelling the rise to power of his young son Siemowit. Dzierzwa seizes on this story, drawing out a novel parallel between the miraculous multiplication of the drinks at Piast feast and the biblical story of the widow of Zarephath, similarly rewarded by prophet Elijah. He also tries to uncover the identity of the mysterious guests, suggesting that they were either angels or Saints John and Paul. These parallels between biblical and dynastic past serve to clearly highlight the charismatic nature of the Piast rulership, while hinting at the dynasty's future mission in the Christianization of Poland.³⁴¹

For the Silesian monk, the most important episodes of the earliest dynastic past were all connected with the first Christian ruler of the Poles, Mieszko I. Omitting the miracles at the Piast's hut, the Cistercian chronicler made sure to include the older tradition on the equally supernatural recovery of young Mieszko's eyesight – a sign of his future conversion.³⁴² As the first Christian Piast, Mieszko was also the first ruler titled *rex* by the chronicler.

The circumstances in which he received his royal crown are one of the most telling changes the author of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* had made to the historiographical tradition. Consciously, in direct contradiction to all the sources he worked with, the Lubiąż

³⁴⁰ Sławomir Gawlas, "Pytania o tożsamość średniowiecznych Polaków w świetle współczesnych dyskusji humanistyki" [Questions about the identity of medieval Poles in the light of contemporary discussions in the humanities], in *Symboliczne i realne podstawy tożsamości społecznej w średniowieczu*, ed. Sławomir Gawlas and Paweł Żmudzki (Warsaw: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2017), 76.

³⁴¹ Banaszkiewicz, *Kronika Dzierzwy*, 121.

³⁴² More on this element of the Piast dynastic tradition in: Przemysław Wiszewski, "Struktura, fabuła i historia. Wokół opowieści o odzyskaniu wzroku przez Mieszka (Galli Anonymi Cronicae, I, 4)" [Structure, narrative, and history: On the Story of Mieszko's Recovery of Sight (Galli Anonymi Cronicae, I, 4)], *Bulletin Der Polnischen Historischen Mission* 5 (2009): 45–64.

monk made Mieszko I (and not his son Bolesław I the Great) the Piast ruler whom Otto III visited in Poland. The Emperor's real goal, pilgrimage to the grave of martyred St Adalbert, is omitted by the chronicler. Nevertheless, just like in other accounts of the visit, the wealth of the Piast state and the splendor with which the emperor was hosted caused Otto to put his own imperial diadem on Mieszko's head. In the chronicler's novel interpretation, through this gesture the emperor not only made Mieszko a king, but—more importantly—an imperial vassal. Once again showing off his knowledge of the Polish language, the chronicler says that this moment of Piast ruler's recognition of his position in the political orbit of the Empire was to live in the name of Poznań, where the event reportedly took place.³⁴³ This bond of vassalage between Mieszko I and Otto III similarly extended to their successors. In the chronicler's mind, all Piast rulers who received royal crowns did so from the hands of the emperors.³⁴⁴ This relationship not only underlined the authority of the Piast monarchs but also created strong expectations concerning their loyalty towards the Holy Roman Emperors. Failing to meet them, as I will discuss below, carried serious consequences.

Both the anonymous Lubiąż monk and Dzierzwa felt the need to include the depiction of ancient Poland created by Vincentius of Cracow in their chronicles. While convinced about its historicity, they did not treat the pre-dynastic past as a repository of the political institutions and proper relationships between ruler and subjects to be emulated. Instead, both turn-of-the-fourteenth-century authors paid closer attention to the origins of the Piast dynasty and its power. By making either small additions or big changes to the existing historiographical tradition, they underlined that the authority of the dynasty comes not from the recognition of its virtues by other Poles, but also through its elevation by God or his earthly representative, the universal sovereign of the Empire.

2.3 The Return of the Prince – Return of Domini Naturales?

A renewed focus on the dynasty and its charismatic authority is reflected in an interesting way in the approach the authors of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* and Dzierzwa's *Chronicle* took when describing the fall of the first Piast polity and the restoration of Poland by Kazimierz I. The narrative about the consequences that befell Poland after the expulsion of its *domini naturales* was important for the concept of loyalty presented in the earliest Polish

³⁴³ SCP, 617: [...] *imperator, liberalitate illius delectatus, eum [Mieszko – MM] infra prandium in mensa residens coronavit suo dyademate et sic imperii feudalem fecit. Iste Mesico episcopatus Polonie instituit et dotavit, quorum prior fuit Poznam, qui locus ideo sic dictus, quia ibi recognovit ipse se imperii feudalem.*

³⁴⁴ Drelicharz, *Unifying the Kingdom of Poland*, 216.

chronicle. As discussed in the previous chapter, Vincentius of Cracow added the second version of these events, casting Kazimierz as the orphaned prince hidden from his stepmother in a monastery. The story about the monastic pedigree of the young Piast was expanded upon by Vincentius of Kielcza in both the shorter and the longer *Vita St Stanislai*. Dzierzwa and the Silesian monk had thus a wide variety of traditions to draw upon in their chronicles.

It is therefore quite telling that faced with all those choices, Dzierzwa decided to limit himself to closely following Vincentius of Cracow's narrative, leaving its tone unchanged. It was not out of ignorance of the tradition offered in *Vita Sancti Stanislai*. Quite the opposite – just before describing Kazimierz's youth and expulsion, the Franciscan chronicler supplements the *Chronica Polonorum*'s narrative with a fragment from the *Vita*, stitching together an unflattering portrait of Kazimierz's father Mieszko II.³⁴⁵ With only small abbreviations, Dzierzwa presents both versions of the story of the expulsion of young Kazimierz from Poland following the text of the *Chronica Polonorum*. Just like in Vincentius of Cracow's version, the exile of the Queen-regent by Polish *cives* finds its justification in her tyrannical rulership, and the Polish subjects play an important role in helping Kazimierz to return to power.³⁴⁶

The author of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*, in turn, made substantive changes to Vincentius of Cracow's account. Firstly, in the confrontation between Kazimierz's mother and the Polish subjects he clearly took the side of the former. While Mieszko II did not measure up to the legacy of his father Bolesław I the Great, on account of his marriage to Otto III's relative whom the chronicler mistakenly calls Judith, he was still able to wear a royal crown.³⁴⁷ Nevertheless, she found herself facing the hatred of the Poles and exile:

When he [Mieszko II] died in the year of the Lord 1034 the Poles, in some frenzy of hatred, expelled his adolescent son Kazimierz I with his mother. For she, seeing that the people were still untamed in their pagan customs and not subdued by any obedience to the king, cleverly caused people in different provinces to assemble for the feasts of the Saints, and to prepare banquets, clap, sing, and celebrate; she urged that the king be invited by the magnates, which was turned in to the custom of services.³⁴⁸

³⁴⁵ Dzierzwa lifts the exact wording of the short description of Mieszko II's ineptness from *Vita maior Sancti Stanislai*, adding it to the less damning but also critical opinion of Vincentius of Cracow. Compare *Vita Sancti Stanislai (Maior)*, 366; and *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*, 23.

³⁴⁶ *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*, 23-24.

³⁴⁷ SCP, 618-19: *Boleslaus primus [...] filio suo Mesiconi secundo sororem Ottonis tercii in coniugium copulavit, Iuditam nomine. [...] Iste licet coronatus non fuerit, propter Dignitatem tamen uxoris nobilitatis rex apellatus est.*

³⁴⁸ SCP, 619-20: *Quo mortuo anno Domini 1034 Poloni tenellum filium eius Kazmirum primum cum matre sua quodam odii furore propulerunt. Ipsa enim cernens populum adhuc gentilitatis consuetudine indomitum et nullis obsequiis regi subditum, astute populum per diversas provincias et in solempnitatibus sanctorum convenire faciebat et convivia instruere, plaudere, canere et letari; regem a magnatibus invitari suadebat, que res in consuetudinem serviciorum tracta fuit.*

It seems clear to me that the chronicler is sympathetic to the queen's project, agreeing with her opinion on the Polish subjects.³⁴⁹ Her assessment, after all, found confirmation in the exile of the ruling family. While scoffed at by the yet untamed Polish nobles, the act of hosting a visiting ruler was—in the chronicler's assessment—an important way of manifesting loyalty by the subjects and authority by the monarch.

This is not the first time Rycheza is said to pass an unflattering judgment on her husband's subjects. According to *Gesta principum Polonorum*, the exiled mother was to caution Kazimierz against his return to his patrimony, warning him not to go to *ad gentem perfidiam et nondum bene Christianam*.³⁵⁰ Both in the early-twelfth- and late-thirteenth-century examples the rebelliousness of the Polish subjects is connected with their only recent conversion.

The active attempts of the queen to reshape the manners and interactions between her husband and the magnates of the realm as well as her investment in proper religious observance are not out of place among the thirteenth-century ideas about the role princesses could play in Central European courts. That period saw a number of wives of local rulers who, following the example set out by Saint Elisabeth of Hungary, exercised their agency in shaping the court life in pursuit of religious and spiritual reform.³⁵¹ Among them was St Elizabeth's aunt St Hedwig, the wife of the Silesian duke Henry the Bearded, whose first life was penned in Lubiąż around the same time as Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*. While the Andechs princess focused her efforts on ascetic refraining from the daily life of the court, aiding the poor, and organizing the Trzebnica Abbey, the active role she played beside her husband was not unlike the one the chronicler prescribed to Kazimierz's mother.

After Kazimierz's exile, the country plunged into internal anarchy and was ravaged by foreign invasions. When the same Polish nobles who exiled the prince realized their mistake, arranging for Kazimierz's return proved more difficult than in the *Chronica Polonorum*. The monk from Lubiąż follows the lead of *Vitae Sancti Stanislai*, writing that in the meantime, the young prince had become a monk at Cluny. Making only small changes to the narrative found

³⁴⁹ Similarly Małgorzata Delimata-Proch, *Rycheza Królowa Polski (ok. 995 - 21 marca 1063): studium historiograficzne* [Rycheza Queen of Poland (c. 995 - 21 March 1063): A historiographical study] (Cracow: Avalon, 2020), 280; Not all of the historians had agreed with this assessment, reading the characteristic as negative. See Inga Stembrowicz, "Podanie o Kazimierzu Mnichu w polskim dziejopisarstwie do końca XIV w." [The legend of Casimir the Monk in Polish historiography until the end of the 14th century], in *Symboliczne i realne podstawy tożsamości społecznej w średniowieczu*, ed. Sławomir Gawlas and Paweł Żmudzki (Warsaw: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2017), 249.

³⁵⁰ 1.19 in *GpP*, 80.

³⁵¹ Gábor Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses: Dynastic Cults in Medieval Central Europe*, trans. Eva Pálmai, Past and Present Publications (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 243–79.

in hagiographic tradition, *the* chronicler describes how Polish envoys had to plead—first with the emperor, then with the pope—for Kazimierz to be released from his monastic vows.³⁵² The pope agreed, convinced by the argument about the danger to the recently Christianized land, but only under certain conditions. The Poles were required to pay Peter's Pence. Kazimierz and his subjects were also to take some monastic customs: keeping fasts, adapting simple dress, and a tonsure-like hairstyle.³⁵³ Released from his vows, Kazimierz was crowned king by Emperor Henry II, and returned with his mother to Poland.

While the Silesian chronicler is not the inventor of the narrative about Kazimierz's youth at Cluny and the difficulties in arranging his return, I think that his choice to include it deserves notice. In its original hagiographic context, the story probably served several purposes. By expanding upon one of the traditions included in *Chronica Polonorum*, Vincentius of Kielcza probably hoped to highlight the antiquity of links between Poland and two important centers and explain to his audience the origins of Peter's Pence.³⁵⁴ The story also bolstered dynastic authority, linking the dynastic past with Saint Stanislaus's life, and cast the Piast ruler as a hero, capable of transforming from a monk into a courageous warrior to save his patrimony.³⁵⁵ In order to lend further credence to the story about the episode, the hagiographer linked it with a distinct local fashion. A tonsure-like hairstyle was noted by contemporaneous outside observers and even captured in the fourteenth-century visual depiction.³⁵⁶

Since the Silesian monk did not betray a great interest in the Polish church and its institutions elsewhere in his chronicle, it seems that it was the heroic aspect of the tale that

³⁵² In *Vitae* the first authority with whom the envoys pleaded was the Abbot at Cluny, and not the Emperor – though both ended up sending the Poles to the Pope, who was the only person able to render Kazimierz's vows void. The author of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* expanded also slightly the list of conditions, as neither simple dress nor the details about form Peter's Pence could take were part of *Vitae*'s text. Compare SCP 620; *Vita sancti Stanislai (Minor)*, 272; and *Vita sancti Stanislai (Maior)*, 382.

³⁵³ SCP, 620: *coram quo propositis terre periculis subvertentibus circumquaque et novellam fidei plantacionem, dominum suum obtinuerunt et reducerunt tali pacto, ut videlicet habitum non mutaret, sed uxore ducta heredem terre generaret, et ut ipsi Poloni, dominum suum in tonsura et in amplitudine vestium imitantes, semper a dominica septuagesime usque in pascha ab esu carnum abstinerent, et ut singulis annis de singulis familiis unum denarium cum inpressione capitis sancti Iohannis vel duas mensuras avene darent sancto Petro Rome pro lumine.*

³⁵⁴ Gerard Labuda, "Twórczość hagiograficzna i historiograficzna Wincentego z Kielc [The hagiographic and historiographic works of Wincenty of Kielce]," *Studia Źródłoznawcze* 16 (1971): 132–33; Stembrowicz, "Podanie o Kazimierzu Mnichu," 245.

³⁵⁵ Brygida Kurbis made an argument that Vincentius of Kielcza tried to introduce a figure of an ascetic ruler to the Polish imaginary, prefiguring the descriptions of austere personal piety of thirteenth-century rulers found in *Greater Polish Chronicle* or hagiographies of St Hedwig or St Kinga, Kurbis p. 32–33; however, as pointed out by Inga Stembrowicz, Kazimierz quickly transforms from a monk into a heroic warrior figure, Stembrowicz "Podanie o Kazimierzu Mnichu," 246.

³⁵⁶ Tomasz Jurek, "Fryzura narodowa średniowiecznych Polaków" [National hairstyle of medieval Poles], in *Scriptura custos memoriae. Prace historyczne*, ed. Danuta Zydorek (Poznań: Instytut Historii UAM, 2001), 635–51.

interested the author of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*. The difficulties repentant Poles had to go through and the high price they had to pay to have their dynasty re-established served—just like the picture of the destruction of Poland—to underline the dangers of disloyalty and the special relationship between Piasts and their subjects. Consciously or not, the story about the Pope’s dispensation made the popular hairstyle into a memento of the dire consequences of exiling the young Piast and the newfound commitment of the Poles not only to the papacy but also to the ruling dynasty.

The special status of the Piast dynasty was even further emphasized in the fourteenth-century interpolation from the Królewiec Manuscript. There, the doubtful Kazimierz is ready to renounce his claim seeing the strength of Masław’s Mazovian forces, but as he lays down his sword and belt on the altar of the Ostrów Tumski church, a voice thrice commands him to strike the enemy. Obedient Kazimierz rode off and defeated Masław’s overwhelming forces.³⁵⁷ The divine source of the Piast authority is thus reconfirmed beyond any doubt, and the royal crown given to Kazimierz by the Emperor is validated by God as the true dispenser of the royal titles.³⁵⁸

The other manuscripts of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* and *Dzierzwa’s Chronicle* recount the versions of the confrontation with Masław that follow closely *Chronica Polonorum*. The leader of the Mazovians is still portrayed as an overambitious man of the lowest origin commanding a force of opportunists and foreign allies. Defeated despite his troops’ numerical advantage, he flees to Prussia, where he is killed by his former subordinates. Both chroniclers recount even the moral of the story uttered by Prussians, who hanged Masław saying “alta petisti, alta tene.”³⁵⁹ Despite their tendency to omit the inconsequential details and moralizing fables found in Vincentius of Cracow’s work, both of the turn-of-the-fourteenth-century chroniclers found the universal figure of the punished overambitious social climber too appealing to dismiss.

In summary, the Silesian monk and Dzierzwa chose different approaches to the tradition about the collapse of Poland during the exile of its Piast rulers. While the Franciscan monk followed the *Chronica Polonorum* in excusing the decisions made by the Polish nobles and making them important actors behind the restoration of young Kazimierz, his counterpart from Lubiąż saw them as unjustified. The Poles still had to be, as pointed out by Kazimierz’s mother,

³⁵⁷ SCP, 622.

³⁵⁸ Kürbis, “Sacrum i profanum,” 33; Michałowski, *Princeps fundator*, 127 ff.

³⁵⁹ SCP, 621, 623; *Dzierzwa’s Chronicle*, 25.

taught how to be proper Christians and subjects. The disasters that befell Poland in Kazimierz's absence served in the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*—just like in Gallus's *Gesta Principum Polonorum*—as a lesson on the consequences of disobeying Piast rulers. Polish subjects pay a high price for reestablishing the severed bonds of loyalty, underlying the special nature of the relationship with the ruling dynasty. While the term is not used, the depiction from the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* is evocative of the idea of the Piasts as *domini naturales*.

2.4 Loyal Subjects and How to Keep Them

Vincentius of Cracow not only presented multiple ways of strengthening the bonds of loyalty but also opined on their usefulness for the ruler and the dangers some of them brought. Given the methods both turn-of-the-fourteenth-century chroniclers used in abbreviating the text of *Chronica Polonorum*, it is unsurprising that most of these detailed descriptions of oath-taking or proper feasting were omitted by their authors.

Such is the case with oath-taking. The oaths sworn upon the insistence of comes Mikołaj after the election of Leszek the White or deliberations about the validity of an oath the archdeacon of Gniezno was forced to swear during the Pomeranian raid on Spycimierz do not appear in either the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* or *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*.

This does not mean that oaths completely disappear from these chronicles. The inability to uphold the sworn promises is still used by both chroniclers in painting the picture of illegitimate dynastic rivals – even if neither of the chroniclers follows exactly in Vincentius of Cracow's footsteps. Dzierzwa mentions the oaths broken by the perfidious Zbigniew when he tried to wrestle the power away from Bolesław III.³⁶⁰ The monk from Lubiąż portrays the second time Mieszko III lost the throne of Cracow as the direct consequence of breaking the promises he gave to Kazimierz II's widow and local elites. On this occasion, the chronicler's method of abbreviating Vincentius of Cracow's text strengthens the point made by his predecessor, as Mieszko's refusal to honor his oath and the defeat and death of his firstborn son at the battle of Mozgawa.³⁶¹ The Silesian chronicler also adds his own surprising example of the instance in which a Piast ruler met divine punishment for breaking his promise, which I will explore in the next subchapter.

³⁶⁰ *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*, 36-38; In Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* the narrative about the conflict between the brothers is much shorter – thus the chronicler only mentions the treachery of Zbigniew and his foreign allies, SCP, 626.

³⁶¹ SCP, 639.

Similarly, while the descriptions of the rich courtly life and useful feasts arranged by Kazimierz II the Just were edited out of the turn-of-the-fourteenth-century chronicles, their role in managing the bonds of loyalty was not completely dismissed. As demonstrated by a campaign of taming her Polish subjects undertaken by Kazimierz's mother, feasts and the ruler's presence were noticed by the author of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*. Indeed, in another part of the chronicle, the festivities staged by the visiting ruler are explicitly depicted as a tool for reaffirming loyalty between Piasts and wavering subjects. In the Silesian chronicler's retelling of the events surrounding Zbigniew's first return to Poland, Władysław I deprives his prodigal son of supporters and reconciles with the people of Wrocław by staging joyous feasts.³⁶²

While the attitudes of the turn-of-the-fourteenth-century chroniclers towards oaths and feasts were not markedly different from Vincentius of Cracow's, this was not the case with gifts. The praises of the magnanimity of the good rulers included by the Lubiąż monk were not followed by the warnings about the dangerous nature of gifts as they were in the bishop of Cracow's work. The material rewards for loyal subjects who rendered service to their ruler seemed a regular facet of political culture, which did not deserve much comment. In an interesting example of a transformation of the Vincentian tradition, the Silesian author writes that when treacherous Zbigniew was captured and brought in front of Bolesław for justice, he was defeated not in the courtroom but in a trial by combat (*pugna probacione*). The victor of the duel was given by Duke Bolesław the territory of Poniec, while the duel was memorialized in the name of the locality where it took place, Sądowel.³⁶³

Both places with which the chronicler linked Zbigniew's trial are located ca. 70 km north of Lubiąż. The tradition about the duel could have been circulating among the local population, a family legend used by Poniec's contemporary owners. As we will see on other occasions, the author of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* often linked the treacherous or valiant deeds from the past with geography and families Silesian readers might have been more familiar with. Whether the detail about the land given by the grateful duke was grounded in local family

³⁶² SCP, 626: *Hic [Zbigniew – MM.] de consilio profugarum ex consensu episcopi Magni comitis Wratislaviensis, dum Setech, princeps exercitus, nimia tenacitatis avaricia salaria militum accepta a rege sibi reservaret, convocato exercitu regis Ungarie, sui nominis scilicet Zbigneui, Moravis quoque ac Boemis, regnum patris decrepiti ac fratris tenelli pervasit. Sed pater, astute infirmitatem simulans cum filio ad se vocato pacificatur et construccione convivalis leticie omnes Wratislavienses sibi conciliat, unde filius crassancius in patrem consurgens, de Wratislavia fugiens, in Crusbiziam se recepit, et Pomeranorum non parva congregans subsidia cum patre congregatur et captus carceri mancipatus.*

³⁶³ SCP, 627: *Cum quo, dum multis legibus contendisset, tandem pugne probacione eum superavit et sic perpetuo exilio dampnatur, et victori totum territorium, quod Ponez dicitur, cum omni iure principali libere donatur et locus iudicii ac pugne a re nomen suscepit scilicet Sandowel.*

tradition or invented by the chronicler, it presents the practice of rewarding loyal subjects with land grants as a regular, morally uncontroversial practice.

In trying to ascertain Dzierzwa's position on gift-giving, we can only rely on investigating his decisions to omit certain fragments or keep Vincentius's text. As mentioned above, Dzierzwa decided to include in his work Vincentius's criticism of the transactional loyalty of the contemporary Poles, who made *amicitia* look like *negociatio*. Nevertheless, this does not mean that he wholly adopted his predecessor's outlook. The topic of buying and selling loyalty does not reappear in other parts of *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*.

This is especially visible in the Franciscan chronicler's treatment of the narrative about Piotr Włost and the perfidious Pannonian. Dzierzwa follows very closely the description of Piotr's kidnapping of Duke Volodar of Przemyśl and the betrayal committed by a Pannonian nobleman who was secretly in the employ of Volodar's son. Dzierzwa's moral assessment of deceptive actions undertaken by both noblemen does not differ from that of Vincentius: Piotr is praised for risking his own life in order to bring security to Bolesław's realm, while the Pannonian, *pater prodicionis* and *filius perdicionis* is brutally punished by his employer.³⁶⁴ The fourteenth-century chronicler mentions that Volodomyrko convinced the Pannonian nobleman to deceive Bolesław III with gold, but does not mention anything about the rewards offered to Piotr by the grateful duke. The parallel drawn between the two men by Vincentius of Cracow to illustrate the importance of disinterested motivations behind Piotr's actions is thus lost in the version presented by Dzierzwa. The Franciscan chronicler was thus more interested in including the details about the gruesome punishment exacted on the perfidious traitor than in warning his contemporaries about the "shade of bartering" introduced to personal relationships strengthened by gifts.

The discussed descriptions of tools used by Piasts to strengthen the bonds of loyalty offer also a glimpse into the content of loyalty. Most of the depictions and reflections on loyal service from Vincentius's *Chronica Polonorum* were lost in the abbreviations made by the turn-of-the-fourteenth-century chroniclers – like the praiseworthy deeds of Vincentius's contemporaries, *comes* Mikołaj or palatine Goworek. The examples discussed above: the victorious champion of Bolesław III depicted by the Silesian monk and Piotr Włost once more putting his life in danger for the sake of the realm, suggest that the turn-of-the-fourteenth-century authors agreed with Vincentius about the contents of loyal service.

³⁶⁴ *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*, 46-48.

One of the few anecdotes from *Chronica Polonorum* that bears little relevance to creating an easy-to-follow outline of Polish history, but was nevertheless included by Dzierzwa in his chronicle, was the fate of a cowardly nobleman and a helpful commoner who partook in Bolesław III's ill-fated Hungarian expedition. Whereas the Franciscan chronicler usually omitted similar moralizing lessons, in this instance he followed very closely the text of his predecessor, detailing the suicidal death of the shamed nobleman, the meaning behind the "gifts" he received, and the contrasting rewards given to the ennobled *originarius*.³⁶⁵ Perhaps this vision of a nobleman punished for deserting his lord on the battlefield and a commoner's rewarded for his service was found by the monk to be instructive enough to be included.

2.5 Unfaithful Subjects

The focus of the turn-of-the-fourteenth-century historians on members of the Piast dynasty over the other participants of the political life resulted not only in vaguer depictions of the loyal service but also in the transformation of the traditions about powerful but unfaithful subjects.

Setting aside the anonymous conspirators and rebels, Vincentius's *Chronica Polonorum* included depictions of the overambitious Masław and the scheming palatine Sieciech. Both men were a part of the historiographic tradition that stretched back to the *Gesta principum Polonorum*. Cracow's bishop simplified their roles in the narrative, making Masław an example of the archetypical social climber and explaining Sieciech's hostility against Bolesław as motivated by the fear of prophesied justice.

As seen above, this depiction of Masław carried over into both Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* and Dzierzwa's *Chronicle*. The portrayal of Sieciech underwent additional evolution, as both turn-of-the-fourteenth-century chroniclers tried to further simplify the narrative about Zbigniew's first return to Poland, focusing on the rivalry between Duke Władysław I's sons.

Sieciech was still portrayed as an ambitious palatine whose avarice and favoritism led many Polish nobles to flee the country and orchestrate the return of the Duke's illegitimate son to Poland. In *Gesta principum Polonorum* and Vincentius's *Chronica Polonorum* the exiles had to remind Magnus, comes of Wrocław, of the indignities suffered under Sieciech's rule for him to reluctantly join their cause. Stripping Vincentius's narrative of literary relish, like the

³⁶⁵ Dzierzwa's *Chronicle*, 51.

pleading letter sent by the exile to Magnus, both Dzierzwa and the Silesian author simply relegated Magnus to a willing co-conspirator.³⁶⁶ The Silesian chronicler made an original addition to the tradition of Zbigniew's supporter from Wrocław, titling him a *comes* and a bishop. The elevation of Magnus to the rank of bishop and his commitment to a conspiracy to unseat the ruling Piasts might be read as echoes of the conflicts between Wrocław bishops and dukes witnessed by the chronicler in the second half of the thirteenth century. I return to those conflicts in the next chapter. The information about Magnus's episcopal title found only limited purchase in the local intellectual circles.³⁶⁷

In *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*, the rebellion in Wrocław was used by Sieciech to conspire against Władysław – he and the duchess were urging Władysław's allies not to join the army he gathered to deal with his son. The link between the scheming palatine and Zbigniew became even more explicit in the depictions of the events that followed Magnus's rebellion. According to both chroniclers, Sieciech was afraid of the young Bolesław III. Thus, when Zbigniew's short imprisonment ended, the palatine aligned himself with the older of Władysław's sons. Readers do not learn about the details, other than that Zbigniew and Sieciech plotted together against Bolesław III. The young prince effortlessly deals with the palatine, who ends up exiled.³⁶⁸ For most of the time Sieciech appears on the pages of both chronicles, he is delegated to acting as Zbigniew's proxy, and his characterization is stripped down to avarice, ambition, and opportunism.

Besides these small changes, the author of Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* gave the readers two more consequential reinventions of the historiographic tradition presented by Vincentius of Cracow. Coincidentally, both have at their center the unfaithful subjects who transgress against their lords.

³⁶⁶ SCP, 625-26; *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*, 32-33.

³⁶⁷ Written in Lubiąż sometime after 1319 Catalogue of Bishops of Wrocław includes information about bishop Magnus taken from a "certain chronicle", but dates his office to fill the vacancy in 1140s. See *Catalogi episcoporum Vratislaviensium*, edited by Wojciech Kętrzyński, MPH, vol. 6 (Cracow: Akademia Umiejętności, 1893), 561; This information circulated later in some Silesian sources, most notably in *Chronicle of the Polish Princes*. More on the afterlife of the information of comes Magnus's episcopal title in: Marek Cetwiński, "Biskup wrocławski Magnus: amplifikacja i metafora jako sposoby narracji dziejopisarskiej" [Bishop Magnus of Wrocław: amplification and metaphor as methods of historiographical narrative], in *Metamorfozy śląskie* (Częstochowa: Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej w Częstochowie, 2002), 95–110.

³⁶⁸ SCP, 626: *Tandem Zbignevo de carcere misso Setech timens iuvenem Boleslaum adherens Zbignevo discordie malum suscitatur. Unde exilio propulsus fuit, Zbignevo cum fratre et patre reconciliato, [...] Dzierzwa's Chronicle*, 34: *Quod frater multum invidens diversa adversus eum ubique machinamenta parat. Sethiegius vero certis instructus pronosticis sue in illo declinationem versucie luxisse fertur. Ecce — inquiens — hic positus est in ruinam multorum et in signum cui contradicetur. Et tuam in primis animam, Sethiegi, pertransibit gladius. Quod et factum est. Sbgneus namque factionem contrahit, sedicionis elicit scintillam, odii flammam: conflatur, discordie fovet incentiva. Que Boleslaus non tantum sedat, sed et sementivam malorum eradicat originem, Sethiegi enim proscriccioni exposito partes regni dissidentes conciliat.*

The first of these casts in the role of the unfaithful subject an unexpected character – Duke Bolesław III. *Gesta principum Polonorum* or Vincentius's *Chronica Polonorum* presented Bolesław as a good, or even ideal ruler and military leader victorious in campaigns against all his neighbors. Given that in the opinion of the Silesian chroniclers the Piasts were linked with the emperors of the Holy Roman Empire by the bonds of vassalage, first established at the times of Mieszko I, it is not that surprising that Bolesław's military exploits against Emperor Henry V were met with disapproval.

After Bolesław aided the Hungarian king against the emperor by invading Moravia, the angered Henry V gathered an army and captured Bolesław in battle. When the emperor wanted to return with his hostage to Germany, the Polish Duke

promised to give him a large sum of money, and having received a date he sent—as if for the treasures—for the aid to all of the provinces of Geths [Prussians – MM.], Ruthenians, and Hungarians. Having been led into the camp at night on wagons and delivered to the middle of the fort, the enemies with their Duke seized the emperor and took him to Kołobrzeg, a Pomeranian castle; where, after holding him for six months, he [Bolesław] wrested away his original freedom from him [Henry V], because he forced him to dishonorably serve in the kitchen; and furthermore to strengthen the perpetual peace and friendship, he obtained for his firstborn son Władysław his [Henry V's] daughter named Agnes in marriage, and having accompanied the emperor back to the borders thus released him.³⁶⁹

In a not-so-long paragraph, Bolesław III commits several transgressions against the emperor. He fights against someone to whom he ought to be loyal as a vassal. Bolesław, by breaking the promise given to his captor and deceitfully seizing the unexpected emperor himself violated the chivalric norms of conduct. The expectations carried by chivalric culture were certainly well familiar to the Lubiąż's monk audience, as courts of thirteenth-century Silesian dukes were particularly active centers of the reception of chivalric courtly culture.³⁷⁰ Even though as the emperor's man Bolesław should have been concerned about the honor of

³⁶⁹ SCP, 627-28: *Quem cum secum ducere vellet, ille multam pecuniam se daturum spondet, et termino obtento tamquam pro thesauro mittit pro adiutorio in omnes Getharum, Rutenorum et Ungarorum provincias. Hostes in nocte in curribus adducti et in medio castrorum positi, cum duce suo imperatorem rapiunt et in Kolberg, castrum maritimum, deducunt, ubi detento per sex menses libertatem pristinam ab eo extorquet, quia ipsum ad servitium coquine ignominiose compulerat, insuper filio suo primogenito Vladislao filiam eius, Agnetam nomine, ob perpetue pacis ac amicitie robur matrimonialiter obtinet, et sic imperatorem usque ad proprios terminos conducens dimittit.*

³⁷⁰ See for example Jacek Witkowski, "Henryk IV Prawy – „Homo economicus” czy „Homo ludens”" [Henryk IV Probus – „Homo economicus” or „Homo ludens”?], in *Śląsk w czasach Henryka IV Prawego*, ed. Krzysztof Wachowski (Wrocław: Uniwersytet Wrocławski, 2005), 71–83; Jacek Witkowski, *Szlachetna a wielce żalсна opowieść o Panu Lancelocie z Jeziora: dekoracja malarska wielkiej sali wieży mieszkalnej w Siedlęcinie* [The noble and very sorrowful tale of Lord Lancelot of the Lake: painting decoration of the great hall of the residential tower in Siedlcecin] (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2001); Nuanced picture of the foreign knights as the vectors of reception of chivalric culture offered in Jurek, *Obce rycerstwo*, 125–34.

his captive, he treats Henry in a particularly debasing manner. As pointed out by Przemysław Wiszewski, forcing the emperor to work in the kitchen was a familiar shorthand for the chronicler's audience for embarrassing social degradation.³⁷¹ Such mistreatment of the captive cast a bad light on the captor, marking another transgression of the norms of chivalrous conduct.³⁷²

In the end, Bolesław reconciles with the emperor, exchanging his position as an imperial subject for more horizontal ties of friendship. Nevertheless, his disloyalty towards the former overlord does not go unpunished. The chronicler describes that just as the Piast ruler planned to crown himself king, an angel snatched his crown and carried it away to Hungary.³⁷³ It is hard to imagine a more direct display of divine forces punishing Bolesław for his actions. Without stating it outright, the chronicler links the loss of the royal crown by Bolesław with the subsequent political fragmentation, as he was the first ruler to divide the realm between his sons.³⁷⁴ For comparison, in *Dzierzwa's Chronicle* the collapse of the kingdom was a result of the terrible murder of St Stanislaus committed by Bolesław II. This is how severely Bolesław – and the entire dynasty – was punished for his perfidy.

The second of the significant changes made by the Lubiąż chronicler concerns the story of Piotr Włost. The courageous *comes* of Bolesław III and his audacious kidnapping of Duke Volodar described in Vincentius's *Chronica Polnorum* and *Dzierzwa's Chronicle* found not one but two different characterizations in the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*. One is relayed by the two manuscripts whose text is considered closer to the late-thirteenth-century original, while the other one is introduced in the Królewiec Manuscript by a fourteenth-century interpolator.

Let us first have a look at the former. Unlike Vincentius of Cracow or Dzierzwa, the monk from Lubiąż introduces Piotr to his audience only after describing Bolesław III's death and the division of his realm. Organizing a winter hunt, the oldest of Bolesław's sons

³⁷¹ Wiszewski, "Dlaczego cesarz został kuchcikiem," 96; Sarah Gordon, "Kitchen Knights in Medieval French and English Narrative: Rainouart, Lancelot, Gareth," *Lit: Literature Interpretation Theory* 16, no. 2 (2005): 189-212.

³⁷² The similar mistreatment of the royal captives is, for example, a part of the monstrous characterization of the giant Harpin in Hartmann von Aue's Iwein. This example and general statement on the dishonor brought by the broad strokes on mistreatment of captives discussed in Janis Witowski, *Ehering und Eisenkette Lösegeld- und Mitgiftzahlungen im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert*, (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2016), 44.

³⁷³ SCP, 629: *Huic Boleslao, cum in regem coronari deberet, angelus coronam de capite illius rapuit ac regi Ungarie Michaeli inposuit.*

³⁷⁴ SCP, 629: *Iste Boleslaus quinque filios habuit, Vladislaum, Boleslaum, Mesiconem, Kazmirum et Henricum; quatuor ergo primis pater decedens terram divisit [...];* Wiszewski, "Dlaczego cesarz został kuchcikiem," 97; Drelicharz, *Unifying the Kingdom of Poland*, 218; A less convincing interpretation is offered by Roman Michałowski, who argues that the loss of the royal crown was not a consequence but a cause of the fragmentation of the realm among Bolesław's sons, in Michałowski, *Princeps fundator*, 120–21.

Władysław II is joined by Piotr Włost, *maior natu et principi proximior*. Looking back at the nobleman's exploits during Bolesław's reigns, the chronicler writes:

This Piotr, at the times of Bolesław Wrymouth, came deceitfully to the king of Rus and having seized him when they were eating together, brought him bound to Bolesław; and when he [the king] freed himself with the ransom, the city of Cilcia was destroyed with many Poles slaughtered and captured by some Pannonian through similar deceit. Because of this said Piotr, charged with penance built seven cloisters and seventy stone churches.³⁷⁵

It is easy to see that the monk from Lubiąż saw the story about the kidnapping of the Ruthenian ruler by Piotr in a different light. The deceit of the Polish nobleman is presented without the context of the looming danger posed by the pacified Volodymyr. This makes the kidnapping clearly a devious act. The deceit of the Pannonian that leads to the massacre of the Poles is seen as natural retaliation for the kidnapping. To this punishment exacted on the Poles the chronicler adds the individual penance undertaken by Piotr. As noted in the previous chapter, the penance of the Polish nobleman for his actions in Ruthenia had already been mentioned in the *Zwiefalten Chronicle*.³⁷⁶ For monks from Zwiefalten and Lubiąż the actions of Piotr, stripped of the rationale presented by Vincentius of Cracow, were seen as grave sin demanding extensive (and expensive) penance. Even the association of Piotr with Bolesław III takes upon the opposite meaning in the Silesian author's eyes than in Vincentius of Cracow's and Dzierżwa's work. Since this Piast was portrayed by the Lubiąż monk as a deceitful ruler who lost the crown and divided his realm, Piotr's devious actions fit well with the spirit of the time.

Having thus introduced Piotr as a powerful aristocrat of questionable moral character, the chronicler returns to the story about the hunt. Duke Władysław and Piotr lose their way in the woods and must spend the night there. At the campfire, drinking melted snow instead of wine at the feast, Władysław jokes about the circumstances, saying to Peter "Behold, what a princely feast – perchance your wife is now more comfortably dining with your abbot". To this Piotr, knowing that they are alone, jokingly responded "My wife does with my abbot only what yours in your absence does with a German knight, her lover." While in the moment Duke Władysław played it off as a joke it was, he was deeply cut by these words. When the men returned to civilization, Władysław's wife saw her husband's distress and, using her charm,

³⁷⁵ SCP, 630-31: *Iste Petrus tempore Boieslai Curvi regem Russie in dolo adierat et cum illo conmessans ceperat eum et vinctum Boieslao adduxit, et cum ille se pecunia liberasset, simili dolo per quendam Pannoniorum Cilciam urbem delevit cum magna strage Polonorum ac captivitate. Propter quod idem Petrus iniuncta sibi penitencia septem cenobia et septuaginta lapideas construxit ecclesias.*

³⁷⁶ *Ortliebi Zwifaltensis Chronicon*, 2-4. The relationship between the two texts is unclear—there is no other conclusive evidence that the chronicle from Zwiefalten was known in Lubiąż, so both texts might have relied on the surviving oral tradition. See Cetwiński, "Podstępem czy siłą?," 162.

learned about the incident. Then, she set up a trap and blinded Piotr.³⁷⁷ This *factum* led to the expulsion of the ruling couple, as nobles and Władysław's brothers took up arms against the senior Piast. While the narrative about the conflict between senior and younger Piasts follows the structure outlined by Vincentius of Cracow, the Silesian chronicler's sympathy lies with Władysław, whose ultimate defeat is brought by the *insidia* of his brothers.³⁷⁸

Before stopping to analyze this fragment of the chronicle in more detail, I want to quickly acknowledge the alternative version of the story about Piotr from the Królewiec Manuscript. The character of the Silesian nobleman was clearly of much interest to whoever added the interpolations to this fourteenth-century version of the text: Piotr is a focus of three out of five additions. The first of the added fragments precedes the reign of Duke Władysław. Between the information about the loss of the crown by Bolesław III and his death, the interpolator placed a succinct but relatively detailed story about Piotr. Virtuous Piotr was a comes of all Poland, palatine of Wrocław, and by the end of Bolesław's reign a protector of the kingdom and the duke's children. He was famous for his military exploits in all neighboring countries, married a Ruthenian princess, and founded many churches and monasteries.³⁷⁹ The second interpolation expands on the characterization of Władysław's wife Agnes and her political scheme. She was described as acting "like a snake, the devil's tool" (*sicut serpens, instrumentum dyabuli*), who perfidiously plotted to destroy the kingdom, slaughter the just, and ruin the honor of the duke. Agnes turns Władysław against his younger brothers. While using sex as a bargaining chip with Władysław, his wife is conducting an affair with a certain Dobek, who becomes instrumental in kidnapping and blinding Piotr Włost in this version of the story.³⁸⁰ Finally, after the exile and death of Duke Władysław the interpolator asserts that the blinded Piotr regained his former position, and upon his death was buried in his foundation in Ołbin.³⁸¹

Crucially, while the thirteenth-century version of the text does not inform us where the new information about Piotr's fate came from, the later interpolator wrote at the end of the first added fragment that *Hec autem plenius in maiori cronica Polonorum et in carmine Mauri*

³⁷⁷ SCP, 631: *Illis pro vino nivem congestam in globum sugentibus, princeps Petro, qasi iocando, ait: Ecce quale principis convivum, forte commodius uxor tua cum abate tuo nunc convivatur. Petrus pro ioco, licet non iocose receperit, hic se solum cum solo sciens, sic respondit: Uxor mea pro se agit cum abbate meo, sicut et tua cum milite Teutonico, te absente, suo amasio.*

³⁷⁸ SCP, 632: *Quod factum in eius ac mariti exterminium redundavit, siquidem tota Polonia ad versus Vladislaum armatur cum fratribus, quos trino prelio fudit, ita ut nil preter solum oppidum Poznan haberent Quod cum vallasset et insidias non precaveret, inter prandium hostes irruunt: aliis trucidatis, aliis submersis Vladislaus fugam iniit [...].*

³⁷⁹ SCP, 629.

³⁸⁰ SCP, 631.

³⁸¹ SCP, 633.

continentur.³⁸² A similar work was also referenced in other historiographic sources. The *Greater Polish Chronicle* describes the exploits of Piotr the Dane (“Dunin”), referring to some *Gesta Piotrconis*.³⁸³ The early fifteenth-century *Chronicle of comes Piotr* refers to an old *libellus quodam pergameneus* still extant in St Vincentius’s library.³⁸⁴ The mutual relationship of these lost texts and their content have long been a subject of argument in Polish historiography. The post-war discussion was shaped by the debate between Marian Plezia and Ryszard Gansiniec, who proposed dueling reconstructions of the poem and the dates of its creation.³⁸⁵ The former’s vision which made the *Carmen Mauri*—and consequently, the basis of both accounts from the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*—a twelfth-century work found purchase among the broader body of twentieth-century scholars.³⁸⁶ While it is still cautiously embraced by some,³⁸⁷ the last three decades saw serious doubts being cast on Plezia’s proposed hypothetical reconstruction of the twelfth-century poem,³⁸⁸ suggestion that the information about Piotr’s deeds in Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* was based not only on the older historiography but also on oral epic tradition. Thus, I believe that Witold Wojtowicz is right to treat the texts of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* and its interpolations as literary expressions of an oral epic tradition (or traditions) on Piotr Włost, while cautioning against attempts at reconstructing the text of the twelfth-century poem.³⁸⁹

When placed in the broader world of high-medieval epic literature, the significance of the intimate exchange between comes Piotr and Duke Władysław in the Silesian forest becomes more apparent. In the world of thirteenth-century *chanson de geste*, the charge of adultery aimed at the ruler’s wife, especially coming from the most powerful subject, was seen as a direct

³⁸² SCP, 629.

³⁸³ 32 in *Chronica Poloniae maioris*, 50.

³⁸⁴ *Cronica Petri comitis Poloniae accedunt Carminis Mauri fragmenta*, ed. by Marian Plezia, MPH NS, vol. 3 (Cracow: PAU, 1951), 34.

³⁸⁵ *Cronica Petri comitis*, XXXIII–LI; Ryszard Gansiniec, “Tragedia Petri Comitis,” *Pamiętnik Literacki* 43, nos. 1–2 (1952): 53–139; Plezia’s response in Marian Plezia, “Dookoła tekstu i daty poematu o Piotrze Właście” [On the text and the dating of the poem about Piotr Włost], *Pamiętnik Literacki* 45, no. 2 (1954): 452–72.

³⁸⁶ For the summary of the discussion, see Małgorzata Delimata, “Sur une source perdue ou sur ‘Carmen Mauri’ encore une fois,” *Quaestiones Mediaevi Novae* 12 (2007): 167–81; Jarosław Wenta, “Tradycja o Piotrze. Na marginesie jednej z wielkich dyskusji” [Tradition about Piotr. On the margins of one of the great discussions], in *Scriptura custos memoriae. Prace historyczne*, ed. Danuta Zydorek (Poznań: Instytut Historii UAM, 2001), 523–38.

³⁸⁷ See for example: Dalewski, *Ritual and Politics*, 150.

³⁸⁸ Marek Cetwiński, “„Carmen Mauri”, czyli efekt śnieżnej kuli. Referat wygłoszony na 13. Spotkaniach Mediewistycznych, 19 X 2005” [‘Carmen Mauri’, or the snowball effect. Paper presented at the 13th Medievalist Meetings, Oct. 19, 2005], *mediewistyka.pl*, 2005, <https://www.mediewistyka.pl/content/view/85/40/>; Witold Wojtowicz, “Tzw. Carmen Mauri” [So-called Carmen Mauri], in *Przeszłość w kulturze średniowiecznej Polski I: Przeszłość obrazowana w tradycjach zapisanych i ujęciach historiograficznych*, ed. Jacek Banaszkiewicz, Andrzej Dąbrówka, and Piotr Węcowski (Warsaw: Instytut Historii PAN/Wydawnictwo Neriton, 2018), 105–25.

³⁸⁹ Wojtowicz, “Tzw. Carmen Mauri,” 114.

challenge to the ruler's authority.³⁹⁰ While the chronicler does not completely absolve Władysław and his wife who insidiously punished Piotr, the actions of the ducal couple are not without justification, as the nobleman's joke would have been read by the chronicler's audience as an attack on Władysław's honor.³⁹¹

Both of the episodes in which the author of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* introduces a new figure of an unfaithful subject go against the grain of the already established historiographical tradition which sees Bolesław III and Piotr Włost as respectable figures worth emulating. Their vilification was primarily motivated by the chronicler's pro-imperial agenda and patronage of Duke Władysław's descendants. There are still some similarities between the ways in which the Silesian author and Vincentius of Cracow construct their portraits of disloyal subjects – like the severe punishment both men deserved. Nevertheless, the unfaithfulness of Bolesław III and Piotr Włost presented on the pages of the Silesian chronicle was fully readable to the audience that thought in slightly different categories than the readers of Vincentius's *Chronica*. The disloyal subjects created by the Lubiąż monk aimed not at physically harming their lords or endangering their domain, but at diminishing their honor.

2.6 Unfaithful Rulers

As discussed in the previous chapter, one of the starkest elements of Vincentius of Cracow's vision of political life was his belief in the subjects' right to abandon the ruler who fell short of the standards of virtuous conduct established by the examples of the legendary ancient Poles. Did the justifications for rebellions against those unfaithful rulers used by Vincentius resonate with the authors of the turn-of-the-thirteenth-century chronicles, or were they more wary of cheering for subjects dethroning their Piast rulers? In this subchapter, I will examine if and how the dissolution of the bonds of loyalty that linked Polish subjects with Bolesław II the Bold and Mieszko III the Old was presented by the Silesian monk and Dzierżwa. The differences between the three versions of the narratives are indicative of the shifting priorities and interests of the chroniclers in Piast Poland.

³⁹⁰ Peggy McCracken, *The Romance of Adultery* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 52–54.

³⁹¹ The crucial role of honor in the exchange of the jokes in the discussed scene was noted already by Przemysław Wiszewski, though he saw Piotr's joke as questioning not the duke's but duchess's honor, as if these were not entangled. See Przemysław Wiszewski, "Honor, konflikt i... wartości: władza Piastów po śmierci Bolesława Krzywoustego" [Honor, conflict and... values: the power of the Piasts after the death of Bolesław the Wrymouth], in *Kościół, kultura, polityka w państwie pierwszych Piastów*, ed. Waldemar Graczyk et al. (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UKSW, 2016), 88.

The portrait of Bolesław II the Bold's slide toward tyranny that resulted in the martyrdom of St Stanislaus and the exile of the monarch was one of the most important contributions of Vincentius of Cracow to Polish historiographic tradition. It was the version of events described in *Chronica Polonorum* that systematized the legend of the bishop of Cracow, serving as the basis for the earliest *Vitae* of St Stanislaus penned by Vincentius of Kielcza in the mid-thirteenth century.

Given that in writing their chronicles both the Lubiąż monk and Dzierzwa used works of both Vincentiuses, it is surprising that they chose to give only cursory depictions of Bolesław II's fall. Crucially, they both overlook the inciting incident that pushes Bolesław over the edge: the decision of some of the Poles to abandon their king during a distant military campaign to defeat the rebellious slaves who allied with or forced themselves on wives of absent husbands. The twelfth-century chronicler constructed this story as a pretext for discussing the hierarchy of loyalties binding Polish nobles, in marriage and in relationship to the ruler. The latter was shown to have a clear limit. The decision of deserters was defended by Vincentius of Cracow, who championed the vision of all members of the political community bearing responsibility for its virtuous character.

The author of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* simplified the story about the slave rebellion, omitting the returning husbands from the narrative. It is the king himself—and not just his men—who returns from the military campaign upon hearing about the slave rebellion aided by the abandoned wives. Even though in this version the punishment exacted by Bolesław falls onto rebels and adulteresses, and not concerned husbands and forgiven wives, it is too cruel for a Christian king. The Lubiąż monk further elaborates on Bolesław's black legend, suggesting that his moral downfall manifested not only in the cruel degradations of his subjects but also in bestiality.³⁹² Confronted for his transgressions and excommunicated by St Stanislaus, Bolesław martyrs the bishop and flees to Hungary, where he and his son Mieszko meet their just death.

Dzierzwa provides even less information on the circumstances that led to Bolesław's downfall. Apparently confident in his reader's familiarity with this episode from the Polish past, the Franciscan chronicler simply refers his readers to *Vita Sancti Stanislai*.³⁹³ Nevertheless, Dzierzwa believed the conflict to have been a breaking point in the history of Poland. While the exiled Bolesław was stricken by illness and his only son poisoned, the punishment for the

³⁹² SCP, 625 : [Bolesław] *cum equa contra naturam effectus*.

³⁹³ Dzierzwa's *Chronicle*, 28.

martyr's death extends beyond the king and his line. While Poland remained a *regnum*, none of the later Piast rulers wore a royal crown.³⁹⁴ Moreover, it is here that the chronicler sees the cause of the political division lamented by Dzierzwa and his contemporaries: "Just as Bolesław had hacked the body of St Stanislaus into pieces and scattered them in all directions, so too the Lord cut his kingdom and allowed it to be ruled by many princes."³⁹⁵ Dzierzwa's omission of the story about the deserting husbands stems from the broader editorial strategy.

But what about the same omission in Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*? Given the interest in Bolesław's doomed reign exhibited by the Lubiąż monk, was a simple result of abbreviating the text of *Chronica Polonorum*. Nor could it be the result of relying on the historiographical work of Vincentius of Kielcza, whose two lives of St Stanislaus include the episode in which concerned husbands abandon Bolesław's campaigns. Living in a time of court intrigues and powerful nobles, the Silesian monk was less willing to vest the power to unilaterally dissolve the bonds of loyalty in the hands of the noblemen, however patriotic their intentions might have been.

This reluctance to praise the past rebellions against the Piasts partially extended to the descriptions of the upheavals that brought Kazimierz II the Just to power and almost toppled him. These two rebellions led by the Cracow nobles were very important for Vincentius of Cracow, but by the time of the creation of Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* and Dzierzwa's *Chronicle* the political struggle from a century ago was no longer generating similar interest. At the same time, the chroniclers of the turn-of-the-fourteenth-century made interestingly different interpretations of the same fragment of Vincentius's *Chronica Polonorum*.

Just like in the case of the conspiracy that allowed young Zbigniew to return to Poland, Dzierzwa simplifies Vincentius's narrative by reducing the number of parties playing a part in the intrigue. Whereas in the chronicle of the bishop of Cracow Mieszko's *insolentia* led him to surround himself with bad advisors, in Dzierzwa's *Chronicle* the duke acted out of his own wickedness. Thus, while in *Chronica Polonorum* it is the malicious courtiers that advise the duke with the words of biblical ruler Rehoboam, the Franciscan chronicler presents those words as warnings issued by Mieszko himself to his subjects – a cause of his downfall.³⁹⁶ It is Mieszko himself—and not some anonymous *praefectus* of Cracow—who is confronted by bishop Gedko

³⁹⁴ Drelicharz, *Unifying the Kingdom of Poland*, 292.

³⁹⁵ Dzierzwa's *Chronicle*, 29: *Sicut igitur hic Boleslaus corpus sancti Stanislai in multas partes secuit et in omnem ventum dispersit, sic Deus regnum suum scidit et plures principes in eo dominari permisit.*

³⁹⁶ Dzierzwa's *Chronicle*, 58: *Quandam enim truculencie feritatem cum filio Salomonis induit, ut dicere presumeret suis optimatibus: Minimus digitus meus grossior est dorso patris mei. Pater meus cecidit vos virgis; ego scorpionibus vos cedam. Ob quamcausam scissum et ablatum est ab eo regnum.*

and who, in return, threatens the life of the clergyman. The rebellion itself unfolds just like on the pages of *Chronica Polonorum*. The noblemen of Cracow depicted by Dzierzwa present their case to Kazimierz in the same terms as in the earlier work. They justify their opposition to Mieszko by the danger his tyranny poses to the whole country, highlighting the difference between their actions and baseless sedition.³⁹⁷ Further simplifying Vincentius's narrative, Dzierzwa clarified that the men who abandoned Mieszko III after he lost Cracow—including his son Odon—joined Kazimierz's forces instead.³⁹⁸

Similar treatment is given to the description of the rebellion of Lesser-Polish "satraps" against Kazimierz in 1191. In *Chronica Polonorum* it is Palatine Mikołaj and his adventurous political projects that draw the initial ire of the opposition of nobles, who turned against his supporter Duke Kazimierz. Dzierzwa omits Mikołaj's role in the story, making Piast duke the sole target of Lesser-Polish conspirators. Thus, Kazimierz is unjustly accused of endangering and diminishing the glory of Poland by aligning himself with the Ruthenian ruler rather than with Hungarians.³⁹⁹

The changes made by Dzierzwa to the narratives of late-twelfth-century rebellions were thus primarily dictated by his attempts to simplify Vincentius's narration. The omissions did not have a significant impact on the broad tone of the descriptions. The lack of larger editorial changes does not unequivocally prove that Dzierzwa shared Vincentius's opinion on the circumstances that justified breaking the bonds of loyalty in the face of rulership that endangered the political community. It nevertheless suggests that the Franciscan monk from Lesser Poland, a region still dominated by the powerful aristocratic elites, did not see Vincentius's vision as requiring amendments.

Whereas Dzierzwa decided to focus on the grievances of subjects with their rulers, omitting the role played by powerful representatives of Piast Dukes, the Lubiąż monk opted for underscoring their part. According to his telling of events, Mieszko III's reigns in Cracow did not come to an end because of the *insolentia* of the old duke, but due to *calumpnia et iniqua iudicia* committed by his representative, certain Kietlicz. Unlike Dzierzwa, the Silesian monk

³⁹⁷ Dzierzwa's *Chronicle*, 59.

³⁹⁸ Compare 4.7 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 145: [...] *Set et carissimi eius, tantorum prorsus beneficiorum immemores, ab eo dilabuntur*; with Dzierzwa's *Chronicle*, 61: *Sed et carissimi Meskonis ab eo dilabuntur et Kazimiro adherent*.

³⁹⁹ Dzierzwa's *Chronicle*, 68: *Laodimiro igitur regno Galaciae restituto, procures Polonorum magno indignati sunt adversus Kazimirum furore pro eo videlicet, quod tantum nefas, tantum flagitium, quod idem Poloniae intulerat, non erat ultus in eo. Ob quam causam contra Kazimirum conspirant. Aiunt Galiciensis hostis restitutione omnem Lechitarum gloriam declinasse, quem potius decerat patibulo sufflgi, quam regno sublimari. Asserunt soluto prorsus Pannoniorum regis foedere huius regni securitatem exspirasse. Quod cum viribus contra Kazimirum nequeunt, dolo peragere constituunt*.

identifies the ambiguous *praeses provinciae* confronted by bishop Gedko not with the Duke himself, but with his overreaching representative. I have explained in the previous chapter how the Silesian author drew on the similarities in Vincentius's description of the leaders of 1177 and 1191 rebellions, identifying both with a single figure – Henryk Kietlicz. By focusing on Kietlicz, the Silesian monk absolves some of the blame that in Lesser-Polish historiography falls directly onto Mieszko III. With Piast ruler's responsibility diminished, the moral judgment passed onto the Lesser-Polish rebels becomes more ambiguous. Further underlying this ambiguity is the role of Odon, who is simply described in Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* as turning, along many others, against Mieszko and driving him out of most of his domain.⁴⁰⁰ The Lubiąż monk does not offer here any judgement of this turn of events, but the omission of the excuses presented by Vincentius is worth noting. Together with the sinister role Odon will, ahistorically, continue to play in the chronicler's narrative of events in 1220s,⁴⁰¹ it suggests that Lubiąż monk did not approve of Odon's actions against his father. Overall then, while Dzierzwa follows Vincentius of Cracow's depiction and shares his judgement of the events in Cracow of 1177, the Silesian chronicler does not celebrate the rebellions against Mieszko III.

In sum, there is a perceptible difference between the two chroniclers' approaches to Vincentius's idea of easily dissolvable bonds of loyalty. While Dzierzwa does not differ much from his predecessor, the Silesian monk seems more hesitant to endorse the possibility of rebelling against the bad Piast rulers. While we cannot prove that Dzierzwa's position is a result of ideological similarities with Vincentius, the differing approaches of the authors from Silesia and Lesser Poland can be explained by the political developments, with Lesser Polish political elites used to the idea of playing the role of electors as described by Vincentius.

2.7 Conclusions

The Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* and Dzierzwa's *Chronicle* share many similarities. Both chronicles were written in busy intellectual milieus. While neither author claimed direct patronage of the court, they both presented views that aligned with the interests of certain Piast rulers—be it Henryk IV Probus or Władysław I the Short—paying special attention to the genealogies of respective branches of the dynasty. When abbreviating the *Chronica Polonorum* of Vincentius of Cracow, both the Silesian and the Franciscan decided to strip it of its elaborate

⁴⁰⁰ SCP, 636: *Quod cernens Odo, filius Mesiconis, una cum aliis patrem invadens profugit, qui cum, ut predictum est, in amicorum copia licet esset in signis, omnium tamen destitutus adiutorio, quod valide querebat, vix tantundem Posnaniensem provinciam cum omnibus filiis de gracia fratris obtinuit.*

⁴⁰¹ See Chapter 3.4.1 below.

prose and erudite interjections. Nevertheless, in their approach to the Vincentian tradition, the turn-of-the-fourteenth-century chroniclers made different editorial decisions on which parts of *Chronica* to omit or recontextualize. These differences were reflected in the way both authors approached the vision of loyalty they found in Vincentius's text.

Unsurprisingly, given their focus on genealogies of Piast family branches, both authors paid less attention to the imagined pre-dynastic past. Instead, they chose to underline the special authority the ruling dynasty, elevated by God and, in the case of Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*, the Emperor, held over Poland. In comparison to Dzierzwa, who more closely followed Vincentius of Cracow's narration and judgement, the Lubiąż monk strongly accentuated the charismatic bonds linking Piasts with their subjects. Unlike chroniclers from Cracow, the Silesian author found actions of the subjects who broke the bonds linking them with Piast rulers difficult to justify. As we will see in the next chapter, this attitude also carried into the description of the contemporary rebellions. While the term is not used, Lubiąż monk's position was evocative of the idea of the Piasts as *domini naturales*. While holding divergent positions on the possibility of rightfully dissolving the bonds, both chroniclers agreed on the ways in which they could be strengthened. The oaths and the feasts continued to play important roles in the turn-of-the-fourteenth-century chronicles. Neither Dzierzwa nor Lubiąż monk shared Vincentius's worries about the corruptible influence of bad gift-giving, with the latter presenting rewards of land for service as expected and uncontroversial.

The land given to the champion who represented Bolesław III in a judicial duel was only one of the reflections of the developments in the political culture of fragmented Poland, reflected in Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*. The surprising transformation of comes Magnus into a bishop of Wrocław might have reflected a more critical lens through which supporters of Piast dukes viewed the empowered ecclesiastical hierarchs. More telling, however, is the redefining of the negative content of the bonds of loyalty presented by Lubiąż monk. The new reinvented unfaithful subjects, like Bolesław III and Piotr Włost, did not have to commit a direct offence against their lord's life and limb, but showed their disloyalty in diminishing lord's *honor*.

Chapter 3: Fragmented Realm, Fragmented Traditions

Almost a century-long period between the writing of *Chronica Polonorum* and chronicles by Lubiąż monk and Dzierzwa did not see any comparable historiographical works being created in fragmented Poland. This does not mean, however, that there were no other means through which ideas about bonds of loyalty between Piasts and their subjects were communicated and discussed. Annalistic traditions created by members of cathedral chapters and Cracow Franciscans, the *Book of Henryków*, charters, and legal documents created in fragmented Poland made note of loyal service and treachery, commenting on the relationship between rulers and subjects, evoking shared norms and expectations. In this chapter, I combine these disparate sources and the contemporary parts of *Dzierzwa's Chronicle* and Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*, into one corpus, which I interrogate in a manner similar to Vincentius's work. Unlike Vincentius's *Chronica Polonorum*, however, the combined sources do not reveal a unified vision of loyalty, but rather a plurality of overlapping ideas about the proper relationship between ruler and his subjects circulating in fragmented Poland. Given the size of the corpus, the discussion in this chapter is confined to bonds of loyalty linking Piasts with Polish nobles and *milites*, with burghers and foreign knights discussed in Chapter 4.

This chapter is divided into six parts, structured around the questions about bonds of loyalty. Thus, I first return to the question of the origins of the bonds between Piasts and their subjects, asking how sources outside of the chronicles tackled the question of obedience rooted not in personal relationships, but the dynastic charisma of Piasts as *domini naturales*. In the second part, I focus on ways of strengthening the bonds of loyalty, investigating old and new tools at Piast's disposal. Given the strong position on dangers of gift-giving presented in Vincentius's *Chronica*, I pay special attention to the shifting ideas about appropriateness of remuneration of loyal service and reciprocity in relations between the ruler and noble subjects. In the third part of the chapter, I return to the question of the content of the bonds, examining what exactly was entailed by the loyal service performed by Piast's *milites*, as described in chronicles, annals, and ducal documents. The following two parts of the chapter are dedicated to disloyalty, with the first one focusing on the depictions of treacherous subjects, and the second investigating those instances of rebellion against contemporary Piast rulers that authors of the sources from fragmented Poland found justifiable. The last analytical part of the chapter is dedicated to aftermaths of these rebellions, touching on the punishment suffered by those accused of disloyalty and asking about the possibility of reconciliation between the Piast ruler

and internal opposition. Finally, short conclusions will reiterate and summarize the most important findings of the chapter.

3.1 From “Natural Lords” to “True Heirs”

One of the first questions I tried to tackle at the beginning of the previous chapters concerned the imagined origins of the bonds of loyalty between Piast rulers and their subjects. The answer was often connected to the broader problem of the dynasty’s position in the political community envisioned by the authors of the analyzed chronicles. The ideological claims about the underlying Piast rulership—and, in consequence, the ruler-subject relationship—become more difficult to trace in the remaining thirteenth-century sources. In the following subchapter, I want to focus on those examples that suggest that loyalty to the Polish dukes is based not only on the personal relationship, but on the reverence owed to the Piasts based on their dynastic charisma.

Before looking into the narrative sources, it is worth acknowledging other manifestations that point towards the continuity of the idea of the Piasts’ divinely sanctioned authority. These are most readily visible in the political aspects of liturgical celebrations celebrated in the diocese of Płock. The gradual produced for Bolesław II of Płock sometime between 1310-13 contained an *Exultet* that added the names of the Duke and his heirs to the local bishop in *una cum* prayer, celebrating members of the Piast family during Easter, one of the most significant Christian festivities.⁴⁰² According to Paweł Figurski, the gradual was only the most spectacular example of attempts at highlighting the sacrality of the ducal authority of (Mazovian) Piasts within a liturgical context. The inclusion of the *Ordo ad regem benedicendum* in the *Płock Pontifical* produced in the first half of the thirteenth century, or the inclusion of the names and images of the ducal family on the ornate liturgical chalice and paten donated to the bishopric by duke Siemowit (+1262) may have been motivated by a similar goal.⁴⁰³

⁴⁰² The sacralizing aspect of the Gradual’s chant was noted already in the older historiography, where it was taken for *laudatio regis*. See Brygida Kürbis, “Zum Herrscherlob in der Chronik des Gallus Anonymus (Anfang 12. Jahrhundert): ‘Laudes regiae’ am polnischen Hof?,” in *Patronage und Klientel. Ergebnisse einer polnisch-deutschen Konferenz*, ed. Heinz-Heinrich Nolte (Cologne: Böhlau, 1989), 51–67; Zbigniew Dalewski, “‘Vivat Princeps in Eternum!’ Sacrality of Ducal Power in Poland in the Earlier Middle Ages,” in *Monotheistic Kingship. The Medieval Variants*, ed. Aziz Al-Azmeh and János Bak (Budapest: CEU Press, 2004), 229; Paweł Figurski, “The ‘Exultet’ of Bolesław II of Mazovia and the Sacralisation of Political Power in the High Middle Ages,” in *Premodern Rulership and Contemporary Political Power. The King’s Body Never Dies*, ed. Karolina Mroziewicz and Aleksander Sroczyński (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2017), 85–103.

⁴⁰³ Figurski, “The ‘Exultet’ of Bolesław II,” 106–8; For the text of Płock’s *Ordo* see Antoni Podleś, ed., *Pontyfikal Płocki z XII wieku. Studium liturgiczno-źródłoznawcze* [The 12th-century Płock Pontifical. A liturgical and source study] (Płock: Płockie Wydawnictwo Diecezjalne, 1986), 111–16; Traditionally, these liturgical objects have been linked with Konrad I of Mazovia’s penance of Płock’s *scholasticus* Jan Czapla, though the commission was finished already after his death and donated by his wife Agafia and son Siemowit. See Kazimierz Jasiński, “Kielich

In the previous chapter, I argued that the changes made by the authors of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* and *Dzierzwa's Chronicle* to the older historiographic tradition signaled a stronger belief in the sacrality of ducal power. Neither the anonymous monk from Lubiąż nor Dzierzwa used the term *domini naturales* to describe Piast rulership, but both gestured towards the Piasts' special role in Polish history and the loyalty it merited from their subjects.

As both authors continued their narratives beyond the events covered already in Vincentius of Cracow's *Chronica Polonorum*, the very structure of their chronicles carried the message that strengthened dynastic authority. The more contemporaneous parts of their works emphasize the genealogical information about the respective Piast family branches. Thus, the second part of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* contains a brief overview of the younger of the Silesian lines, which take their origin from Mieszko IV (Tanglefoot), the lord of Upper-Silesian Opole and Racibórz. Here, the main narrative focuses on the descendants of Bolesław the Tall, who went to form the lines ruling Legnica, Głogów, and Wrocław.⁴⁰⁴ *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*, in turn, contains a detailed genealogy of the Mazovio-Cuyavian branch of the dynasty, tracing it from the son of Kazimierz III the Just, Konrad I of Mazovia, to his living grandchildren, with Władysław I the Short being the most notable among them.⁴⁰⁵ Both genealogies could be used to bolster the claims of the chroniclers' patrons—be it Henryk IV Probus or Władysław I the Short—to the leading role within the dynasty and the throne of Cracow. More importantly, outside of their immediate political utility, the detailed genealogies, with their praises for the achievements, piety, or heroic deaths at the hands of the pagans, bolstered the authority of the Piasts in general, while creating deeper links between local branches and regional identity.⁴⁰⁶

These regional identities, in turn, intersected with the claims about the loyalty owed by the inhabitants of the divided Piast territories. This was not a personal bond, but a charismatic one, grounded in the hereditary title. Such an assertion appeared most visibly in the thirteenth-century annalistic sources describing the successful campaigns of Przemysł I and Bolesław I the Pious to seize all Greater Poland in the 1240s. The intellectual circles close to the sons of Władysław Odonic, the cathedral chapters of Gniezno and Poznań, presented the successes of the young princes as grounded in their status as the “true heirs” (*veri heredes*) of Greater Poland.

płocki z pateną - dar księcia mazowieckiego Konrada I” [Płock chalice with paten - a gift of the Mazovian prince Konrad I], in *Człowiek w społeczeństwie średniowiecznym*, ed. Roman Michałowski (Warsaw: DiG, 1997), 283–87.

⁴⁰⁴ SCP, 644–56.

⁴⁰⁵ *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*, 76–78; Banaszkiewicz, *Kronika Dzierzwy*, 112–116.

⁴⁰⁶ Drelicharz, *Unifying the Kingdom of Poland*, 207.

The term was not only a statement of the hereditary claim to what both Przemysł I and Bolesław I saw as their father's patrimony. It also carried within itself, as I will argue, an assertion about the family charisma that echoed the idea of the *domini naturales*.

This struggle of the young Greater Polish Piasts, framed by the annalists as a triumph over external enemies, was just a chapter in a longer dynastic dispute. While much of the conflict unfolded as a competition between the Silesian and Greater-Polish branches of the ruling family, its roots lay in the friction over the inheritance left by the death of Mieszko III the Old in 1202.

The old ruler of Greater Poland was outlived by two male descendants: his youngest son Władysław IV Spindelshanks, and a child of his first-born Odon, also named Władysław (dubbed in Polish historiography Odonic). Initially, Władysław IV was able to hold both Greater Poland and the throne of Cracow, while exercising guardianship over his nephew. But by 1206, his position had substantially deteriorated. Evicted from Cracow by Leszek the White, Władysław's authority in Greater Poland was challenged by archbishop Henryk Kietlicz and Odon's son, who had just entered adulthood.⁴⁰⁷ The younger Władysław Odonic was defeated and forced into exile by his uncle. He initially found an ally in Henryk the Bearded of Silesia, who entrusted Władysław Odonic to hold the land around Kalisz until he regained the rest of his patrimony. As his position in Greater Poland strengthened, he refused to fulfill his promise to return Kalisz to Henryk. Thus, the Silesian Piast changed sides, allying with Władysław IV Spindelshanks, driving Władysław Odonic again into temporary exile by 1218. Without going into too fine an attempt to reconstruct political events, I will only point out how with the help of the Pomeranians, Władysław Odonic returned to Greater Poland in 1223. The changing tides of the festering conflict eventually shifted to his side by 1229. Władysław IV Spindelshanks was forced to flee to Silesia, where he died in 1231 after granting the rights to his Greater Polish possessions (and Lesser Polish claims) to Henryk I the Bearded and his son Henryk II the Pious.⁴⁰⁸

⁴⁰⁷ Władysław Abraham, *Pierwszy spór kościelno-polityczny w Polsce* [The first ecclesiastical-political dispute in Poland], *Rozprawy Wydziału historyczno-filozoficznego Akademii Umiejętności* 32 (Cracow: Akademia Umiejętności, 1895), 293–97; Zientara, *Henryk Brodaty*, 153–55; Baran-Kozłowski, *Arcybiskup gnieźnieński Henryk Kietlicz*, 86–94, 130–35; Sławomir Pelczar, *Władysław Odonic: Książę Wielkopolski, wygnaniec i protektor kościoła (ok. 1193–1239)* [Władysław Odonic: Duke of Greater Poland, exile and protector of the church (ca. 1193–1239)] (Cracow: Avalon, 2013), 78–98; Bronisław Nowacki, *Przemysł I: Książę suwerennej Wielkopolski 1220/1221–1257* [Przemysł I: Duke of sovereign Greater Poland 1220/1221–1257] (Cracow: Avalon, 2018), 62–67.

⁴⁰⁸ Zientara, *Henryk Brodaty*, 324; Maciej Przybył, *Władysław Laskonogi: książę wielkopolski 1202–1231* [Władysław Laskonogi: duke of Greater Poland 1202–1231], 2nd ed. (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2015), 156; This was accompanied by the adoption of the younger of Henryk's by old duke Władysław. The Greater

This claim seemed to have been recognized by at least some of the Greater Polish nobles. In the words of the *Annals of the Gniezno Chapter*, in 1233 “[Greater]Polish knights wanted to kill their lord Władysław, son of Odon, having led Duke Henryk with his son into [Greater] Poland.”⁴⁰⁹ The author of the later *Greater Polish Chronicle* made Władysław Odonic’s favor towards the church a reason for rebellion of the threatened secular *primates*. This rationale appealed to twentieth-century historiography, though it needs to be noted that it is missing from contemporary sources.⁴¹⁰

These contemporary sources are overall rather scarce, allowing for only a rudimentary reconstruction of the conflict. According to the version of events related four years later by Władysław Odonic, the first attack by Silesian Piasts was defeated and both Henryks had to renounce under oath and the threat of excommunication, their claims to lands once held by Władysław’s uncle or grandfather.⁴¹¹ Nevertheless, the Silesian dukes mounted another campaign the next year, which proved very successful. The terms of peace, mediated by the archbishop of Gniezno Pełka and the bishop of Poznań Paweł, are known to us from the transumpt of the document confirming the agreement issued by Pope Gregory IX. The Silesian dukes were to keep important castles in Santok and Śrem, and all the territories on the left bank of the Warta River, effectively surrounding the control over the southern part of Greater Poland to the two Henryks. Furthermore, these new possessions, now granted by his father to the younger Henryk II Pious were secured under the protection of the papal bull, issued along with the confirmation of the treaty.⁴¹²

Dissatisfied with this unfavorable result, Władysław Odonic did not let the conflict rest. Next to the occasional military action, like the illicit seizure of Śrem in 1235 or fighting around the unidentified *Pobzin*, the Greater Polish ruler tried his luck at the papal court. The first proceedings, which, due to the appeal of Silesian dukes, took place in front of bishop Ekkehard, did not bring changes to the *status quo*. The second proceeding which was to take place in 1237, was seemingly similarly unsuccessful – though the surviving instruction issued by the Pope to the bishop of Płock Piotr and the abbot of Kołbacz (Kolbatz) monastery gives us invaluable

Polish ruler used this procedure earlier himself, in order to secure his claim to Cracow, adopting Bolesław V the Chaste in 1228. See Pauk, “Regnum,” 103–4.

⁴⁰⁹ RkG, [12], 4: *Item M^oCCXXXIII^o milites Poloni volebant interficere dominum suum Wladislaum filium Odonis inducentes ducem Henricum cum filio suo in Poloniam.*

⁴¹⁰ Jasiński, “Z problematyki zjednoczenia,” 201–5; Following Jasiński’s argument Zientara, *Henryk Brodaty*, 328; Nowacki, *Przemysł I*, 124.

⁴¹¹ SUB II.134: *dicti duces H(enricus) et H(enricus), quicquid iuris eis competebat vel competere poterat in terra quondam M(esconis) avi et W(ladizlauri) patruis eisdem ducis Polonie, quam quidem pacifice possidebat, sponte penitus remittentes iuramento prestito promiserunt.*

⁴¹² SUB II.97.

insight into the text of Władysław's appeal and his perspective on the conflict.⁴¹³ Thus, by the time of the death of Władysław Odonic in 1239 Greater Poland remained divided, with its southern parts firmly in the hands of the Silesian Piasts.

It was not until the death of Henryk II the Pious at the battle of Legnica in 1241 that the sons of Władysław Odonic, Przemysł I and Bolesław the Pious, had an opportunity to recover these disputed territories of Greater Poland. With the aftermath of the Mongol campaign leaving territories gathered by the Silesian Henryks in the hands of young Bolesław Rogatka and his adolescent brothers, the Silesian Piasts were unable to defend all their claims. Thus, the *Annals of the Gniezno Chapter* informs under 1241 that:

The Poles [Greater Poles] who supported Duke Henryk, through whom the same duke obtained the principality in [Greater] Poland, having abandoned his son Bolesław on account of his insolence and resigning from their service to him they openly lent their support to the sons of late Władysław, son of late Odon, that is Przemysł and Bolesław, who were the true heirs (*veri heredes*) of [Greater] Poland. Following this, they immediately captured Castle Przemęt.⁴¹⁴

Writing under the patronage of Władysław Odonic's sons, the annalist was quick to point out the difference between Henryk II the Pious and Przemysł and Bolesław. The former ruled Greater Poland only due to the support of some locals, while the latter were the true heirs, genealogically linked with the land.

The annalist's descriptions of the further successes of Greater Polish Piasts always underline that parts of their patrimony were recovered not by the dukes alone, but with significant help of those who recognized their position as true heirs of the land. When in 1243, a coalition of Teutonic Knights and Polish dukes took Nakło from the hands of the Pomeranians, the castle was passed to its *verus heres* - Przemysł I.⁴¹⁵ A year later, Greater Polish dukes were able to recover Kalisz from the hands of Bolesław the Bald's wards, Duchess Wiola, the widow of Kazimierz of Opole, and her adolescent son Władysław.⁴¹⁶ The annalist from Gniezno writes that the Duke's *milites* seized Kalisz and returned it to Przemysł.⁴¹⁷ Similarly, in the same year

⁴¹³ SUB II.134.

⁴¹⁴ RkG, [27], 6: *Item anno quo supra Poloni qui duci Henrico adhererant per quod idem dux principatum in Polonia obtinebat, filio suo Boleslao propter insolenciam ipsius derelicto, etc ei servitium suum resignantes manifeste adhererunt filiis quondam Wladislai filii condam Odonis, Przemisl videlicet et Boleslao, qui veri heredes Polonie fuerunt. Postmodum statim ceperunt castrum Przemanth.*

⁴¹⁵ RkG, [31], 6 : *Anno Domini Millesimo CCXLIII0 cruce signati cum predictis ducibus Polonie castrum Nakel de eius [Świętopełk] iurisdiccione capientes duci Przemisloni vero heredi instituerunt.*

⁴¹⁶ The south-Greater-Polish lands of Kalisz and Ruda were granted to the Duchess-regent by her protector, Henryk I the Bearded in 1234. See Zientara, *Henryk Brodaty*, 333–34.

⁴¹⁷ RkG, [36], 7: *Item auno prescripto dux Przemislius Polonie uxorem duxit filiam condam Henrici ducis Slezie. Post quod factum milites eius castrum Kalis ceperunt, quod ei restituerunt.*

the Pomeranians who had long held Santok in the name of Silesian Piasts handed it over to the Greater Polish duke.⁴¹⁸

Even the Piast rivals recognize the rightfulness of the claims of the Greater Polish *true heirs*. Sharing the ideological outlook of the Gniezno annals, the *Annals of the Poznań Chapter* note that in 1258 Bolesław the Pious decided to recover the castellany of Łąd, seized in his childhood by Cuyavian duke Kazimierz. Trusting in God's support of the rightful causes, Bolesław gathered a large army and entered Cuyavia, laying siege to Inowrocław. Seeing the opponent's force, Kazimierz, nagged by his conscience for holding the land "against heir's will, God, and justice", followed the advice of his *barones* and handed half of the disputed territory to Bolesław.⁴¹⁹

The title of the *veri heredes* worked not only to underscore the hereditary claims, but also carried expectations concerning the loyalty of the inhabitants of the disputed land. For the annalists writing in the Gniezno and Poznań cathedral milieus, Przemysł I and Bolesław I the Pious's status as true heirs of Greater Poland implied that they commanded natural loyalty to the Greater Polish subjects. Men who previously served—often for a long time—other rulers recognized the claim of Władysław Odonic's sons, handing to them parts of their rightful inheritance. Those who rebelled against Silesian rule or handed over Kalisz to Przemysł resembled the men who recognized Kazimierz I as their *dominus naturalis* and aided his return to Poland in the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* or twelfth-century *Gesta*. This similarity has been recognized by the author of the later Chronicle of Greater Poland. Expanding on the material found in the *Annals of the Gniezno Chapter*, he wrote that Greater Polish *terrigene* abandoned Bolesław the Bald for Przemysł and Bolesław, their *domini naturales*.⁴²⁰

The notes made by the Greater Polish annalists on Przemysł I and Bolesław the Pious's recovery of their patrimony were not the only instance in which the claim to "true heirship" was used in dynastic competition. Famously, two Piast contestants for the legacy of Przemysł

⁴¹⁸ RkG, [38], 7: *Item anno eodem dux Barnimusa novum castellum ante Santok edificavit et Pomorani, qui longo tempore in antiquo Santok duci Henrico et filio eius Boleslao servierant, castrum Santok duci Przemisloni tradiderunt.*

⁴¹⁹ RkP, [88], 44: *confisus tamen Boleslaus dux de sua iustitia et fiduciam habens in Domino, qui non deserit iustos et tenes se ad consilium propheticum qui dixit 'pugna pro patria', collegit magnum exercitum [...]. Remordebatur etiam ipsum ducem Kazimirum consciencia, quod rem alienam invito herede contra Deum et iustitiam teneret.*

⁴²⁰ 72 in *Chronica Poloniae maioris*, 88: *Boleslaus namque primogenitus Henrici, quem Tartari occiderunt, mansuetudine patris exutus et sevicia beluina indutus, qui patri suo Henrico cum fratribus suis, Henrico videlicet, Wladislao, Cunrado et Meszcone in ducatibus successerat, cepit sevir in Polonos et insolentiam nimiam exercens Theutonicos Polonis preferendo et ipsis predia large tribuendo. Propter quod Poloni sibi fidelitatis omagia facere recusaverunt ab ipsius dominio sponte recedentes. Adheseruntque dominis suis naturalibus Premislioni et Boleslao filiis quoniam ducis Wladislai Odonis. Quo facto mox terrigene Poloni castrum Przemianth sub Boleslao duce Slesie a quo recesserant ceperunt et dominis suis Premislioni et Boleslao assignaverunt.*

II, Henryk III of Głogów and Władysław I the Short, embraced the concept in their *intitulatio* at the turn of the fourteenth century. The Silesian Piast introduced the title of *heres Regni Poloniae* in his documents in 1301. The title was meant to signal his claim to Przemyśl II's domain and royal ambitions, while echoing the language used at the court of King Vaclav II of Bohemia, at the time Henryk's main rival. Władysław I the Short started using the variations of the title *verus heres totius Regni Poloniae* in 1306, though he was not always consistent about its application.⁴²¹

It is on Władysław the Short's return to Poland that, for the second time, we can find the expression of the special loyalty owed to *verus heres* by the subjects inhabiting the land in the sources. The returning Piast found himself in a conflict with the bishop of Cracow Jan Muskata. Coming from a family of Wrocław burghers, Jan was elected bishop in 1294. An adept politician, he was a strong supporter of King Václav II and an important pillar of the Premyslid rule in Cracow, holding an office of *starosta (capitaneus)*, the king's representative in Lesser Poland, since 1303.⁴²² At the same time, bishop Jan was pursuing a project of expanding episcopal holdings in an attempt to create a territorial lordship.⁴²³ Having angered much of the cathedral chapter and Lesser Polish elites by harshly exercising his temporal power and tolerating the abuses of his men, the bishop found himself in a difficult position with the unexpected death of Václav III in 1306. By the time of Władysław's return to Lesser Poland, Jan Muskata was also already in conflict with archbishop Jan Świnka.⁴²⁴ In early 1306 the

⁴²¹ For the first time the title appears in the document issued on 16th December 1306 in Gdańsk, CDP II.195; In the most recent compilation of other documents using the same titulature, Tomasz Jurek pointed out rather lax attitude in the way in which chancery of Władysław the Short employed the title, see Tomasz Jurek, "Od dziedzica Królestwa do króla" [From the heir of the Kingdom to the king], in *Władztwo Władysława Łokietka: 700-lecie koronacji królewskiej*, ed. Wojciech Fałkowski and Przemysław Tyszka (Warsaw: Zamek Królewski w Warszawie, 2022), 92.

⁴²² The office, first introduced by Vaclav II in 1291, became gradually adopted by Władysław I the Short. For the general outline of the process of its reception in Piast Poland see: Stanisław Kutrzeba, *Starostowie: ich początki i rozwój w XIV w.* [Starostas: their origins and development in the 14th century] (Cracow: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 1903); Jurek, "Polska pod władzą," 197–203; There is no consensus on when exactly Jan Muskata received this office, but the terminus ante quem has to be the last mention of his predecessor on the post, Oldřich of Boškovice, from July 1303. The detailed discussion in Tomasz Pietras, "*Krwawy wilk z pastorałem*": *Biskup krakowski Jan zwany Muskatą* ["Bloodied wolf with a crozier": Bishop of Cracow Jan called Muskata] (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper, 2001), 66–68.

⁴²³ Bartos, "Diplomacy and Arms," 29–33; Sławomir Gawlas, "Człowiek uwikłany w wielkie procesy – przykład Muskaty" [Man entangled in broad processes - example of Jan Muskata], in *Człowiek w Społeczeństwie Średniowiecznym*, ed. Roman Michałowski (Warsaw: DiG, 1997), 391–401.

⁴²⁴ The origins of the conflict, festering since 1301, are not well known. In 1303, the archbishop excommunicated Jan and relieved him of his office, citing Muskata's insubordination and the damages he inflicted on the archbishopric's possessions and men. Muskata was cleared of all of the accusations in an arbitration proceedings held by the bishop of Wrocław Henryk of Wierzbno in 1304, promising to respect the archbishop's authority. See Pietras, *Krwawy wilk z pastorałem*, 154; Tomasz Nowakowski, "Polityka biskupów krakowskich w końcu XIII wieku (Prokop i Jan Muskata)" [The policy of the bishops of Cracow at the end of the 13th century (Prokop and Jan Muskata)], *Nasza Przeszłość* 75 (1991): 19.

archbishop began a canonic process against his subordinate, sending Henryk, canon of Łęczyca and former chaplain of Władysław I the Short, and Mikołaj, canon of Uniejów, to gather testimonies in Lesser Poland. The temporary rapprochement reached by Władysław and Jan Muskata in September of 1306 briefly halted the process. Nevertheless, as the very next year saw the bishop of Cracow driven out of his diocese into exile in Wrocław, 1308 saw the renewal of the process and the interrogation of further witnesses.⁴²⁵

The testimonies of the witnesses interrogated during the process survived in a copy of the protocol made for use in further legal proceedings in 1310. The statements given by the participants were clearly abbreviated, some were presented as joint group testimonies, while others were simply noted as corresponding to those already given before. Despite these flaws, the testimonies offer, as pointed out by Sławomir Gawlas, an opportunity to interrogate the beliefs of the trial's participants, recruited among the supporters of Władysław I's rule in Lesser Poland.⁴²⁶ The charges leveled against Jan Muskata span a wide range – from simony, the abuse of property belonging to the Cracow and Sandomierz chapters, to cruelty in his exercise of secular authority as the *starosta (capitaneus)* on behalf of the Přemyslid monarch.⁴²⁷

From the perspective of this study, the most important were the accusations regarding the breaking of oaths that guaranteed the safety of persons and their property, and those of planning to overthrow and expel the true heir of Cracow land Duke Władysław and *terrigenas Polonos* while bringing in foreigners.⁴²⁸

The distinction in the list of accusations between the bishop's perfidy and his conspiring against Władysław I the Short and the inhabitants of Lesser Poland is not without significance. It was left to the witnesses themselves to draw the connection between the perjuries Jan Muskata was accused of and his disloyalty against the Piast ruler. Some of those interrogated back in 1306 mentioned an oath of loyalty that the Cracow's bishop swore to Władysław (and Lesser Polish nobles), though they did not agree on the oath's specifics. Herbord, dean of Sandomierz College of canons, said that Jan Muskata broke the oath he swore to Władysław and "nobilibus terre" to keep the peace by bringing Germans and handing them castles across

⁴²⁵ The unfolding of the proceedings in 1306, 1308, and of the bishop Muskata's appeal in 1310 is presented in Pietras, *Krwawy wilk z pastorałem*, 80, 91–104.

⁴²⁶ Gawlas, "Verus heres," 85.

⁴²⁷ MPV III.121, 78.

⁴²⁸ MPV III.121, 78: *item, quod plerique prestito corporali iuramento super indemnitate personarum et rerum ipsos tandem lesit graviter in rebus partier et personis; item quod conatur verum heredem et patronum terre et ecclesie Cracoviensis videlicet dominum ducem Wladislaum et terrigenas Polonos de propriis dominiis ad gentes exterarum et scismaticas profligare et alienigenas inducere cum gravi pauperum lesione, quos potius deberet tamquam pater filios et pastor gregem sibi commissum reficere pabulo spirituali.*

the land, from which they perpetrated many atrocities.⁴²⁹ Wirzchosław, a canon of Sandomierz, also claimed that the bishop swore to uphold peace (*vellet pacem tenere*), adding that this false promise was made when swearing on the fragments of the Holy Cross.⁴³⁰ According to the presbyter Theoderic, Jan Muskata was a persecutor of the duke and the entire “gens Polonica”, aiming to drive them off the land even as he gave them an oath of peace and loyalty.⁴³¹ Provost Zdzisław, who claimed that he did not know a more dangerous man than his bishop, said that initially Muskata swore an oath promising to support the duke and “*terrigenae*” in recovering the land of Cracow, only to join the efforts of their enemies to disinherit Władysław and his men.⁴³² A few different witnesses were noted in the protocol to having responded similarly to the interrogation, though their words were not written down.⁴³³ Sławomir Gawlas saw the testimonies about oaths sworn by Jan Muskata to Władysław and Cracow’s nobles as proof of “organizing principle of the loyalty grounded in a personally entered obligations.”⁴³⁴

Yet crucially, not all witnesses linked bishop Jan’s perjuries with his designs against the Piast duke. *Scholasticus* Jan focused instead on the oath given by Jan before his election to the bishopric, in which he promised not to elevate Germans to the ecclesiastical offices, and which he clearly broke by doing exactly the opposite.⁴³⁵ By the time interrogations resumed in 1308, none of the newly testifying witnesses focused on the broken oaths. Instead, when describing Jan Muskata’s actions against Władysław, they followed the formula used in the accusation, underlying the Piast’s position as *verus heres*. Some of the witnesses even described that the bishop of Cracow thought nothing of the true heir’s special status, audaciously declaring that while the duke might be searching for a new bishop, he is searching for a new duke.⁴³⁶

⁴²⁹ MPV III.121, 80: *Dixit eciam, quod commisit crimen periurii iurando domino duci et nobilibus terre pacem tenere, quod postea immutavit, alienigenas Theutonicos videlicet in Cracoviensem terram introducendo et eis castra propria tradendo et alia tradi procurando, ex quo multa mala et vastaciones sunt secute et homicidia perpetrata.*

⁴³⁰ MPV III.121, 84: [bishop Jan] *multa periuria commisit iurando domino duci et terrigenis quod vellet pacem tenere, et ultimo iuravit super lignum sancte Crucis domino duci et terrigenis super premissis, quod statim mutavit.*

⁴³¹ MPV III.121, 82: [bishop Jan] *persequutor est domini principis et gentis Polonice et facto eis iuramento corporali de pace et fidelitate nititur eos exterminare de terra et alienigenas inducere.*

⁴³² MPV III.121, 83: *idem dominus episcopus iuramentum prestitit et firmiter promisit adherere domino duci et terrigenis dare omnem operam, ut terram suam Cracoviensem recuperarent, quod tandem mutavit, adherendo eiusdem domini ducis et terrigenarum inimicis et cum eis ordinando et procurando ipsos exheredare, et adiunxit, quod in mundo periculosior homo reperiri non posset.*

⁴³³ These testimonies were usually denoted with the phrase like “*dixit per omnia sicut*” with “*licet diversis verbis*” added. Thus, following the testimony of Dean Herbord were those of Canon Świętosław and townspeople of Sandomierz, MPV III.121, 82; Testimony of Presbyter Teoderyk was followed by similar statements by Presbyter Vincentius, MPV III.121, 82; while the one by Wirzchosław was echoed by presbyters Paweł and Stanisław, MPV III.121, 84-85.

⁴³⁴ Gawlas, ““*Verus heres,*”” 89.

⁴³⁵ MPV III.121, 84.

⁴³⁶ MPV III. 121, 91, 92.

Therefore, the oaths were not the only source for the expectation of loyalty violated by the scheming bishop. What Gawlas missed, polemicizing with positions that saw Władysław's supporters as motivated by an abstract idea of *regnum Poloniae*, is that the claim about Władysław's hereditary right also carried with it a depersonalized idea about loyalty. Just like in the case of the descriptions of the sons of Władysław Odonic in the Greater Polish annals, the witnesses of Jan Muskata's trial draw a link between Władysław the Short's status as the true heir of Lesser Poland and the tacit obedience (if not direct support) he should count on from the local notables. At the time when the reigns of the Greater Polish Piasts or Władysław I the Short were particularly vulnerable, their supporters appealed to the special relationship between them and their subjects. The loyalty they called for was not grounded in personal relationships alone, but also in the hereditary claim of the ruler, and more broadly, the dynastic charisma.

3.2 Swearing, Giving, and Writing - Strengthening the Bonds

Following the structure of the first chapter, I turn now to the investigation of the tools used to strengthen the bonds of loyalty by the Piast rulers. First, I investigate the formal ways of strengthening the bonds through oaths and homages. Looking for the signs of informal mechanisms of strengthening the bonds, I will then turn towards the arengas of the ducal diplomas as increasingly important tools of communicating with Piast subjects, shaping and responding to their expectations concerning rewards for loyal service.

3.2.1 Oaths and Homage

Even though oaths did not feature as prominently on the pages of the turn-of-the-fourteenth-century chronicles as in Vincentius of Cracow's *Chronica Polonorum*, their continuous importance in political culture is well reflected in other sources. The thirteenth-century diplomas and annals especially frequently noted the oaths that Piast rulers swore to each other in their efforts to resolve inter-dynastic conflicts or reach dynastic consensus. This was the case, for example, during the above-discussed conflict over Greater Poland between Duke Władysław Odonic and Henryk of Silesia, with the oaths sworn by both sides noted in the documents presented to the Papal Curia.⁴³⁷ In another Greater-Polish example, found in the *Annals of Gniezno Chapter*, Przemysł I and Bolesław the Pious concluded the division of Greater Poland in 1247 by swearing mutual oaths to uphold it.⁴³⁸

⁴³⁷ KDW I.95; KDW I.173.

⁴³⁸ RkG, [49], 9.

More importantly for this thesis, the sources also present multiple occasions on which the rulers swore oaths to their subjects. These concerned many interests, not all of them purely material or political. The *Book of Henryków* describes how the knights of Bolesław the Bald refused to participate in the tournament organized on St. Martin's Day, lest the duke promise to make a pious donation. After the proper estate and the recipient (the Abbey of Henryków), are agreed upon, Bolesław, with his hand raised, promised to all the gathered that he would donate the estate.⁴³⁹ While this vignette from the Silesian cartulary presents us with the content of the duke's promise, this spur-of-the-moment obligation was given by Bolesław in only oral form.

This was not the case for the more consequential oaths given by Władysław III Spindleshanks at the assembly at Cienia in 1228. In an echo of the events of 1202 described in *Chronica Polonorum*, after the unexpected death of Leszek the White, Władysław III was once again approached by the Lesser-Polish elites with the proposition of taking Cracow's throne. This time, the Greater-Polish Piast would do so in the name of the adolescent son of Leszek, Bolesław V, and in challenge to Leszek's brother Konrad of Mazovia, who put forth his own claim to Lesser Poland. Meeting the Lesser-Polish delegation by Kalisz, Władysław issued two privileges – one for the Cracow Church,⁴⁴⁰ and the other for its secular elites. With the latter, duke Władysław adopted and made his successor the young Bolesław V. He swore an oath to the Lesser-Polish elites to uphold this arrangement and, furthermore, to defend Cracow with his own forces, love its barons and other nobles, and respect and defend its rights with the help of the bishop and the barons.⁴⁴¹ In at least two different examples, we can point to the diplomas that speak about the commitments made by the prospective rulers to their subjects, though without mentioning accompanying oaths explicitly. In 1278, Przemysław II mediated an agreement between Leszek the Black and Siemomysł, which allowed the latter to return to Cuyavia, under the conditions that he will rescind privileges he issued without the counsel of his *barones*, and stop the influx of the German knights.⁴⁴² In his bid for Cracow, in 1290

⁴³⁹ *Liber Fundationis*, 32-33.

⁴⁴⁰ KDKK I.20

⁴⁴¹ KDKK I.19: *Ego Wladizlaus dux Polonie, Bolezlaum filium fratris mei ducis Lestconis adopto in filium et in bonis meis omnibus mobilibus et immobilibus totaliter mihi heredem substituo, secundum quod iuravimus ego et pater eius, videlicet quod si quis nostrum habens prolem decederet, superstes prolem illam in propriam adoptaret et sibi totaliter substitueret in heredem, si propriam non haberet. Similiter econverso, et hoc cuiuslibet iure in integrum conservato. Et hoc iuro, quod ei nullo tempore inmutabo. Terram vero que ad ipsum ex paterna successione devenit, in protectionem et tutelam suscipio, et contra omnem hominem toto posse meo defendam, tam per me quam per meos ut suos milites. Barones eius eciam et alios nobiles pure diligam et benigne confovebo [...]. Iura iusta et honesta secundum episcopi et baronum consilium tenebo et faciam ea firmiter ab aliis teneri; quod si quis violaverit, punietur; et si reiteraverit, dignitate quam habet privabitur.*

⁴⁴² KDW I.482: *Tunc predictus dux Syradie terram Cuyavie fratri suo domino duci Zem. per nostram ordinacionem et procuracionem karitative restauravit, super talibus ordinacionibus compromissis, quod predictus Zem. dux Cuyavie frater noster, Teuthonicales milites et filios militum Teuthonicalium in terra et curia sua servare*

Václav II of Bohemia issued a document for the ecclesiastical and secular elites of Lesser Poland, promising to uphold their rights, customs, and laws.⁴⁴³

Thirteenth-century sources also depicted subjects swearing oaths to the rulers – though under circumstances which usually differed from those presented in Vincentius's *Chronica*. Most of the instances of oath-swearing by subjects noted in the annals and diplomas concerned the processes of individual reconciliation with the Piast ruler. Thus, the *Annals of the Poznań Chapter* describe how Przemysław I set free the nobles of the Nałęcz clan he had imprisoned after the *fideiussores* vouched that the released men will serve him *bona fide* and *sine fraude et dolo*.⁴⁴⁴ In another case, the reconciliation between Paweł of Przemanków, bishop of Cracow and Duke Leszek the Black saw both men making solemn promises at the Cracow assembly on 8th of December 1284. In a sign of growing trust in written documents, or perhaps great mistrust between both parties, the oral assurances were accompanied in this instance by a document. In it, the Piast ruler, supported by *fideiussores* from among his *barones*, swore to recompense financially all injuries inflicted on the bishop, took his possessions under his protection, and promised filial obedience to the bishop, while in return the duke received a sworn obedience from the bishop.⁴⁴⁵ Paweł was not the last of the Cracow bishops to swear their loyalty to a secular ruler. His successor, Prokop (1292-94), traveled to Prague in order to purge himself from the accusations of disloyalty and to swear an oath of loyalty to Vaclav II as the new Duke of Cracow.⁴⁴⁶ The broken oaths given by Prokop's successor, Jan Muskata, to Władysław the Short and his supporters were already mentioned in the previous subchapter. These individual oaths are, however, not accompanied by the broader gestures of the communal swearing. Even though the thirteenth- and early-fourteenth-century sources make note of the perilous transitions of power through the election of the new rulers, none of them matches the description of the oaths sworn by the subjects electing Leszek the White from Vincentius's *Chronica Polonorum*.

What persisted from the oaths depicted by Vincentius of Cracow throughout the thirteenth century was the role played by the Polish episcopate in witnessing and guaranteeing the sworn terms, threatening those who would break their oaths with excommunication. To stay within the corpus of the already cited examples, the oaths sworn between Władysław Odonic

denegaret, item et quascunque promissiones privilegiorum olim promisit vel tradidit maturo sine consilio, frivola et vana perseverent; eciam, quantumque villas aliquas in predicta Cuyavia temporibus domini ducis Polonie, patrui nostri, vel a duce L. Syradie receperunt, frater noster dominus dux Zem. minime ratum approbabit.

⁴⁴³ KDKK I.94.

⁴⁴⁴ RkP, [34], 27: *comes Thoma et filii ipsius Johannes et Sandziuoy de captivitate sunt liberati per manus fideiussorum hac condicione, quod duci Premisloni bona fide sine fraude et dolo debeant servire.*

⁴⁴⁵ KDKK I.85.

⁴⁴⁶ ACRB I.53

and the Silesian Piasts were witnessed by the bishops of Wrocław, Lubusz, and Poznań, while the oaths sworn by Przemysław I and Bolesław I the Pious when dividing Greater Poland in 1247 were to be ensured by the bishop of Poznań.⁴⁴⁷ This established practice gave the episcopate ample opportunity to strengthen its political position. The efforts of the Polish bishops to follow the papal reforms and to secure recently won privileges came together in 1233. The provincial synod organized that year in Sieradz by archbishop Pełka served as an occasion to find remedies for dynastic infighting, affirm church privileges, and conduct reforms. Among the resolutions of the synod—most of which were concerned with safeguarding the church's economic independence and with the conduct of the clergy (celibacy, proper appearance, etc.)—was the call for Polish episcopate to use excommunication to punish the dukes and magnates who would break an oath given in the presence of a bishop.⁴⁴⁸

The threat of excommunication, sometimes, however, remained empty. While Henryk the Bearded faced an excommunication in consequence of renewing his conflict with Władysław Odonic,⁴⁴⁹ this was not the case for Przemysław I, who was not punished for reneging on the old agreement with his younger brother in 1249.⁴⁵⁰ Moreover, the threat of excommunication as a tool of influencing the behaviors of the thirteenth-century Piast rulers had a mixed record. While Kazimierz of Cuyavia in 1264–67⁴⁵¹ and Konrad of Głogów in 1272⁴⁵² were quick to seek reconciliation with the Church in the face of excommunication, others, like Bolesław the Bald (1256–1261)⁴⁵³ or Henryk IV Probus (1282–88)⁴⁵⁴ waged long-running conflicts with the bishops of Wrocław despite repeated excommunications.

⁴⁴⁷See Chapter 3.1

⁴⁴⁸ KDW I.150: *Item statuimus, quod si quis ex principibus vel aliquis de magnatibus et ceteris quibuscunque, iuramento facto, maxime in presencia alicuius episcopi, contrarium suo iuramento fecerit, episcopus suus dyocesanus coram quo prestitum est sacramentum, periurum excommunicet et tamdiu faciat evitari, donec satisfaciat, vel sufficientem causam coram episcopo eodem assignaverit et probaverit quare fecit in contrarium: et si ille episcopus coram quo iuramentum fuerit factum, (causam illam non acceptaverit,) et si non satisfecerit, suus dyocesanus factum tale denunciaret illius ordinario, et ille excommunicet eum secundum predictam formam. Et si dux aliquis tali periuro aliquod castrum dederit et post tale periurium abstulerit vel destruxerit, in illo castro toto tamdiu non celebrentur officia divina, donec dux eidem castrum reddat, vel ipse de periurio satisfaciat sicut debet.*

⁴⁴⁹ On the straining relations between Silesian Piast and the Polish church, see Zientara, *Henryk Brodaty*, 343–53.

⁴⁵⁰ Beata Wojciechowska, *Ekskomunika w Polsce Średniowiecznej. Normy i Funkcjonowanie* [Excommunication in Medieval Poland. Norms and Functioning] (Kielce: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Humanistyczno-Przyrodniczego Jana Kochanowskiego, 2010), 171.

⁴⁵¹ Jacek Maciejewski, “Działalność kościelna biskupa wrocławskiego Wolimira (1252–1275)” [Ecclesiastical activities of Bishop Wolimir of Wrocław (1252–1275)], *Nasza Przyszłość* 78 (1992): 54–56.

⁴⁵² Tomasz Jurek, “Konrad I Głogowski. Studium z dziejów dzielnicowego Śląska” [Konrad I of Głogów. Study from the history of divided Silesia], *Roczniki Historyczne* 54 (1988): 137–38.

⁴⁵³ Dalewski, “Książę i Biskup.”

⁴⁵⁴ Maciej Maciejewski, *Orientacje polityczne biskupów metropolii gnieźnieńskiej 1283–1320* [Political orientations of the bishops of the archdiocese of Gniezno 1283–1320] (Cracow: Avalon, 2007), 115–51; Winfried Irgang, “Heinrich IV. und die Kirche,” in *Śląsk w czasach Henryka IV Prawego*, ed. Krzysztof Wachowski (Wrocław: Uniwersytet Wrocławski, 2005), 31–37; An English-language reader will find the brief overview of the

The case of Henryk IV is especially interesting from the perspective of the bonds of loyalty. The survival of many documents and correspondence sent throughout the dispute by Tomasz II, bishop of Wrocław, gives us a good (if one-sided) insight into the unfolding of the conflict. The dispute, which started around 1274 over the economic immunities of church-owned villages, was not resolved by the arbitration of Bruno, the bishop of Olomouc in 1276, nor by the papal legate's court in 1282. By 1284 bishop Tomasz fled Wrocław for his nearby possession in Otmuchów, from where he excommunicated the duke. When, later next year, Henryk IV seized Otmuchów and the bishop's castle in Edelstein by force, Tomasz fled to Racibórz. Finding himself in an increasingly difficult situation, within the next years the bishop of Wrocław sent a flurry of letters, looking for help everywhere he could hope to get it: from the canons of Wrocław still in good standing with the duke, other members of the Polish episcopate, the King of Bohemia, and the Pope. In the instructions sent along with the letter to Pope Honorius IV to his procurators at the Papal curia on 16th January 1287, Tomasz asked them to inquire about obtaining a Papal letter which would allow the Polish episcopate to declare Henryk IV's subjects absolved of any bonds of loyalty to the ruler and excommunicate those who would lend the duke any help, counsel, favor, or protection.⁴⁵⁵

Tomasz II understood the dissolving of the bonds of loyalty to be a radical step, on par with the other solution he suggested in the same document, a call for a crusade against Henryk, which would spur his Silesian cousins or *alii extranei* to militarily intervene on behalf of the church.⁴⁵⁶ The bishop of Wrocław's request showed a good understanding of the functioning practice of excommunication. In theory, canon law held that subjects bound to their lords by *fidelitas* should withhold their support from the excommunicated rulers. In practice, however, the absolving of the loyalty oaths required the Pope's separate judicial decision, like the one bishop Tomasz II was trying to obtain, issued in the face of repeated defiance.⁴⁵⁷ We do not learn from the sources if, as Tomasz wanted, the suspension of the bonds of loyalty between

conflict in Mikołaj Gładysz, *The Forgotten Crusaders: Poland and the Crusader Movement in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 368–73.

⁴⁵⁵ SUB V.307: *Unde, si videtur vobis, cum nos credamus esse expediens, quod eidem duci a domino papa littera dirigatur consueta excommunicatis, in qua eum moneat et mandet sibi, ut nos, canonicos nostros et ceterum clerum ad loca propria revocet et satisfaciat ecclesie de ablatis, addens comminationem, sicut domino pape videbitur expedire, vel si Romana ecclesia circa Wrat(islaviensem) ecclesiam maiori moveri voluerit pietate et ipsum ducem materiali gladio cohercere, tunc optineatur a sede apostolica littera ad dominum archiepiscopum nostrum et episcopum Wlad(islaviensem), ut ecclesias, in quibus aliquod ius habere dinoscitur, ab eius debito absolvant et fideles ipsius, quamdiu in excommunicatione et pertinacia perstiterit, ab eiusdem fidelitate denuncient penitus absolutes et excommunicent omnes dicto duci auxilio, consilio, favore vel aliquo patrocinio adherents [...]*

⁴⁵⁶ Ibidem. Plans discussed in Gładysz, *The Forgotten Crusaders*, 371–73

⁴⁵⁷ Elisabeth Vodola, *Excommunication in the Middle Ages* (Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press, 1986), 67–69.

Henryk IV Probus and his *fideles* was pronounced in the dioceses of the archbishop of Gniezno and the bishop of Włocławek, but it appears that just like the proposed crusade, it did not come to pass. Henryk's subjects seemed to have stayed loyal to him throughout the conflict,⁴⁵⁸ which ended with the duke besieging Racibórz in 1287 and reconciling with the bishop.⁴⁵⁹ Thus, the way in which the canon law's provisions about the suspensions of oaths of *fidelitas* would map onto the Polish practice of creating and strengthening bonds of loyalty through oaths remains unknown. We can state, however, that at least bishop Tomasz II believed that there was enough similarity for him to reach for this tool.

Just like excommunication, oath-breaking by the Piast rulers was sometimes described as absolving their subjects from the bonds of loyalty. Bolesław the Bald aimed to secure the help of Wilbrand, the archbishop of Magdeburg in the conflict against his brothers Henryk III and Konrad I by ceding to him half of the castle of Lubusz and the surrounding land.⁴⁶⁰ In the document issued by the duke but drafted by the archbishop's chancery, the outlining of the terms of the military help new allies could expect of each other is preceded by the stipulation that if either party were to not keep their promises, the garrison of Lubusz castle should ignore their authority and suspend their obedience.⁴⁶¹ Similar provisions can be found in the documents issued by Władysław the Short for Václav II of Bohemia in 1292 and 1299. These diplomas, dictated by the Czech chancery, demonstrate an illuminating contrast between the tools used to create and strengthen the bonds of loyalty in the political culture of the Bohemia of the last Přemyslids and fragmented Poland.

Oaths, homages, and belts – formalizing loyalty between Přemyslid monarchs and Piast Dukes

Both diplomas in question were the product of clashing ambitions of the powerful Bohemian king and the Piast ruler of the small Cuyavian Duchy of Brześć and Sieradz, both of whom were among the contenders for the rule in Lesser and Greater Poland. The first point of contention between the two rulers was the question of the succession to the throne of Cracow, left open following the death of Leszek the Black in 1288. Initially, the main contenders to the

⁴⁵⁸ Unable to peel off some of the strongest supporters of Henryk IV, in the excommunication issued again on 10th of April 1287, bishop Tomasz extended the excommunication to Henryk's ally Frederick I of Meissen, and his close advisors, like Chancellor Benrard von Kamenz, or Magister Ludwig. See SUB V.354

⁴⁵⁹ Maciejowski, *Orientacje polityczne biskupów*, 145–47.

⁴⁶⁰ SUB II.369.

⁴⁶¹ SUB II.368: *Ad hec si nos contra ea, que scripta sunt in hoc privilegio, veniremus, castrenses nostri medio tempore nullum nobis obsequium prestare deberent et in castris ipsis [sic! - MM] nullam nobis permittere potestatem, donec emendaretur secundum iustitiam vel amicitiam, quod contra privilegium factum esset, et in archiepiscopo sicut in nobis servari debebit. Qui autem contra Privilegium non venerit, obsequium habebit de suis castrensibus et potestatem castrorum suorum [...].*

throne were Bolesław II of Płock and Henryk IV of Wrocław. While the former gathered some initial support among the Lesser-Polish nobles and could count on his brother Konrad II of Czersk, Cuyavian cousins, and allies from Halycz and Volhynia, the latter was able to quickly seize and hold Cracow's Wawel castle.⁴⁶² Henryk's move prompted the interest of Václav II, who set his eyes on controlling Lesser Poland himself. After the death of Henryk IV Probus in the summer of 1290, Cracow was briefly seized by Przemysław II of Greater Poland, but the lack of support from the local elites and the pressure of Václav II led the Greater-Polish Piast to retreat from Lesser Poland by January 1291 at the latest.⁴⁶³ Nevertheless, the Bohemian King would still have to face the last contender for the control of Lesser Poland, as Władysław the Short, after supporting Bolesław II of Płock in 1288, decided to fulfill his own political ambitions and held the Duchy of Sandomierz in the north-eastern part of the region in his hands.⁴⁶⁴ The army of the Bohemian king, led by Arnold, bishop of Bamberg, entered Lesser Poland in 1291, and by the autumn of 1292 not only drove Władysław out of Sandomierz, but also pursued him to his Cuyavian patrimony. Besieged in Sieradz, the Piast ruler was forced to reach an agreement with Václav II.

⁴⁶² For the attempted reconstruction of the events of this phase of the conflict, see Janusz Grabowski, "Aspiracje polityczne Piastów z linii mazowieckiej do tronu w Polsce pod koniec XIII w." [Political aspirations of the Piast dynasty from the Masovian line to the throne in Poland at the end of the 13th century.], in *Władztwo Władysława Łokietka: 700-lecie koronacji królewskiej*, ed. Wojciech Fałkowski and Przemysław Tyszka (Warsaw: Zamek Królewski w Warszawie, 2022), 33–47; Agnieszka Teterycz-Puzio, *Bolesław II Mazowiecki: Na szlakach ku jedności: (ok. 1253/58 - 24 IV 1313)* [Bolesław II of Masovia (c. 1253/58 - 24 April 1313) on the Paths to Unity] (Cracow: Avalon, 2015), 66–71; The support bases of both candidates mapped out in Nowakowski, *Małopolska elita władzy*; Marcin R. Pauk, "Der eine hiez her Lechschit, her Wüeschhof der ander hiez. Kim byli stronnicy Henryka IV Probusa w Małopolsce?" [Der eine hiez her Lechschit, her Wüeschhof der ander hiez. Who were Henryk IV Probus' supporters in Lesser Poland?], *Roczniki Historyczne* 69 (2003): 91–98.

⁴⁶³ On the lack of support for Przemysław among the Lesser-Polish nobles, see Nowakowski, *Małopolska elita władzy*, 26–40; On Przemysław leaving Lesser-Poland, see Bronisław Nowacki, *Czeskie roszczenia do korony w Polsce w latach 1290–1335* [Czech claims to the crown in Poland in the years 1290–1335] (Poznań: Wydawnictwo UAM, 1987), 42.

⁴⁶⁴ *Traska's Annal*, 852; There is no consensus in the historiography on when exactly Władysław decided to pursue his own goals during the contest for the Lesser-Polish succession. Jan Tęgowski once proposed his candidacy in the face of Bolesław II's failures, see Jan Tęgowski, "Zabiegi księcia kujawskiego Władysława Łokietka o tron krakowski w latach 1288–1293" [The efforts of Duke of Cuyavia Władysław the Short to claim the throne of Kraków in the years 1288–1293], *Zapiski Kujawsko-Dobrzyńskie* 6 (1988): 53–56; The same author later changed his mind, accepting Tomasz Jurek's suggestion that Władysław's control over Sandomierz can be dated to Henryk IV's seizure of Cracow, see Jan Tęgowski, "Rola Łokietka w walce o Kraków w ostatnim ćwierćwieczu XIII stulecia: dojrzewanie idei zjednoczeniowej" [The role of Władysław the Shoty in the struggle over Cracow in the last quarter of the 13th century: the maturing of the idea of unification], in *Władysław Łokietek - odnowiciel Królestwa Polskiego*, ed. Janusz Grabowski, Waldemar Graczyk, and Hubert Wajs (Warsaw: Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych, 2021), 13; Jurek, "Plany koronacyjne Henryka," 21, footnote 76; Yet others saw Władysław's bid for Sandomierz as a response to Henryk IV's death, happening either in concert or competition with Przemysław II's attempt to control Cracow. See for example Łowmiański, *Początki Polski*, vol. 6, 855; Tomasz Nowakowski, "Stosunki między Przemysłem II a Władysławem Łokietkiem w okresie walk o Kraków po śmierci Leszka Czarnego (1288–1291)" [Relations between Przemysław II and Władysław the Elbow-high during the fight for Kraków after the death of Leszek the Black (1288–1291)], *Roczniki Historyczne* 54 (1988): 143–62; Bronisław Nowacki, *Przemysław II: Odnowiciel Korony Polskiej 1257–1296* [*Przemysław II: Restorer of the Polish Crown 1257–1296*], 2nd ed. (Cracow: Avalon, 2007), 164–65.

Three documents issued there paint a picture of the public gestures Władysław was forced to make to end the conflict. The first document was issued by Archbishop Jan Świnka on October 9th. He testified to have been among other prominent witnesses who had seen Władysław renounce his titles to Cracow and Sandomierz and swear an oath promising the king of Bohemia his loyalty and future aid against all of his foes. Jan was to act as the guarantor of the promises given by the Cuyavian Piast, pronouncing a sentence of excommunication that would fall on Władysław if he were to break his oath.⁴⁶⁵

Four days later, another document was issued by archbishop Jakub, this time joined by the bishops of Prague and Olomouc, Jan, Chancellor of the Kingdom of Bohemia, brother Meinhard of the Teutonic Order, the Piast dukes Bolesław II of Płock, Kazimierz of Bytom, and Bolesław of Opole, as well as Václav's half-brother Mikuláš of Opava. Here, Władysław's oath was presented explicitly as an act of submission and homage, in which the Piast Duke recognized Václav as his true and legitimate lord (*verus et legittimus dominus*). Władysław rendered *homagium* with the personal *iuramentum fidelitatis* sworn to the king, in which he promised lifelong loyal service. The duties of the new loyal subject were clearly outlined: they were not limited to "negative loyalty" of abstaining from any evil or deceit, but required Władysław to aid his lord against anyone, and to endeavor to promote, to the best of his ability, the King's benefit and honor.⁴⁶⁶ This oath, as well as Władysław's promise to renounce any claims in Lesser Poland, was to be kept not only under the threat of excommunication by archbishop Jakub Świnka. If Władysław were to violate the sworn promises, he would forfeit his hereditary rights to Sieradz and Cuyavia and would expect to be regarded as an outlaw and infamous, unworthy of any *honores*.⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶⁵ ACRB I.50: *Nos igitur bonum pacis et concordie efficacius firmare volentes ac domini regis beneplacitis predictique principis domini Wladislai petitionibus satisfacere cupientes, prefatam excommunicationis sententiam in eundem dominum ducem Wladislaum ex nunc prout ex tunc, si ipsum contra iuramentum venire contingeret proprium et promissum, ferimus in hiis scriptis et nichilominus eidem domino regi promittimus, quod eandem sententiam publicabimus contra prefatum sepius principem, si contra predicta veniret vel aliquod predictorum.*

⁴⁶⁶ ACRB I.51: [Władysław] *dominus dux iamdictus dominum nostrum regem [Václav] in suum verum et legitimum dominum assumpsit et corporali prestito iuramento fidelitatis sue homagium exhibendo eidem domino nostro regi pro tempore vite sue fidelia obsequia prompta et benivola promisit fideliter facere ac studiose de suarum virium potestati, promittens eciam eidem domino nostro regi, omni dolo et malo quolibet ingenio exclusis, ammodo perpetuo contra omnem hominem viventem, nulla persona penitus excepta, cuiuscumque status, dignitatis et condicionis fuerit, constanter et fideliter asstare persona et rebus pro suis omnibus viribus et pro posse, quociens et quodocumque per eum fuerit requisitus, sicque idem dominus dux domini nostri regis profectus et honoris comoda utiliter procurare sataget, prout sue vires suppetere poterunt et valebunt.*

⁴⁶⁷ Ibidem: *Insuper ad validiorem predictorum omnium firmitatem idem dominus dux contra se petivit excommunicationis sententiam proferri, si predicta omnia et singula violaret vel aliquod predictorum, quam nos Jacobus miseratione divina sancte Gnezezensis ecclesie archiepiscopus ad petitionem ipsius domini ducis contra eum protulimus in scriptis, et si, ut iam dictum est, violare presumpserit supradicta omnia et singula vel aliquod predictorum, eiusdem excommunicationis sentencie subiacebit.*

The third document, issued on the same day by Władysław the Short himself, further underscored this final provision. Acknowledging that breaking his oath of loyalty would mark him as *[nos] exleges, infames et inhabiles ad honores*, and place him under excommunication, the Cuyavian Piast added one more guarantee. Władysław promised that, within the next fourteen days, the citizens of Brzeźnica and Brześć would swear an oath, in front of Michał, chancellor of Sieradz and brother Meinhard of the Teutonic Order. In it, the townsmen were to promise that in case Władysław reneged on his own oath sworn to Václav, they would abandon their Piast ruler and recognize the Bohemian King as their true and legitimate lord.⁴⁶⁸

As the need for three separate documents and multiple acknowledgments of the consequences of the perjury suggest, Władysław's declarations of loyalty, issued in the face of military defeat, were not seen as trustworthy.⁴⁶⁹ While the intentions of the Cuyavian ruler can be gauged only from the limited and uncertain sources,⁴⁷⁰ it is argued that Władysław's relations with his new lord remained contentious, as the Cuyavian Piast allied himself closer with Václav's rival Przemysł II.⁴⁷¹ Unquestionably, the relations between the Greater-Polish Piast and Władysław must have been strong enough for the Cuyavian Piast to become one of the two

⁴⁶⁸ ACRB I.52: *Nos Wladizlaus dei gracia dux Sirazie et Cuiavie tenore presencium serenissimo domino nostro, domino Wenczeslao inclito regi Bohemie, duci Cracovie et Sandomerie marchionique Moravie sub fide et iuramento, quod sibi prestitimus, fideliter promittimus et sincere, quod in spacio quatuordecim dierum a data presencium cives nostros de Brzeznicz dilecto nobis Michaeli, cancellario Sirazie, et consilio domini nostri regis et alios cives de Brzestwie fratri Menkoni ordinis domus Theutonice, magistro Pruzzie, iurare faciemus fidelitatem super eo, quod si nos pacta et promissa nostra, eidem domino nostro facta per nos, violaremus vel aliquod eorum, quod ipsi eidem domino nostro, tamquam vero et legitimo suo domino, de cetero subessent et parerent fideliter et non nobis, obligantes nos ad hoc pene nomine, quod, si iuramentum ipsum super fidelitate ipsi domino nostro regi exhibenda, ut predictum est, a predictis civibus fieri non procurabimus in spacio supradicto, quod ex tunc terre nostre, Sirazia et Cuiavia, ad ipsum dominum nostrum regem et heredes eius pleno iure dominii, tamquam ad verum dominum in perpetuum pertinebunt et nos nichilominus periurii reatum ex eo volumus incidisse ac exleges, infames et inhabiles ad honores ab omnibus amplius nos constituimus reputari.*

⁴⁶⁹ Libor Jan, "Král proti střelci (Václav II. a Vladislav Lokýtek). Nerovná hra na šachovnici přelomu 13. a 14. století" [King against the 'Bishop' (Wenceslas II and Władysław the Short). An unequal game on the chessboard of the turn of the 13th and 14th centuries], in *Władysław Łokietek – odnowiciel Królestwa Polskiego. Restaurator Regni Poloniae*, ed. Janusz Grabowski, Waldemar Graczyk, and Hubert Wajs (Warsaw: Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych, 2021), 47.

⁴⁷⁰ I am referring here to the documents issued in Kalisz by Przemysł II, Władysław the Short and Kazimierz of Łęczyca. Titling themselves *heredes Cracoviae*, they promise archbishop Jan Świnka profits from the salines in Cracow. See KDW II.692; ZDM IV.886; the criticism of the authenticity in Łowmiański, *Początki Polski*, vol. 6, 861–66.

⁴⁷¹ The thesis about Władysław being part of Przemysł's anti-Bohemian camp was first formulated in Oswald Balzer, *Królestwo Polskie 1295-1370* [Kingdom of Poland 1295-1370], 2nd ed. (Cracow: Societas Vistulana, 2005), 152, 183; and remains popular, though not with all of its details, in contemporary historiography. See for example Tęgowski, "Rola Łokietka," 15; Jurek, "Polska droga," 172; Jan Pakulski, "Stosunki Przemysła II z duchowieństwem metropolii gnieźnieńskiej" [Relations of Przemysł II with the clergy of the Gniezno archdiocese], in *Przemysł II: odnowienie Królestwa Polskiego*, ed. Jadwiga Krzyżaniakowa (Poznań: Instytut Historii UAM, 1997), 89; cautiously Nowacki, *Przemysł II*, 179–80; For opposing views, see Łowmiański (as in the footnote above); Jarosław Nikodem, "Metody legitymizacji władzy w Polsce przez Wacława II i Władysława Łokietka" [Methods of legitimizing power in Poland by Wenceslaus II and Władysław the Short], in *Władztwo Władysława Łokietka: 700-lecie koronacji królewskiej*, ed. Wojciech Fałkowski and Przemysław Tyszka (Warsaw: Zamek Królewski w Warszawie, 2022), 58.

main candidates for his inheritance, after Przemysł's unexpected death on 8th of February 1296. Supported by the important part of the Greater-Polish nobles, he was nevertheless unable to thwart the ambitions of his rival, Henryk III of Głogów, with whom he was forced to divide Greater Poland along the Obra river in the treaty of Krzywiń (10th of March 1296).⁴⁷² The fighting, however, did not stop, and soon Władysław found himself fighting against both Henryk III of Głogów and Václav II. By November 1297, he had struck a deal with the latter, once more relinquishing his rights to Lesser Poland, but this time receiving five thousand marks of silver in return.⁴⁷³ Tellingly, the document issued on that occasion drops the references to any oaths of personal loyalty that Władysław swore to the Přemyslid King, who is not addressed as an overlord.⁴⁷⁴ The Bohemian money, which might have never materialized, was not enough in the face of Henryk III's advances in Greater Poland. In the summer of 1298, the Silesian Piast won over Andrzej, bishop of Poznań and parts of his influential Zaręba clan, perhaps even briefly taking control over Poznań.⁴⁷⁵ Even though Władysław was able to quickly retake the city and, at least temporarily, reconcile with the internal opposition, his position in Greater Poland was quickly becoming untenable. This, together with the Bohemian elites renewing their interest in Poland after dealing with a threat posed by Adolf of Nassau,⁴⁷⁶ was the context that led to the meeting between Władysław the Short and Václav's envoys at the hunting retreat near Klęka on 23rd of August 1299.

There, Władysław swore on the sacred relics that he will travel to Prague on Christmas Eve to publicly pay homage to the Bohemian king. This act of submission is described in a

⁴⁷² KDW II.745; The events between the death of Przemysł II and the treaty of Krzywiń, as well as the text of the treaty itself, have been frequently discussed in Tomasz Jurek, *Dziedzic Królestwa Polskiego książę głogowski Henryk (1274-1309)* [The heir of the Kingdom of Poland Duke of Głogów Henryk (1274-1309)], 3rd ed. (Cracow: Avalon, 2010), 59–64. For the more recent reappraisal of the events, see Błażej Śliwiński, "Władysław Łokietek wiosną 1296 roku w Wielkopolsce po zabójstwie króla Przemysła II" [Władysław the Short in the spring of 1296 in Greater Poland after the assassination of King Przemysł II], *Studia z Dziejów Średniowiecza* 24 (2020): 265–94.

⁴⁷³ RBM II.1771.

⁴⁷⁴ Jan, "Král proti střelci," 50–51; Libor Jan, *Václav II: král na stříbrném trůnu* [Václav II: King on the Silver Throne] (Prague: Argo, 2015), 249; Nowacki, *Czeskie roszczenia*, 61.

⁴⁷⁵ In the document issued by Henryk *dux, dux regni Polonie, Pomoranie, Slesie et dominus Glogovie* at Kościany on June 24th 1298, he promised to archbishop Jan Świnka, bishop Andrzej of Poznań and bishop Wisław of Włocławek to uphold all of the Church liberties if they, in turn, help him obtain the royal crown. He further guaranteed to bishop Andrzej Zaręba that the office of the royal chancellor will be forever held by the bishops of Poznań, see KDW II.788. A thorough discussion of the position taken by bishop Andrzej, his family, and the political consequences of this agreement, together with an overview of the older discussions, in Jurek, *Dziedzic Królestwa Polskiego*, 39–46; Maciejowski, *Orientacje polityczne biskupów*, 207–09.

⁴⁷⁶ This international context highlighted in Robert Antonín, "Hnězdenská korunovace krále Václava II. v kontextu jeho zahraniční politiky na počátku 14. století" [Gniezno coronation of King Vaclav II in the context of his foreign policy at the beginning of 14th century], in *Gnieźnieńskie koronacje królewskie i ich środkowoeuropejskie konteksty*, ed. Józef Dobosz, Marzena Matla, and Leszek Wetesko (Gniezno: Urząd Miejski w Gnieźnie, 2011), 257–66.

document in some detail. First, Władysław would give all of his lands to Václav, only to receive them back *in feudum*, rendering to him the customary oath of loyalty and homage that would bind him to the king and his successors.⁴⁷⁷ Entering this relationship, the Piast ruler promised to serve the king and his heir “as any *feudatarius* does for his lord, especially as other *feudatarii*, *vasalli* and *nobiles* of the king of Bohemia are, all together or individually, bound to serve and do by custom or law”.⁴⁷⁸ Afterwards, the duke were to issue a document, which would contain all of the provisions, clauses, and penalties envisioned by the monarch, the wording of which would be determined by the men appointed by the king, and which would be marked by the new ducal seal and the seals of the most prominent of Władysław’s subjects. To further ensure the Piast’s loyalty, the barons, castellans, nobles, vogts and townspeople were also to promise loyalty to the king as their lord. Moreover, if Władysław were to break any part of his oath, he would forfeit all of his titles and possessions, while his subjects, now absolved from the oaths of loyalty and homages given to the Piast would be required to abandon him and recognize the king of Bohemia as their true lord, swearing their loyalty and handing him over all the castles and towns.⁴⁷⁹ The Polish duke was also to forgo trying to challenge thus outlined terms in front of the papal or imperial court. For all this, he was to receive four thousand marks at the date to be set by the royal advisors, as well as the next eight years of profits from the Lesser-Polish saline in Olkusz. Several months after issuing the diploma, Władysław was expelled from Greater Poland by his own subjects, leading historians to wonder what role the Kłęka treaty played in Cuyavian Piast’s downfall. I explore this question in Chapter 3.5.

The defining feature of both the 1292 and the 1299 documents issued by Władysław the Short to the Přemyslid monarch are their legalistic language drawing on terminology of feudal law, which links Władysław’s control over his land with loyalty to his new lord, king Václav. This loyalty was given a well-defined shape, with the Piast’s obligations spelled out in the 1292

⁴⁷⁷ ACRB I.68: *ipsas a predicto rege cum solempnitate debita recipiemus in feudum, et prestabimus sibi fidelitatis et homagii cum expressione omnium articulorum qui requiruntur in talibus consuetum et debitum iuramentum.*

⁴⁷⁸ Ibidem: [...] *de ipsis serviamus perpetuo et faciamus predicto regi et heredibus ac successoribus suis, sicut quilibet feudatarius suo domino et specialiter alii feudatarii, vassalii et nobiles predicti regni Boemie, omnes communiter vel divisim singulariter singuli eis servire et facere tenentur et debent de consuetudine vel de iure, et quod statuta vel edicta, que dictus rex statuerit per nos et dictos heredes ac successores nostros servanda ac tenenda in terris seu feudis ipsis et ratione ipsorum acceptemus et inviolabiliter servemus ac firmiter perpetuo teneamus.*

⁴⁷⁹ Ibidem: [...] *vel si contra predicta vel aliquod predictorum venerimus, vel non fecerimus aut non adimpleverimus vel non observaverimus omnia et singula supradicta: statim extunc a nostro ac heredum et successorum nostrorum predictorum dominio recedere, et predicto regi cum omnibus castris, civitatibus et municionibus quas habent adherere et servire sibi, ac ipsum et dictos heredes ac successores suos, reges Boemie, pro suis veris et legitimis dominis habere in perpetuum, sibi que fidelitatis et homagii prestare iuramentum, omni occasione et dilacione postpositis, teneantur; quos a iuramento fidelitatis et homagii nobis per eos prestito, quo nobis et dictis heredibus ac successoribus nostris sicut suis dominis sunt astricti, in casu predicto absolvimus per hec scripta.*

document. The provisions that required the inhabitants of Władysław's domain to swear an oath of loyalty to the Bohemian monarch, recognizing him as their real lord in case of the Piast's insubordination, used the logic of the *feudum* to further ensure Władysław's loyalty. In the case of the Sieradz treaty from 1292, the Cuyavian Piast's oaths were to be further secured with the threat of excommunication for perjury, issued by archbishop Jan Świnka, in a manner well established in Piast Poland. Nevertheless, the other features of the agreements, as well as the language of the diplomas, reflect primarily the political culture of late-thirteenth-century Bohemia.⁴⁸⁰

The swearing of oaths, just like in Piast Poland, had a long tradition in Bohemia, constituting the main tool of managing the bonds of loyalty between the Přemyslids and their Czech subjects.⁴⁸¹ Playing an important role in the thirteenth-century Empire, the rulers of Bohemia were also increasingly exposed to feudal law. Nevertheless, it only played a limited role in the relationship with their subjects, most often used in communicating with subjects outside of Bohemia proper.⁴⁸² The active role played by the last Přemyslid monarchs on the broader political stage coincided, in the last quarter of the thirteenth century, with a significant evolution in the practice of swearing loyalty among Bohemian nobles. By the time of the adolescence of Václav II at the latest, we can trace in the surviving archival material the practice of not only swearing, but also writing down the individual oaths of loyalty given to the Bohemian king by his subjects.⁴⁸³ Those oaths, as analyzed by Libor Jan, were sworn in multiple contexts: from the well-rewarded old companions of Václav's father using the occasion of swearing the oath of loyalty to the adolescent monarch in order to document their new and old possessions,⁴⁸⁴ to the resolution of conflict between the monarch and rebellious subjects.⁴⁸⁵ Even as their content differed in details, they frequently appealed to the shared obligations of

⁴⁸⁰ Tomasz Jurek, "Dyplomatyka i Łowy" [Diplomacy and hunting], in *Miasta, ludzie, instytucje, znaki. Księga jubileuszowa, ofiarowana Profesor Bożenie Wyrozumskiej w 75 rocznicę urodzin*, ed. Zenon Piech (Cracow: Societas Vistulana, 2008), 30, where also older literature.

⁴⁸¹ On the oaths in the political culture of medieval Bohemia, see: Josef Žemlička, "Sacramenta v politickém životě přemyslovských Čech" [Sacramenta in the political life of Přemyslid Bohemia], in *Ve znamení zemí Koruny české: sborník k šedesátým narozeninám prof. PhDr. Lenky Bobkové, CSc.*, ed. Luděk Březina (Prague: Casablanca, 2006), 16–26; Libor Jan, "Lenní přísahy a přísahy vernosti na dvore posledních Přemyslovců" [Feudal vows and vows of loyalty in the court of the last Přemyslids], in *Stát, státnost a rituály přemyslovského věku problémy, názory, otázky*, ed. Martin Wihoda and Demeter Malaták (Brno: Matice Moravská, 2006), 101–12; German-language overview in Marcin R. Pauk, "Der böhmische Adel im 13. Jahrhundert: Zwischen Herrschaftsbildung und Gemeinschaftsgefühl," in *Böhmen und seine Nachbarn in der Přemyslidenzeit*, ed. Ivan Hlaváček and Aleksander Patschovsky, Vorträge und Forschungen 74 (Stuttgart: Thorbecke, 2011), 253.

⁴⁸² Jan Zelenka, *Vom Beneficial- zum Lehnswesen: Eine vergleichende Analyse sächsischer und böhmischer Quellen des 10.–14. Jahrhunderts*. (Berlin: Lit, 2019), 129–131.

⁴⁸³ Jan, "Lenní přísahy," 108.

⁴⁸⁴ ACRB I.24; ACRB I.25; The context for both, See Jan, *Václav II*, 63–66.

⁴⁸⁵ See the casus of Gerhard of Obřany, ACRB I.30.

service and loyalty that all of the Bohemian *barones* or *terrigenae*.⁴⁸⁶ With his act of homage, Władysław the Short promised to be bound by the same bonds of loyalty as these groups.

Władysław the Short was not even the first of the Piast dukes to have paid homage and sworn an oath of loyalty to Václav II. On 10th January 1289, laying the groundwork for his direct involvement in southern Poland, the Přemyslid monarch received in the Prague castle Kazimierz of Bytom, son of Władysław of Opole from the Upper-Silesian branch of the dynasty. The Piast ruler of a small duchy nested between Wrocław and Cracow might have been motivated to seek protection against Henryk IV Probus and his Lesser-Polish ambitions.⁴⁸⁷ The document issued by Kazimierz described the act in detail. First, the Piast ruler subjected himself, his successors, possessions, lands, and all their inhabitants to the lordship of the Bohemian Kings. The Piast subjects, from barons, burghers, to all inhabitants, were released from the oaths of loyalty and homages that bound them to Kazimierz. Having symbolically relinquished his duchy with its old rights and freedoms by handing the banner to the king, the Duke received it back *in feudum*, having paid homage and sworn loyalty, devotion, and obedience to the Bohemian monarch.⁴⁸⁸ Just like the document Władysław the Short was to receive upon traveling to Prague in 1299, Kazimierz's document outlined his duties, with the Piast promising to head the call against any enemy "as any of your vassals or barons of your kingdom", burdening the demands and requirements of the *iura feudi*, and unwritten expectations of things any loyal vassal should do for his true lord.⁴⁸⁹ Reflecting the voluntary nature of Kazimierz's submission, there was no mention of any provisions that would fall on the Piast if he were to break his loyalty, nor any secondary oaths that were to be sworn by his subjects – the most important of which were present at the Prague ceremony.

⁴⁸⁶ Jan, "Lenní přísahy," 104–8; A generally convincing picture painted by Libor Jan was more recently slightly amended by Jan Zelenka, who argued that rather than treating this relationship as a "quasi-feudal", we should see it as a bond of loyalty grounded in oaths sworn by Bohemian subjects. See Jan Zelenka, *Vom Beneficial- zum Lehnswesen*, 131–32.

⁴⁸⁷ Thusly already Roman Grodecki, "Dzieje polityczne Śląska do roku 1290" [Political history of Silesia up to 1290], in *Historia Śląska: od najdawniejszych czasów do roku 1400*, vol. 1, ed. Stanisław Kutrzeba (Cracow: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 1933), 319–20; Nowacki, *Czeskie roszczenia*, 56; Robert Antonín, "Malopolsko jako objekt zahraniční politiky Václava II. v letech 1289-1300" [Lesser Poland as the Object of Wenceslas' Foreign Policy between 1289-1300], *Mediaevalia Historica Bohemica* 11, no. 1 (2008): 98; Robert Antonín, *Zahraniční politika Václava II. v letech 1283–1300* [The Foreign Policy of King Wenceslas II in 1283-1300] (Brno: Matice Moravská, 2009), 119; Jan, *Václav II*, 130–31.

⁴⁸⁸ SUB V.410: *a vobis domino meo in feudum et iure feudi predictum ducatum, dignitatem, titulum et honorem eiusdem ducatus necnon barones, nobiles et omnes alios homines et habitatores eiusdem ducatus ac omnia alia iura ducatus predicti recepi et ex nunc recipio vobisque tanquam meo et feudi domino homagium feci et facio et vobis fidelitatem, devotionem et obedientiam perpetuas promisi et nunc promitto corporali interposito iuramento in presentia testium eorumdem ordinando et omnino fieri volendo.*

⁴⁸⁹ Ibidem: *obligando [...] quod, quocienscumque vel quandocumque vos iusseritis vel vestri iusserint successores, vos et eos iuvabo et iuvare volo per successores meos contra omnem hominem fideliter toto posse tanquam vester vassallus quilibet sive baro regni vestri necnon ad omnia alia et singula in perpetuum, que iura feudi exigunt et requirunt, et etiam ad illa, que quisque fidelis vassallus suo vero domino facere potest in omnibus atque debet.*

For all of its symbolic ritual and legal language of *ius feudale*, the document acknowledged that the relationship between Kazimierz and Václav II was an evolution of the bonds between their fathers, mentioning *multa promotionis et honoris beneficia* Władysław of Opole earned through his devotion and obedience to Přemysl Otakar II.⁴⁹⁰ Since the very beginning of his reign, Poland played an important part of Přemysl Otakar II's affairs, with the Bohemian ruler seeing himself as a natural protector and ally of the Piast dukes. Unlike the documents issued for Václav II analyzed above, the tools used by his father to manage bonds of loyalty in relationship with Piast rulers did not rely on the normative language of legal expectations. Instead, as discussed by Antoni Barciak, Přemysl appealed to the bonds of kinship between both dynasties, underlying the expectations of mutual friendship and support between blood relatives and making use of knighting ceremonies to underscore their spiritual kinship.⁴⁹¹

The closest of these bonds of loyalty undergirded by kinship and elements of chivalric culture, linked the Bohemian king with Henryk IV Probus. Orphaned in late 1266, young Henryk found himself under the tutelage of his uncle, Władysław, archbishop of Salzburg, the chancellor at Přemysl's court, where he might have spent a few years of his childhood.⁴⁹² After the death of Władysław in 1270, Přemysl Otakar became the guardian of the Duke of Wrocław. This relationship was recognized by Henryk in documents which the Piast issued in his youth, and which survive in the formulary book of *Henricus Italicus*. Submitting himself and his land to Premyslid tutelage, Henryk wrote about the special trust that he had placed in the Bohemian king due to their bonds of kinship, believing that Přemysl will care for him *utpote pater alter*.⁴⁹³

⁴⁹⁰ The relationship between the two rulers analyzed most recently in Wojciech Dominiak, *Ostatni władca Górnego Śląska: Władysław I, pan na Opolu i Racibórze (1225-1281)* [The last ruler of Upper Silesia: Władysław I, lord on Opole and Racibórz (1225-1281)] (Racibórz: WAW, 2009), 236–45.

⁴⁹¹ Antoni Barciak, *Czechy a ziemie południowej Polski w XIII oraz w początkach XIV wieku: polityczno-ideologiczne problemy ekspansji czeskiej na ziemie południowej Polski* [Bohemia and the lands of southern Poland in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries: political-ideological problems of Czech expansion into the lands of southern Poland] (Katowice: Uniwersytet Śląski, 1992), 92–93.

⁴⁹² Thus for example Bronisław Włodarski, *Polska i Czechy w drugiej połowie XIII i początkach XIV wieku (1250-1306)* [Poland and Bohemia in the second half of the 13th century and early 14th century (1250–1306)], *Archiwum Towarzystwa Naukowego we Lwowie. Wydział II Historyczno-Filozoficzny* (Lwów: Towarzystwo Naukowe, 1931), 7:46–47; Barciak, *Czechy a ziemie południowej Polski*; Differently Dette, “Kinder und Jugendliche,” 328–29.

⁴⁹³ *Das urkundliche Formelbuch des königl. Notars Henricus Italicus aus der Zeit der Könige Ottokar II. und Wenzel II. von Böhmen*, ed. by Johannes Voigt (Vienna: K. K. Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1863), no. 52, 60: *Cum etatis tenere fragilitatem de nature consuetudine quedam mentis obnubilet ebitudo (sic) ita, ut ad regnum et gubernacionem terrarum insufficiens sit ingenium puerile, nos Haynricus dei gracia dux Slesie annorum immaturitatem consideracionis oculo diligencius intuentes, de ubertate quoque favoris baronum nostrorum, consilii fideliter informati karissimi domini patris nostri domini O. serenissimi Bohemie regis cum omni ditione terrarum et cum universis et singulis per districtum dominii constitutis tutele et gubernacioni voluntate non coacta, sed libera omnino et salubriter duximus submittendos. De cuius eciam benignitatis et sinceritatis plenitudine, que ratione consanguinitatis ad integritatem amoris nos confibulat, specialem fiduciam hesivimus et perfectam non dubitantes, sed de sua magnificencia presumentes, quod de nobis nostrisque omnibus curam gerere debeat utpote pater alter.*

Despite these intimate ties, the commitments of the Piast ward were outlined in exact detail. Henryk gave a voluntary oath to the bishops of Wrocław, Lubusz, and his *barones* that without Otakar's knowledge and approval, he will not marry nor enter into friendship or alliance, nor will he distribute land, borrow money, or handle internal disputes and issues. Henryk would also return to Prague whenever required, and he would need to demonstrate the capability for independent rule not only to the king, but also Silesian and Bohemian *barones*. It is here, in the circumstances much different than Władysław the Short's capitulation at Sieradz twenty years later, that we find for the first time the provision that if he were to break the oath, Henryk's lands should not only be placed under interdict, but the young duke should be abandoned by his subjects, who should adhere to the Bohemian king.⁴⁹⁴ A different document of the adolescent Piast surviving in the same *Formelbuch* brings attention to another set of tools used to strengthen the bonds between Přemysl Otakar and Henryk. In it, Henryk promises that he will receive the honor of being knighted with the belt only from Přemysl's hands. Furthermore, the Piast states, "in order that the zeal of good will that flourishes between him and us may be manifested by outwardly actions" he promises to always dress his household in the same color as the King, to signify their unity.⁴⁹⁵

The stringent terms of the tutelage outlined in the document issued by Henryk IV were not reflected in any way in the practice of his early rule in Wrocław, which makes it difficult to assess how seriously the letter of the written agreement was taken.⁴⁹⁶ Its spirit, however, the quasi-paternal bonds of kinship that linked Přemysl Otakar II with the Silesian Piast was reflected in their subsequent interactions. Henryk IV supported Přemysl Otakar in his military ventures, while the Bohemian monarch intervened diplomatically on behalf of the young Piast when he was imprisoned by Bolesław the Bald in 1277.⁴⁹⁷ Even as he moved towards formal homages and written feudal contracts, Václav II did not abandon the tools used by his father. A

⁴⁹⁴ Ibidem: *Quod si alicuius predictarum nostrarum paccionum fuerimus transgressores, sepedicti domini episcopi statim ponendi terram nostram sub interdicto et recedendi a nobis cum omnibus nostris, et adherendi domino regi plenam et liberam habeant facultatem.*

⁴⁹⁵ *Das urkundliche Formelbuch*, no. 51, 59: *Promittimus eciam ex deliberato et bona fide dicto domino regi, quod ad hoc ut benivolencie zelus, qui inter ipsum et nos viget, pateat per acciones extrinsecas evidenter, quandocunque continget dictum dominum regem suam vestire familiam et nos nostram, nos iuxta beneplacitum et dispositionem dicti domini regis vestiemus nostram familiam, ita ut tam familia ipsius domini regis quam nostra uniformibus vestiatur vestibus, ut unio denotetur in familiis quam sit benivolencie sinceritas in animis dominorum, nec solum in premissis nos iuxta ipsius domini regis consilium et beneplacitum dirigere volumus actus nostros, verum eciam in singulis aliis eiusdem domini regis consilio regi volumus, ut secum simus unius voluntatis conpares et conformes.*

⁴⁹⁶ Grodecki, "Dzieje polityczne," 260.

⁴⁹⁷ For overview, see for example Jolanta Szczepańska, "Henryk IV Probus. Podstawowe problemy badawcze. Próba podsumowania, cz. 1" [Henry IV Probus. Basic Research Problems. An Attempt at Summary, Part 1], *Textus et Studia* 5, nos. 1-2 (2019): 112–15; Barciak, *Czechy a ziemie południowej Polski*, 101–2.

document surviving in *Summa Nycolai*, the formulary book of the Wrocław chancery, was issued for Václav II to assure “his most beloved nephew H.” of the monarch’s good will, affection, and readiness to support him against any foe bent on destroying him or his land. Tellingly, according to the document, the kinship between the rulers creates a natural bond of alliance (*naturalis foedus*), which only needs to be reinforced by this written guarantee.⁴⁹⁸ Václav also continued to use elements of chivalric culture to strengthen the bonds of loyalty of his new Polish vassals. The Zbraslav Chronicle describes how, on the occasion of his coronation in Gniezno, Václav not only received the homages from the Piast dukes of Opole, Cieszyn, Cuyavia, “and many others”, but also knighted many barons and nobles⁴⁹⁹ – among whom might have been also his new Polish subjects.

The documents issued to Władysław in Sieradz and Kępno can thus be placed in the long tradition of interactions between the last Přemyslid monarchs and the Piast dukes, with the former trying to secure the loyalty of the latter. In doing so, they made use of a variety of tools: from the gestures taken from chivalric culture, like the knighting ceremony, through the language of kinship and friendship, to the feudal law. Even as the appeals to the kinship remained a part of the repertoire well into Václav II’s reign, already in the documents of Přemysl Otakar II one can see the process in which, through writing, the bonds of loyalty created with Polish rulers became increasingly formalized. These changes were not limited to relations with the Piasts but reflected a broader shift in Přemyslid political culture towards, to use the distinction introduced by Hans Jacob Orning, absolute loyalty, defined with the help of written documents.⁵⁰⁰ The appearance, by the early 1280s, of oaths of loyalty that Czech subjects gave to their monarch in written, though not yet uniform form, was part of the same process. Written oaths of loyalty, despite the growing number of the charters issued in fragmented Poland, were not produced in the chanceries of the Piast dukes.

⁴⁹⁸ *Summa Nycolay*, no. 21, 80: *Per presens igitur privilegium noscat tam presens etas quam successura posteritas futurorum, quod licet dominus H., inclitus dux Slesie, karissimus nepos noster, ratione naturalis federis, quo idem dominus dux nostre adjungitur majestati, de nostra benivolencia indubitata gerere possit fiduciam, quam quidem benivolenciam erga ipsum gerimus et habemus, tamen ut ipse deinceps habeat de nobis confidenciam plenioram sibi que nos semper senciatur et inveniat stricioris dileccionis affectibus vinciores, eidem domino duci firmiter promittimus, ipsum perpetuo, quanto efficacius poterimus, adjuvare contra omnem hominem omnemque personam, qui vel que eundem dominum ducem conaretur destruere aut in ejus aut terrarum suarum exterminium niteretur.*

⁴⁹⁹ 67 in *Cronica Aule Regie*, 133: *Veneruntque ad ipsum de Opulia, de Teschin, de Cuyauia ac pluries alii de Polonia duces ac principes, qui se regalibus serviciis applicuerunt fideique et omagium regi humiliter prestierunt. [...] Ut autem tante festivitatis sollempnitas sollempnior haberetur, plurimi barones et nobiles per regem militari baltheo cingebantur, qui tamen omnes in hoc novo militancium festo et tyrocinio armis pro vestibus aureis utenabur.*

⁵⁰⁰ Orning, *Unpredictability and Presence*, 5–10.

Practicing homages in fragmented Poland?

Nevertheless, the interactions with the last Přemyslids, including the direct rule of Václav II in Cracow and his coronation as the king of Poland, had a considerable impact on the political culture of the fragmented Poland. The numerous ways in which the example of the powerful southern neighbors has influenced Piast courts, leading to the adoption of new elements of chivalric culture, visual representations of power, and the broadening of political ambitions, have recently been elegantly summarized by Tomasz Jurek.⁵⁰¹ It is therefore relevant to ask whether the formal tools used by Přemyslids to reinforce loyalty, such as homage-taking and feudal law, were also adopted by the Piast rulers. Looking for the answer to this question, historians usually pointed towards two instances that could be read as the Piasts recontextualizing the bonds of loyalty tying them with family and close allies with the help of homage.

Unsurprisingly, given his connection to Přemysl Otakar II, the first of those instances concerned the relationship between Henryk IV Probus and his Silesian cousins. *Traska's Annal* contains a short note under the year 1281 about the duke of Wrocław inviting for a *colloquium* Przemysław II of Greater Poland, Henryk of Legnica, and Henryk of Głogów and imprisoning them.⁵⁰² Related to the *Traska's* tradition entry in *Annal of Poznań* noted, under 1280, the imprisonment of duke Przemysław of Greater Poland by Henryk IV Probus in Sądowel.⁵⁰³ It was only Jan Długosz who, as is often the case, provided more detail to this story, writing that the dukes who met on 10th of February 1281 in an unidentified place called *Baricz* were kidnapped by Henryk and imprisoned in Wrocław until Whitsunday (1 June). For his freedom, Przemysław II was required to cede to the duke of Wrocław the border region of Wieluń. Since, according to Długosz, Henryk could not demand any land from his Silesian cousins, he instead “bound them to serve him for five years with thirty lances against any enemy and in any necessity”.⁵⁰⁴

⁵⁰¹ Jurek, “Der Einfluß Böhmens.”

⁵⁰² *Traska's Annal*, 847: *Eodem anno dux Henricus Wratislaviensis cepit fratres suos duces, videlicet filium Bolezlay, ducem Henricum de Lednicia fratrem patrualem, cuius fratrem uterinum Bernardum occidit, ducem Polonie Primislium fratrem amitalem, filium ducis Primislii Polonie, ducem Henricum Glogoviensem fratrem patrualem filium Conradi, hos duos cepit dolo vocans eos ad quandam ecclesiam ratione colloquii pro quibus duram penam sustinuit in carcere sue spoliacionis.*

⁵⁰³ *Rocznik Poznański I*, ed. by Gerard Labuda, in *Roczniki Wielkopolskie*, MPH NS, vol. VI (Warsaw: PWN, 1962), 130: *anno Domini MCCLXXX secundus dux Polonie Przemisl captus fuit in Sandwle per Henricum ducem Wratislaue.*

⁵⁰⁴ *Ioannis Dlugossi Annales*, lib. VII-VIII, 214: *Ab Henrico vero Legniczensi et Henrico Glogoviensi, fratribus patruelibus, cum exactione aliquas sortes terrarum non posset, servituros se sibi per quinquennium cum triginta lanceis contra quemlibet hostem et in qualibet necessitate obligat, datisque per duces de implendo pacto obsidibus et iuramento ab omnibus exacto, ne occasione sue captivitatis quicquam contra illum per se vel alios hostile mollirentur, tum primum illos ex captivitate laxatos in principatus suos remisit.*

It is this detail from the distant account that led several historians to suspect that Henryk IV Probus was trying to cast his relationship with other Silesian Piasts in the mold of the feudal institutions, with this thesis most strongly formulated by Tomasz Jurek.⁵⁰⁵ In his view, this feudal relationship did not extend only to the two imprisoned dukes mentioned by Długosz, but also to Henryk of Głogów's younger brother Przemko, and Duke Bolesław of Opole. The latter, while not imprisoned in Sądowel, issued around the same date a document making a similar promise to aid Henryk IV Probus in defense and consulted offensive campaigns in the next six years.⁵⁰⁶

According to Jurek, these new relations between Henryk IV, now a feudal lord, and his vassal cousins were to manifest not only in their participation in Henryk's campaigns to secure the throne of Cracow in 1289-90, or in the tournament organized by him at town of Nysa in 1284. They would also be reflected in Henryk IV taking possession of Przemko's small duchy of Ścinawa upon his death in 1289, and in his own choice of Henryk of Głogów and Bolesław of Opole as inheritors one year later.⁵⁰⁷ While some had agreed with this interpretation of the shifting relations among Silesian Piasts in the wake of kidnapping at Sądowel,⁵⁰⁸ more recently, the idea that Henryk IV used the framework provided by feudal law to do so met with skepticism from historians like Marcin R. Pauk or Přemysl Bar.⁵⁰⁹

I share Pauk's and Bar's opinion. Even leaving aside the problem of reliability of Długosz's account, there is nothing in the relationship between Henryk IV Probus and Henryk of Głogów, Przemko, or Bolesław of Opole as characterized by Tomasz Jurek that would make it distinctly feudal. Providing military support, taking cues on diplomacy and internal politics from powerful family member, and even the arrangements regulating inheritance could all be managed without the tools provided by feudal law. It was, after all, not out of the ordinary for the senior members of the dynastic branch to command loyalty of its junior members, be it

⁵⁰⁵ Tomasz Jurek, "Henryk Probus i Henryk Głogowski. Stosunki wzajemne w latach 1273-1290" [Henryk Probus and Henryk of Głogów. Mutual relations in years 1273-1290], *Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka* 42, no. 4 (1987): 555-70, where also references to the older literature.

⁵⁰⁶ The document survives only as a part of the *formelbuch* created at Wrocław's ducal chancery. See *Summa Nicolay*, no. 15, 64.

⁵⁰⁷ Jurek, "Henryk Probus i Henryk Głogowski," 561-67.

⁵⁰⁸ See for example Nowacki, *Przemysł II*, 102; Błażej Śliwiński, *Mściwoj II (1224-1294): książę wschodniopomorski (gdański)* [Mściwoj II (1224-1294): duke of Pomerellia (Gdańsk)]. (Warsaw: DiG, 2016), 251; Jolanta Szczepańska, "Henryk IV Probus. Podstawowe problemy badawcze. Próba podsumowania, cz. 2" [Henry IV Probus. Basic Research Problems. An Attempt at Summary, Part 2], *Textus et Studia* 5, nos. 3-4 (2019): 107-8.

⁵⁰⁹ See Pauk, "Language of Power," 192-93; Přemysl Bar, "Książęta Piastowscy Śląska wobec rywalizacji Władysława Łokietka z Janem Luksemburskim" [The Piast Dukes of Silesia in the face of the rivalry between Władysław the Elbow-high and Jan of Luxembourg], in *Władztwo Władysława Łokietka: 700-lecie koronacji królewskiej*, ed. Wojciech Fałkowski and Przemysław Tyszka (Warsaw: Zamek Królewski w Warszawie, 2022), 183.

brothers, nephews, or cousins.⁵¹⁰ This is not to say, however, that Henryk IV did not try to strengthen his position with new tools meant to reinforce the bonds between him and other Silesian Piasts. The written commitment issued by Bolesław of Opole, surviving in the formulary book of the duke of Wrocław's chancery, demonstrates that Henryk IV Probus took note of the Bohemian examples. Just like his former guardian, Henryk saw the potential for written documents to lend a more defined form to the bonds of kinship linking him and some other Silesian Piasts.

The second example of the act of a Piast ruler using the new tools provided by feudal law to transform their relationship with a close ally concerns the acquisition of Pomerania by Przemysł II of Greater Poland. After a decade of close relations between Greater-Polish Piasts and the local ruler Mściwoj II, both rulers and their entourages met in February 1282 at the assembly at Kępno in Greater Poland. Here, the aging and childless Mściwoj reached an agreement with an ambitious and energetic younger Piast, preserved in a document issued on February 15th. In it, the old duke, wanting to prevent any future problems, donated in his and his successors' name Pomerania to his dear "little son (filolo)" Przemysł II to be held by the title of *vere et pure donationis inter vivos*. Mściwoj would continue to hold Pomerania in Przemysł's name, though the Piast duke was to be able to exercise the same authority there as Mściwoj, having been named his *procurator*. All of this would be confirmed by Mściwoj's oath.⁵¹¹

⁵¹⁰ An obvious example would be the dynamic relationship between the Greater Polish Piasts: Przemysł I, Przemysł II, and Bolesław I the Pious. Another could be the relationship between Ziemomysł of Inowrocław and his older brother Leszek the Black, as described in Błażej Śliwiński, *Ziemomysł inowrocławski: książę kujawski. Brat Leszka Czarnego i króla Władysława Łokietka (ok. 1247 - początek października/25 grudnia 1287)* [Ziemomysł of Inowrocław, Duke of Cuyavia. Brother of Leszek the Black and King Władysław Łokietek (c. 1247 – early October/December 25, 1287)] (Cracow: Avalon, 2017), 165–67; Similar influence over his cousins might have been exerted by Władysław the Short after his return to Poland, even before the royal coronation, see Krzysztof Karczewski and Wiesław Sieradzan, "Postawy polityczne książąt kujawskich Ziemomysłowiców" [The political attitudes of the Ziemomysłowice dukes of Cuyavia], *Ziemia Kujawska* 9 (1993): 33–44; Błażej Śliwiński, *Leszek, książę inowrocławski: 1274/1275-po 27 kwietnia 1339* [Leszek, Duke of Inowrocław: 1274/1275-after April 27, 1339] (Cracow: Avalon, 2010), 142–48.

⁵¹¹ PIUB 333: *Idcirco nos Msczywgiws divina providentia dux Pomoranie notum facimus tam presentibus quam futuris presentem paginam inspecturis, quod nos non vi vel metu coacti, sed proprio motu et spontaneo pro nobis nostrisque successoribus et heredibus tytulo vere et pure donationis inter vivos damus, tradimus et concedimus dilecto filiolo nostro inclito principi Premisloni dei gracia duci Polonie totam terram nostri ducatus scilicet Pomoranie [...] ad habendum, tenendum et possidendum, et quidquid sibi et suis heredibus deinceps placuerit, perpetuo faciendum, et constituimus dictum ducatum cum omnibus aliis supradictis ipsius Premislonis nomine possidere, donec corporalem acceperit possessionem, quam accipiendi sibi omnimodam concedimus licentiam atque damus, ut auctoritate propria intrare possit de nostra licencia et concessione, ut amodo prefatus Premisl dux Polonie possit de dicto ducatu et omnibus supradictis agere, experiri, excipere et replicare et ipsum ducatum et iura ipsius tenere et possidere et omnia et singula facere, que nosmet ipsi faceremus et exercere possemus nunc et in futurum, ponentes eum in ius et locum nostrum et eum in rem suam procuratorem constituimus [...].*

The older historiography, taking a cue from the terminology used in the document to describe its main legal provision, interpreted the treaty's action as a donation *inter vivos*.⁵¹² Janusz Bieniak, however, argued that given the repeated mention of the other heirs in whose name Mściwoj was foregoing his rights, the treaty was an act of commendation, with Mściwoj becoming Przemysł's feudal vassal and retaining *dominium utile* of the Pomeranian *dominium divisum*.⁵¹³ This interpretation had been met in equal parts with criticism and approval.⁵¹⁴ The proponents of Bieniak's theory can convincingly point out its power to explain Mściwoj's position after 1282, as he continued to issue documents mentioning other successors than Przemysł II and began to appear on the documents and judicial rulings from Greater Poland alongside local barons.⁵¹⁵ Nevertheless, as pointed out by its opponents, the language of the feudal law is absent not only from the text of the document issued at Kępno, but also from the later, turn-of-the-fourteenth-century sources describing Przemysł's authority over Pomerania. Those of the witnesses interrogated during the Polish-Teutonic trials in 1320-21 and 1339 who remembered the circumstances in which Przemysł took control of Pomerania understood it to be a matter of succession after the childless relative.⁵¹⁶ Even the members of the Greater-Polish chancery, writing about the content of the document issued at Kępno on the back side of one of its copies, underlined the son-like reverence Przemysł held for the duke of Pomerania, spilling much of his blood in the service of Mściwoj and his duchy.⁵¹⁷

Janusz Bieniak acknowledged this absence already in his original argument. Pointing out the previous examples of Pomeranian rulers entering into the feudal relationships with the margraves of Brandenburg, and the lack of comparative experience in Greater Poland, he argued that the surviving document from Kępno was a result of the Greater-Polish chancery grappling

⁵¹² Kazimierz Jasiński, "Zapis Pomorza Gdańskiego przez Mszczuja w roku 1282" [The bequest of Gdańsk Pomerania by Mszczuj in 1282], *Przegląd Zachodni* 8 (1952): 176–89; Krystyna Zielińska, *Zjednoczenie Pomorza Gdańskiego z Wielkopolską pod koniec XIII w: Umowa kępińska, 1282 r.* [The unification of Gdańsk Pomerania with Greater Poland at the end of the 13th century: the Kępno Agreement, 1282.] (Poznań: PWN, 1968).

⁵¹³ Janusz Bieniak, "Postanowienia układu kępińskiego (15 lutego 1282)" [Provisions of the Kępno Agreement (February 15 1282)], *Przegląd Historyczny* 82, no. 2 (1991): 209–32.

⁵¹⁴ Among the critics, see Łowmiański, *Początki Polski*, vol. 6, 818; Nowacki, *Przemysł II*, 108–12; Aleksander Świeżawski, *Przemysł - król Polski* [Przemysł - King of Poland] (Warsaw: DiG, 2006), 108–9; Among those accepting Bieniak's position are Błażej Śliwiński, *Rola polityczna możnowładztwa na Pomorzu Gdańskim w czasach Mściwoja II* [The political role of oligarchy in the Gdańsk Pomerania in the times of Mściwoj II] (Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, 1987), 169; Śliwiński, *Mściwoj II*, 265; Tęgowski, "Zabiegi księcia kujawskiego," 62; Jurek, "Polska droga," 165.

⁵¹⁵ Bieniak, "Postanowienia układu kępińskiego," 223.

⁵¹⁶ Bieniak, "Postanowienia układu kępińskiego," 205–15; Milliman, *The Slippery Memory of Men*, '90.

⁵¹⁷ KDW III.2033: *Hec sunt cause quare dux Pomoranie donat ducatum suum duci Polonie: quia progenitores ducis Polonie semper fuerint fautores, defensatores et protectores ducatus Pomoranie; item quia dux Premislyus ipsum, tam in defendendo quam in tuendo ducatum predictum, se opposuit viriliter hostibus pro eodem ducatu, et ipsum ducem Pomoranie habet pro patre et reveretur tamquam patrem, et omnia servicia sibi et suo ducatu usque ad sui et suorum effusionem sanguinis exhibendo etc.*

with describing the unfamiliar form of the feudal relationship with their own language.⁵¹⁸ This explanation does not exhaust the question concerning the true nature of the relationship between Przemyśl and Mściwoj after 1282, but it offers a pointed insight regarding the political culture of the Piast dynasty. Even if the Kępno act bore the characteristics of a commendation, the political elites of Greater Poland, in contrast to their Pomeranian counterparts, were not used to similar tools of strengthening the bonds of loyalty.

While in 1282 the Polish elites were not yet familiar with the relationships based on feudal law, this seemed to change in the early fourteenth century. Polish testimonies given during the legal proceedings in the Polish-Teutonic Trials of 1320-21 and 1339 mention not only oaths, but also homages that Pomeranian subjects gave to Przemyśl II at the assembly in Nakło, or later to Władysław the Short.⁵¹⁹ Similarly, the Pomeranian author of the mid-fourteenth-century *Oliwa Chronicle*, mentioned the homage Pomeranians paid to Przemyśl II, in order to seal Duke Mściwoj's choice of his successor.⁵²⁰ This growing familiarity could have been the result of the increasing number of witnessed homages in which Piasts paid homages to Václav II, like the ones in Sieradz in 1292 or Gniezno in 1300. There is no reason to doubt the trial testimonies that describe Władysław the Short, after his consequential experiences with Přemyslid methods of securing loyalty, experimenting with similar tools when visiting his distant Pomeranian subjects in 1306.⁵²¹ Especially the testimony of Tylon, vogt of Brześć, given during the 1320-21 trial, describes himself composing and receiving oaths of loyalty from citizens of Gdańsk and Tczew in the name of the duke Władysław, in a way that suggests new ways of thinking about oath-taking, intermediaries, and loyalty to the distant ruler.⁵²² Nevertheless, as I will argue in more detail in Chapter 5 of this thesis, the few mentions of homages in the testimonies of the Polish-Teutonic trials of the fourteenth century only underscore the very limited use of this tool of creating and strengthening bonds of loyalty in Piast political culture.

In sum, oath-taking remained a primary tool used by the Piast rulers of fragmented Poland to strengthen bonds of loyalty formally. They were sworn by both the rulers and by the

⁵¹⁸ Bieniak, "Postanowienia układu kępińskiego," 220–23.

⁵¹⁹ In the case of the 1320-21 trial the question about the oaths homages of the Pomeranian subjects was a part of the questionnaire of the proctors, see: Lites I (1).2, 19; Lites I (1).6, 22; Lites I (1).7, 23; others mentioned it unprompted: Lites I (1).1, 18; Lites I (1).4, 21; Lites I (1).9, 24; Lites I (1).14, 26; Lites I (1).25, 32; While three witnesses mention the oaths sworn to the Piast rulers by Pomeranian subjects in 1339 (Lites I (2).25, 232; Lites I (2).26, 238; Lites I (2).95, 366), only one of them mentioned homages as well: Lites I (2).102, 373.

⁵²⁰ *Chronica Olivensis*, ed. by Wojciech Kętrzyński, in MPH, vol. 6 (Cracow: Akademia Umiejętności, 1893), 315: *Mystvugium [...] Deus privavit sui seminis legitimo successore [...] et ideo tempore vite sue designavit sibi successorem dominum Primisium ducem Polonie, cui milites Pomeranie vivente Mystvugio omagium prestiterunt.*

⁵²¹ See Lites I (2).102, 373.

⁵²² Lites I (1).22, 30.

subjects, though due to the largely diplomatic nature of the thirteenth-century sources, the examples of the former are more common than the latter. Most notably, before the political turbulences of the turn of the fourteenth century, we have little surviving evidence for oaths of loyalty sworn by subjects to their new rulers, like the one sworn by the Lesser Polish nobles to Leszek the White, according to Vincentius of Cracow. Throughout the thirteenth century, the Polish episcopate exercised political influence by acting as the guarantors of the most important oaths, threatening perjurers with excommunication. The excommunicated rulers, like Henryk IV Probus, could have been further threatened with the dissolving of the oaths sworn to them by their subjects, though this was seen as a deliberate and drastic step. The formalized provisions that would dissolve the bonds of loyalty between the Poles and the perjured rulers also became a feature of treaties between Piasts and Václav II. This reflected a transformation of late-thirteenth-century Bohemia's political culture, where written documents started playing an increasingly important role in formalizing bonds of loyalty between monarchs and their kinsmen, allies, and subjects. Despite the deep political influence of Přemysl Otakar II and direct interventions of Václav II, formal tools like feudal law and practice of homage used in managing their relationship with Piasts were not directly adopted by the latter. Nevertheless, the practices of managing bonds of loyalty used by Bohemian kings certainly had some, albeit not direct, influence on the Polish political culture. The experiments of Henryk IV Probus, as attested by the *Summa Nicolay*, and the homages given to Władysław the Short in Pomerania suggest the attempts at rethinking the ways to formalize the bonds of loyalty, directly or indirectly inspired by the Přemyslid practices. Perhaps the most important, however, turned out to be the general example of the increasingly important role Bohemian royal chancery played in communicating with royal subjects, propagating ideas about kingship and loyalty.

3.2.2 Land, Rewards, and *do ut des*

This last reflection about the importance of the written document brings me to the increasing role diplomas played in fragmented Poland, and the way in which they communicated a specific vision of ducal generosity and reciprocal loyalty. As I argued in the previous chapter, the turn-of-the-fourteenth-century chroniclers shared Vincentius of Cracow's belief in a ruler's magnanimity, without expressing the same concerns about mercantile relationships built on gift-giving. The importance of largesse as underlying proper relations with the subjects was also underscored in other depictions of praise-worthy Piast rulership. For instance, the Franciscan Lesser-Polish annalistic tradition surviving in *Dzierzwa's Chronicle* and *Traska's Annal* alike focused on this aspect of Bolesław V the Chaste's rule. In his epitaph,

the duke of Cracow was as a sensible and gentle defender of the Church's rights, as well as a “true lover of *milites*, who kept nothing for himself, but bestowed it all to his *milites*.”⁵²³

Besides narrative sources, the link between the ruler's generosity, the gifts he dispensed to the subjects, and their loyalty was repeatedly highlighted in diplomas issued by ducal chanceries. While often present in more than one part of the charter's text, they are most frequently found in its preamble (*arenga*). Ever since Heinrich Fichtenau's 1957 study, historians have acknowledged that far from unreflectively following schematic formulas, preambles were a potent tool of political and ideological communication.⁵²⁴ For the divided Piast Poland, the ideological message of the preambles of ducal documents has been investigated by Tomasz Nowakowski,⁵²⁵ Anna Adamska,⁵²⁶ and Sébastien Rossignol.⁵²⁷ Among the broad category of preambles dealing with the ruler's majesty,⁵²⁸ one can find a whole genre focusing on the reward for loyal service. Appearing particularly frequently in documents of the twelfth-century Roman Emperors. By the first half of the thirteenth century, this kind of preamble came into use in the chanceries of Central European Rulers.⁵²⁹ Building upon the case studies of the aforementioned scholars of Piast diplomatics, I will now present a short outline of the evolution of this type of *arenga* in thirteenth-century Poland.

⁵²³ *Traska's Annal*, 846; *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*, 79: *Fuit itaque hic Boleslaus vir sobrius et mansuetus, nulli malum pro malo reddens, libertatum Ecclesie conservator, militum verus amator, qui nichil sibi retinebat, sed omnia suis militibus tribuebat.*

⁵²⁴ Heinrich Fichtenau, *Arenga. Spätantike und Mittelalter im Spiegel von Urkundenformeln*, Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung. Ergänzungsband (Graz-Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1957), 18:10; Fichtenau, “Monarchische Propaganda in Urkunden.”

⁵²⁵ Tomasz Nowakowski, *Idee areng dokumentów książąt polskich do połowy XIII wieku* [Ideas in the preambles of the documents of Polish dukes up to the middle of the 13th century] (Bydgoszcz: Wydawnictwo Uczelniane WSP, 1999).

⁵²⁶ Anna Adamska, *Arengi w dokumentach Władysława Łokietka: formy i funkcje* [Preambles in the documents of Władysław Łokietek: forms and functions] (Cracow: Towarzystwo Naukowe Societas Vistulana, 1999); Anna Adamska, “Dieu, Le Christ, La Vierge et l'Église Dans Les Préambules Polonais Du Moyen Âge,” *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole Des Chartes* 155 (1997): 543–73.

⁵²⁷ Sébastien Rossignol, “Preambles and Politics: Ducal and Princely Charters in Silesia, Western Pomerania, and Rügen (ca. 1200–ca. 1325),” in *Urkundenformeln Im Kontext. Formen Der Schriftkultur Im Ostmitteleuropa Des Mittelalters*, ed. Sébastien Rossignol and Anna Adamska (Wien: Böhlau, 2016), 95–118; Expanded in Sébastien Rossignol, *Maiestas Principum; Herzogsurkunden als Medien der Herrschaftsrepräsentation in Schlesien, Pommern und Pommerellen (1200–1325)*, Quellen und Studien des Deutschen Historischen Instituts Warschau 36 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2019).

⁵²⁸ Fichtenau proposed “Kaiser- und Königsarengen”, Fichtenau, *Arenga*, 18:30–32; As the same category can be extended to the other sovereigns, Rossignol used “Herrschaftsarengen”, see Rossignol, *Maiestas principum*, 226; “Majesty preambles” is the term most often used in the Polish historiography, see Adamska, *Arengi*, 79.

⁵²⁹ Ágnes Kurcz, “Arenga und Narratio ungarischer Urkunden des 13. Jahrhundert,” *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 70 (1962): 337–42; For multiple Imperial examples, see Petra Schulte, “Friedrich Barbarossa, die italienischen Kommunen und das politische Konzept der Treue,” *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 38, no. 1 (2008): 164–68; Marco Krätschmer, “Rittertum und Lehnswesen im Stauferreich: Zu Organisation und Rekrutierung der Ritterheere im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert,” *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 54, no. 1 (2020): 365–66.

The oldest of the preambles of the Piast charter, which expresses the idea of the rewards due for loyal service appears in 1217. The Silesian duke of Opole Kazimierz began the generous donation made to the court chaplain Sebastian and his brother Grzegorz with these words:

*Sane honestati principum expedire dignoscitur et eorum honoribus famulari, ut plerisque servientium hominibus fidelis et aequa recompensatio in emolumentum precium porrigatur, praesertim ubi evidens fidelitas sui prodit actorem.*⁵³⁰

While this *arenga* does not appear in any other documents left by Kazimierz, there is no doubt about the authenticity of this document.⁵³¹ Court chaplain Sebastian is known to have been a well-connected man, a member of the Wrocław cathedral chapter. As the document mentions the *consilium* of bishop Laurentius, it might be possible that the idea and the dictate behind the document came from fellow members of the Wrocław cathedral chapter, one of which penned the elaborate *arenga*.⁵³²

The exact circumstances in which a similar preamble was used by the next Piast ruler are much better known and much more telling. In the document from 1234, the earliest issued in his name alone, Duke of Sandomierz Bolesław V the Chaste proclaimed that:

*Quoniam fidelitatis constantia et assiduitas obsequendi condignam retributionem pepetunt (sic), tanto liberalius, nostros censuimus remunerandos milites, quanto magis perspexerimus eis predicta suffragari.*⁵³³

Just a year earlier Bolesław, still in his childhood, and his mother Grzmiślawa were imprisoned by his uncle, Konrad I of Mazovia, who aimed to control Lesser Poland.⁵³⁴ Having fled captivity, Grzmiślawa and Bolesław found an ally in Konrad's rival to Lesser Poland, Henryk I the Bearded. It was his military and diplomatic aid that led to the acknowledgment of Bolesław's rights to Sandomierz by Konrad in August 1234.⁵³⁵ Bolesław's document, cited above, was issued for *comes* Klemens in December that year. Wysokie Brzegi, where the document was issued, and the given village of Szyce are both in Cracow land, which was under the control of Henryk the Bearded. The duke of Silesia and his oldest son were the witnesses of

⁵³⁰ SUB I.165; Not only brothers' possession of Leśnica is granted the same freedoms as the *hospites* in Opole and Racibórz, but they also receive two other villages.

⁵³¹ See Irgang's commentary in SUB I.165; Nowakowski, *Idee areng*, 120.

⁵³² Marek Wójcik, *Dokumenty i kancelarie książąt opolsko-raciborskich do początków XIV wieku* [Documents and chancelleries of the Dukes of Opole and Racibórz up to the beginning of the 14th century] (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1999), 52.

⁵³³ CDP III.13 (=SUB II.79)

⁵³⁴ Grzmiślawa was taken under the protection by the bull of Pope Gregory IX, which informs us about her imprisonment and calls upon Archbishop and bishops of Cracow and Wrocław to force Duke Konrad to release Grzmiślawa. See ZDMaz I.336; Later narrative sources depicted the captivity in more, unverifiable, detail. See 61 in *Chronica Poloniae maioris*, 82; *Ioannis Dlugossi Annales*, lib. VI, 266-69.

⁵³⁵ KDTyn 17; Karolina Maciaszek, *Bolesław V Wstydlawy. Książę krakowski i sandomierski (1226-1279): Długie panowanie w trudnych czasach* [Bolesław V the Chaste. Duke of Cracow and Sandomierz (1226-1279): A long reign in difficult times] (Cracow: Avalon, 2021), 93-94.

the document, along with a mixture of the notables from Silesia and Lesser Poland.⁵³⁶ The grant and accompanying diploma were thus not only possible rewards for Klemens's help in freeing Bolesław,⁵³⁷ but also an ideological gesture meant to shore up the support for the young ruler under Henryk's tutelage.

As the broader "ruler's majesty"-type preambles became more popular in Piast Poland in the second half of the thirteenth century, more variations on the theme of reward for service appeared.⁵³⁸ Thus, Bolesław I of Mazovia's document from 1244, in which he received Greater Polish *milites*, brothers Racibor and Albert, granting them a village in his land by Płock, began with the *arenga* "Dignum est, ut in se benemeritj et in suis posteris principum beneficijs consolentur."⁵³⁹ This rather simple expression of the idea of the ruler's favor for those well-deserving appears, as has been pointed out in the historiography, in the diplomas issued by the monarchs of Bohemia and Hungary already in the early thirteenth century.⁵⁴⁰ On Piast documents, it appeared again on two documents by Władysław I the Short.⁵⁴¹

The *arenga* of two diplomas of Duke of Opole Władysław I issued for knight Stefan (1278) and the city of Racibórz (1280), expressed the idea that those who demonstrate memorable *obsequia* should always be repaid by unceasing rewards.⁵⁴² The person who formulated both charters, notary Arnold, continued his career at the court Władysław's sons Mieszko of Cieszyn and Przemko of Racibórz, reusing the same motif in another privilege for

⁵³⁶ The latter group included not only men like Adam Leonardowic, who appeared only at the court of Grzmisława and Bolesław, but also those like Pakosław the Younger, whose loyalties in the conflict over the Lesser Poland seemed to initially lay on the side of Konrad. See Janusz Bieniak, "Pakosław Młodszy," in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1980), 25/1:42.

⁵³⁷ We do not know any details about the service rendered to young Bolesław by Comes Klemens. His kindred and namesake, Klemens of Ruszcza was credited in Bolesław's 1252 charter with an important role in breaking the captive duke and his mother out from Duke Konrad's custody, KDM II.436. Comes Klemens might have played some role in those events. While shared name and lineage (Gryf clan) led some to some confusion in past historiography, they have been convincingly proven to be two separate men. See Piotr K. Wojciechowski, "Rozmowa Elżbiety z Raclawą. Przyczynek do dziejów rodu Gryfów w pierwszej połowie XIII wieku" [Elizabeth's conversation with Raclawa. A contribution to the history of the Gryf clan in the first half of the 13th century], in *Spółeczeństwo Polski Średniowiecznej V*, ed. Stefan Krzysztof Kuczyński (Warsaw: PWN, 1992), 189–94.

⁵³⁸ The dynamics of the development of the "ruler's majesty"-types preambles in 13th-century Piast chanceries outlined briefly in Adamska, *Arengi*, 87.

⁵³⁹ ZDMaz I.448

⁵⁴⁰ Tracing it in Władysław the Short's documents, Adamska, *Arengi*, 93; Nowakowski, *Idee areng*, 179.

⁵⁴¹ KDM I.147; KDW II.971; Both documents were issued to townspeople. First was issued for Rupert and Marek, restoring their hereditary vogtship in Sandomierz in 1311. The second, from 1314 grants several localities to the city of Pyzdry. Timing and the text of the charters leaves no doubt that the diplomas were issued in the aftermath of the conflicts between Władysław and rebellious urban elites led by vogt of Cracow Albert and vogt of Poznań Przemko.

⁵⁴² SUB IV.335: *Quod nostris semper servitoribus, a quibus obsequia digna memoriae dinoscimur recepisse, indesinentia rependamus praemia, dignum et iustum fore penitus arbitramur; SUB IV.338: Dignum et iustum arbitramur omnino, ut illis, a quibus perpetuis laudum preconis obsequia memoranda recepimus, indesinentia semper premia de ducalis gratitudinis munificentia rependamus. Nam ubi sincerissime devotionis exhibitio defectum non patitur, non decet, ut digne retributionis dextera restringatur.*

the town of Racibórz (1286).⁵⁴³ In an illustration of the importance of individual style, after Arnold's departure from the chanceries, Władysław's other sons, Bolko of Opole and Kazimierz of Bytom stopped producing diplomas with this type of preamble. When Arnold's own loyalty and service to the dukes and their father were eventually rewarded in 1292, the document's arenga fittingly proclaimed that while Mieszko of Cieszyn extends his largess to all loyal subjects, he is particularly generous to those who frequently demonstrate their allegiance through service.⁵⁴⁴ The idea was also expressed in the preambles of other contemporary Silesian dukes, though the length and the loftiness of the phrasing varied. Henryk V the Fat, upon gaining control over the duchy of Wrocław, issued two documents to his followers, Gunther von Bieberstein (1290) and *miles* Themo (1292), in which generous donations are preceded by a preamble highlighting ducal *benignitas*.⁵⁴⁵ An elaborate arenga containing the same theme opened the diploma of Bolko I the Strict for his protonotary Siegfried (1295).⁵⁴⁶

In the Duchy of Wrocław, the appearance of new themes in the preambles of the ducal charters can also be linked to the strong influence of the new chancery staff. Notaries of Henryk IV Probus, like Baldwin or Master Ludwig left a strong mark on the increasingly standardized formulary, introducing previously almost entirely absent themes of ducal majesty to the charters' preambles.⁵⁴⁷ As noted by Sébastien Rossignol, preambles focusing more specifically on the idea of "the search for the common good," which highlighted the reciprocal relation between the duties of rulers and their subjects enjoyed particular popularity.⁵⁴⁸ The arenga *Iustis subditorum affectibus inclinari nos convenit...*, which expressed the belief that as the ruler who would vigilantly attend to their subjects' interests, they would do their best to safeguard ruler's *honor* or show their *obsequia* was especially frequently employed.⁵⁴⁹ The less popular arenga

⁵⁴³ SUB V.266: *Ut illis omnibus, a quibus perpetuis laudum preconiiis obsequia recepimus memoranda, indesinentia semper premia rependamus, hoc dignum et iustum fore penitus arbitramur; decet enim, ut, ubi sincere devotionis exhibitio non patitur defectu, nequaquam digne retributionis dextera restringatur.*

⁵⁴⁴ ZDMAł, IV.885: *Etsi munificentiae nostrae gratiam libenter extendamus ad singulos, quos fideles nobis ab operum experimento sentimus, circa illorum tamen merita gratiosius prosequendo libenter dextram nostrae liberalitatis adducimus, pro quibus non solum devotionis et fidei puritas, sed servitii gratitudo multiplicis interpellant;* The document was certifying a sale of rights to *locatio* of the town of Zator to Arnold's brothers, Rudiger and Peter.

⁵⁴⁵ SUB V.462: *Principum benignitas cunctos sibi devotos tenetur gratuite respicere, eis tamen beneficiorum incrementa largius augere, qui suis fidelibus obsequiis plus aliis meruerunt;* similarly in SUB VI.66.

⁵⁴⁶ SUB VI.213: *Licet ad quorundam fidelium suorum munifice prosequenda servicia manus liberalitatis principum quadam generalitate se habeat, illis tamen quadam specialitate sit debitor, in quibus fidei pure constanciam invenit et promptitudinem obsequendi cognoscit quorumque devotio non solum prestitis cupit placere obsequiis, sed speratur in antea potius placitura prestandis.*

⁵⁴⁷ Rossignol, "Preambles and Politics," 100; More detailed analysis of the chancery's personnel and its impact in Winfried Irgang, "Das Urkunden- und Kanzleiwesen Herzog Heinrichs IV. von Schlesien (1270-1290)," *Zeitschrift Für Ostforschung* 36 (1987): 11-29.

⁵⁴⁸ Rossignol, *Majestas principum*, 233.

⁵⁴⁹ The first use in the document from 1285, confirming a transaction between Werner of Strzelina and a townsman from Wrocław, SUB V.174: *Iustis subditorum affectibus inclinari nos convenit et in confirmandis rerum suarum*

expressing the same idea begins with *Contractus nostrorum subditorum tanto maiori cura nos convenit confirmare....*⁵⁵⁰

The demand for preambles referring to rewards for service is well reflected in the *Summa Nycolai*, the Formulary created at Henryk IV's chancery. This rather short collection contains two separate examples of documents rewarding service to the duke. The first one combines consideration of fleeting memory with the call for rewarding long service with fruitful benefices, the second one underscores the piety of giving and managing the affection of the subjects (*affectus subditorum*).⁵⁵¹ The latter preamble was not only used in the chancery practice of Henryk IV,⁵⁵² but also by other Silesian dukes,⁵⁵³ with the chancery of Bolko I of Opole substituting obedience for care for the duke's *honor*.⁵⁵⁴

Even though the preambles of the later diplomas of Bolesław V the Chaste did not match the one used in his adolescence in their directness, they were not lacking the idea of the ruler's generosity towards his subjects. Despite focusing more on the consequences of the passing of time, they nevertheless mentioned the favor with which the ruler bestowed them for service or loyalty.⁵⁵⁵ The same can be said for Bolesław's successor on the throne of Cracow, Leszek the Black. The duke's wish to reward those whose allegiance is demonstrated through loyal service appeared in preambles and narrations of several documents issued by Leszek in the aftermath of the rebellion of Lesser Polish nobles in 1286.⁵⁵⁶ A particularly elaborate arenga opened the

contractibus sic esse benivolos, ut, dum ipsorum commodis vigilanter intendimus, ipsos in honoris nostri profectibus pervigiles senciamus; for the development of its use in surviving Piast documents, see Rossignol, "Preambles and Politics," 101, footnote 33.

⁵⁵⁰ Bolko I Strict (1297), SUB.VI.290: *Contractus nostrorum subditorum tanto maiori cura nos convenit contirmare, quanto ferventiori sollicitudine quam vis ad nostra obsequia intendimus incitare.*

⁵⁵¹ *Summa Nycolay*, no. 2, 46: *Quoniam que geruntur nostris temporibus, sic tabiliora volumus permanere, ut nullis calumpniis ae retraccionibus frivolis et illicitis a memoria valeant revocari, fructuosos beneficiorum impendiis servicia subditorum sunt recompensanda, quos diuturnitas serviciorum emeritos approbavit, jam dudum hos fore digniores ad ampliora premiorum merita reputamus*; Ibidem, no. 22, 82: *Ita nos decet subditorum commodis pia consideracione providere, ut frequentibus ipsorum gratulemur obsequiis, dignis quoque laboris premiis impensa nobis servicia repensemus.*

⁵⁵² SUB V.369; The same arenga was reused in 1293 in the diploma of Henryk's successor on the throne of Wrocław, Henryk V, see SUB VI.127.

⁵⁵³ Henryk V (1293), SUB VI.127; Similar motive with different phrasing also in the charter issued by Konrad of Żagań in 1299, SUB VI.472, and Bolko I of Książ (1297) SUB VI.290; (1299) SUB VI.355.

⁵⁵⁴ (1294) SUB. VI.174; (1297) SUB VI.328.

⁵⁵⁵ (1244) KDM II.425: *Quia celsitudo nostra, que subleuat omnium fidelium subditorum ipsis collationes benigniter factas, ne eis antiquitas valeat nouercari, literarum consuevit testimonio perennare*; (1250) KDM II.431 : *Gracia principum que perpetuis subditorum usibus pro seruicijs eorundem conferuntur, iure debent in memoriam posterorum perpetue firmitatis vigore roborari*; (1262) KDKK I.63: *Quoniam ea, que ex mera principum (liberalitate) pro commodo subditorum ob merita ac fidelia obsequia conferuntur, scriptis publicis testiumque aminiculo roborantur.*

⁵⁵⁶ Donation for Sułko, castellan of Cracow, 1286, ZDM VIII.2527: *Qemadmodum principum magnificentia generositas praeinvenia est praecellens ita et apud suos fideles, quos obsequiorum fidelitas recommendat, debet liber(al)i tatis excellentia praeminere, quae tunc potissimum commendatur, cum in obequentibus fideliter extitit fructuosa*; Exemption from some burdens for the villagers of Świętosław, castellan of Wiślica, 1286, KDM II.504: *Cum principalis dominacio in subditis fidei constandam experitur, pulcre pariter et decenter digno retribucionis*

foundation (*locatio*) charter of the city of Sandomierz, issued for *supparius* Witko, which particularly strongly extolled the ducal splendor, promising rewards to those whom the “purity of loyalty” (*fidei puritas*) renders “pleasing and agreeable” (*gratos et acceptor [acceptos]*).⁵⁵⁷

Almost half of Władysław the Short’s documents began with the “ruler’s majesty”-preamble. The themes most often espoused in those arengas were those of ducal (and later royal) generosity and just reward for service.⁵⁵⁸ Whereas the most popular, simple arenga praising Władysław’s *largitas* appeared regularly in the sources in a standardized formula,⁵⁵⁹ the broad notion of rewarding loyalty and service of subjects was expressed through a diverse selection of phrases.

Long before he carried the royal title, the preambles of the documents issued by Władysław the Short stated that the glory of the monarch shines the brightest when he grants rewards for obedience to his *fideles*.⁵⁶⁰ *Excellentia nostre ingenuitatis* called on the ruler to confer privileges, favors, and honors to those commended by their service.⁵⁶¹ Some preambles echoed the ones used in the past documents. The Sandomierz charter issued by Leszek the Black cited above, or even Bolesław I of Mazovia’s 1244 donation are cases in point, though in the latter, this is due to the common (Bohemian or Hungarian) source of inspiration rather than continuous chancery practice.⁵⁶² Władysław’s documents also used four different variants inspired by the example set out in *Summa Nicolai (Ita nos decet...)*, which framed rewarding

premio ipsorum fidelitas est coronanda, vt vbi fides est et operis euidencia, ibi remuneracioms premium sit paratum; Donation for György Baksa, Hungarian knight, 1287, KDM I.113: *nos Lestco dei gracia dux Cracouie, Sandomirie et Siradie, uolentes cuilibet pro dignis obsequiorum rueritis et honore nostri principatus eque retribucionis premia elargiri, ad hoc nostram inclinauimus beneuolenciam, ut qui ad obsequia nobis placita se prebuit utilem, optatam recipiat a nostre munificencie dextra porcionem.*

⁵⁵⁷ CDP III. 63: *Magnifica Principum celsitudine digne retribucionis premia merentur obtinere quos fidei puritas ex obsequiis reddit gratos et acceptor*; *Ubi enim per operis euidenciam fidele patet obsequium ibi remuneracionis dignissime premium sit paratum*; The same arenga, with slight modifications, used by Leszek’s younger half-brothers: Siemowit of Dobrzyń (1300, DKM IV.15) and Władysław the Short (1330, KDM II.602). As the chancellor of Siemowit Mikołaj returned to his cathedral chapter in Płock, the arenga can be found in the 1301 document issued by Bolesław II of Płock as well. See Ewa Łuczycka, “Trzy dokumenty książąt mazowieckich z pierwszej połowy XIV w. Przyczynek do najdawniejszych dziejów Warszawy” [Three documents of the dukes of Mazovia from the first half of the 14th century. A contribution to the earliest history of Warsaw], *Przegląd Historyczny* 54, no. 2 (1973): 346–50.

⁵⁵⁸ Adamska, *Arengi*, 79–86, 120.

⁵⁵⁹ See for examples KDM I.168: *Largitas regum multipliciter commendatur, si ex grata donacione confirmacio beniuola subsequatur*; This preamble, regularly appearing in Władysław’s documents, was a new product of his chancery, Adamska, *Arengi*, 95–96.

⁵⁶⁰ *Inter claras Regie dignitatis laudes, in eis clarior luce prefulgat, dum fidelibus suis grata premia pro eorum obsequiis largiuntur.* (1307) KDM I.137; (1308) KDP II/1.201; Anna Adamska is right to point out that rather than focusing on not entirely accurate characterization of Władysław’s title, the main reason behind the choice of this particular preamble was the appeal of its core, reward-centered message. Adamska, *Arengi*, 93.

⁵⁶¹ KDW II.964: *Excellentia nostre ingenuitatis exigit et requirit, ut illos prosequimur (sic) speciali prerogativa gratie et honoris, qui se nobis suis serviciis multiplicibus multipliciter recommendant.*

⁵⁶² KDM II.602: *Dignum est, ut benemeriti non solum in se ipsis, sed eciam in suis posteris Principum beneficencijs consolentur*; KDM I.147; KDW II.971.

the obedience of subjects as an act done out of *pia consideracione*.⁵⁶³ Anna Adamska noted that the Silesian formulary book might have been known at Władysław's chancery, though it is also possible that its reception was mediated by the contemporary examples drawn from the documents of Głogów Piasts.⁵⁶⁴ As demonstrated by other arengas, the obligation to reward those serving *bene et fideliter ac laudabiter*, was grounded not only in piety but also in the sense of legality and equity.⁵⁶⁵ In some preambles, the sense that it is just to reward well-deserving subjects was coupled with the mention of punishment that would reach ungrateful for their *demerita*.⁵⁶⁶

The theme of rewards for services is largely absent from the preambles of Przemysław II. The chancery of the first in a century Piast to wear the royal crown was rather conservative in this part of the formulary, relying to a large extent on "memoria-oblivio"-preambles found in documents of Przemysław's predecessors.⁵⁶⁷ Even more general gestures towards magnificence or nobleness appeared only in diplomas issued by Przemysław during his short-lived bid for the control of Lesser Poland.⁵⁶⁸ Only when looking into the *dispositio* of the diplomas can we see that the theme was not completely absent. Nevertheless, even the *dispositio* of the secular donations issued by the dukes of Greater Poland, which regularly highlighted *Fidelia* (and *utilia*) *servicia* as the motive behind the legal action, rarely contained more generalizable statements gesturing towards the importance of ducal generosity.⁵⁶⁹ One diploma of Przemysław II in which he expresses the wish for all of his *fideles* and *servitors* to grow in *beneficiis* and honors in return for their service.⁵⁷⁰ Just like with the preambles mentioned above, this diploma

⁵⁶³ ZDM IV.906; KDM I.173; KDM I.183; AGZ V.1.

⁵⁶⁴ Adamska, *Arengi*, 53, 101–2.

⁵⁶⁵ Karol Maleczyński, "Kilkanaście dokumentów Władysława Łokietka z lat 1296-1329" [Several documents of Władysław the Short from the years 1296-1329], *Studia Źródłoznawcze = Commentationes* 6 (1961): 129–49, no. 8: *Quia dignus est mercennarius mercede sua et vigore iuris ac de equitate expedit, ut bene et fideliter ac laudabiter servientes tum dignam renumerationem percipent pro serviciis iam impensis*.

⁵⁶⁶ KDM II.557, KTyn 41: *iusticia est ius vnicuique, quod suum est, tribuens, ingratos ob demerita puniendo, benemeritos beneficijs perpetuis et gracijs multipliciter premiando*; It needs to be noted that both recipients were monastic communities.

⁵⁶⁷ Stanisław Krzyżanowski, *Dyplomy i kancelaria Przemysława II. Studium z dyplomatyki polskiej XIII wieku* [Diplomas and the chancellery of Przemysław II. A study of Polish diplomatics in the 13th century] (Cracow: Akademia Umiejętności, 1890), 8; Karol Maleczyński, *Zarys dyplomatyki polskiej wieków średnich* [An outline of Polish diplomatics in the Middle Ages] (Wrocław: Wrocławskie Towarzystwo Naukowe, 1951), 1:174.

⁵⁶⁸ KDKK I.91: *Quod Generosa principum maiestas facit [...]*; KDM. II.516: *Quod magnificia principum decrevit autoritas [...]*. This theme, present already in the diplomas of Hungarian and Bohemian monarchs in the early thirteenth century, appeared also in the documents of Silesian dukes of Głogów and Zagań, and continued to be popular in the chancery of Władysław the Short. See Adamska, *Arengi*, 90–91.

⁵⁶⁹ For the closely approaching examples, see: (1289) KDW II.639: *Nos vero tantorum beneficiorum memores, volentes sibi et suis posteris ac successoribus in aliquo consolacionis munere respondere [...]*; (1292) KDW II.680: *Et ut ampliori beneficio nostre gracie habundet [...]*.

⁵⁷⁰ KDW II. 649: *quam plurimis didicimus experimentis laudabilibus, in retributionem servitorum volentes nostros fideles et servitores universos in beneficiis semper crescere et honore, munifice damus, tradimus et conferimus proventus et soluciones eas [...]*.

was issued in Cracow for Lesser-Polish recipients, the burghers Gerard and Henryk (called *Borus*). In Greater Poland, the act of granting possessions or legal exceptions had to speak for itself.

The theme of the reward for the service appeared not only in preambles, but also further down the line, in the *narratio* or *dispositio* parts of the diplomas. The *narratio*s were usually short motivational formulas preceding the proper *dispositio*. They could, but did not have to, be mirrored in *arenga* that underlined the reciprocal nature of the granted gift. The precise wording differed. Most wanted to give back (*reddere*, *recompensare*,) *merita* for *merita* (alternatively *beneficia*),⁵⁷¹ or to recompense for years of *operae* and *labor*.⁵⁷² Others, of varying length and floridity, elaborated on the ruler's moral duty to give the reward (*praemium*, *merces*) for the *obsequia*.⁵⁷³

The outline sketched above demonstrates that, by the turn of the fourteenth century, the idea of remuneration of loyal service by the ruler was expressed in the diplomas issued in almost all of the divided Piast *regnum*. The first to regularly use the theme was Bolesław V the Chaste – a ruler who, ever since his childhood, was forced to navigate the relationship with the powerful Lesser-Polish magnates. Just like the “majesty”-type preambles in general, the motive of remunerating *fidelitas* was most popular with those Piasts who, like Henryk IV Probus, Henryk III of Głogów, Leszek the Black, or Władysław the Short, pursued particularly ambitious political goals that extended beyond regional particularisms. At the same time, one should not underestimate the degree to which the chancery practice shaped the message of the issued charters, as illustrated by the impact of individual notaries or diplomas of Greater Polish rulers. Even as the preambles with themes of rewarded loyal service became more standardized by the turn of the fourteenth century (especially in Silesia), they never became detached from the content of the rest of the diploma. The ideological message they contained should thus be treated as chosen deliberately, and reflected ideas that found purchase not only at the ducal court, but probably also among the addressees.

⁵⁷¹ See for example Henryk IV Probus, (1281) SUB IV. 419: *volens pro meritis merita impendere ampliora et beneficio beneficiis respondere*; Bolesław V the Chaste (1244) KDM II.425: *nos, qui ex officio suscepti regiminis nostri tenemur merita meritis preuenire et dignam dignis seruicijs reddere recompensam*; also (1262) KDKK I.63; Cunegunda of Poland, KDM II.511; Siemowit of Dobrzyń, (1300) DKM IV.15: *ut merita meritorum se gaudeant similitudine recompensare*.

⁵⁷² Henryk V, (1292) SUB VI.66: *ipsi in recompensationem suorum operum et laborum*.

⁵⁷³ See for example Bolesław V the Chaste KDM I.88: *cum tales et tam bene meritos excellens principum liberalitas suis consuevit semper beneficiis prosequi et gracia speciali, vt pro tam continuis obsequiis mercedem a nobis reciperet condignam, Dedimus et contulimus [...]*; Henryk IV Probus, SUB V.271: *volentes eundem nostre benivolencie premiis ad nostris obsequendum beneplacitis reddere [...]*.

In the language of the charters, rulers themselves saw the meritorious deeds and loyal service of their subjects, though it could also become a matter of *fama publica*.⁵⁷⁴ Preambles enumerated several reasons for which Piast rulers were compelled to give. These could be ruler's attributes like *liberalitas*, or *benignitas*, his Christian *pia consideracio*, or the political virtues like *iusticia* and *equitas*. However diverse in their phrasing, most formulas stuck to the simple message of the ruler's obligation to grant special rewards and favor to those who distinguished themselves with extraordinary or long loyal service. In some cases, meting out the just rewards for those deserving was rhetorically paired with punishing bad subjects.⁵⁷⁵ The reciprocity described in those preambles usually rewarded past and present service, but some also looked to the future. Especially interesting were variations on Henryk IV Probus' arengas focusing on the "search of the common good" (*Iustis subdiorum...*, *Ita nos decet...*) popular with other Silesian Piasts and Władysław the Short, and which saw the ruler's actions as a way of managing the emotional bonds with his subjects, ensuring future loyalty.

Polish historiography has long pointed out that the legal acts reflected in the ducal documents were made at public assemblies, such as the *colloquia* of the local elites or celebrated holidays.⁵⁷⁶ Thus, the prospective circle of the audience for the messages transmitted by the charters could have potentially extended much further beyond their addressee and the testators.⁵⁷⁷ In this light, it is important to underline that some of the above-mentioned preambles directly gestured towards another, demonstrative aspect of rewarding the well-deserving subjects. In a message addressed directly to the witnesses of the act of ducal largess, the diplomas said that rulers hoped that those whose obedience and service were rewarded would serve as examples for other subjects to imitate.⁵⁷⁸

⁵⁷⁴ See for example Władysław the Short's grant of rights to locate the city of Lublin for Vogt Maciej (1317), KDM II.569: *discreto uiro ac prouido Mathie aduocato de Opatouecz, nostro procuratori ac fideli seruitori, quem morum probitas et obsequiorum fidelitas nobis gratum et acceptum effecerunt, quod fama publica predicat et facti euidentia attestatur [...]*.

⁵⁷⁵ See for example CDP II/1.157: *qui ex principali magnificentia singulorum merita debemus cognoscere et tractare, ne bonum irremuneratum, et malum incorrectum pertranseat, ad exempli perniciem posterorum*; also already cited KDM II.557, KTyn 41.

⁵⁷⁶ Already in Stanisław Kętrzyński, *Zarys nauki o dokumencie polskim wieków średnich* [An outline of the science of the Polish document of the Middle Ages] (Warsaw: Fudnusz Kultury Narodowej, 1934), 1:250–53.

⁵⁷⁷ Most extensively discussed by Rossignol, *Maiestas principum*, 289–303; See also Fichtenau, "Monarchische Propaganda in Urkunden," 21; Adamska, *Arengi*, 114; Tomasz Jurek, "Ritual Und Technik Der Sozialen Kommunikation Zwischen Landesherrn Und Gesellschaft in Polen Im 13. Jahrhundert," in *Ritualisierung Politischer Willensbildung. Polen Und Deutschland Im Hohen Und Späten Mittelalter*, ed. Wojciech Fałkowski, Bernd Schneidmüller, and Stefan Weinfurter (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010), 115.

⁵⁷⁸ For example, see KDM I.113: *consideratis et inspectis fidelibus obsequijs, que nobis noster fidelis lasco Brunowycz [...] multipliciter exhibuit et in posterum diligenter nititur exhibere, ipsum volentes ad omne obsequendum reddere promptiorem, vt hoc exemplo ceteri ad exercenda virtutum inpendia facilius prouocentur*; KDM I.160: *Dignum est, ut benemeriti in se et in suis munere perpetuo consolentur, vt ceteri ad similia facienda magis animentur*; KDM II.971: *Dignum est, ut bene meriti in se et in suis successoribus principum beneficiis consolentur, ut eorum exemplo alii ad obsequia reddantur promptiores*.

Horses, dogs, and dangerous gifts

The *Book of Henryków* sheds slightly more light on how the reciprocal exchange described in the charters could play out in practice. The author of its first part, Abbot Piotr, outlines the history of the contested ownership of Głębowice forest. The pivotal role in a long story is played by a certain knight Stefan Kobylagłowa, whose scheming led to the forest being temporarily taken away from the Abbey. First, he convinces some of the local ducal peasants to question the claim notary Mikołaj, the original benefactor of the Cistercian foundation, had to the forest. Peasants complained to the duke, who agreed with them and repossessed the forest. Then, Abbot Piotr writes:

Upon noting that through [the action of] these peasants his shrewdness had prevailed, Stephen Kobylagłowa came up to the duke and offered him a warhorse which was then appraised at 28 silver marks before the duke. The lord duke happily accepted the horse, and said to Stephen, "For this favor and your gift, if you ask me for something, you will get it." After he heard this, Stephen reverently and happily came up to the duke, and said, "My lord, you know that I serve you with the utmost pleasure, but my possessions are modest. So I ask that, in order that I may be able to serve you, my lord, that much better, you deign to grant me the forest which has now reverted to you." After he heard these words, the duke summoned the said peasants and granted the forest to Stephen.⁵⁷⁹

The language used by Abbot Piotr to depict the conversation between Stefan Kobylagłowa and Duke Henryk I the Bearded corresponds with the one used in Piast charters.⁵⁸⁰ In a strikingly similar example, Henryk IV Probus gave in 1288 two *Lans* of land to Sandko, son of Jan of Lubrza in consideration of his *fidelia et continua servitia*, receiving in return an expensive warhorse (worth 40 silver marks).⁵⁸¹ Stefan's *gratia* was to be immediately returned by Henryk's reward, with the whole transaction enabling Stefan to serve even more diligently in the future, strengthening the bonds of loyalty between the two. Even though, as Abbot Piotr

⁵⁷⁹ *Liber foundationis*, 42: *Videns autem prefatus Stephanus de Cobylaglova suam astuciam in eisdem rusticis preualuisse accessit ad ducem offerens ei dextrarium qui tunc coram duce computabatur pro uiginti et viii^o marcis argenti. Quem equum dominus dux lete suscipiens dixit ad Stephanum, Pro hac gratia et tuo munimine si quicquam rogaueris inpetrabis. Quod audiens Stephanus reuerenter et lete accessit ad ducem dicens, Domine tu scis quia tibi libentissime seruiro sed habeo modicas possessiones. Vnde rogo ut tibi domino meo tanto melius ualeam seruire mihi siluam que tibi modo cessit digneris conferre. Hiis auditis dominus dux uocatisque dictis rusticis contulit eidem Stephano iam sepedicto siluam;* Translation after *A local society in transition. The Henryków book and related documents*. Edited and translated by Piotr Górecki (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2007).

⁵⁸⁰ Piotr Górecki, "A Historian as a Source of Law: Abbot Peter of Henryków and the Invocation of Norms in Medieval Poland, c. 1200-1270," *Law and History Review* 18, no. 3 (2000): 495.

⁵⁸¹ SUB V.156: [...] *commemorantes et considerantes fidelia et continua servicia militis Sandconis filii Iohannis de Lubzs dedimus, contulimus et per presencia confirmamus duos mansos pro equo suo dextrario valente quadraginta marcas, quos de nostro dominio eidem assignamus a terminis de Dobrin, adiungentes eosdem mansos ad terminos ville sue superius predictae, ita quod a terminis hereditatis sue de Lubzs debeant mensurari [...].*

notes with satisfaction, Stefan was eventually forced to return the forest to the monastery, the duke recompensed him with the value of the horse.⁵⁸²

We should not forget that the narrative reflecting so well the notions of reciprocal gift-giving found in the charters is, for Abbot Piotr, a tale of undue influence. The expensive warhorse was used by scheming Stefan as a tool to affect an important decision of his lord. The interaction described here also illustrates the change surrounding the imagined risks of gift-giving in social relations. Whereas Vincentius of Cracow worried about material motives creating shaky ground for the loyalty of a ruler's subjects, the thirteenth-century Abbot Piotr was concerned about the impact of gifts on the ruler's favor.

This was not just the concern of the Henryków monks, preoccupied with defending their property from the bad decisions of the local rulers influenced by material incentives. The author of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*, also a Cistercian, did not occupy himself much with the possessions of his order. Yet, he also noted the problem of subjects using gifts to buy the favor and loyalty of Piast rulers. Lamenting the fall of the Silesian political project in the wake of the battle at Legnica, the Lubiąż monk wrote that the lands of Henryk II were divided, with Silesia falling into the hands of Bolesław the Bald and Cracow going to Bolesław V the Chaste. The Silesian Bolesław's tyranny was described by the chronicler in detail, which merits a separate investigation in a later chapter. The Lesser-Polish Bolesław, while not as malicious, fared no better. The Chronicler writes that, in his time:

[...] even though the poison of slander flourished throughout all of places in his principality, he [Bolesław] was drawn by whichever party, placated by a small gift, especially by dogs, whose he was lover and admirer, [so] he became unbearable to the whole land.⁵⁸³

This unflattering image of the Lesser-Polish ruler caught the attention of medieval and contemporary historians, who mostly focused on the duke's passion for hunting dogs.⁵⁸⁴ Paweł Żmudzki is probably right to link the opinion expressed by the Silesian monk with the dissatisfaction of a part of the Lesser Polish nobility with Bolesław's reign, which ultimately boiled over in the failed rebellion in 1273. His reading of the quoted account as depicting Bolesław's attempt at strengthening ducal *regalia* seems more speculative to me.⁵⁸⁵ The Silesian

⁵⁸² *Liber Fundationis*, 44.

⁵⁸³ SCP, 643: *Cuius temporibus, licet calumpniarum virus per omnia loca sui principatus vigeret, modico munere tamen placatus, in partem quamlibet trahebatur, et maxime canum, quorum amator et fotor, toti terre importabilis fuit.*

⁵⁸⁴ The account of Lubiąż monk served as a basis for Długosz's testimony, *Ioannis Dlugossi Annales*, lib. VII, 183; See also Maciaszek, *Bolesław V*, 319.

⁵⁸⁵ Paweł Żmudzki, *Studium podzielonego Królestwa. Książę Leszek Czarny* [A study of a divided kingdom. Prince Leszek the Black] (Warsaw: Neriton, 2000), 235.

chronicler himself saw the source of Lesser Polish political instability in the duke's malleable character. Bought by the gifts far cheaper than Stefan Kobylagłowa's warhorse, Bolesław would be easily swayed back and forth by competing interest groups, leaving his domain in crisis.

3.3 Content of the Bonds of Loyalty

Moving away from the ways in which the rulers and their subjects tried to secure each other's loyalty, we should ask what the fragmented historiographic tradition and ducal diplomas of the thirteenth century can tell us about the contents of this bond. In other words, what did the *fidelia servitia* for which the subjects were rewarded and praised actually entail?

One broad answer to this question would focus on the content of the noble's service itself. Here, the thirteenth-century diplomatic material offers a more detailed picture of the rights and obligations of the emerging broad social category of knighthood.⁵⁸⁶ Already in the early thirteenth century, ducal diplomas start to refer to a set of norms of *ius militare*, 'knightly law', that linked the hereditary possession of land and other rights with the required service to the duke.⁵⁸⁷ It would usually take the shape of mounted military service, but its precise details remain unclear, either unmentioned in the sources or drowned in the local exceptions and differences. It seems that the norms concerning the obligations entailed by the service became standardized only in Silesia by the turn of the fourteenth century, with a set number of war-horses to be provided per holding.⁵⁸⁸ Nevertheless, even with the content of the service defined in an easily assessable way, the link between knightly obligations and *fidelitas* was not straightforward. The anonymous continuator of Abbot Peter's work wrote at the turn of the fourteenth century about a certain knight, Poltko of Schnellenwalde, who refused to serve Duke Bolko I at his pleasure and was, in turn, forced to give the duke ten marks for each required

⁵⁸⁶ The social process of the formation of a broad social group of *milites* in thirteenth century Poland has been well discussed by Marcin R. Pauk, "Lords and Peasants: Polish Society and Economy in Transition," in *Writing History in Medieval Poland: Bishop Vincentius of Cracow and the "Chronica Polonorum,"* ed. Darius von Güttner-Sporzyński, *Cursor Mundi* 28 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 255–60; Tomasz Jurek, "Geneza szlachty polskiej" [The origins of the Polish nobility], in *Ślechta, moc a reprezentacja we średowieku*, ed. Nodl Martin and Martin Wihoda, *Colloquia mediaevalia Pragensia* 9 (Prague: Filosofia, 2007), 83–93; Piotr Górecki, *Economy, Society, and Lordship in Medieval Poland, 1100–1250* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1992), 180–86.

⁵⁸⁷ The two classical positions on *ius militare* include Zygmunt Wojciechowski, *Prawo rycerskie w Polsce: przed statutami Kazimierza Wielkiego* [The knightly law in Poland: before the statutes of Casimir the Great] (Poznań: Poznańskie Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk, 1928); and Karol Buczek, "Prawo rycerskie i powstanie stanu szlacheckiego w Polsce" [Knightly law and the birth of Polish nobility], *Przegląd Historyczny* 69, no. 1 (1978): 23–46; More recent discussion in Ambroży Bogucki, "Problem prawa rycerskiego w Polsce" [The problem of knightly law in Poland], in *Spółeczeństwo Polski Średniowiecznej*, vol. 11, ed. Stefan Krzysztof Kuczyński (Warsaw: DiG, 2007), 59–89.

⁵⁸⁸ Piotr Górecki, "Words, Concepts, and Phenomena: Knighthood, Lordship, and the Early Polish Nobility, c. 1100 – c. 1350," in *Nobles and Nobility in Medieval Europe: Concepts, Origins, Transformations*, ed. Anne J. Duggan (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2002), 137–43; Górecki, *The Text and the World*, 193–94.

war-horse in pawn.⁵⁸⁹ While Poltko manifestly refused to perform the expected service, neither the duke nor the writer of the Book of Henryków described his actions in terms of disloyalty.

Thus, rather than tracing the changing expectations of service, I will focus, just like in the first chapter of this thesis, on the scattered references to the subjects whose praiseworthy loyalty has been illustrated (be it by the annalist or the ducal chancery) by specific deeds.

3.3.1 Dying for the Duke – Case of Peregryn of Wiesenburg,

While Vincentius of Cracow focused more on the non-transactional nature of bonds of loyalty rather than their content, his depictions of loyal subjects saw them offering counsel and leading armies and daring raids. To *consilium et auxilium* performed by loyal men like Piotr Włost or palatine Goworek, which map well onto the political culture of Latin Europe, one could also add the readiness to sacrifice their lives and positions further highlighted by Cracow's bishop. As investigated in the previous chapter, the depictions of the loyal service from *Chronica Polonorum* were mostly omitted by the authors of the turn-of-the-fourteenth-century chronicles. Dzierżwa faithfully repeated after Vincentius the story about the exploits of Piotr Włost, and the Lubiąż monk celebrated the victory of Bolesław's champion in the judicial duel against Zbigniew, suggesting that these martial deeds were still seen by the chroniclers as expected of the praiseworthy subjects.

Going beyond the period covered by Vincentius's narrative, the author of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* gave an even more direct example of loyalty displayed by a Piast subject when describing the murder of Leszek the White in 1227. The attack on the Piast dukes gathered for an assembly at Greater-Polish Gąsawa was documented in many thirteenth-century sources, and I investigate those depictions more fully later in this chapter. For now, let us focus on one specific aspect shared by two accounts of the events written by the Lubiąż monk. In the Silesian part of the narrative, the chronicler describes how other Piast rulers were deceitfully led into the trap by the ambitious Duke of Gniezno, Odon. Pretending to require their military assistance, he called upon their aid, only to allow hostile Pomeranians to attack the unsuspecting Poles at the camp in the early morning. The attackers killed Leszek as he fled the bath, and:

they left Henryk, Duke of Silesia, who was still resting in bed, gravely wounded with many injuries, killing at his doorway the loyal knight Peregryn of

⁵⁸⁹ *Liber Foundationis*, 89-90: *Post mortem uero ducis Henrici quarti, regnante iam in istis partibus inclito duce Bolkone, predictus Poltzko eidem principi detrectabat seruire ad placitum et quodam tempore neglexit seruicium trium dextrariorum, quod tamen tenebatur. Pro quo neglectu dux secundum statutum quod statuerat, quod et hodie seruatur, fecit eum inpignorari de quolibet dextrario pro X marcis currentis monete et sic tulit ab eo XXX marcas pro tribus dextrariis, nec aliquid relaxauit. Quam inpignoracionem idem Poltzko egre ferens, accessit ad principem proprio et uoluntario motu et exhibuit ei uenales omnes uillas suas, quas sub eo habuit [...].*

Wiesenburg, father of Gebehard and Tymo, who had not been the imitators of their father. While all the others fled, Duke Henryk was taken home by his own people, and Peregryn was transported to Lubiąż for burial.⁵⁹⁰

The last sentence points out why the memory of Henryk the Bearded's loyal servant might have been particularly cultivated in the chronicler's monastery.⁵⁹¹ Despite this underlying local dimension of the memory of Peregryn's sacrifice, the monk from Lubiąż deemed it important enough to include it in the second version of the story, this time placed in the broader Polish perspective. This time, the chronicler is even more explicit, claiming that Henryk, who suffered many wounds, was saved from his death only by Peregryn throwing himself in front of the duke and dying on top of him.⁵⁹²

Peregryn, whose loyalty Lubiąż monk praised, hailed from the family of Upper Lusatian nobles who migrated to Silesia in the early thirteenth century. The chronicler's evident antipathy towards Peregryn's sons, who pursued successful careers at the courts of Wrocław and Głogów, is difficult to account for.⁵⁹³ Marek Cetwiński, the proponent of the late dating of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*, suggested that the Lubiąż monk might have been alluding to the participation of Peregryn's grandson, Bogusz Wezenborg, in the kidnapping and imprisonment of Henryk V the Fat in 1293.⁵⁹⁴ In an interesting parallel, the late-fourteenth-century *Chronicle of the Polish princes* described this kidnapping as taking place in the bathhouse, with one of the

⁵⁹⁰ SCP, 648 : *Ubi dum convenissent et in dolo de concordia tracteretur, uno mane Pomerani subito super incautos irruentes sive prosilientes, ducem Lestkonem filium Casimiri, monarchum Cracovie, de balneo procurrentem interimunt et Henricum, ducem Slesie, adhuc lecto pausantem, multis vulneribus conscisum moribundum derelinquunt, occiso super obice fideli milite Peregrino de Wysenburg, patre Gebhardi et Tymonis, qui patris imitatores non fuerant. Fugientibus autem cunctis aliis dux Henricus domum relatus a suis, Peregrinus in Lubes sepeliendus transvectus est.*

⁵⁹¹ The necrology of the Lubiąż monastery notes under 31st of December: *Ob. Perigrinus* [empty space in left in manuscript] *qui dedit mansos et lacus Wilkzin.* See *Necrologium Lubense* in *Monumenta Lubensia*, ed. Wilhelm Wattenbach (Breslau: Josef Max & Komp., 1861), 59.

⁵⁹² SCP, 640: *Lesco postmodum ab expeditione, quam in Russiam et Galliciam fecerat, post procerum Russie multifariam necem ac Galitie prosper rediens, cum duce Odone Gnezneusi cuius causa tunc agebatur, ac duce Henrico Barbato fratreque proprio Conrado, duce Cuiavie ac Mazovie in Nakel contra Pomeranos proficiscitur et a Pomeranis in balneo occiditur, et dux Henricus in lecto multis vulneribus affectus sed obiectu Peregrini de Wysenburk, qui super eum occisus fuit, liberatur a morte, et accursu suorum tandem erutus et ad propria deducitur [...].*

⁵⁹³ Gebehard held the titles of Castellan of Sądowel (1243-52) and Głogów (1260-61), Tymo served as the judge at the court of rulers of Wrocław. Tymo's disappearance from the sources coincides with the return of young Henryk IV Probus from the captivity in 1278 (SUB III.337), but this might be accounted for by his advanced age. See Szczepańska, "Henryk IV, cz. 1," 119; On the Wiesenburg/Wezenborg family, with particular attention to Peregryn and his children, see Jurek, *Obce rycerstwo*, 304-5; Cetwiński, *Rycerstwo Śląskie. Biogramy i rodowody*, 2:73, 117, 139, 142.

⁵⁹⁴ Marek Cetwiński, "Śląskie echa zjazdu gąsawskiego: terażniejszość a przeszłość - fikcja wyjaśniająca w twórczości kronikarzy" [Silesian echoes of the Gąsawa assembly: present versus past - explanatory fiction in the works of chroniclers], in *Gąsawa w pamięci historycznej: w związku z 620. rocznicą lokacji miasta*, ed. Dariusz Karczewski (Inowrocław: PTH Oddział Inowrocławski, 2009), 69-70 Bogusz, previously not present in any documents, appears among the knights offered amnesty for their disloyalty in a peace treaty between kidnapped Henryk V and Henryk of Głogów, see SUB VI.144 .

companions of Henryk V dying while shielding the duke in the same manner as Peregryn.⁵⁹⁵ While the accounts of both attacks on Piast rulers draw from the same imagery, I am not convinced that the Lubiąż monk was alluding to contemporary events, or any specific political indiscretions of Perygryn's successors. The bitter comment about their loyalty not measuring up to the example set by their father might have been construed as a broader critique of the moral decline that the Lubiąż monk perceived among his contemporaries.⁵⁹⁶

The Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* presents us thus with an example of a subject who demonstrated his praiseworthy loyalty to the Duke by offering his life in defense of the Piast ruler. The anchoring of the story of Perygryn's sacrifice in the context of the Lubiąż monastery suggests that it was the local community that saw itself as the repository of the memory of the loyal service of one of the abbey's benefactors. Similar examples of the heroic deaths of important subjects could also be found in other narrative sources from thirteenth-century Poland, though they are relatively scarce.⁵⁹⁷

3.3.2 *Consilium, auxilium, et labores* in the Piast Charters

In contrast to the depiction of Perygryn's brave sacrifice, neither Dzierzwa, the Lubiąż monk, nor the thirteenth-century annalists seemed to be that interested in the *consilium* provided by loyal subjects. This is not to say that the thirteenth-century sources do not mention the subjects offering their advice to the rulers. On the contrary, nobles' participation through the deliberations, in the process of decision-making and rulership seems to have been an important feature of the fragmented Piast Poland. This is at least the picture painted by the diplomatic sources, in which the formulas of the *consensus* and *consilium* of the duke's *barones* appear with regularity throughout the period.⁵⁹⁸ Nevertheless, these diplomatic formulae do not frame

⁵⁹⁵ *Chronica principum Poloniae*, ed. by Zygmunt Węclewski, in MPH, vol. 3 (Lwów: Gubrynowicz i Schmidt, 1883), 505.

⁵⁹⁶ Tomasz Jurek saw in this comment of the Lubiąż monk a reflection of the social reality. The sons of migrating knights, having found a more stable footing in a local society, did not develop as strong of an emotional bonds their fathers, lacking any other connections, developed with the lords they served. See Jurek, *Obce rycerstwo*, 137.

⁵⁹⁷ For example, the *Annals of the Poznań of Cathedral Chapter* make a note of the nobles who died in the siege of Nakło in 1255, highlighting the close relationship between Duke Przemysł I and deceased Pakosław, son of Szczedrzyk who *fuerat de magna gracia ducis Premisl*. See RkP, [72], 35-36.

⁵⁹⁸ The relationship between colloquia, the consensus of the Piast subjects, and the counsel of the narrower group of the influential advisors was discussed already Stanisław Zachorowski, "Colloquia w Polsce od w. XII do XIV" [Colloquia in Poland from 12th to 14th c.], in *Studia z historii prawa kościelnego i polskiego* (Cracow: Akademia Umiejętności, 1917), 3-80; More recently Krzysztof Bracha, "Wiece Bolesława Wstydlwego 1234 - 1279" [Assemblies of Bolesław the Chaste 1234-1279], *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 93, no. 3 (1986): 663-77; Antoni Barciak, "Tage und Debatten im Beisein des Herzogs in Polen. Zur Funktionsweise von Tagen (Wiece) des 13. Jahrhunderts," in *Ritualisierung Politischer Willensbildung. Polen und Deutschland im Hohen und Späten Mittelalter*, ed. Wojciech Fałkowski, Bernd Schneidmüller, and Stefan Weinfurter (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010), 69; Answering where on the scale between decision-making that binds the ruler on the one hand and mere expression of the consensus on the other hand lies the participatory role of the nobles expressed in these documents has been a subject of lively discussion. The extreme position on the deciding role of the council of *barones* in

the *consilium* given to the Piast rulers as the obligation of the loyal subjects, or a proof of someone's loyalty. The texts of those charters that elaborate on the content of the loyal service only exceptionally make a note of the *consilium* lent to the rulers by the loyal subjects, focusing instead on the examples of what can be called heroic deeds (*Heldentaten*),⁵⁹⁹ in line with Perygryn's action.

The most straightforward of these types of military accomplishments cited by the ducal charters as examples of the loyal service of the rewarded addressees was the help in capturing strongholds. These can be found underlined in the documents of the Greater Polish Piasts. In 1256, Duke Przemysł I rewarded Marcin called Lis ("Fox") from the influential Zaręba clan with immunities covering his possessions in Szczodrochowo and Czeluścino.⁶⁰⁰ While doing so, he cited the loyal service that Marcin demonstrated a few years earlier, recapturing the castles seized by the unexpected attack of some assailants from Brandenburg.⁶⁰¹ The sons of Władysław Odonic must have issued several similar documents. This is suggested by the forgery from the 1270s, supposedly issued by Bolesław I the Pious in 1252, which uses the same language of reward for military deeds as the authentic document issued in 1256.⁶⁰² Przemysł II also rewarded his subjects who demonstrated their loyalty in this particular manner. In a diploma issued in 1290, he rewarded brothers Janusz, Jan, and Filip, sons of (a different)

exercising Piast rulership was taken by Jerzy Mularczyk, *Dobór i rola świadków w dokumentach śląskich do końca XIII wieku* [Selection and role of witnesses in Silesian documents until the end of the 13th century] (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1977); Jerzy Mularczyk, *Władza książęca na Śląsku w XIII w.* [Ducal power in Silesia in the 13th century] (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1984), 224–25; Polemically Stanisław Russocki, "Świadkowie czy współdecydenci?" [Witnesses or co-decision makers?], *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 85, no. 3 (1978): 669–73; Stanisław Russocki, "'Consilium Baronum' En Pologne Médiévale," *Acta Poloniae Historica* 35 (1977): 5–19; Bracha, "Wiece Bolesława Wstydliwego 1234 – 1279" [Assemblies of Bolesław the Chaste 1234–1279], 676–77; Ulrich Schmilewski, *Der schlesische Adel bis zum Ende des 13. Jahrhunderts: Herkunft, Zusammensetzung und politisch-gesellschaftliche Rolle* (Würzburg: Verein für Geschichte Schlesiens, 2001), 244–48.

⁵⁹⁹ I am borrowing this term from Heinrich Fichtenau, "Forschungen über Urkundenformeln," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 94, nos. 3–4 (1986): 313.

⁶⁰⁰ On Marcin, see Pakulski, "Ród Zarembów," 112.

⁶⁰¹ KDW SN I.16: *Nos autem hanc venditionem dicto Martino confirmamus concedentes ei et posteris suis propter fidele servitium suum, quod nobis ostendit, dum castra que a Theutonicis fuerunt occupata, scilicet Obuzim et Predeyz per ipsius fidele servitium sunt nobis acquisita* [...]; On the attack of some *latrunculi* on the Lubusz and surrounding land see RkP, [44], 29–30; the modern reconstruction of the events in Józef Spors, "Agresja brandenburska wobec Wielkopolski do 1278 r." [Brandenburgian aggression against Greater Poland up to 1278], *Roczniki Historyczne* 40 (1973): 112; Marcin Hlebionek, *Bolesław Pobożny. Wielkopolska na drodze do zjednoczonego królestwa (1224/1227 - 6, 13 lub 14 IV 1279)* [Bolesław the Pious. Greater Poland on the way to a united kingdom (1224/1227 - April 6, 13, or 14, 1279)], 2nd ed. (Cracow: Avalon, 2017), 46–48.

⁶⁰² KDW I.305: *Noverit igitur presentis et futuri temporis posteritas, quod nos Boleslaus Dei gracia dux Polonie, inspectis bonis et fidelibus serviciis comitis Raczononis, que nobis ostendit dum castra que a Theutonicis quondam fuerant occupata, Cbusym videlicet et Drczen, per ipsius fidele servitium sunt nobis acquisita, et in aliis quam plurimis negociis fidelitatis obsequia demonstravit*; For an extensive critique of the document's authenticity, see Franciszek Sikora, "Przywileje rycerskie synów Władysława Odonica. Krytyka autentyczności" [Knightly privileges of Władysław Odonic's sons. Criticism of authenticity], *Roczniki Historyczne* 34 (1968): 21–25.

Perygryn, for helping him in recovering one of his castles – most probably an allusion to the retaking of Kalisz from the hands of the rebellious Sędziwój Zaręba in 1284.⁶⁰³

In other charters, the subjects praised for their loyal service were described to have defended the lives of their Piast rulers, like Peregryn. In a document issued on 24th of August 1295 by Bolesław II of Płock, the Mazovian Piast confirmed the rights of Wawrzyniec, castellan of Biała to the villages of Miłecin and Popień and granted him additional privileges for his *grata et fidelia servitia*. This loyalty, as the charter states, was demonstrated by Wawrzyniec at a time of great need, as the *castellanus* saved the duke's life from the peril when Bolesław's enemies were secretly scheming to kill him.⁶⁰⁴ Unfortunately, the *narratio* of the charter is the only trace of the plot against Bolesław's life, and thus we can only speculate about the exact circumstances of Wawrzyniec's deed.⁶⁰⁵ Much clearer is our understanding of the Lesser-Polish events from 1285, which saw a dangerous rebellion of the local elites against Duke Leszek the Black. Leaving the proper description of this episode for the next subchapter, I want to highlight the diploma issued in 1287 to György of the Baksa kindred, who was one of the men sent to aid Leszek by King László (Ladislaus) IV of Hungary. According to the charter, in Leszek's service the Hungarian nobleman demonstrated his loyalty with many "praiseworthy deeds (*laudabilibus gestis*)", triumphing over Leszek's enemies despite the wounds sustained in the battle. All of this György had done not only in defense of Leszek's life, but also his *honor*.⁶⁰⁶

The most extensive description of loyal service can be found in the diploma Bolesław V the Chaste and his mother Grzmisława issued in 1252 for the powerful palatine Klemens of Ruszcza. The document guaranteed him and his successors extensive privileges, telling the story of almost two decades of praiseworthy deeds.⁶⁰⁷ The *narratio* reaches far into the past,

⁶⁰³ KDW VI.40: [...] *intuentes fidele servitium Janussii, Johannis et Philippi filiorum Peregrini, quod nobis in acquisitione castri nostri fideliter ostenderunt [...]*.

⁶⁰⁴ NKDMaz II.99: [...] *intuentes grata et fidelia servicia kmetonis nostri comitis Laurentii heredis de Popyen, castellani nostri de Bala, que nobis in arduis nostris necessitatibus fideliter demonstravit, cum enim vita nostra perimi ab hostibus latenter conaretur, ipse nos ab huius mortis periculo comite Deo festivius prestituendo verissime liberavit*.

⁶⁰⁵ Some scholars linked the grave danger mentioned by the source with the grand raid of Lithuanian forces from the year earlier, when the pagan army looted its way to Łęczycza in Cuyavia. Returning with seized goods Lithuanians were caught by the pursuing army of Kazimierz II of Łęczycza as they crossed into Mazovia. According to Peter of Duisburg, Bolesław II negotiated a truce between the armies – a truce that was later treacherously broken by the Lithuanians, who defeated the Cuyavians and killed Kazimierz. See Adam Szveda, "Sprawa najazdu litewskiego na Mazowsze w 1302 r." [The issue of the Lithuanian invasion of Mazovia in 1302], in *Europa Środkowa i Wschodnia w polityce Piastów*, ed. Krystyna Zielińska-Melkowska (Toruń: Uniwersytet Mikołaja Kopernika w Toruniu, 1997), 86.

⁶⁰⁶ KDM I.113: *Et quia uir nobilis Comes Georgius, quem nobis in subsidium cum alijs Rex illustris Hungarie, dominus Ladislaus amicus noster miserat, per seruicia sue fidelitatis circa nos laudabilibus gestis exhibita, nobis gratus exstitit, nam in defensione uite et honoris nostri stabili perseuerancia nostris aduersarijs in prelio reluctando, uulnera pertulit et dei assistente presidio, eisdem in fugam conuersis dextera triumphali uictorie nomen obtinuit*.

⁶⁰⁷ On the extensive nature of privileges granted to Klemens, see Gawlas, *O kształt zjednoczonego Królestwa*, 85.

describing how Klemens, through his *industria* used spies and loyal messengers to free Grzmisława and the adolescent Bolesław from the hands of Konrad I of Mazovia in 1233. When Konrad invaded Bolesław's lands, it was Klemens who "having gathered his friends and our knights, as loyal knight and ferocious warrior (*sicut fidelis miles et bellator strenuus*)", with God's help, defeated the Mazovians in the battle of Suchodoły. "Having set us up in our duchy", continues the *narratio*, Klemens "defended the borders of our land with his sword and the ferociousness of his heart (*strenuitate cordis sui*)."⁶⁰⁸

Mikołaj was not the only Piast subject who was rewarded for loyalty in the face of their lord's captivity. On 15th July 1304, Duke Siemowit of Dobrzyń gave a cluster of three villages called Mokowo to the knight Andrzej of Cracow in recognition of his *fidelia, grata, et utilia servicia*. When Siemowit was imprisoned it was Andrzej who, through his *consilium, auxilium, labores*, and with risking his own life, managed to free the duke without paying the ransom and helped him recover his land.⁶⁰⁹ Just like in the case of the document issued by Bolesław II of Płock for castellan Wawrzyniec, here too only the rest of the ducal charter offers the context for Andrzej's heroic exploits, mentioning that the Mokowo estates were confiscated from their past owners: Bernard, Chucz, and Przybysław Wojczyc. Of these three, the first one was a guarantor of the defaulted debt Szymon of Osiek, a subject of Siemowit nephews Leszek, Przemysław and Kazimierz of Inowrocław. The other two demonstrated their disloyalty by following a certain Wojśław Trojanowic and allowing for the castle of Dobrzyń to be treacherously taken – with Chucz dying in the later fight with men loyal to Duke Siemowit.⁶¹⁰ Combining all of the information contained in the charter into a coherent political narrative, Janusz Bieniak argued that the plot of Siemowit's men led by Wojśław Trojanowic to imprison their duke was a part

⁶⁰⁸ KDM II.436: [...] *considerantes fidelitatem et probitatem nostri fidelis comitis Clementis de Ruszcza, palatini Cracouiensis, qui sua industria nos de captiuitate patris nostri ducis Conradi liberauit per exploratores suos et nuncios fideles et pristina restituit libertati; postea quando idem dux coadunatis sibi alijs quatuor principibus, in fortitudine magna et exercitu graui terram sibi nostram subicere et nos perdere cupiens, intrasset, idem Clemens accitis ad se amicis suis et militibus nostris, sicut fidelis miles et bellator strenuus, ipsos duces in campo, qui dicitur Suchodol, inuasit et cum Dei auxilio multos de aduersarijs nostris prostrauit et alios in fugam conuertit, nos in ducatu nostro constituens, omnes fines terrarum nostrarum in gladio suo et strenuitate cordis sui protexit.*

⁶⁰⁹ Stella M. Szacherska, "Kancelaria Siemowita księcia Dobrzyńskiego" [Chancery of Siemowit, Duke of Dobrzyń], *Studia Źródłoznawcze* 11 (1966): 107–9, no. 8: *intuentes fidelia, grata et utilia servicia, que Andreas de Cracovia nobis multipliciter exhibuit, tam eo tempore dum nos fuimus in captiuitate, quam per consilium, auxilium et labores, quos pro nobis fecerat pensando vitam suam, liberati fuimus de captiuitate absque ulla pecunia, per consilium et suo adiutorio rehauiimus terram nostrum [...].*

⁶¹⁰ Ibidem, 108: *Et specialiter his imponimus perpetuum silencium pro repetitione hereditatis Mokowe: primo Bernardo pro eo, quia pro Simano de Ossyek fideiuberat in pecunia ducentarum marcarum argenti et eandem non soluit nobis in terminis statutis; item Chucz existens noster servitor adhesit Voyslao Troyani et per hoc castrum nostrum Dobrzinense fuit fraudatum et pugnando contra nos per nostros homines fuit occisus; item Przibislaus Voyczyk simili modo infidelitatem nobis demonstravit.*

of a broader feud between the duke of Dobrzyń and his nephew Leszek of Inowrocław, angered by the former's seizure of Osiek.⁶¹¹

The context of disloyalty of the past owners of Mokowo and the loyal service of Andrzej of Cracow remains accepted like this in recent historiography,⁶¹² though I do find the explanations offered by Janusz Bieniak in need of some revision. The reconstruction proposed by Bieniak is based not only on the discussed charter issued for Andrzej of Cracow, but also on the text of the lien of Michałów (15.11.1303) made by Leszek to the Teutonic Order.⁶¹³ This, according to Bieniak, was done by Leszek in order to secure money for the conflict against Siemowit, who had by that point seized Osiek. However, simply retaking Osiek could not have been the only goal Leszek procured the money for, as in the very same document Leszek promised it to the Knights as soon as he takes it from his uncle *toto posse*. Thus, Bieniak argues that Leszek's aim was to completely overthrow Duke Siemowit with the help of internal opposition represented by Wojsław Trojanowic.⁶¹⁴ The words *toto posse* used in the document, however, seem to me too vague to necessarily suggest military actions that would require financial aid of the Teutons. Similarly, the ambitious goal of dethroning Siemowit seems to be a too drastic escalation for the Piast feud in fragmented Poland. Against such an ambitious plan speaks also Siemowit's diploma, which mentions that rebels were open to freeing their lord for a ransom. The subsequent unfolding of the conflict between Leszek and Siemowit, which saw the latter on the offensive in Leszek's lands, suggests that the help bought with the Teutonic money did not materialize. Whatever the exact circumstances in which Andrzej proved his loyalty, it is worth noting that this charter, unlike the ones examined previously, makes a note not only of Andrzej's *auxilium*, but also his *consilium* and *labores* that led to the freeing of Duke Siemowit.

The elaboration on the contents of loyal service can also be found in the *narrationes* of the diplomas issued for Piast subjects that did not come from the knighthood. While in the next chapter I will investigate the discourse of loyalty of the towns and their inhabitants in more detail, the few surviving descriptions of the individual loyalty exhibited by townspeople offer an interesting comparison. While they forgo the explicitly military aspect of the service

⁶¹¹ Bieniak, *Wielkopolska, Kujawy*, 225–36.

⁶¹² Most recently Śliwiński, *Leszek, książę inowrocławski*, 90, 101–4; Jan Powierski, “Studia nad polityką Krzyżaków i ich sąsiadów w początkach XIV wieku. Część 2” [Studies on the politics of the Teutonic Knights and their neighbors in the early 14th century. Part 2], in *Władcy, mnisi, rycerze*, ed. Błażej Śliwiński, Gdańskie Studia z Dziejów Średniowiecza 3 (Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, 1996), 189–90.

⁶¹³ For the document, see DKM III.62.

⁶¹⁴ Bieniak, *Wielkopolska, Kujawy*, 232–35.

mentioned in the knightly diplomas, the help lent to the Piast rulers by their urban subjects shared some similarities with the latter.

In a diploma issued in 1283, Przemysław II rewarded his *minister ac servitor*, the burgher from Gniezno, Piotr Winiarczyk, for his past help rendered to the Piast in the time of need.⁶¹⁵ A decade earlier Przemysław, only recently admitted to co-rulership by Bolesław the Pious, found himself in conflict with his uncle and fled the Gniezno castle, finding refuge in Piotr's house.⁶¹⁶ Piotr, the document states, "rising in the night, received us gratefully and faithfully, provided all necessary things, and led us out of the city of Gniezno in complete safety."⁶¹⁷ Gierko, a burgher from Radziejowice, demonstrated his loyalty to Władysław the Short by participating in a similar covert action on behalf of the endangered ruler. In 1310, Władysław rewarded Gierko with the role of the local judge for protecting and serving the duke's wife Jadwiga while Władysław was forced into exile.⁶¹⁸ Based on this document, the prevailing view in Polish historiography holds that it was under Gierko's protection in Radziejów that Jadwiga spent the dangerous years of Přemyslid domination in Poland.⁶¹⁹ In both cases, the Piast rulers made sure to particularly underline and reward the loyalty shown to them at the time of peril and vulnerability, protecting the rulers and their close ones in hiding.

Not less important were the services of Tylon, notary of Przemysław II. In the charter from 1286, the duke rewards Tylon for his loyal service, especially highlighting his diplomatic

⁶¹⁵ KDW IL.639, where the document is published under the date 25 VIII 1289. I am, however, following the convincing argumentation by Tomasz Jurek, who in his recent deeper critical study of the source not only dispelled some doubts concerning its authenticity, but also proposed dating back its issue to 25 VIII 1283, citing the copyist error. See Tomasz Jurek, "Dokument Przemysła II dla Piotra Winiarczyka" [Document of Przemysław II for Piotr Winiarczyk], *Studia Źródłoznawcze. Commentationes* 58 (2020): 207–17.

⁶¹⁶ Details and older historiography discussed in Kazimierz Jasiński, "Stosunki Przemysła II z mieszczaństwem" [Relations between Przemysław II and the burgers], in *Czas, przestrzeń, praca w dawnych miastach: Studia ofiarowane Henrykowi Samsonowiczowi w sześćdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin*, ed. Andrzej Wyrobisz and Michał Tymowski (Warsaw: PWN, 1991), 319–22; Nowacki, *Przemysław II*, 71–73; Hlebionek, *Bolesław Pobożny*, 185–88; Historians attribute the conflict to the young prince's assertive foreign policy, exemplified by his alliance with Henryk IV Probus.

⁶¹⁷ KDW IL.639: [...] *precipue considerato ipsius servicio quod exhibuit nobis in ardua nostra necessitate constitutis, dum a patruo nostro bone memorie duce Boleslao separari cuperemus, furtive castrum Gneznense exeundo domum ipsius petivimus: qui de nocte consurgens, granter et fideliter nos suscipiens, universa necessaria ministravit, extra civitatem Gneznensem sub omni tranquillitate educendo.*

⁶¹⁸ CDP I.103: *inspectis fidelibus servicijs et utilibus Gerconis civis nostri Radzieiowiensis, que nobis exhibuit tunc cum caruimus terris nostris, conjugem nostram charissimam servando et sibi fideliter serviendo, eidem Advocaciam nostram in Radzieow damus, tradimus, et conferimus [...].*

⁶¹⁹ Bieniak, *Wielkopolska, Kujawy*, 77; Andrzej Marzec, "'Domina terrae sandecensis': rola polityczna królowej Jadwigi Łokietkowej w kontekście jej związków z dostojnikami małopolskimi" [Domina terrae Sandecensis. The Political Role of Queen Jadwiga, Wife of Łokietek, within the Context of her Relations with the Dignitaries of Little Poland (1305-1339)], *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 207, no. 1 (2000): 5; Marta Pieber-Zbieranowska wisely cautions against reading too many details into the brief description provided in the document, see Marta Pieber-Zbieranowska, "Jadwiga Łokietkowa - księżna, królowa, mniszka" [Jadwiga Łokietek – duchess, queen, nun], in *Władztwo Władysława Łokietka: 700-lecie koronacji królewskiej*, ed. Wojciech Fałkowski and Przemysław Tyszkowski (Warsaw: Zamek Królewski w Warszawie, 2022), 131.

mission, when he traveled overseas to bring the duke's new bride Richeza of Sweden to her groom's court. It is likely that Tylon's role was not limited to escorting the princess, but rather that he acted as Przemysł's proxy in the *per procuram* marriage that took place in Sweden.⁶²⁰ While this marks an explicit example of non-military deeds mentioned in the ducal charters as part of the grantee's loyal service, the nature of Tylon's mission was not that dissimilar from the exploits discussed above. The diploma's language underscores that the journey undertaken by Tylon led him through dangerous routes, and that, not unlike the brave warriors rewarded by other diplomas, he put himself at risk for his lord.⁶²¹

The overview of these ducal diplomas which elaborated on how Piast subjects demonstrated their *fidelia servitia* allows us to draw some conclusions concerning the content of the bonds of loyalty. The loyalty of the subjects praised in the diplomas manifested itself through the safeguarding of the ruler, his close ones, and his *honor*. The latter should be interpreted in a broad manner, including not only his personal honor, but also the material interests, claims, and rights of the ruler.⁶²² Such an interpretation is suggested by the role the defense of the territorial integrity of the ruler's possessions played in the descriptions of the loyalty, with subjects defending the borders of their land and recovering the lost strongholds and lands. In almost all the examples in which the loyal service was described, it took an explicitly martial dimension, with exceptions mentioning *consilium* or diplomatic missions. In this, interestingly, the very small body of the Polish "*Heldentaten-narrationes*" was not that dissimilar from a much more numerous corpus from the thirteenth-century Árpád charters. Even as their depictions are often much more detailed than the most extensive Polish examples, they nevertheless almost always connect the loyal service with warfare.⁶²³ In those few instances from Piast charters in which the meritorious acts did not take place on the battlefield, they were nevertheless considered to be dangerous, and loyal subjects were praised for the wounds they suffered or could have suffered. On this point, the depictions of loyal service

⁶²⁰ On the place, circumstances, and political context of Przemysł II's second marriage with the daughter of Valdemar, king of Sweden see Kazimierz Jasiński, "Szwedzkie małżeństwo księcia wielkopolskiego Przemysła II (Rykza, żona Przemysła)" [Swedish marriage of Prince Przemysł II of Greater Poland (Rykza, wife of Przemysł)], in *Monastycyzm. Słowiańszczyzna i państwo polskie*, ed. Kazimierz Bobowski (Wrocław: Instytut Historyczny Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1994), 69–80; Nowacki, *Przemysł II*, 131–33.

⁶²¹ KDW I.568: *Nos igitur Premisl secundus, Dei gratia dux Polonie, notum facimus universis tam presentibus quam futuris presens scriptum inspecturis, quod intuentes fidelia grataque obsequia dilecti ac specialis capellani et prothonotarii nostri domini Thilonis, que nobis multipliciter inpendit et in futurum dante Domino inpendere est paratus, et precipue in optinenda nobis dilecta coniuge nostra domina Richzza, ubi in transeundo maria et flumina nec non et alia viarum discrimina, non inmerito corporis potuit et rerum pericula formidare: propter hec et alia fideliter et constanter impensa, damus [...].*

⁶²² Pauk, "Language of Power," 185; More broadly in Görich, *Die Ehre Friedrich Barbarossas*.

⁶²³ László Veszprémy, "Chronicles in Charters. Historical Narratives ('NARRATIONES') in Charters as Substitutes for Chronicles in Hungary," *The Medieval Chronicle* 3 (2004): 188.

presented in the *narratio* of the ducal charters are congruent not only with the depictions from the contemporary narrative sources, but also present continuity with the models laid out already by Vincentius of Cracow.

As *narrationes* were employed in medieval chancery practice for a variety of purposes,⁶²⁴ it seems prudent to ask what purpose they played in the cited thirteenth-century Polish examples. In the neighboring Kingdom of Hungary, where the “Heldentaten-narrationes” proliferated in the thirteenth-century charters to an unparalleled degree, they have been argued to serve an important legal function, as Árpád rulers were prevented from revoking property that was granted to their followers in reward of *iusto servitio*.⁶²⁵ While their numbers suggest that the practice did not have the same established character as in Hungary, the short descriptions from the Polish diplomas could have been used in a similar manner. Even this small number of *narrationes* elaborating on the loyal service found in Piast diplomas cannot be discarded as inconsequential flights of the fancy of individual notaries.⁶²⁶

The inclusion of the explicit description of their loyal service in the ducal diplomas was certainly desired by the addressees of the charters. The official acknowledgement of meritorious deeds by the duke certainly had its value for the noble elites of fragmented Poland, which must have competed as much for prestige as for the offices and material privileges. It is worth pointing out that, in the instances where we can date the meritorious act, we can usually see a time gap between the deed and the issuing of the charter. Except for Tylon, rewarded quickly upon his return from Sweden, the loyal subjects had to wait for their deeds in the service of the ruler to be recognized and memorialized in the charter’s *narratio*. The benefits of transforming the oral tradition into a written record of the martial achievements, which could be used to defend or advance a family’s position in the future, was not lost on the Polish nobles, with many

⁶²⁴ For general remarks on *narrationes* in medieval diplomas, see Fichtenau, “Forschungen über Urkundenformeln,” 312–15; Herwig Wolfram, “Political Theory and Narrative in Charters,” *Viator* 26 (January 1995): 50–52.

⁶²⁵ Zsoldos Attila, “Karászi Sándor bán és utódai: Észrevételek a narratiók eredetéről és szerepéről” [Ban Sándor Karászi and his heirs: Remarks about the origin and function of the *narrationes*], *Századok* 135 (2001): 385–407; Veszprémy, “Chronicles in Charters,” 188; The first historian to draw the special attention to this feature of Hungarian diplomatics, Elemér Mályusz, argued that *narrationes* were traces of the oral literary tradition Elemér Mályusz, “La chancellerie royale de la rédaction des chroniques dans la Hongrie médiévale,” *Le Moyen Âge* 75 (1969): 51–86, 219–54; The most recent overview of the issue for non-hungarian readers found in Judit Csákó, “Chancellerie royale et historiographie dans la Hongrie du XIVe siècle. État des recherches,” in *Formations et cultures des officiers et de l’entourage des princes dans les territoires angevins (milieu XIIIe-fin XVe siècle) : Percorsi di formazione e culture degli ufficiali e dell’entourage dei principi nei territori angioini (metà XIII-fine XV secolo)*, ed. Isabelle Mathieu and Jean-Michel Matz, Collection de l’École française de Rome (Rome: Publications de l’École française de Rome, 2019).

⁶²⁶ This is not to completely reject the influence of the individual chancery practices. As pointed out by Tomasz Jurek, the documents containing the longer *narrationes* about meritorious deeds of Piotr Winiarczyk and Tylon were both created by notary Jan, Tylon’s brother. See Jurek, “Dokument Przemysła II,” 212.

of the diplomas above surviving in interpolated transsumpts.⁶²⁷ To the evidence of such family traditions recounting meritorious deeds in the service of the duke extends not only to the *narrationes*, which often recounted events from decades past, the accounts like that about Peregryn's death from Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* one can also tentatively add some of the detailed descriptions of similar achievements surviving in the later narrative sources.⁶²⁸

Yet not all men whose loyalty was not only rewarded but also described in some detail were interested in continuing to build their position in the service of the same Piast. A trusted man of the Hungarian King, György Baksa quickly left Poland. Another outsider at the court of his benefactor, Andrzej of Cracow, despite the attempts made by Duke Siemowit to strengthen the bonds with the Lesser-Polish knight,⁶²⁹ moved back to Lesser Poland upon Władysław the Short's return to Cracow.⁶³⁰ In these two cases, the elaborate depiction of their deeds could have been deliberately used in order to better secure the new possessions of the men who did not belong to the established networks of the local landowners. It is also worth noting that both diplomas provide not only a detailed account of the loyal deeds of the recipients, but also an equally detailed description of the disloyalty of the former owners of the donated estates. Both descriptions had their legal purpose, justifying the confiscation of traitors' property and its subsequent donation to others. Beyond that, the inclusion of longer descriptions of loyal and disloyal subjects in the diplomas might have also appealed to Piast dukes, as it offered them an opportunity to present the official narrative about the recent internal strife, and set out the models of behavior to be emulated or condemned.

3.3.3 Performing Loyalty on the Battlefield

One particular example illustrates well, in my opinion, just how closely the performance of heroic military deeds was connected in fragmented Piast Poland with the idea of loyalty. It comes from a late narrative source - a part of *Traska's Annal* created at the royal court, sometime between the last years of Władysław the Short's life and early years of Kazimierz the Great's reign.⁶³¹ Thus, just like the testimonies given by the witnesses during the Polish-Teutonic trials

⁶²⁷ For example, the document for Marcin Lis survives in the (interpolated) copy from the *Liber privilegiorum monasterii Lubiniensis*, the one issued for castellan Wawrzyniec is known from early-modern transumpt and copies.

⁶²⁸ Thus, Tomasz Jurek argued for the existence of the written family tradition describing the military deeds of some members of the Nałęcz clan at the turn of the fourteenth century, surviving in the notes added by Jan Długosz to his *Annales*. See Jurek, "Notes on Nałęcz family."

⁶²⁹ Siemowit was the godfather of Andrzej's son Stanisław, according to the document issued in 1302, see Szacherska, "Kancelaria Siemowita," 106–7, no. 7.

⁶³⁰ Thus Andrzej's reward, estates in Mokowo, returned to Bernard. See Bieniak, *Wielkopolska, Kujawy*, 230.

⁶³¹ For more on this so-called "small royal chronicle" see: Wiesiołowski, *Kolekcje historyczne w Polsce średniowiecznej XIV–XV wieku* [Historical collections in Medieval Poland of 14th-15th century], 30, 148.

in the first half of the fourteenth century, it represents a swan's song of the ideas and perspectives held by those who remembered the time before the unification of the Piast lands. The fragment in question concerns Wincenty of Szamotuły and the role he played in the events of 1331.

Wincenty came from the powerful Greater-Polish clan of Nałęcz. His father and uncles, upon the death of Przemysł II, supported Władysław the Short's reign in Greater Poland, and found themselves rewarded by the Cuyavian Piast upon his return in 1314. By 1326 Wincenty, who appears for the first time in diplomatic sources in 1319, held the title of castellan of Przemęt. In 1329 he became the palatine of Greater Poland and, more importantly, was given the more consequential position of the monarch's representative in Greater Poland, as its *starosta (capitaneus)*. In May 1331, at the assembly at Chęciny, King Władysław made his heir prince Kazimierz his representative in Greater Poland, Sieradz, and Cuyavia. According to the anonymous author of the account from *Traska's Annal*, when Kazimierz set out for his new post:

he [Kazimierz] was nearly blocked from this possession by a certain Wincenty, governor of Poznań, whom his father had appointed over the same lands except for Sieradz. And had it not been for the knights and the citizens of the towns, he would have wished to alienate the land from the king and his son. Thus, the aforementioned Wincenty, the worst traitor to the kingdom and the people, impatient to tear it away, slyly and secretly let the Teutonic Knights in around the feast of Saint Mary Magdalene [22 July – MM].⁶³²

The description of the Teutonic campaign in the summer of 1331 continues, with Wincenty actively helping the invading army. After the Teutonic Knights were repelled from the walls of Inowrocław, Wincenty cautiously led them into Greater Poland. In Pzydry, the Teutons wanted to capture Prince Kazimierz, Wincenty's adversary. The young Piast had already left the town, which was quickly taken through the deceit and negligence of loyal burghers. Summarizing the depiction of the destruction wrought onto Greater Poland, the annalist writes that all of this was done without any resistance (*nullo obstante*) because of Wincenty, the worst of traitors, though with great loss to his own people (*Vincencio pessimo fraudatore agente, quamvis cum magno dampno suorum*).⁶³³

⁶³² *Traska's Annal*, 855: *fere a possessione fuit per quendam Vincencium palatinum Poznaniensem, quem pater eius prefecerat eisdem terris preter Syradiam, inpeditus et nisi milites et civitatum cives fuissent, terram a rege et filio suo voluit alienare. Predictus igitur Vincencius, regni pessimus defraudator et gentis, inpaciens huius alienacionis circa festum sancte Marie Magdalene callide et occulte cruciferos eduxit.*

⁶³³ *Traska's Annal*, 855-56.

Modern historiography agrees that the accusations of treachery leveled against Wincenty of Szamotuły in the account known from *Traska's Annal* are false.⁶³⁴ The testimonies of the witnesses of the 1339 Warsaw Trial, which paint a detailed picture of the military conflict with the Teutonic Order, not only do not mention anything about the palatine's treason, but place him among the Polish combatants in the summer and autumn campaigns of 1331, and in 1332.⁶³⁵ The origin of the rumors about the treachery of the powerful Greater-Polish noble remains uncertain. It could have been conceived at the royal court, as a reflection of the clash between Wincenty and Prince Kazimierz suggested by the source,⁶³⁶ as a scapegoating effort after the disastrous campaign of summer 1331,⁶³⁷ or by the rivals of the Nałęcz clan, alarmed by the family's strong position on both banks of Noteć river.⁶³⁸

The author of the account of *Traska's Annal* himself was not convinced by these rumors. Continuing his narration, he writes that, when in autumn the Teutonic Knights attacked again, Władysław sent a letter to Wincenty calling him to Łęczyca, where the palatine reconciled with the king and the prince. From then on, Wincenty transformed in the account into a perfect warrior of the Piast ruler. "Wishing to shed the name of disloyalty (*volens nomen perdere infidelitatis*)", Wincenty cleverly (*sagaciter*) scouted out the enemy army. Seeing the Teutons' numerical advantage, he preserved the morale of the Polish forces by downplaying it, saving the real information for Władysław's ears only.⁶³⁹ In the preceding battle taking place between

⁶³⁴ The theories about Wincenty's treason, present in older scholarship, have been described and thoroughly addressed in: Gerard Labuda, "Studia nad XIV wiekiem, cz. 2: Zdrada Wincentego z Szamotuł" [Studies on the 14th century, part 2: The treachery of Wincenty of Szamotuły], *Sprawozdania Poznańskiego Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Nauk* 71 (1964): 68–69; Jan Pakulski, "Stosunek wojewody poznańskiego Wincentego z Szamotuł do zakonu krzyżackiego i Marchii Brandenburskiej" [The attitude of Wincenty of Szamotuły, Voivode of Poznań, towards the Teutonic Order and the Margraviate of Brandenburg], *Zapiski Historyczne* 37, no. 3 (1972): 29–44; See also Zbigniew Wielgosz, "An regni pessimus defraudator et gentis? Jeszcze o Wincentym z Szamotuł" [An regni pessimus defraudator et gentis? Once more on Wincenty of Szamotuły], in *Ars historica. Prace z dziejów powszechnych i Polski*, ed. Marian Biskup and Henryk Łowmiański (Poznań: Wydawnictwo UAM, 1976), 467–73; Although the notion of Wincenty's suspect loyalty persisted for some time afterwards in connection with his dealings with the Margraves of Brandenburg (which I discuss in a later section of this dissertation), the current consensus affirms loyalty of the palatine of Greater Poland. See Edward Rymar, "Przynależność polityczna wielkopolskich ziem zanoteckich między dolną Drawą i dolną Gwdą oraz Wieleń, Czarnkowa i Ujście w latach 1296–1368" [Political status of Greater Poland's Zanoteć lands between the lower Drawa and lower Gwda rivers and Wieleń, Czarnków and Ujście in 1296–1368], *Roczniki Historyczne* 50 (1984): 60–65; Tomasz Jurek, "Średniowieczne Szamotuły i ich dziedzice" [Medieval Szamotuły and its heirs], in *Szamotuły. Karty z dziejów miasta*, vol. 1, ed. Antoni Gąsiorowski (Szamotuły: Muzeum Zamek Górków, 2006), 23–24; Tomasz Jurek, "Szamotulski Wincenty (Wincenty z Szamotuł) h. Nałęcz, Wojewoda Poznański, Starosta Wielkopolski," in *PSB* (Warsaw-Cracow: Instytut Historii PAN, 2009), 46:582–84; Janusz Bieniak, *Zarębowie i Nałęcze a królobójstwo w Rogoźnie* [The Zaręba and Nałęcz clans and the regicide in Rogoźno] (Warsaw: DiG, 2018), 167–80.

⁶³⁵ See for example Lites I (2).59, 316; Lites I (2).74, 340.

⁶³⁶ Labuda, "Studia nad XIV wiekiem: Zdrada," 69; Pakulski, "Stosunek wojewody poznańskiego," 39.

⁶³⁷ Jurek, "Średniowieczne Szamotuły," 23.

⁶³⁸ Thus Bieniak, though deliberately refusing to name any specific opponents, see Bieniak, *Zarębowie i Nałęcze*, 180.

⁶³⁹ *Traska's Annal*, 856: *Sed de Lancicia ipsorum ad unum vel duo miliaria semper sequebatur, eos debilitans, vestigia; ubi etiam predictum Vincencium, de quo memorati sumus, per litteras patentes advocans, ipsum sibi et*

Radziejów and Płowce, victorious from the annalist's perspective, Wincenty's conduct was noted like this:

Said Wincenty, in order to remove entirely the conjecture and opinion of treachery everyone believed was committed by him, and to destroy all suspicion, himself started the battle with his own men, fought valiantly, and contending bravely alongside the lord king and the nobles of his kingdom, he brought about a victorious triumph of glory against the beard-wearers [Teutonic Knights – MM.] and their allies. Therefore, it remains doubtful to many whether this Wincenty could have plotted such a great act of treachery and such a cruel blow against his own people, when in such a critical and necessary matter for the kingdom of Poland he won such forever-lasting glory.⁶⁴⁰

The link between the military service displayed by Wincenty and the judgement on his loyalty is made clear here. Helping Władysław with the information, valiant fighting on the battlefield, and bringing glory to the whole Kingdom, were seen as actions that could not have been performed by a disloyal man. The autumn campaign of 1331 is a stage on which Wincenty is allowed to demonstrate his loyalty after his reconciliation with the Piasts, and he does so in a manner that convinced many contemporaries and, perhaps, the annalist himself. The final information on Wincenty simply notes, in a matter-of-fact tone, that the palatine “died unexpectedly, struck by an arrow (*inopinabiliter telo percussus interiit*)” in April of 1332.⁶⁴¹ The military deeds were thus not only widely seen as the content of the bonds of loyalty between ruler and his *milites*, but also the way to reaffirm ones loyalty after conflict and reconciliation. As I hope to demonstrate in the later parts of this chapter, the reconciliation between ruler and disloyal subjects presented in the account was had its firm place in the political culture of the

filio reconciliavit. Qui Vincencius volens nomen perdere infidelitatis, ipsos barbatos et eorum exercitum fuit sagaciter exploratus, et quamvis incomparabiliter plures illos cognosceret et forciore, ne metum Polonis et Cracoviensibus et Sandomiriensibus et aliis incuteret, ipsos respectu nullos esse et nichil posse affirmavit, quamris regis auribus aliud inculcare non obmisit.

⁶⁴⁰ Ibidem, 856-857: *Sepe enim dictus Vincencius ut totam coniecturam et opinionem omnium fraudis, quam penes eum autumabant, nec non et totam suspicionem tolleret, ipse bellum cum suis inchoavit, viriliter pugnavit et cum domino rege et sui regni nobilibus fortiter decertans, victoriose glorie triumphum de barbatis et eorum auxiliariis feliciter representavit. Ambiguum igitur penes multos est, quod dictus Vincencius tantam fraudem et tam crudelem cladem sue genti fuisset molitus, cum in tam arduo negocio et valde necessario Polonie regno tantam gloriam in perpetuum duraturam acquisivit.*

⁶⁴¹ *Traska's Annal*, 857; If the annalist were to still hold information about Wincenty's treachery as true, one could expect him to give palatine's death more explicit dimension of just punishment. This is what Jan Długosz did in his version of the story, in which Wincenty is portrayed as undisputed traitor, murdered by a *conspiratio* of men looking to avenge the damages Wincenty's treachery had brought. See *Ioannis Dlugossi Annales*, lib. IX, 177; The circumstances of palatine's death, in light of the brevity of *Traska's Annal* account, had been a subject of speculation. Some argued that he was killed in the fighting against Teutonic Knights, like Pakulski, “Średniowieczne Szamotyły,” 24; Janusz Bieniak proposed that Wincenty was assassinated by the same opponents who spread rumors about his treachery, see Bieniak, *Zarębowie i Nałęcz*, 178.

fragmented Poland, and Wincenty was not the only palatine to be depicted as paving over his former treachery with exemplary military service.

3.4 Unfaithful Subjects

Many depictions of loyal service analyzed above made use of the contrast between the few subjects who stood by their rulers and the disloyalty of others, whether through open rebellion or deceitful plotting. In the following chapter, I examine the ways in which sources created in fragmented Poland described instances of disloyalty. Structurally, the subchapter is further divided into three parts, each of which groups sources concerning a different set of accounts. The first part describes reactions to the deceitful assassination of Leszek the White in 1227. The second focuses on the disloyal subjects of the Greater Polish Piasts. The final section investigates accounts of the rebellions faced by the dukes of Cracow in the last quarter of the thirteenth century.

Just like when analyzing the description of the rebellions presented in Vincentius of Cracow's *Chronica Polonorum*, I want to ask how the medieval authors narrate rebellions and plots, how the participants were described, and what their motivations were. In cases in which the length of the narrative source allows for it, I will also ask about the broader role that the descriptions of disloyalty played in the source. The most extensive narrative sources, that is the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*, Dzierzwa's Chronicle, and the annalistic tradition created by the Franciscans of Cracow, were created some time after the described events. Thus, their authors had the opportunity to frame the rebellions and the plots of the recent past in a way that reflected their own ideological agendas.

3.4.1 Killed in the Bath and Captured at the Mass. The Gąsawa Massacre and its Aftermath

In November of 1227, at the meeting of the members of the Polish episcopate and Piast princes at Gąsawa in Greater Poland, deceitful assailants murdered Leszek the White.⁶⁴² The sudden death of the duke of Cracow, who spent the last decade of his life trying to assert the

⁶⁴² For the discussion on the attendees of the fatal meeting, see Gerard Labuda, "Śmierć Leszka Białego (1227)" [The Death of Leszek the White (1227)], *Roczniki Historyczne* 61 (1995): 32; Janusz Bieniak, "Polityczne okoliczności śmierci księcia Leszka Białego" [Political circumstances of the death of Prince Leszek the White], in *Gąsawa w pamięci historycznej: w związku z 620. rocznicą lokacji miasta*, ed. Dariusz Karczewski (Inowrocław: PTH Oddział Inowrocławski, 2009), 53–54; Norbert Mika, "Udział książąt śląskich w wydarzeniach w Gąsawie 1227 roku" [Participation of the Silesian dukes in the 1227 events at Gąsawa], in *Gąsawa w pamięci historycznej: w związku z 620. rocznicą lokacji miasta*, ed. Dariusz Karczewski (Inowrocław: PTH Oddział Inowrocławski, 2009), 85–97.

dominant position among the members of the Piast dynasty as the *dux Poloniae*, was noted by many sources.

The rule of Leszek, the oldest son of Kazimierz II the Just in Cracow was not uncontested. On two occasions, Cracow was captured by different Piasts. Armed with a papal bull confirming that the throne of Cracow should pass to the senior member of the dynasty, old Duke of Opole Mieszko IV the Tanglefoot captured Cracow in 1210.⁶⁴³ He died shortly after in 1211, allowing Leszek to return to Cracow. Another attempt was undertaken by Henryk I the Bearded, who briefly besieged the city in 1225, before the attack of Ludwig of Thuringia on Lubusz led him to abandon his plans and seemingly reconcile with Leszek.⁶⁴⁴

Both incidents were noted in the thirteenth-century annals in a very brief manner, without mentioning anything about positions taken by Lesser-Polish subjects.⁶⁴⁵ This did not stop the historians from assuming that some disloyal members of the local elite had to be involved in these attempts at dethroning Leszek.⁶⁴⁶ In the case of 1225, many followed Jan Długosz's account. According to the Late-Medieval historian, members of the Gryf clan, stripped of their offices and titles due to the cowardice displayed in the battle against the Prussians, convinced Henryk to try to capture Cracow.⁶⁴⁷ The people identified as the members of the clan indeed seem to disappear around that time from the most important of the Lesser-Polish offices, while appearing in the documents of Duke Kazimierz of Opole.⁶⁴⁸ Nevertheless, the veracity of Długosz's sensational account should not be overstated, as multiple factors could have led the Gryf kindred to become more invested in their position in the Silesian principality.

Neither of the earlier attempts at dethroning Leszek was linked by medieval historiography with the assassination of the Duke of Cracow. The internal opposition played a lesser role in the events at Gąsawa than the family conflict within the Piast dynasty. It was the contest over Greater Poland Władysław III Spindleshanks and his nephew, Władysław Odonic, mentioned already in subchapter 3.1, that set the stage for the death of Leszek the White.

⁶⁴³ Zientara, *Henryk Brodaty*, 187–89.

⁶⁴⁴ Zientara, *Henryk Brodaty*, 256–57, 268–72.

⁶⁴⁵ For 1210 see, *Rocznik Małopolski*, 161: *Mesco filius Wlatislay claudicantis et exulantis obtinuit Cracoviam; Rocznik Górnośląski*, ed. by August Bielowski, in MPH, vol. 3, (Lwów: Akademia Umiejętności, 1878), 715: 1206 *Mesco dux Raceburgensis tenendo Cracoviam obit*; Death of Mieszko the Tanglefoot noted under 1211, but without information about his seizure of Cracow, in: KkK, 147; RkK, [183], 71; The events of 1225 noted in: RkK, [193], 74: *Henricus dux Zlesie stetit in Cracouia octo diebus cum suo exercitu et recessit*.

⁶⁴⁶ For overview of older historiography, see for example Marek Chrzanowski, *Leszek Biały: Książę krakowski i sandomierski. Princeps Poloniae (ok. 1184- 23/24 listopada 1227)* [Leszek the White: Duke of Cracow and Sandomierz. Princeps Poloniae (c. 1184- November 23/24, 1227)] (Cracow: Avalon, 2013), 99–100, 130–31.

⁶⁴⁷ *Ioannis Dlugossi Annales*, lib.V-VI, 241-42.

⁶⁴⁸ Wójcik, *Ród Gryfitów*, 42.

By the 1220s, Leszek became involved in the conflict, entering an agreement of mutual succession with his erstwhile rival for the throne of Cracow Władysław III Spindleshanks.⁶⁴⁹ At that time Władysław Odonic, exiled by his uncle in 1217, found a supporter in Świętopełk of Pomerania. In 1223, the younger of Władysław and his Pomeranian allies entered Greater Poland from the north, taking hold of the borderland centers of Ujście and Nakło. The negotiations between the two Władysław in Kcynia brought only a temporary peace.⁶⁵⁰ In a renewed conflict, the older of the Greater-Polish Piasts suffered a defeat at the siege of Ujście. This gave Władysław Odonic a surprising upper hand, though it is unclear how far he was able to capitalize on it before November 1227.⁶⁵¹ Meanwhile, involvement in the Greater-Polish conflicts turned out to have a steep price for Świętopełk, as unnamed Piast princes instigated Prussians to raid Pomerania.⁶⁵² Whether deciding to break with Cracow's overlordship,⁶⁵³ or motivated by some disagreements with a victorious ally, Świętopełk seized Greater-Polish Nakło from Odonic sometime before the meeting at Gąsawa in 1227.⁶⁵⁴

The sources describing the events at Gąsawa are not in agreement regarding the perpetrator of the assassination, variously attributing it to the Pomeranians, to Odon, or to a conspiracy involving both parties. Most of the older historiography viewed both Władysław

⁶⁴⁹ This arrangement was naturally more favorable to Leszek, younger of two Piast Dukes by over two decades. It is known to us only from a reference in the document of Władysław issued after Leszek's death in 1228, during the struggle to seize power in Cracow. See: KDW I.122; The exact dating of the treaty is therefore disputed, and depends largely on a given historian's position on Władysław's political fortunes in the conflict against his nephew. Some opted for the agreement to be made in 1217, see Grodecki, "Dzieje polityczne," 203; Zientara, *Henryk Brodaty*, 246; others suggested 1225, see for example Labuda, "Śmierć Leszka Białego"; Błażej Śliwiński, "Zerwanie Świętopełka gdańskiego z księciem krakowskim Leszkiem Białym: Na drodze do Gąsawy" [Świętopełk of Gdańsk's break with the Kraków duke Leszek the White: On the road to Gąsawa], in *Kopijnicy, szyprowie, tenutariusze*, Gdańskie Studia z Dziejów Średniowiecza 8 (Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, 2002), 210; or even later, shortly before Gąsawa. Thusly Przybył, *Władysław Laskonogi*, 179.

⁶⁵⁰ Peace talks are mentioned in KDW III.2024; an overview surrounding the document itself and the simmering violence between 1223 and 1227 in Bieniak, "Polityczne okoliczności," 48–54; Pelczar, *Władysław Odonic*, 194–204.

⁶⁵¹ The Greater Polish Chronicle states that after the battle of Ujście almost all of Greater Poland fell into Władysław Odonic's hands, while the annals of Gniezno and Poznań cathedral chapters report these military successes only under 1231 and 1232 respectively. Compare 50 in *Chronica Poloniae Maioris*, 80; RkG, [10], 5; RkP, [16], 24; Thus, some historians are willing to argue for the primacy of the chronicle's account, arguing that its author must have had access to now lost, better annalistic sources, see Tomasz Jurek, "Gąsawa - w obronie zdrajcy" [Gąsawa - in defence of the traitor], *Roczniki Historyczne* 62 (1996): 158; Pelczar, *Władysław Odonic*, 202; Skeptical of chronicle's account Janusz Bieniak argued for more conservative gains made by younger Piast's army based on diplomatic sources, see Bieniak, "Polityczne okoliczności," 48–50.

⁶⁵² The raid and scheme of Piast princes mentioned in a papal bull issued in response to the complaint submitted by Świętopełk, see PIUB 35; Scholars agree that the raid was instigated by Władysław IV Spindelshanks but the possibility of involvement of other Piasts had garnered more (Konrad of Mazovia) or less (Leszek the White) support. Discussion of the raid and the historiographical debates surrounding it in Śliwiński, "Zerwanie Świętopełka gdańskiego," 212–19.

⁶⁵³ Śliwiński, "Zerwanie Świętopełka gdańskiego," 235–36.

⁶⁵⁴ Motives that could have sparked such conflict listed for example in Jurek, "Gąsawa," 161–62; Pelczar, *Władysław Odonic*, 222–24.

Odonic and Świętopełk as guilty, although they envisioned their cooperation differently.⁶⁵⁵ Nevertheless, when Gerard Labuda reached a similar conclusion in his 1995 article,⁶⁵⁶ he met with many polemical voices. Tomasz Jurek placed the sole blame on Świętopełk, arguing that Odonic's blame could have been limited to failing as a host to properly secure the place of the meeting.⁶⁵⁷ Błażej Śliwiński also ascribed the sole blame to Świętopełk.⁶⁵⁸ The renewed debate failed to produce a new consensus, dividing historians between those who saw Odonic as a co-conspirator in the crime and those who, following Jurek's view, were inclined to limit his role to merely not preventing the Pomeranian attack.⁶⁵⁹

It is assumed that the two oldest notes on Leszek's murder in Gąsawa come from the *Calendar of the Cracow Cathedral* and *The Annals of the Cracow Cathedral Chapter*, created in the same milieu. While the former's entry was written down in a hand from the mid-thirteenth century and the latter's redaction is dated at 1266, both have drawn from older notes.⁶⁶⁰ The former reads: *Dux Lestko, quem filius Odonis interfecit, obiit*,⁶⁶¹ the latter: *Lezsko dux Cracouie interfectus est in colloquio a filio Odonis sub fraude*.⁶⁶² This short description blaming Władysław Odonic is also conveyed in the later Annals drawing on the same tradition, the so-called *Short Annal of Cracow*⁶⁶³ and the *Holy Cross Annals*.⁶⁶⁴

Unsurprisingly, the *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter* did not mention anything about the involvement of Władysław Odonic, the father of Greater-Polish princes, in the Gąsawa events, stating (under 1229) that *Lestko dux Cracovie et Pomeranie in Ganszawa occiditur*.⁶⁶⁵ The second Lesser-Polish annalistic tradition, stemming from the early-fourteenth-century *Annales Polonorum deperditi*, identified the treacherous attackers differently. Thus, the *Annals of Kuropatnicki* and *Annals of Dąbrówka* noted under 1225 that: *Lesko dux Cracovie per fraudem in colloquio occiditur a Pomoranis*.⁶⁶⁶ The *Annals of Sędziwój* include a similar

⁶⁵⁵ Semkowicz believed that Władysław Odonic was the mastermind behind the intrigue and convinced Świętopełk to stage the falling out and help him with the ambush, see Aleksander Semkowicz, "Zbrodnia Gąsawska" [Gąsawa massacre], *Ateneum, Pisma naukowe i literackie* 3 (1886): 341; equal blame placed by Grodecki, "Dzieje polityczne," 206; Świętopełk as the main instigator with Władysław's help in Zientara, *Henryk Brodaty*, 288–90.

⁶⁵⁶ Labuda, "Śmierć Leszka Białego."

⁶⁵⁷ Jurek, "Gąsawa."

⁶⁵⁸ Śliwiński, "Zerwanie Świętopełka gdańskiego."

⁶⁵⁹ Pelczar, Władysław Odonic, 223–31; Maciaszek, Bolesław V Wstydlivy, 51.

⁶⁶⁰ Jurek, "Gąsawa," 152.

⁶⁶¹ KkK, 188.

⁶⁶² RkK, [95], 75.

⁶⁶³ *Rocznik Krótki*, ed. by Zofia Kozłowska-Budkowa, in *Najdawniejsze roczniki krakowskie i kalendarz*, MPH NS, vol. 5 (Warsaw: PWN 1978), [59], 240: *Lestco dux Crac[ouie] interfectus est in colloquio a filio ducis Odoni sub fraude*.

⁶⁶⁴ *Rocznik świętokrzyski*, ed. by Anna Rutkowska-Placheńska, MPH SN, vol. 12 (Cracow: PAU, 1996), 34: *Lestco dux Cracovie interfectus est in colloquio a filio Opoliensis Odonis sub fraude*.

⁶⁶⁵ RkP, [17], 24.

⁶⁶⁶ *Rocznik Małopolski*, 164.

entry, but under 1226.⁶⁶⁷ The *Annals of Gesselen* were more laconic, noting under 1257 *Listko a Pomeranis interficitur*.⁶⁶⁸ Traska's Annal version puts the death of Leszek from the hands of Pomeranians under the year 1228, adding that in the same year Duke Henryk was imprisoned by Conrad of Mazovia: *Dux Lestco interefctus est a Pomoranis sub fraude, et dux Henricus Zlesie a duce Conrado Mazovie captivatur*.⁶⁶⁹ The exact same wording is used by the *Annals of Szamotulski*, which does not surprise, given that its text is known to have been extended with the use of Traska's notes.⁶⁷⁰

As this overview demonstrates, the annalistic notes that were arguably created before the unification of the realm tell little about the death of the ruler of Cracow. Save for the shortest of notes, the Lesser-Polish annals agree that the death of Leszek happened *sub fraude*. This does not necessarily mean that the extant redaction of the *Annals of Cracow Chapter* and Franciscan tradition had to draw from some primary, now lost record – as suggested by Tomasz Jurek.⁶⁷¹ It does, however, point to the agreement of the locals that the sudden death of Leszek had to be a result of treachery – an accusation that quickly found two different guilty parties. When the Lesser Polish annals mentioned the location of the murder, they referred to it not to specify a geographical place but to emphasize the treacherous nature of those who ambushed Leszek *in colloquio*, where he could expect to feel safe. In a noticeable contrast, the *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Charter* mention Gąsawa, but not the *colloquium*. Whether we read the text in its surviving form or substitute *et Pomoranie* in Leszko's ducal title with *a Pomoranis*, the annalistic entry from Greater Poland does not say anything about the betrayal or disloyalty that led to Leszko's death.⁶⁷²

I will begin the analysis of the chronicle accounts of the events at Gąsawa with *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*. While not the youngest of the surviving accounts, it is, due to the shared reliance on *Annales Polonorum deperditi*, close in its vision to the Franciscan family of Lesser-Polish annals. Relying on the same source, *Dzierzwa* expands upon Leszko's deeds. After defeating the self-confident Roman and his numerous army at the battle of Zawichost (1205), Leszek was to enter Pomerania, where he was received by local nobles as their legitimate lord

⁶⁶⁷ *Rocznik Sędziwoja*, 877: *Lesthko dux Cracovie per fraudem in colloquio a Pomoranis occiditur*.

⁶⁶⁸ *Rocznik Małopolski*, 165

⁶⁶⁹ Traska's Annal, 837.

⁶⁷⁰ *Rocznik Małopolski*, 165; on the relation between Traska's Annal and *Annals of Szamotulski*, see Drelicharz, *Annalistyka małopolska XIII-XV wieku*, 428-34.

⁶⁷¹ Jurek, "Gąsawa," 153.

⁶⁷² The editor of the critical edition of the Greater-Polish Annals, Brygida Kurbis, believed that otherwise unconfirmed in other sources title of dux Pomoranie given to Leszek is a reflection of Greater-Polish sentiment aimed against Świętopełk of Pomerania, seen as an usurper, see RkP, 58, footnote 24; Against such interpretation, proposing corrections to the text Labuda, "Śmierć Leszka Białego," 11; Jurek, "Gąsawa," 153.

and appointed Świętopełk his “governor or *capitaneus*”.⁶⁷³ Breaking his narrative to present the genealogy of Lesser-Polish and Cuyavio-Mazovian Piasts, Dzierzwa returns to Leszek, writing that:

Therefore Leszek the White, desiring to expand the *res publica*, and wishing to discuss this with his men, summoned the governors of all his lands along with the nobles to an assembly at Gąsawa. When the Pomeranians had also arrived, Świętopełk, the governor of the coastal region, aspiring to princely rank (*ambiens principatum*), suddenly and unexpectedly attacked his lord with his men and killed him. Thus, Duke Leszek was taken from the place of his murder to Cracow and buried there in the cathedral in the year of our Lord 1226.⁶⁷⁴

The Franciscan Chronicler asserts then not only the identity of the murderers, but also their motive. The Polish duke, whose care about *res publica* echoes Vincentius of Cracow’s ideals of rulership, was killed by his own overambitious subject, elevated to the office by Leszek himself.

The fourteenth-century author is the first writer to mention Leszek’s *adventus* in Pomerania, with good reason. As Dzierzwa was writing his chronicle, he must have had in mind the contemporaneous journey of Władysław the Short. Taking on the mantle of Przemysław II, whose short-lived monarchy included Pomerania, Cuyavian Piast traveled to Pomerania to secure his power in late 1306. There, he was recognized as *verus dominus*, took homages and distributed land and offices among the nobles.⁶⁷⁵ Even if two years later the territory slipped away from Władysław’s grasp, falling into the hands of the Knights of the Teutonic Order, the Piast ruler would continue to assert his rights at battlefields and in court. The Franciscan chronicler clearly wanted to highlight that Piasts were deemed *legitimi domini* of Pomerania long before.⁶⁷⁶

In this context, it is worth mentioning that a similar vision of Świętopełk’s involvement in the death of Leszek the White was circulating at the same time in the lands controlled by the Teutonic Order. Written sometime in the second quarter of the fourteenth century, not so long after Dzierzwa’s Chronicle, *Translacio et miracula sanctae Barbarae* contains several

⁶⁷³ Dzierzwa’s Chronicle, 76: *Post hoc Lestko Albus Pomoraniam intrat ibique honorifice ab omnibus Maritimorum proceribus tamquam legitimus eorum dominus est susceptus. Statuto itaque loco sui procuratore seu capitaneo terre, viro vtique potente Swanthopelkone, ac omnibus rite ordinatis, ad sedem regni sui revertitur [...].*

⁶⁷⁴ Dzierzwa’s Chronicle, 78: *Lestko igitur Albus augere cupiens rempublicam, super qua cum suis tractare volens, omnium terrarum suarum prepositos cum proceribus in Gansawa ad colloquium convocat. Quo cum et Pomorani venissent, Swanthopelcus procurator maritime regionis, ambiens principatum in dominum suum subito cum suis inopinate irruit et occidit. Sicque dux Lestko de loco necis in Cracoviam ducitur ibique in maiori ecclesia Anno Domini M^oCCXXVI sepelitur.*

⁶⁷⁵ I discuss this in more detail in Chapter 5.

⁶⁷⁶ Despite its brevity and age, still valuable overview of the themes introduced into 13th- and early 14th-century historiography to emphasize the ties between Piast Poland and Pomerania can be found in: Czesław Deptuła, “Ideologia Polski jako państwa morskiego w dziejopisarstwie Polskim XII-XIV wieku” [Poland as a sea-power in the polish literature from the 12th to the 14th century], *Zeszyty Naukowe KUL* 18, no. 4 (1975): 13–17.

traditions concerning the circumstances in which the head of St Barbara found its way to Pomerania and into the hands of the crusading order.⁶⁷⁷ According to one of them, the relic was captured by the Knights of the Teutonic Order as they fought in 1242 against Świętopełk. Described as *tyrannus* and *pseudocristianus*, the ancestors of the Pomeranian duke were said to have been simple knights from Sieradz land, who deceitfully (*in dolo*) murdered their unnamed lord at Gąsawa and usurped for themselves the title of dukes of Pomerania. This story, according to the *Translatio*'s author, was still recounted by the "venerable Polish tradition".⁶⁷⁸ The story of Pomeranian treachery at Gąsawa, similar in its shape to the one found in Dzierzwa's chronicle, was thus used by the *Translatio*'s author to justify the Order taking possession of St Barbara's relic, and perhaps just like the Poles, to lay claim to Pomerania at large.

As the rebellion of the influential local noble, Piotr Święca of Nowe, played an important role in Władysław's loss of Pomerania, one could ask if this more recent act of betrayal of a Piast by a Pomeranian official did not influence Dzierzwa's framing of the events at Gąsawa. Marek Cetwiński argued that, in addition to the universal warning against powerful notables, Świętopełk's actions were presented as a portent of the contemporary treachery of Piotr Święca.⁶⁷⁹ While tempting, such a conclusion might be too far-fetched. As I will explore in more detail in the last chapter of the thesis, the precise events of 1307-09 quickly became difficult for the Polish elite to recall. By the time of the Inowrocław Trial of 1320-21 and the Warsaw Trial of 1339, Piotr and other Pomeranian nobles were just one of several groups whose *perfidia* was blamed for the loss of the disputed territory.

The involvement of Pomeranians was not a whole-cloth invention of the early-fourteenth-century Franciscan from Cracow. Accusing the Pomeranians, the author of *Annales Polonorum deperditi* must have drawn on the older tradition that spoke about their involvement in the murder of Leszek the White. The traces of such an understanding of the events can be found in a much earlier, though foreign source, the *Chronicle of Halych-Volhynia*. The story

⁶⁷⁷ More on the source and the context of its creation in Maria Starnawska, "The Role of the Legend of Saint Barbara's Head in the Conflict of the Teutonic Order and Świętopełk, the Duke of Pomerania," in *Culture and Conflict in Western and Northern Europe*, vol. 2, ed. Jochen Schenk and Mike Carr, The Military Orders, VI (London: Routledge, 2016), 203–12; Gregory Leighton, "The Relics of St Barbara at Althaus Kulm: History, Patronages, and Insight into the Teutonic Order and the Christian Population in Prussia (Thirteenth–Fifteenth Centuries)," *Zapiski Historyczne* 85, no. 1 (2020): 8–22.

⁶⁷⁸ *Translatio et Miracula Sanctae Barbarae*, ed by. Max Töppen, in *Scriptores rerum Prussicarum*, vol. 2 (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1870), 404: *fuit quidam dux nomine Swantopolcus desperatus tyrannus et pseudocristianus qui cum esset oriundus de Polonia ex territorio Seradiensi et natus progenitoribus suis de simplicibus militibus, dicti progenitores sui dominum et principem proprium in dolo circa Gansavam fluvium inter Gneznam et Nakel castrum interfecerunt, usurpantes violenter sibi ducatus vel nomen ducis Pomoranie, prout narrat veneranda antiquitas Polonorum adhuc.*

⁶⁷⁹ Cetwiński, "Śląskie echa," 75.

about Leszek's death comes from the part of this thirteenth-century work that might have been created as early as 1246/47.⁶⁸⁰ The manifold connections between Danilo and Vasilko Romanovichi on the one hand and the elites of eastern parts of Piast Poland suggest that the account is a reflection of the opinion held at the Mazovian and Lesser-Polish courts shortly after events at Gąsawa.⁶⁸¹ According to the Rus' source, in the year 6737 Leszek, "the Lyakh great prince", was murdered at an assembly (на сонмѣ) by Świętopełk and "Odovich" Władysław, "upon the advice of the disloyal boyars".⁶⁸² Both perpetrators who would appear in the later Polish annals are mentioned here, as well as the peaceful setting of the *colloquium* in which the unexpected betrayal took place. The blame is also laid on Leszek's "boyars", on whose advice the murderers acted. It is possible that the author of the *Chronicle of Halych-Volhynia*, primed to distrust treacherous boyars, added this accusation himself.⁶⁸³ Dariusz Dąbrowski argued that the identity of the boyars was most likely already lost on the Polish source of Rus' chronicler, who were either uncertain themselves or chose to remain silent for political reasons.⁶⁸⁴ Tomasz Jurek suggested that the original account on which the author of the *Chronicle of Halych-Volhynia* relied on referred to Świętopełk as one of Leszek's "boyars", underscoring Cracow's overlordship over Pomerania.⁶⁸⁵ This is impossible to prove. What can be said, however, is that just like Dzierżwa's account will do later, the tradition that the Rus' chronicler relied upon imagined the Gąsawa massacre as orchestrated by Leszek's powerful subjects, a group to which Świętopełk either belonged or collaborated with.

Perhaps an even earlier account of the massacre at Gąsawa comes from a different foreign source, the Chronicle of Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, written sometime in the second quarter of the thirteenth century. The Cistercian monk set out to compile a universal history,

⁶⁸⁰ For an overview of the various stages in the creation of the 13th-century work, see: Adrian Jusupović, *The Chronicle of Halych-Volhynia and Historical Collections in Medieval Rus'* (Leiden: Brill, 2022).

⁶⁸¹ Dariusz Dąbrowski, "Uczestnicy wydarzeń gąsawskich 1227 roku w świetle przekazów Kroniki halicko-Wołyńskiej" [Participants of the 1227 events at Gąsawa in the light of the accounts of the Halych-Volynian Chronicle], in *Gąsawa w pamięci historycznej: w związku z 620. rocznicą lokacji miasta*, ed. Dariusz Karczewski (Inowrocław: PTH Oddział Inowrocławski, 2009), 97.

⁶⁸² *Chronica Galiciano-Voliniana*, eds. by Dariusz Dąbrowski and Adrian Jusupović, MPH NS, vol. 16 (Cracow-Wawrsaw: PAU, 2017), 130: В та же лѣта Лестько оубієнь быс[тъ], великий княз[ъ] лад[ъ]скыи, на сонмѣ оубієнь быс[тъ], С[вѣ]тополкѣмъ Гѣлговичем[ъ] и Волѣдиславѣм[ъ], съвѣтом[ъ] боарѣ невѣр[ъ]ных[ъ]; As explained by the editors, the later copyist confused the names of the perpetrators of the murder, which survived in a correct phrasing (Стополкомъ . Гѣдовичемъ Володиславомъ) in the *Hypatian Codex*. See also Dąbrowski, *Uczestnicy wydarzeń Gąsawskich*, 95.

⁶⁸³ On the frequent use of the idea of disloyal boyars, contrasted with the faithful common subjects of Romanovichi in the Chronicle of Halych-Volhynia, see Adrian Jusupović, "Tożsamość i obcość w czasach Daniela Romanowicza: konstrukcja narracji w Kronice halicko-wołyńskiej" [Identity and otherness in the time of Daniel Romanovich: the construction of narrative in the Halych-Volhynia Chronicle], in *Symboliczne i realne podstawy tożsamości społecznej w średniowieczu*, ed. Sławomir Gawlas and Paweł Żmudzki (Warsaw: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2017), 507–10.

⁶⁸⁴ Dąbrowski, "Uczestnicy wydarzeń gąsawskich," 98.

⁶⁸⁵ Jurek, "Gąsawa," 154.

from the Garden of Eden to contemporary times (reaching 1241), gathering information from over the entire Christendom.⁶⁸⁶ In the parts of his chronicle preceding 1227, Alberic recounts the conflict between Władysław II and his brothers, noting the genealogy of contemporary Piasts,⁶⁸⁷ as well as the victory of Leszek the White and Conrad of Mazovia at the battle at Zawichost in 1205, where of Roman of Halych, *Rex Russie*, was killed.⁶⁸⁸ The Cistercian chronicler returns to this triumph of the sons of Kazimierz when telling the story of Leszek's murder and its consequences:

In Poland the Duke of Cracow named Leszek, worthy of memory for his famed renown, was killed by a certain relative of his, an immoral (*improbus*) man, the younger Władysław, son of Odoyseus [Odon]. Leszek, together with his brother Konrad, had once gloriously defeated the King of the Rus' named Roman. This Władysław, Duke of Gniezno after his uncle, old Władysław, after killing the aforementioned Leszek and capturing Duke Henryk of Wrocław, a Catholic man, was finally, by God's judgement, killed by lust in this way: he brought with him a German girl for a night, who, unable to bear her oppression, stabbed him hard in a stomach with a short blade she carried in secret, and thus he died; and Duke Henryk who was the oldest of all the Polish dukes, took possession of Cracow. All these deeds, carried out within six years, we put here for the sake of continuity.⁶⁸⁹

The death of Leszek the White is the sole work of his villainous relative Władysław Odonic. We do not learn much about the murder itself, only that it was just a part of a longer series of misdeeds by this *vir improbatus*, who also imprisoned Duke Henryk the Bearded. The victim of Władysław also in other relations, as I will explore shortly, Henryk was indeed imprisoned shortly in the aftermath of Leszek's death, but by Conrad of Mazovia – another rival to the throne of Cracow. It seems to me very plausible that Alberic refers here to this event, attributing the misfortune of yet another virtuous Piast to wicked Władysław. The narrative, delineated in bold strokes, culminates in a fitting conclusion wherein the immoral Piast is justly

⁶⁸⁶ On Alberic and his chronicle see: Antoni Grabowski, *The Craft of History: Turning History into a Discipline in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*, Knowledge, Scholarship, and Science in the Middle Ages (Turnhout: Brepols, 2024), 4:27–33; From older literature, see Andrzej Wyrwa, “Alberyk z Trois-Fontaines i jego średniowieczna Kronika świata” [Alberic of Trois-Fontaines and his Medieval Chronicle of the World], in *Cognitioni gestorum. Studia z dziejów średniowiecza dedykowane Profesorowi Jerzemu Strzelczykowi* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo UAM, 2006), 319–44.

⁶⁸⁷ *Chronica Albrici Monachi Trium Fontium, a monacho Novi Monasterii Hoiensis interpolata*, edited by Paul Scheffer-Boichorst, in *Chronica aevi Suevici*, MGH SS, vol. 23 (Hannover: Hahn, 1874), 838.

⁶⁸⁸ *Ibidem*, 885.

⁶⁸⁹ *Ibidem*, 921: *In Polonia dux Cracovie celebri laude memorandus, Listet nomine, interficitur a quodam cognato suo, viro improbo, iuniore Logeslao, Odoyseii filio. Qui Listet cum fratre suo Conrado de rege Russie, Romano nomine, quondam nobiliter triumphaverat. Hic autem Logeslaus dux Guenessie post patrum suum magnum Logeslaum, postquam dictum Listet interfecit et ducem Henricum de Vresscelavia cepit, virum catholicum, tandem Dei iudicio a luxuria interficitur hoc modo: iuvenulam Theutonicam secum de nocte collocavit, quae non ferens oppressionem suam, canipulo, quod secum occulte portabat, ventrem illius fortiter pupugit, et ita mortuus est; et dux Henricus, cum esset senior omnium ducum Poloniae, Cracoviam optinuit. Hec omnia infra sex annos gesta causa continuationis hic explevimus.*

subjected to divine retribution. The scandalizing circumstances of Władysław's death fit Alberic's moralizing tone. There are, however, some small indications that it might not have been entirely the product of a monk's imagination. Already Kazimierz Jasiński pointed out that it was in reality Władysław III Spindleshanks's death that happened *infra sex annos* and cleared Henryk's path to the throne of Cracow, suggesting that Alberic conflated rival Greater-Polish Piasts. Furthermore, there exists a Polish medieval tradition that has the older Władysław dying in such an ignoble manner, though known only to fifteenth-century Cracow erudites – Jan Dąbrowka and Długosz.⁶⁹⁰ It is then possible that the tale (true or not) of the sordid death of one of Władysław was told in Poland, and traveled along with other information from a distant land to Trois-Fontaines Abbey. The specific circles from which the Polish informants of the foreign chronicler originated are unknown. Seeing the antipathy towards Władysław Odonic, older historiography suggested that the accusations came from the court of his Greater Polish rival.⁶⁹¹ Tomasz Jurek argued for the Silesian provenance, pointing to the favorable presentation of Henryk I the Bearded and Wrocław's court connections with Cistercian monks.⁶⁹² In the cautiously formulated opinion of Antoni Grabowski, Leszek and Konrad were the main protagonists of the longer story known to the chronicler, later divided into three different entries on Polish events.⁶⁹³ Among the proposed places of origin, Silesia or Lesser Poland appear most plausible. This conclusion is supported by the observable similarities between Alberic's account and the work written by the anonymous Cistercian behind the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* who, as I discussed in the previous chapter, is most often linked with the Silesian Lubiąż and Lesser-Polish Mogilno.

This observation naturally leads me to the vision of Leszek's death presented by the author of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*. As I have already briefly alluded to in the previous subchapter, the Lubiąż monk included in his chronicle two descriptions of the event – a longer description placed in the "Silesian" part of his narrative, and its abbreviated version in a later overview of the history of entire Poland. As the latter contains the bare minimum that the author thought important for the reader, I will analyze it first. Since the narrative of this part of the

⁶⁹⁰ Biblioteka Narodowa, Rps 3002 III, 34v, <https://polona.pl/item-view/f9e33821-d07f-4a1d-831a-414e5a72977f?page=38> [access 29.09.2025]

⁶⁹¹ Zientara, *Henryk Brodaty*, 232–33 (footnote no. 3); Jerzy Mularczyk, *Od Bolesława Chrobrego do Bolesława Rogatki (studia polemiczne)* [From Bolesław the Brave to Bolesław the Bald (polemical studies)] (Wrocław: Oficyna Wydawnicza Sudety, 1994), 76.

⁶⁹² Jurek, "Gąsawa," 155.

⁶⁹³ Antoni Grabowski, "Polska i Polacy w średniowiecznej wspólnocie europejskiej – świadectwo Alberyka z Trois-Fontaines" [Poland and Poles in the medieval European community - testimony of Alberic of Trois-Fontaines], in *Przeszłość w kulturze średniowiecznej Polski* (Warsaw: Instytut Historii PAN/Wydawnictwo Neriton, 2018), 1:221–23.

chronicle focuses on the rulers of Cracow, we learn that Leszek the White, having returned from successful campaigns in Ruthenia, set out with his men against the Pomeranians in Nakło. Leszek was joined by Henryk I the Bearded, Konrad of Mazovia, and Odon, “Duke of Gniezno”, on whose behalf the expedition was organized. There, Leszek was killed in a bath by Pomeranians, while Henryk, saved by the sacrifice of Peregryn, was almost killed in his bed. Thus, the chronicler ends “the expedition of so many [princes] was ruined by the betrayal or the treachery (*prodicionem sive tradicionem*) of Odon.”⁶⁹⁴ The blame for the death of Leszek the White lies on Odon, who called for the help of other Piasts in a campaign against the Pomeranians, only to betray them, allowing the enemy to ambush the camp. The Silesian author is the first to mention the participation and injuries suffered by other dynasts during the events. Even though Piasts are meeting at a military camp, and not a *colloquium*, the murders still took place in an intimate, secure setting – bath or bed. I have already mentioned other notable addition by the Silesian chronicler, the knight Peryegryn, who shines as an example of loyalty in the broader tale of betrayal.

It is only the more extensive, earlier version of the same story from the “Silesian” part of the chronicle that expands more on the motivations behind Odon’s treachery. In this version Duke of Gniezno Odon, “desiring *monarchia* and deceitfully thinking about the death of all the Polish princes (*aspirans monarchiam et in omnium principum Poloeni mortem dolos cogitans*)”, called on their help in besieging Pomeranian-held Nakło. There, as Odon deceitfully pretended to arrange peace talks, the Pomeranians unexpectedly attacked the Piast camp one morning, killing Leszek and wounding Henryk – just like described in a shorter version. In the mind of the Lubiąż monk the sudden death of Leszek the White was caused by the political ambitions, lust for power of a deceitful man, Odon, who used underhanded means to try seizing *monarchia* for himself. The term has, as pointed out by the Polish scholars, a specific meaning, consequentially employed by the chronicler, signifying the throne of Cracow and the leading position among the Piast rulers it represented.⁶⁹⁵

Before asking why the late-thirteenth-century author attributed this particular motivation to the killer of Leszek the White, one could ask why he identified him with Odon, duke of Gniezno. Most historians argue that this was a simple misattribution: the Lubiąż monk

⁶⁹⁴ SCP, 640: *Lesco postmodum ab expeditione, quam in Russiam et Galliciam fecerat, post procerum Russie multifariam necem ac Galitie prospere rediens, cum duce Odone Gneznensi, cuius causa tunc agebatur, ac duce Henrico Barbato fratreque proprio Conrado duce Cuiavie ac Mazovie in Nakel contra Pomeranos proficiscitur et a Pomeranis in balneo occiditur, et dux Henricus in lecto multis vulneribus affectus sed obiectu Peregrini de Wysemburk, qui super eum occisus fuit, liberatur a morte, et accursu suorum tandem erutus et ad propria deducitur; et tantorum [principum] expedicio per Odonis prodicionem sive tradicionem confunditur.*

⁶⁹⁵ Michałowski, *Princeps fundator*, 121; Drelicharz, *Unifying the Kingdom of Poland*, 200 ff.

saw events at Gąsawa as connected to Władysław Odonic, but uncertain of the chronological details, confused the son with his long-dead father (Odon died in 1194).⁶⁹⁶ When Odon's son appears in the narrative later, the Cistercian chronicler doubles down on this "mistake", having Henryk blame Władysław for the acts of his father.⁶⁹⁷ The Silesian chronicler often creatively rearranged the chronology established in the historiographical traditions he built upon in his work, creating his own vision of past Piasts and events. For example, I discussed in the previous chapter Lubiąż's monk creative rearrangement of participants in Gniezno summit of 1000. The only other time Odon appears in the narrative in either part of the chronicle is in the context of rebelling against his father, Mieszko III the Old, driving him out of Poland.⁶⁹⁸ The Silesian chronicler, unlike his predecessor, Vincentius of Cracow, did not offer any excuses for such a dramatic break with filial obedience. It is therefore plausible that he saw the rebellious son as a more convincing conspirator behind the ambush waiting on Leszek and Henryk – someone ready to turn both against his father and his other kin, "all princes of Poland".

The story of Odon's ambush and Leszek the White's death in the Silesian part of the Cistercian chronicle is worth examining in its broader narrative context. The serious wound suffered by Henryk in the ambush set up by the ambitious duke of Gniezno was merely the first of treacherous deeds committed by all the Piasts with whom Henryk the Beadred, *pius princeps*, had to contend. The Lubiąż monk writes that after Leszek's death, it was his brother Konrad of Mazovia who tried to occupy Cracow. However, Leszek's widow, seeing Konrad's tyranny (*tyrannide illius considerata*), with the advice and consent of the nobles, submitted herself and her children under the protection of Duke Henryk, whom she *monarchiam Cracovie [...]* *resignavit*.⁶⁹⁹ In the ensuing military clash, the Silesian Piast drove Konrad out of Lesser Poland, defeating him in the battles at Skała and Miedzybór, with the Mazovian duke's firstborn son Przemysław dying in the second of the clashes. This information is especially worth noting as no earlier source knows about Konrad's son of this name. It is possible that the Lubiąż monk knew about the existence of the Mazovian Piast who was otherwise unmentioned in the sources. More likely, given the chronicler's tendency to play loosely with the genealogy of the late members of the dynasty in order to achieve an ideological effect, it seems to me that the

⁶⁹⁶ Jurek, "Gąsawa," 159–60; Pelczar, *Władysław Odonic*, 216; Other position taken by Gerard Labuda, who believed that ambitions of the described duke of Gniezno could have been harbored only by Władysław III Spindleshanks, Labuda, "Śmierć Leszka Białego," 13–14.

⁶⁹⁷ SCP, 649.

⁶⁹⁸ SCP, 636.

⁶⁹⁹ SCP, 648: *sed relictis Lestkonis, tyrannide illius considerata, cum consilio et consensu procerum pium principem Henricum, ducem Slesie dictum cum barba, advocans se suosque duos parvulos filios tutele commisit et monarchiam Cracovie illi resignavit quam tamen, duobus preliis a Conrado patruo illorum evicit.*

introduction of Konrad's firstborn was deliberate. True or not, Przemysł's death during the military campaign waged by his father immediately invites comparisons with the battle at Mozcawa, which involved the death son of another unworthy claimant to Cracow's throne, Mieszko III the Old. This similarity would be unlikely to escape the attention of Silesian *Chronica Polonorum's* readers, helping to further characterize Konrad as a malicious competitor in the fight for Cracow.

Even as the death of his son could have signaled to Konrad (and the reader) that his cause was not just, the Mazovian ruler remained committed to his ambition, laying an ambush against the Silesian Piast. The unsuspecting Henryk dismissed his mercenaries and traveled to Spytkowice, a secluded place by the ford at the Vistula river, where he was to meet with barons of Cracow to arrange the matters of the land. As the Lubiąż monk writes, "And because the *fraus* and *tradicio* of Cracovians is never hidden, while the pious prince was devoutly attending the Mass there, suddenly enemies attacked, seized the unsuspecting prince, and placed him in chains led him to Płock, a castle in Mazovia."⁷⁰⁰ In an appropriate show of filial duty, the young prince Henryk the Pious's response is to prepare the military expedition with a goal of freeing his father. His mother St Hedwig, however, had a different idea for bringing the conflict to an end without spilling any more blood of the commoners. She traveled to the Mazovian *tyrannus* herself and negotiated her husband's release, marrying off her two daughters to Konrad's sons.⁷⁰¹ Freed from captivity and finally in the possession of Cracow's *monarchia*, Henryk felt obliged to take revenge on the betrayers. The Lubiąż monk writes that remembering his injuries suffered at Nakło and seeing that Władysław III Spindelshanks was driven out of Greater-Poland by his brother Odon, Henryk struck at the son of the treacherous Piast, Władysław, conquering all of southern Greater Poland.⁷⁰² Despite this triumph, the chronicler does not finish his narrative on an optimistic note. With the final act of disloyalty, the castle Śrem built

⁷⁰⁰ SCP, 649: *Tamen quia raro pertinacium est a sue presumptionis perfidie proposito resilire, cum pius princeps Henricus, iam velud evicto adversario, securior consisteret, exercitu alienigeno cum filio ad propria remisso, ultra Cracoviam ad secreciora loca deserti Spitovicz circa vadum Wizle cum baronibus Cracovie de statu terre ordinaturus secessit. Et quoniam Cracoviensium fraus et tradicio nunquam delituit, cum ibi pius princeps missarum celebritati devocius astaret, ecce subito hostes irruunt, incautum rapiunt et vinculis iniectum in Ploczk, castrum Mazovie, deducunt.*

⁷⁰¹ SCP, 649: *Quo filius eius [Henryk the Bearded's] malo conperto, per omnia in ulcionem patrisque liberationem convocatis exercitibus se preparat. Beata vero Hedvigis, sanguini innoxio ac pauperum lesioni conpaciens, malum imminens prevenire studuit et in propria persona tyrannum adiit, duasque filias filii ob perpetue robur pacis filiis Conradi in coniugium tradidit.*

⁷⁰² Ibidem: *Iniurie siquidem prime et vulnere, que in Nakel per Odonis tradicionem acceperat et propter exilium Vlodislai, fratris Odonis, qui in Slesiam propulsus a fratre exulabat, dux Henricus non inmemor, insurrexit contra Vlodislaum filium Odonis et evicit ab eo omnem terram [...] usque ad castrum Geschk.*

by Henryk to control this new land, was treacherously entered at night by Poles, who killed the Přemyslid relative of Henryk entrusted with the command.⁷⁰³

The story of the death of Leszek the White is thus a part of a longer narrative that focuses on Henryk's struggle for the Cracow's *monarchia* and the leading role among other members of the dynasty. Like in the much shorter telling by Alberic, after Władysław/Odon killed Leszek, the Silesian duke Henryk found himself at first in captivity, and afterwards on the throne of Cracow. Such framing ignored a good amount of actual political developments taking place at that time, like the involvement of Władysław III Spineshanks, an actual guardian of Leszek's child and widow.⁷⁰⁴ The narrative focused more on presenting Leszek's death and Henryk's captivity as two symptoms of the same general political (and moral) crisis, successfully navigated by the Silesian Piast. The Cistercian from Poland did not let the betrayal go unpunished. The Silesian monk finds a convenient justification in Henryk's conquest of parts of Greater Poland in presenting it as a justice dispensed for the treachery of Władysław Odonic's father. Konrad's scheming, though not punished directly, was also for naught. Just like Mieszko III at Mozgawa, Konrad lost his firstborn son pursuing an unjust claim to Cracow, but his underhanded means did not allow him to achieve this goal. The conflict between Konrad and Henryk bears a resemblance to the Silesian chronicler's vision of the clash between Bolesław III Wrymouth and the emperor Henry V I described in a previous chapter. Just like Bolesław in the past, so does Konrad, unable to defeat Henryk in open battle, settle on deceitfully kidnapping an unsuspecting opponent, and releasing his noble prisoner after the negotiated marriage between their children resolves the conflict. Given the invented nature of the tradition about Henryk V's imprisonment by Bolesław, it is possible that the Lubiąż monk consciously modeled the earlier events after the more recent conflict over the "monarchy" of Cracow.

The longer narrative about Henryk I the Bearded constructed thusly must have resonated in a particular way with the Lubiąż monks' contemporaries. We do not know when either part of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* was created. We might, however, assume that the work started taking shape at the time of Henryk IV Probus of Wrocław – the chronicler's clear favorite among the contemporary Piast. The ambitious Silesian Piast found himself, ever since the death of Bolesław V the Chaste, in a conflict over Cracow with representatives of Konrad's Cuyavio-Mazovian branch of the dynasty – first with Leszek the Black, then with Konrad II and Bolesław

⁷⁰³ SCP, 650: *traditione Poloni noctu castrum irrumpentes [...]*.

⁷⁰⁴ For the overview of the actual events, see Zientara, *Henryk Brodaty*, 292–302; Agnieszka Teterycz-Puzio, *Konrad I Mazowiecki – książ wielki łacki (1187/89 - 31 sierpnia 1247)* [Konrad I of Mazovia - Grand Knaz of Lakhs (1187/89 - August 31, 1247).] (Cracow: Avalon, 2019), 125–33.

II of Mazovia.⁷⁰⁵ The remark about the stereotypical perfidy of the inhabitants of Lesser Poland might not be only a comment on the particular political agency exercised by the powerful local nobles, but perhaps also an expression of the duke's frustration over building support for his candidacy for Cracow's throne.⁷⁰⁶

The negative portrayal of Odon, the progenitor of the Piasts of Greater Poland, also reflects the rivalry between the two branches of the dynasty. The terrible betrayal of the Greater-Polish Piast served in the eyes of the Lubiąż monk as a good justification for the Silesian attempts to wrest control over Greater Poland from the local branch of the dynasty in 1230s. While the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* gestures towards the back-and-forth campaigns in southern Greater Poland by describing the deceitful repackaging of the castle of Śrem by Greater-Polish forces, it does not present the conflict in much detail. Interestingly, while focusing on the unfaithfulness of Odon and his son, the Lubiąż monk omits from his retelling of the conflict the rebellion of the Greater-Polish subjects who, according to the *Annals of the Gniezno Chapter*, not only betrayed Władysław Odonic for Henryk the Bearded, but also wanted to see their ruler dead.⁷⁰⁷ Thus, the belief that Piasts or their allies tried to deceitfully end the lives of their rivals can be found on both sides of this inter-dynastic conflict. Alternatively, though less likely in my opinion, the negative portrayal of Odon could have reflected a much more recent rivalry between Henryk IV Probus and Przemysł II, a Greater-Polish Piast with strong ties to Świętopełk's son Mściwoj II.⁷⁰⁸

It is also significant that the Lubiąż monk wrote the story of the triumph of Henryk IV's great ancestor over conspiring traitors at a time when the Wrocław court itself was not free from plotters. The chronicler himself writes about the Silesian nobles who saw discord between Henryk III and his brother Władysław, archbishop of Salzburg, eventually poisoning both of the guardians of young Henryk IV.⁷⁰⁹ The same men, fearing the consequences of their actions, were to conspire together with Bolesław the Bald to capture the young prince, imprisoned by

⁷⁰⁵ See in most detail in Jurek, "Plany koronacyjne Henryka."

⁷⁰⁶ On the difficulties faced by Henryk IV in building support for this rule in Lesser-Poland after 1288, see Nowakowski, *Małopolska elita władzy*, 15–26; Pauk, "Der eine hiez her Lechschit."

⁷⁰⁷ RkG, [12], 4: *Item MCCXXXIII^o milites Poloni volebant interficere dominum suum Wladislaum filium Odonis inducentes ducem Henricum cum filio suo in Poloniam.*

⁷⁰⁸ Marek Cetwiński saw the depiction of the duke of Gniezno Odon, an aspiring monarch working closely with Pomeranians, as an allusion aimed at Przemysł II. However, this interpretation hinges on dating the creation of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* to the 14th century, which seems too far-fetched to me. See Cetwiński, "Śląskie echa," 68.

⁷⁰⁹ SCP, 653: *Henricus vero usque ad ipsum vite sue punctum cum Vlodislao, iam Salczburgensi electo, in una sorte permansit, que tunc in fine vite eius per vim militum, qui ipsum intoxicari fecerant et Vlodislao adherebant, in duo divisa fuit; SCP, 654: Tandem defuncto Vlodislao archiepiscopo Salczburgensi, similiter intoxicato a suis Slesiensibus et in Salszburg sepulto [...].*

his uncle in the castle of Wleń.⁷¹⁰ In this context, the praise heaped on Peregryn and the scornful yet oblique comment about his sons reads as a comment on the relations between Silesian Piasts and their subjects.

To conclude, the accounts of Leszek the White's death reveal not only enduring belief in deceit and betrayal leading to this Piast's assassination, but also the evolving political narratives that shaped their retelling. While the discussion about the veracity of those claims will probably remain open, the earliest narrative sources pointed at Władysław Odonic, working either alone or together with Pomeranians. While these sources differ on the precise location, they all portray the attack on the assembled Piasts as occurring in a setting that should have guaranteed safety, whether during a meeting, in the bath, or in bed. This consistent framing serves to underscore the treacherous and underhanded nature of the act.

As more details were added in successive Polish sources, the shape taken by the story continued to reflect the preoccupations of its creators. Thus, the tradition which can be connected to *Annales Polonorum deperditi*, and which found its fullest expression in Dzierzwa's *Chronicle*, focuses on the participation of Pomeranians, highlighting the ties of the contested territory with the Piast dynasty. The version of the story linking the death of Leszek the White with the overambitious Pomeranian subjects of the Piast ruler might have been, as suggested by the *Translatio et miracula Sanctae Barbarae*, circulated more broadly among the participants of the early-fourteenth-century contest for control over Pomerania. Both Dzierzwa and the *Halycz-Volhynian Chronicle* portray Leszek's death as the result of a conspiracy orchestrated by powerful yet treacherous subjects, whether explicitly naming Świętopełk or referring more vaguely to anonymous "boyars." In contrast, the Cistercian tradition associated with the Silesian courts attributes the act to the ambition of a malicious member of the Piast dynasty, identified either with Odon or his son. Moreover, in the telling of Alberic and the Lubiąż monk the murder of Leszek was connected with another deceit, the imprisonment of Henryk I the Bearded. The narrative shaped this way clearly singled out the Silesian Piasts having the best morals from among the competitors for the throne of Cracow, justifying Henryk's conquest of southern Greater Poland. Perhaps in reflection of this tradition, Leszek's death and Henryk's imprisonment are mentioned in the same entry in *Traska's Annal*, a Lesser-

⁷¹⁰ SCP, 655: *Boleslaus Legniczensis invindens cum filio suo Henrico de captivitate pueri dolos cogitare cepit et tendiculas. Pro voto ergo machinacionis sue quibusdam baronibus pueri de morte patris eius et patrui timentibus a puero, circumvenientes per latruncos noctu dormientem puerum in lecto suo in Ieltsch cepi fecit, in nocte quinte ferie post primam dominicam quadragesime, anno Domini 1277, et castrum Len sub ducis vinculis crudelissime detinuit.*

Polish source which, nevertheless, contains notes drawn from some unidentified Silesian source.⁷¹¹

3.4.2 Facing the Treachery in Greater Poland

In the face of competition over southern Greater Poland, the supporters of Władysław Odonic's sons Przemysł I and Bolesław I the Pious promoted the idea of a special link between the members of the local branch of the dynasty on the one hand, Greater Poland and its inhabitants on the other. While the picture of the "true heirs" painted by the Greater-Polish annalists suggested that members of the local branch of the dynasty could depend on the natural loyalty of the Greater-Polish *terrigenae*, their relationships with their subjects were not always perfect. Przemysł I and Przemysł II alike had to face the instances of disloyalty among the ranks of their most powerful subjects.

Imprisoned Nobles and Treacherous Advisors

In 1248, as the *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter* inform us, the "Duke of [Greater] Poland Przemysł seized *comes* Tomasz, *castellanus* of Poznań, and his son Tomisław, his cupbearer, and held them in chains in Gniezno, delivered into strict custody."⁷¹² An equally short note informed the reader about the release of imprisoned Tomasz and his sons, Jan and Sędziwoj, which took place a year later.⁷¹³ Comes Tomasz and his sons belonged to the influential Nałęcz clan, members of which played an important role in Greater Polish politics ever since the beginning of the thirteenth century. At first, aligning closely with Władysław IV Spindleshanks, after his death members of this kinship group sided with Władysław Odonic and his sons, rather than with the Silesian Piasts vying for the control of southern Greater Poland.⁷¹⁴ Besides Tomasz and Tomisław, other kindred held important titles on the courts of Przemysł I and Bolesław I.⁷¹⁵

What were the reasons for the imprisonment of the prominent family that had a long history of supporting the rulers from the Greater Polish line of the Piast dynasty? The rationale, absent from the contemporary annalistic notes, is given in the later account given by the

⁷¹¹ This Silesian undercurrent in *Traska's Annal* identified in Drelicharz, *Annalistyka małopolska XIII-XV wieku*, 387–88.

⁷¹² RkP, [20], 24–25: *comitem Thomam castellanum Poznaniensem et Thomislaum filium suum seu eius pincernam captivavit et in vinculis in Gnezden detinuit arte custodie mancipatos.*

⁷¹³ RkP, [34], 27: *comes Thoma et filii ipsius Johannes et Sandziuoy de captivitate sunt liberati per manus fideiussorum hac condicione, quod duci Premisloni bona fide sine fraude et dolo debeant servire.*

⁷¹⁴ Jurek, "Średniowieczne Szamotuły," 11–16; Pakulski, *Nałęcz Wielkopolscy w Średniowieczu*, 111.

⁷¹⁵ Among them were Dzierżykraj, palatine of Gniezno, castellans of Śrem Jan and Międzyrzecz Mikołaj, as well *subpincerna* Niemierza. See Pakulski, *Nałęcz Wielkopolscy w Średniowieczu*, 111–12; More on Dzierżykraj for example in Jasiński, "Studia nad Wielkopolskim stronnictwem," 192–94.

Chronicle of Greater Poland. Informing about the sudden imprisonment of Tomasz and his sons (Tomisław and Sędziwój), it adds that the men of Nałęcz clan wanted to expel Przemysł and Bolesław from Greater Poland and hand it back to Bolesław the Bald, but their malicious scheme was uncovered.⁷¹⁶ The view of the uncovered conspiracy that aimed to restore the Silesian rule found a general acceptance in modern historiography.

Explaining why the part of the powerful clan, which already held some of the most prominent offices, would seek to overthrow Przemysł I and submit to Bolesław I the Bald, proved more difficult. Some historians speculated that Tomasz might have represented part of the Greater Polish knighthood that was unhappy with the growing political and economic power of the Church, supported by Przemysł I.⁷¹⁷ Conflict between Poznań bishopric and the local *milites* in the years 1244-45 saw, according to the *Annals of Gniezno's Chapter*, knights opposing the privileges won by the Church during Władysław Odonic's reign, with the young Greater-Polish rulers siding with the episcopate.⁷¹⁸ According to Jan Pakulski, Bolesław the Bald wanted to capitalize on the sentiments of some nobles, who began to turn against Władysław Odonic's sons. Bolesław reached out to Tomasz and his family, trying to curry the support of the powerful office holders. The members of Nałęcz clan, in turn, were to be swayed by the perspective of even further offices and land grants.⁷¹⁹ Bronisław Nowacki found this interpretation rightfully unconvincing, but his own suggestion that the clan lent its support to the Silesian Piast, counting on geographically diversifying its landed possessions by obtaining new grants in southern Greater Poland seems equally spurious.⁷²⁰

In the face of these difficulties, it is worth asking if the scholars who wanted to reconstruct the political motivations behind Przemysł's conflict with Tomasz's family did not

⁷¹⁶ 86 in *Chronica Poloniae maioris*, 93: *Et eodem anno tempore Przemisl dux Polonie Thomam castellanum Poznaniensem et Thomislaum ac Sandziuogium filium eius pincernam de cognacione Nalancz captivavit et vinculis ferreis constrictos in Gneznensi castro carcerali custodie deputavit. Volebant enim prefati milites cum suis consortibus in terram Polonie Boleslaum ducem Slesie inducere Przemislio et fratre suo profugatis. Sed eorum consilia, quamvis occulta, et malicie conceptus presencia ducum fuerunt propallata.*

⁷¹⁷ Thus for example Grodecki, "Dzieje polityczne," 236; Dissatisfaction of some of Przemysł's subjects mentioned also by Pakulski, *Nałęcz Wielkopolscy w Średniowieczu*, 111.

⁷¹⁸ RkG, [40-41], 7-8; More on this in Jasiński, "Studia nad Wielkopolskim stronnictwem."

⁷¹⁹ According to the historian in political calculation of Tomasz staying by Przemysł I's side did not offer such perspectives for even further advancement, as it would upset the balance of power between competing Greater Polish clans. See Pakulski, *Nałęcz Wielkopolscy w Średniowieczu*, 112; Following Pakulski's argument Jacek Osiński, *Bolesław Rogatka: książę Legnicki, dziedzic monarchii Henryków śląskich (1220/1225-1278)* [Bolesław the Bald: duke of Legnica, heir of the monarchy of Silesian Henryks (1220/1225-1278)] (Cracow: Avalon, 2012), 170.

⁷²⁰ Nowacki, *Przemysł I*, 171-72; As pointed out by Przemysław Kaleta, Nowacki's argument not only relies on uncertain information regarding the geographic location of Nałęcz's estates in the 1240s, but also is at odds with the practice among the Piast-era nobility of aiming at maximizing the utility of their estates through geographical proximity. See Przemysław Kaleta, "Zdrady możnych a rotacja elity władzy w Wielkopolsce w dobie panowania potomków Władysława Odonica" [Nobles' acts of betrayal and the rotation of the ruling elite in Wielkopolska in the era of the reign of the descendants of Władysław Odonic], *Historia Slavorum Occidentis* 9, no. 2 (2015): 67.

place too much faith in the reliability of the *Chronicle of Greater Poland*. None of the historians cited above questioned the veracity of the claim being made by the chronicle that survives to us in the form given to it in the mid-fourteenth century.⁷²¹ We can, of course, posit that the author of this later work had access to some now inaccessible but reliable oral or written historiographical tradition. Given the reliance of the *Chronicle of Greater Poland* on the annalistic tradition of local cathedral chapters, it is also possible that the chronicler based his version of the events from 1248 entirely on the information found in the annals and conjecture. Between information about the imprisonment and release of Tomasz and his sons the *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter* make note of Bolesław the Bald's conflict with his younger brothers, Henryk III the White and Konrad I of Głogów, and Przemysław I's intervention on behalf of the latter. The information about the conditional release of Tomasz Nałęcz and his sons is directly preceded by the entry on Przemysław's successful military campaign, during which he imprisoned Bolesław for scheming to murder Konrad, and a note on the marriage between Konrad and Przemysław's sister that further cemented their alliance.⁷²² The fourteenth-century chronicler, whose narrative followed the structure of the *Annals* very closely, links these two events, writing that it was on the occasion of the wedding celebrations that Tomasz and his sons were let go.⁷²³ It is then possible that the author of the *Chronicle of Greater Poland*, looking for an explanation of the sudden imprisonment of Przemysław's notables, framed all of it as a part of a Przemysław's long struggle with Bolesław the Bald.

The next, equally short mention of the disloyalty of the members of the Greater-Polish political elite comes from 1284 and was noted in *Traska's Annal*. First, it informs the reader that on 28th of September the town of Kalisz burned down. In the very same year, the castle of Kalisz was seized by Sędziwój, whom the annalist identifies as "son of Janko, fraternal nephew of Jarkembold", and handed to Henryk IV Probus. Duke Przemysław gathered a big army to retake the castle but was beset by treachery. Not only did a lot of his men die in the fighting at Kalisz "through the treachery of his own knights (*fraude militum suorum mediante*)", but was also advised by treacherous barons to surrender to Henryk the territory up to the river Ołobok in exchange for recovering Kalisz.⁷²⁴ The entry for next year also contains a short passage linked

⁷²¹ Similar concern, though voiced more cautiously, seemed to be shared by Janusz Bieniak in *Zarębowie i Nałęcz*, 53.

⁷²² RkP, [28], [32], 26-27.

⁷²³ 90 in *Chronica Poloniae maioris*, 95: *In hac eciam solempnitate nupciarum Thomas castellanus Poznaniensis et filii eius a captivitate per manus fideiussorum liberati fuerunt.*

⁷²⁴ *Traska's Annal*, 850: *Eodem anno arsit civitas Kalisiensis in vigilia beati Michaelis. Anno eodem a Sandowoyone capitur castrum Kalisiense, scilicet filio Yanconis, filiolo Achanboldi, quod tradidit duci Wratislaviensi, Hinrico IV, ad quod requirendum dux Primisliius maioris Polonie cum magna multitudine militum advenit, sed fraude militum suorum mediante, circa idem castrum pugnantibus, nobiles milites perdidit, in hoc non*

to the events, which simply states: “In this year Benjamin and Sędziwój were captured.”⁷²⁵ Sędziwój’s actions also found their reflections in two charters issued by Przemysł. On 13th October 1284, the duke granted immunities to the estates of Tomisław of Szamotuły from the Nałęcz clan in reward for his past and present loyal service, with a dating clause that reads *Actum in Kalis, dum castrum captum fuit per comitem Sandivoyum filium Ianconis palatini Poznaniensis*.⁷²⁶ The document from June 26th 1286 mentions that the village Kowale was taken away from a certain S. *propter tradicionem castri Calisiensis* by the verdict of the court held by Mściwoj II and Greater-Polish barons.⁷²⁷

This time, the two men imprisoned by the Greater-Polish Piast belonged to a different, equally powerful local clan, the Zaręba. Just like in the case of Tomasz Nałęcz, the earliest identifiable members of the kin-group in the early 13th century were the brothers Olbracht and Wawrzyniec, who served at the court of Duke Władysław Odonic. The older of the imprisoned men, Benjamin, was the son of Wawrzyniec. He began his career at the court of Bolesław the Pious and was a palatine of Poznań on behalf of Przemysł II since 1274 at the latest. His frequent appearances on the witness lists of documents issued by the duke, in the prominent, first place, speak to the important position he held next to the ruler of Greater Poland.⁷²⁸ The younger of the imprisoned, Sędziwój, was a grandson of Olbracht. His father Jan played a central role at the court of Bolesław I the Pious, who became a godfather of Sędziwój.⁷²⁹ While he served both Bolesław and his nephew Przemysł II as a *subcamerarius*, appearing with this title in the ducal documents from 1282, Sędziwój did not bind himself exclusively to the Greater Polish Piasts. On 18th February 1284, he appears on Przemysł’s diploma as *castellanus* of Ruda (by Greater Poland-Silesian border). He must have held this office on behalf of Henryk IV Probus, to whom Przemysł II handed this borderland territory in 1281, when negotiating his way out of captivity.⁷³⁰ Thus, when taking control over Kalisz Sędziwój, linked to Greater Poland by family connections and possessions, was in the service of the Silesian ruler.⁷³¹

suffecit quin et terram predictis baronibus videlicet traditoribus consulentibus duci Wratislaviensi usque in Oloboch tradidit possidendam, et castrum in eisdem terminis edificavit pro castro Kalisiensi sibi reddito a Hinrico duce Wratislaviensi.

⁷²⁵ Ibidem : *Eodem anno capitur Benyamin et Sandyvoyus.*

⁷²⁶ KDW I.546.

⁷²⁷ KDW I.562

⁷²⁸ Bieniak, *Zarębowie i Nałęcz*, 89–90.

⁷²⁹ KDW I.364. The document, known only from a much later copy, has been judged by Sikora to be spoiled by 14th-century interpolation, but the information about Duke Bolesław being the godfather of Sędziwój was not questioned. See Sikora, “Przywileje rycerskie,” 27–33.

⁷³⁰ KDW I.535; On Ruda being a concession exacted by Henryk IV in the wake of imprisoning Przemysł II, Henryk of Głogów, and Henryk of Legnica during the assembly at Sądowel in 1281 see Grodecki, “Dzieje polityczne,” 289–90; Nowacki, *Przemysł II*: 101–2; Jurek, “Plany koronacyjne Henryka,” 19.

⁷³¹ Kaleta, “Zdrady możnych,” 72–73; Bieniak, *Zarębowie i Nałęcz*, 109.

Just like in the case of the imprisonment of Nałęcz in 1248, the sources' silence about the motives guiding Sędziwój and the treacherous *barones* left historians speculating about its cause. According to some, Sędziwój and his kinsmen felt overlooked by Przemysł II in the distribution of lands and offices, or feared being overlooked by the Piast ruler.⁷³² Others tried to place the conflict over Kalisz in a broader struggle between Henryk IV Probus, who was to incite Greater-Polish opposition, and Przemysł II, motivated by the ambitions of the "unification of the realm".⁷³³

Even though, as pointed out by historians, Sędziwój was in Henryk's service at that time, his capture of the castle seems to be treated not simply as an underhanded tactic of the enemy combatant. While the *Kalisz Annals* mention of Sędziwój's father alone could have been interpreted as a simple attempt at further identifying the culprit, but the additional naming of Jarkembold, castellan and later a long-serving palatine of Kalisz,⁷³⁴ paints a picture of a personal connection. A Connection that Sędziwój abused by capturing Kalisz, which had already been beset by disaster, and handing it to Henryk IV. The documents issued by Przemysł also focus on the unexpected seizure of one of the duke's castles by the Zaręba, rather than the involvement of the dynastic competitor. This betrayal by Sędziwój is quickly compounded by two instances of outright treason. Przemysł, who as a capable ruler reacts by quickly gathering a large army, loses men and land because of the *traditores* among his powerful close advisors. In the surviving version of the entry from *Traska's annal*, the identity of those is anonymous. It is unclear if the information about the imprisonment of Benjamin along with Sędziwój comes from the *Kalisz Annals* – and if so, if it was originally a part of a longer narration that identified the treacherous barons more closely. Setting the details of the reconciliation aside for later, it is worth noting now that Benjamin's imprisonment could not have been long, as he reappears as palatine of Poznań by Przemysł's side in 1286. Even Sędziwój reconciled with Przemysł, since 1291 he held offices again and appeared frequently as the witness in the Greater Polish Piast's charters.⁷³⁵

Thus, the account of the events of 1284 based on the *Kalisz Annal* predominantly centers on the disloyalty of Greater Polish nobles, depicting Przemysł II's entourage as rife with traitors,

⁷³² Pakulski, "Ród Zarembów," 127.

⁷³³ See for example Nowacki, *Przemysł II*, 119–25; Tomasz Jurek wondered if the attack was not an emotional response to the election of archbishop Jan Świnka, whom Henryk saw as the impediment to his ambitious plans, Jurek, "Plany koronacyjne Henryka," 19; Less directly, but similarly pointing towards Henryk IV Kaleta, "Zdrady możnych," 72.

⁷³⁴ Jarkembold held the castellany of Kalisz between 1249–1253. The last diploma in which he appears as the palatine of Gniezno-Kalisz was issued on 6th of January 1284 (KDW I.531). See Pakulski, "Ród Zarembów," 109; Bieniak, *Zarębowie i Nałęcz*, 82.

⁷³⁵ Kaleta, "Zdrady możnych," 71; Bieniak, *Zarębowie i Nałęcz*, 90, 110.

ready to undermine the power of an otherwise capable ruler. Such portrayal aligns with other annalistic entries from *Traska's Annal* attributed to the *Kalisz Annal*. For instance, the account from the year 1283 also evokes a sense of intrigue and conspiracy, insinuating that Przemysł II's first wife, Ludgarda of Mecklenburg, died under unclear (and implicitly suspicious) circumstances.⁷³⁶ Nevertheless, both the *Kalisz Annal* and other sources are silent about any outrightly expressed conflict between Przemysł II and his subjects. On the contrary, the support of the noble elite allowed the Greater-Polish Piast to pursue his broad political ambitions in Pomerania and Lesser Poland.

Assassinating the Piast Monarch - Rogoźno 1296

Przemysł II's ambitions culminated in his royal coronation at Gniezno Cathedral on 26 June 1295.⁷³⁷ Although his attempt to assert control over Lesser Poland following the death of Henryk IV Probus proved unsuccessful, upon leaving Cracow in 1291, Przemysł took with him the old Piast royal insignia, setting in motion his coronation efforts.⁷³⁸ Just a few months after his coronation, on 8 February 1296, Przemysł was murdered while celebrating the last days before the beginning of Lent with his closest entourage in Rogoźno.⁷³⁹

The murder of the recently crowned, still young and ambitious ruler reverberated widely, catching the interest of sources from Poland and the region. Given the importance, real and symbolic, of the 1295 coronation, it is not surprising that the regicide of Przemysł II remains a subject of considerable interest in Polish historiography. It is not my goal to offer a comprehensive overview of either medieval historiography or modern attempts at reconstructing the circumstances of the Piast monarch's death. My focus remains on the narratives created in Poland in the first decades of the fourteenth century (in other words, on

⁷³⁶ *Traska's Annal*, 849: *Anno eodem obiit illustrissima coniunx domini ducis Primislii maioris Polonie, filia Nicolay Kassubite, nomine Lucardis dicta; mortem vero eius nemo potuit indagare, qualiter interiit*; The events in Kalisz and death of Ludgarda linked in Karol Górski, *Śmierć Przemysła II* [Death of Przemysł II] (Poznań: Ostoja, 1929), 12; More cautiously Pakulski, "Ród Zarembów," 127.

⁷³⁷ The details of the coronation and its significance described in: Zbigniew Dalewski, "Przeszłość zrytualizowana: tradycja królewskich koronacji" [The Ritualized Past: The tradition of royal coronations], in *Przeszłość w Kulturze Średniowiecznej Polski*, vol. 2, ed. Halina Manikowska (Warsaw: Neriton, 2018), 34–35.

⁷³⁸ On Przemysł's attempts at seizing Cracow and preparations for the coronation, see for example Nowakowski, *Małopolska elita władzy*, 26–40; Nowacki, *Przemysł II*, 161–91; Bronisław Nowacki, "Zabiegi o zjednoczenie państwa i koronację królewską w latach 1284 i 1285 na tle rywalizacji Przemysła II z Henrykiem IV Prawym" [Efforts for state unification and royal coronation in 1284 and 1285 against the background of the rivalry between Przemysł II and Henryk IV Probus], in *Przemysł II: odnowienie Królestwa Polskiego*, ed. Jadwiga Krzyżaniakowa (Instytut Historii UAM, 1997), 153–60; Tomasz Jurek, "Przygotowania do koronacji Przemysła II" [Preparations for the coronation of Przemysł II], in *Przemysł II: odnowienie Królestwa Polskiego*, ed. Jadwiga Krzyżaniakowa (Instytut Historii UAM, 1997), 167–80.

⁷³⁹ On the date, see Kazimierz Jasiński, "Tragedia rogozińska 1296 r. na tle rywalizacji wielkopolsko-brandenburskiej o Pomorze Gdańskie" [The Rogoźno tragedy of 1296 against the backdrop of the Greater Poland-Brandenburg rivalry over Gdańsk Pomerania], *Zapiski Historyczne* 26, no. 4 (1961): 73.

the relation from *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter* and *Traska's Annal*). Nevertheless, to put these two sources in context, it is helpful to sketch out the other sources and historiography.

The narrative sources can be divided into three groups, each corresponding to the culprits accused of the murder. The first group blames the Margraves of Brandenburg. It includes a contemporary note from the Annals of the Cistercian abbey of Kołbacz (Kolbatz) by Szczecin,⁷⁴⁰ the *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter*⁷⁴¹—which is of greatest relevance for me—and chronicles produced in the middle or second half of the fourteenth century: the Pomeranian *Oliwa Chronicle*,⁷⁴² and the Chronicle of Heinrich of Herford.⁷⁴³ The second group encompasses the sources that blame Przemysł's subjects. Such a version was noted shortly after the events by the *Zbraslav Chronicle*.⁷⁴⁴ Later, in the second half of the fourteenth century, it appeared in the *Chronicle of the Polish Princes*,⁷⁴⁵ and the annalistic notes: a short note from *Traska's Annal*,⁷⁴⁶ a longer version of the *Annals of Szamotulski*,⁷⁴⁷ and in the turn-of-the-fifteenth-century tradition of the Toruń Franciscans.⁷⁴⁸ The third group, made up of late medieval sources, tried to plot the course between the two previous positions, accusing both the external enemy and internal opposition of working together to kill the Piast.⁷⁴⁹

⁷⁴⁰ *Annales Colbazienses*, ed. by Wilhelm Arndt, in MGH SS, vol. 19, (Hannover : Hahn, 1866), 716: *Occisus est Petrus rex Polonie a quodam marchinonum milite dicto Jacob Kassube*.

⁷⁴¹ RkP, [122], 53.

⁷⁴² *Chronica Olivensis*, 315.

⁷⁴³ *Liber de rebus memorabilioribus sive chronicon Henrici de Hervordia*, ed. by August Potthast (Göttingen: Dieterich, 1859), 211: *Quarto decimo anno Rodulfi regnum Polonorum per marchiones de Brandenburg destruitur et desolatur Sane marchiones Brandenburgenses cum Polonis vicinis suis bella pervicacia viribus magnis et frequenter agentes, tandemque regnum Polonorum potenter ingredienti, invalescebant. Regem eorum in regno suo, in domo sua, quin et in lecto suo preoccupantes, interimebant. Regnum totum igne feroque vastantes et ubique desolantes, destruebant. Civitates, oppida, castra, villas et terras sibi propinquo abrapiebant et pro se perpetuo jure belli possidenda tenebant*; K. Jasiński argued that this part of the late-fourteenth-century source relied on the now lost *Cronica principum de Brandenburg* from 1320. See Jasiński, *Tragedia rogozińska*, 72, footnote no. 45.

⁷⁴⁴ 50 in *Cronica Aule Regie*, 100: *Dux Calisiensis paulo post a suis occiditur et rex Wenceslaus in regem totius Polonie, ut patebit inferius, cum solempnitate maxima de consensu gentis Polonice coronatur*.

⁷⁴⁵ *Chronica principum Poloniae*, 541: *De duce Boleslao Kalisensi non invenitur processisse heres, sed de Primsil duce Poznaniensi processit filius eius, eciam nomine Primsil. Hic occisus est a suis, eciam nullo relicto herede*.

⁷⁴⁶ *Traska's Annal*, 853: *6 Idus Februarii rex Primisilius maioris Polonie occiditur a suis militibus, videlicet Polonis turpiter*.

⁷⁴⁷ *Rocznik Małopolski*, 187: [1296] *6 Idus Februarii rex maioris Polonie occiditur a suis militibus de clenodio dicto vulgariter Zaremba prope oppidum Rogosno. Cumque gravissime fuisset quasi letaliter vulneratus, et illi quasi iam mortuum reliquissent, supervenit quidam ex inimicis ipsius requirens ab eo, si adhuc supervivere voluisset. Cui rex voce humili fertur respondisse, se adhuc posse supervivere, si in caloribus servaretur atque mederetur. Fuit enim tempestas hec in vigilia sancte Apollonie virginis. Quo audito lictor, qui superstabat, evaginato pugione ipsum ad terram confodiens penitus tunc exstinxit*.

⁷⁴⁸ *Franciscani Thorunensis Annales Prussici*, ed. by Ernst Strehlke, in *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum*, vol. 3, (Leipzig : Hirzel 1866), 62: *Anno 1296 Primislaus rex Polonie et Pomeranie dux occisus est a militibus suis in Rogosno*.

⁷⁴⁹ *Ioannis Długossi Annales*, lib.VII-VIII, 289; See also *Rocznik świętokrzyski*, 54; *The Fifth Catalogue of the Bishops of Cracow*, ed. by Józef Szymański, in *Katalogi biskupów krakowskich* MPH NS, vol. 10/2 (Warsaw:

The older Polish academic historiography tended to reconcile these differing narratives by endorsing the view that the Margraves of Brandenburg acted in concert with members of the Greater-Polish nobility, particularly from the Zaręba and Nałęcz clans.⁷⁵⁰ It is broadly agreed that the main motive behind the Margraves' plot against Przemysł II was their opposition to Piast advance in Eastern Pomerania, which members of the older, Johannine part of the Ascanian dynasty desired to control themselves.⁷⁵¹ As for the motivation and the role played by the Polish magnates, the answers proved more vague. Karol Górski suggested that the ire of Zaręba and Nałęcz clans was drawn by the cruelty of Przemysł II, blamed for the death of Ludgarda, and the arbitrariness of his internal politics.⁷⁵² Kazimierz Jasiński focused on the grudges that the members of both clans were to hold against their monarch due to the repressions after the events of 1248 and 1284, though the long memory of injustice suffered by Nałęcz men seemed less convincing to him. He also argued that the involvement of the Polish nobles was limited to informing the Margraves about the ruler's itinerary.⁷⁵³ Jan Pakulski eventually found old grievances inadequate to explain the involvement of the closest elite circle of Greater Poland, pointing out to the lack of consequences faced by either clan in the aftermath of the regicide, though he did not rule out the involvement of other Przemysł's subjects.⁷⁵⁴

PWN, 1974) 100-101, in which among the conspirators are not only Margraves, Nałęcz and Zaręba clans, but also Bohemians.

⁷⁵⁰ The author of the first focused study of the 1296 regicide, K. Górski, believed not only in the plotting of Margraves of Brandenburg and Greater Polish magnates, but also in the involvement of Václav II of Bohemia and Henryk of Głogów, Górski, *Śmierć Przemysła II*; Other historians preferred to single out just the Margraves and Greater-Polish nobles, see for example: Baszkiewicz, *Powstanie*, 263–64; Jasiński, "Tragedia rogozińska," 78–88.

⁷⁵¹ So for example Górski, *Śmierć Przemysła II*, 19–21; Władysław Karasiewicz, *Działalność polityczna Andrzeja Zaręby w okresie jednoczenia państwa Polskiego na przełomie XIII/XIV wieku* [The political activity of Andrzej Zaręba during the period of unification of the Polish state at the turn of the 13th and 14th centuries]. Wydział Historii i Nauk Społecznych. Prace Komisji Historycznej, XIX (Poznań: Poznańskie Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk, 1961), 16; Jasiński, "Tragedia rogozińska," 73; Nowacki, *Przemysł II*, 210; More on the context of the Brandenburgian expansion in Edward Rymar, "Próba identyfikacji Jakuba Kaszuby, zabójcy króla Przemysła II, w powiązaniu z ekspansją brandenburską na północne obszary Wielkopolski" [An Attempt to Identify Jakub the Kashubian, assassin of king Przemysł II, in the context of Brandenburg expansion into northern Greater Poland], in *Niemcy - Polska w średniowieczu*, ed. Jerzy Strzelczyk (Poznań: Wydawnictwo UAM, 1986), 203–24; Edward Rymar, "Stosunki Przemysła II z margrabią brandenburską ze starszej linii askańskiej w latach 1279-1296" [Relations of Przemysł II with the Brandenburg margraves of the older Ascanian line in 1279-1296], in *Przemysł II: odnowienie Królestwa Polskiego*, ed. Jadwiga Krzyżaniakowa (Poznań: Instytut Historii UAM, 1997), 123–44; The rapidity of the Brandenburgian seizure of the territories around Santok, Drzeńsk, and Międzyrzecze days after the regicide also recently discussed by Tomasz Jurek, "Brandenburski zabór w Wielkopolsce 1296 r." [Brandenburgian seizure in Greater Poland in 1296], in *Mieszczanie, wasale, zakonnicy*, ed. Błażej Śliwiński, Studia z dziejów średniowiecza 10 (Malbork: Muzeum Zamkowe w Malborku, 2004), 366–68.

⁷⁵² Górski, *Śmierć Przemysła II*, 15–16.

⁷⁵³ Jasiński, "Tragedia rogozińska," 90–100.

⁷⁵⁴ Initially Pakulski saw the involvement of some members of the Zaręba clan as certain, see Pakulski, "Ród Zarembów," 130–32; with less certainty in later work, see Pakulski, *Nałęcz Wielkopolscy w Średniowieczu*, 120–22.

As historians struggled to define more closely the role played by the most prominent of Przemysł's supporters in the events at Rogoźno, some disputed the involvement of the Zaręba and Nałęcz clans altogether. Władysław Karasiewicz underlined the good relations between Zaręba kinsmen and Przemysł II, leading up to his coronation and death, and pointed out that the information that blames the prominent local families appears in late, Lesser-Polish sources. The creation of the tradition explicitly blaming the named Greater-Polish families was, in Karasiewicz's view, a product of the animosities between Greater-Polish and Lesser-Polish elites of the fourteenth-century unified monarchy of Kazimierz the Great, linked with the rebellion of Maciek Borkowic.⁷⁵⁵

A similar argument was made by Janusz Bieniak, who, through source criticism, convincingly questioned the contemporaneity of Lesser-Polish annalistic notes. While Brygida Kürbis suggested that both the version from *Traska's Annal* and *Annals of Szamotulski* were derived from the *Kalisz Annals*,⁷⁵⁶ Bieniak singled out the shorter entry as the original expanded upon in the *Annals of Szamotulski*. The language of the latter would be out of place in a text composed before the late fourteenth or fifteenth century.⁷⁵⁷ Just like Karasiewicz, Bieniak argued that the transformation of the vague "[Przemysł's] own men" into Zaręba and Nałęcz clans reflected the political animosities in fourteenth-century Poland. More precisely, the accusation was aimed at palatine Wincenty of Szamotuły of the Nałęcz clan, married to a Zaręba, whose political rivals—as I explored in the previous subchapter—were not above fabricating rumors about disloyalty.⁷⁵⁸

Setting aside attempts at reconstructing the real version of the events, let us turn our attention towards the Polish sources themselves and ask what do they have to say about treachery in general. The longer of the annalistic notes, contained in *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter*, follows the entry which describes the coronation of Przemysł II in the prior year, stating:

In the year of our Lord 1296, when the same king was celebrating the feast of Shrovetide in the town of Rogoźno, the Germans (*Theutonici*), driven by the zeal of envy because the same king had obtained the royal scepter, namely Margrave Otto the Long, with another Otto, and with Margrave Jan, nephew of the said king, sent more than few armed men to deceitfully seize him. These men, entering the same town very early morning on Ash Wednesday, inflicted serious

⁷⁵⁵ Karasiewicz, *Działalność polityczna*, 28–29.

⁷⁵⁶ Kürbis, *Dziejopisarstwo Wielkopolskie*, 77–80.

⁷⁵⁷ Among the archaisms used in the *Annals of Szamotulski* Bieniak points out the name Zaręba, which takes on the meaning denoting the whole kinship group gradually during the second half of the fourteenth century, as well as clenodium, which gradually takes on the meaning intended in the *Annals* around the fifteenth century. See Bieniak, *Zarębowie i Nałęcz*, 137–40.

⁷⁵⁸ Bieniak, 155–80.

wounds and captured him. But not satisfied with his harsh captivity, and being unable or unwilling to easily take him away to their own land, having inflicted even harsher blows they put him to a cruel death.⁷⁵⁹

The annals identify those responsible for murdering Przemysł II very clearly as the Margraves of Brandenburg, envious of the recently crowned Polish monarch. The armed men they sent to Poland seized the unsuspecting Piast in a clandestine raid and ended up killing Przemysł rather than bringing him into the Margrave's captivity. The information provided by the Greater-Polish source has been picked apart by historians aiming to reconstruct the events at Rogoźno, debating the veracity of almost all the provided information. Envy of the royal title has been seen by some as an unconvincing motive behind such drastic actions,⁷⁶⁰ even though contemporaneous diplomatic sources suggest that the Margraves of Brandenburg did not acknowledge Przemysł's royal title.⁷⁶¹ It has also been pointed out that the annalist most likely confused Otto V the Tall from the Salzwedel branch of the dynasty with his contemporary relative, Otto IV "with the Arrow" from the Stendal line – an uncle of the mentioned "other" Otto (Otto VII) and Jan (John IV), born to Konrad I and Przemysł II's sister Konstancja.⁷⁶² Finally, the actions of the men sent by the Margraves had historians wonder whether the aim of their mission was to capture the Piast or kill him outright.⁷⁶³

When analyzed in their broader context, rather than a collection of "facts of the case", the abovementioned details come together in a deliberately constructed narrative. The motivation of the Margraves appeared to the annalist a natural response to the recent festive coronation of Przemysł, described in some detail just beforehand. Whether rulers of Brandenburg indeed feared that the Piast's new title and ambitions would hinder their political ambitions in the East or took it as a challenge that required a response within the logic of

⁷⁵⁹ RkP, [122], 53: *Item anno Domini Millesimo CC Nonagesimo VI cum idem rex festum Carnisprivii in Rogosno civitate celebraret, Theutonici zelo invidie inducti, quod regale sceptrum idem rex adeptus fuerat, videlicet marchio Otto Longus, cum alio Ottone cum marchione Iohanne nepote dicti regis, miserunt armatos non paucos homines ipsum ad capiendurn furtive. Qui introeuntes eandem civitatem summo mane in die Cinerum, gravissimis vulneribus illatis, ipsum ceperunt. Quibus non suviciens eius tam gravis captivitas, ipsum cum deducere in terram suam commode non valuerunt seu non valerent, gravioribus plagis illatis crudeli morte extinxerunt.*

⁷⁶⁰ Jasiński, "Tragedia rogozińska," 88; Krzysztof Benyskiewicz, "Udział margrabiów brandenburskich w zabójstwie Przemysła II w świetle relacji 'Rocznika kapituły poznańskiej'" [The involvement of the Brandenburg margraves in the murder of Przemysł II in the light of the account of the 'Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter'], *Studia Zachodnie* 7 (2004): 17.

⁷⁶¹ See the consequentially used ducal title in their diplomas analysed by Jurek, "Brandenburski zabór w Wielkopolsce."

⁷⁶² Jasiński, "Tragedia rogozińska," 73–74, 89; Bieniak, *Zarębowie i Nałęcz*, 135; Some, however, defend the veracity of information that both Otto IV "with the Arrow" and Otto V the Tall took part in the plot against Przemysł II, see: Świeżawski, *Przemysł - król Polski*, 181.

⁷⁶³ The kidnapping as the original goal of Przemysł's assailants has been more broadly accepted in literature, see for example Nowacki, *Przemysł II*, 210; Bieniak, *Zarębowie i Nałęcz*, 146 ff.; Differently Benyskiewicz, "Udział margrabiów" 22–23.

agonistic competition, the envy described by the annalist was meant to speak to the glory of Przemysł II's achievement. The Poznań annalist was not the only writer to interpret the actions of the Brandenburg Margraves as driven by a desire for revenge over a perceived or actual insult to the Ascanian dynasty. In seeking to explain the death of Przemysł II, the mid-fourteenth-century author of the *Oliwa Chronicle* claimed that the Piast ruler was killed by the Margrave in retaliation for the death of his wife, Ludgarda, whom Przemysł had allegedly strangled based on unfounded accusations.⁷⁶⁴

Back in the *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter* account, the perfidy of the Margrave's plan is further highlighted by bringing to the reader's attention the familial ties linking the Ascanians and the Greater-Polish monarch. Przemysł was not only, as explicitly mentioned, an uncle of Jan. Through his second marriage with Margaret, a niece of Otto IV the Tall, Przemysł was also tied to the other, Salzwedel branch of the Ascanian dynasty.⁷⁶⁵ This connection was remembered by the annalist and his readers, and further colored the picture painted in the Poznań annal. The demands of the narrative logic dictated also the size of the intruding force. The envy-inspiring monarch could have been attacked only by the overwhelming force of the assassins. The picture of a deceitful plot is completed by the treatment of Przemysł. Kidnapping and imprisonment were regular features of Piast political culture. It was governed by norms, the breaking of which carried a particular scorn in the eyes of contemporaries. The particular cruelty against the prisoner became an object of scorn in the eyes of contemporaries, as we have seen in the case of the invented captivity of Emperor Henryk V or the later example of the degrading imprisonment suffered by the Silesian Henryk V the Fat. The Margraves men are depicted as displaying the most extreme disregard for the norms which ought to govern the feud between ruling rivals. The entire story of envy, deceit, and cruelty comes together to a profoundly negative characterization of the *Theutonici*, the group held responsible for the death of Przemysł.

This anti-German tone is characteristic of this latest part of the *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter*. The group of notes from the year of the coronation of Przemysł II in 1295

⁷⁶⁴ *Chronica Olivensis*, 315: *Qui post hec coronam regni Polonie ab apostolica sede consecutus, uno anno supervixit et captus per satellites Woldemiri marchionis de Brandeburk occisus est in ulcione sancte Lukardis coniugis sue, quam ipse male suspectam habens, fecerat iugulari*; The tradition about Przemysł's mistreatment of Ludgarda, though not always linked with his death, had a long medieval and modern afterlife. See Jacek Wiesiołowski, "Pieśni i podania o Ludgardzie: Z dziejów literatury okolicznościowej" [Songs and legends about Ludgarda: From the history of occasional literature], in *Kultura średniowieczna i staropolska. Studia ofiarowane Aleksandrowi Gieysztorowi w pięćdziesięciolecie pracy naukowej*, ed. Danuta Gawinowa (Warsaw: PWN, 1991), 491–502.

⁷⁶⁵ More on the Ascanian-Piast marriages in: Kazimierz Jasiński, "Uzupełnienia do genealogii Piastów. Dokończenie" [Addenda to the Genealogy of the Piasts. Final Part.], *Studia Źródłoznawcze = Commentationes* 5 (1960): 104–6.

to the death of Henryk III of Głogów in 1309 has been identified by Brygida Kürbis as the continuation of the earlier chapter's annals, undertaken sometime after 1312.⁷⁶⁶ They were written around the time of Greater-Polish elites abandoning their support for the rule of young dukes of Głogów.⁷⁶⁷ Reflecting this context, this part of the annals is characterized by two ideological undercurrents: a strong antipathy towards the perfidious *Theutonici* and the defense of the political agency of Greater-Polish elites. Those pressing political concerns strongly shaped the *Annals*' narrative about the death of Przemysł II, presented as the first in a series of cruel and deceitful German plots against the Poles of Greater Poland. The drive for thematic clarity seems to me also to be a better explanation for the sources' silence about the participation of possible Polish co-conspirators than an editorial intervention of Poznań's bishop, Andrzej Zaręba.⁷⁶⁸ After all, other annalistic entries written during his episcopate did not shy away from presenting the bishop or Greater-Polish elite in conflict with their rulers.

It is possible that the vision presented by the *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter*, guided by a strong ideological agenda, did not resonate with all its readers. These doubts can be justified by the laconic testimony given by another bishop of Poznań, Jan Łodzia, during the Warsaw Trial of 1339. Asked during the proceedings about the history of Pomerania and its connections to the Polish monarchs, Andrzej Zaręba's successor recounted in some detail the turbulent turn of the fourteenth century. His account echoed at many points the perspective expressed in the *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter*, the contents of which, in all likelihood, were known to the bishop of Poznań. Nevertheless, when it came to Przemysł's death, Jan Łodzia simply said that he was "*prodicionaliter interfectus in domo sua*".⁷⁶⁹ The phrasing, which might have been further distorted in the making of the trial's protocol, leaves some ambiguity as to who betrayed Przemysł, murdering him in Rogoźno.⁷⁷⁰

Much less ambiguous, though equally laconic, is the note that survives in *Traska's Annal* and which we can take as drawn from the *Kalisz Annal*. According to the source, on 8 February 1296 "King Przemysł of Greater Poland was shamefully killed by his own knights, namely the [Greater] Poles".⁷⁷¹ Beyond this broad identifier, we do not learn anything about the treacherous subjects of the Piast ruler, save for the condemning judgement of the annalist.

⁷⁶⁶ Kürbis, *Dziejopisarstwo Wielkopolskie*, 81–83.

⁷⁶⁷ More detail in Chapter 4.

⁷⁶⁸ According to some this omission by the source written on behest of bishop Andrzej Zaręba suggests coverup of the actual involvement of his clan in the plot. See Górski, *Śmierć Przemysła II*, 7; Benyskiewicz, "Udział margrabiów," 29.

⁷⁶⁹ Lites I (2).2, 150.

⁷⁷⁰ Bieniak, *Zarębowie i Nałęcz*, 140.

⁷⁷¹ *Traska's Annal*, 853: *6 Idus Februarii rex Primislius maioris Polonie occiditur a suis militibus videlicet Polonis turpiter*

The description of the murder as *turpiter* sets Traska's depiction apart from a more contemporaneous source that also blames Przemysł's own men for his death, the Czech *Chronicon Aulae Regiae*. The information about the death of the Greater-Polish competitor of the chronicler's patron, Václav II, is included in the part of the broader, moralizing narrative. New chaplain of the monarch, Alexius, was sent as an envoy to Rome. There, however, he abused the trust put in him, using royal stipends to curry favor and friendship not to the king's but his own benefit. Most damningly the disloyal envoy *in contemptum proprii domini* secured the royal crown for the "duke of Kalisz", Przemysł II. Once Alexius ran out of funds, he was strangled by his own servant.⁷⁷² The lesson of this clearly constructed morality tale,⁷⁷³ which warns against fraudulent subjects and calls for loyal service, is delivered in a rhyme.⁷⁷⁴ The chronicler describes how Przemysł, having obtained the papal confirmation in such an underhanded way, crowned himself a king of all Poland. Václav contested Przemysł's rights to "claim for himself Polish crown, since ancient times held in Cracow", appealing to the Roman curia even though, as the chronicler points out, he could have easily pursued his just cause in military action. These efforts turned out to be unnecessary, as Przemysł "shortly after was killed by his own men, and King Václav was crowned as king of all Poland [...]".⁷⁷⁵ It is not difficult to see in the fate of Piast king, *omnibus ingratus*, a parallel with the fate of Alexius who perfidiously secured the crown for the Greater-Polish ruler. Ideological demands played as important a role in shaping the Zbraslav chronicler's depiction of Przemysł II's death as the

⁷⁷² 49 in *Chronica Aule Regie*, 97-99.

⁷⁷³ The veracity of the narrative about the mission of the unknown from other sources Alexius has long been a subject of debate in Polish and Czech historiography alike. The story from the *Zbraslav Chronicle* shares many similarities with the Styrian Rhymed Chronicle's account of the envoy sent to Rome by Henryk IV Probus. The duke of Wrocław wanted to lift the excommunication and inquire for the royal crown, but his disloyal representative squandered the gold. Trying to avoid the consequences, the envoy fled to Venice and convinced his brother, the duke's medic, to poison Henryk IV, See *Ottokars Österreichische Reimchronik. Erster Halbband*, eds. by Franz Lichtenstein and Joseph Seemüller, MGH Scriptores, vol. V/1 (Hamburg: Hahn, 1890); Josef Šusta, first to point out this similarity, saw in the literary narrative about Henryk IV an echo of Alexius's actions, see Josef Šusta, "Václav II. a koruna polská" [Wenceslas II and the Polish crown], *Český časopis historický* 21, no. 3 (1915): 315-18; following him Barciak, *Czechy a země południowej Polski*, 118; Tomasz Jurek argued that the similarities between both stories are superficial enough not to completely question the veracity of either account, Jurek, "Przygotowania do koronacji," 172; This argument, however, does not account for the important detail in Alexios's story – his death *in medio canalium*, which suggests that he, just like the unnamed envoy of Henryk IV, fled to Venice after running out of money. Without definitively resolving the question that was central to the discussion (that is veracity of the claims regarding the efforts undertaken by Przemysł II and Václav II to obtain the royal crown in Rome), I am inclined to align with those interpretations that emphasize the constructed, moralizing character of the story about Alexius, like Jarosław Nikodem, "Kontrowersje wokół przygotowań do koronacji Przemysława II" [Controversies over preparations for the coronation of Przemysław II], *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 112, no. 3 (2005): 127-30; Jan, *Václav II*, 193-94.

⁷⁷⁴ 49 in *Chronica Aule Regie*, 98: *Sic fraudulentus cecidit mucrone peremptus / Et male finivit, qui defraudare cupivit / Regem devotum. Fraudes fuge, reddere debes) votum, / Si servire velis dominis, estoque fidelis, / Ne mala te tangat passio, ne te mater tua plangat, / Ne de mote tua monachi dicant tibi huha.*

⁷⁷⁵ 50 in *Chronica Aule Regie*, 100: *Dux Calisiensis paulo post a suis occiditur et rex Wenceslaus in regem tocius Polonie, ut patebit inferius, cum sollempnitate maxima de consensu gentis Polonice coronatur.*

information about the recent events. Blaming his own subject for Piast's death also aligned with the chronicler's vision of Greater Poland as a place of lawlessness and treachery, where even during his coronation Václav had to guard himself against plots of some evildoers.⁷⁷⁶

Returning to the annalistic note surviving in *Traska's Annal*, one can wonder if its author would not agree with Zbrasław's chronicler on the dangerous character of Greater-Polish politics. Assuming that the entry has been the last of the notes that found their way to some version of *Annales Polonorum deperditi* from the *Kalisz Annal*, we can place it in the context of other notes that can be attributed to this annalistic tradition. As such, the shameful murder of their recently crowned monarch would be just the last of the notes that are critical of the Greater-Polish elites – the abovementioned information about the taking of Kalisz by Sędziwój Zaręba in 1284 and the suspicious death of Ludgarda. The brevity of the Greater-Polish entries surviving in *Traska's Annal* cautions against overly definitive interpretations. Nevertheless, there are grounds to suggest that the author of the *Kalisz Annal* adopted a critical perspective on the influence of powerful nobles in Greater-Polish affairs, differing from the perspective of the non-dynastic political elites expressed in the early-fourteenth-century *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter*.

3.4.3.1 Facing Rebellion in Lesser Poland

As the Greater-Polish Piasts were dealing with the instances of individual disloyalty among members of the powerful non-dynastic elites, the rulers of Lesser Poland faced what sources described as more organized opposition. Much like Leszek the White in the early decades of the thirteenth century, his successors—Bolesław V the Chaste and Leszek the Black—faced attempts by the Lesser-Polish nobility to depose them in favor of installing an alternative Piast ruler on the Cracow throne.

Rebellion against Bolesław V the Chaste

The first, smaller rebellion took place in 1273. In the only annalistic note to describe it, *Traska's Annal* notes, after describing the terrible raid of Lithuanians that in that year

certain knights from Cracow went towards Duke Władysław of Opole with all their force, following the counsel of Bishop Paweł of Cracow. But Bolesław, having sent an army, intercepted them in the field near Bogucin, and in the grand battle more than many [men] fell on both sides.⁷⁷⁷

⁷⁷⁶ 67 in *Chronica Aule Regie*, 133: *Dictum namque tunc erat regi, quod pararent occultas insidias quidam malefici, qui erant pacis et patrie publici inimici.*

⁷⁷⁷ *Traska's Annal*, 842: *Ipsa anno quidam milites Cracovienses processerant ad ducem Opoliensem Wladyslauum cum tota potencia sua de consilio episcopi Pauli Cracovie. Sed Bolezlaus misso exercitu comprehendit eos in campo circa Boguczyn, et comisso prelio forti ceciderunt multi ex utraque parte quam plures.*

As the contemporary note did not answer the most important question of why the Lesser-Polish nobles would turn against Bolesław V the Chaste, the motives behind the rebellion were left for historians to imagine. First to try was Jan Długosz, according to whom it was childless Bolesław's decision to make Leszek the Black his successor in Cracow. Relying on the entry from *Traska's Annal* and the depiction of Bolesław from the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*, the late medieval author blamed the Lesser-Polish Piast for not being good in exercising justice, letting himself being easily bribed and excessively indulging in his passion for hunting, earning the ire of all of his subjects.⁷⁷⁸ Modern historians followed the leads set by Długosz, though differing in their choice of emphasized motives. The explanations that looked for the source of grievances of the Lesser-Polish opposition in a context of Bolesław's broader Polish or Central European politics gave way more recently to those that looked at internal policies of the Cracow ruler as the source of tension with some of his subjects.⁷⁷⁹

Just as mysterious are the identities of the knights who went to Władysław of Opole. Like in the case of the Lesser-Polish rebellions contesting the rule of Leszek the White in 1210 and 1225, historians tried to identify the participants either through looking at the changes in the office-holders or by suspecting the Lesser-Polish nobles who had a connection, through lands or positions held, with Władysław of Opole.⁷⁸⁰ Unlike the conflict over Kalisz from 1282 or the future Lesser-Polish rebellion from 1285, the aftermath of 1273 rebellion did not leave a

⁷⁷⁸ *Ioannis Dlugossi Annales*, lib.VII-VIII, 183: *Extabant et aliae magis principales magisque urgentes et verifice seditionum causae: calumniarum enim virus, Boleslao Pudico duce et dissimulante et tollerante, per omnia suorum principatuum loca adeo diffundebatur grassabaturque, ut plures numero militares viri simplices et iusti per calumniarum astus et dolos iudiciis damnati et poenis innocenter addicti aut suis exuerentur patrimoniis aut iudiciales transgressionibus, quas culpas vocitamus, tam duci et iudicibus quam actoribus solvere coacti, gravissimis dispendiis subiacerent. Querulantium insuper et se super suis offensis et iniuriis adeuntium parum iustus parumque finalis decisor, munerumque et largitionum sectator, modico accepto munere facile in partem utramque, cum unius tamen laesione et praeiudicio, praeceps ferebatur. His accedebat, quod canum nimius et immoderatus amator et fotor, venationum quoque excessivus et intempestivus tractator, tam ecclesiasticis quam secularibus crebra irrogans et ingeminans gravamina, universis suis subditis, qui pro ea tempestate ad tractandum et prosequendum ducales venationes, ad nutriendum quoque ducales canes erant obnoxii, onerosus et importabilis censebatur.*

⁷⁷⁹ The older historiography did not question Długosz's account about the opposition against Leszek the Black as Bolesław's chosen heir, further placing the rebellion as a proxy conflict in a struggle for the Babenberg inheritance. See for example Oskar Halecki, "Powołanie księcia Władysława Opolskiego na tron krakowski w r. 1273" [The appointment of Duke Władysław of Opole to the Cracow throne in the year 1273], *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 27, nos. 3–4 (1913): 257–62; Łowmiański, *Początki Polski*, vol. 6, 202–4; more recently Agnieszka Teterycz-Puzio, "Zamachy stanu w Małopolsce okresu rozbitcia dzielnicowego" [Coups d'état in Lesser Poland of the feudal fragmentation period], in *Zamach stanu w dawnych społecznościach*, ed. Arkadiusz Sotłysiak (Warsaw: Ośrodek Badań nad Tradycją Antyczną. Uniwersytet Warszawski, 2004), 354; Paweł Żmudzki rejected the idea that Leszek's candidacy sparked the rebellion, linking the opposition not only to the Bolesław V's support for the anti-Bohemian coalition on foreign stage, but also Piast's assertive exercise of ducal economic prerogatives, see Żmudzki, *Studium podzielonego Królestwa*, 233–35; The opposition to internal politics of Bolesław, mostly the attempt at monopolizing salt regale, seen as the main reason by Maciaszek, *Bolesław V Wstydlivy*, 209–16.

⁷⁸⁰ So already Halecki, "Powołanie księcia Władysława Opolskiego," 220–22; More recently, summarising older historiography Maciaszek, *Bolesław V Wstydlivy*, 209–29.

direct trace in the diplomatic sources. A few of the diplomas issued by Bolesław shortly after the conflict reward his followers for constant and loyal service, but do not hint that behind the frequently used chancery formula hides a reference to the most recent actions.⁷⁸¹ In 1278 Chancellor Prokop, the future bishop of Cracow, received from Bolesław the village of Czystebrzegi, which certain knights possessed until they were disinherited from it due to the “magnitude of their transgressions” (*magnitudine excessuum exigente*). The unnamed knights might have been the participants of the rebellion, though in that case, one should note the understated way in which their disloyalty was described.⁷⁸²

Shifting focus from these hypothetical reconstructions to the narrative provided by Traska, we can see that the annalist was interested in only one named participant of the rebellion, Paweł of Przemanków. The bishop of Cracow (1266-99) pursued his own political agendas, quickly developing a bad reputation in medieval historiography.⁷⁸³ The *Annals of the Cracow Cathedral Chapter* make a note under 1271 about the *discordia* between the bishop and the ducal couple, resolved by the mediation of the Chapter’s canons.⁷⁸⁴ In the aftermath of the Lithuanian raid and the fratricidal conflict, the annalist notes that Paweł was visited by a voice that told him that it would have been better if he had never been born. Another voice admonished the bishop to continue his course of action, while yet another prophesied that he will die in the seventh year. These conversations with disembodied messengers, surely of heavenly and hellish origins, and the bishop’s promise to amend his way of life, were, according to the analysts, overheard by many witnesses from among the Cracow Dominicans.⁷⁸⁵ As we can see, advising the rebels was just one of the wicked acts of Cracow’s bishop, who was also

⁷⁸¹ The diplomas were issued for: miles Świętosław (1274) KDM II.628; lords of Trzebol (uncertain, ca. 1274-1278) CDP I.59; comes Mikołaj KDM I.88; Given the formulaic character of the *fidelia servitia* noted in the charters, I am more cautious than Karolina Maciaszek, who counts the recipients of these diplomas among those who remained loyal to Bolesław V in 1273. See Maciaszek, *Bolesław V Wstydlivy*, 221–22.

⁷⁸² KDM I.94: *villam Czystebrzegi, quam prius quidam milites possederant et dudum sunt exhereditati suorum magnitudine excessuum exigente, quam etiam nostri homines venatores per concessionem pro tempore tenuerint [...]*; Maciaszek, convinced that the anonymous knights were rebels, identifies them with the members of the Gryf clan, holders of the landed estates nearby, Maciaszek, *Bolesław V Wstydlivy*, 227.

⁷⁸³ Jan Gawron, “Czarna legenda biskupa krakowskiego Pawła z Przemankowa” [The Dark Legend of Paweł of Przemanków, the Bishop of Cracow], *Annales Universitatis Mariae Curie-Skłodowska, sectio F – Historia* 71 (2016): 25–64.

⁷⁸⁴ RkK, [251], 101.

⁷⁸⁵ Traska’s *Annal*, 842: *Venit vox ad Paulum episcopum Cracoviensem dicens: Ve tibi, episcopo Paule, melius tibi fuisset, si natus non fuisses. Hanc vocem audierunt bene 70 viri. Imponebatur enim eidem, quod ipso procurante fuisset facta strages supradicta in Lublin. Tandem post aliquantulum tempus venit vox dicens ei: Non timeas, Paule, fac quicquid voveris, quia ego tecum sum. Hanc audierunt multi fratres Predicatorum, in quorum domo eo tempore morabatur ante Cracoviam. Post aliquantulum vero tempus eodem anno predicto episcopo solo existente in cubiculo suo, venit vox de aëre dicens: Non timeas, Paule, fac quod vis, quia septimo anno morieris. Nec distinxit utrum septimo anno episcopatus sui vel septimo anno ab eo tempore, quo hec vox ad ipsum facta est. Ad quam vocem respondit episcopus: Bene, inquit, quia usque ad septimum annum potero vitam meam emendare.*

accused of aiding pagan raiders.⁷⁸⁶ The information about the yet unfulfilled prophecy about the seventh year of the bishop's pontificate suggests that the accusations were written down in 1273 or 1274, perhaps in the very *milieu* of the Cracow Dominicans who were to hear the voices.⁷⁸⁷ Besides this direct intervention of the supernatural forces fighting for the bishop's conscience, the rebellion also had one other consequence. Later that year Duke of Cracow and his allies, Bolesław the Pious and Konrad II of Mazovia, were to invade the duchy of Opole, raising and plundering a good part of it but losing many men in their campaign.⁷⁸⁸

Unlike the bishops imagined by Vincentius of Cracow and Vincentius of Kiełcza, the Cracow intellectuals of the first half of the thirteenth century, Paweł of Przemanków from the pages of *Traska's Annal* does not limit himself to admonishing the Piast rulers on behalf of his flock. Instead, bishop Paweł joins, together with the fictional bishop of Wrocław Magnus from the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*, the ranks of church hierarchs whose political interventions are interpreted as instigating disloyalty among Piast subjects. The rebellion of 1273 left little mark in other sources, were not mentioned in Bolesław's diplomas, and created no obvious personal shift among the holders of the highest Lesser-Polish offices. Nevertheless, it proved a useful building block for those interested in creating a black legend of bishop Paweł, who now could be blamed not only for the pagan raids, but also the bloody civil discord ending in the battle at Bogucin.

Rebellion against Leszek the Black

While Długosz's suggestion that the rebellion of 1273 was dictated, in part, by the opposition of some of the Lesser-Polish nobles to the choice of Leszek the Black as Bolesław V's heir, it is easy to see what might have led the Late-medieval historians to this conclusion. The Cuyavian Piast, well known to the local elite, was received without controversy on Cracow's throne after the death of the last member of the local branch of the dynasty on 10th December 1279, but his rule in Lesser Poland was filled with conflict.⁷⁸⁹ Already in 1280,

⁷⁸⁶ This accusation was also further expanded upon by Jan Długosz, though the Late Medieval historians had bishop Paweł conspiring with Lithuanians on the occasion of their 1283 raid. See *Ioannis Dlugossi Annales*, lib.VII-VIII, 224-25.

⁷⁸⁷ This provenance suggested recently by Żmudzki, *Dux fabulosus*, 229; in a revision of his earlier position, which saw the accusation emerging later, during the conflict between the bishop and Leszek the Black, Żmudzki, *Studium podzielonego Królestwa*, 325.

⁷⁸⁸ *Traska's Annal*, 842: *Bolezlaus dux Cracovie et Sandomirie, Boleszlaus dux Polonie, Conradus dux Mazovie, Lestco dux Syradie, intrantes terram Wladyslay ducis Opoliensis, devastaverunt eam totaliter spoliantes et incendio subicientes usque in Opol et in Cosle et usque in Odram, et multos homines amiserunt ibidem.*

⁷⁸⁹ On the transition of power in the wake of Bolesław's death see Żmudzki, *Studium podzielonego Królestwa*, 265-67.

Leszek involved himself in a dispute with the widow of his predecessor, St. Cunegunda, over the control of the area around Sącz in southern Lesser Poland, which in the years prior had become almost an independent territorial lordship controlled by an Árpáadian duchess.⁷⁹⁰ The conflict drew in bishop Paweł of Przemanków, Cunegunde's ally, sparking the enmity that led to the bishop's temporary imprisonment in 1283.⁷⁹¹ Most consequential, however, was a failed attempt by the Lesser-Polish nobility to depose Leszek the Black and place Konrad II of Czersk, Leszek's Mazovian relative, on Cracow's throne.

Naturally, the rebellion of the Lesser Polish elites left its greatest impression in the local sources. The complicated textual tradition of the local annals is reflected in a fragmented, overlapping way in which events are described. Thus, for example, *Traska's Annal* contains four separate entries describing the struggle between Leszek the Black and the opposition of noblemen who would rather see Konrad II's rule. The first mention of the rebellion against Leszek can be found not under the year 1285, but 1282. According to the *Annal*:

In that year, palatine Janusz and the knights of Sandomierz opposed the aforementioned Duke Leszek and gave away the castles of Sandomierz and Radom to Konrad, ruler of Mazovia; but said Leszek drove out Konrad from the [said-MM.] land and he possessed the aforesaid castles and the whole land in peace.⁷⁹²

Under the year 1285 there are two separate notes on the rebellion. The shorter one simply mentions the victory of Duke Leszek over his own knights and is considered a shortened version of the longer entry placed under the same year.⁷⁹³ This third, most detailed description goes as follows:

In that year, the most pious Duke Leszek of Cracow, Sandomierz, and Sieradz gloriously triumphed over his own knights and Duke Conrad of Mazovia. For those knights, namely of Kraków, had, to the detriment (*preiudicium*) of Duke Leszko, chosen Duke Conrad as their lord and heir, having scorned the holy man. And since God does not forsake the righteous, nor do their children beg for

⁷⁹⁰ The dominion was handed by Bolesław V the Chaste to his wife in 1257, securing the post-marital future of the chaste duchess in place of already exhausted dowry, see KDM II.452; The creation of Cunegunde's lordship and the conflict between her and bishop Paweł on the one hand, and Leszek the Black on the other, has a numerous bibliography. The English-language overview of the conflict has been recently provided in Bartos, "Diplomacy and Arms," 18–25; For the recent Polish contributions to the discussion, referring also to the older historiography, see: Maciaszek, *Bolesław V Wstydlivy*, 283–92.

⁷⁹¹ The near contemporary sources on the imprisonment of the bishop see: *Traska's Annal*, 849; In addition to the literature from the footnote above, the particular attention to the sources describing Paweł's imprisonment and their role in shaping medieval opinion about the bishop and the duke paid more recently in Żmudzki, *Dux fabulosus*, 209–34; Gawron, "Czarna legenda."

⁷⁹² *Traska's Annal*, 848: *Anno eodem Ianussius palatinus et milites Sandomirienses opposuerunt se predicto duci Lestkoni et castrum Sandomiriense et castrum de Radom tradiderunt duci Conrado, principi Mazowie; sed prefatus Lestko expulit Conradum de terra, et predicta castra et totam terram in pace possedit.*

⁷⁹³ *Traska's Annal*, 850: *Eodem anno dux Lestko piissimus de suis militibus triumphavit in die sancti Stephani protomartiris*

bread, Duke Leszek, seeing the malice (*malicia*) of his barons, took refuge in Hungarian help, who immediately came to his aid. Not only did the Christian Hungarians sympathize with the cause of the pious and illustrious duke, but even the pagan Cumans felt for him most deeply, and without delay both groups, together with the said duke, formed battle lines against the knights of Cracow and Duke Conrad. Wonderful to relate, a battle took place, and with God's help, Duke Leszek, with a few of his loyal men from Cracow and scarcely six hundred Hungarians and Cumans, had made Duke Conrad flee, with his multitude of men killed and captured; and thus he returned in glory to the castle of Cracow, which alone of all the castles in the land of Cracow had been faithfully held for him by Cracow's citizens, while the lady duchess, that is Gryfina, was residing there. For this loyalty, in the same year, Duke Leszek fortified the city of Cracow with very strong palisades and moats, despite the resistance of the knights, and granted great liberties to the said citizens.⁷⁹⁴

The final entry, noted under 1286, shifted its perspective towards invading Konrad, noting that the Mazovian Piast and knights from Cracow and Sandomierz wanted to expel Leszek and burned the city of Cracow, but were defeated by Leszek the Black with the help of the Hungarian king.⁷⁹⁵

Before proceeding with the analysis of the accounts from *Traska's Annal* and other thirteenth- and fourteenth-century sources, I want to pause here to address one important question already arising – how many separate rebellions did Leszek the Black face in the 1280s? No other Piast-era source mentions multiple rebellions in Sandomierz and Cracow, but Jan Długosz presents the 1282 and 1285 rebellions as two separate events, as usual, expanding upon the narrative found in the *Traska's Annal*.⁷⁹⁶ Thus, while the information in *Traska's Annal* about Konrad and the Lesser-Polish nobles burning Cracow in 1286 has rightfully been considered as referring to the same events as the one described under 1285, modern historiography was divided on the question of the events of 1282. In the older historiography, the rebellion of palatine Janusz and the *milites* of Sandomierz was taken for another in the series

⁷⁹⁴ Traska's Annal 850-51: *Eodem anno dux Lestko piissimus Cracoviensis, Sandomieriensis et Syradiensis, de suis militibus et duce Conrado Mazoviensi gloriose triumphavit. Quia dicti milites videlicet Cracovienses ducem Conradum in preiudicium ducis Lestkonis sibi elegerant in dominum et heredem, sancto viro contempto. Et quia Deus non derelinquit iustum nec semen eius querens panem, dux Lestco videns maliciam suorum baronum, confugit ad auxilium Ungarorum, qui statim ei affuerunt in presidium. Non tamen Ungari christiani causam ducis pii et incliti condolentes sed et pagani Comani eius vicem fortissime condolerunt, et extemplo cum dicto duce utrique contra milites Cracovienses et ducem Conradum acies ordinauerunt. Mirabile dictu, fit congressus, Deo iuvante, dux Lestko cum paucis suis Cracoviensibus fidelibus et Ungaris Comanisque vix sexcentis ducem Conradum cum magna multitudine hominum fugavit, mactavit et captivavit, et sic cum gloria ad Cracoviense castrum remeavit, quod solum sibi per cives Cracovienses de omnibus castris terre Cracoviensis fuit fideliter reservatum, domina ducissa in eodem castro, videlicet Gryphina, residente. Pro qua fidelitate dux Lestco predictis civibus civitatem Cracoviensem fortissimos plancis et fossatis, renitentibus militibus, eodem anno munivit et magnas contulit libertates.*

⁷⁹⁵ Ibidem: *Dux Mazovie Conradus cum militibus Cracovie et Sandomirie conantur eicere Lestconem et civitatem conburunt, sed cum auxilio regis Ungarie vincuntur.*

⁷⁹⁶ Ioannis Długossi Annales, lib. VII-VIII, 220, 234-237.

of Leszek's confrontations with the Lesser-Polish opposition,⁷⁹⁷ or a reaction to the Cuyavian Piast's failure to protect the north-eastern parts of his new realm against the Lithuanian raids.⁷⁹⁸ Even then, some suggested that the political crisis in 1282 was quickly resolved, explaining thusly the silence of other sources and the complete lack of consequences for Palatine Janusz.⁷⁹⁹ One has to admit that, especially in comparison with the descriptions of fratricidal conflicts noted in *Traska's Annal* under 1273 and 1285, the information on the rebellion of the elites in Sandomierz elites is presented in a much more muted language. Janusz and the nobles merely *opposuerunt* Leszek, and the duke was able to easily push Konrad II (and only him) out and recover the land, which he then held peacefully. The fate of the leader of the supposed rebellion, who not only did not lose his office but was given in 1284 even more prestigious castellany of Cracow, had led other historians to question the veracity of *Traska's* account.⁸⁰⁰

An additional argument based on the source criticism has been recently proposed by Paweł Żmudzki. Highlighting that one note mentions only the participation of *milites* from Sandomierz, whilst the other of *milites* from Cracow, Żmudzki suggested that the original information about the 1285 rebellion was divided, along the geographical lines, into two notes.⁸⁰¹ This editorial intervention allowed the annalist to move the information about the involvement of Palatine Janusz and the knights from Sandomierz under 1282.⁸⁰² The need to obfuscate the participation of Janusz in the rebellion of 1285 would be a result of the dynamically changing political circumstances in turn-of-the-fourteenth-century Cracow. While we do not know the fate of Palatine Janusz, we know that his kinsmen from the Topór clan, Otto and Żegota, exiled after 1285 returned to Cracow as early as 1289 and were staunch supporters of Władysław the Short in his first attempts at taking control of Lesser Poland.⁸⁰³ The reintegration of former rebels into the Lesser-Polish political elite and the rise of the town's patriciate in the early 1300s created a complex political landscape. In this context,

⁷⁹⁷ Halecki, "Powołanie księcia Władysława Opolskiego," 246–52; Baszkiewicz, *Powstanie*, 249; Nowacki, *Przemysł II*, 126.

⁷⁹⁸ Thus Stefan Krakowski, "Obrona pogranicza wschodniego Małopolski za Leszka Czarnego" [Defence of the eastern borderlands of Lesser Poland under Leszek the Black], *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego*, Nauki Humanistyczno-Społeczne, vol. 15 (1960): 110–12.

⁷⁹⁹ Piotr K. Wojciechowski, "Ugrupowania polityczne w ziemiach krakowskiej i sandomierskiej w latach 1280–1286" [Political factions in the lands of Kraków and Sandomierz between 1280 and 1286], *Przegląd Historyczny* 70, no. 1 (1979): 59.

⁸⁰⁰ Władysław Karasiewicz, "Paweł z Przemankowa, biskup krakowski 1266–1292" [Paweł of Przemanków, bishop of Cracow 1266–1292], *Nasza Przyszłość* 9 (June 1959): 205; Łowmiański, *Początki Polski*, vol. 6, 204; Żmudzki, *Studium podzielonego Królestwa*, 401–3; Teterycz-Puzio, "Zamachy stanu w Małopolsce," 355.

⁸⁰¹ The observation about the geographical consistency of 1282 and longer 1285 entries in *Traska's Annal* was initially made in Drelicharz, *Annalistyka małopolska XIII–XV wieku*, 381–82.

⁸⁰² Żmudzki, *Dux fabulosus*, 166–67.

⁸⁰³ Nowakowski, *Małopolska elita władzy*, 18, 20, 41; Kurtyka, "Elita małopolska," 37–39.

distinguishing between the heroic defense of loyal burghers and the rebellion led by Palatine Janusz became politically relevant for all parties involved.⁸⁰⁴

Agreeing with Paweł Żmudzki, we must ask why exactly the extracted information about the disloyalty of palatine Janusz and other nobles from Sandomierz would be moved backward in time and inserted, by the editing annalist, under the year 1282. Can the context in which the brief account was placed tell us more about the goal that the annalist wanted to accomplish? The information about the rebellion in Sandomierz is placed between the information about Duke Leszek's victory over the Yotvingians, whose raiding party devastated Lublin, and a longer description of the similar triumph over the Lithuanians.⁸⁰⁵ On the occasion of the latter, stylized after campaigns of Judas from the First Book of the Maccabees as a great victory of the capable ruler,⁸⁰⁶ palatine of Sandomierz Janusz and palatine of Cracow Żegota make a surprising appearance. As Leszek and his smaller force caught up with the Lithuanians on their way back from the looting raid, the Piast ruler divided his army, entrusting the two strong flanks to his palatines. It were those two wings led by, if the reader is to follow Traska's account, a leader of a recent rebellion and his kinsman that, with God's help, enveloped and crashed the Lithuanian force.⁸⁰⁷ The contrast created by the information about Janusz's rebellion and the following information about the important role played by it would-be leader is what led many researchers to question the veracity of the information about the 1282 rebellion in Sandomierz.

While not disregarding the information found in the earlier tradition, the annalist responsible for the surviving shape of the 1282 note from *Traska's Annal* wanted to suggest that while Janusz briefly opposed Duke Leszek, they nevertheless quickly reconciled. The campaign in pursuit of the Lithuanian raiders gives an opportunity to present Janusz one more time as once more a good and reliable subject of the Piast ruler, doing what loyal subjects do – performing acts of military prowess on behalf of his Duke. The image evoked here is not dissimilar to the story about Wincent of Szamotuły recorded at the royal court in 1330s, and also folded into *Traska's Annal*. Just like in the case of the Greater-Polish palatine, here too, the questionable loyalty of the powerful subject of the Piast ruler is reaffirmed to the reader by the

⁸⁰⁴ Żmudzki, *Dux fabulosus*, 189–91.

⁸⁰⁵ *Traska's Annal*, 848.

⁸⁰⁶ This episode has been argued by Paweł Żmudzki to belong to *Gesta Lestconis Żmudzki, Dux fabulosus*, 148–63.

⁸⁰⁷ *Traska's Annal*, 848–49: *Dux vero Dei adiutorio confisus taliter affatur suos commilitones; Melius est nos mori pro Christi nomine et raptivis gloriose, quam videre mala gentis nostre Hiis prolatis exercitum duabus alis cinxerunt, videlicet Segothoni tunc palatino Cracoviensi et lanussio palatino Sandomiriensi existentibus has predictas a duce alas tradite fuerunt, quibus paganismum Deo opitulante vallaverunt et devicerunt.*

description of his military deeds. The neutral language used to describe the opposition to Leszek's rule, especially when compared with the longer description of the events from 1285, leaves little doubt that some effort was put by the annalist who placed the information about the Sandomierz rebellion under 1282 to minimize Janusz's disloyalty.

The reserved language used to describe is especially visible in comparison with the longest of Traska's accounts, which leaves no doubt in the reader's mind that the rightful ruler gloriously triumphed over rebellious subjects.⁸⁰⁸ The motives behind the decision taken by the anonymous *milites Cracovienses* remain unknown, but it is judged as *preiudicium* against Leszek. The *malicia* of Cracow's barons was so great, that not only Hungarians, but even pagan Cumans felt deeply about the disloyalty shown to the Piast ruler.⁸⁰⁹ While only a few Cracow nobles stand by Leszek and take part along with the Hungarian allies in the battle against the rebels, steadfast loyalty is demonstrated by the burghers of Cracow, who resist the rebels even in the absence of their ruler. Thus, the narrative concludes with the *cives* rewarded for their steadfast support with the new fortifications and liberties for the city. While the annalistic entry does not mention any repercussions falling on the rebels explicitly, the noted *renitentia militibus* suggests that rewarding loyal townspeople of Cracow was at the same time envisioned as a gesture of punishment for the nobles, whose lack of consensus was ostentatiously ignored.

The same information about rewarded loyalty of Cracow's burghers and the unhappy reaction of the *milites* can be found in the account of the rebellion from Dzierzwa's Chronicle. Relying on the tradition from *Annales Polonorum deperditi*, similar to the one reflected in Traska's note from 1286, the Franciscan chronicler presented the rebellion of Lesser-Polish elites against Leszek as the most notable event of Leszek the Black's reign after the victories over the pagans. Just like in Traska's Annal, Dzierzwa does not name the leader or present reasons for which Lesser-Polish *milites* decided to hand over lands of Cracow and Sandomierz to Konrad II. The mention of the victory of Leszek and his small force of Hungarians against the odds is the only hint at partisanship in the otherwise neutral description of events. Nevertheless, when it comes to the right to fortify the city granted by Leszek to the loyal Cracow under the protest of the *milites*, the Franciscan chronicler does not hide his judgement, saying that from then on "Poles lost almost all their power and glory."⁸¹⁰

⁸⁰⁸ Kürbis, *Dziejopisarstwo Wielkopolskie*, 263–65; Żmudzki, *Dux fabulosus*, 166.

⁸⁰⁹ Żmudzki, *Dux fabulosus*, 166.

⁸¹⁰ Dzierzwa's Chronicle, 84: *Anno denique Dominice Incarnacionis MCCLXXX milites ducem Conradum Mazoviensem in terram Cracovie et Sandomirie adducunt, cui dux Lestko cum paucis Ungaris restitit et fugavit. Et quia Theutonici, scilicet cives Cracovienses, tantummodo fideles fuerunt et castrum conservaverunt, ideo dicitur Theutonicis contra voluntatem militum civitatem Cracoviensem munire permisit et sic deinceps Poloni quasi totum posse suum et gloriam perdiderunt.*

The Lesser-Polish rebellion of 1285 is also the chronologically last event noted in the Polish part of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*. The account of the rebellion is as laconic as Dzierzwa's. The Cistercian chronicler reports that the anonymous conspiracy of traitors (*conspiratio infidelium*) drove Leszek out of Cracow in favor of Konrad II but was shortly defeated in a battle. The Silesian author did note Hungarian help but also emphasized the role of the burghers of Kraków. Although the city was destroyed by fire, they held the castle in the name of the legitimate prince, for which Leszek rewarded them by constructing the city's fortifications in August 1285.⁸¹¹

As we can see then, all accounts about the rebellion of 1285 present the anonymous Lesser-Polish *milites* deposing Leszek and offering the rulership to Konrad, characterizing this act simply as *preiudicium or infidelitas*. All draw a contrast between the disloyal nobles and the townspeople of Cracow, rewarded for their loyalty. While I will explore this topic in more detail in the next chapter, it is worth already noting that Dzierzwa further underlined the ethnic character of the divided loyalties of the Lesser-Polish subjects, seeing in the outcome of the rebellion the turning point of recent political history.

The rebellion of the Lesser-Polish nobles featured prominently not only in the recent memory of annalists and chroniclers but also found its reflection in the language of the diplomas issued by Leszek's chancery. I have already analyzed one of them, the 1287 diploma issued for György Baksa, while discussing the descriptions of the loyal service this foreigner performed. The village of Wieligłowa given to the Hungarian belonged before the palatine of Sandomierz, Otto, one of the participants of the rebellion, who was stripped of his possession on account of *crimen lese maiestatis*, as he, under the guise of peace, conspired with treacherous factions (*traditoriae facciones*) for Leszek's destruction.⁸¹²

In a document issued much earlier, on 9th of June 1285, shortly after the victorious battle at Bogucice, Leszek made known to all that when almost all (*quasi omnes*) barons and knights of the land of Cracow and Sandomierz rejected (*speverunt*) him as their duke, but with God's help he was able to defeat them. The duke praised especially the fidelity of the addressee of the diploma, Stanisław of Chroberz, who abandoned all of his brothers and friends (rebels siding

⁸¹¹ SCP, 643-44: *Cui successit Lestko, filius Kazmiri, filii Konradi, qui seva bella contra Getarum insultus victor exercuit, tandem conspiracione infidelium Cracovie propellitur, et Conradus, Semoviti filius ducis Mazovie, filii Conradi fratris Casmiri, inducitur. Qui cum infidelibus ductoribus in bello per Lestkonis validum exercitum, exusta Cracovia, confusus aufugit, et Lestko cum triumpho ad suos fideles cives Cracovie, qui ipsum castrum sibi strennue servaverant, rediit, et fidelitate illorum inspecta civitatem munivit anno Domini 1285 mense Augusti.*

⁸¹² KDM I.134: *Nam propter crimen lese Maiestatis, quod comittere non est ueritus, sub specie pacis conflans nefarie in nostrum exterminium traditorias facciones, omnibus hereditatibus in nostro possessis dominio, iusta iudicante sententia meruit exheredari.*

with Konrad) and remained loyal to Leszek, receiving in reward the village of Kęblów.⁸¹³ This passage was understandably noticed by researchers interested in the medieval knightly clans in Poland - more specifically, in the question of clan solidarity or the lack of thereof. Thus, Janusz Bieniak saw Stanisław's actions in opposition to the rest of his family and friends as an exception that proves the rule of the expected broad, though not ironclad, solidarity within a clan.⁸¹⁴ It is certainly worth highlighting that the language of Leszek's diploma presents Stanisław as making an uneasy choice between competing bonds of loyalty. The language of the source, however, pitches the loyalty to the ruler not against an abstract loyalty to the clan, but against closest bonds of fraternal kinship and *amicitia*. That Stanisław would be praised for choosing his lord over these bonds seems to me convincing even without introducing a debatable notion of clan solidarity.

Half a year later, the duke of Cracow issued a diploma for a convent of Poor Clares at Skała, in which the rebellion was described in much detail. According to the document Otto, palatine of Sandomierz, was a cause of "treacheries, disloyalties, and many troubles" (*tradicionēs, infidelitates et plurima incommoda*) in the land of Cracow. He was doing so in a manner so unholy and open, that he did not stop at secrets acts of treachery (*tradicionēs clandestini*), but as a commander (*capitaneus*) he gathered his supporters in treachery (*perfidie fautores*) and contemptibly (*contemptibiliter*) tried to drive Leszek out of his domain. He not only led Konrad II of Mazovia into the land but also wanted to treacherously hand over to him the castles in which Leszek's wife resided with her loyal followers. However, divine power and justice turned those evil deeds (*maleficia*) into nought. Leszek's enemies were destroyed, and Otto and his possessions were delivered under duke's control, meeting with well-deserved vengeance. In correction of Otto's heinous *criminis lese maiestatis*, the duke granted part of the rebel's village of Żyrkowice to the Piast princess Salomea, Leszek's cousin, and her convent at Skała.⁸¹⁵ The addressee is not coincidental – Salomea was Leszek's cousin, but Konrad II's

⁸¹³ KDM I.109: *Nos itaque Lestco dei gracia Dux Cracouie, Sandomirie ac Sirazie, Notum facimus vniuersis tam presentibus quam futuris, ad quorum cognicionem tenor peruenerit litterarum, quod cum quidam Barones et milites nostri terre Cracouie et Sandomirie quasi omnes nos Ducem suum spreuerunt, Kurradum uero sibi in dominum elegerunt volentes nos de terra pellere, et cum eodem iam dicto Duce Kunrado nobiscum bellum in Bogucic susceperunt, sed quia deus est semper auxiliator suis, vnde quia Stanizlaus de Chrober Miles noster fidelis, obmissis omnibus fratribus et amicis suis, nobis fidelia, vtilia et continua seruicia sua tunc temporis et omnibus temporibus ostendit et adhuc exhibere non desistit.*

⁸¹⁴ Bieniak, "Rody rycerskie," 185.

⁸¹⁵ KDM I.110: *Ottone quondam palatino Sandomiriensi tradicionēs, infidelitates et plurima incommoda in Cracouiensi dominio procurante, ita inpie et patenter, quod non solum contra nos tradicionibus clandestinis insultabat, verum etiam tanquam capitaneus discurrendo nos legitimum principem et patronum acumulatis perfidie fautoribus de nostro dominio eicere contemptibiliter non neglexit, introducens alium principem nostris terris, videlicet ducem Cvnradum, et castra dimenciens ad tradendum eidem duci Cvnrado, in quibus coniunx nostra cum suis fidelibus residebat. Set tandem diuina potencia et iusticia, que non deest iustis inuocacionibus ac*

sister, and Skala's Poor Clares had their patrons also among the participants of the rebellion.⁸¹⁶ This context gives the long and detailed description of the rebellion an additional meaning. The part of the village that belonged to Otto was a gift intended to strengthen the relationship between the duke and the politically entangled convent. By receiving this donation with the accompanying charter, the Poor Clares had to endorse and uphold the description of the 1285 events coming from the ducal chancery. Yet another document characterizing the rebellion of 1285 as *crimen laesae maiestatis* was issued by the duke for the Cracow Dominicans sometime in 1286. In the diploma that gave the friars the right to use the water from the Rudawa river, Leszek mentioned that in the past, access to water was blocked by Grzegorz son of Żegota, heir of Balice.⁸¹⁷ This member of the Topór clan in his temerity rebelled against Leszek, he was found guilty of *laesae maiestatis*, stripped of his possessions, and beheaded.⁸¹⁸

The competition over the water resources on the outskirts of the city, described in passing in Leszek's document, has been at the center of discussions about the possible causes of the 1285 rebellion. Barring the older explanations that saw the events of that year as the dramatic conclusion of the series of the same malcontents opposed to Leszek's rule since 1273, the Piast ruler's support for the political aspirations of the town of Cracow is seen as the main cause of the underlying rebellion of 1285.⁸¹⁹ Unlike the sources above suggest, the construction work on the important part of the town's fortifications, the city's moat that was to rely on the very same Rudawa river, had already begun prior to August of 1285.⁸²⁰ The rebellion of the Topór clan would be the outcome of two groups thus far favored by Leszek the Black, the

deuotis, ita predicti Ottonis et cum suis fautoribus maleficia obruit et destruxit, quod et ipsum personaliter cum vniuersis bonis et redditibus iuxta tradicionis meritum sub nostram totaliter subegit famosissime et tradidit vlcionem.

⁸¹⁶ On Topór clan's connections with the convent, see Kurtyka, *Tęczyńscy*, 142.

⁸¹⁷ On Grzegorz's family ties, see: Kurtyka, "Elita małopolska," 42–45.

⁸¹⁸ KDKK I.86: *Inhibemus autem et contradicimus, quod nullus ipsos fratres in ipso ductu aque vmquam audeat impedire. Volumus eciam vt hac nostra donacione, quam propter deum facimus et salutem nostre anime, ipsi fratres gaudeant nunc et in evum, non obstante eo, quod Gregorius Comes heres de Balic, dictus Zegoczicz, eandem aquam fratribus contradicens inhibuerat memoratis ; Cum ipse, qui sue temeritatis calcaneum contra nos erexerat nostrum exterminium sciendo, tanquam reus lese maiestatis, non solum omnes hereditates suas et patrimonia, ceteraque bona, sed insuper collum et vitam perdiderit ipso iure et sit perpetuo adiudicatus, ac eodem iure ad nostrum sint hec omnia dominium deuoluta.*

⁸¹⁹ Żmudzki, *Stadium podzielonego Królestwa*, 412; On Leszek's support for the city's aspirations see Piotr Okniński, *Narodziny miasta komunalnego. Struktury ustrojowe, ramy przestrzenne i podstawy gospodarcze Krakowa w XIII wieku* [The birth of communal town. Political structures, spatial framework and economic bases of Cracow in the thirteenth century] (Warsaw: Instytut Historii PAN, 2018), 47–50; Differently Puzio, who places more emphasis on dissatisfaction with Leszek's role in defending the Eastern borders or with his choice of Przemysł II of Greater Poland as the inheritor, see Teterycz-Puzio, "Zamachy stanu w Małopolsce," 335.

⁸²⁰ See the document issued by Leszek on 22 January 1284, that lists among the possessions of the Cistercian Abbey from Wąchock *taberna in Cracouia circa fossatum in platea, que ducit ad ecclesiam sancti Floriani*, see KDM II. 498. On the moat construction prior to the rebellion, see Żmudzki, *Dux fabulosus*, 183–35; Jacek Lamberschek, *Sieć wodna średniowiecznego Krakowa i jej gospodarcze wykorzystanie* [The water network of medieval Krakow and its economic use] (Warsaw: Instytut Historii PAN, 2016), 108–9.

townspeople of Cracow and kindred of Janusz, Żegota, and Otto, coming to clash over the influence in Lesser Poland.

Nevertheless, these motives did not interest the authors of the discussed sources. The reasons for the rebellion were not discussed in the narrative sources, while Leszek's diplomas explained the participation of the named individuals in the attempt to overthrow their ruler by individual malice. What both the annalistic sources and duke's chancery underscored in their accounts was just how broad the disloyalty of Leszek's subjects was. The more desperate Leszek's position, abandoned by *quasi omnes*, seemed to be, the more praiseworthy was the loyalty of those few who remained with their duke, and the clearer his victory appeared as a sign of divine favor. The victory over the rebels was seen as one of the most important achievements of Leszek's rule. The authors of the discussed annals and the chronicles commented on the broader socio-political consequences of the rebellion, noting the growing importance of the city of Cracow, though to different degrees.

Having analyzed separately the most prominent depictions of disloyal subjects found in the annalistic and historiographical tradition of fragmented Poland, I would like to draw a few general conclusions. The first set of conclusions has to do with the terms used in the sources to describe this kind of behavior. Whether described as *fraus*, *traditio*, *proditio*, *preiudicium*, or *infidelitas*, disloyalty was aimed at Piasts themselves, highlighting the personal nature of the bonds of loyalty. It was either the ruler's hold to power or, less frequently, his life, that was threatened by the traitors, with his honor or the fate of the political community unremarked upon. The sources rarely opine on the motives guiding the traitors. Thus, their disloyalty was explained by envy, contempt they held for the rightful ruler, individual *temeritas* or by the unjustified drive to power. The latter, used to explain the massacre at Gąsawa by Dzierzwa and Lubiąż monk alike, came the closest to the motivations that usually governed *monstra proditionalia* in Vincentius of Cracow's *Chronica Polonorum*.

The depictions of treachery also lend certain insight into the rules that marked the boundaries of a properly waged feud. Describing the murder of Leszek the White, the subsequent struggle over Cracow, or the death of Przemysł II, different authors underlined the deceitful character of the attack by highlighting the setting in which it took place. *Colloquium*, bathhouse, one's bed, or the church in the middle of the mass – all those places can be added to the banquet's table as settings in which the breaking of trust is seen as particularly condemnable. Similarly, while the kidnapping alone could have been treated ambiguously, seizing the

unexpected ruler from one of those settings and perhaps more importantly, the violent mistreatment of the captive,⁸²¹ were seen as stepping outside of the norms governing the conflict.

The example of Nałęcz, Zaręba, Topór, or even Gryf clans lends itself to a more general observation about the role of the different kinds of bonds, namely kinship, in the narratives of disloyalty from fragmented Poland. Vincentius of Cracow, for all his concern about the proper relations within the family, was not interested in the role the bonds of kinship played in the actions taken by the disloyal subjects. However, the earlier *Gesta principum Polonorum* suggests that familial links could make one's loyalty suspect. Describing the period when the powerful palatine Sieciech plotted against the children of Duke Władysław, Gallus mentions the accusations made against the princes' tutor, *comes* Wojśław, on the basis of his kinship (*consanguinitatis*) with Sieciech.⁸²² While the chronicler believed in Wojśław's innocence, the situation in which the loyalty to the kinsman would triumph over the loyalty to the ruler was clearly probable in the political culture of pre-fragmentation Piast Poland. The genealogical analysis of the links between the participants of the rebellion in Cracow in 1285 or those imprisoned by Przemysław II in the face of the conflict over Kalisz in 1284 suggests that close kinship groups influenced the loyalties (or rather, disloyalties) of the Piast subjects. Only more detailed depictions of events from the remote past, surviving in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century works, like the *Annals of Szamotulski* or Jan Długosz's *Annales*, that accused whole kinship groups of treachery. When the contemporary sources themselves made a note of the ties of kinship that bound the conspirators, they end up describing only the closest family relations: sons rebelling alongside their father, or brothers taking up arms together against their ruler. Those closest bonds of kinship were seen as particularly strong and overcoming them in the name of loyalty to the ruler was, like in the case of Stanisław of Chroberz, particularly worthy of acknowledgment and reward.

What role did the discussed accounts of the subjects' disloyalty play in the broader context of the thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century sources? The most obvious answer is that the instances of treachery were simply a part of the description of the recent events that the authors felt were important for their audience. This is especially true in the case of the most laconic of the annalistic notes created either contemporaneously or shortly after the described events, like the earliest information about the death of Leszek the White.

⁸²¹ The aversion to the physical violence being visited on the rival members of the dynasty, especially in comparison to contemporary Přemyslid Bohemia, noted in Pauk, "Regnum," 87, footnote 35.

⁸²² 2.16 in *GpP*, 142.

The later sources, created around the turn of the fourteenth century, tended to be more detailed, since the Lubiąż monk, Dzierzwa, or annalists writing and compiling the future *Traska's Annal* used instances of rebellion or treachery to construct purposeful narratives. As illustrated by the different ways in which the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* and *Dzierzwa's Chronicle* interpreted the massacre at Gąsawa or assessed the aftermath of the 1285 rebellion against Leszek the Black, the contemporary agendas of the chroniclers played an important role in shaping their depictions of disloyalty. For the Lubiąż monk, it was the promotion of the Silesian branch of the dynasty, who, surrounded in the past and present by duplicitous family members and subjects, held a special claim to Cracow's *monarchia*. The chronicler used the disloyalty of deceitful and power-hungry Odon to justify Henryk the Bearded's actions in Greater Poland, the attempt at seizing control over the patrimony belonging to a still extant branch of the dynasty, an act unprecedented in Piast political culture. Dzierzwa, in turn, drew an explicit connection between the treacherous actions of Świętopełk from a century ago and the recently contested claim of Piast rulers to Pomerania. The other way in which the contemporary preoccupations of the turn-of-the-fourteenth-century authors were reflected is the attention paid by some of the sources to the ethnicity of the traitors, as done by the *Annals of the Poznań Chapter* or *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*. Their perspectives on the death of Przemysł II at the hands of envious *Theutonici* or the disastrous consequences of privileging burghers of Cracow in the aftermath of the 1285 rebellion were just a part of a broader image of the perfidious Germans and townspeople. I explore how this potent political tool was wielded during the struggles to unify the kingdom in the next chapter.

By the last quarter of the thirteenth century, disloyalty of the subjects started to be noted in ducal diplomas.⁸²³ The information about these acts of *traditio* or *crimen laesae maiestatis* performed an important practical role: it justified the alienation of the property of the disloyal subject, which was now bestowed by the Piast ruler to someone else. There were, however, also more subtle reasons for which information about the disloyalty was included in the text of the ducal charters. Thus, for example, the reference to the treachery of Sędziwój Zaręba that appears in the diploma issued for the loyal service of Tomisław of Szamotuły could have been just as valuable than the privileges granted in its text in the jostling over prestige between Greater-Polish noble clans. The Piast charters were used to present the official ducal narrative on the recent events in a way that induced the buy-in of the communities and institutions whose

⁸²³ The document issued by Bolesław the Bald for Ikon, son of Miro in 1255 (SUB III.573), would be an outlier in a chronology of this development. Its authenticity, however, is very much contested. I discuss this issue at more length in the subchapters that follow.

loyalties were divided between both sides of the conflict. This strategy, as we will see in the next chapter, was used even more frequently, and with some success, by Władysław the Short in his bid for the unification of the realm in the early fourteenth century.

3.5 Unfaithful Rulers – Justified Rebellions?

Whereas the examples of unfaithful subjects explored in the previous subchapter were treated with strong disapproval by the thirteenth and early fourteenth-century annalists and chroniclers, I would now like to turn towards more ambiguous descriptions of disloyalty. In his *Chronica Polonorum*, Vincentius of Cracow was adamant that subjects belonging to the *res publica*'s political community ought to abandon the rulers who would fail to live up to the virtuous ideals. Stanisław Russocki, in his study of the *ius resistendi* among medieval Slavs, also wondered about the impact of Vincentius's rich theoretical argument for the subject's right to abandon bad rulers. Focusing mostly on the *Chronicle of Greater Poland*, which he took to be a late-thirteenth-century source, Russocki saw the laconic, neutral way of describing the contemporaneous rebellions of Piast subjects as a sign of a lack of institutionalized right of resistance. In the face of the increasingly weakening authority of the ever-dividing Polish duchies, the subjects felt no need to offer ideologically grounded explanations for dissolving the bonds of loyalty binding them to the Piast rulers.⁸²⁴ In the previous chapter, when tracing the Vincentian tradition in the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* and *Dzierżwa's Chronicle* in the last chapter, I similarly argued that the turn-of-the-fourteenth-century chroniclers had a different, less enthusiastic attitude towards subjects' rights to resist their rulers than the one so strongly advocated for by Vincentius of Cracow.

Nevertheless, Russocki's argument seems to me to be too dismissive of the efforts of the authors and subjects living in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries to justify abandoning or actively resisting their Piast rulers. In the following subchapter, I hope to demonstrate that far from only condemning or simply observing the disloyalty, the authors of these works formulated a number of justifications for the dissolution of bonds of loyalty. In order to do so, I will focus on the two illuminating examples of the thirteenth-century Piasts abandoned by their subjects - Bolesław the Bald of Legnica and Władysław the Short.

⁸²⁴ Russocki, "Opór Władcom," 36–39.

3.5.1 Fraternal Rights and Subject's *honor* – Plots and Rebellions Against Bolesław the Bald

Bolesław the Bald, Duke of Legnica was a Piast ruler who seemed to be held in low opinion by almost all contemporary sources. The oldest son of Henryk II Probus, Bolesław found himself ill-prepared to uphold the dominant position of the Silesian Piasts in the wake of his father's death at the battle of Legnica in 1241. He not only quickly lost control over the disputed parts of Greater Poland to the sons of Władysław Odonic, but also became embroiled in an intermittent conflict with his younger brothers Henryk III the White and Konrad I of Głogów, their successors, and the bishop of Wrocław Tomasz I.⁸²⁵ Thus, it is not surprising that the Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter, supportive of the Greater Polish *veri heredes*, presented Bolesław the Bald in a negative light, as did the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*, biased towards the dukes of Wrocław. The Cistercians of the Henryków abbey were also disappointed with Bolesław's rulership, which compared poorly with the idealized rule of his father and grandfather, and which was in abbot Piotr's mind one more sign of the general moral and political decline.⁸²⁶ Thus, the depictions of one of several instances in which Bolesław found himself abandoned or openly challenged by his men would seem to be a likely space for the representations of the Piast subjects justifiably dissolving the bonds of loyalty with their ruler. As we will see, however, even in those circumstances not all authors were ready to unambiguously endorse the disloyalty of Bolesław's subjects.

The earliest instance of Bolesław's subjects abandoning their ruler is depicted in the fragment of the Annals of the Gniezno Cathedral Chapter that was already discussed at the beginning of this chapter. The inhabitants of Greater Poland abandoned Bolesław because of his *insolencia*, turning towards the *veri heredes* of the land, Przemysław I and Bolesław I.⁸²⁷ This brief justification is worth noting, if only for its similarity to the rationales used by the rebels depicted by Vincentius of Cracow, but it was not the sole excuse made for the Greater Polish men turning away from Bolesław. After all, their disloyalty to the Silesian Piast was just the flip side of their newly rediscovered loyalty to the sons of Władysław Odonic, the rightful rulers of Greater Poland. From the perspective of the Gniezno annalist, the bonds of loyalty linking

⁸²⁵ On the last one, see Dalewski, "Książę i Biskup."

⁸²⁶ Górecki, *The Text and the World*, 33; Piotr Górecki, "The Paradox of Piast Power: A Contemporary Observer in His Context," *Viator* 49, no. 2 (2018): 146; Marek Cetwiński, "'Bolezlaus fatuorum opera exercuit': Z dziejów poczucia humoru średniowiecznych Ślązaków" ['Bolezlaus fatuorum opera exercuit': From the history of the sense of humor of medieval Silesians], in *Viae historicae: księga jubileuszowa dedykowana profesorowi Lechowi A. Tyszkiewiczowi w siedemdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin*, ed. by Mateusz Goliński Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis. Historia 152 (Wrocław: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2001), 294–95.

⁸²⁷ RkG, [27], 6.

Greater Poles with Bolesław were loose to begin with, as it was only through their will that Bolesław's father Henryk became the ruler in Greater Poland. The extraordinary circumstances in which the inhabitants of Greater Poland became the subjects of the Silesian Piast were underscored by the annalist, and should be taken into account when discussing the ways of dissolving the bonds of loyalty.

If in the case of Greater-Polish subjects it could have been argued that they never owed that much loyalty to the Silesian usurpers to begin with, this was certainly not the case with the subsequent examples of disloyalty. The *Book of Henryków*, the *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter*, and the *Silesian Chronica Polonorum* all mention how, during the struggle between Bolesław and his younger brothers over the division of power within Silesia in the late 1240s, Bolesław would find himself abandoned by his men.

Let us first begin with the *Book of Henryków*. Abbot Piotr describes how Bolesław, on the occasion of organizing a tournament, was pressured by his knights, led by Albert the Bearded to make a donation to the Abbey. Bolesław donated to Henryków the manor of Jaworowice, with the included text of a diploma dated 3 March 1243. Then, Piotr writes:

After those deeds the house possessed these [holdings in Jaworowice] while the lord duke, the said Bolesław, reigned peacefully for a few years. After these things were done and a bit of time had passed, the knights captured their lord Bolesław, the said duke, and this was done supposedly in the name of Henryk [III], his brother born after him. But let it be known that at that time this young lord, lord Henryk, had not yet attained the years of responsible age. Hence, because the disorder and damage of the entire province [of Silesia] began at that time, let it be known that this captivity was perpetrated not by the counsel of the young lord Henryk, but of certain others, whose names shall not be inscribed in this booklet.⁸²⁸

Even at a brief glance, the description of the knights who imprisoned Bolesław is critical of the conspirators. Despite his dislike of the oldest of Henryk the Pious's sons, Abbot Piotr considered the deceitful act perpetrated against the ruler as the starting point, even more so than

⁸²⁸ I. 77 in *The Henryków Book*, 119. I have modified Piotr Górecki's translation, changing its first sentence. As the scholar himself points out in the footnote, the Latin of the first sentence, written in the preserved copy in rubric, leaves enough ambiguity to make it difficult to discern if it was the Duke's a reign or the abbey's possession of the manor that lasted a few peaceful years; For original, see *Liber Fundationis*, 35: *Post hec acta possedit domus ista regnante domino duce dicto Bo(lezlao) pacifice aliquot annis. Hiis actis et paucis temporum curriculis transactis ceperunt milites dominum suum B(olezlaum), dictum ducem, et hoc factum est quasi nomine domini Heinrichi, fratris sui, post eum nati. Sed sciendum, quod idem domicellus, dominus H(einricus), nondum tunc uenerat ad annos intelligibilis etatis, undeque tunc exortum est initium et nocumentum tocius huius prouincie. Sciendum quod hec captiuitas non est facta consilio domicelli Heinrichi, sed quorundam aliorum, quorum nomina huic libello non inscribuntur.*

the devastating Mongol invasion, the reason of the crisis plaguing Silesia.⁸²⁹ The disloyal knights claimed to be acting *quasi nomine domini Heinrichi*, most likely trying to cast themselves as the defenders of Henryk's rights. However, as the abbot twice asserts, Bolesław's brother could not have been behind the plot, as he was still a *domicellus*. Young Henryk was then not to shoulder the responsibility for the tragic consequences of the heinous act, avoiding the stigma of scheming against his own brother. These were blamed entirely on the group of knights whose names Abbot Piotr condemned to oblivion.

The excuse made by Piotr had convinced modern historians. Even though Henryk was most likely older than the term *domicellus* would suggest,⁸³⁰ historians saw him as a puppet in the hands of the powerful nobles.⁸³¹ While Abbot Piotr decided not to write down the names of the participants, these had been, in a reasonable assumption, sought among the later supporters of Henryk III's rule. Thus, Marek Cetwiński cites the group of men who appear in the earliest independently issued document from 1248, namely *comes* Mroczo of Pogorzela, Albert with the Beard, and notary Konrad as likely culprits.⁸³²

If indeed some or all of those men were involved in the consequential imprisonment of Duke Bolesław, then Abbot Piotr's decision not to write their names down could be read as more than a gesture of *damnatio memoriae*. Both Albert with the Beard and notary Konrad had close relations with the Henryków monks. The former, as illustrated by the very episode with Jaworowice cited above, was a benefactor of the abbey, while the latter was Abbot Piotr's friend from the school years.⁸³³ Konrad was instrumental in allowing the monks of Henryków to access the duke at a time when Bolesław closed himself off from his subjects and lived in hideouts. The secret entrances to his hiding places were known to Konrad, who counted among

⁸²⁹ Marek Cetwiński, "Idealizacja przeszłości: opat Piotr o kryzysie moralnym po „najeździe pogan” (Z Księgi henrykowskiej)” [Idealization of the past: Abbot Piotr on the moral crisis after the "invasion of the pagans" (From the Book of Henryków)], *Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka* 76, no. 3 (2021): 74.

⁸³⁰ Henryk III was born sometime between 1227-30, see Kazimierz Jasiński, *Rodowód Piastów Śląskich* [*Genealogy of Silesian Piasts*], 2nd ed. (Cracow: Avalon, 2007), 118.

⁸³¹ Grodecki, "Dzieje polityczne," 238; Andrzej Jureczko, *Henryk III Biały: książę wrocławski (1247-1266)* [Henryk III the White: duke of Wrocław (1247-1266)] (Cracow: Avalon, 2007), 33; Osiński, *Bolesław Rogatka*, 128; Differently Jerzy Mularczyk, "Z problematyki walk o władzę na Śląsku w latach czterdziestych XIII wieku" [On the issue of power struggles in Silesia in the 1240s], *Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka* 34, no. 1 (1979): 9.

⁸³² SUB II.354; Marek Cetwiński, "Kronikarze o zamachach stanu na średniowiecznym Śląsku" [Chroniclers on coups d'état in medieval Silesia], in *Zamach stanu w dawnych społecznościach*, ed. Arkadiusz Sotłysiak (Warsaw: Ośrodek Badań nad Tradycją Antyczną. Uniwersytet Warszawski, 2004), 322; Osiński, *Bolesław Rogatka*, 171-72; Without citing the document, but also naming Mroczo and Albert as the most likely leaders of the rebellion Jureczko, *Henryk III Biały*, 38.

⁸³³ *Liber Fundationis*, 52: *Hic idem C(onradus) in sua puericia fuerat collega in scolis cuiusdam monachi huius claustris nomine Petri.*

the small group of those trusted by the duke.⁸³⁴ As this episode of the *Book of Henryków* is set in 1244, the duke's notary either changed his allegiances sometime after or was not involved in the plot to imprison Bolesław after all. If the former is true, then Piotr might have decided not to write down the names of the conspirators to avoid drawing the link between the abbey's patrons and their condemnable actions against the Piast ruler. Thus, despite his tepid sympathy for the eldest son of Henryk the Pious, and potential close ties between the abbey and some of the conspirators, Abbot Piotr was critical of the Silesian knights who dissolved the bonds of loyalty to their ruler in the name of defending the rights of another member of the dynasty.

The imprisonment of Bolesław the Bald, this time by Henryk III the White and not merely on his behalf, is also mentioned by the *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter*. In the entry from 1249, the annalist notes that the Silesian duke gave away the castle of Lubusz to the Archbishop of Magdeburg in return for his help in fighting his younger brother. Bolesław wanted to drive Henryk out of his land, because "the said Henryk had earlier captured said Bolesław, his brother, and bound in chains, had placed him under guard in the tower at Legnica."⁸³⁵ The diplomatic sources confirm that both of Henryk IV Pious's sons prepared in 1249 for military confrontation, enlisting the help in the West.⁸³⁶ Most likely, the past captivity of Bolesław refers here to the same events as the *Book of Henryków*.⁸³⁷ Unlike Abbot Piotr, however, the Greater Polish annalist sees the Duke of Wrocław at the center of his brother's imprisonment. Nevertheless, the reference to the high price Bolesław had to pay, giving away his *nobile et firmum castrum*, as well as his plans to completely drive out Henryk III of all of his land suggest that the sympathies of the annalist in the conflict did not lie on Bolesław's side.

Indeed, as the *Annals* are quick to recount, Bolesław was also persecuting his other brother, Konrad. Sometime between Bolesław's imprisonment by his knights and 1249, most probably in the summer of 1248, Silesia was divided into two parts, with their centers in Legnica

⁸³⁴ *Liber Foundationis*, 53: *Et sciendum, quod dominus B(oleslaus) prefatus dux tunc temporis se fecit semper serare et nullum omnino ad se admisit nisi ualde notos. Habuit etiam tunc in multis suis habitaculis secreta hostiola, cunctis hominibus nisi ualde sui familiaribus ignota. Unde postquam prescripta noticia inter Conradum notarium et Petrum monachum est manifestata, Conradus notarius multociens traxit dominum Bodonem abbatem per dicta latibula ad dominum ducem, et hoc tam diu fecit, donec negotium claustrum ad bonum effectum perduxit.*

⁸³⁵ RkP, [28], 26: *Eodem anno dux Slezie Boleslaus lilius condam ducis Henrici dedit Lubus castrum nobile et firmum archiepiscopo Magdeburgensi, ut ei ferret auxilium contra fratrem ipsius uterinum Henricum ducem Wratislaviensem, contra quem pungnabat, pro eo, quod idem Henricus dictum fratrem Boleslaum captiuauerat antea et vinculatum in turri de Legnicz arte custodie mancipauerat. Unde nitebatur idem Boleslaus fratrem suum Henricum de terra penitus profugare.*

⁸³⁶ See the document issued by Bolesław the Bald for Archbishop Wilbrand, SUB II.368; At the same time, Henryk III the White, also promising territorial concessions, secured the help of the Margrave of Meissen, see SUB II. 369.

⁸³⁷ Differently Jacek Osiński, who made an unconvincing argument for separate rebellions in 1244 and 1248, See Osiński, *Bolesław Rogatka*, 182–89.

and Wrocław. These were to be ruled by Bolesław the Bald and Henryk III the White, who were to share the power in their domains with their younger brothers, Konrad and Władysław, respectively, both in the early stages of their ecclesiastical careers.⁸³⁸ While in late 1248 Konrad briefly became a bishop-elect of Passau, he quickly abandoned the church office.⁸³⁹ Thus, in 1249, as the Poznań annalist notes, Konrad, *timore fratris sui Boleslai*, fled to the court of Przemysł I. The Greater-Polish Piasts then entered Silesia with their army, handed over the newly built stronghold of Bytom to Konrad, and captured Bolesław who, according to the annalist, not only denied Konrad his part of land, but also tried to deceitfully murder his brother.⁸⁴⁰ The *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter* do not mention anything about the circumstances of Bolesław's release,⁸⁴¹ but we know that the conflict between the brothers had not ended. Konrad, after celebrating his wedding with Przemysł I's sister Salomea, imprisoned his other brother Henryk, as he did not fulfill the sworn promise to demand land from Bolesław on Konrad's behalf. The Duke of Wrocław was released only after he offered hostages to his younger brother and promised to either pressure Bolesław into giving Konrad some land or, failing that, to do it himself.⁸⁴²

The Poznań annalist made the last note on the conflict between the Silesian Piasts in 1251, when he noted:

Duke Bolesław, son of Henryk, held captive Ikon, son of Miro, castellan of Krosno, whom he seemed to love more than all other men, and for whom he did whatever that same Ikon requested of the duke, and to whom the same duke had

⁸³⁸ More on the division in Grodecki, "Dzieje polityczne," 238–40; Jureczko, *Henryk III Biały*, 40–45; Tomasz Jurek, "Geneza księstwa głogowskiego" [The genesis of the Duchy of Głogów], *Przegląd Historyczny* 78, no. 1 (1987): 81; Pauk, "Regnum," 140–45.

⁸³⁹ Tomasz Jurek argued that this choice reflected Konrad's ambitions for rulership in Poland, see Jurek, "Geneza księstwa głogowskiego," 83; Marcin R. Pauk points out that Konrad's conflict with his brother started only after his hopes for Passau bishopric were dashed by the lack of Pope Innocentius IV's approval of his position, see Pauk, "Regnum," 142.

⁸⁴⁰ RkP, [32], 27: *Eodem anno Cunradus filius quondam Henrici ducis Slezie, qui fuit occisus a Tartaris, timore fratris Boleslai secessit in Poloniam ad Premislonem ducem Polonie generum suum, qui eum benigne suscepit et honorifice pertractavit. Tandem collecto exercitu suo dux Przemisl et etiam fratris suis Boleslai ducis Gneznensis edificavit et munivit castrum Bytom et tradidit dicto sororio suo Conrado. Cum autem idem edificaretur, dux Przemisl sororium suum ducem Boleslaum captivavit et in vincula coniecit, eo quod fratri suo Conrado partem terre denegabat, ymmo eundem etiam fraudulenter occidere nitebatur.*

⁸⁴¹ It is assumed in historiography that Bolesław had to make some concessions, but they are hard to precisely define. See Grodecki, "Dzieje polityczne," 246; Mularczyk proposed that it was already then that Konrad received his own Duchy in Głogów, but this interpretation has been convincingly rejected by Tomasz Jurek. See Jerzy Mularczyk, "Podziały Śląska między synów Henryka II Pobożnego w połowie XIII wieku" [Divisions of Silesia between the sons of Henry II the Pious in the mid-13th century], *Przegląd Historyczny* 76, no. 3 (1985): 493; Jurek, "Geneza księstwa głogowskiego," 84–86; Jureczko suggested that Bolesław indeed promised to grant Konrad his own land to regain his freedom, making Henryk III his guarantor, but reneged on this promise. Jureczko, *Henryk III Biały*, 59.

⁸⁴² RkP, [39], 28: *Eodem anno dux Cunradus filius Henrici fratrem suum Henricum ducem captivatum tenuit eo, quod eidem promiserat et iure iurando firmaverat, quod a duce, Boleslao fratre ipsorum ei partem terre requireret, quod non fecit. Ipse autem dux Henricus datis pro se obsidibus liberatus est, ita tamen, quod vel a fratre Boleslao fratri Conrado iusticiam requireret, vel de terra propria eidem Conrado satisfaceret.*

given much money, and he handed him over to the Germans to be guarded, wishing to extort money from him so that he could with it gather the Germans to aid him. Seeing this, the Poles who had adhered to Duke Bolesław lost hope in him and, deserting him as a persecutor of their own honor, turned to his brother Duke Konrad, handing over Krosno and other fortresses to him.⁸⁴³

The first part of this account had caused a considerable debate among those scholars who aimed at reconstructing the circumstances of the further splintering of Silesia and the creation of Konrad's own domain, with its center in Głogów. The veracity of the claim that it was the imprisonment of Ikon that sparked the rebellion in Krosno has been questioned by some historians, who pointed out the later fruitful career of Ikon in Bolesław's service, recognized and rewarded with offices and privileges.⁸⁴⁴ At the center of this discussion lies a question of whether the once-imprisoned noble could have returned to loyal service and the duke's favor, a question which I will tackle in the next subchapter of this thesis.

For now, it suffices to say that the real identity of the imprisoned knight was of secondary importance to the annalist from Poznań. What mattered was less the name of the Duke's favorite than his connection with the castellany of Krosno, which explained why it was in that place that Bolesław's subjects rebelled against him. The closeness of the imprisoned noble to Bolesław might have also been exaggerated for the effect, as the annalist found it important that the duke's favorite was so outrageously mistreated by the fickle, bad ruler. The imprisonment and extortion of Ikon, the description of which the annalist laced with the contrast between the persecuted Poles and the courted German mercenaries, was seen as an attack on the honor of Bolesław's subjects, which in turn justified the dissolution of the bonds of loyalty between them and the Piast ruler. The category of *honor* used by the annalist was already regularly evoked by the middle of the thirteenth century by the Piast rulers.⁸⁴⁵ As we have seen in the previous parts of this thesis, it was the defense of the ruler's honor that was often cited as the content of the bond of loyalty, and endangering it was, as in the cases from Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*, seen as an act of disloyalty. This time, a similar argumentation was used

⁸⁴³ RkP, [40], 28: *Boleslaus dux filius Henrici Iconem filium Mironis, castellanum Crosnensem, quem pre omnibus hominibus diligere videbatur et pro quo faciebat quicquid ab eodem duce postulabat, et cui multas pecunias idem dux contulerat, captivum tenuit et Teutonicis tradidit custodiendum, volens ab ipso pecuniam extorquere, ut posset cum ea in auxilium suum Theutonicos convenire. Quod videntes Poloni, qui eidem duci Boleslao adherebant, de ipso desperaverunt et eum tamquam honoris sui persecutorem deserentes fratri ipsius duci Conrado adhererunt, tradentes ei Crosnam et alias municiones.*

⁸⁴⁴ The authenticity of the document issued for Ikon in 1255, describing his loyalty in the face of the rebellion of other nobles in the past, SUB III.573, is contested. This did not stop many scholars from rejecting the possibility of Ikon's imprisonment in 1251. Most notably, see Cetwiński, *Rycerstwo Śląskie. Pochodzenie-gospodarka-polityka*, 1:124; Mularczyk, "Podziały Śląska," 498–500; Jurek, "Geneza księstwa głogowskiego," 85–86; I discuss this issue in more detail in the Chapter 3.6.

⁸⁴⁵ Pauk, "Regnum," 92–98.

by the subjects, in the spirit of the reciprocal obligation of the ruler to respect their honor as well. Failing to do so justifiably led the Poles to lose their trust in Bolesław and to dissolve the bonds of loyalty, turning to his brother instead.

The final account of Bolesław being betrayed by his own men during the struggle with his brothers over the division of Silesia comes from the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*. While both parts of the chronicle blame Bolesław for the fraternal conflict and the loss of Lubusz and Greater Poland, only the longer entry from the Silesian part of the chronicle contains the details about the revolt against the oldest brother.⁸⁴⁶ The Lubiąż monk writes how, after the storm of the Mongol invasion, Bolesław turned against his younger brothers and three times besieged Wrocław. Thwarted in his plans of capturing the city, valiantly defended by the townspeople, Bolesław gathered the army of “German adventurers and robbers” (*advenis Teuthonicis predonibus*) and embarked on the campaigns of looting and burning the land, massacring people even on consecrated grounds. Meanwhile, “many castles were built by the knights and the robbers, to the detriment of the land”.⁸⁴⁷ Thus:

when Bolesław, to the detriment of his brothers, handed over the castle and the land of Lubusz to the Margraves of Brandenburg, Jan and Otto, and to the Archbishop of Magdeburg, he was thus deprived of his own land of Legnica by the castle builders (*abstructores castrorum*), so that he wandered miserably without a servant, sometimes on horseback, sometimes on foot, with a certain *figellator* Surrian. [...] Finally, by the forces of Henryk III, the brother of Bolesław, the castles of the plunderers were overthrown, and Bolesław was restored to the rule of the land of Legnica, though unworthy (*indignus*). Later, he acted wickedly against his brothers Henryk and Konrad, capturing them, and was himself afterward captured by them, and finally, along with the aforementioned *figellator*, he was deliberately allowed, as if a fugitive, to escape by night from the castle and tower of Wrocław.⁸⁴⁸

This colorful depiction by the Lubiąż monk places Bolesław’s ouster from power and degrading vagrancy as a part of the broader narrative about the bad Piast ruler and brother. The

⁸⁴⁶ For the shorter account from the Polish part of the chronicle, see SCP, 643.

⁸⁴⁷ SCP, 651-52: *Cum hac tempestate submota terra Slesie respirare debuisset, ecce senior filius Boleslaus Calvus contra fratres suos parvulos consurgens tribus expeditionibus Wratislaviam obsedit, que licet tunc in iure Teuthonico novella esset et viribus quasi nulla, tamen se contrahens in angustia sua, viriliter se defendit. Quod cernens Boleslaus multis advenis Teuthonicis predonibus congregatis terram non solum spoliis verum etiam incendiis aliquociens crudeliter vastavit, et in hoc malo in ecclesia et cimiterio Novi-fori fere quingenti homines incendio perierunt, et castra multa predonum ac militum in malum terre constructa fuerunt.*

⁸⁴⁸ SCP, 652: *Cumque idem Boleslaus in preiudicium fratrum suorum castrum Lubes cum terra marchionibus Brandenburgensibus Iohanni et Ottoni et archiepiscopo Magdeburgensi tradidisset, ita propria terra Legnicensi ab abstructoribus castrorum destitutus fuit, quod sine famulo aliquando eques, aliquando pedes cum Surriano figellatore misere vagabatur. [...] Tandem Henrici tercii, fratris Boleslai, viribus castra predonum subversa sunt, et Boleslaus gubernaculo terre Legnicensis restitutus est licet indignus. Qui postea contra fratres suos Henricum et Conradum et per captivacionem ipsorum scelestus et ipse ab eis postmodum captivatus fuit et tandem cum predicto figellatore, tamquam effuga, ex industria de castro ac turre Wratislaviensi recedere noctu permissus est.*

enigmatic *abstrucotres castrorum*, as convincingly argued by Tomasz Jurek, should be identified with the very same “German adventurers and robbers” whom Bolesław himself invited to fight his brothers.⁸⁴⁹ Their disloyalty is merely another manifestation of the general anarchy that the Piast duke introduced to Silesia. According to Lubiąż’s monk, the duke of Legnica does not lose his power as a result of the rebellion of ordinary subjects. Instead, it was the same villains who looted and burned the countryside on behalf of Bolesław who eventually turned against him. Thus, even though the chronicler clearly states that Bolesław was unworthy of rulership, he nevertheless praises Henryk III the White for restoring him to his throne in Legnica. In doing so, Henryk not only acted as a good brother but also brought back peace and order to the land. Despite the unambiguously negative opinion of Bolesław, the Lubiąż monk could not bring himself to cheer for the overthrow of the Piast ruler. This is in line with the approach the chronicler took when adapting the descriptions of rebellions against members of the dynasty from older historiographical tradition. As I discussed in the previous chapter, the Lubiąż monk did not share Vincentius of Cracow’s explicit approval of the Poles who expelled bad rulers like Queen Rycheza or Mieszko III the Old. The case of Bolesław the Bald illustrates that even when discussing contemptuous dukes, the author of the *Silesian Chronica Polonorum* remained at best ambiguous on, if not silently opposed to the idea of subjects rightfully abandoning their Piast rulers.

The authors of the *Book of Henryków*, *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter*, and the *Silesian Chronica Polonorum* shared their antipathy towards Bolesław the Bald, but did not agree in their judgment on those subjects who betrayed their loyalty to the bad Piast ruler. Abbot Piotr saw the kidnapping and imprisonment of Bolesław by his own followers as a shameful act that brought disaster onto Silesia, with the self-interested nobles trying to hide behind the justification of defending the rights of junior dynasty members. The Lubiąż monk presented Bolesław’s ousting from power as a work of foreign mercenaries and plunderers, whom the bad duke invited to Silesia in his unjust fight against his younger brothers. The only unambiguous support for the subjects abandoning Bolesław was voiced in the *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter*. The annalist’s account also highlighted the problems brought by the duke’s foreign mercenaries, whose financial demands caused the Piast ruler to turn against his erstwhile favorite, Ikon. The imprisonment of this nobleman was seen by Bolesław’s subjects as an attack

⁸⁴⁹ Tomasz Jurek, “Abstructores Castrorum. Przyczynek do dziejów społecznych i politycznych Śląska w połowie XIII w.” [Abstructores Castrorum. A Contribution to the Social and Political History of Silesia in the Mid-13th Century.], in *Narodziny Rzeczypospolitej. Studia z dziejów średniowiecza i czasów wczesnonowożytnych*, vol. 2, ed. Waldemar Bukowski and Tomasz Jurek (Cracow: Towarzystwo Naukowe Societas Vistulana, 2012), 769–75.

on their honor, which, in the eyes of the annalist, justified the dissolution of the bonds of loyalty between Bolesław and his subjects.

3.5.2 Władysław the Short Flees Greater Poland

The unexpected death of Przemysł II on 8 February 1296 left Greater Poland in a state of crisis. In the face of the heirless death of the last male member of the Greater-Polish branch of the dynasty, two Piast candidates quickly declared themselves, ready to seize Przemysł's inheritance: Władysław the Short and Henryk of Głogów. The closest ally of the deceased monarch, Władysław the Short, entered Greater Poland, having been elected, as he later claimed, by Greater-Polish nobles to be their new ruler. In late February Henryk of Głogów, who was named an heir in case of the premature death of Przemysł II in a deal made by both Piasts sometime few years earlier,⁸⁵⁰ gathered forces to enforce his claim. With the army of the Silesian ruler moving through Greater Poland, the two claimants met on 10 March 1296 in Krzywiń by Leszno, reaching a compromise. While Władysław would keep the eastern parts of Greater Poland with its important centers of power, ceding to Henryk only the southern and western parts of Przemysł's realm, he recognized the legal claim of the Silesian Piast and adopted his oldest son, promising to give him Poznań after he reaches adulthood.⁸⁵¹

This treaty is traditionally seen as Władysław's defeat, and the first step towards the disillusionment of the Greater-Polish elites with the Cuyavian Piast, whom they now deemed too weak to fulfill their political ambitions.⁸⁵² In a few years, the would-be ruler of half of Greater Poland was not only rejected by those who elected him Przemysł II's heir, but was driven completely out of Poland. It is the justifications made by the Greater-Polish nobles who had gotten rid of Władysław the Short that interest me in this part of my thesis. I have already outlined the political events unfolding in Greater Poland between early 1296 and 1299 when discussing the document that the Cuyavian Piast issued for the Bohemian monarch in the late summer of 1299.⁸⁵³ After reaching a deal with the Bohemian emissaries at the secluded hunting grounds near Klęka, Władysław stayed in Eastern Greater Poland, issuing in early September

⁸⁵⁰ For an overview of the circumstances in which Przemysł II might have made this promise to Henryk of Głogów, known only from the reference to it in the treaty of Krzywiń, see Jurek, *Dziedzic Królestwa Polskiego*, 30–40.

⁸⁵¹ KDW II.745

⁸⁵² Bieniak, *Wielkopolska, Kujawy*, 122; Janusz Bieniak, "Zjednoczenie państwa polskiego" [Unification of the Polish state], in *Polska dzielnicowa i zjednoczona. Państwo-społeczeństwo-kultura*, ed. Aleksander Gieysztor (Warsaw: Wiedza powszechna, 1972), 230; The most recent interpretation of Błażej Śliwiński poses an interesting challenge to this view, by highlighting the large Greater-Polish land owners as the main beneficiaries of the treaty that meant to stop the fighting in the region's heartland. See Śliwiński, "Władysław Łokietek wiosną," 292–93.

⁸⁵³ See Chapter 3.2.1.

documents in Poznań, Kalisz, and Pyzdry.⁸⁵⁴ In November, Władysław still waged some military actions against Henryk III of Głogów on the Greater-Polish and Silesian border,⁸⁵⁵ On December 1st 1299, in the Cuyavian town of Łęczyca, he rewarded the *fidelia servitia* of his chaplain and *subcancellarius* Master Henryk with a village of Wichrów,⁸⁵⁶ only to disappear from Poland altogether until returning to Lesser Poland in 1304.

While the diplomatic sources do not tell us much about the problems faced by Władysław in the second half of the 1299, the *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter*, in its only note for that year, wrote that in the time of Duke Władysław the Church “had suffered many injuries” from the duke and his knights: the violation of cemeteries, the oppression of the poor, widows, and orphans, attacks on the church property, and other things “too horrible to speak of”. Therefore “Andrzej, by God’s grace bishop of Poznań, placed his whole diocese under a general interdict, forbidding the celebration of divine offices etc.”⁸⁵⁷ As the annalistic narration continues under 1300, writing that:

the [Greater] Poles, seeing the fickleness (*inconstancia*) of Duke Władysław, called for King Václav of Bohemia and took him as their lord, having chased Władysław from all his lands. Under King Václav the greatest peace and justice flourished in Poland, as it did in the time of his heirs.⁸⁵⁸

Similar in its tone was the account given in 1339 during the Warsaw Trial by Andrzej’s successor, Jan Łodzia, bishop of Poznań. Witnessing these events as a child, Jan said that Władysław succeeded Przemysł II in Greater Poland and Pomerania, but after three years of his rule:

on account of the wars and because the aforesaid lord Władysław, lord of the aforesaid land of Pomerania, did not keep good justice and many damages, wrongdoings, despoliations, and oppressions occurred in the said land of Pomerania, such that it was almost completely deserted, and because the said lord Władysław, the lord of the said land of Pomerania and king of Poland, was unwilling to correct the said excesses or bring the malefactors to justice, the nobles and all of the people of said land of Pomerania and Poland opposed and contradicted the said lord Władysław, and they ejected him from the said lands

⁸⁵⁴ KDW II.819-21.

⁸⁵⁵ As testified by the document issued at the camp in Skomlin, KDW II.825.

⁸⁵⁶ CDP II.171.

⁸⁵⁷ RkP, [123], 53: *Item anno Domini Millesimo CC nonagesimo IX cum temporibus ducis Wladislai ecclesia multas iniurias pateretur tam a predicto .. duce quam a militibus eius, scilicet violaciones cimiteriorum et oppressiones pauperum, viduarum ac orphanorum, omnium bonum ecclesiarum, ecclesie ad anichilacionem et alie que loqui horrendum est Andreas Dei Gracia episcopus ecclesie Poznaniensis in tota diocese sua generale posuit interdictum prohibens divina official celebrare etc.*

⁸⁵⁸ RkP, [124], 54: *Item sub anno Domini Millesimo CCC Poloni videntes inconstanciam ducis Wladislai predicti vocaverunt Wenceslaum regem Bohemie et in dominum sibi receperunt fugato Wladislao de omnibus terris eciam propriis. Sub quo rege Wenceslao maxima pax et iusticia vigit in Polonia, tamquam temporibus ipsorum heredum.*

of Pomerania and Poland and they accepted into lordship the king of Bohemia, and as long as he lived they hang onto him as their lord.⁸⁵⁹

Interestingly, the Bohemian *Zbraslav Chronicle* does not mention anything about Władysław the Short. According to its Cistercian author, after the death of Przemysław II, the short discussion led the elites of his kingdom to elect Václav II as their lord, sending envoys to the Bohemian King.⁸⁶⁰

When discussing the dissolution of the bonds of loyalty linking Greater-Polish nobles and Władysław the Short which led to his removal from the duchy and the invitation of the Přemyslid monarch, we have to consider three events: the treaty of Kłęka in August of 1299, the interdict placed by bishop Andrzej Zaręba in the same year, and the rebellion of Greater-Polish nobles, who drove Władysław out of his lands. The *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter* allow us to link, though not explicitly, the actions of bishop Andrzej with the rebellion of the Greater-Polish subjects. Other than that, the causal links, or even the chronological order of the three events are open to interpretation, leading to differing views in the scholarship.

Historians writing in the first half of the twentieth century, believed that it was the difficult political situation, caused in part by the opposition of bishop Andrzej, that led Władysław to accept the terms offered to him in August by the Bohemian envoys.⁸⁶¹ This view, however, was challenged in the 1960s, with Janusz Bieniak offering a new chronology of the events, which remains dominant to this day. Tracing the contacts between Władysław and the members of the Greater-Polish and Cuyavian episcopate, the Polish historian argued that the relations between the Piast duke and the archbishop Jakub Świnka and bishop of Włocławek Wisław throughout 1299 were decent, if not perfect. In contrast, Władysław did not meet in that year with bishop Andrzej – though he continued to grant land and titles to the members of the Zaręba clan. This, Bieniak argued, was the sign of worsening relations between the bishop and Cuyavian Piast.⁸⁶² The interdict of bishop Andrzej, however, came late, in December – not

⁸⁵⁹ Lites I (2).2, 150: *qui per tres annos vel circa dictam terram Polonie tenuit et possedit pacifice et quiete; tandem, tum propter guerras et quia prefatus dominus Wladislaus dominus prefate terre Pomoranie non erat bonus iusticiarius et multa dampna, iniurie et spolia et oppressiones fiebant in dicta terra Pomoranie, taliter quod fere fuit deserta in totum, quia dictus dominus Wladislaus dominus dicte terre Pomoranie et rex Polonie nolebat dictos excessus corrigere nec iusticiam facere de malefactoribus in eadem, nobiles et totus populus illius terre Pomoranie et Polonie se dicto domino Wladislao domino Pomoranie et regi Polonie opposuerunt et contradixerunt, ipsumque a dictis terris Pomoranie et Polonie eiecerunt et regem Boemie videlicet Wenceslaum in dominum receperunt, et quamdiu vixit, sibi tamquam eorum domino adhererunt.*

⁸⁶⁰ 67 in *Cronica Aule Regie*, 132: *Unde factum est, postquam primus rex Kalisiensis occisus fuisset nullumque heredem masculinum supersitem reliquisset, maiores natu regni illius pariter convenerunt et de principe alio, cui se terramque securius subicere valeant, solliciti tractaverunt. Breviantur hec consilia, nam omne communiter in Wenceslaum, regem Bohemie sextum, ut regnet super eos, dirigunt sua vota.*

⁸⁶¹ Šusta, “Václav II. a koruna polská,” 332–35; Włodarski, *Polska i Czechy*, 150–59.

⁸⁶² Bieniak, *Wielkopolska, Kujawy*, 126–29.

before Władysław issued his last document in Łęczyca, and months after he visited the seat of Andrzej's diocese on September 1st that year.⁸⁶³ Thus, Bieniak claims, the excommunication of the duke was not a cause but a consequence of the oaths sworn by Władysław at Klęka, a final blow to the legitimacy of the Cuyavian Piast in the eyes of the Greater-Polish elites.⁸⁶⁴ The idea that the deal at Klęka was particularly discrediting in the eyes of the Greater Polish elites, turning the growing opposition against the hastily elected Władysław into an open, successful rebellion, has been accepted by many historians.⁸⁶⁵ Tomasz Jurek pointed out that Władysław's loss of power in December aligned with the deadline of the promised homage in Prague, going as far as suggesting that bishop Andrzej and the rebels might have used the clauses contained in the Klęka document as their justification.⁸⁶⁶

This interpretation of the role that the meeting at Klęka played in the Greater Polish subjects getting rid of Władysław, while tempting, needs to be taken with a grain of salt. There is no denying that the treaty was a political miscalculation on Władysław the Short's part, and that its document was important for Václav II, who was meticulous in collecting legal claims legitimizing his rule in Poland.⁸⁶⁷ It is, however, unclear just how much impact the agreement reached at Klęka could have had on the opinion of the Greater-Polish elites. The talks, as suggested by the lack of witnesses mentioned in the document, were most likely not public.⁸⁶⁸ We cannot thus determine how those who did not participate in the talks learned about Władysław's declaration of future submission. We also do not know how reliable the circulating information would be, and just how legible its legal implications would be to the public. After all, as I discussed earlier in this chapter, there is little evidence for familiarity with the feudal law among the Greater-Polish elite in the last decades of the thirteenth century. Finally, the promises given to the Bohemian king do not figure in the justifications noted by the representatives of the Greater-Polish elites themselves.

Seeing the interdict issued by bishop Andrzej as the response to the agreement Władysław the Short reached at Klęka with Václav's representatives places disproportionate

⁸⁶³ KDW II.819; this argument first forwarded in Maria Bielińska, "Kancelaria Władysława Łokietka w latach 1296-1299: ze studiów nad kancelarią wielkopolską" [The Chancery of Władysław the Elbow-high in the years 1296-1299: from studies on the Greater Poland Chancery], *Studia Źródłoznawcze = Commentationes* 6 (1961): 21.

⁸⁶⁴ Bieniak, *Wielkopolska, Kujawy*, 130.

⁸⁶⁵ See for example Łowmiański, *Początki Polski*, vol. 6, 887; Nowacki, *Czeskie roszczenia*, 63–65; Maciejowski, *Orientacje polityczne biskupów*, 216.

⁸⁶⁶ Jurek, "Dyplomatyka i Łowy [Diplomacy and hunting]," 39.

⁸⁶⁷ Václav's strategies of legitimization most recently discussed in Nikodem, "Metody legitymizacji."

⁸⁶⁸ See ACRB I.68, which mentions only advisors that were to help in arranging Władysław's homage in Prague. These are identified with Władysław's advisor Aleksy of Leckinsteen and Václav's half-brother Mikuláš of Opava, both of whom might have participated in the meeting.

weight on the political hopes and aspirations of the Greater-Polish elites. The men closer to the nobles responsible for overthrowing Władysław, like the annalist behind the entry in the *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter* and bishop Jan Łodzia, chose to focus on completely different rationales: the injuries suffered by the inhabitants of Greater Poland from the hands of malefactors, whose excesses Władysław could not or did not want to curb. This inability to stop the violence and bring order to the land which, as has been frequently pointed out, enjoyed in the previous two decades a period of peace and stability,⁸⁶⁹ has to be seen as the foremost justification for abandoning the Cuyavian Piast by his Greater-Polish subjects.

Other contemporary sources indicate, though not directly, that this concern about lawlessness was not expressed without any basis. In March of 1298 Władysław the Short issued a document allowing the townspeople of the most important urban centers of Greater Poland: Poznań, Gniezno, Pyzdry, and Kalisz, to pursue and punish the criminals, of whatever kind of social standing they might be.⁸⁷⁰ This prerogative was reiterated in one of the final documents issued by Władysław prior to his exile, in which the authorization to prosecute the criminals was granted to the citizens of Kalisz and all those who would align with them.⁸⁷¹ These measures of involving urban centers in upholding the public order and curbing banditry would persist into the period of the Czech rule in Greater Poland.⁸⁷² Finally, though its depiction is undoubtedly colored by its goal of presenting Václav II as the ideal ruler, we should not dismiss the *Zbraslav Chronicle* when it presents the Přemyslid's entry to Greater Poland in 1300 as accompanied by a campaign against banditry.⁸⁷³

Secondly, though less directly, the *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter* gesture also towards the other factor that had been argued to serve as a point of contention with Greater-Polish nobles. By contrasting the ill-behaved Władysław's men with the suffering parishioners of the Poznań diocese the annalist draws attention to the fact that, despite their relative proximity and interconnectedness, Władysław's closest supporters were not Greater-Polish

⁸⁶⁹ This aspect of Przemysł II's rule underlined in Sławomir Gawlas, "Polityka wewnętrzna Przemysła II a mechanizmy społecznych dążeń i konfliktów w Wielkopolsce jego czasów" [The internal policy of Przemysł II and the mechanisms of social aspirations and conflicts in Greater Poland during his reign], in *Przemysł II: odnowienie Królestwa Polskiego*, ed. Jadwiga Krzyżaniakowa (Poznań: Instytut Historii UAM, 1997), 76; Nowacki, *Przemysł II*, 230; Świeżawski, *Przemysł - król Polski*, 280–81; Śliwiński, "Władysław Łokietek wiosną," 276.

⁸⁷⁰ KDW II.777

⁸⁷¹ KDW II.820

⁸⁷² See the document of the confederation of the Greater-Polish cities issued with the consensus of representative of Přemyslid monarch in 1302, KDW II.858.

⁸⁷³ 67 in *Chronica Aule Regie*, 133: *Porro mox ut ad terminos Polonie rex pervenit, pacis comodo verbo et opere intendere cepit, tuguria namque latibula, que hinc inde latronum habitacio fuerant in rubetis, confregit igneque plurima consumpsit, fratres quoque et consanguineos quosdam quondam illius magni Zcebisii ibidem in quodam castello inventos obsedit et obtentos protinus decollavit.*

locals, but his Cuyavian subjects.⁸⁷⁴ While not as outrageous in his favoritism towards his “foreign” advisors over local elites as Bolesław the Bald in the past or Silesian Piasts in the future, Władysław was still believed not to have fully the best interests of his new subjects at heart.

3.5.3 Outlining Red Lines - Wincenty of Szamotuły

Finally, among the early-fourteenth-century sources, we can also find an example of a Piast subject directly setting out the borders that he believes would justify him turning to the aid of the other lord. I am referring to the already alluded to treaty ratified in Landsberg (Gorzów Wielkopolski) between Palatine Wincenty of Szamotuły with his brothers and Margrave Ludwig’s representatives in Neumark: Hasson and Wedegon von Wedel, and Betkin (most probably Bertold) von Osten. The text of the charter served, after the account of *Traska’s Annal*, as the other point of reference in the discussion of Wincenty’s treachery. However, even as historiography reached consensus on the palatine’s innocence, the interpretation of the document has not been unanimous. For some, the document was issued on 18 August 1331 in secrecy. Wincenty, hounded by the accusations of ineptitude or treachery reflected in the aftermath of the Teutonic Knights’ raiding Greater Poland, sought out the protection of the Margrave in case of repressions on behalf of King Władysław.⁸⁷⁵ Different position underscores the border-zone nature of the Noteć river valley, highlighting the possessions Wincenty’s family held on both sides of the border.⁸⁷⁶ Thus, the Landsberg treaty should be linked with the attempts to bring peace to the Brandenburg-Polish border, expressed in a truce ratified on 29th October 1329.⁸⁷⁷ In this reinterpretation, which seems more plausible to me, Wincenty and the representatives of the Neumark elites took the step of guaranteeing private peace on the border in anticipation of, or in addition to the treaty between the margrave and the king.⁸⁷⁸

⁸⁷⁴ This pointed out already in Jasiński, “Rola polityczna możnowładztwa.”

⁸⁷⁵ Gerard Labuda, “Studia nad XIV wiekiem. Zdrada,” 68–69; Antoni Czacharowski, *Spoleczne i polityczne sily w walce o Nową Marchię w latach 1319-1373: ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem roli możnowładztwa nowomarchijskiego* [Social and political forces in the struggle for the Neumark in the years 1319-1373: with particular emphasis on the role of the Neumark nobility] (Poznań: PWN, 1968), 107–9; Wielgosz, “An regni pessimus defraudator,” 467–73; Pakulski, “Stosunek wojewody poznańskiego”; Jan Pakulski, *Sily polityczno-społeczne w Wielkopolsce w pierwszej połowie XIV wieku* [Socio-political forces in Greater Poland in the first half of the 14th century] (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 1979), 38–41.

⁸⁷⁶ Most extensively Rymar, “Przynależność polityczna,” 43–65; On Wincenty family’s aspirations to build a territorial lordship in Noteć borderland also Gawlas, “Polityka wewnętrzna,” 78–79.

⁸⁷⁷ KDW II.1103.

⁸⁷⁸ Rymar, “Przynależność polityczna,” 60–65; Edward Rymar, “Jeszcze raz o datacji i okolicznościach zawarcia polsko-brandenburskiego układu landsberskiego (gorzowskiego)” [Revisiting the dating and circumstances of the conclusion of the Polish–Brandenburg Landsberg (Gorzów) agreement], *Nadwarciański Rocznik Historyczno-Archiwalny* 18 (2011), 31–43; Tomasz Jurek more cautiously remains by the 1331 date, but sees the private treaty as an extension of the 1329 truce, see Jurek, “Szamotulski Wincenty (Wincenty z Szamotuł) h. Nałęcz, Wojewoda

In the text of the treaty, Wincenty swears an oath to the margrave, his representatives, and “to the whole land of the March, its cities and vassals (*toti terre marchie, civitatibus et vasallis*)” to firmly observe the peace and serve him loyally with all of his fortresses. Neither the Polish king nor the Brandenburg margrave would be allowed to pass Wincenty’s lands when attacking each other, and that the signatories would stand by the margrave’s side if the Polish king were an aggressor. The most important from my perspective is, however, the last provision of the treaty, which stipulates that if the palatine, or his kinsmen were to suffer any offense or injustice (*calumpniam aut iniuriam*) from Władysław that would lead to hostility, then they would surrender themselves and all their castles to the margrave and seek reconciliation only with his permission.⁸⁷⁹

This direct statement makes it clear that Wincenty had no doubt that there are circumstances in which he would be completely justified in dissolving the bonds of loyalty that linked him with the Piast monarch. In comparison to the rest of the treaty, these are defined rather broadly as unspecified injustices that would befall not only Wincenty, but also his family and kin. It seems to me that this vagueness was not coincidental, as it favored the Greater-Polish palatine. It was ultimately left to his discretion if he felt himself threatened enough to surrender his castles to the Margrave, which gave Wincenty, contrary to the letter of the treaty, the opportunity to settle the disagreements with Władysław the Short without Brandenburgian involvement.

To conclude, despite the disapproval voiced against Bolesław the Bald by the Lubiąż monk, the late-thirteenth-century chronicler did not articulate the idea about the right of Silesian subjects to rebel against their bad ruler. This was a marked departure from Vincentius of Cracow’s *Chronica Polonorum*, which persistently argued for the rights of the non-dynastic

Poznański, Starosta Wielkopolski”; Leaving the matter of the date open, but also interpreting the treaty as a private peace initiative by Wincenty, a subject of both Władysław the Short and Margrave Ludwig, Bieniak, *Zarębowie i Nałęcz*, 168–75.

⁸⁷⁹ KDW II. 1117: *Noverint universi presentium notitiam habituri, quod nos Vincentius miles palatinus Pozensis, una cum fratribus nostris, domino Dobergost milite et Thomislav famulo, inclito principi domino Lodewico marchioni de Brandenborch et suis capitaneis, videlicet Hassoni seniori et Wedegoni dictis de Wedell, nec non Bartholdo de Ost eiusdem domini marchionis advocato, ac toti terre marchie, civitatibus et vasallis, fide data promittimus pacem firmam absque omni dolo inviolabiliter observare et cum omnibus munitionibus nostris fideliter deservire. Ita quod, si dominus rex Polonie terras domini marchionis velit devastare aut aliquatenus molestare, per nostras munitiones castri Vellenen et castri Tzernekow introitum et exitum sibi plane debemus denegare; et e converso domino marchioni idem faciemus, si vellet terras domini regis Polonie aliquatenus impedire. Si autem prefatus rex Polonie per alias vias aut munitiones terras domini marchionis sepredicti potenter introiverit, extunc ipsum dominum marchionem et suos vasallos, cum nostris munitionibus ex ista parte fluvii Netze iuvare debemus, introitum et exitum ipsis ministrando. Item quod, si nobis, Vicentio et fratribus nostris, dominus rex Polonie calumpniam aut iniuriam aliquam fecerit aut nostris amicis, pro quo eiusdem regis Polonie inimici existeremus, tunc cum omnibus nostris munitionibus domino marchioni adherere debemus, nullam concordiam aut ordinationem cum domino rege Polonie faciendo, donec fuerit ex ipsius domini marchionis voluntate.*

elites to abandon or actively resist rulers who failed to perform their duties. While this aspect of the complex political ideas expressed by Vincentius did not find direct reception in the works of historiography created in fragmented Poland, the period saw no shortage of ideas about proper justifications for dissolving the bonds of loyalty. These run a wide gamut: from claiming to defend the rights of the other members of the Piast dynasty, through the attack on the person or *honor* of one of the subjects, to the accusation of the broader failure, through fickleness or ineptitude to bring peace and justice to the ruled land. This diversity suggests that the norms guiding the dissolution of the bonds of loyalty were not universally agreed upon throughout fragmented Poland – as further illustrated by Abbot Piotr’s unfavorable view of the justification used by the Silesian nobles. Thus, in the narrow sense, Stanisław Russocki was right to point out the lack of an institutional framework resembling *ius resistendi* in the political culture of fragmented Poland.⁸⁸⁰

In a much more general sense, one can see the outline of the boundaries beyond which the bonds of loyalty might dissolve, which rely on the shared understanding of three obligations on the Piast ruler’s part. The first was grounded in the personal, reciprocal relationship and was an obligation to respect the honor of their subjects. Perhaps more fundamental were his duties to administer justice and secure peace in the ruled land. As the latter was often understood to be possible only with the help of the local inhabitants, reliance on foreign forces or advisors was an easy way of crossing those boundaries.

3.6 Aftermaths of Disloyalty

Thus far, when discussing the disloyal noble subjects of the Piast dukes I have stopped short of describing the consequences faced by those who betrayed their Piast rulers. In this part of the thesis, I ask about the later fates of the known disloyal subjects: what punishment did those accused of disloyalty suffer? How often could those accused of disloyalty, like Wincenty of Szamotuły discussed above, return to the favor of the Piast ruler? Answering these questions has important consequences for the interpretation of poorly documented political events from the thirteenth century. As the discussion of pre-1285 rebellions in Lesser Poland elsewhere in this chapter demonstrated, scholarly attempts to identify anonymous disloyal subjects often hinge on unspoken assumptions about their most likely fates, their stripping of lands and titles.

An even more illustrative example of how unexamined assumptions about the punishment and reconciliations with disloyal subjects can be found in the historiographical

⁸⁸⁰ Russocki, “Opór Władcom,” 39.

discussion is the case of Castellan Ikon, mentioned in passing in the previous subchapter. To revisit it once more, according to the *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter* in 1251 the Silesian subjects rebelled against Bolesław the Bald, after he imprisoned Ikon, son of Miro, castellan of Krosno, trying to extort money from him to hire more German military aid. According to the annalist, the situation was made more outrageous by the fact that Ikon was, up to this point, the duke's favorite, frequently bestowed with favors and gifts by Bolesław.⁸⁸¹ The witness lists of the documents issued by Bolesław the Bold do mention Ikon son of Miro, castellan of Głogów (not Krosno), testifying on several documents issued by the duke between 1247-1250.⁸⁸² His disappearance from the written record after that date aligns with the story told by the Greater-Polish annalist, but his reappearance five years later suggests otherwise. In a document issued in 1255 Bolesław rewards Ikon with the far-reaching immunities, praising his "constancy, stability, loyalty, and perseverance" in the challenging times. Even as the duke's brothers turned against him and other men who received benefices from Bolesław's hand had abandoned him, Ikon "in all these temptations and disturbances around us, and many others, has always remained more stable and faithful."⁸⁸³ Made palatine of Legnica sometime before 1259, Ikon appeared frequently on the documents of Bolesław the Bald and, after the old duke died in 1278, continued to serve his successors.⁸⁸⁴

The discrepancy between the information provided by the *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter* and the diploma received by Ikon in 1255 led historians to create divergent visions of Ikon's political career, while casting doubt on the reliability of both sources. Andrzej Jureczko argued for the veracity of the annalistic account.⁸⁸⁵ Marek Cetwiński, in turn, placed more faith in the 1255 diploma, pointing out the discrepancies in the annalistic note created in

⁸⁸¹ RkP, [40], 28: *Boleslaus dux filius Henrici Iconem filium Mironis, castellanum Crosnensem, quem pre omnibus hominibus diligere videbatur et pro quo faciebat quicquid ab eodem duce postulabat, et cui multas pecunias idem dux contulerat, captivum tenuit et Teutonicis tradidit custodiendum, volens ab ipso pecuniam extorquere, ut posset cum ea in auxilium suum Theutonicos convenire. Quod videntes Poloni, qui eidem duci Boleslao adherebant, de ipso desperaverunt et eum tamquam honoris sui persecutorem deserentes fratri ipsius duci Conrado adhererunt, tradentes ei Crosnam et alias munitiones.*

⁸⁸² SUB II.339, 353, 371, 413.

⁸⁸³ SUB III.573: *Innotescat universis tam presentibus quam futuris hanc literam inspecturis, quod nos Boleslaus dei gratia dux Slezie, cum essemus maximis occupati perturbationibus, quibus nos tam nostri milites, quibus multa bona ostendimus et fecimus, quam fratres nostri, videlicet Cunradus et Henricus, captivantes indebite sepius perturbaverunt et in eadem necessitate et aliis quam plurimis multi et quam plurimi beneficia diversa circa nos habentes a nobis recesserunt, dominus vero Iko in omnibus his temptationibus et perturbationibus et aliis multis circa nos semper stabiliter et fideliter perseveraverit, quapropter ob eiusdem domini Ikonis constantiam, stabilitatem, fidelitatem et perseverantiam, quia in omnibus necessitatibus his permansit circa nos constans, in omnibus bonis suis et hereditatibus et servitiorum suorum eidem domino Ikoni damus, habita bona et perfecta deliberatione, omnia iura ducalia, videlicet iudicia maiora, homicidia, furta, effusiones sanguinis et eius similia, poradlne, podvorove, strozne, castrorum reparationes, solutiones et exactiones qualescunque, et suis posteris vel heredibus in perpetuum iure hereditario ad habendum, possidendum et percipiendum.*

⁸⁸⁴ Cetwiński, *Rycerstwo Śląskie. Biogramy i rodowody*, 2:88.

⁸⁸⁵ Jureczko, *Henryk III Biały*, 65–68.

Poznań, which seemed to have conflated Ikon with a different Silesian nobleman, Otto. Not only did Otton's family had real connection with rebellious region, but Otto himself is known to have spent some part of 1251 imprisoned by anonymous forces.⁸⁸⁶ Therefore, Cetwiński argued, Ikon was never imprisoned by Duke Bolesław, and served him loyally during the time of great political upheaval, for which he was richly rewarded.⁸⁸⁷ Even among those who agreed with Cetwiński's criticisms of *Annals of Poznań Cathedral Chapter* one can find voices equally skeptical of the authenticity of the document issued in 1255.⁸⁸⁸ The charter is known only from the transumpt issued for Ikon's grandson, Stefan of Parchwice, in 1309.⁸⁸⁹ The extent of the judicial privileges granted to Ikon, as well as the witness list, led Joseph J. Menzel and Winfried Irgang to suggest that the document presented for confirmation in 1309 was a forgery, created at the turn of the fourteenth century.⁸⁹⁰ Stefan, who oversaw the rise of his family to the very top of the elite in the Duchy of Legnica,⁸⁹¹ could have fabricated or embellished an old diploma, relying on the loyalty of his grandfather to justify his own advancement.

The central problem at the heart of the historiographical debate over Ikon's role in the 1251 events can thus be boiled down to the question asked by Marek Cetwiński: would the later collaboration between Bolesław the Bold and Ikon be possible, if the events described in the *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter* had really taken place?⁸⁹² The question was meant as merely a rhetorical figure, and was treated as such by the participants of the discussion around Ikon's case, eager to critique the veracity of seemingly contradictory sources. In my opinion, however, the possibility of Ikon's imprisonment and later return to favor needs to be considered in earnest.

3.6.1 Punishment

Understanding the difficulty of the reconciliation in the face of breaking the bonds of loyalty requires establishing just how significant the consequences of disloyalty were for the subjects. What were the punishments that traitors and rebels who rose up against a thirteenth-century Piast could expect?

⁸⁸⁶ Otton's imprisonment was noted on occasion of the donation he made for abbot of Lubiąż, in gratitude for helping to pay Otton's ransom, see SUB III.22.

⁸⁸⁷ Cetwiński, *Rycerstwo Śląskie. Pochodzenie-gospodarka-polityka*, 1:124; Cetwiński, "Kronikarze o zamachach stanu," 320; Similarly Mularczyk, "Podziały Śląska," 498–500.

⁸⁸⁸ Jurek, "Geneza księstwa głogowskiego," 85–86.

⁸⁸⁹ RS 3027.

⁸⁹⁰ Josef Joachim Menzel, *Jura Ducalia: die mittelalterlichen Grundlagen der Dominalverfassung in Schlesien* (Würzburg: Holzner, 1964), 147; Irgang's commentary in SUB III.537.

⁸⁹¹ Tomasz Jurek, "Slesie stirps nobilissima. Jeleńczycy- ród biskupa wrocławskiego Tomasza I" [Slesie stirps nobilissima. Jeleńczycy - the clan of bishop of Wrocław Tomasz I], *Roczniki Historyczne* 58 (1992): 39.

⁸⁹² Cetwiński, "Kronikarze o zamachach stanu," 320.

As we have seen in the previous chapters, the chroniclers writing during the fragmentation period were very much concerned with the idea of the disloyal subjects meeting just punishment. In Vincentius of Cracow's *Chronica* nearly all the traitors, both real and imagined, were punished in a deliberately exemplary manner, either dying a dishonorable death, maimed, or at least exiled. The turn-of-the-fourteenth-century authors following in his footsteps paid particular attention to these parts of Vincentius's work, leaving the details about Masław's or the Pannonian nobleman's fate unchanged.

The attention to the punishment of those accused of treachery can also be found whenever thirteenth-century authors engaged with the contemporaneous traditions. This was the case with the anonymous chronicler behind the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*. As I discussed in more detail in the previous chapter, he included in his story a version of an oral tradition about the exploits of the twelfth-century magnate Piotr Włost. In the telling of the story surviving in the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*, Duke Władysław II responds to the audacious challenge to his own power by a powerful noble by blinding Piotr in punishment.

The story about Piotr Włost was not the only oral tradition about the Piast duke punishing a powerful aristocrat accused of disloyalty circulating in thirteenth-century Poland. While not surviving in as expansive a form as a tale about the Silesian nobleman, the death of Palatine Krystyn at the hands of Duke Konrad of Mazovia seems to have similarly made an impression on the Piast subjects. The contemporaneous entry from the *Annals of the Cracow Cathedral Chapter* noted that this "most valiant knight" was first blinded and then executed by the Piast ruler. The death of the palatine, brought by the envy (*livor*), led to the ravaging of Mazovia by the pagan raids.⁸⁹³ Despite the clear importance given to the event by the Lesser-Polish annalist, the contemporary reaction to the death of Palatine Krystyn seems initially muted.⁸⁹⁴ Nevertheless, in the middle of the thirteenth century, the Mazovian nobleman reappears in the *Mors et miracula beati Veneri*.⁸⁹⁵ This short text was created by the local Dominicans in an attempt to propagate the cult of the martyred Bishop of Płock, Werner. In the described vision, miraculously revealed to Jan, the Dean of Płock Cathedral, heads of Bishop

⁸⁹³ RkK, [186], 71-72: *Christinus palatinus Maz[oviensis] miles strenuissimus, precepto ducis Conradi cecatur, tandem violenter iugulatur. Et quia summa petit livor, qui etiam cum male queruntur prospera, sepius adversa succedunt, flos milicie Mazouiensis marcere lividorum cecidit et murus tocius est Mazouie dissipatus totalisque terra Mazouia lacte et melle manans tunc maxime mel in absinthium et lac incepit in adversa nubila commutare.*

⁸⁹⁴ The lack of other mentions in contemporary sources noted laready by Jan Powierski, "Śmierć wojewody Krystyna Piotrowica a początek najazdów pruskich na Mazowsze: legendy o Łabędziach a przekazy o traktacie spiskim z 1214 roku" [The death of voivode Krystyn Piotrowic and the beginning of the Prussian invasions of Mazovia: the legends of Łabędzie and the accounts of the Spiš Treaty of 1214], *Komunikaty Mazursko-Warmińskie* 1 (1992): 24.

⁸⁹⁵ The english-language discussion of the passage in Gładysz, *The Forgotten Crusaders*, 142–43.

Werner and Krystyn were both placed on the altar of the cathedral. The Mazovian Palatine, pictured in a position similar to a martyred bishop, is described as the man of great valor, known from his marvelous exploits in campaigns overseas and subduing the Prussians. Prompted by the accusations of Krystyn's enemies, Duke Konrad had the nobleman blinded and, later, killed.⁸⁹⁶ While the surviving traces of the tradition about the death of Krystyn do not specify what exactly the palatine was accused of, they portray the Piast ruler as swiftly dispensing capital punishment against the accused powerful subject.

Death as punishment for disloyalty also appears in the earliest surviving monument of Polish legal tradition, the *Elbląg Book*.⁸⁹⁷ This private compilation of Polish customary law was composed in German sometime in the second half of the thirteenth or early fourteenth century for the use in the territories controlled by the Knights of the Teutonic Order.⁸⁹⁸ According to the *Elbląg Book*, in Polish customary law, a person accused of treachery (*vorretnis*) had to find twelve witnesses willing to swear to their innocence. Reflecting the seriousness of the charge, this was the largest group of compurgators demanded in the legal compilation for any sort of accusation.⁸⁹⁹ Failing this, the accused had to fight a judicial duel. In case he lost the duel, the traitor was to be stoned to death.⁹⁰⁰ This punishment seemed to historians to be a relic of an archaic legal custom, an anachronistic part of the *Elbląg Book*.⁹⁰¹ Indeed, there is no thirteenth-century account that would see those accused of treachery meet their justice in this particularly cruel way.

A less spectacular but equally final penalty was, however, invoked and noted in the sources. In the wake of the 1286 rebellion, Leszek the Black beheaded Grzegorz of Balice, the son of Cracow's Palatine Żegota.⁹⁰² Moving from the center to the periphery of Piast Poland,

⁸⁹⁶ *Mors et miracula beati Veneri episcopi Plocensis*, ed. by Wojciech Kętrzyński, MPH, vol. 4, (Lwów: Akademia Umiejętności, 1884), 752: *Decanus autem prius dictus nocte subsequenti in visione duos canonicos Plocenses vidit portantes et deponentes in maiori altari cathedralis ecclesie Plocensis duo capita, unum Veneri episcopi et aliud comitis Cristini magni palatini, qui eciam accusantibus emulis prius excecatus, postmodum iugulatus [est] per Cunradum ducem. Iste Cristinus tante strenuitatis fuit, ut mirabilem miliciam exercuerit ultra mare et Prutenos ac alios gentiles hostes Mazovie compescuerit, ut plena securitate reddita Mazovie, tributarii existerent Polonorum.*

⁸⁹⁷ *Najstarszy Zwód Prawa Polskiego*, eds. by Józef Matuszewski and Jacek Matuszewski (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 1995).

⁸⁹⁸ See the discussion in *Najstarszy Zwód Prawa Polskiego*, 1-20.

⁸⁹⁹ *Najstarszy Zwód Prawa Polskiego*, art.23, §9; For comparison, killing a knight or a merchant on a public road would require nine compurgators, while killing a peasant – six. See *Najstarszy Zwód Prawa Polskiego*, art.15, §7, §9.

⁹⁰⁰ *Najstarszy Zwód Prawa Polskiego*, art.23, §8.

⁹⁰¹ Paweł Gołdyn, "Ukamenowanie i rozszarpanie w polskiej wczesnośredniowiecznej praktyce karnej" [Stoning and tearing apart in early medieval polish penal praxis], *Czasopismo Prawno-Historyczne* 58, no. 2 (2006): 128–30; Adam Vetulani, *Z badań nad kulturą prawniczą w Polsce piastowskiej* [From studies on the legal culture of Piast Poland] (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1976), 136–37.

⁹⁰² The document grants Cracow Dominicans the water rights to Rudawa stream, which were previously contested by Grzegorz and his kinsmen. KDKK, I.86: *Volumus eciam vt hac nostra donacione, quam propter deum facimus*

the death penalty was also used in Pomerania by Duke Mściwój II, in retribution against the townspeople of Gdańsk. In 1271, they used the instability caused by the conflict within the Pomeranian ruling family to offer direct control over the city to the margrave of Brandenburg, Konrad I.⁹⁰³ In the documents issued in the decades after these events, Duke Mściwój referred to the conspiracy of Arnold, Jan, and other townspeople, or simply *Theutonici incoli Pomeranie* against him, his *barones* and *terrigenae*. It constituted *crimen laesae maiestatis*, which was “according to canons and law alike” punishable by death and confiscation of the property.⁹⁰⁴

Nevertheless, the confiscation of the landed possessions alone was often where the consequences for the subjects accused of disloyalty ended. This is borne out by examples already discussed in this chapter. Thus Otto, Palatine of Sandomierz, another participant of the 1285 rebellion, escaped Lesser Poland with his life but had his lands, like the village Wielogłowy, confiscated by *iusta iudicante sententia*.⁹⁰⁵ Duke Siemowit of Dobrzyń confiscated the estate of Mokowo from the two participants of the plot against him in 1304.⁹⁰⁶ In Greater Poland Sędziwój Zaręba, who handed over Kalisz to the Silesian rival of Duke Przemysł II, was punished by the confiscation of his village of Kowale by the court of Greater-Polish *barones* headed by Mściwój of Pomerania.⁹⁰⁷ The same body of men was responsible for punishing Dziwan, son of a prominent Prussian exile in service of Mściwój of Pomerania, who rebelled against the ruler of Gdańsk in 1285. The quickly quelled rebellion had a limited

et salutem nostre anime, ipsi fratres gaudeant nunc et in ewm, non obstante eo, quod Gregorius Comes heres de Balic, dictus Zegoczicz, eandem aquam fratribus contradicens inhibuerat memoratis; Cum ipse, qui sue temeritatis calcaneum contra nos erexerat nostrum exterminium siciendo, tanquam reus lese maiestatis, nonsolum omnes hereditates suas et patrimonia, ceteraque bona, sed insuper collum et vitam perdiderit ipso iure et sit perpetuo adiudicatus, ac eodem iure ad nostrum sint hec omnia dominium deuoluta.

⁹⁰³ More detailed discussion of events in Pomerania in Chapter 4.2.

⁹⁰⁴ (1283) PIUB 365: [...] *cum cives Gdanenses Arnoldus cum cognatis suis et affinibus et Jacobus cum fratre et aliis consanguineis et affinibus heredes de Scrobotow et Vytomino crimen lese maiestatis incurrissent ex eo, quod in mortem nostram machinari cum aliis civibus Gdanensibus marchionem Brandenburgensem in excidium terre et privationem dominii nostri ac baronum et terrigenarum expulsionem unanimiter conspirantes in castrum et civitatem Gdanensem cum effectu receperunt se nobis cum eodem hostiliter opposcentes, considerato ergo, quod huiusmodi crimen tam secundum canones quam secundum leges pena capitis et privatione bonorum omnium tam mobilium quam immobilium puniatur [...];* (1290) PIUB 464: [...] *ipsos utpote notatos crimine lese maiestatis vita et omnibus bonis mobilibus et immobilibus sentencialiter abiudicavimus et in presentibus abiudicamus [...];* Both documents were issued for the bishops of Cuyavia, who received some of the possessions belonging previously to the executed or exiled traitors.

⁹⁰⁵ KDM I.113: [...] *prout dictam uillam Welgloua Comes Otto possidebat, quondam Sandomirie Palatinus, qui prenominata uilla seu hereditate sua culpa exigente, se despoliauit. Nam propter crimen lese Maiestatis, quod comittere non est ueritus, sub specie pacis conflans nefarie in nostrum exterminium traditorias facciones, omnibus hereditatibus in nostro possessis dominio, iusta iudicante sententia meruit exheredari.*

⁹⁰⁶ Szacherska, “Kancelaria Siemowita,” 107–9, no. 8.

⁹⁰⁷ KDW I.562.

character of personal conflict with the Duke.⁹⁰⁸ Like Sędziwoj Zaręba, Dziwan was spared his life, but lost all his possessions and rights.⁹⁰⁹

The exemplary violent punishments for disloyalty, like death or mutilation, excited the thirteenth-century audience of stories about Palatine Krystyn and Piotr Włost. In reality, however, they appear to be relatively rare. Less violent alternatives, like imprisonment, stripping the traitors of their possessions and offices, were more frequently used by the Piast rulers. Just like on the other peripheries of the Latin Christendom in the High Middle Ages, the rulers of Poland wielded an array of different forms of punishments against the disloyal subjects.⁹¹⁰

In moments of particular weakness of the ruler, the disloyal subjects could even avoid most of the consequences of their rebellion. This was the case with the conspirators led by Lutko Pakosławic, who in 1293 betrayed Duke Henryk V the Fat, abducting him on behalf of his rival, Henryk of Głogów.⁹¹¹ After months of imprisonment, which later tradition painted as particularly torturous, the kidnapped Piast gave in to the demands of the duke of Głogów. On Mai 6th 1294 Henryk V issued a document which settled his conflict with the other Silesian Piast. Among many concessions the ruler of Wrocław was forced to make was a provision that promised an amnesty for named participants of the conspiracy against him: the aforementioned Lutko, Jasiek of Przylep, notary Ludwik, and Bogusz Wezenborg with his friends. The rebels were free to sell their land possessions without impediment and relocate to Henryk of Głogów's domain.⁹¹²

3.6.2 Reconciliation

While Lutko and his co-conspirators left Wrocław, exile at other Piasts' courts or political irrelevance at home were not the only outcomes awaiting the punished rebels. In time,

⁹⁰⁸ Śliwiński, *Mściwoj II*, 314–20.

⁹⁰⁹ PIUB 493.

⁹¹⁰ The same multiplicity of forms of punishment for disloyalty can be found, for example, in contemporary Scotland. There too, the spectacular violence captivated the imagination of thirteenth-century writers and modern historians, but was in reality much less prevalent than more lenient forms of punishment and reconciliation. See Iain A. MacInnes, “‘A Somewhat Too Cruel Vengeance Was Taken for the Blood of the Slain’: Royal Punishment of Rebels, Traitors, and Political Enemies in Medieval Scotland, c.1100–c. 1250,” in *Treason*, ed. Larissa Tracy (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 119–43.

⁹¹¹ On the conflict between Henryk V the Fat and Henryk of Głogów over the throne of Wrocław, vacated with the death of Henryk IV Probus, see Jurek, *Dziedzic Królestwa Polskiego*, 27–51.

⁹¹² The document is known only from its later German translation, see SUB VI.144: *Wir gebin ouch unse hulde und unse vruntschaft hern Boguschen von Wisenburk und sinen vrunden und Lutken hern Pacozlawen sun und sin brudern und alle im vrunden und hern Ieschen von Psrilep und Lodwige dem schriber und allen den, di wir umme unse gevenknisse und umme unse urloge vordachten, daz sie unse hulde haben und ir gut mugin vorkoufen oder vorwelschen an allerhande gut uns zu gebene und an allerhande hindernisse. Unde alle, di ir gut wollen vorkoufen oder vorwelschen, si sin ritter oder knechte oder burger, und wollen zu unsem vettern voren, di sulle wir nicht mit keynen dingen hindern.*

the disloyal subjects could, despite the loss of held lands and titles, regain their position among the ranks of the political elites. Identifying the participants of the rebellions against the Piast dukes and tracing their subsequent careers is rarely possible, given the limitations of the sources. Nevertheless, two well-documented examples from Greater Poland speak for the possibility of reconciliation between the ruler and subject whose loyalty was deemed suspect. I am referring to the cases of Castellan Tomasz Nałęcz and his sons, imprisoned in 1248, and to Benjamin and Sędziwój Zaręba, imprisoned in 1285. I have discussed these two confrontations between the Greater-Polish Piasts and the members of the powerful local clans in a previous subchapter (3.4.2). Without recalling the exact context again, I will now elaborate further on the post-imprisonment fates of these noblemen.

The cases of Benjamin and Sędziwój Zaręba are more straightforward. At the time of imprisonment in 1285, Benjamin was already boasting a long career in the service of Bolesław I Pious and Przemysław II, holding the office of the palatine of Poznań since 1273. While *Traska's Annal* informs about his imprisonment along with his kinsman Sędziwój in 1285,⁹¹³ he was freed already sometime in 1286, appearing with his old title on the witness list of Przemysław II's document issued that year.⁹¹⁴ Temporarily losing the office of the palatine of Poznań shortly after the incident, Benjamin must have been given less prestigious titles of castellan and judge of Gniezno sometime between 1288 and 1290,⁹¹⁵ only to return to his old position of palatine of Poznań in 1293.⁹¹⁶ While the period in which Benjamin fell out of favor with Przemysław II is traceable in the documents, the senior member of the Zaręba clan was able to return to his previously held position among the most important office-holders of Greater Poland. The same holds true for the younger of Zaręba's, Sędziwój. Despite his central role in capturing Kalisz for Henryk IV Probus in 1284, Sędziwój did not stay out of Przemysław's favor much longer than Benjamin. Already free, he issued a document along with his brothers for the bishop of Lubusz on April 26th, 1289.⁹¹⁷ Merely two years later Przemysław II bestowed back the titles of *subcamerarius* of Gniezno and Kalisz to Sędziwój, which Zaręba held while in the service of the Greater-Polish Duke prior to 1284.⁹¹⁸ From then until the death of Przemysław II, Sędziwój continued to regularly appear among the witnesses listed on the ducal charters.⁹¹⁹

⁹¹³ *Traska's Annal*, 850.

⁹¹⁴ The document is known only from a later copy, mistakenly dated for 1276, see KDW I.459

⁹¹⁵ It is with these titles that he appears in the document from October 23rd 1290, KDW II.658.

⁹¹⁶ KDW II.693; For a more detailed discussion, see: Pakulski, "Ród Zarembów," 114; Bieniak, *Zarębowie i Nałęcz*, 90–92.

⁹¹⁷ KDW VI.36.

⁹¹⁸ KDW II.674.

⁹¹⁹ Documents listed in Bieniak, *Zarębowie i Nałęcz*, 110–11.

It is thus clear, that within five years from the imprisonment of the Zarębas, both men reconciled with the duke and returned to his service – something that did not escape the notice of the older historiography. Trying to explain this reversal of fortunes, historians imagined Benjamin playing a role in negotiations between Przemysł II and Henryk IV the Pious that saw the latter returning the disputed castellany of Ruda into the hands of the former.⁹²⁰ Since this thesis, built on little source evidence, is impossible to conclusively prove or disprove, we should also entertain the idea that the rehabilitation of the disloyal Zarębas was not a result of exceptional diplomatic service, but of the less spectacular process of gradual reconciliation.

The possibility of such reconciliation can be also seen in the other discussed example of the imprisonment of important Greater-Polish nobles: castellan Tomasz Nałęcz and his sons, imprisoned by Przemysł I in 1248. In this case our only source, the *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter*, makes a note of the quick release of the imprisoned nobles. The note about it appears under the next year, following the information about the celebrations of the wedding between Konrad of Głogów and Salomea.⁹²¹

Beyond this information, the later lives of the imprisoned members of the Nałęcz clan are more difficult to discern, as we have to rely on less frequent records from charter witness lists. There are no traces of the family losing its landed possessions. Its head, Tomasz, lost the castellany of Poznań, as from 1250 onwards the title belonged to Przedpełk of the clan Łódzia.⁹²² It is possible that after few years from his imprisonment, Tomasz was given a less prestigious castellany in Czarneków, as the official bearing the same name appears in a single document from 1256.⁹²³ As for Tomasz's sons mentioned in the entry from 1249, Sędziwój might have become the castellan of Międzyrzecz, as suggested by a document from 1275,⁹²⁴ while Jan pursued a church career, eventually becoming the bishop of Poznań (1286-1297).⁹²⁵

⁹²⁰ See for example Sławomir Musiał, "Bitwa pod Siewierzem i udział w niej Wielkopolan" [Battle of Siewierz and participation of Greater Polish actors], in *Przemysł II: odnowienie Królestwa Polskiego*, ed. Jadwiga Krzyżaniakowa (Poznań: Instytut Historii UAM, 1997), 164, footnote 16; Bieniak, *Zarębowie i Nałęcze*, 91; Both of these historians follow in the argumentation presented originally by Jasiński, "Z problematyki zjednoczenia," 227-28; It needs to be pointed out, however, that Jasiński himself was quite cautious when presenting this hypothesis, offering it merely as possible explanation for Zaręba's return to Przemysł II's favor. The only tangentially related piece of source evidence cited for the support of this idea is the presence of *Beniamin palatinus* among the witness list of the document issued in Wrocław by Henryk IV Probus on March 8th 1287, which could be identified with Benjamin Zaręba. For the document, see SUB V.320.

⁹²¹ RkP, [34], 27: *comes Thoma et filii ipsius Johannes et Sandziuoy de captivitate sunt liberati per manus fideiussorum hac condicione, quod duci Premisloni bona fide sine fraude et dolo debeant servire.*

⁹²² See KDW I.283.

⁹²³ KDW SN I.16; For the identification of both officials with the same person, see Pakulski, *Nałęcze Wielkopolscy w Średniowieczu*, 56; Nowacki, *Przemysł I*, 173; Similarly, but with more caution, Bieniak, *Zarębowie i Nałęcze*, 44.

⁹²⁴ KDW I.458; Pakulski, *Nałęcze Wielkopolscy w Średniowieczu*, 60.

⁹²⁵ Pakulski, *Nałęcze Wielkopolscy w Średniowieczu*, 59–60.

Cupbearer Tomisław was mentioned together with his father Tomasz on the occasion of the imprisonment, but left out of the annalistic note about the release of the noblemen. Nevertheless, Tomisław reappears in the documents of the Greater-Polish dukes issued between the August 29th 1256 and October 31st 1271.⁹²⁶ Jan Pakulski and Tomasz Jurek argued that after few years out of favor, Tomisław returned to the once-held position.⁹²⁷ Janusz Bieniak did not agree with this identification, unconvincingly arguing that the imprisoned cupbearer Tomisław died in jail, and the later man of the same name was simply a Nałęcz from a different branch of the family.⁹²⁸ Despite that, Bieniak also agreed that the political position of the clan was quickly restored after the conclusion of the conflict with Przemysł I in 1249, as testified by the career of other Nałęcz, Dzierżykraj.⁹²⁹ While the post-imprisonment careers of Tomasz Nałęcz and his sons cannot be reconstructed with certainty, traces of their presence in later documents suggest that the release from prison and reconciliation with the duke were soon followed by the reintegration of Tomasz and his close family into the political elite of Greater Poland.

The account of the *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter* gives us some, albeit limited, insight into the mechanisms of the reconciliation between the formerly disloyal subject and the Piast ruler. Tomasz Nałęcz and his sons are said to have been let out of the prison with the help of the intercessors. The networks of political allies and kinsmen certainly played an important role in the process of reintegrating the men who fell out of the ducal favor back into the political elite, even if it is difficult to trace.

The annalist does not link the two events directly, but the fact that the release of the prisoners was mentioned immediately after the information about the wedding ceremony of Konrad of Głogów and Duke Przemysł I's sister in Poznań suggests that they might have taken place at the same time.⁹³⁰ Whether that was indeed the case or not, the promise that the released nobles would serve him “in good faith, without fraud and deceit” was given to the duke on a public occasion. In twelfth-century Poland, the celebrations that brought together the ecclesiastical and secular elites had been used as a stage for the public display of the ritual of

⁹²⁶ See KDW I.342; KDW I.444.

⁹²⁷ Pakulski, *Nałęcze Wielkopolscy w Średniowieczu*, 57; Jurek, “Średniowieczne Szamotyły,” 13; Jurek, “Notes on Nałęcz family,” 163.

⁹²⁸ Bieniak, *Zarębowie i Nałęcze*, 43–45.

⁹²⁹ Bieniak, 54.

⁹³⁰ RkP, [33-34], 27; The events explicitly linked in the *Greater Polish Chronicle*, see 90 in *Chronica Poloniae maioris*, 95: [Duke Przemysł – MM.] *rediens Poznaniam sororem suam Salomeam Cunradi duci prefato dedit in uxorem. [...] In hac etiam solempnitate nupciarum Thomas castellanus Poznaniensis et filii eius a captivitate per manus fieiussorum liberati fuerunt. Sicque bona fide et absque fraude et dolo duci Przemisloni et suo fratri servicio perpetuo se obligarunt.*

submission and reconciliation.⁹³¹ The *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter* or, for that matter, any other account concerning disloyal subjects of the thirteenth-century Piasts, does not mention any symbolic gestures beyond the swearing of oaths by the released Zarębas. Nevertheless, the rituals of *deditio*, a well-established element of the Piast political culture described in the anonymous *Gesta* or Vincentius's *Chronica*, most likely continued to play its role in the settlement of conflicts between Piasts and their subjects. The example of the struggle between Bolesław the Bald and bishop Tomasz of Wrocław, in which the former offered at one point, to undergo a ritual of public penance, demonstrates the continuous relevance of symbolical communication in processes of reconciliation in thirteenth-century Poland (even though concerns member of ecclesiastical, not knightly elite).⁹³²

To the west, in the Empire, the increasing embrace of pragmatic literacy opened new avenues of political communication, in which written documents were used in conjunction with symbolical gestures in the process of reconciliation.⁹³³ The surviving source material, though limited, suggests that similar developments took place in fragmented Poland. The aforementioned ritual of public penance proposed by Bolesław the Bald, for example, had been laid out in exact detail in a written agreement reached in 1258 through the mediation of sympathetic churchmen.⁹³⁴ *Traska's Annal* mentions that Wincenty of Szamotuły, suspected of treachery, was summoned by Władysław the Short by *patentes litteras* to join his army gathering in Cuyavia, ending his conflict with Piast monarch and prince Kazimierz.⁹³⁵ The official letters sent to Wincenty, must have been as important part of the reconciliation as whatever ritual gestures took place in the military camp at Łęczyca.

Finally, some of the ducal documents that proclaim the loyal service of the recipient hint at the elaborate role they must have played in the process of reconciliation between the Piast rulers and their erstwhile political rivals. Given and received in a public setting, these diplomas made spurious claims about past loyalty in order to better secure it in the future. The case of the diplomatic overtures made by Władysław the Short in his conflict with the bishop of Cracow Jan Muskata serves the most illustrative example.

⁹³¹ Most notably, the first stage of the conflict between Duke Władysław I and his oldest son Zbigniew ended with the imprisonment and the subsequent ritualistic *deditio* of the latter, taking place during the consecration of the Gniezno Cathedral in May 1097.

⁹³² Dalewski, "Książę i Biskup."

⁹³³ Claudia Garnier, "Zeichen und Schrift. Symbolische Handlungen und literale Fixierung am Beispiel von Friedensschlüssen des 13. Jahrhunderts," *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 32, no. 1 (1998): 263–87.

⁹³⁴ SUB III.278.

⁹³⁵ *Traska's Annal*, 856: *Sed de Lancicia ipsorum ad unum vel duo miliaria semper sequebatur, eos debilitans, vestigia; ubi etiam predictum Vincencium, de quo memorati sumus, per litteras patentes advocans, ipsum sibi et filio reconciliavit.*

As outlined in more detail at the beginning of this chapter, the bishop was a strong supporter of Přemyslid rule in Lesser Poland and mounted violent resistance against the Cuyavian Piast. Despite the atrocities committed by the bishop's men and the kidnapping of the bishop by Władysław's followers, the dynamic political situation brought both men to seek conciliatory end to the hostilities. The Cuyavian Piast entered Cracow, issuing on September 2nd 1306 an extensive privilege for bishop Jan, confirming all the possessions, incomes, and rights given to the bishopric by previous rulers, as well as Władysław's promise to dismiss those of his followers who had their hand in the kidnapping of the bishop. Safe for this provision, buried deep in the text of the charter, the language of the document does everything it can to pave over the recent conflict between the issuer and the addressee. Instead, the *narratio* of the diploma praises the *merita et fidelia servicia* of the venerable bishop, who supposedly *fideliter, vireliter, liberaliter* rendered his services to Władysław in the past and will continue to do so in the present.⁹³⁶ The enumerated witnesses of the document and other members of the Lesser-Polish elite who were present during the public gestures accompanying the granting of the written charter were the audience witnessing this statement. The public praise of Jan's past loyalty was an element of signaling to the duke's followers the reconciliation with Cracow's bishop, covering his past disloyalties with an aspirational model of good relations between the ruler and the bishop.

While the reconciliation with the bishop of Cracow was short-lived, the same strategy was, with success, used by Władysław when dealing with bishop Andrzej Zaręba of Poznań. The prelate who once played an instrumental role in delegitimizing Władysław's rule in Greater Poland, found himself by 1312 at the helm of a rebellion against the young children of Henryk of Głogów.⁹³⁷ On January 11th 1314, Władysław met with Andrzej Zaręba in Greater-Polish Słupca, by the Cuyavian border. The meeting that preceded by a few months Władysław's return to Greater Poland as its recognized ruler, resulted in the bishop of Poznań receiving the right to mint his own coinage. Just like in the document issued for Jan Muskata, the language of this ducal charter focuses on the loyal service of the bishop who once led the rebellion against Władysław's rule in Greater Poland, focused on *merita et servitia* of the bishop, and the notion of rewards owed for the loyal service.⁹³⁸

⁹³⁶ KDKK I.114.

⁹³⁷ On the leading role played by bishop Andrzej Zaręba in organizing the opposition against the continuing rule of the dukes of Głogów, see for example Pakulski, *Siły polityczno-społeczne*, 33; Jurek, *Dziedzic Królestwa Polskiego*, 216; Maciejowski, *Orientacje polityczne biskupów*, 314–16.

⁹³⁸ KDW II.964

By way of concluding the reflections on the aftermaths of disloyalty, it is useful to return to the case of Ikon. The discussion above was not meant to offer a definite answer about the real role played by the Silesian nobleman during the crisis of Duke Bolesław the Bald's power around 1250. It puts, however, several assumptions made in previous historiography under scrutiny. Firstly, the authenticity of Bolesław's 1255 charter for Ikon can be questioned due to the extent of the privileges and the suspect list of witnesses. Its narrative, however, has a contemporary counterpart in the document issued in 1252 by Bolesław the Chaste for Klemens of Ruszcza.⁹³⁹ More importantly, the undisputed favor enjoyed by Ikon in the later years of Duke Bolesław's reign does not exclude the possibility of his imprisonment a decade earlier, as described in the *Annales of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter*. As demonstrated by the examples discussed above, the punishment through exemplary violence was only one side of a broad spectrum of fates met by the subjects accused of treachery. Much more often, the disloyal subjects lost their lands and offices - though even in such cases, it was possible for the punished members of the elites to return to the ruler's favor and political relevance. The thirteenth-century sources document the instances in which the Piast reconciled with competing members of the dynasty or bishops, opening the possibility for future political cooperation. There is no reason to think that similar processes of reconciliation could not occur between Piast dukes and the secular elites of fragmented Poland. The increasingly important role of the written word in political communication opened to the Piast rulers new avenues of mending the relations with disloyal subjects and signaling the end of a conflict. If genuine, the 1255 charter praising the loyalty of Ikon could have been an example of the new opportunities for recasting the ambiguous past relations as marked by unwavering loyalty.

3.7 Conclusions

The analysis conducted in this chapter concerned a large and diverse body of sources and yielded many incremental findings. I presented them at the end of each respective section, but, given the scope of the chapter, I take the liberty of summarizing and reiterating the most important ones here.

Already in Chapter 2 we have seen that, in comparison to Vincentius of Cracow's *Chronica Polonorum*, the Lubiąż monk and Dzierzwa tried to reemphasize the dynastic charisma of Piast rulers. Following up on that observation, in the first part of this chapter I tackled a question related to the deeper ideological claims about the place of Piast dukes in

⁹³⁹ KDM II.436

broader political community: were the thirteenth-century sources imagining loyalty to the Polish dukes as always grounded in personal relationship, or could it also be depersonalized reverence, based on Piast dynastic charisma? While by no means dominant, the belief in the loyalty owed to the members of the local branch of the dynasty by all inhabitants of the land, reminiscent of a vision formulated already by Gallus Anonymus, could be found in analyzed sources. Though the precise term *domini naturales* would not be used in this context until the penning of the *Chronicle of Greater Poland*, the related concept of *veri heredes* could be found in Greater Polish annals or testimonies of Jan Muskata's trial. It was invoked in the moments of acute political crisis by the supporters of embattled Piasts, like Władysław Odonic's sons or Władysław the Short, to demand loyalty of all *terrigenae*, which extended beyond personal obligations to a broader, inherited claim that bound ruler and community.

The second part of the chapter was dedicated to the tools of strengthening the bonds of loyalty. The oaths, so important for Vincentius of Cracow, continued to play a fundamental role in political culture of thirteenth-century Poland, with Polish bishops often acting as witnesses and guarantors of oaths sworn by Piast rulers. Whereas in the neighboring Bohemia the last quarter of the thirteenth century saw growing formalization of bonds of loyalty, with oaths of loyalty outlining precise obligations of the subjects committed to writing, this process did not occur in Piast lands – despite the deep influence the last Přemyslids had on fragmented Poland. Similarly, Piast rulers were hesitant to adapt the language of homage and feudal law in framing the relationship with their subjects. Alongside oaths, Piast rulers strengthened loyalty through acts of generosity, especially grants of land and privileges. Narrative sources and diplomas alike emphasized largesse as a defining virtue of good rulership and framed loyalty as something that deserved tangible reward. Unlike in Vincentius's *Chronica Polonorum*, the reciprocal logic of service repaid with gifts was not seen with scorn, but rather expressly embraced in the ducal diplomas – though, as examples from *Book of Henryków* and Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* illustrate, gift-giving could still corrupt proper relations between rulers and followers.

Despite the increasing role writing played in communication between Piast dukes and their subjects, the contents of the bonds of loyalty remained largely unformalized. When describing acts of loyal subjects, the narrative sources and diplomas rarely emphasized routine counsel or participation in rulership, focusing instead on the daring, usually martial deeds. Men described as loyal were praised for putting their life and possessions in danger in order to defend ruler's life and *honor*.

Thirteenth-century Poland saw many acts of disloyalty, from underhanded assassinations to open rebellion. When describing these events, most contemporary authors

presented the disloyalty of Piast subjects as a personal betrayal aimed at the ruler – with only witnesses at Bishop Jan Muskata’s trial presenting it, like Vincentius of Cracow used to, as an offense against the broader political community. The short accounts emphasized that disloyalty threatened ruler’s hold on power or his life, rarely reflecting on broader consequences or deeply probing motives of traitors beyond envy, contempt, or hunger for power. Deceitfulness of disloyal subjects manifested itself further through the violation of rules of the conflict: attacks on Piasts were carried out in the spaces of trust, like churches and bathhouses, and involved reprehensible abuse of kidnapped captives. Most of the authors of the analyzed sources shared Vincentius of Cracow’s belief that some rebellions against Piast subjects were justified - with a notable exception of a Cistercian monk behind Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*. The exact ideas on what could justify the dissolution of the bonds of loyalty differed, but in all cases amounted to the Piast ruler’s failure to meet his obligations towards the subjects. The understanding of the latter, encompassing ensuring peace, administering justice, and respecting subject’s *honor*, was shared across fragmented Poland.

The consequences met by those who broke the bonds of loyalty, or were accused of it, are difficult to properly assess. Most of the analyzed accounts of rebellions are short, and simply do not describe its aftermath. In others, the divine forces took responsibility for punishing disloyalty: the disembodied voices tormented bishop Paweł of Przemanków, Władysław Odonic’s ignoble death was noted by Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, while according to the Lubiąż monk Konrad of Mazovia’s firstborn son died in his illegitimate campaign to seize Cracow. In other part of Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*, Henryk I the Bearded enacted rightful vengeance on the treacherous Greater-Polish Piasts by driving them out of their possessions. As I discussed in more detail in the final part of this chapter, the legal sources and diplomas paint a picture in which taking away land and titles was used more commonly used to punish disloyalty than death or other examples of spectacular violence. Moreover, as I underscored, the eventual reconciliation between the disloyal subject and Piast ruler seems to have been an outcome that was more likely than it was thus far suggested in Polish historiography.

Chapter 4: Loyal Towns and Perfidious Germans

Two chronicles of the fragmented Poland, Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* and *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*, end their narratives around the same event: having defeated the rebellion of Lesser-Polish nobles in 1285, Leszek the Black rewarded the citizens of Cracow, who remained loyal to him in the moment of crisis.⁹⁴⁰ *Dzierzwa*, looking back from the fourteenth-century perspective at the duke's permission to "Germans, that is burghers of Cracow" to build the city walls, concluded that "thus, from that time on Poles lost almost all of their power and glory".⁹⁴¹ The different stances taken by the Lesser-Polish townspeople and nobles during the rebellion of 1285 were just the early stage of the political competition between traditional noble elites and the increasingly ambitious urban centers. This broader conflict underpinned much of the political strife in turn-of-the-fourteenth-century Poland, and would, by the time *Dzierzwa* wrote his chronicle, dramatically influence the shape of the newly unified Kingdom of Poland.⁹⁴²

In this chapter, I examine the ways in which the loyalty of two groups, "Germans" (*Theutonici*) and "burghers" (*cives*) was imagined in the same sources as examined in the previous two chapters. While, as demonstrated by the example above, these categories were conflated by some medieval authors, they should first be examined separately. Thus, the first part of this chapter will focus on the ways in which the loyalty of the town-dwellers was discussed in the documents issued in thirteenth-century Poland. The second will be devoted to the thirteenth-century voices concerned with the loyalty of non-urban *Theutonici*, mostly German-speaking knights, offering their services to the courts of the Polish rulers. Finally, in the last part of the chapter, I will discuss the ways in which the figure of the perfidious German-speaking burgher was mobilized during the political confrontation between Władysław the Short and his noble supporters with the most important urban centers of Lesser and Greater Poland.

⁹⁴⁰ SCP, 643-44: *Cui successit Lestko, filius Kazmiri, filii Konradi, qui seva bella contra Getarum insultus victor exercuit, tandem conspiracione infidelium Cracovie properlitur, et Conradus, Semoviti filius ducis Mazovie, filii Conradi fratris Casmiri, inducitur. Qui cum infidelibus ductoribus in bello per Lestkonis validum exercitum, exusta Cracovia, confusus aufugit, et Lestko cum triumpho ad suos fideles cives Cracovie, qui ipsum castrum sis strennue servaverant, rediit, et fidelitate illorum inspecta civitatem munivit anno Domini 1285 mense Augusti.*

⁹⁴¹ *Dzierzwa's Chronicle*, 84: *Et quia Theutonici, scilicet cives Cracovienses, tentummodo fideles fuerunt et castrum conservaverunt, ideo dictis Theutonicis contra voluntatem militum civitatem Cracoviensem munire premisit [Duke Leszek -MM.] et sic deinceps Poloni quasi totum posse suum et gloria perdiderunt.*

⁹⁴² Gawlas, *O kształt zjednoczonego Królestwa*, 88-96.

4.1 Loyal Towns and their Vogts

First mentions of loyal burghers appear in the ducal diplomas in the second half of the thirteenth-century. These earliest examples focus on the individuals rewarded for the “loyal service” by the dukes, and the language of loyalty used in them hardly differed from the one used when addressing the duke’s *milites*. The exact manner in which their loyalty was exhibited was, apart from the rare exceptions already discussed in the previous chapter, not elaborated upon. Some of the earliest burghers to be rewarded in that manner came from the cities of Greater Poland,⁹⁴³ and Silesia.⁹⁴⁴

The issuing of the *locatio* document itself was, at times, framed as the reward for the service of the vogts of the newly established urban centers. In an illustrative case of Lesser-Polish Bochnia, Bolesław V the Chaste granted the *locatio* charter in 1253 to four prospective town founders (*locatores*) in reward for their “loyal and welcomed service (*fidelia grataque seruicia*).⁹⁴⁵ After outlining the rights of all of the townsmen and further privileges of all of the founders, the document singled out one of them—Mikołaj, son of Volkmar, a former citizen of Legnica—for his even greater services, rewarding him with hereditary vogtship.⁹⁴⁶ The 1286 *locatio* charter of Sandomierz was also presented as the reward for the town’s founder and its future hereditary vogt Witko, in recognition of his merits and obedience to the issuer of the charter, Duke Leszek the Black.⁹⁴⁷ Just like Mikołaj, Witko was a member of the urban elite of another town, Cracow.⁹⁴⁸ His title of salt mine administrator (*supparius*) hints at a longer career in Leszek’s service. Given the timing of the ducal privilege and Witko’s ties, it is tempting to link the important office conferred on the first vogt of Sandomierz as directly linked with the

⁹⁴³ See Bolesław the Pious’s document for Henryk Stango, citizen of Kalisz (1268), KDW I. 434; Przemysł II’s documents for Piotr Winiarczyk, citizen of Gniezno (1293), KDW II.639; and Henryk *de Tonch*, citizen of Poznań (1284), KDW I. 547.

⁹⁴⁴ See Henryk IV Probus’s documents for his tailor, Chunato Baran from 1274, SUB IV. 253 or Roman, citizen of Wrocław, SUB V.271.

⁹⁴⁵ KDM II.439

⁹⁴⁶ Ibidem: *Preterea cupientes prenotatum Nicolaum filium Volkmari propter merita ipsius eo quod nobis multas utilitates pre ceteris attraxit, specialis gracie prerogatiua benigno fauore respicere, et honoribus simul cum fructibus aliis anteferre [...] prenotatum Nicolaum filium Volkmari cum suis successoribus iudicem et aduocatum constituimus hereditarie in prehabita ciuitate [...].*

⁹⁴⁷ CDP III.63: *Magnifica Principum celsitudine digne retribucionis premia merentur obtinere quos fidei puritas ex obsequiis reddit gratos et acceptos; Ubi enim per operis euidentiam fidele patet obsequium ibi remunerationis dignissime premium sit paratum. [...] ex dignitate principatus singulorum merita diligenti consideratione debemus iutueri volentes cuilibet pro meriti qualitate impendere gracie quantitatem in retributionem obsequiorum nobis et terris nostris multipliciter per Withconem supparium nostrum prestitorum ipsi ac ipsius posteris Ciuitatem Nostram Sandomiriensem damus et tytulo perpetue donacionis tradimus sub iure theutonico et libertate meydhuriensi locacionis locandi et conuocandi ad eandem homines quarumlibet nacionum et undecumque libere tamen condicionis liberam et omnimodam facultatem [...].*

⁹⁴⁸ Piotr Okniński, “Elita władzy miasta Sandomierza do schyłku XIV w.” [The power elites in the City of Sandomierz until the late fourteenth century], *Przegląd Historyczny* 110, no. 3 (2019): 361.

stalwart support Cracow's townspeople lent Leszek during the rebellion of 1285. The *locatio* of a municipality at the most important center of power in eastern Lesser-Poland was a part of the same search for an alternative source of political support that led the Piast ruler to patronize Cracow's burghers.⁹⁴⁹ While Witko benefited greatly from the *locatio* charter, Duke Leszek envisioned a broader urban community of Sandomierz as legal and political actors in their own right. To this end, the document promised that the duke would never appoint a *landvogt* over the city, and that during the "grand court" that will be held thrice a year the judicial rulings will be made not by vogt alone, but also by a loyal knight or burgher acting as the duke's representative.⁹⁵⁰

As the economic and political significance of the towns increased throughout the second half of the thirteenth century, it was not only individual citizens or town leaders, but the urban communities as a whole that became praised for their loyalty, obedience, and service in ducal charters. In the most rapidly urbanizing region of fragmented Poland, Silesia, the 1261 document issued by Duke Bolesław the Bald freed the townspeople of Lwówek from various levies and tolls in recognition of their "many loyal services" and the inconveniences they had to endure during the attacks of the duke's enemies.⁹⁵¹ Duke of Wrocław Henryk IV Probus was continuing the pro-urban policy begun already by his father. During his adolescence and early years of independent rule, Henryk issued a number of privileges for Wrocław's urban community.⁹⁵² The language of these diplomas focuses on the continuous care for the city's development, with loyalty of towns' consuls mentioned only in passing.⁹⁵³ It contrasts with the document from September 2nd 1277, in which Henryk recalled the "long and loyal service" rendered by the citizens of Wrocław to him and his predecessors, while reconfirming their privileges and extending the city council's competencies.⁹⁵⁴ This sudden attention towards the

⁹⁴⁹ Żmudzki, *Stadium podzielonego Królestwa*, 420–27.

⁹⁵⁰ CDP III.63:

⁹⁵¹ SUB III.362: *Nos igitur Boleslaus dei gracia dux Slezie notum facimus universis presentibus et futuris, quod perspectis multis obsequiis fidelibus civium nostrorum in Lewenberc et etiam incomodis seu dampnis eorundem per insultus crebros hostium terre nostre ipsis frequenter illatis deliberato ac bono nostrorum fidelium consilio eis hanc fecimus gratiam specialem [...].*

⁹⁵² Mateusz Goliński, "Miasta a polityka gospodarcza Henryka IV Probuse" [Towns and the economic policy of Henryk IV Probus], in *Śląsk w czasach Henryka IV Prawego*, ed. Krzysztof Wachowski (Wrocław: Uniwersytet Wrocławski, 2005), 50–52.

⁹⁵³ SUB IV. 267; For the other diplomas issued before the kidnapping of Henryk IV, see SUB IV.153, 165, 209, 236, 256, 282.

⁹⁵⁴ SUB IV.307: *Ea, que ex principum beneplacito ad subditorum commoda conceduntur, aliquociens sibi renovacionis remedio indigent subveniri, ut ea, que vetera sunt, wltum novitatis assumendo pociorem adhibicionem fidei conquirant et maioris gaudeant fulcimine firmitatis. Ideoque est, quod nos Heinricus dei gracia dux Slezie et dominus Wratizlauie constare volumus universos presencium noticiam habituros, quod inspectis diutinis et fidelibus obsequiis per cives nostros Wratizlouienses nostris progenitoribus felicis memorie et nobis hucusque fideliter impensis omnia iura a patre nostro domino H(einrico) et patruo nostro domino Wlo(dizlao) bone memorie inclitis ducibus Slezie ipsis civibus Wratizlouiensibus liberaliter tradita et concessa, prout in*

townspeople's loyalty came in the aftermath of the kidnapping of Henryk by Bolesław the Bald earlier the same year. Most likely then, this rhetorical gesture followed the townspeople's involvement, on the side of Henryk IV, in the recent political crisis. While Henryk soon stopped issuing diplomas for Wrocław, he seemed to enjoy the support of the urban center until his death.⁹⁵⁵

The successive reconfirmations of the urban privileges of Wrocław are instructive, as they tell the story of the increasing role of the city in the duchy's politics. Upon Henryk IV's childless death, his domain became the subject of competition between several candidates. A close ally of the deceased duke, Henryk of Głogów, looked like the best-positioned claimant in Silesia. Yet it was the son of Bolesław the Bald, Henryk V the Fat of Legnica, who managed to seize the throne in Wrocław, finding his primary support in the urban community.⁹⁵⁶ Upon arriving in the city, the new ruler issued on July 22nd 1290 a charter confirming the city's privileges. By doing so, he claimed to be "repaying favor with favor" to his "most loyal and beloved" citizens of Wrocław, listed before the other *terrigenae* as instrumental in securing the duchy for Henryk V.⁹⁵⁷ When the death of Henryk V marked yet another struggle in Wrocław, confirmations of the privileges of the loyal townspeople were issued once more by the successive guardians of Henryk's adolescent son, Bolesław III the Generous. In 1296 city's rights were confirmed by Bolesław's uncle, Bolko I.⁹⁵⁸ Upon the latter's death, after some jostling within the city's patriciate, guardianship of Bolesław fell onto his father-in-law, King Václav II, who in January 1303 issued a document in which he promised to foster and uphold the rights of his *fideles* – vogt, council, and all citizens of Wrocław.⁹⁵⁹ Clearly, by the turn of the fourteenth century, the confirmation of the privileges of the townspeople, combined with an appeal to the demonstrated or expected loyalty, became an important part of securing control over the Duchy of Wrocław.

ipsorum continentur privilegiis super eo datis, consensu nostrorum baronum accedente tenore presencium omnimodis confirmamus perpetuo valitura ratum et gratum habituri, quicquid eisdem civibus nostris a predictis nobis caris munificencialiter est concessum.

⁹⁵⁵ SUB V.66; *Ottokars Österreichische Reimchronik*, v. 21257-21283.

⁹⁵⁶ Jurek, *Dzieńnik Królestwa Polskiego*, 29–34.

⁹⁵⁷ SUB V.461: *Hinc est, quod nos Heinricus dei gracia dux Slesie dominus Wratislaue et Legniz tam presentibus quam futuris volumus esse notum, quod post solum deum per fideles et karissimos cives nostros Wratislavienses pariter et per terrigenas Wratislavienses sumus ducatum Wratislaviensem et dominium consecuti. Unde dignum fore dinoscitur, ut beneficia beneficiis recompensemus, quod ipsis sub prestito iuramento omnes donationes, concessiones, iura et privilegia ipsorum [...] emendaremus et confirmaremus [...].*

⁹⁵⁸ SUB VI.245.

⁹⁵⁹ *Breslauer Urkundenbuch* I.73: *Nos Wenceslaus [...] notum facimus universis presentes litteras inspecturis, quod nos viros providos advocatum, consules et universos cives Wrat., fideles nostros, per tempus, quoad illustrium filiarum [filiorum] quondam Henrici ducis Wrat. tutele geremus officium, in ipsorum voluntatibus, iuribus et liberatibus, quibuscunque in ipsa civitate vel extra usi sunt, et que privilegiis et aliis legitimis documentis poterunt racionalibiter ostendere, promittimus graciosio fovere et favorabiliter conservare.*

A similar link between the confirmation of privileges, the language of loyalty, and the legitimization of uncertain Piast rule can be seen in Greater Poland. Two years after taking possession of the entire Greater Poland upon the death of his uncle Bolesław I the Pious (+1279), Przemysł II issued a document for Henryk, vogt of Kalisz. In recompense for the vogt's loyal service, the duke of Greater Poland reconfirmed Henryk's and the city's rights.⁹⁶⁰ A new privilege issued by Przemysł year later in 1283, this time addressed to all loyal townspeople of Kalisz, made the city the center of a *districtus*, the model for laws, and the high court for the smaller urban communities and villages of the region. These important prerogatives were granted to the "beloved and loyal citizens of Kalisz", because the duke found them "devoted and in all matters pertaining to our [Przemysł's] honor."⁹⁶¹

In the face of the contest for rule over Greater Poland after Przemysł's death, Władysław the Short continued the former's pro-urban policies. Confirming and extending the city privileges by the Cuyavian Piast served to reward and mobilize further the political and financial support of the townspeople.⁹⁶² Władysław's difficult position in the contest against Henryk of Głogów and Václav II was reflected in the frequency and the language of the issued documents. Granting the city of Pyzdry the right to set up cloth market stalls in December 1297, the duke claimed to recognize "the labors of the citizens of the said city, which they did not fail to loyally carry out, at their own cost and expense."⁹⁶³ Freeing Poznań from the tolls in February 1298, Władysław linked his response to the petitions of "our honorable citizens" to the damages the city had suffered in recent military confrontations.⁹⁶⁴ On the occasion of reconfirming the

⁹⁶⁰ KDW I.511: *Igitur nos Premisl secundus, Dei gratia dux Polonie, notum facimus universis tam presentibus quam futuris presentem paginam inspecturis, quod intuentes fidele servitium et utile dilecti et fidelis nostri advocati Kalisiensis Heynrici, et etiam statum terre nostre cupientes in melius reformare, locationem eiusdem civitatis, quam a serenissimo patruo nostro felicis recordationis domino Boleslao Dei gratia duce Polonie iure hereditario pro se suisque successoribus rite ac rationabiliter comparavit, iam dicto advocato et suis posteris perpetuo possidendam innovamus nostro privilegio confirmantes.*

⁹⁶¹ KDW I.528: [...] *nos Psrimizlaus Dei gracia dux Poznanie et Calysie recognoscimus tenore presentium publice protestando, quod ad alleviandos defectus et egestates fidelium nostrorum civium in Kalys, assignavimus omnes civitates et opida in districtu Kalysiensi et ipsius terminis constitutis ipsis nostris fidelibus, ut iura sua iudiciaria recipiant apud ipsos [...]. Cum vero dilectis nostris fidelibus civibus in Kalys, quos nostra donacio in omnibus que nostro intendunt honori actenus benigna prosecucione benivolos reppererit et fideles, speciali ut condignum est dileccionis privilegio prerogativam dederimus tam sollempnem, et ut omnes civitates, ville et oppida ut prediximus iura sua requirere debeant apud ipsos, volumus, ut omnes sentencie quas predicti cives fideles nostri in Kalis dederint, dummodo iuramentis suis ausi fuerint confirmare, inviolate permaneant et a nullis penitus reprobentur.*

⁹⁶² Gawlas, *O kształt zjednoczonego Królestwa*, 91.

⁹⁶³ KDW VI.56: *respicientes labores civium dicte civitatis, quos fideliter facere non obmittunt per proprios sumptus et expensas [...]*

⁹⁶⁴ KDW II.773 : [...] *nos Wladislaus, [...] notum facimus universis presentibus et futuris presentem paginam inspecturis, quod nostrorum baronum consilio habito, statum nostre civitatis Poznaniensis, que in magna sua parte per guerras est viciata, cupimus in melius reformare. Honorabilium nostrorum civium ibi degencium precibus attendentes, omnes cives nostros in iam dicta civitate nostra [...] ab omni solucione et exaccione thelonei absolvimus.*

privileges granted to the city by Przemysł, Władysław extended them “so that the citizens of Poznań can rejoice in our special grace and favor.”⁹⁶⁵ In Pomerania, Władysław reconfirmed the privileges of citizens of Elbląg, mentioning that their loyalty was already acknowledged by the previous rulers.⁹⁶⁶ The privileges of Kalisz were confirmed by Władysław on three occasions, with the 1297 document referring to the pleasing and loyal service of the whole urban community.⁹⁶⁷ Two charters from 1298 were addressed to vogts Henryk and Arnold, Henryk’s son, both receiving the confirmations of their and their city’s privileges in reward for demonstrated loyalty.⁹⁶⁸ Beyond their material significance, these diplomas also served as a tool of political communication. The reconfirmation of privileges granted by the previous rulers cast Władysław as the natural successor of Przemysł II, allowing him to bolster the contested legitimacy of his claim. Thus, the documents recalled the privileges given by and loyal services rendered not only to Przemysł,⁹⁶⁹ but also to more distant predecessors – Mściwój II or Bolesław I the Pious.⁹⁷⁰

When the death of Václav III once more created a power vacuum in Greater Poland, the competitors embraced Władysław’s tactics of securing the support of the urban subjects. On September 6th 1306, less than a month after the Přemyslid’s death, his brother-in-law Bolesław III of Wrocław issued a document granting the village of Tyniec to the city of Kalisz. The donation is dressed in the common language of care for the city’s continuous development and growth, but the title used by Bolesław, *heres regni Poloniae*, betrays the deeper intentions behind the grant.⁹⁷¹ The charter served then as one of the opening salvoes of young Bolesław’s far-fetched bid for the Přemyslid inheritance. The village given to the city was thus either a reward for or an enticement of the support of the Kalisz townspeople. Given that the list of witnesses of the act was comprised of Silesian courtiers, the latter seems more possible. Bolesław’s ambitions in Greater Poland were quashed by his more experienced cousin, Henryk of Głogów.⁹⁷²

The older of the Silesian Piasts also used the confirmation of the urban privileges given by the predecessors to legitimize his claims in Greater Poland, while bolstering and rewarding

⁹⁶⁵ KDW II.775 : *Ut fideles nostri cives Poznanienses gaudeant de speciali nostra gracia et favore [...]*.

⁹⁶⁶ KDW II.769 : *[...] inspectis fidelibus serviciis civium de Elbingo que eis sepissime impenderunt, contulerunt eisdem civibus de Elbingo omnimodam libertatem [...]*.

⁹⁶⁷ KDW II. 760: *[...] intuentes grata et fidelia servicia tocius universitatis civium Kalisiensium, que nobis in presenti constanter et fideliter ostenderunt et in futurum nostris successoribus sunt ostensuri [...]*.

⁹⁶⁸ KDW II.794, 802.

⁹⁶⁹ This familial link is underscored most directly in the document issued for Kalisz’s Vogt Henryk, KDW II.749.

⁹⁷⁰ See for example KDW II.769, 760.

⁹⁷¹ KDW II.905.

⁹⁷² More detailed description of the conflict between both Silesian Piasts in Jurek, *Dziedzic Królestwa Polskiego*, 114-18. See also Pakulski, *Siły polityczno-społeczne*, 22-23.

the support of the townspeople. Already on August 26th 1306, Henryk reconfirmed the privileges issued by his Piast predecessors for Pyzdry. The same charter rewarded one of its citizens, Gierko, with additional possessions by the city – perhaps in recognition of the role he played in securing the city’s support for Henryk.⁹⁷³ After dislodging his cousin from Greater Poland, Henryk also issued a document for the city of Kalisz, in which he not only granted them the same village of Tyniec, but also Greater and Lesser Dobrzec. These, together with the confirmation of the privileges granted by the predecessors, were given in recognition of the hardships and grave dangers the loyal citizens of Kalisz had to endure – presumably as the forces of Silesian Piasts battled it over Greater Poland.⁹⁷⁴ The predecessors listed by Duke Henryk included not only Greater Polish Piasts, but also Władysław the Short, Václav II, and even Bolesław III the Generous. While the inclusion of the latter granted legitimacy to Henryk’s rivals, it did so to assuage the concerns of the townspeople, whose support for any of Henryk’s predecessors was not to be punished.

The Silesian, Greater-Polish, and to a lesser extent, Lesser-Polish examples cited above illustrate how issuing charters confirming and extending the privileges of the urban communities became an important tool for obtaining and strengthening the towns’ political support. It is likely that these documents were accompanied by public gestures, like oaths of loyalty given by the burghers to their new benefactor. We can find the traces of such oaths in a few fourteenth-century sources: burghers of Gdańsk and Tczew swore loyalty to Władysław in 1306, while rebellious burghers of Cracow were accused in 1311 of perjury.⁹⁷⁵ The regularity with which important centers in contested lands received confirmations of earlier privileges from the competing rulers speaks to the reciprocal bonds they were meant to evoke: the towns’ loyalty to the new ruler on the one hand, the confirmation and extension of the city’s position on the other. The often-found mentions of the price paid by the townspeople for their loyalty, of hardships suffered from the hands of the duke’s enemies, further underscore the material implications of the charter received in reward.

The urban communities were well aware of the connection between loyal service to the duke and the city’s privileges established in ducal diplomas and used it to their advantage. In

⁹⁷³ KDW II. 905.

⁹⁷⁴ KDW II.914: *Nos Heinricus [...] attendentes universa incommoda graviaque pericula que fideles nostri cives Kalisienses hactenus diversimode pertulerunt, volentes eosdem in aliquo consolacionis iuvamine relevare ut ex hoc nostris reddantur serviciis prompiciores [...]*.

⁹⁷⁵ See the testimony of Vogt Tylon, who acted as Władysław’s emissary in Pomerania, Lites I (1).22, 30: *Interrogatus, qualiter sibi hoc constet, respondit: hoc scio quia propter hoc bene quadringenta miliaria equitavi, et fui bene quater in Pomorania cum domino rege, tunc duce, et iuramenta recepi et dictavi nomine domini regis, tunc ducis, et tota terra et milites sibi obedierunt, et dictavi iuramenta fidelitatis que cives de Gdanczk et Trschow sibi prestiterunt*; On perjury of the Cracow burghers, see subchapter below.

the document mentioned above for the city of Poznań from 1298, Duke Władysław the Short acted to recompense the city for the losses it suffered in war in response to the entreaties (*preces*) of the townspeople.⁹⁷⁶

An even better example of the way in which the townspeople themselves linked the loyalty they demonstrated to their lords with the expectation of the reward in the form of further privileges can be found in the series of the real and forged privileges that the Upper-Silesian Piasts were supposed to issue for the city of Racibórz. While we do not know the exact date of the town's *locatio*, Racibórz's population of *hospites* and its vogts were mentioned off-handedly in the documents of local rulers in the first half of the thirteenth century.⁹⁷⁷ The town's earliest surviving privilege, issued by Duke Władysław of Opole in 1267, granted the city the nearby meadow and allowed its inhabitants to cut wood from the ducal forest for the price of 8 marks of silver.⁹⁷⁸ The charter issued in 1280 exempted the townspeople of Racibórz from paying for the wood whatsoever. This privilege was framed, as in the case of Cracow's document from 1288, as given in the recognition of loyalty and bravery in the face of hostile attack. Władysław, having heard much about the loyalty of the townspeople when Racibórz "was besieged by a great multitude of enemies", decided to honor their "praiseworthy and firm resistance", so that "their abundant loyalty together with valor (*strenuitas*), should be an example for all of the possessors of the fortified cities."⁹⁷⁹ The oblique enemy mentioned by the charter most likely refers to the Bohemians or Henryk IV Probus's men, who attacked Władysław's land in retribution for his raid on Opava.⁹⁸⁰ Just six years later Władysław's sons Mieszko and Przemysław, when granting the city the judicial supremacy over all other localities that used "Flemish law" in their domains, did so while praising the loyal citizens of Racibórz for "putting aside all fear" and standing firmly by their rulers in tempestuous times.⁹⁸¹ What specific crisis

⁹⁷⁶ KDW II.773.

⁹⁷⁷ Norbert Mika, "Przeobrażenia w ustroju miasta Raciborza na przestrzeni wieków" [Transformations in the governing structure of the city of Racibórz over the centuries], in *Sacrum i profanum: klasztory i miasta w rzeczywistości Górnego Śląska w średniowieczu*, ed. Elżbieta Bimler-Mackiewicz (Rybnik: Muzeum w Rybniku, 2003), 66–67.

⁹⁷⁸ SUB IV.44.

⁹⁷⁹ SUB IV.388: *Notum sit igitur universis et singulis presentem paginam inspecturis, quod nos Wladislaus dei gratia dux Opoliensis senior, cum civitas nostra Ratibor inimicorum multitudine magna vallabatur, fidelitate civium dicte civitatis in resistentia laudabili et virili audita plurimum et comperta ipsos cives et omnes ipsorum successores dignum duximus altis muneribus honorandos. Quod videlicet ipsorum promotioni volumus intendere per omnes modos, quos possumus, quamdiu caro texerit ossa nostra, ut ipsorum fidelitas simul et strenuitas copiosa sit cunctis civitatum munitarum possessoribus in exemplum tamen et signum favoris et gratie pretaxate, dictis superius civibus et omnibus ipsorum successoribus pepercimus in marca auri, que ratione lignorum in festo beati Galli solvi consuevit [...]*

⁹⁸⁰ See Włodarski, *Polska i Czechy*, 93; Grodecki, „Dzieje polityczne,” 284.

⁹⁸¹ SUB 5.266: *Nos igitur Mesco et Premislaus dei gratia duces Opolienses domini de Ratibor considerata fidelitate civium nostrorum de Ratibor, quos dignos ducimus multis gratiarum actionibus pro eo, quod omni*

this document refers to remains open to interpretation. Most likely it relates to the raging conflict between Henryk IV Probus and bishop Tomasz II, which also drew in Mieszko and Przemyśl. It was, after all, in Racibórz where Wrocław's bishop found shelter since the spring of 1285, after he was forced to flee his stronghold in Otmuchów. The sources do not mention any direct consequences that townspeople had to suffer by the time of the issuing of the charter, but with the bishop's men being attacked on Silesian roads, it is not difficult to imagine that the inhabitants of Racibórz were concerned by the violence outside the city.⁹⁸² Both the language and the content of the diploma can also be treated as a way for Mieszko and Przemyśl to shore up the support of the city before the inevitable escalation of the conflict with the Duke of Wrocław. If that was the case, it was a successful effort – even as Henryk IV Probus besieged Racibórz in 1287, the citizens remained loyal until the reconciliation between the duke and the bishop.⁹⁸³

The loyalty of Racibórz continued to be praised in later diplomas.⁹⁸⁴ Furthermore, the language of loyalty became an important part of the townspeople's own self-characterization. Two late-medieval forgeries, based on some original documents of Duke Przemyśl, embellish their descriptions of the reliable support lent by the city to its Piast rulers. The important privilege reshaping the governance of the city along the norms of Magdeburg law, purporting to be issued in 1299, praised the “noble loyalty and loyal nobility” of Racibórz's inhabitants.⁹⁸⁵ Another forged document rewarded the city, adorned with “jewels of its habitual loyalty” and clad in “armor of unfailing devotion”, with the forest on the east bank of the Oder. Purportedly issued in the aftermath of yet another siege of Racibórz, attacked in 1290 by the forces of Lev Danylovych of Halych,⁹⁸⁶ the diploma contained an extensive narrative, which described the

terrore semoto nobis, prout decuit, astiterunt viriliter in cunctis nostris oportunitatibus tempore procelloso, eis pro posse nostro libare volumus [...].

⁹⁸² On the dangers faced by the envoys sent by the bishop on Silesian roads, see SUB V.238.

⁹⁸³ The brief information about the siege of Racibórz in 1287 should be treated with caution, as it is known only from late-fourteenth-century *Chronicle of the Polish princes*. See *Chronica principum Poloniae*, 499; Nevertheless, the presence of Henryk IV Probus in Upper Silesia in 1287 lends credibility to the idea that he carried out the military campaign against the Dukes of Racibórz. See SUB V.362.

⁹⁸⁴ Loyal service of the townspeople would appear, for example, in the privilege limiting the number of butcher's stalls in and within the vicinity of Racibórz, see Marek Wójcik, “Niedrukowany dokument Leszka, księcia raciborskiego, z datą 3 maja 1326 roku” [Unprinted document of Leszek, Duke of Racibórz, dated May 3, 1326], in *Scriptura, diploma, sigillum. Prace ofiarowane Profesorowi Kazimierzowi Bobowskiemu*, ed. Joachim Zdrenka and Joanna Karczewska (Zielona Góra: Oficyna Wydawnicza Uniwersytetu Zielonogórskiego, 2009), 113–23.

⁹⁸⁵ SUB VI.473; While the surviving document was forged, the establishment of the city council and the limitation of the judicial powers of the hereditary vogts must have happened in the early fourteenth century, as attested by other sources. The conflict between the increasingly powerful Racibórz patriciate and the city's vogts, traceable in the sources around the turn of the fourteenth-century, is outlined in Mika, “Przeobrażenia w ustroju miasta Raciborza na przestrzeni wieków” [Transformations in the governing structure of the city of Racibórz over the centuries], 67–68.

⁹⁸⁶ On the campaign, see Norbert Mika, “Polityka czeska kniazia Lwa Daniłowicza. Z dziejów stosunków rusko-czeskich w drugiej połowie XIII w.” [Lev Danylovych's Bohemian policy. Ruthenian-Bohemian relations in

townspeople repelling the most recent attack and recalled the valorous defense from 1280. The inhabitants of Racibórz twice defended their city against “the greatest assault of the tyrants,” fighting “beyond the manner of townspeople (*extra morem civium*).”⁹⁸⁷ While the flowery language of the *narratio* could have been added by interpolators, it is likely that one or both sieges were already noted in the diploma used by the late-medieval forgers.⁹⁸⁸

Whether the description of valorous deeds was a part of the original charter or a later creation, they testify to the important place of the loyal support and sacrifices suffered for their rulers played in the memory of the urban community. For the creators of the forgeries, that is Racibórz’s inhabitants from the fourteenth or fifteenth century, the language of loyalty was an expected feature of the ducal diplomas issued for the city. They also believed that the underscored allegiance of the townspeople would serve as a convincing justification for the claimed prerogatives of the city council.

It was not only the townspeople of Racibórz who cultivated the memories of the past loyal service, and especially the military support lent to their rulers. In 1288, Leszek the Black exempted the burghers of Cracow from customs duties in recognition of the successful, strenuous defense they mounted against the most recent (1287) Mongol invasion.⁹⁸⁹ The diploma and its information about the victory their ancestors won in Leszek’s service were

second half of 13th c.], in *Przemyśl i ziemia przemyska w strefie wpływów ruskich (X - połowa XIV w.)*, vol. 2, ed. Vitaliy Nagirny and Tomasz Pudłocki, *Colloquia Russica*, I (Cracow: Towarzystwo Wydawnicze „Historia Iagellonica”, 2013), 163–81.

⁹⁸⁷ SUB V.512: [...] *Dum igitur conscientie nostre volumina volvimus, dum civitates nostro subiectas dominio in nostre considerationis speculo speculamur, in quibus credimus sinceram fidem et devotionem debitam congruis temporibus reperiri, occurrit nobis specialiter Ratiboriensis civitas consuete fidelitatis representans monilia et indeficientis devotionis circumamicta phaleris, satis nostro dominio fructuosus et floridis obsequiis obsequitur et fidei sue constantia probabilibus argumentis et evidentissimis indiciis demonstratur. Metitur etiam actus mentis nostre causas alias, per quas de ipsa civitate non indigne specialem confidentiam gerimus. Nam cum dudum inhabitatores dicte civitatis a vicinis nostris adhuc vivente bone memorie patre nostro graves paterentur iniurias et pressuras, ita quod civitatem ipsam inopinate valido exercitu cuperent occupare, ipsi cives tanquam fidelissimi et electi lesis et confusis adversariis triumphatorie suam liberaverunt civitatem ab insultu maximo tyrannorum. Postmodum etiam tempore fratris nostri charissimi illustrissimi ducis Mesconis simul et nostro venientes adversarii nostri noctis sub silentio terras, menia dicte scanderunt civitatis ipsam occupare manu predonica cupientes. Quod cum audisset populus ibi manens, nulla more intercapedine sibi sumpta in hostes dictos extra morem civium acriter insilivit et ita properabat ad prelium expedite, tanquam leones, quos fames extimulat, ad stabula cursitant armentorum. Et cum hinc inde foret diu direque certatum et suos enses fidelium comitiva civium sanguine inimicorum plurimum rubricassent, adversariis pluribus interemptis deus iudex iustus cum ipsis descendens in prelium ipsos laudis perpetue triumpho de suis hostibus decoravit et quasi miraculose sanguinem innoxium sic salvavit.*

⁹⁸⁸ Norbert Mika believed in the authenticity of the forgery’s *narratio*, see Mika, “Polityka czeska,” 177, footnote 67; Norbert Mika, *Racibórz w obliczu najazdów tatarskich i zagrożenia wałaskiego* [Racibórz in the face of Tatar invasions and the Wallachian threat] (Racibórz: Agat, 2002), 50–62.

⁹⁸⁹ KDMK 2: *Nos Lestco dei gracia Dux Cracoviensis, Sandomiriensis et Syradiensis, quum ex dignitate principatus singulor[um] merita diligenti consideratione debemus intueri, volentes cuilibet pro meriti qualitate impendere gracie quantitatem, in retributionem condignam obsequi[orum], que nobis et terris] nostris Ciues nostri Cracouienses pugnando contra seuissimam gentem Tartarorum et victoriam in eisdem obtinendo laudabiliter [osten]derunt [...].*

regarded highly important by the urban elites of Late-Medieval Cracow.⁹⁹⁰ While we do not know if he was a burgher himself, the author of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* gestured at a similar memory of loyal military service being cultivated in Wrocław. It was, after all, the city that firmly defended itself three times against the forces of German adventurers and robbers led by Bolesław the Bald in 1240s. As the chronicler underscores, Wrocław had done so against the odds, since it was only recently bestowed *ius Theutonicum* and was almost without men.⁹⁹¹

Furthermore, the language of loyalty (or rather accusations of the lack of thereof) was also used for political goals within the urban communities. In addition to the record of loyal deeds found in charters issued for or forged by the cities, among the source material from urban centers of fragmented Poland we can find denunciations of fellow compatriots.

This was the case in Wrocław, where the early-fourteenth-century Municipal Book contained a short entry on the “digressions of Walther *de Pomerio* against the city.” Walther, supposed accomplice in the 1293 scheme to kidnap Henryk V the Fat, was accused of being the duke’s jailor, torturer, and in general of being “always with Lutko Pakosławic against the city.” Later, Walther caused havoc in the city council’s chambers, threatening to kill or mutilate councilor Nicholaus Hellenbrech, the city’s notary Peter, and all who would write letters to the King of Bohemia.⁹⁹²

The veracity of the accusations described in the Municipal Book had already been questioned by the nineteenth-century historiography.⁹⁹³ Though Walther *de Pomerio* had some connections with the duke Henryk of Głogów, having bought from him some land by Trzebnica in 1297,⁹⁹⁴ his involvement in the plot is not mentioned in the documents that brought the end

⁹⁹⁰ Piotr Okniński, *Wehikuly Pamięci: Przeszłość i władza w dawnym Krakowie (do końca XVIII w.)* [Vehicles of Memory: The Past and Power in Old Krakow (until the end of the 18th century)] (Warsaw: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2023), 161–64.

⁹⁹¹ SCP, 652: *Cum hac tempestate submota terra Slesie respirare debuisset, ecce senior filius Boleslaus Calvus contra fratres suos parvulos consurgens tribus expeditionibus Wratislaviam obsedit, que licet tunc in iure Teuthonico novella esset et viribus quasi nulla, tamen se contrahens in angustia sua, viriliter se defendit.*

⁹⁹² The Municipal Book, referred to in sources and historiography as “*Hirsuta Hilla Vetus*”, created ca. 1324, is now lost. The text of the entry cited after Gerhard Pfeiffer, *Das Breslauer Patriziat im Mittelalter*, *Darstellungen und Quellen zur schlesischen Geschichte* 30 (Breslau: Trewendt & Granier, 1929), 110: *hii sunt excessus Waltheri de Pomerio contra civitatem. Item primo excessit, cum dominus dux ventrosus esset captivatus per Ludkonem Pacoslai et duceretur in Glogoviam, ecce Ludeko Pacoslai posuit ipsum Waltherum in custodem domini ducis et tortorem. Item secundum vitium, quod semper contra civitatem cum Ludecone Pacoslai. Item tertium vitium, ipse Waltherius de Pomerio fuit comminatus (dominis) manifeste in consistorio dominis consulibus stans coram eis, quod vellet occidere et mactare et pedes amputare dominis consulibus et nominatim Nicolao dicto Hellenbrech, quic tunc fuit temporis consul civitatis et magistro Petro scriptori, si praesumerent scribere litteras ad regem Bohemiae, tunc regnantem et tutorem existentem. Item impedivit jus Magdeburgense venditum in Nysam pro una marca auri.*

⁹⁹³ Colmar Grünhagen, *Geschichte Schlesiens* (Gotha: Perthes, 1884), 1:125, *Anmerkungen* 50–51; The issues with veracity of the claim were, perhaps too hastily, off-handedly dismissed in Jurek, *Dziedzic Królestwa Polskiego*, 49, footnote 99.

⁹⁹⁴ SUB VI.316.

to the conflict between the ruler of Głogów and imprisoned Henryk V. Moreover, accused burgher's position within the city politics and the favor of Henryk V's son, Bolesław III the Generous, speak against the first of the accusations.⁹⁹⁵ The noted transgressions were thus most likely exaggerated by Walther's enemies – the men whom he threatened with violence in city council's chambers. This intervention by an outspoken burgher led to the bishop of Wrocław, Henryk of Wierzbna, and not Václav II of Bohemia, becoming the guardian of an adolescent duke of Wrocław upon the death of his uncle, Bolko I of Jawor.⁹⁹⁶ The accusations of disloyalty against the old ruler and the city entered into Wrocław's Municipal Book are therefore an artifact of factional struggles within the urban community – struggles in which the discourse of loyalty was used as one of the tools.

Summarizing the discussion above, the ways in which the loyalty of the urban subjects was described in the ducal documents issued in fragmented Poland closely followed the discourse of knightly loyal service analyzed in the previous chapter. The earliest mentions of loyalty appeared when justifying the rewards bestowed on outstanding individual burghers, with the details of their "loyal service" most often left vague. With the growing power of the cities by the last quarter of the thirteenth century, the urban communities as a whole became more commonly rewarded and described as loyal subjects of Polish dukes. The mention of the witnessed and expected loyalty displayed by the townspeople became an important part of the charters confirming and extending municipal privileges, as competing Piasts fought to curry the favor of powerful urban centers and bolster their own legitimacy.

The special role that the written documents played in the creation and self-perception of the Central-European urban communities gave the townspeople of fragmented Poland an appreciation of the written statements about their loyal service. As demonstrated by the example of the Racibórz forgeries, the unwavering support and sacrifices suffered in the service of their dukes could have become an important instrument of communal self-promotion. It could also have been wielded as a tool when appealing for the ruler's favor or when justifying claims and privileges. In that, the urban communities acted similarly to the noble families examined in the last chapter, who appealed to the real or imagined loyalty of their ancestors for political gains. The plurality of political actors among the townspeople should not be overlooked. The claims of loyalty and accusations of treachery were used as tools in the competitions for power and

⁹⁹⁵ In 1308 Duke Bolesław III, in recognition of Walther's loyal service, allowed him to employ two fishermen in his possessions by Wrocław. RS 3000; From the later appearances of Walter as witness on documents of Henryk V's children, see for example RS 3032, 3035, 3065, 3078, 3267, 3330, 3361.

⁹⁹⁶ Jurek, *Dziedzic Królestwa Polskiego*, 91.

position within the urban community. Finally, none of the documents analyzed above mentioned anything about the ethnicity or language spoken by the loyal townspeople.

4.2 From Foreigners to Subjects

If we are to look for the earliest mentions of the perfidious *Theutonici*, we need to step outside of the urban context. The process of the so-called German colonization, beginning at the turn of the thirteenth century, also brought to fragmented Poland rural settlers, as well as knights, looking for land and employment.⁹⁹⁷ Prior to that, the image of Germans presented by Polish chroniclers was shaped primarily by the fluctuating relations between Piast rulers and the Imperial elite.⁹⁹⁸ In the *Chronica Polonorum* the German entourage of the prideful Queen Rycheza is the only mention of Germans as Polish subjects. Otherwise, they appear either as an invading force, no more perfidious than other neighboring ethnicities. With the increasing number of settlers who, irrespective of their ethnicity, came to live under the *ius Theutonicum*, in the thirteenth century term *Theutonici* no longer referred to the inhabitants of neighboring German principalities, but also increasingly diverse body of the Piast subjects.⁹⁹⁹

In the narrative sources, this change was not perceptible immediately. In the older tradition created at Gniezno's Cathedral Chapter, *Theutonici* appeared only as the Knights of the Teutonic Order, allies of the Greater-Polish Piasts against the troublesome Pomeranian neighbors to the north. In turn, the *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter* convey negative attitudes towards the German-speaking followers of Piast rulers. The association with the *Theutonici* was an often-noted detail in the annalist's portrayal of the Duke of Legnica, Bolesław the Bald. It was the money for German assistance in fighting against his brother that Bolesław hoped to secure by imprisoning Ikon. Moreover, the annalist noted that the duke's former favorite was held under the guard of those very Germans.¹⁰⁰⁰ It is also not without prejudice that the annalist notes the German ethnicity of the henchmen who, on the behest of

⁹⁹⁷ On the thorny issue of the connotations carried by the term, together with historiographical overview, see Piskorski, "The Medieval Colonization"; On the dynamics of the migration see Zientara, "Die deutschen Einwanderer"; Tomasz Jurek, "Die Migration deutscher Ritter nach Polen," in *Das Reich und Polen*, vol. 59, ed. Aleksander Patschovsky and Thomas Wunsch, *Vorträge und Forschungen* (Stuttgart: Thorbecke, 2003), 243–76; Geographically narrower, but exquisitely detailed overview of knightly migrations in Jurek, *Obce rycerstwo*, 18–66.

⁹⁹⁸ See for example Andrzej Pleszczyński, "The Image of the Germans and the Holy Roman Empire in Polish Historiography until the 13th Century," in *Germans and Poles in the Middle Ages*, ed. Andrzej Pleszczyński and Grischa Vercamer, *Explorations in Medieval Culture* 16 (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 101–18; Sławomir Gawlas, "The Perception of the Holy Roman Empire and Its People in the Eyes of the Polish Elites in the Middle Ages," in *Germans and Poles in the Middle Ages*, ed. Andrzej Pleszczyński and Grischa Vercamer, *Explorations in Medieval Culture* 16 (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 119–30.

⁹⁹⁹ Gawlas, "The Perception," 133.

¹⁰⁰⁰ RkP, [40], 28.

Bolesław, brutally kidnapped bishop Tomasz of Wrocław.¹⁰⁰¹ Bolesław was also surrounded by Germans when he, at least according to the annalist, tried to lure Konrad of Głogów into the trap at the castle in Legnica. When all of Bolesław's Germans left his side for their watch duties, Konrad seized the opportunity to turn the tables on the older brother, kidnapping him instead.¹⁰⁰²

Bolesław was not the only Silesian Piast who was noted by the annalist to often rely on German followers. The punitive raid on Oleśnica conducted by Przemysław I took place after Duke Henryk III of Wrocław failed to pay the promised ransom for certain German knight.¹⁰⁰³ These examples, however, create only the most tenuous link between German followers of Piasts and disloyalty. After all, it were not their henchmen, but the Silesian Piasts themselves, who were described as behaving in a morally dubious, underhanded manner. We have seen a similar characterization in Vincentius's *Chronica Polonorum*, when Władysław II did not trust his subjects to wage an unjust war against his own brothers, and thus had to rely on foreign mercenaries.¹⁰⁰⁴ Just like in that case, the reliance on foreign Germans who fought for gold was one more detail meant to paint a negative picture of the dynastic rivals of the Greater-Polish Piasts.

Next time the Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter made note of the Germans in the employ of neighboring rulers, they did so while describing Bolesław I the Pious's intervention in Pomerania. Upon the death of Duke Świętopełk II in 1266, the region was torn by the violent struggle for succession between Świętopełk's brother Sambor, older son Mściwój II, and younger son Warcisław. Without going into the details of political events, Mściwój II found himself seeking the help of Margraves of Brandenburg, to whom he promised the overlordship over Gdańsk. With the sudden death of Warcisław in 1271, Mściwój found himself outmaneuvered by his Brandenburgian allies.¹⁰⁰⁵ According to the *Annals*, the Pomeranian

¹⁰⁰¹ RkP, [79], 41: [...] *Boleslaus dux Slesie inprovisus nocte, qua idem episcopus requiescebat, [...] eadem nocte cum Theutonicis fracto hostio manu armata irruit et tamquam furem et latronem captivari precepit [...]*.

¹⁰⁰² RkP, [80]. 42: *Dominus autem C[onradus] cum videret Theutonicos, qui erant circa fratrem eius B[oleslaum], fere omnes ascendisse turres ad custodiendum et circumspiciens in castro circa fratrem suum paucos homines, quod ei ille machinabatur, in hoc ei vicem reddidit. Quod in eodem castro dominus C[onradus] ducem B[oleslaum] captivavit et citissime, ne Theutonici descenderent de turribus et dominum suum .. recipere, eo detento de castro exsiluit et captivum deduxit in Glogouiam et custodie mancipavit.*

¹⁰⁰³ RkP, [63], 33-34: *Propter hoc idem dux preceperat predictam civitatem spoliare, quia idem dux Henricus obligatus fuerat predicto in quingentis marcis argenti pro quodam Theutonico captivato, ut ei dictam pecuniam non solverat, cum sepe per ipsum ducem Premizlonem fuerat monitus.*

¹⁰⁰⁴ 3.28 in *Chronica Polonorum*, 120-22: *Proinde suorum aliquantsiper minus fidens Wladislaus exterorum turmas contrahit [...] Munitissime tamen presidatis urbibus, imperatoriam adit serenitatem, cuius erat sorore uxorius, a quo subsidiari supplicat et que emandicare nequit, emercari studet suffragia.*

¹⁰⁰⁵ The basic outline of the events in Milliman, 'The Slippery Memory of Men,' 66-76; For a more detailed, often polemical discussion, see Jasiński, "Wojna domowa na Pomorzu Gdańskim w latach 1269/70-1272 (Ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem roli rycerstwa i możnowładztwa)" [The civil war in Gdańsk Pomerania in the years 1269/70-1272 (With particular emphasis on the role of the knights and nobility)], in *Spółeczeństwo Polski Średniowiecznej*, vol. 3, edited by Stefan Krzysztof Kuczyński (Warsaw: DiG, 1985), 135-87; Śliwiński, *Mściwoj*

ruler, at first gave the city and castle of Gdańsk to Margrave Konrad, securing his aid against Wracisław. Nevertheless, with his brother dead, Mściwój

[...] hoped that he could now rule securely in the land of Pomerania, wished to enter his castle and the city of Gdańsk. He was not permitted to enter by the Germans (*per Theutonicos*), who were guarding that same castle and city in the name of Margrave Konrad. Considering such great injury and perfidy of the Germans, who did not allow him to rule and exercise lordship over his own inheritance, the aforesaid Duke Mściwój, having summoned his entire land, surrounded the said castle and city with careful guard, so that no more Germans might enter to guard and defend the aforementioned fortifications.¹⁰⁰⁶

Since Mściwój was unable to retake Gdańsk on his own, at the advice of his men he sent for the help of Bolesław I the Pious. In the entry for 1272 the annalist from Poznań describes the triumphant campaign of Bolesław in Pomerania “against the Germans who were in Gdańsk.” During which the assaulting forces of the Piast ruler killed almost all *Theutonici*, save for a few who ended up in Mściwój’s captivity.¹⁰⁰⁷

The term *Theutonici* on its own is vague enough to mark the Margrave’s military contingent sent to his ally, Mściwój’s German-speaking subjects, or both groups. While other sources convincingly inform us about the support some townspeople of Gdańsk lent to the Brandenburgian cause, I do not believe that this was the intention of the annalist from Poznań. Out of the outlined options, the first one seems to me to be the most likely explanation. In the annalistic narration, Gdańsk was already handed over to Margrave Konrad before Warcisław’s death. Since the siege of the Pomeranian center was meant to prevent more *Theutonici* from entering Gdańsk, it seems most likely that they were not understood as inhabitants of the city and Pomeranian subjects, but as the external force. As we will see later in this chapter, this will change with the evolving memory of the Brandenburgian occupation of the city. Nevertheless, writing shortly after the Pomeranian events, the Poznań annalist attributed *perfidia* primarily to the Brandenburgian allies-turned-enemies of Duke Mściwój. It is not surprising that the Poznań annalist decided to depict the Margraves’ forces as duplicitous, given that the period saw rising Ascanian-Piast tension over the borderland across the Noteć river.¹⁰⁰⁸ It is worth pointing out,

II, 126–81; Edward Rymar, “Mściwoj II jako lennik margrabiów brandenburskich (w latach 1269-1273) [Mestwin II as a vassal of Brandenburg margraves (in the years 1269-1273)],” *Studia z dziejów średniowiecza* 23 (2019): 216–44.

¹⁰⁰⁶ RkP, [116], 49: *Videns hoc dux Msciwius, quod erat orbatus fratre suo domino W[arcisla]o et sperabat se iam securum regnare in terra Pomoranie, voluit intrare castrum suum et civitatem Gdansk non fuit permissus intrare per Theutonicos, qui custodiebant idem castrum et civitatem nomine Conradi marchionis. Considerans prefatus dux M[sciwius] tantam iniuriam et perfidiam Theutonicorum, qui non permittebant eum regnare et dominari in propria hereditate, convocata terra sua tota vallavit diligenti custodia dictum castrum et civitatem, ne plures Theutonici intrarent ad custodiendum et defendendum predictas municiones.*

¹⁰⁰⁷ RkP, [117], 50.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Spors, “Agresja brandenburska,” 115-17.

that in descriptions of these borderland clashes found in the *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter*, the Brandenburgian forces are also referred to simply as *Theutones*.¹⁰⁰⁹

Not long after the events described in the *Annals*, in 1278 Duke Przemysł II mediated an agreement between Leszek the Black and his younger brother, Ziemomysł of Inowrocław. Ziemomysł, who found himself pushed out of his duchy by the forces of Bolesław I the Pious in 1271, was allowed to restore his rulership, but only under certain conditions. The returning Piast ruler was to refuse to allow any German knights and their children (*Teuthonicales milites et filios militum Teuthonicalium*) to serve in his land and court. He was also to render void any privileges that these Germans were promised or received from him without proper counsel, and to refuse to confirm any land grants that they might have received from Bolesław I the Pious or Leszek the Black. Finally, Ziemomysł also promised to issue foundation charters to new villages and towns only after the consent of his *barones*.¹⁰¹⁰ The document clearly points to the presence of German knights in Cuyavia generally and Ziemomysł's court specifically as the principal concern of the local noble elites, otherwise prepared to accept the return of their former duke.

Since promises to prevent German knights from receiving land grants or even arriving at the ducal court were required of Ziemomysł before his return to power, it is easy to imagine that internal opposition to his pro-German policies played as important a role in ousting him from Inowrocław's throne in 1271 as the forces of Bolesław I the Pious. The rivalry between Greater-Polish Piast and his Cuyavian kinsmen had been noted in contemporary annals, but only the later historiographical tradition surviving in the *Chronicle of Greater Poland* informs us about such opposition. According to the chronicle, in 1268, just few months after his father's death, Ziemomysł had to recon the betrayal of castellan Teodoryk, who handed over Bydgoszcz to the Greater-Polish Piast.¹⁰¹¹ Other Cuyavian nobles also rebelled against Ziemomysł and

¹⁰⁰⁹ See for example the very next entry, RkP, [118], 51.

¹⁰¹⁰ KDW I.482: *Tunc predictus dux Syradie terram Cuyavie fratri suo domino duci Zem. per nostrum ordinacionem et procuracionem karitative restauravit, super talibus ordinacionibus compromissis, quod predictus Zem. dux Cuyavie frater noster, Teuthonicales milites et filios militum Teuthonicalium in terra et curia sua servare denegaret, item et quascunque promissiones privilegiorum olim promisit vel tradidit maturo sine consilio, frivola et vana perseverent; eciam, quantumque villas aliquas in predicta Cuyavia temporibus domini ducis Polonie, patruī nostri, vel a duce L. Syradie receperunt, frater noster dominus dux Zem. minime ratum approbat. Item, quod si antedictus frater noster Zem. volens locare civitates vel villas cum consilio maturo baronum suorum, locare poterit ad sue affectationem voluntatis.*

¹⁰¹¹ According to the chronicler, Teodoryk was a Prussian convert living in Cuyavia. Upon realizing the duplicity of his own action, he asked his own servant to behead him, see 155 in *Chronica Poloniae maioris*, 123; Interesting tradition about the suicide of Teodoryk analyzed in more detail in Marek Cetwiński, "Samobójstwo Teodoryka Prusa (z Kroniki Wielkopolskiej)" [Suicide of Teodoryk Prus (from the Chronicle of Greater Poland)], in *Nihil Superfluum Esse. Studia z Dziejów Średniowiecza Ofiarowane Profesor Jadwidze Krzyżanowskiej*, ed. Jerzy Strzelczyk and Józef Dobosz (Poznań: Instytut Historii UAM, 2000), 237–45; Pazik, "Opowieść o samobójstwie pewnego rycerza," 206–11.

joined Bolesław, angered by the favor and overreliance of their young duke on the “bearded brothers”, that is the Knights of the Teutonic Order.¹⁰¹² Even though this time Ziemomysł was able to regain the support of the nobles and lose only some of his territory to Bolesław, in the subsequent campaign in 1271, Greater-Polish forces took Inowrocław, forcing the Cuyavian ruler into exile.

The 1268 rebellion described in the *Chronicle of Greater Poland* has been seen as the expression of the same sentiment as the one found in the 1278 resolution. Already Jadwiga Karwasińska drew the line between the two sources, arguing that the close cooperation with the Teutonic Order corresponded with Ziemowit’s policy of supporting migration of the German-speaking knights and commoners from the nascent Prussian *Ordensstaat*.¹⁰¹³ Her argument, though at times slightly modified, remains strongly embedded in Polish scholarship.¹⁰¹⁴ This is despite the clear disparity between the two sources: in one, Ziemomysł is accused exclusively of favoritism towards the Teutonic Order, while the other suggests that the rebels took issue with the policy towards the German knights settling in Cuyavia and the foundation of new settlements without prior consultation. In a recent voice of the discussion, Błażej Śliwiński underscored just how little evidence there is that already in 1268 Ziemomysł was seriously pursuing any of the latter policies. Surviving sources do not show a trace of the spree of founding new towns and villages by Ziemomysł. Given that the revolt took place just a year after his father’s death, it seems unlikely that it was invoked by a dramatic change in the dynamics with which new settlements were created. There are also no direct records that suggest the influx of the German knights in Cuyavia. None of the men appearing in Ziemomysł’s entourage, except perhaps Treasurer Wilhelm, can be said to be of German origin. Therefore, Śliwiński concluded it must have been Ziemomysł’s tightening connections with the Teutonic Order that provoked the 1268 rebellion.¹⁰¹⁵

I agree that we should not see the grievances of the Cuyavian elites expressed in the 1278 document as connected to the policies of Ziemomysł before his exile. Similar criticism can be extended even further. The 1278 request that Ziemomysł render void the donations

¹⁰¹² 156 in *Chronica Poloniae maioris*, 124: *Anno denique predicto primates terre Cuyauie cernentes, quod Semomisl dux eorum ipsis spretis Fratrum Barbatorum interim consiliis eorum utebatur in omnibus sequens favores, adhererunt Boleslao duci Polonie.*

¹⁰¹³ Jadwiga Karwasińska, *Sąsiedztwo kujawsko-krzyżackie 1235-1343* [Cuyavian-Teutonic neighborhood 1235-1343] (Warsaw: Towarzystwo Naukowe Warszawskie, 1927), 74–75.

¹⁰¹⁴ See for example Zmudzki, *Studium podzielonego Królestwa*, 212; Gerard Kucharski, “Kujawy po śmierci Kazimierza Konradowicza. Wydarzenia z lat 1269-1271” [Cuyavia after the death of a Kazimierz Konradowicz. Events from 1269-1271, in *Mieszczanie, wasale, zakonnicy*, ed. Błażej Śliwiński, *Studia z dziejów średniowiecza* 10 (Malbork: Muzeum Zamkowe w Malborku, 2004), 85–87; Hlebionek, *Bolesław Pobożny*, 96.

¹⁰¹⁵ Śliwiński, *Ziemomysł inowrocławski*, 89–105.

granted to the Germans by previous rulers has been seen as proof that Bolesław the Pious and Leszek the Black continued the pro-German policy of the exiled Piast, but simply had done so in a less abrasive manner.¹⁰¹⁶ Outside of this single source, however, there is no other evidence for German knights settling in Cuyavia between 1267 and 1278, not to mention anything about the special favor being extended to them by Piast rulers.

The closest information we can infer about the groups of the new, foreign arrivals that could have upset the Cuyavian nobles is the presence of Sambor II and Warcisław, rivals defeated by Mściwój II in the struggle over Pomerania. Before 1271, these allies of Ziemomysł found temporary shelter in Cuyavia, where they were most likely followed by the core of their closest Pomeranian supporters. This group of exiles would have been relatively small, and there is nothing we can say for certain about its ethnic composition - while Sambor II surrounded himself with the German knights, we know that not all of them followed him into exile.¹⁰¹⁷ Nevertheless, even if the exiles were predominantly Slavic-speaking Pomeranians, they could have still been perceived with hostility preserved for “others” by the Cuyavian political elite.¹⁰¹⁸ Hostility toward foreign knights may also have stemmed from the passage of crusading armies organized by Přemysl II Ottokar and the princes of the Empire. In the late 1260s and early 1270s, their repeated routes to Prussia led through Cuyavia.¹⁰¹⁹

Our inability to find the proof that migrating German knights were indeed favored and granted land by Piast rulers of Cuyavia makes the terms of Ziemomysł’s return to Inowrocław ever more interesting. In the absence of other sources, we should consider if the grievances expressed in the 1278 document were grounded less in tangible political experiences and more in the fears of the Cuyavian nobles. It should not be overlooked that as the negotiations for Ziemomysł’s return from exile took place, the political elites of Cuyavia were given the opportunity to shape their relationship with the Piast ruler. By forcing Ziemomysł to revoke the lands granted to foreigners, even if such donations were in fact rare, they clearly delineated the boundaries of the duchy’s political community. It was the Cuyavian *barones* that were to partake in Ziemomysł’s rulership – advising and consenting to his decisions, monopolizing the access to the duke and the land he could distribute. Whether grounded in past experiences or in

¹⁰¹⁶ Hlebionek, *Bolesław Pobożny*, 98; Żmudzki, *Studium podzielonego Królestwa*, 242.

¹⁰¹⁷ Piotr Oliński, “Otoczenie księcia Sambora II” [The entourage of Duke Sambor II], in *Krzyżowcy, kronikarze, dyplomaci*, ed. Błażej Śliwiński, Gdańskie Studia z Dziejów Średniowiecza 4 (Koszalin: Bałtycka Wyższa Szkoła Humanistyczna w Koszalinie, 1997), 115–46; The thesis about entourage of Sambor II as the source of Cuyavian noble’s complaint was supported, for example, in Jurek, “Die Migration deutscher Ritter,” 260.

¹⁰¹⁸ Śliwiński, *Ziemomysł inowrocławski*, 129–32.

¹⁰¹⁹ Gładysz, *The Forgotten Crusaders*, 343–44.

prejudice, the concern about German knights and their offspring had a real impact on the relations between the restored Cuyavian Piast and his subjects.

The demands made of Ziemomysł upon his return to power in 1278 can be thus be seen as a sign of the evolution of the language surrounding Germans in the Piast realms. No longer mercenaries employed by bad rulers or duplicitous, untrustworthy allies, they became an internal danger, otherized subjects. A couple of years after the *barones* of Cuyavia, the Archbishop of Gniezno Jan Świnka also resorted to anti-German rhetoric in a political conflict – this time with the Silesian Franciscans. The friars, most of whom were German-speaking, had left the Polish province for a Saxon one, in defiance of the bishop of Wrocław. At the 1285 provincial synod in Łęczyca, Archbishop Jan expressed his concerns about the order's refusal to admit Poles into its ranks and made an attempt at bolstering the importance of the Polish language.¹⁰²⁰ In the same year, he wrote a letter on the problem to the Papal curia, in which he enumerated evils arising from the presence of the German knights and settlers (*milites et coloni*) in Polish lands: they were not only oppressing Polish people, depriving them of their possessions, rights, and customs, but also violated the Church's immunities and refused to pay Peter's Pence.¹⁰²¹

This shift was also perceivable in the ways in which the Pomeranian events of 1271 were described. Whereas in the 1270s the Greater-Polish annalist presented the *Theutonici* defending Gdańsk as the external forces of the Margraves, the documents issued by Duke Mściwoj in subsequent years offered a different vision of events. In a document issued in 1283 he granted the Cuyavian Bishop Albierz the villages confiscated from burghers Arnold and Jakub, who joined Margrave Konrad's forces in 1271. The diploma describes how these two and other townspeople of Gdańsk plotted against the life of Mściwoj, and conspired together with the Margrave of Brandenburg, planning to devastate the land, deprive Mściwoj of his lordship, and to expel all *barones* and *terrigenæ*.¹⁰²² By 1290, in the document issued for

¹⁰²⁰ KDW I. 551.

¹⁰²¹ KDW I.616: *Subintransibilibus eciam tam militibus quam colonis Theutunicis in Poloniam, et occupantibus villas et alia loca que Poloni possederant, et exinde de singulis capitibus solvebant censum Romane ecclesie, videlicet denarium sancti Petri, quem ipsi Theutunici tam milites quam coloni penitus solvere contradicunt [...]. Sed et alia mala per eiusdem gentis ingressum multiplicata sunt in terra, dum gens Polonica per eos opprimitur, despicitur, guerris concutitur, iuribus et consuetudinibus patrie laudabilibus privatur, noctis intempeste silencio in propriis commodis capitur, et quod hiis est deterius, ecclesiarum emunitas violatur et ecclesiastica censura per eosdem contempnitur et parvipenditur omnino.*

¹⁰²² PIUB 365: [...] *cives Gdanensesd Arnoldus cum cognatis suis et affinibus et Jacobus cum fratre et aliis consanguineis et affinibus heredes de Scrobotow et Vytomino crimen lese maiestatis incurrissent ex eo, quod in mortem nostram machinari cum aliis civibus Gdanensibus marchionem Brandenburgensem in excidium terre et privationem dominii nostri ac baronum et terrigenarum expulsionem unanimiter conspirantes in castrum et civitatem Gdanensem cum effectu receperunt se nobis cum eodem hostiliter opposcentes [...].*

Albierz's successor Wisław, the story of the conspiracy evolved further. Mściwoj claimed that during his conflict with Margrave Konrad, *Theutonici* living in Pomerania adhered to the margrave and conspired against the duke and his *barones*, seizing castles and fortifications, murdering Pomeranian nobles and commoners.¹⁰²³ Given the close ties between Mściwoj and Greater-Polish elites and the Cuyavian addressee of both documents, the statements made by the Pomeranian ruler seem to reflect ideas not uncommon in Piast Poland.

Indeed, a very similar vision of German conspiracy meant to not only topple the rightful ruler, but also to eradicate his *barones* and *terrigenæ*. can be found in the protocols of the 1306-08 trial of the Bishop of Cracow, Jan Muskata. In the list of accusations compiled by Archbishop Jakub Świnka, two out of nine put direct focus on the bishop of Cracow's relationship with Poles and Germans. Muskata was accused of trying to drive lord Władysław and the *terrigenas Polonos*, out of Lesser Poland into exile (in Hungary and Rus, the lands of "foreigners and schismatics"), replacing them with foreigners. This accusation alone framed bishop Jan's opposition to Władysław the Short as part of a broader, malicious plan to destroy or exile all Polish *terrigenae*, supplanting them with outsiders. That these foreigners would be Germans is suggested by another accusation – Muskata was supposed to employ a band of German soldiers, who terrorized and looted lands in his diocese, while being exempt from the ban on consuming meat during the Lent.¹⁰²⁴

As thoroughly analyzed by Sławomir Gawlas, almost half of the witnesses (25 out of 53) interrogated during the trial followed this framing, seeing the excesses of Cracow's bishop through the lens of ethnic conflict.¹⁰²⁵ Many witnesses confirmed that the bishop's goal was to eliminate not just Duke Władysław, but also all nobles *gens Polonica* from Lesser Poland. For example, Provost Zdzisław from Sandomierz testified that even though Bishop Jan swore an oath promising Władysław and *terrigenas* that he will help them recover all Lesser Poland, he quickly joined with their enemies, plotting and actively working to deprive them of their inheritance.¹⁰²⁶ Another churchman from Sandomierz, Dean Herbord, specified who the

¹⁰²³ PIUB 465: *Theutonicis incolis Pomeranie marchiom adherentibus et in nostram et in nostrorum baronum electionem et in nostram mortem et nostrorum conspirantibus, sicut notorie patuit, quia castra dominii nostri et alias munitiones occupantes plurimos nobiles et ignobiles Pomeranie crudeliter peremerunt [...].*

¹⁰²⁴ MPV III.121, 78-79: [Jan Muskata] *conatur verum heredem et patronum terre et ecclesie Cracoviensis videlicet dominum ducem Wladislaum et terrigenas Polonos de propriis dominiis ad gentes externas et scismaticas profligare et alienigenas inducere cum gravi pauperum lesione, quos potius deberet tamquam pater filios et pastor gregem sibi commissum reficere pabulo spirituali. [...] item, quod est grave scandalum in populo, soldinariis suis Theutonicis, qui de suis municionibus spoliabant terras Cracoviensem et Sandomiriensem, ut est dictum, dedit licenciam carnes et lactinia tempore quadragesimalis ieiunii comedendi.*

¹⁰²⁵ Gawlas, "Verus heres," 86–87.

¹⁰²⁶ MPV III.121, 83 : *idem dominus episcopus iuramentum prestitit et firmiter promisit adherere domino duci et terrigenis dare omnem operam, ut terram suam Cracoviensem recuperarent, quod tandem mutavit, adherendo*

anonymous *inimici* were. In his testimony, Jan Muskata broke his oath of peace given to Władysław and the nobles of the land by bringing in “foreign Germans” (*alienigenas Theutonicos*) into the Cracow land, handing over his and others’ castles, from which “many evils and devastations followed, and murders were committed.”¹⁰²⁷ Similar testimonies were given by other clergymen and burghers from Sandomierz.¹⁰²⁸ Prior Henryk of Busko simply said that Jan “keeps the Germans against the duke and against the Polish people (*contra gentem polonicam*), so that they might plunder the lands.”¹⁰²⁹

The most evocative testimony, linking the abuses of power committed by the bishop’s men and Jan Muskata’s scheme against Władysław and his Polish subjects, was given by Comes Jarogniew. He confirmed that Bishop Jan was plotting to destroy and exile from their land Władysław the Short and all *gens Polonica*. When the bishop’s soldiers would be confronted about the destruction of church property, looting, murder, kidnapping, and other atrocities, they committed, they supposedly answered that they had done so with Muskata’s special blessing and on explicit order to “destroy and annihilate land, language, and the Polish people.”¹⁰³⁰

Not all the witnesses framed ethnic conflict in Musta’s Lesser Poland in similarly dire terms. Instead of the violent conduct of the bishop’s German followers, they focused on the grievance concerning favoritism within church structures. Vicar Klemens was one of the many clergymen from Cracow to note that Bishop Jan did not promote Poles to the church offices, claiming that they were unfit to hold them.¹⁰³¹ Instead, the bishop promoted “foreign Germans.”¹⁰³² According to Włóścibór, Canon of St Florian’s in Cracow, this refusal to promote Poles by Jan Muskata was caused by his hatred of the Polish people (*gens Polonica*), and ultimately linked to his desire to eliminate them completely.¹⁰³³

eiusdem domini ducis et terrigenarum inimicis et cum eis ordinando et procurando ipsos exheredare, et adiunxit [...].

¹⁰²⁷ MPV III.121, 80-81: *Dixit eciam, quod commisit crimen periurii iurando domino duci et nobilibus terre pacem tenere, quod postea immutavit, alienigenas Theutonicos videlicet in Cracoviensem terram introducendo et eis castra propria tradendo et alia tradi procurando, ex quo multa mala et vastaciones sunt secute et homicidia perpetrare*; Later, Herbord specified that castle of Tyniec was one of those that were deceitfully captured by bishop’s men acting against Władysław the Short.; see Ibid.: *castrum Tynecz captum est per suos homines in fraudem domini ducis et contra iuramentum proprium.*

¹⁰²⁸ MPV III.121, 82-84.

¹⁰²⁹ MPV III.121, 85: [Bishop Jan] *tenet Theutonicos contra ducem et contra gentem polonicam, ut spoliarent terras.*

¹⁰³⁰ MPV III.121, 93: [Bishop’s soldiers] *dixerunt, quod mandato episcopi hoc facerent speciali, quod videlicet indifferenter ecclesias et cymiteria spoliarent; dixit eciam, quod, dum eos ad spoliandum mittebat, manualement benedictionem dabat eis, iniungens pro omnibus peccatis, ut terram et linguam, gentem Polonicam destruerent et adnichilarent [...].*

¹⁰³¹ MPV III.121, 88-89: [Bishop Jan] *dignos Polonos non promovet, dicens eos inhabiles ad beneficia.*

¹⁰³² MPV III.121, 89: [Bishop Jan] *non promovet Polonos terrigenas, sed extraneos Theutonicos.*

¹⁰³³ MPV III.121, 90: *Iohannes, episcopus Cracoviensis, gentem Polonicam odio habet et omnino non promovet sed impedit in promocione, dixit enim alias: »Si non deberem perficere, quod incepi, et si non eliminarem gentem Polonicam, mallet mortem quam vitam«.*

The testimonies demonstrate, many were ready to believe that Bishop Jan's disloyalty towards Władysław the Short, *verus heres* of Lesser Poland, was in fact a part of a larger plot planned by the duke's enemies, foreigners, and Germans. Their aim was to either expel or eliminate not only the Piast ruler, but also *nobiles terrae, terrigenae*, or *gens Polonica*. Despite the difference between them, all three of these terms seem to be gesturing towards a similarly understood political community – one that could encompass both secular and ecclesiastical elites, and could, just like Władysław himself, hold Bishop Jan to his promises.

Sławomir Gawlas's well-founded interpretation points to the testimonies in the context of broader social tensions brought by the increasing importance of urban centers, visible already at the time of the rebellion against Leszek the Black in 1285. Traditional noble and ecclesiastical elites felt endangered by the political sway of Cracow and bishop Muskata's energetic attempts at carving out his own territorial lordship, and saw Władysław's return from exile as an opportunity to re-entrench their powerful position.¹⁰³⁴ Władysław the Short and his supporters, as I will demonstrate in the next subchapter, skillfully levied this sentiment in the confrontation with the urban centers of Lesser Poland. During Muskata's trial, however, the *Theutones* were a threat not linked with the cities in any special way. While two witnesses mentioned that Bishop Jan did not collect Peter's Pence from the urban communities,¹⁰³⁵ and occasionally the citizens of the bishop's town of Sławków are mentioned among his henchmen,¹⁰³⁶ burghers of Sandomierz also testified during the trial and were named among the victims.¹⁰³⁷

These were not the only voices mentioning the German-speaking subjects of the Polish rulers by the end of the thirteenth century. As already noted by the scholars before, the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* contains a contrasting, more nuanced vision of German knights in Piast service.¹⁰³⁸ As discussed in Chapter 2, the ancient Lechites and Polish entourage of Bolesław III Wrymouth were depicted by the chronicler as the masters of underhanded military tactics. Malicious Bolesław the Bold was still depicted as relying on the help of German adventurers and robbers, who committed many atrocities in Silesia before turning against Bolesław

¹⁰³⁴ Gawlas, "Verus heres," 89–94; More on the topic of Muskata's attempts in Gawlas, "Człowiek uwikłany"; Bartos, "Diplomacy and Arms," 26–35.

¹⁰³⁵ MPV III.121, 89: [Bishop Jan] *denarium sancti Petri non exigit a civitatensibus et in iure theutonico sedentibus*.

¹⁰³⁶ See for example MPV III.121, 80.

¹⁰³⁷ MPV III.121, 81, 82–83.

¹⁰³⁸ Wilamowska, "Kronika polsko-śląska," 92–93; Wielgosz, "'Kronika Polska' - Metoda prezentacji dziejów," 58–59; Mularczyk, "Kronika Polska," 31–33.

himself.¹⁰³⁹ At the same time, the Upper-Lusatian Peregryn Wezenborg was celebrated for this death in the service of Henryk the Bearded as the epitome of a loyal servant.

The most impactful depiction of the German-speaking subjects, however, comes from the episode from the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* that I have not yet discussed. In the part of the chronicle depicting the times of Henryk I the Bearded's rule in Silesia, we can find an original narrative between his two sons, Konrad and Henryk II the Pious.

According to the chronicler, Henryk I the Bearded made plans to divide his realm. The duke gave the western borderlands of Lusatia and Lubusz to his younger son, Konrad, while planning to have his older son Henryk II made king of Poland. Having learned about this plan, Konrad, “who detested the Germans, gathered Poles from various provinces and intended to drive out his brother, who at that time was in Silesia with only a few Germans.” With the duke and his wife, St Hedwig, sitting on the sidelines of the conflict, their sons met on the battlefield at Studnica. There, Henryk II “together with the arriving Germans, peasants and knights alike, whom he had assembled from elsewhere” defeated his brother’s army, routing and killing countless Poles.¹⁰⁴⁰ Konrad managed to save his life, but he was not spared divine judgment. Having fled to the “wilderness of Tarnów”, he was crippled in a hunting accident and died, with his body transported to Trzebnica monastery. The chronicler mentions that St Hedwig foresaw this tragic end of her son’s life, on whose account so much blood was spilled – thus directly linking Konrad’s death with his failed political ambitions.¹⁰⁴¹

The story of such an early confrontation between the two ethnic groups living in Silesia, unknown from any other sources, caused much interest among historians. The most thorough analysis by Benedykt Zientara, in which he reassessed the older historiography on the topic, clearly demonstrated that the story was the Silesian monk’s invention, based to an unknown degree on several different oral traditions. The information about the accidental death of Prince

¹⁰³⁹ SCP, 652: *Quod cernens Boleslaus multis advenis Teuthonicis predonibus congregatis terram non solum spoliis verum etiam incendiis aliquociens crudeliter vastavit, et in hoc malo in ecclesia et cimiterio Novi-fori fere quingenti homines incendio perierunt et castra multa predonum ac militum in malum terre constructa fuerunt.*

¹⁰⁴⁰ SCP, 647-48: *Pater iuniori filio Conrado procatus fuerat filiam ducis Saxonie, designans ei terram Lusacie et Lubecensem, seniore vero Henricum regem Polonie instituere nitebatur. Quod comperiens Conradus, qui Teuthonicos execrabatur, congregatis ex diversis provinciis Polonis fratrem cum paucis Teuthonicis qui in Slesia erant tunc, propellere intendebat, pater vero et mater, cum hoc malum sedare nequirent, pater Glogoviam, mater in Nempcz secedentes filios congregari permiserunt. Qui in campo inter Legnicz et Aureum Montem, in loco, qui Studnicza vel Ruffa ecclesia nuncupatur, committentes, Henricus cum Teuthonicis advenis, tam agricolis quam militibus, quos aliunde congregaverat, occisis innumeris Polonis campum victoriae, fugientibus, qui evadere poterant, triumphans obtinuit.*

¹⁰⁴¹ SCP 648: *Conradus ergo spe vite servande ad patrem confugiens, secessit in desertum Tarnow, ubi in venacione de equo corruens, fractis cruribus occubuit et in Trebnicz delatus in capella sepultus est propter sororem, que maxime diligebat illum et Crispus cognominabatur. Ad cuius exequias dum mater eius advocaretur, tacita morte illius, tamquam ad egrotantem filium, ait illa: Frustra egrotare fingitis, ad quem sepeliendum pergam, cuius mortem ante prescivi, quam multorum ex eius temeritate sanguis funderetur innoxius.*

Konrad came from the oral tradition of Trzebnica's monastery. The information about the battle between the two brothers might have been grounded in the memory of some unspecified social upheavals around 1220, but the ethnic dimension to the conflict was only later added to the story.¹⁰⁴²

The story created in this way combines several strands of the local tradition into a compelling narrative. It provided the readers with a compelling explanation for Konrad's unfortunate end, making a hunting accident a form of divine judgment for his attempt at driving his brother and the Germans out of Silesia.¹⁰⁴³ More importantly, in the times of the growing ethnic upheaval, it highlighted the connection between the Silesian Piasts and their German subjects. Operating in a similar logic as the other stories analyzed in this subchapter but reversing the roles, it presented the Germans as hated targets of attempted removal, undertaken with the help of "foreign" Polish knights recruited from other Piast principalities. In response, Henryk was able to persevere against his malicious brother by mobilizing the support of the Germans, knights and peasants (*agricolae*) alike. This broad coalition fighting in the past for the renowned Henryk II the Pious certainly played into the idea of ethnic solidarity linking all German speakers, set apart from their Polish counterparts.¹⁰⁴⁴ By showing Henryk the military support reaching beyond *milites*, German settlers were shown to be the most dedicated, loyal subjects of the Silesian Piasts.

4.3 *Burghers of Cracow, burning with madness of German rage...*

The rebellion of Cracow's Vogt Albert and the reactions to it were a culmination of the increasing political power of the urban communities and the growing anti-German sentiment I have discussed thus far. This challenge to the power of Władysław the Short mounted by the Lesser-Polish urban centers in 1311-12 had a lasting influence on the outlook and collective identity of Władysław's supporters, the elites of the future united Kingdom of Poland, and

¹⁰⁴² Benedykt Zientara, "Die Schlacht bei Rothkirch: Entstehung einer Legende; zur Geschichte der nationalen Gegensätze in Schlesien im 13. Jahrhundert," in *Europa slavica - Europa orientalis. Festschrift für Herbert Ludat zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Klaus-Detlev Grothusen and Klaus Zernack (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1980), 368–90; Henryk Łowmiański's attempts at explaining the nature of the real conflict between the brothers, presumably captured by the Silesian chronicler, do not seem convincing. Łowmiański, *Początki Polski*, vol. 6, 828–31; I do not also agree with Mularczyk's thesis that the image of the triumph of German forces of Henryk II was meant to be read as a part of pro-imperial argument of the chronicle. Mularczyk, "Kronika Polska."

¹⁰⁴³ The author of the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* frequently imagined Piasts divinely punished by death for attacking family members. See the examples of battlefield deaths of sons of Mieszko III the Old and Konrad of Mazovia discussed elsewhere in this thesis.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Jurek, *Obce rycerstwo*, 121.

Cracow's burghers.¹⁰⁴⁵ Among these influences was, as I will argue here, the conflation between *cives* and *Theutonici*, with both groups characterized primarily by their disloyalty in the eyes of the elites of Władysław the Short's realm.

As Piast and Přemyslid contenders fought for control of Lesser Poland, the urban centers of the region leveraged this rivalry into growing political power. The support of the burghers of Cracow was crucial for Henryk IV Probus, and the Silesian duke issued during his short reign a *locatio* document for the town of Wieliczka.¹⁰⁴⁶ This document was confirmed by Henryk's rival and successor, Przemysł II. The Greater-Polish Piast also granted his own *locatio* charter to Miechów, making Gerard Borus, a burgher of Cracow, its first vogt.¹⁰⁴⁷ The reign of Václav II seemed to enjoy the burgher's support, and the new forms of exercising territorial lordship by the distant Přemyslid ruler fostered the ambitions of urban centers. In addition to founding Nowy Sącz (1292), Václav oversaw the construction of the stone city walls that adjoined the fortifications of the Wawel castle, strengthening the city while underscoring the royal control.¹⁰⁴⁸ Thus, when in late 1304 Władysław the Short returned to Lesser Poland,¹⁰⁴⁹ he did not garner the support of local townsmen.¹⁰⁵⁰ In the confrontation between those loyal to Přemyslids and the supporters of the Cuyavian Piast, Cracow suffered damages, with parts of the castle and the city destroyed by fire, perhaps ignited by the burghers themselves.¹⁰⁵¹

¹⁰⁴⁵ Gawlas, "Verus heres," 91–94; Anna Adamska, "Away with Germans and Their Language? Linguistic Conflict and Urban Records in Early Fourteenth-Century Cracow," in *Uses of the Written Word in Medieval Towns: Medieval Urban Literacy II*, ed. Marco Mostert and Anna Adamska, Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy, 28 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 65–85; Piotr Okniński, "Ad hoc traxit me natura ...". Social Stereotypes in Kraków and the Rebellion of Vogt Albert of 1311–1312," in *Germans and Poles in the Middle Ages*, ed. Andrzej Pleszczyński and Grischa Vercamer, Explorations in Medieval Culture 16 (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 367–72; Okniński, *Wehikule Pamięci*, 105–58.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Jurek, "Plany koronacyjne Henryka," 24; Wieliczka's charter is known from the later transumpt in KDM II.515; The identity of the addresses of the charter, newly minted vogts Jaško and Isinbold, is not known. See Franciszek Sikora, "Wójtostwo wielickie w średniowieczu" [Vogtship of Wieliczka in middle ages], *Annales Academiae Paedagogicae Cracoviensis. Studia Historica* 21 (2004): 204; Nevertheless, it seems to me quite likely that they were, just like the first vogts of Sandomierz or Miechów, burghers from Cracow.

¹⁰⁴⁷ KDM II.516.

¹⁰⁴⁸ An overview of Václav's urban policies, be it in Lesser Poland specifically or in his Polish domains more generally in Gawlas, *O kształt zjednoczonego Królestwa*, 92; Jurek, "Polska pod władzą," 215–16; Okniński, *Narodziny miasta komunalnego*, 53–55; On the building of the city walls and their significance, see Sławomir Gawlas, "Nova Civitas in Okol. Fragment z dziejów Krakowa" [Nova Civitas in Okol. A sketch from the history of Kraków], in *Spółeczeństwo Polski Średniowiecznej*, vol. 6, ed. Stefan Krzysztof Kuczyński (Warsaw: DiG, 1994), 106–7.

¹⁰⁴⁹ The reconstruction of events presented in detail in Andrzej Marzec, *Urzednicy malopolscy w otoczeniu Wladyslawa Lokietka i Kazimierza Wielkiego, 1305-1370* [Lesser-Polish officials in the entourage of Władysław the Elbow-high and Casimir the Great 1305-1370] (Cracow: Societas Vistulana, 2006), 22–26.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Situation looked differently in Cuyavia, where the townspeople of Brześć, led by Vogt Tylon, rose up against the Bohemian capitaneus in the name of "their duke lord Władysław", see KDW II.897; Bieniak, *Wielkopolska, Kujawy*, 29 ff.

¹⁰⁵¹ KkK, 145: [9th Mai 1305]: *dum arsit civitas apud Omnes Sanctos, de illo igne ventus portavit super ecclesiam Cracouiensem et exussit totam in crastino sancti Stanislai*; In the works of Lesser-Polish annalistic tradition the information about the fire was given under 1306, see *Traska's Annal*, 853; *Rocznik Malopolski*, 188-189; The idea that the fire was set up by the townsmen, in order to reassert the autonomy of the city and destroy the rival center

The end of Muskata's loyalist resistance, marked by the well-witnessed confirmation of the bishopric's privileges issued by Władysław in Cracow on 2nd of September 1306, was followed by similar gestures towards the Cracow burghers. On 12th of September, the city received staple right and a promise that city and the Wawel castle will never be adjoined by the same wall.¹⁰⁵² Around the same time, Władysław renewed and extended the privileges of the city and its vogts, Albert and Henryk, strengthening city's judicial autonomy. With generous content came a generous form. The document referred to past and future "steadfastness and pleasing obedience" of the two vogts, and was issued with the assent of Bishop Jan Muskata and the "barons of our land", who also attached their seals to the charter.¹⁰⁵³ It is most likely on the occasion of handing to the Cracow burghers these extended privileges that oaths of loyalty to Władysław the Short, mentioned in descriptions of future events, were sworn by the townspeople.

Beyond Cracow, in 1307 Władysław confirmed the privileges of Ludwik and Mikołaj, vogts of Nowy Sącz,¹⁰⁵⁴ and the privilege issued for Miechów's vogt Gerard, in reward of the past and anticipation of the future loyal service.¹⁰⁵⁵ In Sandomierz, where Władysław's entry to Lesser Poland led to vogt Witko losing his power before 1306,¹⁰⁵⁶ the new vogts Marek and Robert were given two neighboring villages, with the charter referring explicitly to their loyal service and the ruler's duty to reward it.¹⁰⁵⁷ The change of power occurred also in Wieliczka, where Gerlach von Culpen, Muskata's brother-in-law, was removed from vogtship.¹⁰⁵⁸ Clearly,

in Okół, was formulated in Gawlas, "Nova Civitas," 106–7; Gawlas, *O kształt zjednoczonego Królestwa*, 93; Okniński, *Narodziny miasta komunalnego*, 56; The issue of the fire connects to the larger question of Władysław's possible presence in Cracow city or castle already on 15th May 1306, when he issued a document in Cracovia (KDM I.135); The authenticity of the document has been questioned by Zofia Kozłowska-Budkowa, "Przyczynki do życiorysu Jana Muskaty" [Contributions to the biography of Jan Muskata], in *Ars historica. Prace z dziejów powszechnych i Polski*, ed. Marian Biskup (Poznań: Wydawnictwo UAM, 1976), 452–53; After her also Pietras, *Krwawy wilk z pastorałem*, 82; Arguing for the authenticity of the document and the early presence of Władysław in the castle, see Marzec, *Urzednicy malopolscy*, 23–24; and cited above works of Gawlas and Okniński.

¹⁰⁵² KDMK I.4.

¹⁰⁵³ KDMK I.3: [...] *fida pura deliberacione matura prehabita, mediante affectu simul et assensu venerabilis in cristo patris Iohannis dei gratia Cracouiensis Episcopi, et aliorum nostre terre baronum, Attendentes constanciam et grata obsequia fidelium nostrorum Cracouiensis Cuitatis Aduocatorum, Adalberti videlicet et Henrici fratris sui, que nobis specialius et euidencius pre ceteris impenderunt et imposterum sunt dante domino fideliter impensuri [...]*.

¹⁰⁵⁴ KDM I. 136.

¹⁰⁵⁵ KDM II.544: [...] *attendentes fidelia seruicia, que nobis Gerhardus noster ciuis Cracouiensis, cum filiis suis exhibuit et exhibet [...]*.

¹⁰⁵⁶ New Vogt Marek appears already as a witness in the trial of Jan Muskata, see MPV III.121, 82; More in Okniński, "Elita władzy," 362.

¹⁰⁵⁷ KDM I.137: *Inter claras Regie dignitatis laudes, in eis clarior luce prefulget, dum fidelibus suis grata premia pro eorum obsequijs largiuntur. Nos igitur Wladislaus dux Cracouie et Sandomirie notum facimus [...] quod attendentes fidelia grataque obsequia, que Marco cum filio suo Roberto fideles nostri aduocati Sandomirienses nobis multipliciter et fideliter exhibuerunt et adhuc exhibere debent esse parati [...]*.

¹⁰⁵⁸ KDM III.657; On Gerlach as a vogt, see Sikora, "Wójtostwo wielickie," 204.

using the same tools as those used in Silesia or Greater Poland, Władysław made a considerable effort in securing the loyalty of the townspeople of Lesser Poland.

Despite that, the aspirations of the urban community and changes in the political landscape led Vogt Albert to rebel against Duke Władysław.¹⁰⁵⁹ Besides Cracow, the rebels found allies among the townspeople of Sandomierz and, perhaps, Wieliczka.¹⁰⁶⁰ To briefly summarize the most broadly accepted vision of events, the rebellion must have started before the autumn of 1311, perhaps as early as May.¹⁰⁶¹ By the winter of 1311/12, the Cuyavian Piast managed to pacify the forces aligned with the rebels outside Cracow. Around the April of 1312, the burghers of Cracow invited the help of Duke Bolesław of Opole, who arrived at the city. The Silesian Piast did not prevent the defeat of the rebels – Bolesław soured on the burghers, reached agreement with Władysław, and left Cracow, having taken Vogt Albert into Silesian captivity.

The first descriptions of the disloyal burghers can be found already in the diplomas issued by Władysław during the rebellion. Already in October 1311, Władysław issued in Wiślica a diploma returning the vogtship of Sandomierz to Marek and Rupert, from whom it was taken *per dolos et fraudes* by Witko and a certain Zygrfyd. The document drew a strong contrast between two pairs of vogts: the former loyally served Władysław, his barons, and dominions, even endangering their lives and possessions, while the latter's excesses against Władysław, his wife, and dominions constituted *crimen laese maiestatis*.¹⁰⁶² On 21st December,

¹⁰⁵⁹ On the broader context, see most recently Tomasz Jasiński, "Handel miedzią węgierską a restytucja rządów Władysława Łokietka w Polsce (1304-1312)" [Hungarian copper trade and the restitution of Ladislaus the Short's rule in Poland (1304-1312)], *Roczniki Historyczne* 84 (2018): 93-138.

¹⁰⁶⁰ These three centers of resistance, together with Miechów monastery, were listed already by Edmund Długopolski, "Bunt wójta Alberta" [Rebellion of vogt Albert], *Rocznik Krakowski* 7 (1905): 159-67; Sławomir Gawlas, arguing for the broad confederacy opposing Władysław, added to the list also monks of Jędrzejów and Mogiła, Gawlas, *O kształt zjednoczonego Królestwa*, 94; It is, however, unclear if (and if so, to what extent) these centers participated in the rebellion. Information about Wieliczka's involvement is limited to attempt by Gerlach von Culpin to once again exercise his power in the vogtship he lost in 1307, as argued in Pietras, *Krwawy wilk z pastorałem*, 108; Sikora, "Wójtowstwo wielickie," 204; The information about Miechów's involvement was convincingly nuanced in Jerzy Rajman, "Buntownicy czy niesłusznie oskarżeni? Bożogrobcy miechowscy i ich relacje z Władysławem Łokietkiem" [Rebels or unjustly accused? Order of the Holy Sepulcher in Miechów and their relations with Władysław the Elbow-High], in *Władysław Łokietek - odnowiciel Królestwa Polskiego*, ed. Janusz Grabowski and Hubert Wajs (Warsaw: Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych, 2021), 179-98.

¹⁰⁶¹ This overview follows the reconstruction by Długopolski, "Bunt"; amended, when necessary, after Okniński, *Narodziny miasta komunalnego*, 131-33.

¹⁰⁶² KDM I.147: *inspectis fidelitatibus et fidelibus seruicijs, que Nobis, Baronibus et dominijs nostris fideles et constantes uiri Ministri Nostri Rupertus et Marcus filij Marci, quondam Aduocati Sandomiriensis, plurimis annis in omnibus necessitatibus nostris publice, iucunde et hilariter prestiterunt, Bona sua et Personas proprias pro salute Nostra et Dominiorum nostrorum diuersis et uarijs periculis liberaliter exponentes [...] Verum si priuilegia cuiuscumque Witkoni, Zyffrido, uel filijs eorum concessa super eadem Aduocacia apparerent, propter fraudes, dolos et tradiciones ac excessus, quos contra Nos, consortemque nostram et nostra dominia commiserunt, lese Maiestatis crimen atrociter perpetrantes, ex consilio et unanimi assensu Baronum nostrorum decreuimus et pronunciauimus esse nulla [...]*

the duke granted to the Tyniec Abbey villages confiscated from disloyal Cracow burghers. The document accused “burghers of our city Cracow” of public offenses, perjury, treachery, and *crimen laese maiestatis*, which they performed against Władysław, his successors, and the whole *gens Polonica* by “handing the aforementioned city to foreign princes, eradicating and exterminating us, their true and legitimate lords and heirs.”¹⁰⁶³ On 21st of February Władysław’s wife, Jadwiga, issued a privilege for the townspeople of Sącz, in which she freed them from all the tolls they paid to her in Sandomierz land. Just like her husband’s document from October, she drew the comparison between disloyal Cracow and loyal Sącz, stating that when:

through disloyalty, the townspeople of Cracow withdrew from our most beloved spouse and from us and our children, working to bring in another duke to overthrow and eliminate our aforementioned lordship from all parts of the land; but the aforesaid citizens of Sącz, unwilling to agree to their betrayal, showed themselves as men truthfully and constantly adhering to us in loyalty, which bound them to us inviolably.¹⁰⁶⁴

Finally, on 7th of April, the Poor Clares at Sącz were given back the toll on the river Poprad, previously donated to the townspeople of Cracow. In a language matching the document of the Tyniec Abbey, here too the burghers of Cracow were accused of public offenses, perjury, treachery, and *crimen laese maiestatis*. Preferring other masters, they most wickedly strove to exterminate and exclude Władysław, his heir, and whole *gens Polonica*.¹⁰⁶⁵

Already during the rebellion the chanceries of the ruling couple presented a strong and coherent vision of the events unfolding in Lesser-Poland. The rebels, in almost all diplomas identified as townspeople of Cracow, have been accused of *crimen laese maiestatis*. Already in December, good few months before Bolesław’s arrival in Cracow in the spring, the rebels were accused of aligning themselves with foreign princes. According to Władysław’s chancery, the goal of Cracow’s burghers went beyond expelling Władysław, encompassing the extermination of the ducal family, heirs, and the whole *gens Polonica*. This last part echoed the

¹⁰⁶³ Ktyn I.41: [...] *quod propter demerita publica, periuria, tradiciones, prodiciones, commissiones criminis lese maiestatis, quas ciues ciuitatis nostre Cracouiensis nephandissime in nos heredesque nostros ac gentem Polonicam atrociter perpetrarunt tradentes civitatem dictam principibus peregrinis, euellendo et exterminando nos suos veros et legitimos dominos et heredes [...].*

¹⁰⁶⁴ CDP III.75: [...] *cum Cives Cracovienses a consorte nostro karissimo et a nobis puersisque nostris per infidelitatem recesserunt, alium ducem nobis in subversionem et eliminacionem de dominijs nostris jam predictis inducere laborantes ad omnes partes terrarum; Sed prehabiti cives Sandecenses nolentes consentire tradicionibus ipsorum, tanquam viri veraces et constantes nobis adherentes in fide qua nobis tenebantur inviolabiliter prestiterunt [...].*

¹⁰⁶⁵ KDM II.557: *propter demerita publica, periuria, tradiciones, prodiciones ciuium ciuitatis nostre Cracouiensis, que in nos, heredes nostros et gentem Polonicam prodicionaliter verbo, factis et operibus comiserunt, exterminando et excludendo nefandissime a bonis temporalibus et perpetuis hereditariis in opprobrium nostrum, heredum nostrorum et gentis Polonice, sibi alios dominos ausu temerario fouendo, lese maiestatis scelera perpetrando [...].*

description of the Gdańsk rebellion from one of Duke Mściwoj II documents and, more relevantly, the claims raised during bishop Muskata's trials, framing the rebellion in ethnic terms.¹⁰⁶⁶ Its reflection can even be seen in the punishments met by Cracow's municipality. As the city was stripped of its privileges and liberties, the language of the urban chancery changed from German to Latin.¹⁰⁶⁷

The new role of the defender of whole *gens Polonica* mobilized Władysław's support in Lesser Poland, and opened new opportunities elsewhere. Around the time the Cuyavian Piast was issuing diplomas for those who supported him against the city-led revolt, a continuation was added to the *Annals of the Poznań Cathedral Chapter*, which expressed a stronger anti-German sentiment. As previously discussed, the *Annals* blamed the envious Germans, the Margraves of Brandenburg, for the death of King Przemysław II.¹⁰⁶⁸ The rule of the Silesian Piasts sat uneasily with the annalist. Henryk of Głogów was described as stern, fiscally extractive, and "not a perfect friend of Poles," though he brought peace and stability to Greater Poland.¹⁰⁶⁹ His adolescent sons were judged more harshly. Too young to rule themselves, they were surrounded by German advisors, who in turn sold many estates to foreigners and counseled their Silesian wards to "exterminate all Polish people (*gens Polonica*), both members of the church and the secular nobles."¹⁰⁷⁰ This sentiment seemed to have been shared by other members of the intellectual *milieu* in Poznań.¹⁰⁷¹

Indeed, the attempts of the young dukes of Głogów to introduce the new administrative system that would substitute castellanies with city-based districts, *Weichbilds*, together with their decision to divide Greater-Poland after the death of their father, led to the rebellion of their Greater-Polish subjects.¹⁰⁷² Though during the fights between 1312-1314 some local knights

¹⁰⁶⁶ Okniński, "Ad hoc traxit me natura," 368–69.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Adamska, "Away with Germans and Their Language?," 79–85.

¹⁰⁶⁸ See Chapter 3.4.2

¹⁰⁶⁹ RkP, [125], 54: *Henricus dux Slezie et dominus Glogouie totam terram Polonie obtinuit et possedit quiete. Hic fuit rigidus valde furibus et predonibus ac violentis, sed solus fuit maximus exactor nec perfectus amicus Polonorum. Sed temporibus suis pax maxima fuit in Polonia in omnibus terris suis.*

¹⁰⁷⁰ RkP [127], 55: *Item Anno Domini MCCCIX obiit idem dux Henricus dimissis quinque filiis, videlicet Henrico, Conrado, Johanne, Boleslae et Przemislone. Hos quia iuvenes erant et tenelli, tenuerunt et alligaverunt consiliis Theutonicis, ita quod nichil aliud poterant facere, nisi quod placeret Theutonicis, et multas ab eis terras et civitates exrufaverunt pro modica pecunie quantitate et dederunt eis consilium, ut totam gentem Polonicam exterminarent, tam ecclesiasticas personas quam seculares milites.*

¹⁰⁷¹ Tomasz Jurek points out the marginal note made by one of the contemporary readers of Vincentius's *Chronica Polonorum*, which explains that the Silesian Piasts came from the line of Władysław II and his German wife, they were always enemies of their own *gens Polonorum*, see Jurek *Dziedzic Królestwa Polskiego*, 217, footnote 65; The text of the note after *Magistri Vincentii Episcopi Cracoviensis Chronica Polonorum*, ed. by Aleksander Przezdziecki (Cracow: Wywiałkowski, 1862), 148: *Nota hic, unde habuerunt ortum principes Slezie, quod errant filii Wladusialy exulis propter uxorem Theutonicam inperatoris sororem, quorum nomina hic continentur; qui a theutonica oriundi semper fuerunt infesti genti sue polonice.*

¹⁰⁷² Gawlas, *O kształt zjednoczonego Królestwa*, 94; Jurek, *Dziedzic Królestwa Polskiego*, 203–23.

likely aligned with Piasts from Głogów, it was the city of Poznań, held by Vogt Przemko, that became the main center and last redoubt of pro-Silesian loyalists.¹⁰⁷³ The elites of Greater Poland that saw themselves as a political community of *gens Polnica*, shared the same existential anxieties as those used by Władysław the Short to mobilize his supporters in the fight against Vogt Albert. This explains why, despite the failure of his brief rule in the years 1296-1300, Władysław was invited by the anti-Silesian opposition to become their ruler. Entering Greater Poland in 1314, Władysław tellingly issued documents for Pyzdry and Kalisz, donating villages to the former and renewing privileges of the latter, praising the loyalty of the burghers from both towns demonstrated to their *verus heres*,¹⁰⁷⁴ setting them apart from rebellious Poznań.

The quelling of Vogt Albert's rebellion and resistance mounted by Poznań firmly grounded disloyalty as the link between burghers and Germans in the minds of the intellectual elites of Władysław's domain. The works of Franciscan authors from Cracow working at that time are abundant in examples of scorn for Germans and town-dwellers. Even though his chronicle did not cover Cracow's rebellion, Dzierżwa's distrust of Germans, with whom he equated all Cracow burghers, is clearly visible in the fragment cited at the very beginning of this chapter.¹⁰⁷⁵ According to the chronicler, the favor Leszek the Black showed to Germans also extended to the adoption of German culture – more precisely, their hairstyle.¹⁰⁷⁶ In the annalistic tradition created by the Franciscan monks, the attempts of Henryk IV Probus to seize Cracow were cast among these lines. *Traska's Annal* noted that even though it was Bolesław of Mazovia who was elected a successor of Leszek the Black, Henryk IV Probus was handed the city of Cracow by lowly butchers (*carnifices*), which brought much misfortune to the land.¹⁰⁷⁷ The subsequent battle at Siewierz and the Lesser-Polish campaign against Henryk by

¹⁰⁷³ Pakulski, *Siły polityczno-społeczne*; Jurek, *Dziedzic Królestwa Polskiego*, 216–23.

¹⁰⁷⁴ KDW II.971: *Dignum est, ut bene meriti in se et in suis successoribus principum beneficiis consolentur, ut eorum exemplo alii ad obsequia reddantur prompiciores. Nos igitur Wladislaus, Dei gracia heres regni Polonie, dux Cracovie, Sandomirie, Syradie, Lancicie ac Cuyavie, notum esse volumus [...] quod inspectis fidelitatibus et serviciis fidelibus ac utilibus, que nobis discreti viri fidelissimi nostri cives Pizdrenses fideliter, unanimiter et constanter impenderunt et in futurum impendere et exhibere sunt parati tanquam vero domino et heredi [...];* KDW II.973: *Et quia dignum est ut bene meriti principum beneficiis consolentur, igitur nos attendentes dictorum civium fidelitates et fidelia servicia que nobis constanter et fideliter ostenderunt, omnia iura et privilegia eorum, que a nostris predecessoribus optenta habuerunt, in publicis nostris scriptis gratanter rata habentes, duximus confirmanda.*

¹⁰⁷⁵ As pointed out by Drelicharz, the ethnicity of Leszek's town-dwelling supporters was most likely not noted by the earlier compilers of the *Annales Polonorum deperditi*, since it is overlooked in the rest of Lesser-Polish annalistic tradition. It must have been then Dzierżwa's original intervention, see Drelicharz, *Annalistyka małopolska XIII-XV wieku*, 373.

¹⁰⁷⁶ *Dzierżwa's Chronicle*, 81: *Hic in favorem Theutonicorum comam nutriebat.*

¹⁰⁷⁷ *Traska's Annal*, 852: *Lestco dux Cracovie, Sandomirie, Syradie sine prole obiit, cui Boleslaus, dux Mazovie, succedit per eieccionem Statim Henricus dux Wratislaviensis venit, cui civitas per carnifices traditur, castrum per Sulconem; et multa mala orta sunt in terra.*

Władysław Łokietek was framed as a fight as much against Silesians as *Theutonicos*. It ended by a second betrayal of the city of Cracow, leading to capture of bishop Paweł, deaths of many knights, and devastation.¹⁰⁷⁸

The change was also reflected in the descriptions of Vogt Albert's rebellion itself. Bringing to the fore the ethnic dimension of the conflict suggested previously by the charter, the *Annals of the Cracow Cathedral Chapter* described the rebels led by Albert as "the citizens of Cracow, burning with the madness of German rage, friends of deceit, cloaked and hidden enemies of peace," perjurers, and likened them to Judas.¹⁰⁷⁹ The annalist, writing sometime between the end of rebellion and the 1330s, gave also a detailed description of the punishment faced by the rebels. While Albert, "the source of all wickedness", was carried away by Duke Bolesław to Opole, Władysław, having entered the city, imprisoned some of its burghers. Then, the duke "harshly dragged these captives with horses through whole city, and those who were dragged, he pitifully hung on the gallows outside of the city, and he made the corpses hang there for so long that the rotten muscles would detach from the bones." This exemplary violence, more brutal than any of the examples discussed in Chapter 3.6, was accompanied by an equally forceful rearrangement of the urban space: Albert's house was destroyed, a castle was built in the city, and a tower was erected over one of the city's gates.¹⁰⁸⁰

A short Latin poem, the *Song of Cracow Vogt Albert*, added to this picture. Composed of two parts that survive only in fifteenth-century manuscripts, the source seems to have been created shortly after the depicted events, though it is difficult to tell precisely when.¹⁰⁸¹ The first part, offers a moralizing story of Albert, whose quick rise and even quicker fall warn the reader

¹⁰⁷⁸ *Ibidem: duces in Sevyor bellum committunt Bolezlaus Mazovie Wladizlaus et Kazimirus duces Cuyavie contra Zlesienses, et vincunt, multos vero captivant ex Zlesiensibus et Theuthonicis occiduntur. Circa Scalam prosternuntur milites multi. In Swetnicz dux Wladyslaus dictus Loctek cum Teuthonicis bellum committit et vicit eosdem. Civitas denuo Cracoviensis Zlesiensibus traditur et dux Wladislaus pedester vix effugit Episcopus Paulus captivatur et milites multi alii occiduntur, terra vastatur et multa mala aucta sunt; see also Annals of Szamotulski in Roczniki malopolskie, 185: Dux Loktek cum Teutonicis bellum committit et vincit eosdem. Civitas Cracoviensis Zlesieusi denuo traditur, et dux Wladislaus pedester vix aufugit. Episcopus Paulus captivatur, et milites multi alii oceiduntur, terra Tastatur, et multa mala orta sunt.*

¹⁰⁷⁹ RkK, [254], 104: *Anno incarnationis Domini nostri Jesu Christi M^oCCC^oXII cives Cracovienses rabie furoris Germanici perusti, fraudis amici pacis quoque palleati hostes et oculi, domino Wladyzlao duci Cracovie, Sandomirie ac domino tocius Polonie quemadmodum Iudas Jesu osculum prebentes, vice iuramenti prestantes cautelam, deposito Dei timore contradixerunt et Bolezlaum ducem Opoliensem induxerunt.*

¹⁰⁸⁰ RkK, [254], 104: *[...] Et tunc immediate illustrissimus princeps Wladyzlaus civitatem predictam subintrans denuo civium aliquos captivavit carceralique custodie reclusit. Hos captivatos seviriter per totam civitatem equis traxit tractosque patibulo extra civitatem miserabiliter suspendit, ibidemque funera tamdiu pendere fecit, quoadusque nervi putrefacti ossium compaginem dissolverunt. Eodemque anno castrum in civitate, destructa domo prefati advocati, construxit et turrim in valva ducente ad sanctum Nicholaum edificavit.*

¹⁰⁸¹ Henryk Kowalewicz, "Pieśń o wójcie krakowskim Albercie" [Song of Kraków vogt Albert], *Pamiętnik Literacki* 56, no. 3 (1965): 125–38; Wojciech Mrozowicz, "Pieśń o wójcie krakowskim Albercie – przekaz historyczny w poetyckim sztafażu" [The song about the Cracow's vogt Albert - a historical narration in a poetic stylization], *Res Gestae* 13 (2013): 32–42.

against trusting in *fortuna*. The final stanzas of this part have dead Albert bemoan his own exile and degrading burial: buried nose down, in a grave shared with some drowning victim.¹⁰⁸² This punishment of the rebel's corpse, as pointed out by Piotr Okniński, together with the information of the destruction of the vogt's house, could be interpreted as attempts at *damnatio memoriae*, which the leader of the rebels would deserve.¹⁰⁸³ The second part of the poem, almost certainly written later by another author, explains that it was not *fortuna* alone that brought Albert to this sad end, but rather his insidious German nature. According to the poet, everywhere where Germans settled, "they want to always be first / and to no one subservient," feigning humbleness, intermarrying with locals, climbing the social ladder until "He who was brought in a basket, / excludes the hereditary heirs."¹⁰⁸⁴

As it has been frequently pointed out in the past, the depiction of methodical German deceitfulness found in this part of the *Song* matches the anti-German imagery known from fourteenth-century Bohemia.¹⁰⁸⁵ The text of the poem invites those comparisons, warning in its last stanza about the fate of the Czechs, dispossessed of their inheritance and left with nothing but boots and garbs.¹⁰⁸⁶ The *Chronicle of Dalimil*, written just at the time of Władysław's confrontation with Vogt Albert, presented the same picture of a German servant, who slyly ingratiates themselves into his ruler's favor, but is governed by a disloyal, malicious nature.¹⁰⁸⁷ The same image was elaborated on by later writers, with the pamphlet *De Theutonicis bonum dictamen* from the second half of the fourteenth century inviting many comparisons with the *Song of Vogt Albert*.¹⁰⁸⁸

¹⁰⁸² Kowalewicz, "Pieśń," 135: *De finali taceo / Naso deorsum conuerso / Iunctus cuidam submerso / Hic sepultus iaceo.*

¹⁰⁸³ Okniński, *Wehikuly Pamięci*, 110–11.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Kowalewicz, "Pieśń," 135: *Ad hoc traxit me natura, / Que est Almanorum cura, / Ut quocunque veniunt, / Semper volunt primi esse / Et nulli prorsus subesse. / Ad hoc se sic muniunt. / Illos habent ipsi mores, / Per quos aquirunt favores: / Primo se humiliant, / Mox eorum ducunt natas / Suas ipsis prius datas / Et sic se conciliant. / Sed sub dolo fit hoc totum; / Cum se bene / facit notum / Iam palpat ulterius, / Ad patronum vadit ville, / Offert sibi grossos mille / Ut fiat sudarius. / Mox adhuc sudat diatim, / Ut sit heres ville statim / Datis nummis pluribus. / Sic ville fit advocatus, / Qui in sporta sit portatus, / Exclusis heredibus.*

¹⁰⁸⁵ František Graus, *Die Nationenbildung der Westslawen im Mittelalter* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1980), 126 (footnote 290), 221–23; Mrozowicz, "Pieśń o wójcie krakowskim Albercie"; Okniński, "Ad hoc traxit me natura," 370–71.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Kowalewicz, "Pieśń," 135: *Sic Bohemi sunt delusi / De bonis suis detrusi / Ab ipsis Theutunicis / Et iam quasi perierunt / Sua bona expenderunt / In caligis et tunicis.*

¹⁰⁸⁷ For Dalimil's *Chronicle* and its characterization of Germans, see Éloïse Adde, "Les étrangers dans la Chronique de Dalimil, une place de choix faite aux Allemands," *Cahiers du CEFRES* 31 (2011): esp. 38–42.

¹⁰⁸⁸ "Ein deutschfeindliches Pamphlet aus Böhmen aus dem 14. Jahrhundert," ed. Wilhelm Wostry, *Mitteilungen des Vereines für Geschichte der Deutschen in Böhmen* 53/3–4 (1915), 193–232; Given the preponderance of the tropes used in the second part of *Song of Vogt Albert* that can be found already in *Chronicle of Dalimil*, I do not believe that this part of the poem about the vogt of Cracow had to be created, like *De Theutonicis bonum dictamen*, in the late fourteenth century. This opposing view expressed most recently by Piotr Okniński, see Okniński, "Ad Hoc Traxit Me Natura," 370–71; Okniński, *Wehikuly Pamięci*, 125–27.

The Cracow annalists and intellectuals were not the only ones who, as the polity brought together by Władysław the Short in 1310s slowly matured into a unified kingdom, kept returning to the rebellion of Vogt Albert. The royal chanceries of the now-crowned Władysław, and later his son, Kazimierz, kept referring to these more and more distant events. The reason for it was pragmatic, as treason of former owners of properties was mentioned to explain the expropriation of those goods.¹⁰⁸⁹ The passage of time could even conflate the opposition on behalf of bishop Jan Muskata and the participation in Albert's rebellion into one event, as it might have happened with the actions of Gerard von Culpen described in Kazimierz the Great's document in 1339.¹⁰⁹⁰ Nevertheless, even then the mention of past rebellion could be symbolically relevant. This was the case in 1334, when King Kazimierz gave Spycimir of Tarnów the house in Cracow that used to belong to Vogt Henryk, one of the 1311/12 rebels. The document, opening with an arenga focusing on royal duty to repay for the loyal service, drew a contrast between the disloyal burgher, former owner of the possession, and the loyal Spycimir, rewarded for the losses he incurred when fighting other *Theutonicos* - the Knights of the Teutonic Order.¹⁰⁹¹ As we will see in the next chapter, the conflict with the military order to the north gave longevity to the figure of perfidious German-speaking burghers.

4.3 Conclusions

As demonstrated in this Chapter, the parallel processes of migrations by German-speaking settlers and urbanization impacted the ways in which loyalty was imagined and discussed in fragmented Poland.

¹⁰⁸⁹ This was for example the case with a matter-of-fact statement included in Władysław the Short's document from 1325, KDM II.588: *quia vero post fraudem, quam aduocatus et ciues prefati in tradicionem ciuitatis nostre Cracouiensis commiserunt, hereditas prefata Krzeczlauice cum omni dominio et iure ad nostrum est dominium totaliter deuoluta [...]*.

¹⁰⁹⁰ KDM III.657: *Notificamus insuper vniuersis litteram per presentem, quod quemadmodum pie memorie genitor noster, rex eiusdem regni, Gerlacum olim de Culpen et heredes ipsius sepepredicta aduocacia ante triginta duos(s) annos priuauit ex iudicio sentencialiter, suorum nobilium maturo consilio prelibato, propter crimen lese mayestatis, quod perpetuerat in predicto nostro genitore et in nobis, contra nos verso dominos et heredes principes extraneos in exterminium nostrum inducendo, milites, ciues et quosuis pauperes nostros occidendo, spoliando et terras nostras concremando, hominesque nostros in eadem terra comburendo, sic et nunc nostrorum baronum maturo consilio prehabito et inito, iamdictam priuacionem sentenciatam genitoris nostri antedicti ratificantes ex iudicio sentencialiter presentibus ex certa sciencia confirmamus [...]*.

¹⁰⁹¹ AGZ III.1: *Reges decet in reddendis seruiciorum obsequiis pia consideratione prospicere, ut quos in exhibicione eorumdem fideles esse cognouerint, ipsorum eciam comodis (sic) intendant iugiter et insisteranter [...]* *Quod ob merita fidelium obsequiorum nobis constanter per fidelem nostrum Comitem Spicimirum Cracouiensem Castellanium impensorum et ob recompensam dampnorum, que in conflictu cruciferorum percepit, sibi suisque posteris aream, ut ab antiquo extat circumferenciata, et domum lapideam in Cracouia sitam in platea sancti Francisci ex facto Henrici quondam advocati Cracouiensis dudum commissio in crimen illese (sic) mayestatis Regie patris nostri ad nos pertinentem, damus, tradimus, donamus et confirmamus tytulo et iure hereditario in perpetuum tenendam et habendam convertendamque pro sua [...]*.

While many inhabitants of the increasingly important urban centers were German speakers, the thirteenth-century authors interested in burghers' loyalties, especially the ducal charters, did not underscore the foreign origins of the townspeople. Whereas the earliest references to the loyalty of urban subjects concern individual burghers, with the increasing power of urban centers Piast rulers started referring more often to the loyal service of whole urban communities. The content of the bonds of loyalty, whenever highlighted in more detail in these charters, did not differ from the examples discussed in Chapter 3.3. Thus, the praiseworthy loyalty of urban communities manifested in their devotion to the ruler's *honor*, readiness to suffer peril and material losses in the service, fierce fighting spirit (*virilitas*) and military valor (*strenuitas*). The dominant discourse of loyalty owed by Piast subjects centered on the military deeds performed by knights and nobles, and burghers had to strive to match it. By the end of the thirteenth century, confirmations of city's privileges by a new ruler, accompanied by the declarations about past and expected loyalty, were routinely issued for the most important urban centers. Especially important at times of contested successions, reconfirmation was an instrument of mutual recognition, a tool for creating and restoring bonds between Piasts and their urban subjects.

The last decades of the thirteenth century also saw an impactful change in the role *Theutonici* played in the discourse of loyalty. Prior to the 1270s, Germans were noted in the Annals and diplomas of the fragmented Poland as foreigners: external enemies, occasionally duplicitous allies, or mercenaries whose loyalty was bought by bad Piast rulers. As the number of Germans offering service to the Piast rulers grew, the attitude towards the arrivals competing for land and ducal favor hardened. As subjects, *Theutonici* were increasingly imagined as disloyal conspirators. Allied with the foreign dukes, they worked to disinherit or exterminate not just their rulers, but also whole Polish political community, whether a particular author defined it as *barones*, *terrigenae*, or *gens Polonica*.

In the aftermath of Vogt Albert's rebellion, the urban and German identities became closely entangled in the writing of Władysław I's supporters, with both groups defined by their suspect loyalty to the *verus heres* of Poland. Already during the rebellion, the Cuyavian Piast managed to present the opposition led by Cracow's vogt as aimed at whole *gens Polonica*, and this image was only further expanded in the works of Cracow intellectuals, who saw German madness or nature as the driving force behind the city's revolt. The Franciscan compilers of the *Annales Polonorum deperditi* and Dzierzwa projected the belief about the duplicitous nature of the burghers of Cracow, who would ally themselves to the bad rulers supported by Germans, back into the past. As suggested by the similarities found in *Chronicle of Dalimil*, the marrying

together of anti-German sentiment, hostile attitudes towards politically ambitious new social forces, and of accusations of perfidious nature was not specific to the immediate political context of Lesser Poland, but reflected broader, regional trends.

All three parts of this chapter underscore how important was the language of loyalty in creating and reinforcing identities. The firm loyalty shown either to the Piast ruler or to each other, no matter if real or imagined, was used to construct communities of all scale: from those encompassing a single urban center to those that encompassed all *Theutonici*, peasants and knights alike. Inversely, the claims about disloyalty were an invaluable tool for excluding groups and individuals from the political communities. An attempt by the noble supporters of Władysław the Short to paint the townspeople of urban centers of Greater- and Lesser- Poland as perfidious Germans was meant to entrench their leading position in the nascent reunified Kingdom. The long shadow of distrust, cast in the aftermath of rebellion of Vogt Albert, would continue to loom over the urban communities of Władysław the Short's realm even after his death.

Chapter 5: Loyalty, Memory, and the Legal Argument – Protocols of Polish -Teutonic Trials

On the 20th of January 1320 Władysław the Short was crowned the king of Poland. This date is traditionally seen in Polish historiography as the breaking point, marking the end of the fragmentation period and the beginning of the “Late Piast Monarchy”. While the coronation was doubtlessly a strong symbolic statement that heralded a transformation of the political culture, the changes in the relations between the freshly anointed monarch and his subjects did not occur overnight.

Furthermore, Władysław’s rule remained neither unquestioned nor far-reaching. He controlled Lesser Poland, Greater Poland, and his familial Sieradz and Cuyavia lands. Mazovia and Silesia remained in the hands of other members of the Piast dynasty, with the latter under the increasing political influence of Bohemia. King Jan of Luxemburg did not forget the Polish claims of his Přemyslid predecessors. In the north, the Knights of the Teutonic Order used the political upheaval of the first decade of the fourteenth century to seize control over Pomerania in 1309 and threaten the northern borderlands of Władysław’s domain. The conflict with the crusading military order from Prussia consumed most of the political attention of Władysław the Short during his kingship, with especially devastating military campaigns taking place in 1330-31, just a couple of years before the king died in 1333. His son, King Kazimierz the Great, inherited the conflict, which he was able to resolve only after a long diplomatic game in 1343.

In the following chapter, I focus on two sources created during the fourteenth-century conflict between the Polish kings and the Knights of the Teutonic Order – testimonies of the participants of two trials that took place in Inowrocław (1320-21) and Warsaw (1339). Both processes were attempts by the Polish side to vindicate their claims to the disputed territory and financial compensation in front of the judges delegated by the Pope. Just like in the case of the process of bishop Jan Muskata analyzed in the previous chapters, the testimonies given by the interrogated witnesses seem to offer a window into the political imagination of the broad spectrum of Polish medieval society. With both trials gathering in total almost 150 witnesses, many of their testimonies shed intimate light on these aspects connected to loyalty known from more impersonal sources that I examined up to this point. With many of the participants of both fourteenth-century Polish-Teutonic trials belonging to the generation that helped Władysław the Short to establish his kingdom, the trials can be seen as a swan’s song of the political actors born into the political culture of fragmented Poland. How do the testimonies fit into the ideas about loyalty painted in the previous chapters? Answering this question should bring us closer

to understand the extent of transformation and continuation in the Piast political culture after Władysław's coronation.

The testimonies of the witnesses of fourteenth-century Polish-Teutonic trials have been present in modern Polish historiographical discussion since its beginnings. While most of the focus of early researchers using the source was on the processes and diplomatic context surrounding them, the historical value of the statements of its participants was appreciated already in the first half of the twentieth century.¹⁰⁹² Arguably the most important works on the processes were penned-up by Helena Chłopocka and Janusz Bieniak. Chłopocka's classical monograph on the protocols of both fourteenth-century trials, while focusing on source criticism and legal aspects of the work offers a good overview of all the aspects of the proceedings, while Bieniak's in-depth investigations elaborate on the twists and turns of the legal procedure.¹⁰⁹³ Both scholars were also interested in the social makeup of the participants of the 1339 trial.¹⁰⁹⁴

As a rare window into the beliefs and consciousness of the broader society of Piast Poland, the testimonies of the witnesses of both trials were also a subject of investigations focused on social and cultural history. The analysis of the testimonies from the 1320-21 trial was an important part of Sławomir Gawlas's attempt at outlining the ideological program of Władysław the Short's supporters. In his opinion, the concerns expressed by the participants of the trial reflected the vision of the Piast rulership built on personal ties of loyalty and obedience rather than an abstract idea of *regnum Poloniae* circulating in elite intellectual circles.¹⁰⁹⁵ Wiesław Sieradzan and Paul Milliman investigated ways in which participants of both trials

¹⁰⁹² See for example works of Łodyński and Tymieniecki, who already approached the testimonies with methodological complexity, recognizing the way they were shaped by multiple factors: Maryan Łodyński, "Regnum Poloniae w opinii publicznej XIV wieku" [Regnum Poloniae in the public opinion of the 14th Century], *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 28 (1914): 38–54; Kazimierz Tymieniecki, "Proces polsko-krzyżacki z lat 1320–1321" [Polish-Teutonic Knights trials in the years 1320–1321], *Przegląd Historyczny* 21 (1918): 77–148.

¹⁰⁹³ Helena Chłopocka, *Procesy Polski z Zakonem Krzyżackim w XIV wieku: Studium Źródłoznawcze* [Poland's trials with the Teutonic Order in the 14th century: A study in source criticism] (Poznań: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1967); Janusz Bieniak, "Geneza procesu polsko-krzyżackiego z 1339 roku" [Origins of the Polish-Teutonic trial of 1339], *Acta Universitatis Nicolai Copernici. Historia* 24 (1990): 23–50; Janusz Bieniak, "Geneza procesu polsko-krzyżackiego z lat 1320-1321 (inorocławsko-brzeskiego)" [Origins of the Polish-Teutonic trial of 1320-21 (inowrocław-brześć)], in *Balticum. Studia z dziejów polityki, gospodarki i kultury XII - XVII wieku. Ofiarowane Marianowi Biskupowi w siedemdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin*, ed. Zenon Hubert Nowak (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Towarzystwa Nauk, 1992), 49–59; Janusz Bieniak, "Przebieg procesu polsko-krzyżackiego z 1339 roku" [The proceedings of the Polish-Teutonic trial of 1339], *Pamiętnik Biblioteki Kórnickiej* 23 (1993): 5–22.

¹⁰⁹⁴ Helena Chłopocka, "Świadkowie procesu polsko-krzyżackiego w 1339 r." [Witnesses of the Polish-Teutonic Trial in 1339], *Pamiętnik Biblioteki Kórnickiej* 23 (1993): 23–35; Janusz Bieniak, "'Litterati' świeccy w procesie Warszawskim z 1339 roku" [The lay 'litterati' in the Warsaw Trial of the year 1339], in *Cultus et Cognition. Studia z dziejów średniowiecznej kultury*, ed. Stefan Krzysztof Kuczyński (Warsaw: PWN, 1976), 97–106; Janusz Bieniak, "Milites w procesie polsko-krzyżackim z 1339 roku" [Milites in a polish-teutonic trial from 1339], *Przegląd Historyczny* 75, no. 3 (1984): 503–14.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Gawlas, "'Verus heres,'" 94–104.

recalled the past, with the former focusing on their historical consciousness and the latter on the shifting place of Pomerania in their memory.¹⁰⁹⁶ The accounts of the witnesses have also been used by scholars interested in the role of violence and trauma on the one hand,¹⁰⁹⁷ and literacy and orality on the other.¹⁰⁹⁸

This chapter is divided into five parts. In the first two, I provide the reader with the historical context in which the testimonies should be placed. I outline the political events that led to the Polish-Teutonic processes in the first subchapter, and discuss methodological challenges presented by the protocols of the trials in the second. Then I proceed to my analysis of the sources. In the third subchapter, I focus on the way in which bonds of loyalty were described by the witnesses. Transitioning from the general reflections on loyalty to more specific cases, the fourth subchapter is dedicated to how witnesses conceived of treason, real and imagined. Finally, in the last subchapter, I discuss the testimonies of these witnesses who exemplified with their actions the murky nature of the loyalties at play in the border-crossing communities of disputed territories.

5.1 Polish-Teutonic Rivalry in the First Half of the 14th Century

The ruling elites of eastern Pomerania asserted their *de facto* independence from the Piast overlordship during the times of Duke Świętopełk Sobiesławowic (ante 1195-1266),¹⁰⁹⁹ but the ties were not completely severed. Mutual political interests, like the fear of the Brandenburgian expansion, drew the rulers of Pomerania and Greater Poland, culminating in the Kępno Agreement on 15th February 1282, discussed in the previous chapter (Chapter 3.2.1).

Just like in the case of other lands held by Przemysł II after his demise in Rogoźno in February of 1296, Pomerania fell initially into the hands of Władysław the Short, then into the hands of Přemyslids, only to return into the former's control in late autumn of 1306. Upon

¹⁰⁹⁶ Sieradzan, *Świadomość historyczna*; Milliman, *The Slippery Memory of Men*; Both positions develop on the research avenues gestured towards already by Chłopocka in: Chłopocka, "Tradycja o Pomorzu."

¹⁰⁹⁷ Radosław Kotecki, "The Desecration of Holy Places According to Witnesses' Testimonies in the Polish-Teutonic Order Trials of the 14th Century," in *Arguments and Counter-Arguments. The Political Thought of the 14th-and 15th Centuries during the Polish-Teutonic Order Trials and Disputes*, ed. Wiesław Sieradzan (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2012), 69–110; Piotr Górecki, "Memory: An Unlikely Case Study of Genocide," in *A Cultural History of Genocide in the Middle Ages*, ed. Melodie H. Eichbauer (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021), 165–201.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Anna Adamska, "The Kingdom of Poland versus the Teutonic Knights: Oral Traditions and Literate Behaviour in the Later Middle Ages," in *Oral History of the Middle Ages. The Spoken Word in Context*, eds. Gerhard Jaritz and Michael Richter, (Krems-Budapest: CEU Press, 2001), 67–78.

¹⁰⁹⁹ The assassination of Leszek the White in Gąsawa in 1227 discussed in Chapter 3 can be seen as the successful attempt at overthrowing the Piast suzerainty by Świętopełk, further sealed by the bull of papal protection issued by Gregory IX on 17th April 1231, see: PIUB 44, 37-38; Gerard Labuda, "Stanowisko prawno-polityczne książąt Pomorza Nadwiślańskiego na przełomie XII i XIII wieku" [The legal and political position of the dukes of Vistulan Pomerania at the turn of the 12th and 13th centuries], *Zapiski Historyczne* 66, nos. 2–3 (2001): 35.

Przemysł's death the claim to the land was also briefly raised by Leszek of Inowrocław, but dropped in the face of the bid made by Władysław the Short, his step-uncle.¹¹⁰⁰ Other Cuyavian nephews of Władysław also became involved in Pomeranian affairs. After the brief stay in Pomerania in December of 1306, Piast ruler left Tczew and Świecie in the hands of Przemko and Kazimierz. The northern part was left under the control of chancellor Piotr of Nowe from the influential Świeća family. In an episode that I will illuminate further in the later part of this chapter, Piotr grew disillusioned with Władysław's rule and promises, electing to switch allegiances to the Margraves of Brandenburg. Even though Piotr himself was captured by a quickly organized punitive expedition, those loyal to Władysław faced by the summer of 1307 overwhelming forces of Piotr's kinsmen, Brandenburgians, and townsmen of Gdańsk who aligned themselves with the rebels. With the forces of Piotr's successor judge Bogusza besieged in Gdańsk's *castrum* the decision was made to call upon the Knights of the Teutonic Order, whom Władysław considered his allies.

Relying on a history of friendly relations and political partnership, Władysław failed to account for the increasing territorial ambitions of the Knights. The military order, invited to Chełmno land by Konrad I of Mazovia sometime between 1228 and 1230, carried out the Christianization of Prussia with violence and efficiency, leading to the quick creation of a powerful state. In 1301 recently crowned Václav II requested the Order's help in defense of his Pomeranian subjects threatened by duke Sambor of Rügen. The Teutonic Knights temporarily garrisoned Gdańsk receiving funds and land grants in return.¹¹⁰¹ Not above taking advantage of the financial troubles coupled with familial bickering, Teutonic Knights came into the possession of Michałów land in 1303. It was pawned to them by the oldest of the Cuyavian dukes, Leszko, and they refused the offers of his younger brothers and co-rulers Przemysł and Kazimierz to buy it out in their brother's absence.¹¹⁰²

In 1308 the Order answered the call for help and entered the Gdańsk castle, but the quarrels among the defenders led to Teutonic Knights turning against judge Bogusza's men. Having expelled them, they proceeded to seize the town.¹¹⁰³ Having captured Gdańsk they then

¹¹⁰⁰ Śliwiński, *Leszek, książę inowrocławski*, 67–73.

¹¹⁰¹ For the discussion of the role played by Teutonic Knights in contentious politics of late-thirteenth century Pomerania, see: Milliman, *The Slippery Memory of Men*, 66–93, 112.

¹¹⁰² Śliwiński, *Leszek, książę inowrocławski*, 94–99.

¹¹⁰³ The destruction of the town and the massacre of some or all of its inhabitants described by the witnesses became a subject of debate and political interest both in medieval and modern historiography. See: Błażej Śliwiński, "Wydarzenia w Gdańsku i w okolicach w okresie od września do 12/13 listopada 1308 roku" [Events in and around Gdansk in the period from September to November 12/13 1308], in *"Rzeź gdańska" z 1308 roku w świetle najnowszych badań*, ed. Błażej Śliwiński (Gdańsk: Muzeum Historyczne Miasta Gdańska, 2009), 79–114; For English-language summary of the historiographical debate, see: Milliman, *The Slippery Memory of Men*, 190–94.

proceeded to Tczew, which was handed out to them by the confused and threatened duke Kazimierz of Inowrocław.¹¹⁰⁴ Władysław the Short met with the Knights of Teutonic Order in April of 1309 in the Cuyavian village of Grabie. There he was presented with and refused the demand to cover the expenses incurred by the Knights as they garrisoned Gdańsk's castle, coupled with the proposal to sell Pomerania to the Order.¹¹⁰⁵ After the breakdown of negotiations the Teutons besieged Świecie, which capitulated in September of 1309, leaving all of Pomerania in the hands of the Order.

The violence committed by Teutons during the seizure of Pomerania did not escape the attention of the papal curia in Avignon. Answering Władysław's complaint, Pope John XXII designated three judges to adjudicate the matter: archbishop of Gniezno Janisław, bishop of Poznań Domrat and Mikołaj, the abbot of Mogilno. The trial began on 14th April 1320 in the Cuyavian town of Inowrocław, from which it takes its name in Polish historiography. The claims of the Polish side focused on the damages suffered by whole *regnum* and Władysław on account of illegal seizure of Pomerania. The interrogations of the witnesses took place between April and September of 1320. The Teutonic Order chose the legal strategy of undermining the judges' competencies and validity of the process in the first place. Despite objections of their legal representatives, the final verdict was proclaimed on 10th February 1321, fully vindicating the claims of Władysław's lawyers. Nevertheless, persistent appeals at the curia and Avignon's preoccupations elsewhere postponed its execution indefinitely.

Władysław the Short's alliance with Giedyminas's pagan Lithuania set the stage for the renewal of Polish-Teutonic hostilities.¹¹⁰⁶ Responding to the expedition of the forces of Jan of Luxemburg and the Teutonic Knights to Samogaitia in 1329 Władysław attacked Chełmno. In return, Czech and Teutonic forces seized Dobrzyń. The next three years were characterized by the pattern of Teutonic raids and Polish counteractions. Particularly damaging were two big campaigns organized in 1331 by the Knights. In July, they entered Cuyavia capturing Bydgoszcz, and despite the attempt to stop them at Pyzdry by Palatine Wincenty of Szamotuły, they struck deep into Greater Poland, burning Środa, Gniezno, and Żnin. The September raid

¹¹⁰⁴ Lites I, 296; Błażej Śliwiński, *Pomorze Wschodnie w okresie rządów księcia polskiego Władysława Łokietka w latach 1306-1309 [Eastern Pomerania during the period of reigns of Władysław the Elbow-high in years 1306-1309]*. (Gdańsk: Muzeum archeologiczne w Gdańsku, 2003), 444–54.

¹¹⁰⁵ According to Śliwiński Teutonic Knights intentionally dictated the price that was too steep, having already decided to keep northern Pomerania in their hands, see: Śliwiński, 495–96.

¹¹⁰⁶ For a detailed overview of the diplomatic situation in the second half of the royal reign of Władysław the Short, especially the alliance with Lithuania and actions against the Wittelsbachs, see: Milliman, *The Slippery Memory of Men*, 124–30; Kurtyka, *Odrodzone Królestwo*, 37–40; Jarosław Nikodem, "Litwa w polityce Władysława Łokietka" [Lithuania in Władysław the Elbow-high's policy], in *Władysław Łokietek - odnowiciel Królestwa Polskiego*, ed. Janusz Grabowski, Waldemar Graczyk, and Hubert Wajs (Warsaw: Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych, 2021), 63–84.

reached even further into Władysław's domain in an unsuccessful attempt to link up with Jan of Bohemia, meeting forces of the Polish king and Palatine Wincenty in an inconclusive battle at Płowce.¹¹⁰⁷ Worse yet, in April of 1332 Teutonic Knights entered Cuyavia capturing Brześć and Inowrocław, seizing Władysław's patrimony. With a truce mediated by papal legate Peter of Annency and the death of king Władysław on 2nd March 1333, it was up to his son Kazimierz to seek the final resolution of this conflict.

Seeing the futility of the military campaigns of his father, Kazimierz turned towards diplomacy. The grandiose Visegrád meeting of the new Polish king with Jan of Bohemia and with Károly I (Charles Robert) of Hungary was an occasion to settle the Polish-Teutonic conflict.¹¹⁰⁸ The arbitration by Bohemian and Hungarian monarchs left Pomerania, Chełmno, and Michałowo in the hands of the Order. Such an outcome was unsatisfying to Kazimierz, but not unexpected, given the arbiters. Predicting this turn of events, the Polish king simultaneously started a long process of lobbying at the papal curia. Already in the summer of 1335 Jarosław of Bogoria presented in Avignon two complaints against the Teutonic Order. By 1338 Kazimierz's efforts bore fruit, with Pope Benedict XII issuing two bulls that commanded papal legate Galhard de Carcès and Peter canon of Le Puy to investigate the grievances of Polish king and prelates.¹¹⁰⁹

The second process began on the 4th of February 1339 in Warsaw, at that time a quiet town located in the neutral Mazovia. The list of grievances presented by the Polish proctors expanded since the Inowrocław Trial. It concerned not only the illegal seizure of Pomerania, but also of lands of Chełmno, Michałowo, Dobrzyń, and Cuyavia, as well as the damages incurred by the king and the archbishopric of Gniezno during the military campaigns of 1330-32. The scope of the trial, much grander than in 1320-21 was also reflected in the number of participants and the length of the process. Witnesses were sworn in and interrogated between February and May, with sessions taking place in Uniejów, Łęczyca, Kalisz, Pyzdry, Gniezno, Sieradz, and Cracow. On the 15th of September 1339 Galhard de Carcès and Peter of Le Puy pronounced their verdict. The Teutonic Order was to return all the disputed lands and pay a staggering indemnity of 200,000 marks, as well as cover the costs of the trial.¹¹¹⁰

¹¹⁰⁷ For the military history of the campaign, see Marian Biskup, "Analiza bitwy pod Płowcami i jej dziejowego znaczenia" [Analysis of the Battle of Płowce and its historical significance], *Ziemia Kujawska* 1 (1963): 73–104.

¹¹⁰⁸ Stanisław Szczur, "Zjazd wyszehradzki z 1335 roku" [Visegrad congress of 1335], *Studia Historyczne* 35, no. 1 (1992): 3–18.

¹¹⁰⁹ Bieniak, "Przebieg procesu polsko-krzyżackiego," 11–13.

¹¹¹⁰ Lites I (2), 140.

The Order's lawyers again decided not to recognize the authority of the court, believing that their influence in the papal curia would allow them to overturn the sentence. Indeed, by the time Benedict XII authorized another arbitration in 1341, both sides of the conflict had already begun their own negotiations, which led to the treaty of Kalisz on the 8th of July 1343. Kazimierz had to let go of Pomerania, Chełmno, and Michałów, but retook the rest of Cuyavia, Dobrzyń, and smaller territories around Gniewków.¹¹¹¹ Having this outcome in mind, Janusz Bieniak saw the Warsaw Trial as a success of Kazimierz. The Polish king's goal was not so much a complete vindication of all of the claims made in 1339, but forcing a peaceful resolution of the conflicts on better terms than those offered in Visegrád in 1335 – and this he accomplished.¹¹¹²

5.2 Testimonies as a Source

Texts of the protocols of both the Inowrocław and Warsaw Trials are known to us from surviving notarial copies made just after the conclusion of each process.¹¹¹³ For the purpose of this thesis two parts of the protocols are of particular interest: the lists of theses (*intentiones* in 1320 and *articuli causae* in 1339) presented by the Polish proctors and the testimonies themselves (*depositiones testium*).

The grievances presented by the representatives of Piast monarchs not only dictated the boundaries of investigation, informing which events the witnesses would be asked to recall, but also shaped their answers in a more subtle way. The intentions of the Polish proctors in 1320 were presented in seven points. The first two focused on the Piasts' claim to Pomerania, which was to be possessed by „now king then duke” Władysław, and held in his name by Przemysł and Kazimierz of Cuyavia. The following three aimed to prove that the dukes were expelled from Gdańsk, Tczew, and Świecie. Two closing *intentiones* were formulated with a goal to prove that the Knights' crimes are common knowledge – meeting the legal standard of *fama publica* and *notoritas*.¹¹¹⁴ During the interrogation the first two articles were supplemented by additional questions, like the one about the length of Władysław's reign in Pomerania or his exercise of temporal jurisdiction there.¹¹¹⁵ Even though the term *regnum Poloniae* appeared in

¹¹¹¹ More on Treaty of Kalisz, especially on the proceeding 1337 peace talks in Inowrocław in Stanisław Szczur, “Traktat pokojowy Kazimierza Wielkiego z Zakonem Krzyżackim z 1343 roku” [Peace treaty of Kazimierz the Great with Teutonic Order from 1343], *Zapiski Historyczne* 56 (1991): 7–43.

¹¹¹² Bieniak, “Przebieg procesu polsko-krzyżackiego,” 20–21.

¹¹¹³ The textual history of both protocols was reconstructed in detail by Chłopocka, see: Chłopocka, *Procesy Polski*, 59–197.

¹¹¹⁴ Lites I (1), 17.

¹¹¹⁵ Lites I (1), 18.

the documents preparing the process, this framing is absent from the questions addressed to the witnesses. Useful in the communication with the papal curia, it was not seen by Polish proctors as a proper way of framing the argument about Władysław's rights to Pomerania presented to other participants of the trial.¹¹¹⁶

During the Warsaw Trial of 1339 the list presented by the Polish proctors counted 30 articles, which can be further divided into three categories. The first one aimed to establish the belonging of disputed territories of Chełmno (Art. 1), Pomerania (Art. 4, 6, 7), Cuyavia (Art. 9-11), lands of Dobrzyń (Art. 12-15), and Michałowo (Art. 16-18). Except for Chełmno, Kazimierz's lawyers aimed to prove that all these lands belonged „from antiquity to the kingdom of Poland” in general, to the late king Władysław in particular, that they were lost because of the unlawful and violent seizure by the Teutonic Knights, which brought financial damage to Kazimierz's kingdom.¹¹¹⁷ The second group focused on the military campaigns of 1331, with proctors aiming to establish participation of the Order's notables during the raids, and the scale of destruction they brought to Cuyavia, Sieradz land, and Greater Poland (Art. 20-29), and to estimate the general financial losses suffered by the kingdom (Art. 30).¹¹¹⁸ The last category belongs to the articles that aimed to strengthen the Polish case by demonstrating that the disputed lands held the longest by the Order, Chełmno and Pomerania, were a part of the Polish episcopal structures (Art. 2, 3 and 5).¹¹¹⁹

This expanded list of *articuli causae* from 1339 also expressed a more sharply formulated political vision. The legal representatives of king Kazimierz presented participants of the trial with the reality in which disputed territories belonged to the indivisible and ancient Kingdom of Poland.¹¹²⁰ By doing so, they paved over the complicated history of these lands. In reality, the relationship between these lands and the late King Władysław was far from uniform. Whereas parts of Cuyavia were a part of Władysław's patrimony, the lands of Dobrzyń and

¹¹¹⁶ Gawlas, “‘Verus heres,’” 100.

¹¹¹⁷ Lites I (2), 94-96.

¹¹¹⁸ Lites I (2), 96-98.

¹¹¹⁹ Lites I (2), 95.

¹¹²⁰ Milliman, *The Slippery Memory of Men*, ' 203–17.

Michałowó belonged to monarch's nephews,¹¹²¹ while his claim to Pomerania hinged on the claim to Przemyśl II's inheritance and recognition by the local nobles.¹¹²²

The groups of witnesses of both trials, though drastically different in size, represented similarly diverse spectrums of Polish society. During the Inowrocław Trial 25 witnesses were called upon. Assessing the composition of the list of participants, Sławomir Gawlas pointed out that the papal process shared some of the witnesses with the contemporaneous trial between the Cuyavian bishop Gerward and Hospitallers. Polish proctors, having to hastily produce their witnesses, made use of those already attending different proceedings in nearby Brześć.¹¹²³ It is no surprise then that half of the witnesses (13) interrogated during the 1320-21 trial hailed from Cuyavia. Nevertheless, all lands held by Władysław ended up represented by more than one witness – with two of them being refugees from conquered Pomerania.¹¹²⁴ The group was dominated by the members of the ecclesiastical and secular elites (9 of each), but less influential witnesses—knights, parish priests, and townspeople—were also interrogated.

If the witnesses interrogated during the 1320-21 trial might have been chosen in a haphazard manner, it certainly was not the case with the participants of the 1339 Warsaw Trial. The effort of the Polish proctors to mobilize the biggest body of witnesses possible is clearly reflected in the protocol of the trial. Among the witnesses were the bishops of the reunified Polish Kingdom, accompanied by the members of the cathedral chapters (20 witnesses in total). Alongside prelates of the church, secular rulers also gave their testimonies: dukes Kazimierz of Cuavia, Władysław of Łęczyca, and Leszek of Inowrocław. Less distinguished witnesses included nobles (41), knights (14), townspeople (30), members of religious orders (11), and parish priests (10). Geographically, most of the people who testified hailed from Greater Poland (49), Sieradz (22), Cuyavia and Dobrzyń (20), and Łęczyca (12). With the trial taking place partially on the territory of Trojden I of Czersk, some Mazovians, including the duke himself, also took part in the proceedings. Finally, four of the participants came from Pomerania and

¹¹²¹ On the relationship between King Władysław and his nephews, see for example Karczewski and Sieradzan, "Postawy polityczne książąt kujawskich"; Śliwiński, *Leszek, książę inowrocławski*, 142–48; Sobiesław Szybowski, "Kujawy i ziemia dobrzyńska oraz ich elity rycerskie w Królestwie Władysława Łokietka i Kazimierza Wielkiego w latach 1320–1343" [Cuiavia and Dobrzyń land and their chivalric elites in the kingdom of Władysław the Elbow-High and Casimir the Great in 1320–1343], in *Władysław Łokietek – odnowiciel Królestwa Polskiego*, ed. Janusz Grabowski, Waldemar Graczyk, and Hubert Wajs (Warsaw: Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych, 2021), 223–44.

¹¹²² See Chapter 3.

¹¹²³ Gawlas, "'Verus heres,'" 97–98.

¹¹²⁴ The contingent of witnesses from Lesser Poland numbered 5, from Greater Poland – 4. Two witnesses came from Mazovia – Duke Waław and bishop Florian of Płock. For a detailed overview of the geographical origins of the trial's witnesses, see the table in Sieradzan, *Świadomość historyczna*, 27.

Chełmno, territories firmly held by the Teutonic order.¹¹²⁵ Keeping track of where the witnesses came from is not an aimless exercise. Given the recent reunification of the Polish kingdom, the differences between the testimonies of witnesses coming from different parts of King Kazimierz's domain or different backgrounds should be of particular relevance.

Given the broad social spectrum represented by the witnesses of both trials, it is unsurprising that not all the participants knew Latin, the language of the proceedings. In 1320-21 eleven witnesses were described as *illiterati*, in 1339 seventy-four. For them the questions were translated into a vernacular, with given answers translated into the Latin of the protocol. Unfortunately, its makers did not specify which language was spoken by the interrogated *illiterati*.

This brings me to the question of the role of notaries and scribes in shaping the text of the answers written down in the *depositiones testium*. Even when the translation was not necessary, the agents preparing the documents under the supervision of the notaries still acted as mediators between the oral statements and written testimonies. The *depositiones* are not a transcript, and we have to take into account that those tasked with writing down the answers shaped—consciously or not—the text of the source. The formalized nature of the protocol compelled its writers to fit the responses into the constraints of formulas that carried additional legal significance.¹¹²⁶ Thus, the prevalence of some statements in testimonies, like the underlying insistence on seeing with one's own eyes or the notoriety of some facts, bears marks of conventionalization.¹¹²⁷

The testimonies of the witnesses of the fourteenth-century Polish-Teutonic trials are not an easy text to analyze. The leading nature of the questionnaire, the translations and paraphrases of the scribes, and the formulaic conventions of its legal language all create a barrier between the witnesses' accounts and the contemporary reader. Nevertheless, these challenges can be overcome. Even if in some cases identifying the sources of commonalities between testimonies might be very difficult, the diversity of the accounts given during the trial creates opportunities to investigate the way in which they differ. The diversity of testimonies, and different backgrounds of the participants of the trial, make its protocol in some ways a more reliable source.

¹¹²⁵ Ibidem.

¹¹²⁶ These challenges have been already identified in older literature, see for example: Górecki, "Memory: An Unlikely Case Study of Genocide," 169–70; Adamska, "The Kingdom of Poland versus the Teutonic Knights," 70.

¹¹²⁷ Patryk Maćkowiak, "Pojęcia notoryjności i famy w protokole procesu polsko-krzyżackiego z lat 1320–1321. [Notions of notoriety and fama in the protocol of the Polish-Teutonic trial of 1320–1321]," *Zapiski Historyczne* 87, no. 1 (2022): 5–25.

5.3 Bonds of Loyalty in Disputed Land

In the following part of this chapter, I focus on the way in which discourses of loyalty are woven into more general statements about the Piast rulership. While not at the strict center of their arguments, it was important for both the royal proctors and their witnesses to establish the loyalties of the inhabitants of Pomerania or Cuyavia. Thus, analyzing their testimonies we can attempt to answer a similar set of questions as in the case of the sources from previous chapters: how were the bonds of loyalty between rulers and subjects created, reinforced, or dissolved?

When testifying about Piast rulership over the disputed territories, witnesses of both trials mentioned the obedience and service of its inhabitants. For example, one of the witnesses in 1320-21 Piotr, *iudex* of Poznań when asked how he knew that king Władysław ruled over Pomerania, responded that he was there many times with the Piast ruler and “saw him many times with his own eyes ruling through whole land of Pomerania, in towns, castles, and villages, and everyone being obedient to him.”¹¹²⁸ Michał, *iudex* of Sandomierz, who also accompanied him to Pomerania, said that “he ruled and received tributes in his [Władysław’s] name, and all inhabitants served him.”¹¹²⁹

In the testimonies of the 1339 trial the overwhelming majority of the responses to the questions about the provenance of the disputed territories start with the generalized statement that the deceased Władysław ruled there “peacefully and quietly” (*pacifice et quiete*) as a “true lord” (*verus dominus*), and everyone “obeyed and served him” (*sibi obediebat et serviebat*) as it befits the ruler.¹¹³⁰ The primary function of these observations was to convey that Władysław’s rule was by no means opposed by the inhabitants of the contested lands – some of the witnesses even added that the Piast was obeyed *sine contradictione*.¹¹³¹ This was to lend further credence to the Piast claims about their rights, recognized as legitimate—or at least not protested—by the subjects from lost territories. It is also possible that the phrasing depicting Piast rule as peaceful and quiet reflects broader ideas about proper rulership. As demonstrated

¹¹²⁸ Lites I (1).11, 25: *Interrogatus, quomodo sibi hoc constet, respondit, quod in vicino habeo bona paterna, et pluries fui in terra Pomoranie cum dicto domino rege, tunc duce, et ipse dominabatur per totam terram Pomoranie in civitatibus, castris et villis, et omnes sibi obediebant, et hoc vidi oculis meis multociens.*

¹¹²⁹ Lites I (1).13, 26: *Interrogatus, quomodo sibi hoc constet, respondit, quod fui cum domino rege, tunc duce, in Pomerania, et ipse dominabatur et tributa recipiebantur nomine suo, et omnes sibi terrigene serviebant.*

¹¹³⁰ For the illustrative variation of this phrasing see the testimony of Urban, *subpincerna* of Łęczysca, Lites I (2).12, 197: [...] *ipse testis qui loquitur vidit et pluries presens fuit in dicta terra Cuyavie, quando dominus Wladislaus rex eam possidebat et tenebat pacifice et quiete et sibi obediebatur tamquam vero domino dicte terre, et omnes serviebant sibi sicut eorum domino et ita reputabatur per omnes ut dixit.*

¹¹³¹ See for example Lites I (2).26, 238.

later in this sub-chapter, the ideal of a ruler as guarantor of peace and stability of his subjects present in the sources discussed elsewhere in this thesis continued to be appealed to by some of the trials' witnesses.

It is worth noting that *obedientia* and *servitia* presented here by the witnesses do not stem, at least directly, from some inextricable link between the Piast dynasty and inhabitants of Polish lands. The same obedience and service were extended to others who held the contested territories. For instance, Przezdrzew, a canon of the cathedral chapter in Poznań testified that he not only heard about the Teutonic conquest of Cuyavia, but he himself:

passing more than many times through the said land of Cuyavia, its castles, and villages, saw that the said master and the brothers of Crusaders of Prussia possessed and held the said castles, villages, and places, and all the land, and were in possession of them as lords, and all obeyed them; if they do this out of fear or love, only they and God knows, for the witness himself does not know [...].¹¹³²

The difference between loyalty and coerced obedience was then, at least in the eyes of this witness, difficult to tell apart. In what way did the Piast rulers then create the link between them and their subjects?

The mechanisms of creating bonds of loyalty were elaborated upon in some of the testimonies. Several participants of the 1320-21 trial, describing Władysław the Short traveling to Pomerania to take up rulership there, mention oaths and homages given by new subjects. Five of them seemed to mention it unprompted, like bishop Gerward who said that he „also saw that all the vassals of this land paid homage to him as its owner and heir, and took oaths of fidelity.”¹¹³³ Three more witnesses added the detail about homages and oaths when asked a follow-up question by the proctors of the Polish king. For example, the bishop of Płock Florian “asked whether the knights of the said land paid homage to the lord king, then duke, he answered that: yes, but I did not take part oathtaking, but heard about it from trustworthy people, and saw that they obeyed him in all things as a true lord and heir.”¹¹³⁴ This response highlights

¹¹³² Lites I (2).3, 159: *et ipse testis postmodum transiens sepius et multociens per dictam terram Cuyavie et castra et villas ipsius vidit, quod dicti magister et fratres Cruciferi de Prussia dicta castra, villas et loca et totam terram possidebant et tenebant et dominabantur in ea sicut domini et omnes obediebant eis; si ex timore, vel amore hoc faciant, sciant ipsi et Deus, quia ipse testis nescit [...]*.

¹¹³³ Lites I (1).1, 18: *vidi eciam, quod omnes vasalli terre illius sibi homagium tamquam possessori et heredi prestiterunt et iuramenta fidelitatis*; Lites I (1).4, 21; Lites I (1).9, 24; Lites I (1).14, 26; Lites I (1).25, 32.

¹¹³⁴ Lites I (1).2, 19: *Interrogatus, an milites dicte terre domino regi, tunc duci, homagium prestiterunt, respondit, quod sic; sed non interfui iuramento, sed audiui a fide dignis personis, et vidi, quod sibi obediebant in omnibus tamquam vero domino et heredi*; Other two witnesses specifically asked about the homages at: Lites I (1).6, 22; Lites I (1).7, 23.

the direct link between the rituals of homage and oathtaking, and the expectation of loyalty that these created.

As the testimonies of both bishops remind us, an important aspect of rituals confirming one's new loyalty was their public nature. Unfortunately, most of the testimonies given in 1320-21 do not expand on the way in which these homages and oaths were staged.

More can be gleaned about who swore them. Besides the *vasalli* and *millites* mentioned by Gerward and Florian, other witnesses expanded the list to include *omnes Pomorani*,¹¹³⁵ *milites Pomoranie et civitates*,¹¹³⁶ or *omnes milites, vassalli, burgenses, opidanei*.¹¹³⁷ Concerning the participation of the townspeople particularly interesting is the testimony of Thylo, *advocatus* of Brześć and close associate of Władysław the Short. He claimed that he not only accompanied the ruler on four occasions to Pomerania, but he also received oaths in his name and dictated their texts to the burghers of Gdansk and Tczew.¹¹³⁸ Closing the list of subjects who swore oaths to Władysław were newly appointed officials brought by Cuyavian Przemysł and Leszko. In the relation of Maciej, dean of the cathedral chapter of Włocławek, his brother Świętosław who „held castle Tczew, which was held by the lord dukes of Cuyavia in the name of lord king” paid an homage to the king just like the other knights.¹¹³⁹

Despite the greater number of participants, the testimonies given during the Warsaw Trial of 1339 contain even fewer mentions of oaths and homages. These appear only in a few instances in which witnesses recalled the events leading up to Władysław taking control of Pomerania. Covering an episode that does not appear in the recollections of the participants of the 1320-21 trial, four witnesses mentioned oaths unanimously sworn by the Pomeranian knights and nobles after they agreed that Przemysł of Greater Poland would be the successor of Duke Mściwoj.¹¹⁴⁰ The homage is mentioned only by one of them – Dominican monk Wilhelm, lector from Płock, who left the description of the ceremonial entry of Władysław the Short to Gdańsk:

¹¹³⁵ Lites I (1).4, 21.

¹¹³⁶ Lites I (1).14, 26.

¹¹³⁷ Lites I (1).25, 32.

¹¹³⁸ Lites I (1).22, 30: *hoc scio quia propter hoc bene quadringenta miliaria equitavi, et fui bene quater in Pomorania cum domino rege, tunc duce, et iuramenta recepi et dictavi nomine domini regis, tunc ducis, et tota terra et milites sibi obedierunt, et dictavi iuramenta fidelitatis que cives de Gdanczk et Trschow sibi prestiterunt.*

¹¹³⁹ Lites I (1).7, 23: *Interrogates, qualiter sibi constet, respondit, quod pro certo scio, sed ibi non fui, et frater meus germanus comes Sventoslaus tenuit castrum domini regis Trschow. Interrogates, an rex, tunc dux, exercuerit iurisdictionem tem poralem in terra Pomoranie, respondit, quod sic. Interrogates, an terrigene sibi homagium prestiterunt, respondit, quod sic, quia et frater meus et alii milites sibi homagium prestiterunt. [...] respondit, quia iam dixi supra, quod frater meus Sventoslaus tenuit castrum Trschow, quod domini duces Cuyavie tenebant nomine domini regis.*

¹¹⁴⁰ Lites I (2).25, 232; Lites I (2).26, 238; Lites I (2).95, 366.

all the knights and nobles and clergymen and all people of the said land Pomerania received lord Władysław [...] as their lord, and as the lord of said land Pomerania, and as the king of Poland; And they came out of the city of Gdansk with the ceremonial procession of the city, in which procession the witness who speaks was present with his convent, and they brought him [Władysław] to the mentioned city and its castle, and knights and nobles performed homage to him and gave him honor as their lord, lord of said land, and king of Poland, and then bestowed and handed over all of the villages, castles, and places of said land Pomerania, for which this same witness who speaks was present, saw it, and heard it. After that happened, he [Władysław] went through the whole of Pomerania to take possession of these castles, villages, and places, in which they have received him and performed and gave him honor and homage as their lord, lord of said land, and king of Poland.¹¹⁴¹

The *adventus* depicted by Wilhelm was certainly meant to make a lasting impression on all the old and new Piast subjects. Why did then so few participants of the 1339 trial remember this or other instances of homages and oath-taking? Even if we take into account that not all those interrogated during the Warsaw Trial were asked about the events in Pomerania (67 out of 124), and accept that some of the mentions from 1320-21 were a result of the proctors' expressed interest, the difference between two trials is stark.

I suggest that this process of forgetting about the rituals meant to create the bonds of loyalty between Władysław and Pomeranians was part of a broader shift in memory about the place of this land in Piast dominion. As it was well argued by previous scholars, the proctors of King Kazimierz made in 1339 an argument that painted all of the disputed territories covered by the Warsaw Trial as belonging to the indivisible Kingdom of Poland "since time immemorial."¹¹⁴² The practice of recently-established subjects affirming their loyalty to the foreign, if not distant, Piast duke through ritualized gestures did not fit the vision in which Pomerania was always under the control of Piast monarchs. Thus, they were left uninvestigated by the proctors and unrecalled by most of the witnesses. This made the testimonies about Pomerania, barring the four examples discussed above, similar in this aspect to those given about all the other disputed lands, in which homages or oath-taking simply do not appear.

¹¹⁴¹ Lites I (2).102, 373: *omnes milites et nobiles et clerus et totus populus dicte terre Pomoranie dominum Wladislaum quondam regem Polonie [...] in dominum suum et dicte terre Pomoranie et sicut regem Polonie receperunt, et exeuntes de civitate Gdansk cum processione sollempni ipsius civitatis, in qua processione ipse testis qui loquitur erat presens cum conventu suo, ad civitatem predictam et ipsum castrum eum introduxerunt et omagium, milites et nobiles, sibi fecerunt et honorem sibi impenderunt sicut eorum domino et dicte terre et regi Polonie, ac deinde sibi omnes villas, castra et loca ipsius terre Pomoranie assignaverunt et tradiderunt, ipso teste qui loquitur presente et vidente et audiente; quo facto ivit per totam terram Pomoranie ad capiendum possessionem castrorum, villarum et locorum ipsius, in quibus eciam eum receperunt et honorem et omagium sibi fecerunt et impenderunt sicut eorum domino et dicte terre Pomoranie et regi Polonie.*

¹¹⁴² Milliman, 'The Slippery Memory of Men,' 205–17.

How then were the bonds of loyalty between Piasts and their subjects established outside of Pomerania, according to the witnesses of the 1339 Warsaw Trial? Answering this question is hard in the face of the silence of the sources. These few testimonies that offer more detail about the source of loyalty of Piast subjects from other disputed territories are characterized by the rather oblivious tone of the witnesses, who do not feel the need to elaborate on its origins. In the illustrative example of this kind of answer, Chwał *iudex* of Łęczyca responded to the question about the Piast rulership in Cuyavia by stating that he “not only saw lord Władysław, then king of Poland, ruling and possessing said land of Cuyavia, but also saw his father, grandfather of this lord Kazimierz now king; and the witness who is speaking, and his parents, and all nobles and commoners served them as their lords and [lords] of said land [...]”¹¹⁴³ For him and a few other witnesses, the loyalty to Władysław and his ancestors was a matter of unquestioned familial (and community) tradition. Unsurprisingly, all of these participants of the trial hailed from Cuyavia, the patrimony of the royal branch of the Piast dynasty.¹¹⁴⁴

It is hard to envision this model of loyalty, hinging on the Władysław’s ancestral rights, being internalized by the Piast subjects hailing from Greater or Lesser Poland. This would require them to endorse the vision of the past unified Polish Kingdom presented by the Polish proctors – in which all of the kingdom would constitute King Kazimierz’s *patrimonium*. Nevertheless, in the few instances in which witnesses testifying at the 1339 trial described the mechanisms through which bonds of loyalty between rulers and subjects were created, these entrenched, hereditary ties between people and the patrimonial lords of their land were the only alternative to oaths and homages of newly acquired subjects.

A different aspect illuminated by Chwał’s testimony that is easier to find across testimonies from both trials is the importance of personal relationships between rulers and their subjects. Some witnesses, just like Chwał, mentioned their own service to the king. While they did not elaborate on what obligations exactly such service entailed, they still painted a picture in which unmediated access to the Piast ruler was important in strengthening the bonds of loyalty. The mechanisms of reinforcing proximity to the ruler can be easily seen when looking at these aspects of rulership that drew the closest attention of the witnesses of Polish-Teutonic trials.

¹¹⁴³ Lites I (2).8, 184: *ipse testis qui loquitur non solum vidit dominum Wladislaum, regem Polonie quondam, dominari et possidere dictam terram Cuyavie, sed etiam vidit patrem suum, avum istius domini Kazimiri nunc regis; et ipse testis qui loquitur, et parentes sui et omnes nobiles et ignobiles serviebant eis et obediebant sicut dominis eorum et dicte terre, cuilibet in tempore suo, tamquam veris principibus et dominis dicte terre Cuyavie.*

¹¹⁴⁴ Lites I (2).8, 184; Lites I (2).15, 206; Lites I (2).74, 340; Lites I (2).32, 254; Lites I (2).40, 270.

One of the activities of rulers most often noted by the witnesses of the Warsaw Trial of 1339 was feasting. When testifying about personally seeing the whole chain of successive Pomeranian rulers, from Duke Mściwoj through king Przemysł to Władysław, palatine of Innowrocław Jan of Płonkowo mentioned not only that he saw them ruling peacefully and quietly, but that he also broke the bread with them.¹¹⁴⁵ Moreover, Jan claimed not only to join Władysław at his table, but also to host the ruler in his own house in Cuyavia.¹¹⁴⁶ Other witnesses who joined the tables of the Polish rulers represented a diverse group of lay and clergymen, from Andrzej *castellanus* of Rozprza, to Peter the parish priest of Radłów.¹¹⁴⁷

The witnesses of both the 1320-21 and 1339 trials paid particular attention to the ruler's role in granting lands and offices.¹¹⁴⁸ As we have already seen in the testimony about Władysław's tour around Pomerania by lector Wilhelm cited above, the distribution of both was an important prerogative of the Piast ruler. It was also exclusive to him – at least this is how Janisław, archbishop of Gniezno would like his audience to believe. When commenting on a transfer of land between king Władysław and his nephew (also Władysław), from whom the former took the land of Dobrzyń granting him instead the duchy of Łęczyca, the archbishop said that “the lord king of Poland is lord of all the land within the kingdom of Poland, and he gives to those he wants and takes away from those he wants.”¹¹⁴⁹ Similarly, Brother Gerard from the Cistercian abbey of Łęknio does not leave in his testimony any doubt that the officials' power came only from the king in whose name they ruled – no matter if they were themselves Piasts, like king Władysław's nephews Przemysł and Kazimierz from Cuyavia, or just some knights.¹¹⁵⁰

The witnesses who coveted land and offices were at times very direct about the role these material factors played in their relationship with the monarch. Thus, knight Żyro testifying at the Brześć Trial said that he knew that Władysław ruled Pomerania, because he “he stayed in the aforesaid inheritance of Krupocin, situated in the duchy of Pomerania in the district of Świecie, as in his own house, and for these goods he performed service to the aforesaid lord the duke as the lord and owner of this duchy.”¹¹⁵¹ Piast followers who hoped to be someday

¹¹⁴⁵ Lites I (2).25, 231.

¹¹⁴⁶ Lites I (2).25, 234.

¹¹⁴⁷ Lites I (2).25, 231; Lites I (2).27, 243; Lites I (2).31, 251; Lites I (2).42, 280; Lites I (2).47, 293; Lites I (2).49, 298; Lites I (2).51, 306-307.

¹¹⁴⁸ Similarly Gawlas, “Verus heres,” 101–2.

¹¹⁴⁹ Lites I (2).97, 369: *Dixit eciam ipse dominus archiepiscopus, quod dominus rex Polonie est dominus omnium terrarum infra regnum Polonie consistencium, et dat cui vult, et cui vult aufert.*

¹¹⁵⁰ Lites I (2).94, 364:

¹¹⁵¹ Lites I (1).8, 23: *Interrogatus, quomodo sibi hoc constet, respondit, quod in hereditate predicta Crupocin, sita in ducatu Pomoranie districtus Svecensis, tam quam in propria domo moratus sui, et pro eisdem bonis predicto domino duci servitium feci, tam quam domino et possessori ducatus eiusdem.*

rewarded in that way were also well aware of the financial advantages brought by office-holding. Describing the wealth of the occupied Cuyavia in 1339, the knight Antoni could not stop himself from remarking that if he were to be made a *capitaneus* in the retaken land, he would be very satisfied with his share of collectable dues.¹¹⁵²

Given the circumstances in which the witnesses of both trials gave their testimonies, it is not that surprising that they almost completely omitted descriptions of how the bonds of loyalty between the ruler and his subjects might be dissolved. In most instances in which witnesses mentioned the difficulties faced by Władysław the Short—like the rebellion of Piotr Świeca—they present the opposition in a bad light.

Nevertheless, two high-ranking representatives of Poznań's ecclesiastical hierarchy interrogated during the Warsaw Trial suggested that Piast subjects could, in very specific circumstances, be justified in abandoning their ruler. In the first, vaguer example canon of the cathedral chapter Przezdrzew commented on the 1307 rebellion in Pomerania by saying that it happened because of the weakness (*propter debilitatem*) of Władysław the Short.¹¹⁵³ The longer testimony by Poznań's bishop Jan Łodzia, already cited in this thesis, blamed Władysław's wars and inability to exercise justice for the desolation of Pomerania and Greater Poland, with injustices and oppressions suffered by the subjects, justifying their turn against Władysław and submission to King Václav II.¹¹⁵⁴ As I argued in Chapter 3.5.2, bishop Jan clearly linked the deposition of the Piast ruler with Władysław's inability to properly perform the ruler's tasks of securing peace and justice for his subjects.

Throughout the analysis of the thirteenth-century sources, we have seen similar hints at the idea that the legitimacy of the good Piast ruler hinges on his ability to protect his subjects from external and internal forces. It is, however, in the testimonies of the witnesses of the Warsaw Trial that we can see this source of the legitimacy of Piast rulership underscored most explicitly. Thus, it was the argument about the ability to protect the subjects that was cited by most witnesses when they were asked to explain the basis for the transfer of Dobrzyń from the hands of king Władysław's nephew. The young duke of the borderland region was unable to defend it from the Teutons and other enemies. Therefore, it was seen as only natural that he gave his land to the older Piast, who was able to protect it.¹¹⁵⁵

¹¹⁵² Lites I (2).49, 298: *Dixit eciam, quod si, recuperata dicta terra Cuyavie per dominum regem, ipse dominus rex vellet facere ipsum testem qui loquitur capibtnum in dicta terra, ipse testis daret dicto domino regi in quloibet septennio XV milia marcarum, et quod superesset, adhuc divideret cum eo, et adhuc dicto testi remaneret satis.*

¹¹⁵³ Lites I (2).3, 158.

¹¹⁵⁴ Lites I (2).2, 150.

¹¹⁵⁵ For a representative expression of such view, see Lites I (2).31, 251-252: *Mortuo fratre istius ducis Semoviti, successit sibi in dicta terra filius suus Wladislaus nunc dux Lanciciensis, qui quidem non poterat defendere dictam*

Thus far, the analysis of the testimonies of the witnesses of the two fourteenth-century Polish-Teutonic trials revealed a familiar picture. The ways in which the participants of the trials imagined the creation, strengthening, and dissolution of the bonds of loyalty between the ruler and his subjects reflected the visions of loyalty employed in diplomatic and narrative sources of the thirteenth century analyzed in the previous chapters of this thesis.

The importance placed by the witnesses on the personal nature of the relationship between ruler and subjects, noted for the 1320-21 trial already by Sławomir Gawlas, was only further underscored in testimonies given in 1339. Feasting, drinking, and access to the ruler were among the most often noted aspects of rulership by the witnesses of the Warsaw trial, testifying to the longevity of these well-tested tools for creating expectations of loyalty. Interestingly, there are no discernible differences between the ways in which witnesses of different social standing talked about rulership and loyalty. The only notable regional difference could be spotted with the participants from Cuyavia, who were in a position to mention a long family tradition of service to Władysław the Short and his ancestors.

What changed between the 1320-21 and 1339 trials was the memory of the oaths and homages of the inhabitants of Pomerania when accepting the rule of Polish Piasts – be it Przemysław II or Władysław. For those testifying in Inowrocław, these rituals were still in a recent memory, and formed a basis for the bonds of loyalty between Pomeranians and Piast rulers. By 1339, most of the witnesses did not mention them. As I argued, this was not a statement on the decreasing utility of these rituals for creating and strengthening the bonds of loyalty. Rather, it was a result of a shifting memory about the place of Pomerania in the kingdom of Poland. The creation of Kazimierz's proctors, this *regnum* did not only exist since time immemorial, but had the Piasts as its apparent "natural masters", who thus required no further affirmation of their subject's loyalty.

5.4 Suspect Subjects, Dubious Loyalties?

This subchapter is dedicated to the ways in which participants of the two fourteenth-century Polish-Teutonic trials thematized disloyalty. The repeated failures to stop the territorial expansion of the Teutonic Order during the first decades of the fourteenth century caused many of the witnesses of both the Inowrocław and Warsaw Trials to look for scapegoats. As I will

terram Dobrinensem a Cruciferis et ab aliis qui infestabant eum in dicta terra, et eo tunc videns hoc dominus Wladislaus rex quondam, patruus suus, accepit dictam terram ad manum suam pro defensione ipsius et quod posset eam defendere a Cruciferis, et dicto duci Wladislao nepoti suo dedit ducatum et terram Lancieniensem, quam nunc tenet et possidet ut dixit.

demonstrate in this subchapter, the papal processes took place in a general atmosphere of distrust, with many participants accusing individuals and communities of disloyalty while others trying to deflect accusations like these. I will start my analysis with the testimonies concerning the rebellion of Piotr Świeca from Nowe, which ultimately led to the loss of Pomerania in 1308. Understanding who, according to the participants testifying in 1320-21 and 1339 betrayed the king, I will proceed to the overview of the shorter stories about the wartime treachery. Finally, in the second half of the subchapter I will focus on the example of participants of the trial who, fearing the accusation of treachery, felt it necessary to reaffirm their loyalty to the Piast monarchs.

The Świeca family of local Pomeranian nobility played an instigating role in setting off the events that would lead to the Polish-Teutonic conflict. Piotr's father, Świeca, became the most influential among the supporters of the last Pomeranian duke, Mściwoj II. Just as the young Piotr was taking over the mantle from his aging father, King Václav II tasked his family, alongside the Teutonic Order, with *de facto* control over Pomerania during his reign in Poland (1300-05).¹¹⁵⁶ Similarly, upon his entry to Pomerania in late 1306 Władysław the Short reached an agreement with Piotr. He was to keep the administration of northern Pomerania, while its southern parts were placed in the hands of Władysław's nephews Przemysław and Kazimierz. Once it became clear that the Cuyavian Piast would not be able to keep the financial promises given to Piotr, the disillusioned noble switched his allegiances to the Margraves of Brandenburg.¹¹⁵⁷

A small, quickly organized Polish expedition to Pomerania captured Piotr in the fall of 1307. Nevertheless, Władysław's men under the leadership of Judge Bogusza faced the remaining family of the chancellor, the Brandenburgian forces entering Pomerania, and the townspeople of Gdańsk who were convinced to join the invading side. Besieged by these forces, the crew of Gdańsk castle turned to the Teutonic Knights for aid, paving the way for the Order to gain control over Pomerania.

As for Piotr, after a few years of imprisonment, he was released by the autumn of 1310 and returned to Pomerania. The later-surviving tradition from the *Holy Cross Annals*, confounding Piotr's rebellion with different events from Greater Poland, stated that those

¹¹⁵⁶ The precise place of the origin of Świeca family has been a subject of long debate, see: Błażej Śliwiński, "Gniazdo rodu Świeców" [The cradle of Świeca family], *Studia Baltyckie. Historia* 2 (1996): 35–51; A full account of Świeca's position in Pomerania at the turn of the fourteenth century in: Śliwiński, *Pomorze Wschodnie*, 85–130.

¹¹⁵⁷ Józef Spors, "Rola polityczna Świeców w końcu XIII i początku XIV wieku" [The political role of Świecas in the late 13th and early 14th centuries], *Roczniki Historyczne* 46 (1980): 32–34.

responsible for the loss of Pomerania were to be hanged at first, but thanks to the intervention of Władysław's advisors were spared and let out after their father guaranteed to buy out the Pomerania from Teutonic Order.¹¹⁵⁸ According to Błażej Śliwiński, this tradition carries the grain of truth. It was bishop Gerward who advocated for the release of Piotr, counting on the Święcas being able to repay their still owed debt – which they did in 1313. The family remained influential in Pomerania as parts of it switched hands between Teutons, Brandenburgian margraves, and dukes of Wologost, eventually exercising only nominally dependent territorial lordship in their vast possessions around Sławno.¹¹⁵⁹

In an often repeated judgment of Gerard Labuda, Piotr's rebellion was „typical for feudal relations retraction of obedience to one lord (most commonly out of perceived or real shortfall in fulfilling their duty to defend and aid on their part) and submitting under the protection of another feudal lord.”¹¹⁶⁰ While, as I argued throughout this thesis, the concepts of loyalty differed across time and space significantly enough to object to calling this episode typical of any model of relations, I also have to agree with this broad characterization of Piotr's actions. Despite old Święca's lifelong support for Duke Mściwoj's pro-Piast policy and the oaths sworn by all Pomeranian nobles to Władysław the Short, the breaking of an important promise by the Cuyavian Piast signified in Piotr's eyes a dissolution of bonds of loyalty.

How were these events depicted in the testimonies of the witnesses of the Inowrocław and Warsaw Trials? The participants of the 1320-21 trial did not elaborate much on the events that led to the Teutonic intervention and capture of Pomerania. When asked what caused Władysław to lose control over this land they focused on the violent military takeover by the Order, with very few witnesses explaining that the Knights were called upon by Władysław's men looking for help. Czesław *custos* from Sandomierz simply stated that it was necessary to call for the aid of the Teutonic Order in the face of attacking *Saxones* – Brandenburgians.¹¹⁶¹ Only one witness pointed out that the army of the Margraves approaching Gdańsk was accompanied by “some treacherous Pomeranians” (*quibusdam fraudulentis Pomoranis*).¹¹⁶²

¹¹⁵⁸ *Rocznik świętokrzyski*, 63-65.

¹¹⁵⁹ Błażej Śliwiński, “Studia z dziejów zakonu krzyżackiego, Pomorza wschodniego i Polski w latach 1310-1320” [Studies on the history of the Teutonic Order, Eastern Pomerania and Poland in the years 1310-1320], *Studia z dziejów średniowiecza* 12 (2006): 332–36.

¹¹⁶⁰ Gerard Labuda, *Historia Pomorza* [History of Pomerania], I.1 (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 1971), 541; Repeated for example in: Spors, “Rola polityczna Święców,” 34.

¹¹⁶¹ Lites I (1).17, 28: *Sed cum Saxones impugnassent terram Pomoranie, concessa fuit de mandato regis pars castris Gdanczk Cruciferis de Thorun, ut contra Saxones auxilium prestarent terrigenis.*

¹¹⁶² Lites I (1).18, 28: [...] *marchione autem Saxonie cum quibusdam fraudulentis Pomoranis ad expugnandum Gdanczk accedente qui erant in possessione et regimine civitatis et castris Gdanensis nomine predicti regis, tunc ducis, et totius terre Pomoranie, adversus predictum marchionem, ut se possent forcius defensare, Cruciferorum Ordinis sancte Marie de Domo Theutonica sub promissa summa certe pecunie auxilium imploraverunt.*

Chancellor Piotr and his kinsmen are thus not explicitly named. Henry, the parish priest from Pomeranian Miłobądz is the only one to mention that Piotr was captured by Duke Władysław when he seized control over the land and its strongholds.¹¹⁶³ The leader of the Świąć family also appears in the testimony of Włocławek's cantor, also Piotr, who simply states that his namesake and other Pomeranian nobles surrendered their castles to their new ruler Władysław.¹¹⁶⁴ Chancellor from Nowe was thus acknowledged as playing an important role in acknowledging or resisting Piast rule among Pomeranian nobles, but his consequential rebellion was only vaguely gestured towards by a few witnesses.

The unwillingness to discuss the upheavals in Pomerania was proportional among the participants of the Warsaw Trial. Out of the many witnesses asked about it, only ten remembered that Władysław's hold over this land was not *sine contradicione*. Starting from the least detailed depictions, Przezdrzew, *canon* of Poznań's cathedral and son of *iudex* Bogusza simply acknowledged that many enemies (*multi inimici*) rose up against the Cuyavian Piast in Pomerania.¹¹⁶⁵ Świętosław, the former palatine of Pomerania, next to the appearance of the anonymous enemies blamed the attacks by Bohemians and Brandenburgians (*Boemi et Saxones*), and the rebellion of the townspeople of Gdańsk.¹¹⁶⁶ The largest Pomeranian town was described as the center of the opposition to Władysław's rule also by two witnesses from Płock, *prepositus* Stephen¹¹⁶⁷ and Lektor Wilhelm. In the latter's telling, the city of Gdańsk was compelled to rebel against king Władysław by chancellor Piotr, clearly depicted as the main instigator of rebellion against the Piast ruler.¹¹⁶⁸

The role of Piotr Świąć in the opposition against Władysław's rule was reflected in the memory of most witnesses who remembered the upheavals in Pomerania. Even those who

¹¹⁶³ Lites I (1).20, 29: *Interrogatus, quomodo sibi hoc constaret, respondit, quod vidi et scio, quod dominus rex Wladislaus, tunc dux, captitavit Petrum Svencz, et opida munivit, iurisdiccione in dicta terra tamquam dominus exercuit temporalem.*

¹¹⁶⁴ Lites I (1).21, 29: *vidi etiam, quod ipse dominus Wladislaus iudicavit Pomoranos, et audiui et presens fui quod Petrus Sventze et alii nobiles resignaverunt sibi castra, que sic recepta assignavit ducibus Cuyavie Primislio et Kasymiro suo nomine tenenda, qui etiam ipsius regis nomine castra et totam Pomoraniam possederunt pacifice et quiete.*

¹¹⁶⁵ Lites I (2).3, 158: *[...] propter debilitatem dicti domini Wladislai quondam regis Polonie, tunc ducis, multi creverant inimici in dicta terra Pomoranie [...].*

¹¹⁶⁶ Lites I (2).116, 389: *[...] cum crevissent inimici in dicta terra Pomoranie et Boemi et Saxones devastassent totam terram et cives civitatis Gdansk rebellassent contra dictum dominum Wladislaum quondam regem et eius homines et officiales qui tenebant et custodiebant castrum ibidem, tunc illi qui dictum castrum custodiebant et tenebant nomine dicti domini Wladislai vocaverunt Cruciferos.*

¹¹⁶⁷ Lites I (2).10, 191: *Dixit etiam, quod tota terra regebatur et gubernabatur per eum et nomine suo, preter civitas Gdansk, que erat in discordia et opposuerat se contra dictum dominum Wladislaum; et est publica vox et fama de predictis ut dixit.*

¹¹⁶⁸ Lites I (2).102, 373: *Dixit etiam quod postmodum, quodam Petro dicto cancellario, nobili dicte terre Pomoranie procurante, qui se opposuit et opposuerat dicto domino Wladislao regi quondam, civitas Gdansk se subtraxit a dicto domino Wladislao rege et se opposuit eidem et gentibus suis, dicti domini Wladislai regis, que erant in castro ibidem.*

admitted that they did not travel there themselves, like archdeacon of Gniezno Przedclaw and Tomasz of Zajązkowo, but have seen the rebellious chancellor captured and imprisoned by Władysław's men in Cuyavian Brześć. Tomasz even had some idea about Piotr's plans, saying that the chancellor chose to „attach himself to the margrave of Brandenburg.”¹¹⁶⁹ *Scholasticus* Jakub claimed that the younger Święca was also encouraging others to take up arms against Władysław. He said that he was with the Piast ruler in Sandomierz when two knights from Pomerania arrived, bringing the news that „Germans who were in said land rebelled themselves against said lord king Władysław, instigated by a certain Piotr, son of Święca.”¹¹⁷⁰ Dzierżko, a bannerman from Cracow added in his testimony that Piotr resisted Władysław, not willing to let go of the castles he held in the Piast's name.¹¹⁷¹ Piotr's rebellion was also remembered by the aforementioned bishop Jan Łódzia. In his retelling of the history of Pomerania, Piotr was the only Pomeranian noble who opposed Władysław's rule upon his return in 1306. Święca tried to bring the margrave of Brandenburg into Pomerania, but his plan was foiled because Władysław „captured the said Piotr and long held him in bound captivity.”¹¹⁷² Finally, the palatine of Brześć Albert claimed that the insurrection of some of the Pomeranian inhabitants was already predicted by Duke Mściwoj. Offering Piast Przemysław II the Pomeranian throne, he warned him:

Lord, receive this land because it is yours and I fear, that after my death you will have trouble with Germans (*Theutonici*) and other inhabitants of the said land, because perhaps they will not want to receive you after my death.¹¹⁷³

¹¹⁶⁹ Lites I (2).51, 305: *Dixit eciam quod quidam Petrus, Cancellarius dictus, filius Swancze, qui tenebat pro dicto domino Wladislao rege Gdansk, Tharszow et novem castra dicte terre Pomoranie, insurrexit contra dictum dominum Wladislaum regem et rebellavit se contra eum et adhesit marchioni Magdeburgensi (sic) et tunc illo tempore Cruciferi intraverunt dictam terram ad adiuvandum dictum dominum Wladislaum regem contra illos fraudulentem, ita quod dictus dominus Wladislaus rex semper tenebat castrum Gdansk, et expugnabant castrum quantum poterant, et tunc dicti Cruciferi venientes in occursum hominibus qui erant infra dictum castrum Gdansk pro domino Wladislao intraverunt, et demum omnes homines qui erant in eo pro dicto domino Wladislao rege expulerunt.*

¹¹⁷⁰ Lites I (2).106, 380: *Interrogates quomodo scit hoc, dixit quod illo tunc duo milites venerunt de dicta terra Pomoranie in Sandomiriam ad dictum dominum Wladislaum quondam regem quando dicta terra Pomoranie auferebatur dicto domino Wladislao regi, quia Theutonici qui erant in dicta terra rebellaverant se contra dictum dominum Wladislaum regem ad instigationem cuiusdam Petri filii Swencze.*

¹¹⁷¹ Lites I (2).110, 383: *Dixit eciam quod captivavit ibidem unum militem nomine Petrum Swence, quia non obediebat sibi nec volebat restituere sibi castra que tenebat ab eo in dicta terra ut dixit.*

¹¹⁷² Lites I (2).2, 150: *dictus dominus Wladislaus incepit dictas terras Pomoranie et Polonie de quibus eiectus fuerat recuperare et possidere, sic quod omnes milites, nobiles et ignobiles dicte terre Pomoranie obediebant et serviebant sibi sicut eorum domino et domino terre Pomoranie, excepto quodam Petro filio palatini dicti terre Pomoranie, dicto Swancza, qui dicebatur cancellarius dicte terre Pomoranie, qui conabatur introducere in dictam terram Pomoranie marchionem Brandeburgensem, quod perficere non potuit, quia dictus dominus Wladislaus quondam rex Polonie et dominus dicte terre Pomoranie captivavit dictum Petrum et longo tempore tenuit eum in vinculis captivatum.*

¹¹⁷³ Lites I (2).80, 348: *Domino, recipiatis terram istam quia vestra est et timeo, quod post mortem meam haberetis brigam cum Theutonicis et aliis habitatoribus dicte terre, quia forsan nollent vos recipere post mortem meam.*

While the short rule of Przemysł unfolded *pacifice et quiete*, Mściwoj's words still proved prophetic.

As we can see, the motivation of rebellious Piotr did not interest the witnesses or proctors of either trial. Despite that, the role of the younger Święca in the loss of Pomerania became clearer with time. His co-conspirators were foreigners, Brandenburgians or even Bohemians, or „otherized” subjects of Władysław, be it *Pomerani* or local *Theutonici*. Moreover, some witnesses seemed to be convinced that Piotr was the only noble unhappy with Piast rule, and that his capture should have meant the end of troubles in this disputed land. Clearly trying to argue for the dynasty's rightful and uncontested claim to Pomerania, witnesses of both the Inowrocław and Warsaw trials were set to minimize the instances of the resistance by the most important local nobles. Instead, they were trying to reframe it as a doing of non-Polish „others” aided by the external enemies.

Transitioning from the rebellion of Piotr Święca towards more incidental examples of war-time treachery, I turn now the attention towards the seizure of the city of Gdańsk by the Teutonic Knights. The tales of this violent episode were the first ones to capture the imagination of the contemporaries outside of Pomerania, and they certainly imprinted themselves on the memory of the participants of the fourteenth-century trials.¹¹⁷⁴ Next to the murder of the civilian population and burning of the churches, the use of war-time deceit played a significant role in painting a black picture of the Teutonic Knights.

Among the witnesses of the 1320-21 trial, two testified that the Order wrestled control of the castle of Gdańsk through deception and trickery (*fraudibus et dolis exquisitis*).¹¹⁷⁵ Their capture of the town lying beneath took place in a similar manner, with the Knights entering it secretly (*furtim*) under the cover of the night.¹¹⁷⁶ The latter motive underwent an interesting evolution by the time of the Warsaw Trial. Still claiming that the Gdańsk *castrum* was captured deceitfully, some witnesses were additionally convinced that the covert entry of the Knights into the town was possible because of the inside help. Knight Antoni, Duke Kazimierz of Inowrocław, and Zbylut *castellanus* of Ujście—all three present in 1308 in the nearby Tczew—heard that:

the Crusaders had entered the said land of Pomerania with a powerful army, and had maliciously entered the city of Gdańsk and taken it by night, because the

¹¹⁷⁴ Milliman, 'The Slippery Memory of Men,' 190–94; Śliwiński, “Wydarzenia w Gdańsku.”

¹¹⁷⁵ Lites I (1).1, 19; Lites I (1).18, 28.

¹¹⁷⁶ Lites I (1).13, 26: *furtim intraverunt civitatem*; Lites I (1).14, 27: *de nocte furtive intraverunt civitatem*; Lites I (1).17, 28: *potenter intraverunt de nocte civitatem*.

German townsmen from the outskirts of the said city handed it over to them and betrayed it with great treachery [...].¹¹⁷⁷

This was not the only time when the witnesses of the 1339 trial mentioned the Teutons managing to sneak into the town. Many years later during the siege of Pyzdry, the Knights distracted the defenders by feigning negotiations with the commanding knight Krzywosąd, while they sneaked through the unsecured second gate.¹¹⁷⁸ To some extent, these narratives are a part of the usual strategy of depicting the hostile other as fighting deceitfully, outside of honorable norms of engagement. The testimonies of the Warsaw Trial are full of examples in which the Knights of Teutonic Order act, as Palatine of Poznań Mikołaj put it, “like pagans and people without fate.”¹¹⁷⁹

More interestingly, the stories of the capture of Gdańsk’s urban center gained between 1320-21 and 1339 an explicitly ethnic, anti-German focus. The details added by the participants of the Warsaw Trial echo the rhetoric used at the time of confrontation between nobility and urban centers of Greater and Lesser Poland in the 1310s which I examined in the previous chapter. According to Błażej Śliwiński, the three men testifying about the Teutonic Knights being let into the town wanted to excuse the lack of response of the garrison from Tczew, where they were stationed. Thus, they seized the rumor about the support of some of the townspeople of Gdańsk spread by the Order itself – the idea that the Knights were helped by some of the burghers legitimized the Teutons’s control over the city.¹¹⁸⁰ While that might have been the case, I would like to point out that the fragment from the Oliwa Chronicle Śliwiński cites depicts citizens of Gdańsk letting the Teutons into their city, but it does so by presenting them as exacerbated defenders coming to terms with the futility of resistance.¹¹⁸¹

¹¹⁷⁷ Lites I (2).49, 296: *Et cum audissent quod Cruciferi intrassent dictam terram Pomoranie cum eorum exercitu valido et civitatem Gdansk hostiliter intrassent et cepissent de nocte, quia cives Theutonici qui erant infra dictam civitatem reddiderunt eis dictam civitatem et tradiderunt cum magna fraude [...];* Lites I (2).43, 283: *Dixit eciam, quod Theutonici stantes infra dictam civitatem Gdansk, defraudaverunt Polonos qui erant infra eam;* Lites I (2).118, 393:[...] *dicti Cruciferi cum civibus de Gdansk condixerunt et convenerunt: quod si eos intrmitterent in dictam civitatem Gdansk, omnes milites et nobiles Polonos ibidem in ea existentes interficerent et sibi dicti Cruciferi castrum et civitatem Gdansk obtinerent.*

¹¹⁷⁸ Lites I (2).63, 320: *Interrogatus quomodo lioc scit, dixit, quia ipse testis qui loquitur vidit dictos Cruciferos et presens fuit, quando venerunt ad dictum locum seu opidum Pisdr et quando ipsum spoliaverunt, vallaverunt seu obsederunt, et cum cives dicti loci una cum quodam milite domini regis Polonie dieto Crivosand exivissent per unurn hostium dicti opidi volentes loqui cum eis; et incontinenti, cum exivissent dictum opidum et irent ad staciones eorum ad loquendum cum dictis Cruciferis, alii de exercitu eorum intraverunt fraudulenter dictum opidum per aliam portam [...].*

¹¹⁷⁹ Lites I (2).70, 331: *Dixit eciam, quod homines multos interfecerunt et spoliaverunt, sicut pagani et homines extra fidem.*

¹¹⁸⁰ Śliwiński, “Wydarzenia w Gdańsku,” 99.

¹¹⁸¹ *Chronica Olivensis*, 319: *Quidam vero ex civibus presumptuosi dominos terre Prusie ludibriis et sub sannacionibus incompositis provocabant in tantum, quod domini exacerbati cum exercitu valido civitatem obsederunt et eam ferocibus animis oppugnaverunt. Videntes autem cives, quod diucius potencie dominorum*

The inclusion of the details about the treacherous German burghers could be easier explained when taking into account the thirty-year-long time gap between the capture of Gdańsk and the trial. As their memory faded, Antoni, Kazimierz, and Zbylut incorporated into their testimonies popular rumors and sentiments. With only a handful of witnesses remembering that the inhabitants of Gdańsk were rebelling against Władysław's rule in the first place, its seizure could have been transformed into another example of noble Poles betrayed by the German-speaking town dwellers. As observed by Paul Milliman, those killed in Gdańsk turned between 1320-21 and 1339 from *terrigenae*, *Pomeranos*, and simply *homies* to *milites* and *Polonos*.¹¹⁸² Thus, in the eyes of some of the participants of the Warsaw Trial, the German burghers of Gdańsk were both co-conspirators of Piotr Świąca in his rebellion against Władysław, while for others they were responsible for the massacre of the city by letting the Teutonic Knights in. In either of these two dissonant versions of events the shared element is the conviction about the disloyalty of the German-speaking urban subjects of the Piast ruler.

I need to point out, to further nuance this discussion, that this attitude was certainly not shared by all participants of the Warsaw Trial. After all, almost a quarter of them were townspeople themselves. In most cases, the ethnic identity was used by the witnesses in an affirmative, non-exclusionary way.¹¹⁸³ The Polishness of the inhabitants of the disputed territories, expressed through their language, law, and customs, was used as an argument for those lands belonging to the Kingdom of Poland. The German speakers who lived in these lands were mentioned not exclusively in a bad light. Maciej, Archdeacon of Płock, and Wacław, *subpincerna* of Sieradz both agreed that Władysław's right to rule in Pomerania was widely known and acknowledged by Germans and Poles alike.¹¹⁸⁴

Nevertheless, the story about the betrayal of the Gdańsk townsmen, together with testimonies that linked the city or Germans of Pomerania with the rebellion of Piotr Świąca suggests that urban *Theutonici* were still treated with suspicion by the participants of the 1339 Warsaw Trial. This in itself testifies to the long afterlife of the rhetoric coined by the circles of Polish ecclesiastical and aristocratic elites at the turn of the fourteenth century, discussed in the previous chapter. No longer politically expedient, it still served as a reservoir of political images

resistere non valerent nec ullum possent habere redemptorem, civitatem tradiderunt, quam domini cum suo exercitu intrantes omnes milites Pomeranos, quos in ea reppererunt, iusserunt trucidari.

¹¹⁸² Milliman, 'The Slippery Memory of Men,' 171–75.

¹¹⁸³ Milliman, 222–26.

¹¹⁸⁴ Lites I (2).4, 163: [...] *est vox et fama publica de predictis tam inter indigenas quam inter Alamannos et alios alienigenas habitantes intra regnum Polonie et extra, et nullus dubitat quin dicta terra et ducatus Pomoranie sit de regno Polonie et pertinet ad ipsum regnum prout ponitur in dicto articulo ut dixit*; Lites I (2).21, 221: *Interrogatus quid sit notorium, dixit, quod homines communiter sciunt tam nobiles quam ignobiles et tam clerici quam layci et tam Theutonici quam Poloni ut dixit.*

– in this case, helping to find an easy scapegoat for setbacks in the Polish-Teutonic conflict in an atmosphere of growing suspicion.

The diversity of the witnesses testifying at the Warsaw Trial gives us an opportunity to see how the inhabitants of the towns of the Kingdom of Poland tried to push against this sentiment. I believe that this is how one should understand the testimonies given by the townspeople of Kalisz, who used the trial's stand to paint a deliberate, shared picture of their community and its place in the kingdom of Poland.

The six burghers from Kalisz constituted the largest group of witnesses from the same urban center interrogated during the fourteenth-century Polish-Teutonic processes. They were all asked only one question, concerning the destruction caused by the Teutonic army around Kalisz during their campaign in Autumn of 1331. Hoping to link with the forces of king Jan of Bohemia, the Knights approached and besieged the city. They were met with stiff resistance from the town's inhabitants and had to lift the three-day-long siege on 23 September.¹¹⁸⁵ The proctors representing King Kazimierz during the Warsaw Trial did not interrogate the people from Kalisz to hear about military exploits, but to establish the damages done during the siege to the properties of the king and his subjects, for which the Teutonic Knights were to pay indemnities.

This is reflected in the composition of the group of witnesses. Two of them in addition to being *civis Kalissiensis* held offices outside of the city—Petermann *advocatus* of Stawiszyn, and Arnald, *scoltetus* of Tłokinia—and testified to the destruction of these places, even calculating the damages. Further two, furrier Jan and Żybot from Pleszewo similarly noted the destruction of their own properties they saw from behind the city walls. Lastly, Jakub from Pleszewo and Jan called Momilch description painted a more general picture of devastation. Propertied men of high standing in the local community, they were chosen by the Polish side as direct victims of the Teutonic attack.

A quick glance at the six testimonies reveals broad similarities in their general structure, dictated by the shared set of questions asked by Polish procurators. Thus, all witnesses testified that they had been in Kalisz when they saw the Knights burning the surrounding villages and approaching the city, wanting to capture it. They were unable to do so because the citizens of Kalisz resisted them with arms. The Teutons attempted parleying with the burgers, but it was unsuccessful, and after a three-day-long siege they left.

¹¹⁸⁵ The resistance met by the Teutons during the siege did not escape the attention of the contemporary annalists, noted in: *Traska's Annal*, 856; *Rocznik Małopolski*, 193-94.

The brevity of both the descriptions and the actual siege did not stop the witnesses from painting the defense of Kalisz as the heroic act of their whole community. Save for Żybotą from Pleszew, all of the witnesses mentioned their active participation in the defense, claiming that they and their fellow citizens defended Kalisz, shooting at the Teutonic army with arrows. The resistance of the burghers was enough to deter the attackers – which as the furrier Jan added was an act of God’s grace.¹¹⁸⁶ The reasoning behind mounting the defense can be seen in the testimonies of Jan called Momilch and Jakub from Pleszew, who did not doubt that if the city were to be captured, it would be burned just like the surrounding villages.¹¹⁸⁷ In the face of the destructive military campaign of 1331, the brutality of which was still very much alive in the memory of other witnesses of the trial, it is not hard to imagine that the claim about the steadfast posture of their compatriots repeated by all witnesses from Kalisz rung a prideful or even boastful tone.

These words must have resonated strongly given how little resistance the Teutonic army met in the campaign of 1332 by the Cuyavian cities, especially Inowrocław. As noted by one of its defenders, *subcamerarius* Dobrzygniew, after the army surrounded the city people inside it decided to give it to the Order, seeing that they could not have done anything else but get themselves killed.¹¹⁸⁸ The quick fall of Inowrocław must have been noted in the public perception if, as observed already by Jadwiga Karwasieńska, *Traksa’s Annal* noted that the city surrendered itself on its own accord.¹¹⁸⁹ From among all of the defenders of the city its inhabitants must have been suspected to be the ones to welcome the Teutonic army with open arms. By 1335, when the Order’s representatives were given their instructions for the negotiations in Visegrád, they included a separate provision shielding the townspeople of Inowrocław from King Kazimierz’s anger, underlying that they surrendered only “forced by

¹¹⁸⁶ Lites I (2).55, 312: *Interrogatus de causa sciencie dixit, quia ipse testis qui loquitur, cum aliis suis concivibus dicti loci Kalis viderunt dictos Cruciferos ante dictam civitatem Kalissiensem, quia volebant intrare dictam civitatem et spoliare et cremare eam sicut alia loca, sed ipsi cives defenderunt se sagittando ad eos et ipsi Cruciferi ad eos, sed per Dei gratiam dictam civitatem non intraverunt, tamen non stetit per eos, quia bene fecerunt posse suum ut dixit.*

¹¹⁸⁷ Lites I (2).57, 313: *Dixit eciam, quod ipse testis qui loquitur sagittavit contra eos cum aliis concivibus suis defendendo dictam civitatem Kalissiensem, quia volebant eam intrare et spoliare et cremare sicut alia loca;* Lites I (2), 58, 313: *Interrogatus quomodo hoc scit, dixit, quia ipse testis qui loquitur vidit dictos Cruciferos et exercitum eorum ante dictam civitatem Kalissiensem, quia volebant eam intrare, sed ipse testis qui loquitur, cum aliis concivibus suis resisterunt (sic) eis cum sagittis sagittando ad eos quantum poterant, quia aliter dictam civitatem intrassent et spoliassent et cremassent sicut alias villas et loca in territorio et districtu ipsius civitatis Kalissiensis.*

¹¹⁸⁸ Lites I (2).85, 357: *et tunc ipse testis qui loquitur intrans dictam civitatem, dicti Cruciferi incontinenti eam vallaverunt et expugnaverunt et cum machinis percusserunt ad eam volentes eam omnino capere et eam intrare, et tunc illi qui erant infra dictam civitatem, videntes quod non poterant se defendere nec resistere eis, dictam civitatem tradiderunt eis et eos permiserunt intrare inviti, quia aliud non poterant facere, ne eos occiderent ut dixit.*

¹¹⁸⁹ Traska’s *Annal*, 857: *Ipo in tempore Wladyslavia-iunior sponte sc subdidit eisdem;* Karawasińska, *Sqsiedztwo*, 173.

the siege”.¹¹⁹⁰ This addition most probably was requested by the former Cuyavian subjects of the Piast monarch, anxious about the way their loyalty was perceived.

The people of Kalisz could have, after all, chosen to parley with the attackers. The Knights offered to negotiate with the citizens. This attempt was described by three witnesses, with all testimonies presenting a slightly different version of events.

The shortest statement was given by Żybotą from Pleszew. He said that the Teutonic Knights who surrounded the city “were eager to talk to the townspeople, but the townspeople did not want to talk with them.”¹¹⁹¹ In the description of Petermann, the person sent by the Teutons to talk with townsmen was an alderman of the nearby village of Radziejów, who went up to the bridge in front of the city. However, the people of Kalisz did not want to talk to him, as they “feared fraud or other imminent danger.”¹¹⁹²

The most detailed testimony given by Arnald, an alderman of Tłokina, both confirmed and contradicted the others. According to him:

at that time a certain knight called Krzywosąd came to the said city of Kalisz on behalf of the king of Poland, who nevertheless wanted to speak with the said Crusaders about the will of said citizens; and then the testifying witness and Jan the Furrier, his fellow citizen, were sent for talks with them, which took place in the middle of the bridge in front of said city with the Commander from Papowo, whose name he does not remember, and with Jan called Noschen, noble and squire of the said Crusaders, and with the advocatus of Radziejów.¹¹⁹³

Not only did the meeting take place, but the townspeople of Kalisz might have not been as fundamentally opposed to it as Żybotą and Petermann suggested. Nevertheless, even in this version of the story, the talks with Teutons are conducted primarily by knight Krzywosąd, the very same one who parleyed with the invading army at Pyzdry. Thus, while including this inconvenient information, Arnald resolutely points out that the townsmen obtained the approval

¹¹⁹⁰ Lites I, 447: *Primo, dominus rex Polonie solvere debet omnia dampna a tempore pacis et pronunciati arbitrii promissa. Item omnes captivi hincinde liberi erunt. Item post resignacionem terrarum dominus rex non gravabit quemquam nec imputabit ulli, et precipue civibus Wladislaviensibus, quod ex necessitate obsidionis se fratrum potencie subdiderunt.*

¹¹⁹¹ Lites I (2).55, 313.

¹¹⁹² Lites I (2).53, 312: *Dixit eciam, quod cognovit in dicto exercitu advocatum de Radzeow de cuius nomine proprio non recordatur, quia ille venerat ad pontem iuxta Kalis ad loquendum cum civibus dicti loci de Kalis, sed ipsi cives noluerunt sibi loqui quia timuerunt fraudem vel aliquod periculum imminere, et tunc vidit eum ut dixit.*

¹¹⁹³ Lites I (2).56, 314: *Interrogatus si cognovit aliquos de dictis Cruciferis dixit quod sic, quia illo tunc venerat ad dictam civitatem Kalissiensem quidam miles dictus Crivosand, pro parte domini regis Polonie, qui voluit loqui cum dictis Cruciferis, de voluntate tamen dictorum civium; et tunc fuerunt missi ad dictos Cruciferos cum eo ipse testis qui loquitur et Johannes pellificis, concivis suus, ad loquendum cum eis, qui fuerunt locuti in medio pontis ante dictam civitatem cum commendatore Papoviensi, de cuius nomine non recordatur, et cum Iohanne dicto Noschen, nobili et armigero dictorum Cruciferorum, et cum advocato de Radzeow [...].*

of the king's representative.¹¹⁹⁴ This outlier only highlights the constructed nature of Żybota and Petermann's testimonies. People of Kalisz clearly thought that stating that they refused the talks would paint a better picture of their community. This also explains why the furrier Jan, who according to Arnald also took part in the meeting on the bridge, did not mention anything about it in his testimony.

At the same time, both Arnald and Petermann make sure to note the presence of the *advocatus* of the nearby Radziejów among the besieging forces. This was not the only familiar face among the attackers noted by the witnesses. Jakub from Pleszew, when he was asked if he recognized some from the Teutons:

said that no, except for a certain (*quendam*) Mikołaj called from Dobrzecz who otherwise (*alias*) used to be their fellow citizen, but then however was with said Crusaders, and the *advocatus* from Radziejów, and a certain Jan called Noschen.¹¹⁹⁵

The *advocatus* of Radziejów and Mikołaj from Dobrzecz played a convenient role in the answers of the people of Kalisz, serving as a foil for the townspeople's attitude. The leader of the nearby community among Teutonic ranks flatteringly contrasted with the steadfast resistance of Kalisz, while the disavowal of Mikołaj signaled that those who chose to align with the attackers found themselves outside of the town's community.

While asked only a simple question, all witnesses from Kalisz gave testimonies which included unprompted telling about the defense of their city. While the details of their narratives differed, and sometimes contradicted one another, the general picture all of them wanted to paint was clear and shared: when others might have faulted and even joined the attackers, their community wholeheartedly resisted the Teutons. The need to distance themselves so strongly from the attackers paints the picture of the atmosphere of suspicion surrounding this and probably other urban communities in the reunified Piast monarchy. The statements made by the townsmen of Kalisz, placed in this context, read as a conscious polemic with the established vision of unreliable urban subjects. Thus, their testimonies represent a valuable but thus far overlooked counter to the prevailing sentiment, trying to navigate the changing relationship between towns and monarchs in the aftermath of the reunification of the Polish kingdom.

It is hard to tell whether other participants of the Warsaw Trial shared a similar anxiety about having their loyalty questioned, as the testimonies paint an ambiguous picture. On the

¹¹⁹⁴ According Pakulski citizens of Kalisz recieved the king's agreement to negotiate, perhaps wanting to ransom out the city after witnessing the destruction of its surroundings. See: Pakulski, *Sily polityczno-spoleczne*, 114.

¹¹⁹⁵ Lites I (2).58, 315: *Interrogatus si cognovit aliquos de dictis Cruciferis, dixit quod non, nisi quendam Nicolaum dictum de Dobrzecz qui alias fuerat eorum concivis sed illo tunc erat cum dictis Cruciferis, et advocatum de Radzeow et quendam Iohannem dictus Noschen.*

one hand, according to Lector Wilhelm, defenders of the Gdańsk's castle were concerned that if they were to abandon the position that they could no longer defend, they could be accused of treason.¹¹⁹⁶ Moreover, as the very same time the Warsaw Trial was taking place, the accusations of treason leveled against Palatine Wincenty of Szamotuły (discussed in Chapter 3) were still circulating among the Cracow court, contributing to a generalized atmosphere of distrust.

On the other hand, the very same accusations against Wincenty never found their expression in the testimonies of the witnesses. Here, the palatine appears only in a positive light, as a commander of the Greater Polish forces during the campaign of 1331.¹¹⁹⁷ Furthermore, some of the participants of the Warsaw Trial were open about their failures to defend the post entrusted to them by the king. The example of the *subcamerarius* of Inowrocław Dobrzygniew cited above was not isolated. For instance, Czesław Wojaszyc, who was among the crew garrisoning Sieradz said that he:

with 14 other noble squires rode out to meet them [Teutonic Knights – MM.] in the field in front of the town, and seeing their numbers and that they could not resist them, fled to the said town [Sieradz]; and at last, the said Crucifers who were in pursuit entered the said town, and as soon as they did so they entered the castle because those who were guarding it had fled [...].¹¹⁹⁸

Albert, palatine of Brześć, made a similar calculation. When the Teutonic Knights entered the castle, he decided to flee rather than die in its defense.¹¹⁹⁹ Whether guided in those decisions by fear or by tactical calculation, neither of them seemed to be particularly concerned if their military failure would result in any suspicions about their loyalty.

¹¹⁹⁶ Lites I (2).102, 373-74; Perhaps taken by Lector Wilhelm's statement, Błażej Śliwiński interpreted the response of Bogusza gave to the Marcin from Trzebcze, who informed the leader of the Gdańsk garrison about incoming enemy forces, as the acknowledgment that a commander that would abandon his post would be decapitated, see Śliwiński, "Studia z dziejów zakonu", 329; It seems to me, however, that Bogusza's response is instead a clear statement about his readiness to defend the castle in the name of Władysław, even if he were to be decapitated by the victorious enemy. See Lites I (2).124, 404: *Et ipse testis qui loquitur fuit missus per eum ad illos, qui tenebant et custodiebant castrum Gdansk pro dicto domino Wladislao rege, ad monendum et dicendum eis ex parte ipsius ducis Kazimiri: quod diligenter et fideliter custodirent dictum castrum nomine dicti domini Wladislai regis: qui responderunt ipsi testi qui loquitur: quod si scirent quod cras decapitarentur, nichilominus castrum ipsum custodirent nomine ipsius domini Wladislai: sicut faciebant et tenebant ipsum.*

¹¹⁹⁷ For example Lites I (2).49, 316; Lites I (2).50, 317.

¹¹⁹⁸ Lites I (2).100, 371: *cum aliis nobilibus domicellis XIV obviaverunt eis ante opidum in campo, et videntes multitudinem eorum et quia non poterant eis resistere, fugierunt ad dictum opidum; et demum dicti Cruciferi insequentes eos intraverunt dictum opidum, et mox ad castrum euntes ipsum intraverunt, quia illi qui custodierant ipsum fugierant, et tunc intrando dictum castrum, receptis prius armis et bonis omnibus que invenerunt in eo.*

¹¹⁹⁹ Lites I (2).81, 349: [...] *ipse testis qui loquitur tunc erat et fuit palatinus in dicta terra pro dicto domino Wladislao, quando dicti Cruciferi dictam terram occuparunt et expugnarunt; de dictis Cruciferis intrantibus et occupantibus dictam civitatem Brestensem, ipse testis qui loquitur qui erat in dicta civitate cepit fugam et exivit dictam civitatem ut melius potuit.*

This is not to say that their actions went completely unnoticed. As parts of Cuyavia were returned to the Polish king after the 1337 truce, Kazimierz issued in Inowrocław an official document, stating that:

because necessity does not have a law, none of those who were forced to submit to the rule of said Master and brothers, either out of fear, friendship, or sympathy, or for any other cause or circumstance aligned with them as the war started, that is cities of Brześć, Inowrocław, and inhabitants of the land (*civitatibus Brest, Wladislavie Iuniori necnon terrigeni*), for the good of the peace and harmony out of the magnificence of our royal heavenliness, we bestow the pardon on all without a difference, promising to never recall to mind, or to punish ad animum (*revocare vel vindictam sumere*) ourselves or through others, for all that, that was done by word or action against us or one of ours.¹²⁰⁰

The Cuyavian nobles were listed then along the towns of Brześć and Inowrocław as parties that had to be issued a royal forgiveness. At the same time, this document follows the cited example of the Teutonic instructions from Visegrád in painting occasional disloyalty under duress as understandable and forgivable. If it was this or similar acts of public pardon that made the witnesses like Dobrzygniew or Czesław at ease with recounting their faint resistance, they were clearly less worried about their perceived disloyalty than the townspeople of Kalisz.

As demonstrated, the witnesses' recollections about instances of disloyalty often reflected more the ideas and agendas of the participants of the trial rather than the way events unfolded. Most of the witnesses followed what undoubtedly was a suggestive framing of royal proctors and simply did not recall any incidents that could put in question the peaceful and quiet rule of Władysław the Short. As illustrated by the shifting memories about the rebellion of Piotr Świeca and the massacre of Gdańsk, when speaking about the more distant events witnesses often fell back on familiar tropes and prejudices. In these cases, it was the figure of the perfidious German-speaking townsmen, the creation of which around the turn of the fourteenth century I examined in the previous chapter. The fight for political influence mounted and lost by Cracow and Poznań in the 1310s cast a long shadow over the urban communities of the reunified kingdom of Poland. While some members of the Polish nobility did not expect the accusations of working with the invading Order, the townspeople were seen as particularly suspect. Finally, the provisions included in the text of the truce of Inowrocław that absolved the Cuyavian populace from submitting to the Teutonic army show us that one's former disloyalty

¹²⁰⁰ Lites I, 456: *Ceterum, cum necessitas legem non habeat, nemini eorum, qui se predictorum magistri et fratrum dominio coacti subdiderunt aut alias metu amicitie vel favoris vel quacunque alia causa seu occasione propter motam gwerram ipsis adhererunt, videlicet civitatibus Brest, Wladislavie Iuniori necnon terrigenis, propter bonum pacis et concordie premissarum de magnificencia nostre regie celsitudinis omnibus indefferenter (sic) ignoscenciam elargimur, promittentes nunquam ad animum revocare vel vindictam sumere, per nos vel per alium, quomodolibet pro omni eo, quod dicto vel facto contra nos vel aliquem nostrum per quempiam est commissum.*

could have been forgiven. This and similar mechanisms of reconciliation of the ruler and his disloyal subjects were important tools for Piast monarchs in the politically perilous first decades of the reunited Kingdom.

5.6 Crossing Loyalties and Borderland Communities

After examining the way in which witnesses dealt with the disloyalty of others and the suspicions surrounding their own loyalties, I want to turn toward the very specific group of participants of the Warsaw Trial. Among those who were called upon to testify by King Kazimierz's proctors were some witnesses who participated in the events of past decades while fighting on the side of the Teutonic Order. While the laconic nature of the testimonies themselves and the lack of other sources concerning their earlier and later fates limit the scope of any conclusions that can be drawn, they deserve some attention.

Bogusław and Michał Łazanka were a grandfather and grandson duo that were both described by the protocol's author as *milites Lanciciensies*. They both spoke about the strong Cuyavian roots of their family, with Bogusław mentioning even that he was a nephew of Wisław, bishop of Włocławek.¹²⁰¹ The family also owned estates in Chełmno land. Thus, senior Łazanka who claimed to have spent seven years under the command of the Knights, had a lot to say on the history and status of this disputed territory, relying on the knowledge of his peasants and progenitors who lived there.¹²⁰² It is then little surprise that just as the possessions of the family crossed the Cuyavian-Chełmno border, so did their loyalties. Bogusław was in Pomerania in 1308 to witness firsthand its conquest by the Order, though he does not say if he fought with or against them. In 1329 Bolesław's son was among the crew defending Dobrzyń against the Teutonic Knights – an event witnessed also by Michał Łazanka.¹²⁰³ By 1331 however, both found themselves on the other side of the conflict. Michał was a part of Order's army that entered Greater Poland in July and Cuyavia and Sieradz in September of 1331. Bogusław did not participate in the former, sending his son, grandson (Michał), and family's followers (*familiaribus*) instead, but joined in person the Teutonic army for the campaign that seized Brześć in 1332.¹²⁰⁴ Given the title they have been given by the author of the protocol, as

¹²⁰¹ Lites I (2).32, 254-255.

¹²⁰² Lites I (2).32, 253: *ipse testis qui loquitur septem annis penes dictos Cruciferos, et tunc ipsi excommunicabantur quia non solvebant dictum denarium beati Petri sicut illi qui sunt infra regnum et sicut alii de regno Polonie, sed utrum modo solvant, ipse nescit ut dixit. Dixit etiam quod audivit a progenitoribus suis, quod habitantes infra terram Culmensem tenenturolvere flcmmium beati Petri Ecclesie Romane sicut alii et ceten de regno ut dixit.*

¹²⁰³ Lites I (2).41, 275.

¹²⁰⁴ Lites I (2).32, 257: *ipse testis qui loquitur misit cum eis filium suum et nepotem suum et familiares*

well as the fact that both of them were interrogated in Uniejów, it can be assumed that sometime between 1332 and 1339 they settled around Łęczycza, south of Cuyavia.

Tomasz of Zajączkowo, similarly to the Łazanka family, also underscored his personal connections with the Piast rulers while simultaneously hinting at his links to the Teutonic Chełmno. He testified that he was a frequent guest at the table of Duke Siemowit of Cuyavia and that he feasted with King Władysław as well.¹²⁰⁵ He also said that he lived in Chełmno when its people were excommunicated for not paying their Peter's Pence, and thus his wife had to be buried outside of cemetery grounds.¹²⁰⁶ Unlike the Łazankas, Tomasz started his military career on the Teutonic side. He was a part of the armies that besieged Świecie in 1309, and Dobrzyń in 1329. His service must have been seen as reliable by the Knights of the Teutonic Order, given that he was tasked with delivering the money to Brandenburgian agents, from whom the Order tried to secure the rights to Pomerania.¹²⁰⁷ Nevertheless, in 1331 he fought in the battle of Pyzdry on the side of Władysław the Short, alongside the family's retainers and his son – who was captured by the Teutons.¹²⁰⁸ Perhaps it was because of this captivity that when the Knights entered Cuyavia in 1332 he was among the Teutons.¹²⁰⁹ Unlike Łazankas Tomasz appears briefly in sources outside of the trial's protocol. In 1335 he appeared in a rather elite company of envoys sent by King Kazimierz to Trenčín for negotiations with king Jan of Bohemia which preceded the meeting at Visegrád.¹²¹⁰

suos et eos associavit quousque exiverunt terram Culmensem; Ibidem, 255.

¹²⁰⁵ Lites I (2).51, 307: *Interrogatus quomodo hoc scit, dixit, quia ipse testis qui loquitur vidit in dicta terra Dobrinensi ducem Semowitum, fratrem dicti domini Wladislai quondam regis, patrem ducis nunc Lanciciensis, dominari pacifice et quiete sicut dominum verum et legitimum et sicut in patrimonio suo, cui omnes obediebant et serviebant sicut eorum domino; et ipse testis qui loquitur, pluries comedit et bibit cum eo in dicta terra Dobrinensi ut dixit, et tunc vidit quod ita reputabatur ab omnibus in dicta terra; Ibidem, 306: Interrogatus quomodo hoc scit, dixit, quia ipse testis qui loquitur vidit eum in dicta terra dominari sicut dominum et omnes obediebant et serviebant sibi sicut domino, et ipse testis qui loquitur, pluries fuit cum eo et comedit et bibit, et vidit quod dictam terram tenebat et regebat sicut patrimonium suum [...].*

¹²⁰⁶ Lites I (2).51, 305: *et ipse testis qui loquitur illo tunc erat in dicta terra Culmensi habitator et uxor sua tunc mortua fuit ibidem et sepulta extra cymiterium.*

¹²⁰⁷ Lites I (2).51, 306: *Dixit eciam plus, quod cum dicti Cruciferi de Prussia intrassent et occupassent dictam terram Pomoranie totam, requisiverunt dictum dominum Wladislaum quondam regem quod earn eis venderet, quod facere noluit dictus dominus Wladislaus; nec Cruciferi earn sibi tradere voluerunt, ymmo iverunt ad marchionem Magdeburgensem (sic) et dixerunt sibi, quod cum ipsi expulissent gentes et homines suos de dicta terra Pomoranie, quod venderet earn eis, quod fecit, precio videlicet octo milibus marcharum; et ipse testis qui loquitur portavit dictam pecuniam dicto marchioni et earn ivit ponderari u t dixit, et sic deinceps dictam terram dctinent et detinuerunt occupatam cum magno dampno ipsius domini regis Polonie.*

¹²⁰⁸ Ibidem, 308: *Dixit eciam, quod ipse testis qui loquitur, cum aliis nobilibus de Polonia habuerunt conflictum et bellum particulare cum dictis Cruciferis circa dictum locum Pisdr; Tomasz's son tried to escape being captured by hiding under the skirt of the elderman's wife, see Ibidem: Dixit eciam, quod illo tunc ceperunt filium ipsius testis qui loquitur, infra ecclesiam parochialem dicti loci, quem absconderat uxor advocati dicti loci subtus mantellum suum de pellibus, et adhuc tenent eum captivum.*

¹²⁰⁹ Ibidem, 306: *Dixit eciam, quod ipse testis qui loquitur vidit quod eam tenent et possident, quia apud eos fuit in dicta terra Cuyavie et tunc vidit ut dixit [...].*

¹²¹⁰ Pakulski, *Siły polityczno-społeczne*, 128.

It is unclear if Perigrinus, a *domicellus* from Zajączkowo also interrogated during the Warsaw Trial was the son or the servant mentioned by Tomasz or simply his local compatriot. The latter seems more likely, since Perigrinus does not mention the battle of Pyzdry or any captivity. Instead, he reliably shows up at the service of the Teutonic Order, from Dobrzyń to Greater Poland, mentioning also his friend Cunat among the Knight's ranks.¹²¹¹ In an interesting detail, despite this seeming commitment to this side of the conflict, he was not able to tell the interrogators the names of the commanders in the army he served in because—as he admitted—Knight's officials changed too often to keep track of.¹²¹² Clearly, Perigrinus was not as involved in the affairs of the Order as well-trusted Tomasz.

Not only nobles were among the witnesses who used to fight for the Teutons. A townsman from Szadek, Godzwin Rykalicz was a part of the Order's army during its campaign in the summer of 1331.¹²¹³ He would have also joined the Teutonic army on its raid against Dobrzyń, but he was ill at that time.¹²¹⁴ This is despite the fact that, as he earlier told, he was born in Cuyavia and he, his father, and grandfather had always obeyed king Władysław.¹²¹⁵

The examples of individuals or families that switched allegiances during the long Polish-Teutonic conflict are not rare but lack details. Speaking plainly about their time spent in the service to the Teutonic Order, these witnesses did not seem to think about their actions as malicious. They certainly did not feel like they needed to excuse themselves, nor were they asked about their motives by proctors. Already Jadwiga Karwasińska pointed out that this creates an unresolved clash in the testimonies – witnesses defended Władysław's rights to the disputed territory when asked by the proctors, only to mention that they were fighting against him few sentences later.¹²¹⁶ This feature of the testimonies speaks more to the formulaic nature of the responses as written into the trial's protocol, rather than necessarily revealing the attitude of the witnesses with mixed loyalties. The only thing that can be convincingly said about the

¹²¹¹ Lites I (2).52, 309-310.

¹²¹² Lites I (2).52, 310: *Interrogatus si vidit aut cognovit dictos commendatores nominatos in presenti articulo, dixit quod sic, quia cum eis erat illo tunc in dicto exercitu, sed de eorum nominibus non recordatur, quia quolibet anno mutantur prout placet magistro dicti Ordinis.*

¹²¹³ Lites I (2).40, 272.

¹²¹⁴ Lites I (2).40, 271: *Item super XIV articulo interrogatus dixit verum esse et notorium est sibi, quod dicti Cruciferi cum exercitu eorum ceperunt et occuparunt terram Dobrinensem et adhuc detinent occupatam, ut apparet de facto evidenter cuilibet intuenti; sed ipse testis qui loquitur hoc non vidit nec fuit presens cum dictis Cruciferis, quia infirmus erat et fuit illo tunc ut dixit.*

¹²¹⁵ Lites I (2). 40, 270: *Dixit etiam, quia ipse testis qui loquitur et pater suus et proavus et omnes obediebant et serviebant sibi sicut domino eorum, et ipse testis habet patrimonium suum in dicta terra Cuyavie in quodam loco dicto Pripust.*

¹²¹⁶ Karwasińska, *Sqsiedztwo*, 179.

latter is to note the openness with which participants of the trial were willing to discuss their past service rendered to the Teutonic Order.

In case of some of these witnesses, this service might have been part of their obligations as the subjects of the Teutonic Order. Older Łazanka mentioned directly the land his family owned near Chełmno. Zająchkowo, from which both Tomasz and Perigrinus hailed from was similarly located nearby Wąbrzeźno in Chełmno land. The Polish knights living by Chełmno served as an important source of manpower for the fledgling *Ordensstaat*, with 1278 privilege outlining their duty to serve in the Order's campaigns in Prussia, Pomerania, and Poland.¹²¹⁷ The expectation that the witnesses from Zająchkowo or members of Łazęka family were to serve in the Teutonic army was thus very clearly formulated.

Having family connections or estates in the lands controlled by Paists as well, it is possible to explain their shifting loyalties as the result of double lordship. As we have seen with the example of Wincenty of Szamotuły, the arrangements in which borderland nobility would owe some obligations to more than one ruler were not foreign to the political culture of fourteenth-century Poland. Perhaps it is due to this familiarity those caught in situations where both sides of the conflict could call upon bonds of loyalty were treated with leniency and understanding – as were the discussed witnesses.

The other broad conclusion that can be drawn from the analysis of the trial's testimonies concerns the mechanism through which these individuals were able to switch sides during the conflict. The ways through which these witnesses had done it are not illuminated. Some clue about one of the possible avenues of reaching reconciliation with the Polish monarch can be found in the previously cited document issued in Inowrocław in 1337, which promised royal forgiveness while casting their support for the Teutonic Order as (mostly) coerced. What can be said with more certainty is that these mechanisms were available to the broad group of past collaborators, who were involved with the Teutonic Order to different degrees. Second observation that can be made is that existing mechanisms allowed individuals with mixed loyalties to switch sides multiple times, being pulled towards and away both sides of the conflict, as was the case with Tomasz of Zająchkowo.

The testimonies also bring the attention to the interactions between family relations and bonds of loyalty. Bogusław Łazanka and advocatus of Radziejow did not join Teutonic forces

¹²¹⁷ The position of Polish knights who lived as subjects of the Teutonic Order in Chełmno land presented in more detail in Antoni Czacharowski, "Polityczna aktywność rycerstwa ziemi chełmińskiej XIII-XIV wieku" [Political activity of the Chełmno knighthood in 13-14th centuries], in *Zakon Krzyżacki a Społeczeństwo Państwa w Prusach*, ed. by Zenon Hubert Nowak, Rocznik Towarzystwa Naukowego w Toruniu 86 (Toruń: Towarzystwo Naukowe, 1995), 103–10.

alone, but with their sons (and grandsons) following their lead. So did the son of Tomasz of Zajączkowo, whose capture might have been the cause for Tomasz to briefly switch sides between 1331 and 1332 campaigns. Details like these suggest that loyalties were shared among the members of the family – at least between close vertical family relationships. This thesis is further reinforced by the way in which some witnesses framed their connection with the Piast dynasty, boasting about the familial history of the service that linked them, their fathers, and grandfathers to the Polish rulers.

Perhaps most importantly, these specific testimonies are the most sharp parts of a broader picture painted by many of the Warsaw Trial's witnesses. The royal proctors made an attempt at excising the long history of Teutonic Order as allies of local Piast rulers and benefactors of donations made by members of the ruling dynasty and noble families, presenting them instead as the competing territorial lords.¹²¹⁸ However, as the presented testimonies attest, the ties between communities living in Polish principalities and Teutonic Order built over the century of mostly friendly relations.

5.7 Conclusions

The Piast monarchs of the fourteenth-century Poland faced the challenge of creating a unified identity for their subjects after more than a century of political fragmentation. During the Warsaw Trial, the procurators of King Kazimierz presented the participants of the trial with the political vision of the unified Kingdom of Poland that existed since time immemorial.

While the witnesses of the trial did not always agree on the details of the past of the Piast regnum, they shared the vision of the role loyalty played in the relationship between the Polish kings and all of their subjects. Witnesses coming from Greater-, Lesser Poland, or Cuyavia alike saw the bonds of loyalty as reinforced primarily by a personal connection with the monarch and grounded in his role as keeper of peace and justice. The practices that illuminated how differently the rule of late Władysław the Short legitimized in parts of his patchwork-like polity, like the homages he received in Pomerania, were largely forgotten about.

Further transformations of the memory seen in the testimonies of the witnesses of the Warsaw Trial demonstrate how loyalty was used to position the communities within or outside of the ancient *regnum Poloniae*. The complicated political landscape of the turn-of-fourteenth-century Pomerania and the complex circumstances that led to its seizure by the Teutonic Order

¹²¹⁸ For a more detailed argument about the transition from framing of the Polish-Teutonic conflict as the one between rulers and their monastic subjects towards one between two territorial rulerships see Milliman, 'The Slippery Memory of Men,' 205–17.

in 1308-09 were often reduced in the testimonies to shorter narratives based on familiar tropes and prejudices. In the cases of the rebellion of Piotr Świąca and the massacre of Gdańsk, it was the figure of the perfidious German-speaking townsmen. Used extensively by the backers of Władysław the Short during his struggle against Cracow and Poznań in the 1310s, it still echoed among the sentiments expressed by some of the witnesses interrogated in 1339.

As illustrated by the example of the townspeople of Kalisz, the burghers were wary of being suspected of aiding the Teutonic Order's military. When asked only a simple question, all witnesses from Kalisz gave testimonies which included unprompted telling about the defense of their city. The picture they painted was clear: when others might have faulted and even joined the attackers, their community strongly resisted the Teutonic Order's forces. A conscious polemic with the established vision of unreliable urban subjects, their testimonies represent an effort to navigate the changing relationship between towns and monarchs in recently unified Poland. In contrast to the burghers, not all of the *milites* interrogated during the Warsaw Trial were concerned with how their conduct in defense of disputed lands would reflect on their perceived loyalty. Next to the witnesses who were using loyalty to exclude others or highlight their place among the good subjects of Polish kings, there was also a small group of men whose loyalties lay on both sides of the conflict. Their testimonies, alongside documents like the one issued in Inowrocław in 1337, shed some light on the mechanisms through which monarchs of the Polish kingdom reconciled with their disloyal subjects in the challenging times. These witnesses were also living proof of the rich history of manifold connections that, despite the three decades of conflict, linked the society of Teutonic Ordenstaadt with King Kazimierz's subjects. The boundaries of the ancient Kingdom of Poland, drawn up by the procurators and policed by some of the participants, were less clearly defined in the eyes of the others.

These differences in the testimonies lead me to underscore the agency of the witnesses interrogated in 1339. King Kazimierz's procurators were not the only ones who used the trial's stand to spin their own tales. Rather than simply accepting or rejecting the vision presented to them by procurators, the witnesses could pursue their agenda. Expressing grievances or highlighting virtues and connections, personal or of broader communities, people interrogated in 1339 jostled for their space in the young kingdom. The king's subjects actively participated in shaping the nascent political community of *regnum Poloniae*. This process continued over the long rule of Kazimierz, eventually leading to the emergence of a political nation that would outlive the end of the Piast dynasty in 1370.

Conclusions

This dissertation set out to examine how bonds of loyalty between Piast rulers and their subjects were imagined and discussed in thirteenth-century fragmented Poland. In doing so, I have analyzed a broad range of sources created at the courts and chanceries of Piast rulers or created by their subjects: from *Chronica Polonorum* of Vincentius of Cracow, its two turn-of-the-fourteenth-century continuations, through diplomas issued by Piast dukes and monarchs, to testimonies and annalistic accounts created in the early years of Kazimierz the Great's rule. My two goals were to examine how these bonds were conceptualized in the sources created in fragmented Poland, and to set the observed changes in the ways loyalty was imagined and discussed in the context of the broader transformation of Polish society during the long thirteenth century.

By way of conclusion, I will first assemble the pieces of the larger picture of loyalty painted in the sources from fragmented Poland. How did the analyzed sources imagine bonds between rulers and subjects being created, and in what circumstances could they be dissolved? What were the tools used to strengthen the bonds of loyalty? What obligations did those bonds entail?

In the first chapter of the thesis, I demonstrated how ideas about loyalty presented on the pages of *Chronica Polonorum* by Vincentius of Cracow were deeply rooted in his preoccupation with virtue and the participation of non-dynastic elites in the power wielded by Piast dukes. According to the chronicler, it was the shared concern for the virtuous character of *res publica* that formed the basis for the mutual loyalty that bound rulers and subjects alike. Thus, Vincentius departed from the idea expressed in the early-twelfth-century *Gesta principum Polonorum*, which suggested a special, impersonal bond of loyalty linking all inhabitants of the land to the ruling Piast dynasty, the *domini naturales* of Poland. This change had serious ramifications for the Piast rulers, as their ability to properly uphold the safety and virtuous character of *res publica* was now overseen by ecclesiastical and secular elites. These arbiters of the Piast rule, guided by the highest loyalty to the whole political community, could depose an undeserving ruler and invite a candidate of better moral character.

The idea that it fell onto the most powerful of the Piast subjects to ensure that the duke would rule in accordance with the established expectations, voiced by Vincentius, fits well into the broader belief about the contractual nature of kingship, popular in the High Middle Ages across Europe.¹²¹⁹ It also resonated with the audience of Vincentius's writing. The promises

¹²¹⁹ Weiler, "Kingship as Contract."

extracted by the regional elites from Władysław III Spindleshanks at Cienia in 1228, Ziemomysł of Inowrocław in 1278, or Václav II in 1290 suggest that parts of the political elites of fragmented Poland were ready to cast themselves as overseers of the contract between the duke and the political community.¹²²⁰ While none of the documents listed above institutionalized the subjects' right to resist, the political culture of fragmented Poland saw it possible for the bonds of loyalty to be justifiably dissolved if the ruler failed to respect the honor of their subjects or fell short of their responsibility to dispense justice and secure peace.

Nevertheless, the idea of the Piasts as *domini naturales* of Poland, although dismissed by Vincentius, continued to echo throughout the thirteenth century. The turn-of-the-fourteenth-century chroniclers put more emphasis on the Piast dynastic charisma, with the Lubiąż monk taking a decidedly negative view of rebellious subjects celebrated by Vincentius of Cracow. More notably, the thirteenth century saw certain members of the dynasty described by their supporters as *veri heredes*. This term was used by the Greater-Polish Piasts and Władysław the Short at the time of a particularly strong challenge to the dynasty's rule, be it from the hand of another Piast branch or Czech monarchs, in an attempt to imply a special bond that linked them with all inhabitants of the contested land.

The tools used to create or strengthen the bonds of loyalty show continuity throughout the period of fragmentation. The oaths, important already in the political culture of the twelfth-century Poland, continued to be sworn to and by rulers. Vincentius's *Chronica Polonorum* showed oaths used to secure the allegiance of the powerful subjects to a Piast ruler in a contested election, though disparate thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century sources presented subjects swearing loyalty to their new ruler *en masse* only on rare occasions. In line with the role ascribed to them by Vincentius of Cracow, the bishops of thirteenth-century Poland frequently acted as witnesses and guarantors of these oaths, backing them with the threat of excommunication. Another way of strengthening bonds of loyalty noted in Vincentius's *Chronica* and later thirteenth-century sources was through institution of godparenting. The artificial kinship it created between the Piasts and their noble subjects, like Sędziwój Zaręba or Andrzej of Cracow's son, seems especially important in the context of sparse use of knighting rituals, which could perform a similar function. The reception of other formal tools of strengthening bonds of loyalty seems to have been similarly limited. While some Polish dukes paid homages to Czech monarchs, the only clear example use of *homagium* paid to the Piasts can be found at the turn of the fourteenth century. It is worth pointing out that this novel solution

¹²²⁰ On parallels between the privilege issued at Cienia and the Hungarian Golden Bull from 1222 or Pax Austriaca from 1254 already pointed out in Gawlas, *O kształt zjednoczonego Królestwa*, 84.

was used in Pomerania, outside of the traditional reach of direct Piast lordship. Among less formal tools, feasting continued to play a paramount role throughout the analyzed period. For Vincentius, it was a vital tool in the hands of a good duke who wanted to evaluate and strengthen the loyalty of their supporters. In the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*, the hosting of the ruler by his subjects was an important sign of the authority of the former and loyalty of the latter, with joyous feasts used to mend the relations between Duke Władysław I and rebellious Wrocław. Even as late as the Warsaw Trial of 1339, the sight of Władysław the Short sharing food and drink with his subjects was cited as proof of Piast lordship over disputed lands.

Gift-giving was the tool for strengthening the bonds of loyalty that was approached the most differently in the sources investigated in different chapters. For Vincentius of Cracow, preoccupied with the virtuous character of the political community, gifts were inherently dangerous. Leaning on twelfth-century reflections on good and bad styles of gift-giving, the Polish chronicler believed that a ruler's magnanimity ought to be free from calculation. Gifts were given without the expectation of any future obligations, while subjects served not out of anticipation of rewards, but out of shared concern for the good of the *res publica*. But the thirteenth-century material makes clear that this position was not held broadly in fragmented Poland. Warnings against the dangers of reducing loyalty to transactional relations were omitted by turn-of-the-fourteenth-century chroniclers, who saw the rewards for service as a regular part of the reciprocal bond of loyalty. In the second half of the thirteenth century, the idea that it was the ruler's duty to reward those who distinguished themselves with loyal service was frequently expressed in the ducal diplomas. The reciprocity described in the diplomatic formulas usually rewarded present or past service, which could also have been performed by or for past generations, though some of the preambles framed the ruler's benevolence as a way of ensuring future loyalty. In an interesting reversal of the dynamics between rulers and subjects, the worry expressed by the Cistercian monks from Henryków and Lubiąż about the harmful effect of gifts on reciprocal relationships concerned the undue influence on Piasts, whose favor could be bought.

What can be said about the contents of the imagined bonds of loyalty? These seemed to be, just like elsewhere in Europe, primarily defined in negative terms. Thus, neither rulers nor subjects could threaten each other's lives or broadly defined *honor*. The positive content of the bonds, the expectations of what exactly the loyal service entailed, were rarely described in explicit, concrete terms. A throughline, seen from Vincentius's *Chronica*, through the Silesian *Chronica Polonorum*, to ducal diplomas issued for nobles and urban communities, linked loyalty with military deeds. *Fidelia servicia* of those praised by chroniclers and chanceries was

associated with *strenuitas* and *virilitas* showed fighting for the ruler, and the readiness to endanger one's life and possessions in defense of the duke's life and *honor*. As illuminated by the commentary left in *Traska's Annals* concerning Palatine Wincenty of Szamotuły, the battlefield was the best stage to perform loyalty on. It is important to point out that it was not just *milites* whose loyalty was discussed through the lens of military deeds, but also individual burghers and whole urban communities. For example, by focusing on the heroic tales of the defenses of their cities, the townspeople of Racibórz or Kalisz tried to secure their privileges and political position. This similarity, I argue, suggests that the discourse of loyalty in fragmented Poland was geared towards the knights and nobles – it was their feats that urban communities had to emulate to prove themselves loyal, equally valuable subjects of Piast rulers.

Investigation of the depictions of bonds of loyalty led me finally to ask about the possibility of mending severed ties. Chronicles, annals, legal sources and documents presented a broad spectrum of different forms of punishment met by disloyal rulers and subjects. Whereas chroniclers like Vincentius of Cracow or the Lubiąż monk wrote about divine or earthly justice punishing disloyalty with death or mutilation, the diplomatic sources focused more on possessions and offices lost by those accused of *crimen laesae maiestatis*. The actual fates of the actors known to have participated in the rebellions recorded in the thirteenth-century annals are difficult to trace, having to rely on assumptions about the personal changes among office holders or in the land tenure. These, however, should better account for the possibility of reconciliation between Piast rulers and subjects who were committed or were accused of acts of disloyalty. The cases of Sędziwój Zaręba, Wincenty of Szamotuły, or Tomasz of Zajączkowo speak to the possibility of suspect subjects to return, over time, to the political relevance and favor of the Piast rulers.

The picture outlined this way suggests that, throughout the thirteenth century, there was more continuity than change in how bonds of loyalty between ruler and the subjects were imagined. Regardless, the broader socio-economic transformation taking place in fragmented Poland left its mark on the ways in which loyalty was imagined and discussed.

This was the case with the growing transition from orality to literacy, exemplified by the growing importance of the written communication between Piast rulers and their subjects. In comparison with Bohemia, where written documentation and legal novelties drove the process of institutionalization of the bonds of loyalty and systematization of their content by the time of last Přemyslids, the changes to Piast political culture were not as radical. Intensive contact between the two dynasties notwithstanding, tools like homages, feudal law, and written promises of loyalty, used by Přemyslid monarchs, were not directly adopted by Piast dukes.

Nevertheless, these practices seemed to have inspired some Piast rulers, as attested by *Summa Nicolay* or oaths and homages given to Władysław the Short in Pomerania.

More impactful than the reception of specific tools was the increasing reliance and trust in written documents, which influenced the way loyalty was communicated. Ducal charters did more than just record legal acts: they communicated ideals of loyalty and reciprocity, setting the rewarded loyal followers or punished traitors as examples of behavior to emulate or condemn for an audience assembled at public acts. By praising the loyalty of recipients, ducal charters not only justified grants and acknowledged merit but also created a written record of loyal service, more or less detailed. As we have seen, noble families and urban communities alike used such records to defend, justify, and advance their privileges and political position. Particularly in urban contexts, the documents praising townspeople's loyalty generated a feedback mechanism that further encouraged the subsequent reissue of charters on reciprocal obligations between Piast rulers and Polish towns. Moreover, the discourse of loyalty used in the issued documents proved a powerful tool in shaping political narratives. Like in the case of documents issued by Leszek the Black in the aftermath of the 1285 rebellion or Władysław the Short in the aftermath of the 1312 rebellion, they linked the material interests of the addressee with the vision of events presented by the ducal chancery, forming a common understanding of who exactly the loyal and disloyal subjects were. Similarly, they could have been used to pave over the past disloyalties, signaling the political reset, as they did in the examples of Władysław the Short's confirmations of privileges issued to "always loyal" Bishop Jan Muskata and Cracow burghers, or Kazimierz the Great's promise of amnesty issued in 1337. Evidently, just like elsewhere in Europe, pragmatic literacy broadened the possibilities for political communication, with documents being used alongside symbolic gestures in processes of reconciliation.

The second of the changes in the socio-political landscape of fragmented Poland reflected also in the discourse of loyalty was the emergence of the new groups of subjects - powerful urban centers and German-speaking knights in Piast service. As demonstrated in Chapters 4 and 5 of this thesis, the tensions mounting since the last quarter of the thirteenth century between politically ambitious urban communities and traditional noble elites found their expression in the ethnocentric rhetoric that pitted Polish *terrigenae* against perfidious German-speaking burghers. This image, used to mobilize the supporters of Władysław the Short in his struggle over Lesser and Greater Poland continued to shape memory of the past and discussions about the present in the recently unified kingdom of last Piast monarchs. But the claims of the German's perfidious nature and their methodical conspiracies were only one of

the ways in which the discourse of loyalty was employed for political means in turn-of-the-fourteenth-century Poland. The Silesian *Chronica Polonorum* and Dzierzwa's Chronicle used the narratives about loyalty and treachery to further the arguments in support of their political programs: be it the Silesian *monarchia* triumphing over the treacherous Greater- and Lesser-Poles, or Dukes of Cracow taking revenge for Pomeranian disloyalty. Testimonies of the Polish-Teutonic trials and accusations against Wincenty of Szamotuły paint a picture of a time in which the claims about loyalty and treachery were frequently used in fighting for positions in a recently restored monarchy. All these efforts underscore the importance of language of loyalty in creating and reinforcing identities. Already Vincentius of Cracow used loyalty, abundant among ancient Poles, to outline his vision of political community, constituted through shared virtues, norms and allegiances. Later sources from fragmented Poland, from chronicles and annals to charters and testimonies, show how loyalty to Piast rulers or other members of the community was used to construct political communities, as small as single urban centers or as large as the whole *regnum Poloniae*.

These observations lead me to conclude that, despite the challenge presented by the uneven distribution of often disparate sources, fragmented Poland should not be overlooked by scholars interested in how loyalty, as a political instrument, was imagined and discussed in High Middle Ages. Due to the already broad scope of the thesis, I could not expand in detail on all the ways in which the developments in Piast principalities mirrored or diverged from the practices and language of loyalty used elsewhere in Latin Christendom. The associations between loyalty and *honor*, the *narrationes* describing heroic deeds in the ducal charters, *Summa Nycolai*, and the figures of perfidious Germans in the *Chronicle of Dalimil* – serve all as a reminder of exchanges between the political cultures of Piast Poland and other Central-European polities, which are deserving of future, detailed investigations. What set the fragmented Poland apart were the specific political circumstances. A long co-existence of the principalities ruled by parallel branches of the same dynasty, engaged variably in cooperation and low-level conflict, made questions of loyalty of much interest for Piast rulers and their subjects.

For historians of Medieval Poland, my analysis offers a systematic attempt at investigating a well-known period and the sources it produced from a different perspective. By placing disparate accounts describing loyalty and treachery in the context of the broader discourse of loyalty, I suggest that a more careful, source-critical approach is needed in understanding events and allegiances of the period. The emerging vision of the political culture of Poland in the high Middle Ages, as seen through the lens of concepts of loyalty, suggests

much continuity between the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, underscoring the artificial nature of 1320 coronation as a cutting point for future investigations. The answer to how the loyalty owed to a single Piast monarch differed from the loyalty owed to one of the competing dynastic rulers lies in the post-Warsaw Trial developments, which are best captured by the historical writing compiled and penned by Janko of Czarneków. Ultimately, the question of how ideas about bonds of loyalty were transformed with the unification of Piast Poland is one that invites further research, beyond the confines of traditional geographical or chronological boundaries.

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