Cuius regio?
Ideological and Territorial Cohesion of Silesia

eds Lucyna Harc, Przemysław Wiszewski, Rościsław Żerelik

vol. 1

The Long Formation of the Region (c. 1000–1526)

ed. Przemysław Wiszewski

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The Long Formation of the Region Silesia (c. 1000–1526)

ed. Przemysław Wiszewski

Wrocław 2013

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Table of Contents

Przemysław Wiszewski
Whose region is it? A few words on a certain research project and Silesian history 9

Gerard Kosmala
Geographical characteristics of Silesia 19

Stanisław Rosik
The formation of Silesia (to 1163). Factors of regional integration 41

Marcin Pauk, Ewa Wółkiewicz
The administrative structure of Silesia as a determinant of legal and constitutional cohesion (12th–15th century) 65

Grzegorz Myśliwski
Did Silesia constitute an economic region between the 13th and the 15th centuries? A survey of region-integrating and region-disintegrating economic factors 93

Przemysław Wiszewski
Region-integrating or region-disintegrating? The social groups of medieval Silesia examined in the context of their political activity (from the last decades of the 12th century to the 15th century) 129

Przemysław Wiszewski
The multi-ethnic character of medieval Silesian society and its influence on the region's cohesion (12th–15th centuries) 167

Romuald Kaczmarek
The cultural identity of medieval Silesia: the case of art and architecture 193

Wojciech Mrozowicz
Regional identity in Silesia (until 1526) 215

Przemysław Wiszewski
Many communities, too little community? Conclusions on the analysis of region-integrating forces in medieval Silesia 237

Maps and Illustrations 243

Tables 245

Bibliography 247

Index 291

Polish-German Concordance of Topographic Names 301

The Authors 305

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Whose region is it? A few words on a certain research project and Silesian history

Abstract:

This collection of articles represents the output of the first stage of research on the history of the region of Silesia, conducted under the patronage of the European Science Foundation as part of the project 'Cuius regio. An analysis of the cohesive and disruptive forces determining the attachment and commitment of (groups of) persons to and cohesion within regions'. Silesia, one of the regions analyzed in the project, is an example of a borderland territory whose historical development was substantially influenced by various cultural traditions. The primary goal of the research on the Silesian history was to determine the factors that led to disintegration and subsequent re-creation of the region, for there are arguments indicating that the history of the local community has been – and continues to be – the product of a dynamic process whose course was not determined solely by the factor of its constant existence within the limits demarcated within the 16th-century Kingdom of Bohemia.

We are hopeful that the book will inspire a discussion in the academic community on a new dimension of the social history of Silesia, on issues connected with the development of Europe's regions and on universal mechanisms present in the formation of regional social cohesion.

Keywords:

Silesia, regional history, social cohesion

The *Cuius regio* project and the history of Silesia

This collection of articles represents the output of the first stage of research on the history of the region of Silesia, conducted under the patronage of the European Science Foundation as part of the project '*Cuius regio. An analysis of the cohesive and disruptive forces determining the attachment and commitment of (groups of) persons to and cohesion within regions*'.[1] The study on the history of Silesia, financed by the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education,[2] is part of a much broader international initiative conducted by research teams from the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania and Spain. The aim of the project, initiated and coordinated by Prof. Dick de Boer from Groningen, is to develop new standards of conducting and presenting academic research in the area of regional history by means of comparative analyses based on materials connected with the histories of communities of various regions of Europe. Silesia, one of the regions analyzed, is an example of

[1] More information on the project is available at www.cuius-regio.eu.

[2] *Cuius regio. An analysis of the cohesive and disruptive forces determining the attachment and commitment of (groups of) persons to and the cohesion within regions*, decision of the Minister of Science and Higher Education No. 832/N-ESF-CORECODE/2010/0.

a borderland territory whose historical development was substantially influenced by various cultural traditions. Over the centuries it frequently changed hands between competing local rulers. Due to these long-term transformations, today various national communities perceive Silesia in different ways, as do even the inhabitants of its different parts. Germans view Silesia first and foremost as a territory situated in the middle part of the Odra region with its capital in Wrocław (Lower Silesia), Poles associate it with the territory of the upper part of the Odra region (Upper Silesia) and Czechs link it with the so-called Opava Silesia located within the current borders of the Czech Republic.[3] Lastly, present-day inhabitants of Silesia themselves express a range of views on their regional affiliation, often identifying Silesia with only one of the current administrative units of Poland.[4] The activity of socio-political movements declaring support for the autonomy of Silesia (Silesian Autonomy Movement) and demanding minority status for Silesians should also be highlighted.[5] This conglomeration of various forms of self-identification is further complemented by attempts to establish the so-called euro-regions that would include parts of Silesia.[6]

Historical tradition places the territory called Silesia in the upper and lower sections of the Odra valley (hereafter, when speaking of the period when this territory was not yet identified as part of the region now referred to as Silesia, I will use the name 'the Odra region').[7] From the 10th century onwards, it was frequently a source of conflict between the rivalling local dynasties which later gave rise to the states of Bohemia and Poland. Naturally, these territorial feuds did not take place without the participation of the Holy Roman Empire and its magnatial clans. The shaping impact of the collision of different cultural traditions further intensified within the Silesian community between the 13th and 14th centuries together with a great influx of German settlers. Complex and intertwined political, ethnic and cultural transformations led to the dominant Polish-speaking culture of that time being replaced by a German one. From the second half of the 12th century Silesia was divided into a number of administrative units and inhabited by a multi-ethnic community, whose economic interests were diversified and whose history was strongly influenced by particular aspects of the local political history. The obvious

[3] Krzysztof Nowak, *Pojęcia Śląsk i Śląskość na pograniczu polsko-czeskim (obszar byłego Śląska austriackiego*), [in:] *Granice i pogranicza. Historia codzienności i doświadczeń*, ed. Marzena Liedke, vol. 1, Białystok 1999, pp. 245–255.

[4] Stephanie Zloch, *Polens neue Regionen auf dem Weg in die Europäische Union. Die Beitrittsvorbereitungen auf dem Gebiet der Regional- und Strukturpolitik*, 'Osteuropa', 50 (2000), issue 4, pp. 367–381 (refers to the voivodeship of Silesia introduced in 1999, which includes the so-called Upper Silesia).

[5] Kazimiera Wódz, *The Silesian Case. Silesian Identity in a Region of the Polish State*, [in:] *Regional Identity & Diversity in Europe. Experience in Wales, Silesia and Flanders*, David M. Smith, ed. Enid Wistrich, London 2007, pp. 64–101.

[6] Hans-Åke Persson, *Viadrina to the Oder-Neisse Line - Historical Evolution and the Prospects of Regional Cooperation*, [in:] *Regions in Central Europe. The legacy of history*, ed. Sven Tägil, London 1999, pp. 211–257.

[7] For more information on the geographic characteristics of Silesia see the article by Gerard Kosmala, also available in this volume.

questions that come to mind at this point involve how and for what purpose one should compare the history of such a unique community with that of other regions of Europe?

The question of developing a methodological framework for a comparative analysis of the history of regions selected for the project was discussed by members of project research teams during meetings in Morbach and Tallinn (2010). Drawing on the concept of the region – as developed on the basis of humanistic geography – and on the views of Michael Keating and Aansi Passi, a decision was made to approach regions predominantly from the perspective of the communities of their inhabitants and these communities' relations to particular territories. Changes in a region's borders are determined not only by geographic conditions, but most importantly by economic and cultural activity, as well as by shared administrative systems and historic traditions.[8] The size of a community, as well as the geographic range of the region influenced by the cementing forces found in links of social identification, evolve over time.[9] For the purposes of this project, several spheres have been designated as crucial for the functioning of socio-historical phenomenon. Their isolation in the course of research on individual regions is intended to facilitate comparison of results obtained by the project teams. The following spheres are those to be examined: activity of the administrative apparatus; economic factors; cultural/regional identity of the community studied; the role of social groups within the community; issues of ethnicity. The study of all the regions selected for the project focuses on exploring all the aforementioned spheres in what are termed regional formative periods, including the pre-formative period (until the years 1517–1525), the period between 1525 and 1648, and the period from the mid-17th century to the Napoleonic Wars.

In order to make it possible for researchers in the *Cuius regio* project to compare their results in a wider European context, all interested parties need access to the latest findings and analytical results relating to the regions under study. As far as the history of Silesia is concerned, this is to be facilitated by a series of publications beginning with this volume. The periodical classification of research on the history of Silesia is slightly different from that adopted for the project as a whole, due to the specific character of the history of this particular region. The region's initial formative period is dated between approximately 1163 and 1526. The medieval period of the history of Silesia, as outlined by these dates, closes with the establishment of the Habsburgs as the ruling dynasty of Bohemia. The period of Habsburg sovereignty over Silesia sets the chronological limits of the second stage of research, that is the years 1526–1740. Phenomena

[8] The issue is presented on the basis of examples of transformations of contemporary administrative structures and the matter of the growing importance of the regional dimension in relation to the structure of modern nation-states by Michael Keating, *The invention of regions: political restructuring and territorial government in Western Europe*, 'Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy', 15 (1997), pp. 383–398; idem, *The New Regionalism in Western Europe. Territorial Restructuring and Political Change*, Aldershot 1998.

[9] See Aansi Paasi, *The resurgence of the 'region' and 'regional identity'. Theoretical perspectives and empirical observations on regional dynamics in Europe*, 'Review of International Studies', 35 (2009), pp. 121–146.

exerting a crucial impact on the cohesion of the Silesian community from this period did not, however, decrease in significance until 1811. Therefore, some of the considerations contained in the second volume will in fact extend to this date. However, the bulk of the research on the community of the Odra region during Prussian rule will be discussed in the third volume of the series, devoted to the history of the Silesian community divided between the Kingdom of Prussia (later the German Empire) and the Kingdom of Bohemia (later the Austro-Hungarian Empire, 1740–1918). A separate volume will cover the period between 1919 and 1945, that is the times of Silesia's division between Czechoslovakia (later the Czech Republic), Germany and Poland and the period encompassing World War II. The series will be concluded with a discussion of Silesian history in the period from 1945 to ca. 2010.

Somewhat less attention will be devoted to the last of those periods than the remaining ones for two reasons. Firstly, the chronological range of the entire project ends with the close of the 18th century. Secondly, the character of historical phenomena observed after 1945 in the Odra region is unique when compared to those witnessed before the end of World War II. What had taken place before was in fact part of an undisturbed historical continuum during which a population evolved whose culture, while undergoing constant, dynamic change, maintained continuity of its original traditions in its natural space, the Odra region. The replacement of this German-speaking Silesian community with settlers displaced from central Poland, then territories under occupation by the Soviet Union, inaugurated a difficult period involving the formation of a new Silesian identity. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that following the year 1945 the chance for building a unified Silesian identity was simply thwarted. Instead, Silesian identity was dismembered: split between Lower and Upper Silesia, associated with vaguely defined areas of the Land of Lubusz (Ziemia Lubuska) and Opole Silesia (Śląsk Opolski), along with Opava Silesia (Śląsk Opawski). Attempts are also presently being made to promote a German image of Silesia in the Silesian-Lusatian borderland. These phenomena deserve more in-depth study in the future in the context of results generated by research on the relatively stable population of the Odra region in the period prior to 1945.

In line with the project's objectives, authors of articles presented in this volume have focused their attention on phenomena related to the aforementioned thematic areas which may have played a pivotal role in either strengthening or loosening the bonds within the community of inhabitants of the Upper and Middle Odra Valley. The specific course of history resulting in the territory of the Odra region's incorporation – while retaining extensive autonomy – into the Crown of Bohemia, gave rise to a widespread conviction about the region's administrative and cultural unity which allegedly existed from as early as the second half of the 10th century, at the very outset of the monarchy of the Piasts and the Přemyslids. We now regard this vision as anachronistic. In line with the project's main objective, we think of a region as a dynamic phenomenon whose principal feature is a long-term and conscious process of the preservation of bonds within the community

inhabiting a certain geographical territory. That is why the researchers, having abandoned the method of retrogression, aimed to present in their analyses the factors that could have lead to the development of regional links in the Odra region between the 10th and 15th centuries. What must be emphasized here is that they by no means predetermined that the very emergence of these bonds led to irreversible changes in the structure of the region, which took place independently of the changes that occurred in its surroundings and within the regional community. The attempt to isolate phenomena leading to both integration and disintegration of Silesian society is not only a search for the answer to the question of the exact moment and conditions that facilitated the formation of this type of community. The primary goal is to determine the factors that led to its disintegration and subsequent re-establishment, for there are many arguments indicating that the history of the local community in the Odra region has been – and continues to be - the product of a dynamic process whose course was not determined solely by the factor of its constant existence within the limits demarcated by the 16th-century Kingdom of Bohemia.

The research on the region of Silesia was coordinated by Lucyna Harc, Przemysław Wiszewski and Rościsław Żerelik. Work on each of the aforementioned periods was performed by excellent specialists, and the efforts of each team were coordinated by a specialist in research on a given period of Silesian history and a member of the grant team. The first team was led by Mateusz Goliński and Przemysław Wiszewski. The group of specialists included geographers, historians and historians of art from Katowice (Gerard Kosmala), Wrocław (Romuald Kaczmarek, Wojciech Mrozowicz, Stanisław Rosik, P. Wiszewski) and Warsaw (Marcin Pauk, Ewa Wółkiewicz, Grzegorz Myśliwski). We are hopeful that the fruits of their work and the collection of articles covering subsequent periods of Silesian history will inspire a discussion in the academic community on a new dimension of the social history of Silesia, on issues connected with the development of Europe's regions and on universal mechanisms present in the formation of regional social cohesion.

An outline of the medieval history of Silesia (ca. 950–1526)[10]

There is much discord between historians as to when and by whom state authority was first established in the Odra region. Some scholars advocate the view that already in the first half of the 10th century the rulers of Great Moravia exercised a degree of control over the lands. The majority of scholars, however, argue that the dukes of the Czech

[10] For a detailed list of literature on the discussed issues see chapters below. Sources on general history of medieval Silesia: *Geschichte Schlesiens*, vol. 1: *Von der Urzeit bis zum Jahre 1526*, ed Ludwig Petry, St. Michel 1983, 4th edition. Since this is a re-edition of a work produced prior to the World War II, see also later works on the subject: Wienfried Irgang, *Quellen und Literatur zur mittelalterlichen Geschichte Schlesiens in Auswahl*, [in:] *Geschichte Schlesiens,* vol. 1: *Von der Urzeit bis zum Jahre 1526*, pp. 480–510. The latest bibliography on the history of Silesia prepared in cooperation with Herder-Institut in Marburg, Slezské Zemské Muzeum in Opava and Wrocław University is available online at: http://www.wroclaw-uw.sowwwa.pl/sowacgi.php?&lang=en_GB (accessed on 26th February, 2013).

Přemyslid dynasty, especially Boleslaus I the Cruel of Bohemia (915–967) and Boleslaus II the Pious of Bohemia (967–999), were the first sovereigns of the Odra region. Mieszko I (d. 992), the first historic ruler of the Piast dynasty or his son, Boleslaus I the Brave (992–1025), annexed the territories in the 10th century.[11] Boleslaus I the Brave cemented the incorporation of the Odra region into his realm in AD 1000 with the establishment of the Bishopric in Wrocław as one of the dioceses of the Archdiocese in Gniezno, which at the time extended to all the lands controlled by the Polish duke. The Přemyslids, however, did not accept that they had lost control over Wrocław. Taking advantage of the crisis that affected the Piast realm following the death of Mieszko II (1025–1034), Duke Břetislaus I reclaimed the Odra region after invading Poland in 1038. Following his death, the province was again annexed in 1050 by the son of Mieszko II, Casimir I the Restorer (1034–1058). However, as Bohemia and all its neighbouring lands were at the time the feudal property of the Holy Roman Emperor Henry III, Casimir was unable to launch his military campaign without Henry's permission. Henry III accepted Casimir's rule over Silesia in 1054 on the condition that he and all his heirs pay tribute for the land to the sovereigns of Bohemia. The issue of tribute payments ignited the tinderbox of conflict between the Dukes of Bohemia and Poland. The first one to refuse to fulfil his tribute obligation was Boleslaus II the Bold (1054–1079), but the practice was reinstated by Ladislaus Herman (1079–1102). His son, Boleslaus III the Wrymouth (1099–1138), also refused to do so, and from then on the issue was a recurrent motif in the political game between the rulers of both dynasties.

According to the current state of our knowledge, Boleslaus III the Wrymouth was the first Piast to rule the province of Silesia while his father was still alive. Following Wrymouth's death in 1138, his realm was divided between his sons, the oldest of whom, Ladislaus II, was to rule Silesia and Lesser Poland and, due to his senior status, played the role of the Piast dynasty leader. Nonetheless, he was soon accused by his younger brothers, Boleslaus IV the Curly and Mieszko III the Old of attempting to rule in an autocratic fashion. As a result of a civil war that broke out between the Piast brothers, Ladislaus II the Exile was banished in 1146 from Poland. From this moment on Silesia was ruled by Boleslaus IV, who was forced in 1163 by Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa to transfer his power over the Odra region to the sons of Ladislaus II. The middle part of the Odra region with the centrally-situated fortress of Wrocław went into the hands of the oldest son of Ladislaus II – Boleslaus I the Tall (1163–1201). The southern part of the region, in turn, was allotted to his younger brother, Mieszko the Tanglefoot. Not much later, the third of the brothers – Conrad Spindleshanks – annexed the lands situated in the northern edge of Silesia, together with their capital of Głogów. As a result of the subsequent series of battles, the son of Boleslaus I the Tall, Jaroslaus, who held the office of

[11] Sławomir Moździoch, *Schlesien im 10. Jahrhundert*, [in:] *Boleslav II. Der tschechische Staat um das Jahr 1000. Internationales Symposium, Praha 9. - 10. Februar 1999*, ed. Petr Sommer, Prague 2001 (=Colloquia Mediaevalia Pragensia, vol. 2), pp. 417–440.

the Bishop of Wrocław, claimed power over the lands (including the major fortress of Opole) sitting between those of his father and those of his uncle Mieszko, in the south. By the second half of the 12th century the Odra region had thus been divided politically and territorially into three parts: the northern part including Głogów, the middle part with Wrocław as its main city, and the southern part with Racibórz. Simultaneously, the name Silesia started to be used in reference to the lands formerly controlled by Boleslaus the Tall, i.e. the northern and middle Odra region encompassing Głogów, Legnica and Wrocław.

The 13th century can be described as a period of extensive cultural, civilizational and economic transformations of the Odra region's community, and from the very outset it was marked by the intensive efforts of local dukes to enrich the local community with colonists from the lands of the Holy Roman Empire and the Romance countries. This policy thoroughly transformed the legal structure of rural communities, making them resemble communities of the Holy Roman Empire. At the time, Silesia saw the foundation of the first towns modelled after their western counterparts, whose citizens were granted special legal privileges based on the laws of Magdeburg. By the mid-13th century numerous German knights were introduced to Silesian ducal courts. Together with the community of settlers composed of burghers and villagers, they developed a new German-speaking Silesian culture that soon began to dominate that of the Polish speakers.

In spite of these changes, the Piast rulers of the lands of the Odra region's upper and middle segments made numerous attempts to regain power over all of Poland throughout the entire 13th century. The one who came closest to reaching this goal was Henry I the Bearded (t. 1201–1238) with his son Henry II the Pious (t. 1238–1241), who ruled the entire Odra region, Lesser Poland and half of Greater Poland, including Poznań. The Mongol invasion of 1241 and the death of Henry II the Pious in the battle of Legnica put an end to the hegemony of the Silesian Piasts in Poland. The rule of the sons of Henry II the Pious was from then on restricted to the territory of Silesia proper, with capitals in Głogów, Legnica and Wrocław. The ultimate attempt to restore dominance over the remaining Polish rulers of the Piast dynasty was undertaken by Duke Henry IV the Righteous of Wrocław in the 1280s. He managed to gain control over Cracow in 1290, but his triumph was soon thwarted by his death. His quest was continued by Duke Henry I (III) of Głogów. He seized power of Greater Poland but, unfortunately, his dreams of claiming the royal crown were never fulfilled. He was forced to accept the royal dignity of the King Wenceslaus II of Bohemia and Poland and his son Wenceslaus III. Following the death of Wenceslaus III (1306), it was Ladislaus the Elbow-high – the ruler of Kuyavia – who sought power over Lesser and Greater Poland. After Henry I (III) of Głogów died in 1309, his sons lost control over Greater Poland. In the 14th century the lands reigned over by members of various lines of the dynasty of the Piasts of Silesia were divided between their numerous heirs. As a result, the Odra region saw the greatest

political fragmentation in its history; at its peak more than thirty dukes were in power at the same time.

Weak and conflict-prone dukes were unwilling to acknowledge the sovereignty of Ladislaus the Elbow-high, who in 1320 proclaimed himself King of Poland. Having accepted the military and political dominance of the King of Bohemia, John of Luxembourg, between 1327 and 1339 the majority of the dukes of the Odra region recognized his suzerainty by paying him feudal homage. The heirless Duke Henry VI the Good of Wrocław bequeathed his duchy to King John, who came into possession of the land in 1335. Earlier, following the abdication of the Piast ruler Boleslaus III the Generous in 1311, King John awarded the Duchy of Opava – as its feudal lord – to Nicholas in 1318, who came from a collateral line of the Přemyslid dynasty. Nicholas was also granted power over Racibórz following the death of Leszek in 1336. Half a century later, after the death of Bolko II the Small (1368) and his wife Agnes (1392), kings of Bohemia became direct sovereigns of the Duchy of Świdnica-Jawor. As a result of these circumstances the Odra region became part of a new political system, which resulted in the severing of ties between Silesians and the Polish political community. The new connection with the Crown of Bohemia assumed principle significance. Even the independent dukes of Silesia, Opole, Racibórz and Cieszyn became formal subjects of the Bohemian ruler, who took direct control over the region's capital of Wrocław and the Bohemian-Silesian borderland, thereby securing himself the potential to launch immediate military interventions in the region. Despite the obvious political dominance of the Kings of Bohemia over the dukes of the Odra region, the latter group, together with the states of hereditary royal duchies, Świdnica and Wrocław, retained extensive autonomy within the borders of their realms. This was manifested in the fact that in the 14th century there was no royal office whose competences would extend to the entire Odra region.

This situation changed only in the 15th century. Following the Hussite rebellion against Sigismund of Luxembourg, the rightful King of Bohemia, the duchies of Silesia supported their sovereign by establishing regional alliances. As a result, Silesian armies participated in military invasions of Bohemia, and Silesia became the target of retaliatory Hussite campaigns. At the same time, in the course of warfare with the common enemy, the dukes of the upper Odra region were for the first time regarded as the rulers of Silesia. This title had formerly been reserved only for the heirs of Boleslaus I the Tall. The conclusion of the Hussite Wars and assumption of power over Bohemia by Ladislaus of the Habsburg dynasty did not improve the dire situation of Silesia's inhabitants. The majority of elites did not acknowledge the rule of George of Poděbrady, the regent appointed by Ladislaus. Following Ladislaus' sudden death in 1457, George was accused of poisoning the king and as a result he – being elected by the Czechs – was denied acceptance as the sovereign of Silesia. This sparked a long period of military conflicts between the members of a Silesian coalition headed by the town of Wrocław with George,

who was considered a heretic. The Silesians openly favoured Mathias Corvinus, who managed with the support of the pope to annex Silesia in 1464 and crowned himself King of Bohemia in 1469. The streak of warfare was not broken even by the death of George in 1471, for his crown as well as the fight against Mathias Corvinus was taken over by Ladislaus Jagiellon. As a result of this prolonged feud, Silesia was invaded by the armies of Casimir Jagiellon, King of Poland, who supported his son Ladislaus, King of Bohemia. In 1474 a Polish army even besieged Wrocław, but to no avail. Mathias Corvinus kept control of Silesia until his death in 1490, and it was only then when power was transmitted to Ladislaus Jagiellon, and following his death in 1516, to the minor Louis. The death of the latter ruler in the battle of Mohács in August 1526 opened the way for the Habsburgs to claim power over the throne of Prague. On 24th October 1526, Ferdinand I Habsburg became the new King of Bohemia, and his coronation marked the initiation of this dynasty's 200 years of rule in the Odra region.

Throughout its medieval history, the community of the Odra region underwent a multitude of transformations in the course of which a number of alternative systems for regional organization of the territory came about. Eventually, in the second half of the 15th century the strong influence of political factors resulted in the creation of an administrative unit named Silesia, whose territory overlapped to a large extent with that of the 'historical region of Silesia'. However, this did not imply the formation of a coherent local community. The evolution of both individual members' sense of identification with the community and of administrative, economic and cultural aspects in the context of the formation process of the local community constitute the focus of the research presented in the chapters to follow.

Map 1. Political fragmentation of Silesia, c. 1350 (Dariusz Przybytek)

Gerard Kosmala
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Geographical characteristics of Silesia

Abstract:

This article contains basic geographical information about Silesia, useful as a starting point for further historical analysis. Silesia is a region of central Europe located within the borders of several nations. At different times in its history it has been part of Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany and Poland. The rough outline of the relief of Silesia was formed in the Paleozoic Era, finally reaching its ultimate form in the Cenozoic Era. The same holds true for both the Sudetes as well as the entire tectonic foreland, which was shaped by a glacier. Silesian land has always been rich in mineral resources such as building rocks, coal and copper, although only few of these can be found in abundance. The terrain's shape results from the general structure of the hydrographical network which, with the exception of the eastern frontiers, is symmetrical, with the Odra river, flowing from the south-east to the north-west, as the axis of symmetry. Reservoirs have been built along many rivers for both energy-related and retention purposes. Due to the total absence of lakes, these reservoirs are the largest bodies of water in Silesia.

The temperate, transitory climate with an annual average rainfall of 600–700 mm and average annual temperature of 8 °C results in conditions which are favourable for vegetation. Considering the abundance of fertile land one can easily understand why the agricultural scenery dominates the landscape. This, along with the development of industry at the base of the Sudetes and in the south-eastern part of Upper Silesia, is the reason for the relatively small amount of woodland areas. Silesia is an area which has been deeply transformed by human activity. The dominant landscape is culturally harmonious, with the exception of industrial districts, which often are the sight of more long-lasting changes that are often irreversible.

Keywords:

Silesia, geography, landscape, region, conditions

Silesia, as a defined territory, can be analyzed on many levels: historical, geographical, political, administrative and cultural. Despite the fact that this essay focuses primarily on the geographical characteristics of Silesia, in my view it is simply impossible to disregard its other features. When discussing as broad a topic as the development of a region, it is by definition necessary to take into account the complexity and multidimensional character of the issue while focusing on a particular question. The interrelationships between geography and history are, above all, natural and understandable.

Geography is history in space; likewise history is geography in time. Such statements may seem to be simply truisms. However, it is still commonly believed that there is no (or no need for) interaction between those two fields: geographers, on the one hand, concentrate on the here and now, with no attention to historical conditionings whatsoever,

while historians, on the other, fail to consider the vital spatial conditioning of historical processes.[1] Unfortunately, this erratic approach produces distorted results.

By making the aforementioned remarks I wish to explain and to some extent justify my approach to the matter: in assessing the geographical characteristics of Silesia one should not limit oneself only to the sphere of (physical) geography. For a comprehensive presentation of Silesia, it is necessary to show a wider context, including sometimes the background (historical, for instance) of the discussed phenomena and processes.

Throughout its history, Silesia has been the subject of numerous historical and geographical studies; however, these have generally focused only on particular fragments of its territory. Considering that the region, being located in the very heart of Europe, has been the scene of a vast number of historical events, there are surprisingly few geographic monographs devoted to the entire region (this includes cartographic studies also). This deficiency becomes even more striking when we notice a rapid increase in the number of scholarly publications in this part of Europe after 1989. Why are there no geographic syntheses of the whole of Silesia? One objective (to some extent) reason to explain this situation is naturally the issue of the existing political boundaries, but there are certainly many others.

Taking into account only the publishing markets and academic communities of countries which are most interested in Silesia, the aforementioned deficiency of geographical syntheses proves to be most severe in the case of the publishing markets of Poland and the Czech Republic. This is perhaps caused by the general research approaches that are typically used: the German approach is characterized by treating Silesia as a region (one whole country or land), while the Polish and Czech ones are often focused on Silesian political/administrative units,[2] especially voivodeships. In Poland, after the period of domination of the policy of 'Silesia's Return to the Motherland', as reflected in a vast number of publications,[3] geographers ceased to view the region of Silesia as a potential subject of study.[4]

[1] A good illustration of this is the fact that such a major publication as *Historia Śląska*, ed. Marek Czapliński, Wrocław 2002, contains not a single map.

[2] A similar stance was presented by K. Heffner at a conference concerning the deficiency of research on Silesia, cf. Krystian Heffner, *Deficyty badań śląskoznawczych w zakresie geografii społeczno-ekonomicznej* [in:] *Deficyty badań śląskoznawczych*, eds. Marek S. Szczepański, Tomasz Nawrocki, Andrzej Niesporek, Katowice 2010, p. 114.

[3] Among the related monographic publications, albeit also referring only to the Polish part of Silesia, at that time the following were published: Maria Suboczowa, Antoni Wrzosek, *Śląsk: obraz geograficzno-gospodarczy*, Katowice 1948 and two volumes of the series *Ziemie Staropolskie*, issued at eleven-year intervals by Instytut Zachodni w Poznaniu – *Dolny Śląsk* in 1948 and *Górny Śląsk* in 1959.

[4] May we view this as yet another argument for the fact that, despite the aforementioned political issue, Silesia is still (perhaps subconsciously) not regarded as a 'Polish region'? However, discussion on this matter takes place in the peripheries of the academic world, and these questions are not aptly examined by researchers. From a geopolitical perspective, too, this is a fact worth analyzing.

Location of Silesia

The meaning of the term Silesia is ambiguous. Depending on the chosen perspective – whether geographical, historical, cultural, political or administrative – it may be identified with different areas. In recent decades, confusion over this matter in Poland has increased, fanned, among other factors, by the 1999 administrative reform.[5] For the purpose of this article I have defined the territory of Silesia as stretching as far as the Kwisa river in the west and the Liswarta, Brynica, Przemsza and Vistula rivers in the east, the Baruth-Głogów glacial valley in the north and the Sudetes and the Silesian Beskids in the south (Map 2). I pass over the discussions of the detailed outline of the Silesian boundary in the region of the Moravian Gate in the north-west and the question of it belonging to the Kłodzko Region,[6] since in my mind these aspects are of no vital importance for the issue of geographical characteristics.

Silesia is a region located in central Europe, bordered by Greater Poland to the north, Lesser Poland to the east, Moravia and Bohemia to the south and Lusatia to the west. In the south-east it shares its border with Slovakia and in the north-west with Brandenburg.

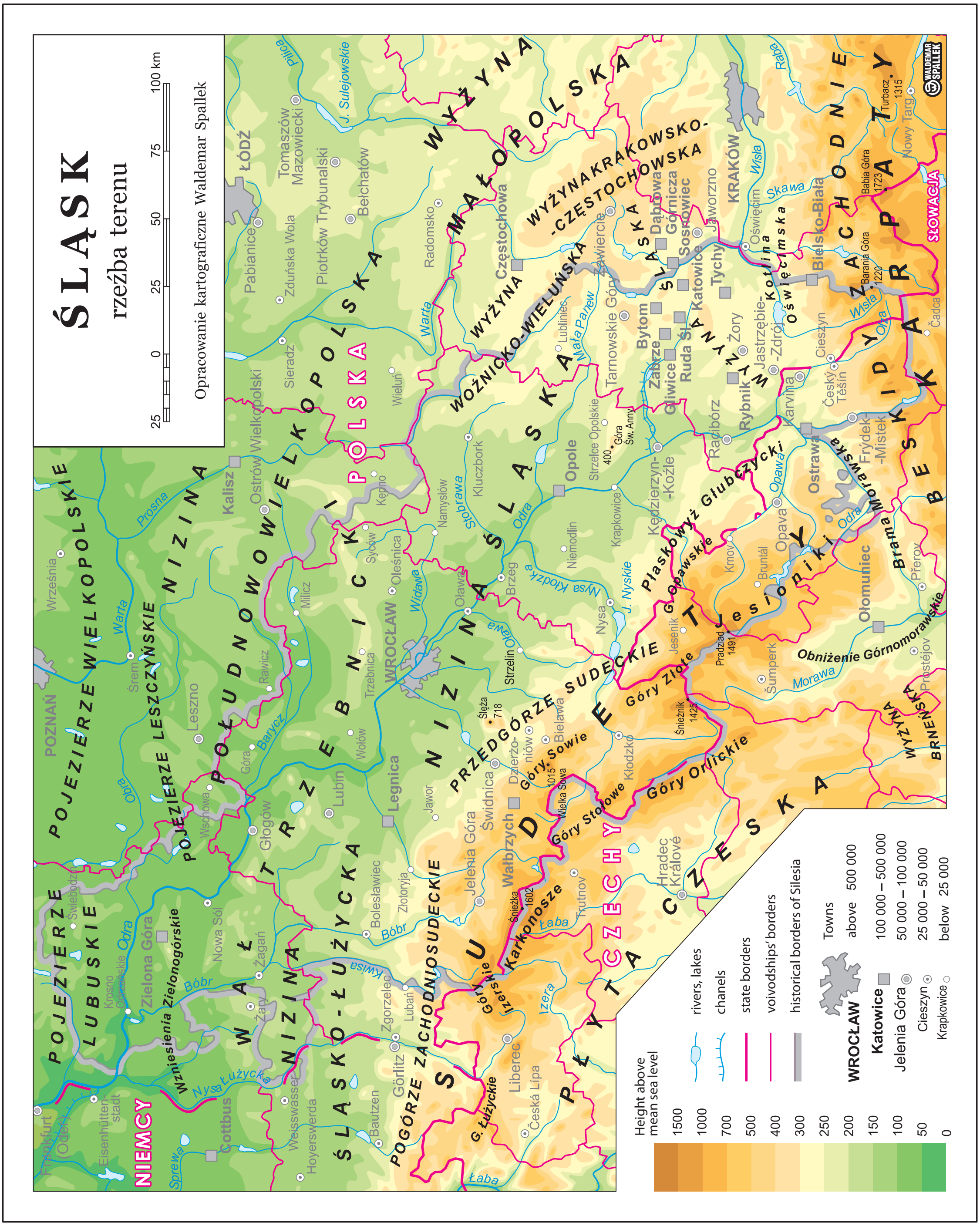
Silesia's geopolitical location is an area between Greater Poland, Lesser Poland, Hungary, Bohemia, Saxony and Brandenburg; those mostly small state organisms were often part of much larger ones and, therefore, the statement that Silesia lies between Poland, Germany and Bohemia has caught on in popular literature. Moreover, in literature and publications on natural sciences the location of Silesia is sometimes described in rather approximate terms: Silesia lies in the upper Odra river basin or, a very inaccurate description, Silesia is the land to the north of the Sudetes. These terms may also be helpful in establishing its location.

Today, historical Silesia belongs to Poland and the Czech Republic. Within the territory of these two countries the region has been divided into six administrative units of the highest rank: four in Poland (the voivodeships of Lower Silesia, Opole, Lubuskie and Silesia)[7] and two in the Czech Republic (the voivodeships of Moravia-Silesia and Olomouc).

[5] What I mean here are the boundaries of the newly formed voivodeships together with their names; especially controversial is the case of the Voivodeship of Silesia, cf. Gerard Kosmala, Waldemar Spallek, *Gdzie leży Śląsk?*, 'Geografia w Szkole', No. 4, 2007, p. 59. The role of the media in further enhancing the chaos is not to be underestimated, and a good example here is the frequent confusing of the Voivodeship of Silesia with the region of Silesia. Not only in this case can we talk about creating new meanings and new regions.

[6] Renata Pysiewicz-Jędrusik has marked out the core of Silesia and its peripheral areas, varying in the degree of peripherality (i.e. understood as a period of being included in Silesia), cf. *eadem, Granice Śląska,* Wrocław 1998. The discussions on the outline of the borders of Silesia focus exactly on those peripheral areas whose national status was repeatedly changing throughout history.

[7] Small parts of Silesia near Rychtal, Syców and Międzybórz are located in the voivodeship of Greater Poland.



Map 2. Region of Silesia - relief (G. Kosmala)

Landform features and landscape

The aforementioned Sudetes are part of Silesia's territory, but more importantly they are an essential component in determining and providing the richest variety of the region's landform. To put it in simple terms, the territory of Silesia resembles an amphitheatre stretching along the north-west and south-east axis, opening towards the north-west. Yet, though the Sudetes, the Silesian Beskids and the Silesian Highlands might be considered the border of this structure, the Trzebnica Embankment in the north is not a bordering unit, since the Milicz–Głogów Depression, neighbouring it to the north, is also part of Silesia. The lowest point is the Odra river valley near Krosno Odrzańskie (ca. 40 mamsl) and the highest point is Śnieżka (1602 mamsl).

Most of the area of Silesia – i.e. its central, western and northern parts – consists of lowlands with glacial landforms developed during the Mindel and Riss glacial stages. The monotony of the landscape is slightly diversified by moraine inclines and complexes of dunes. Plains are cut by wide river valleys, the widest of which – the Odra river valley – to some extent constitutes an axis of the region. Even though the rivers have a long history, we will not find many meandering riverbeds here – during the last millennium of human residence in Silesia its many rivers have been regulated and their beds have been straightened. A few remaining old river beds and fragments of former valleys show the previous course of rivers. In the northern and western part of the Silesian landscape, fragments of glacial valleys (Warsaw–Berlin, Baruth–Głogów, Wrocław–Magdeburg) can be display the pattern of the Pleistocene hydrographic network.

The Milicz–Głogów Depression consists of two valleys: the Milicz–Żmigród Valley and the Głogów glacial valley. These valleys are located along the axis of the Barycz river valley, which pours both its waters and the waters of its numerous tributaries into the Odra river to the east of Głogów. A significant part of the depression consists of marshy, wooded areas which, following land management treatment (reclamation, drainage etc.), have been brought under cultivation. The area also boasts the largest concentration of fish-breeding ponds in Poland.

The strip of post-glacial hills separating the Silesian Lowlands from the Milicz–Głogów Depression is called the Trzebnica Embankment. It comprises – looking from the west – the Żary Hills, the Dalków Hills, the Trzebnica Hills (whose highest peak is 258 mamsl), the Twardogóra Hills and the Ostrzeszów Hills.[8] Near Ścinawa the Odra flows northwards through the Trzebnica Embankment, separating the Dalków Hills from the Trzebnica Hills. The distribution of the Trzebnica Embankment is mostly latitudinal, though in the case of some of its units this can differ slightly. It is composed mostly of loose Quaternary deposits prone to erosion and denudation, hence the characteristic features of its structure are gentle slopes and ridges, a certain degree of 'fragmentation, but also,

[8] The highest parts of the Ostrzeszów Hills reach 280 mamsl, but they lie in the area of Greater Poland, i.e. Kobyla Góra (284 mamsl), Bałczyna (278 mamsl).

in some parts, considerable area slopes of up to ca. 12–15°, which are determined by the presence of loess deposits'.[9]

The north-west fringe of Silesia is an area with more diverse and slightly younger landforms connected with the Leszno phase of the Baltic glaciation. The hilly, moraine area of the Czerwieńsk Heights and the Łagów Lakelands is crossed by the Middle Odra Valley, at times up to 10 km wide. In the vicinity of Zielona Góra we find a latitudinal strip of elevations of a glacial tectonic origin (with an altitude of up to 221 mamsl) whose southern, insolated slopes provide ideal conditions for the cultivation of grape vines.

In the south, the Silesian Lowlands gently transform into the area of the Sudetes Foothills, which in turn are separated from the Sudetes by the distinctive Sudetic Marginal Fault along the line of Złoty Stok–Bielawa–Świebodzice–Złotoryja. The flat foothills rising southwards are diversified by hills, reaching, in the case of the highest, the Ślęża Massif, 718 mamsl (Photo. 1). Others, such as the Strzegom Hills or the Strzelin Hills (better known as the Niemcza–Strzelin Hills) as well as the Głubczyce Plateau, do not exceed 500 mamsl.

Photo. 1. View of the Ślęża Mount (G. Kosmala)

The southern border of Silesia is formed by the Sudetes, fault-block mountains formed in the Cenozoic era but with Palaeozoic features. Even though these are not very high mountains, their structure is very diverse and comprises mountain valleys and massifs, faults and depressions.

[9] Piotr Migoń, Mieczysław Sobik, Marek Kasprzak, *Dorzecze górnej Odry – środowisko fizycznogeograficzne*, [in:] *Wyjątkowe zdarzenia przyrodnicze na Dolnym Śląsku i ich skutki*, ed. Piotr Migoń, Wrocław 2010 (=Rozprawy Naukowe Instytutu Geografii i Rozwoju Regionalnego, vol. 14), p. 21.

The Sudetes are divided into Western Sudetes, Central Sudetes and Eastern Sudetes. The highest mountain range in the Western Sudetes is Karkonosze, which boasts the highest peak of the whole Sudetes–Śnieżka (1602 mamsl). To the west of the Sudetes are the Izera Mountains, consisting of four parallel ridges; the two northern ranges are separated by the Kwisa river valley, which, flowing through the Izera Foothills, marks the border between Silesia and Lusatia. In the east, the Karkonosze Mountains neighbour the Rudawy Janowickie, mountains of longitudinal orientation, while most of the Sudetes' ranges stretch along the north-west and south-east axes, i.e. according to the so-called 'Sudetes' direction'. Between the aforementioned ranges lies the valley of Jelenia Góra. This is closed in the north by the moderately low Kaczawskie Mountains (highest point of which is Skopiec Hill, 723 mamsl). The valley opens to the north-west with a depression, where the Bóbr river escapes through a gorge from the Sudetes to the Izera and Kaczawa Foothills.

The Central Sudetes are the lowest sub-range of the Sudetes. Their highest peak is Wielka Sowa (1015 mamsl) of the Owl Mountains. They are formed of the Precambrian gneiss, as are the Bystrzyckie and Orlickie Mountains. The geological structure of the Wałbrzyskie and Kamienne Mountains, as well as the Bardzkie Mountains, date back to the late Paleozoic. Lying at the very heart of the Central Sudetes, the Table Mountains (Broumovská vrchovina), composed of marl and severely cracked and weathered sandstone, form characteristic and rare landscapes, the most famous of which are the rock labyrinths, frequently used as scenery for adventure movies. The diverse landscape of the Central Sudetes is further varied by numerous depressions that separate the mountain ranges, formed in less resistant Carboniferous or Permian rocks (the Kamienna Góra valley, Marciszów valley and the Nowa Ruda Depression), as well as the Kłodzko Valley of tectonic origin.

To the east of the valley stretch the Eastern Sudetes, the highest ranges of which – the Śnieżnik Mountains (Králický Snéžnik) (Śnieżnik, 1425 mamsl) and the Jeseniky Mountains (Pradziad, 1491 mamsl) – form one of Silesia's most distinctive borders. The Bialskie Mountains (Czernica, 1082 mamsl) and the Golden Mountains (Rychlebské hory), constituting the eastern borderline of the Kłodzko Valley as well as the Opawskie Mountains (Zlatohorská vrchovina), are much lower; none of its peaks, except Czernica, exceeds 1000 m in absolute altitude.

The Sudetes are separated from the Carpathian Mountains by the Moravian Gate, a major communication route which for millennia was used for trading and other purposes. In its northern part, the Ostrava Valley, we find Ostrava, a large city which today belongs to both the territories of Silesia and Moravia. Ostrava was established by the Ostravice river; however, its current borders comprise an important hydrographic junction: both the Ostravice and Opava rivers flow into the Odra. In the east the Ostrava Valley connects with the Oświęcim Valley. This is where the Vistula river changes direction

to the east and flows along the wide and marshy valley. We find there numerous fish-breeding ponds whose produce were supplied to royal households as far back as the Middle Ages.

Between the Ostravice river in the west and the Biała river in the east stretch the Silesian Beskids,[10] forming the south-eastern borderline of Silesia. They are characterized by young landforms and heavy fragmentation of mostly longitudinal ridges. The range's highest point is the eastern ridge which peaks at Skrzyczny (1257 mamsl). From under the Barania Mountain (1220 mamsl) flows the Vistula, and the band of Czantoria Wielka and Stożek constitutes a watershed between the Odra and the Vistula rivers (and simultaneously marks the state border between Poland and the Czech Republic, which historically was a source of contention).

The eastern borderline of Silesia is marked by the Silesian Highlands. Its form resembles a hand with fingers spreading westwards. In the centre of this hand is the Katowice Upland (with the Upper Silesian Industrial Region), which is composed of rocks from the Carboniferous period, containing deposits of black coal. Its fingers are the cuestas (ridges) of Herby, Woźniki and Chełm, consisting mostly of resistant limestone, sandstone and conglomerates as well as the Rybnk Plateau, a part of the Upper Silesian Carboniferous structure. The highest peak of the Silesian Highlands is the St. Anna's Mount (400 mamsl), located furthest to the west in the ridge of Chełm, towering over the nearby

Photo. 2. Southwest view of the Mount St. Anna (G. Kosmala)

[10] On the Czech side, from the Jablunkov Pass and the Olza Valley westwards, we find the Moravian-Silesian Beskids (Moravskoslezské Beskydy).

plains (Photo. 2),[11] a Tertiary, eroded volcanic cone. The landscape of the Silesian Highlands is hilly, owing to its alternating humps and depressions; the landscape of the central part of the Upland has been transformed, or even ruined, by economic activity, settlement and transportation networks.

The layout of landforms made it difficult to penetrate Silesia from the southern side; the Sudetes were a distinct, though not absolute, barrier, as were the Beskids. The ridges of the Silesian Highlands or the Trzebnica Embankment were not so significant and they only stood out in terms of landscape. If we, however, consider the fact that both these units, together with the mountain areas and the borderland of Silesia and Lusatia, were covered by vast forest complexes, which, in addition – as in the case of the Barycz Valley – were marshy areas, then the central part of Silesia (the lowland), the area of original settlement, was surrounded by natural barriers, which to some extent fostered its development.[12]

The most important physical macro-regions of Silesia are: the Silesian Lowland (Nizina Śląska), the Silesian Upland (Wyżyna Śląska), the eastern, central and western Sudetes (Wschodnie, Środkowe i Zachodnie Sudety) and the Sudetian Foreland (Przedgórze Sudeckie) (see Map 2). A characteristic feature of Silesia is its belt-like structure of landscapes. Looking from the south we can see medium-sized mountains which transform into a strip of foothills, which in turn changes into to the largest area of plains and lowlands in the territory. Next, a narrow strip of elevations and depressions marks the northern borderline of Silesia. This simplified picture is to a large extent disrupted by the area of highlands on the eastern periphery of Silesia, and to some extent by the Moravian Gate, which separate the mountainous areas. This belt-like landscape structure is also visible in the layout of soils and vegetation potential. This is also illustrated in the formal division of Silesia into regions of physical geography,[13] introduced on the basis of such criteria as geological structure, landforms, climate and flora. Silesia comprises part of the physical geographical region of western Europe, a sub-region of Hercynian Europe and the Carpathian Mountains, the Prykarpattia and its inner valleys. Located within these subregions, Silesia is part of four provinces and seven sub-provinces.

[11] The Sanctuary of St. Anna Samorzecia, visible on the top of the mountain, is the most important pilgrimage and spiritual centre of the Upper Silesia.

[12] Do the natural borders matter in the context of a thousand-year history of Silesia? This problem still requires examination. This is not a question of geographical determinism, but rather of using the concept of natural borders in the politics of countries. The concept of natural borders and the natural development of national territories has been addressed by i.a.: Norman J.G. Pounds, *Political geography*, New York 1972; *idem*, *France and 'les limites naturelles' from the XVIIth to the XXth Centuries*, 'Annals of the Association of American Geographers', vol. 44, No. 1, 1954, pp. 51–62. Various research has shown that political borders formed on the basis of elements of landscape morphology (i.e. rivers, mountain ridges) are more durable the ones outlined without regard to such conditionings, cf: Gerard Kosmala, *Stabilność granic politycznych w Europie Środkowej i Wschodniej w XX wieku*, 'Czasopismo Geograficzne', 70 (1999), vol. 1, p. 62.

[13] A most frequently used division was presented in: Jerzy Kondracki, *Geografia fizyczna Polski*, Warszawa 1988, pp. 240 and following.

Geology and natural resources

The diversity of landforms in Silesia is a consequence of its geological structure, which in the case of Silesia is highly complex. Several structural units of the geological bed of Silesia can be distinguished. The Sudetes were formed in the Paleozoic era as a result of the Caledonian (the Kaczawskie Mountains) and Hercynian orogenies. In the Carboniferous period granite intrusions of the Karkonosze Mountains took place there, as well as at Strzelin and Strzegom. The fault-block character of the Sudetes is the result of tectonic movements in the Tertiary period. Particular tectonic blocks, separated by fault lines, were uplifted to various points and then underwent denudation processes. Intrusions of basalt rocks near Lubań, Złotoryja, Jawor, Niemcza and – furthest to the east – St. Anna's Mount occurred during the Tertiary period.

To the north, the Sudetes are bordered by the Fore-Sudetic Monocline. The deeply deposited rocks of the Precambrian bed are covered with a thick layer of Paleozoic rocks, covered in loose Cenozoic deposits.

The Silesia–Cracow Monocline, which was formed in the Carboniferous period, is filled with deposits from the earlier Paleozoic to the Jurassic period and covered with Quaternary deposits. The smallest part of the Silesian bed is the youngest unit – the Carpathian Mountains – which, together with the Fore-Carpathian Depression, was formed in the mid-Tertiary period. The uplift of the Carpathian Mountains and the simultaneous depression of the Sudetic block gave the final shape to the attitudinal proportions of Silesia, with a terrain generally sloping to the north-west.

This complex geological structure has resulted in a diversity of mineral resources both discovered and exploited in Silesia, but whose deposits were, unfortunately, in many cases rather scarce.

More or less correctly, Silesia is associated with black coal; it has been the most important Silesian energetic resource dating back to at least the 19th century. It can be found in two basins: the Lower Silesian (near Wałbrzych and Nowa Ruda) and Upper Silesian basins (in the Ostrava–Tarnowskie Góry–Mysłowice triangle).[14] Lower Silesian coal has been extracted since the 14th century and the peak of its mining was in the mid-19th century. Later, the status of the leading coal mining area was taken by the Upper Silesian basin, whose exploitation began as late as the mid-18th century. Today, coal mining has been abandoned in Lower Silesia, and in Upper Silesia it has been considerably reduced.

Miocene seams of lignite can be found near Legnica and Ścinawa, and while rather small deposits lie in many other locations (near Zielona Góra, Głogów, Żagań

[14] Although the basin also stretches further to the east – to Dąbrowa Górnicza and Sosnowiec – the requirements of the current study make us focus only on the Silesian part of the Upper Silesian basin.

and Ząbkowice Śląskie), they are not exploited for economic reasons. In the region of the so-called 'sack of Żytawa' (*worek żytawski*) and further on to the west, i.e. mostly in Lusatia,[15] the mining of lignite is performed on a large scale by means of an open-cut method, which brought about considerable socio-economic and landscape changes. In the northern borderland of Silesia, to the north of Syców and near Zielona Góra, the exploitation of natural gas deposits takes place.

From an economic perspective, copper ores are currently of greatest importance. These are mined in the Legnice-Głogów copper basin. The Permian cupriferous slates which are exploited there (Polkowice, Rudna) also contain other metals, including a considerable amount of silver. Moreover, cupriferous marls and slates are found in the region of Bolesławiec and Złotoryja. Copper mining had already existed – on a smaller scale – in the Middle Ages: copper deposits were exploited in the Sudetes, near Boguszów, in Złoty Stok, Miedzianka and Ciechanowice.

From the 14th century onwards silver was extracted in the mines located near Wałbrzych and Boguszów, Srebrna Góra and later near Złoty Stok, Zlaté Hory, Kamienna Góra, Świdnica and in the Izera Valley. Considerable amounts of silver were extracted, to some extent, during the exploitation of lead-zinc ores from the 12th century by the guild miners near Bytom and Tarnowskie Góry, and later, for some time, also in the Sudetes – in the Karkonosze Mountains, Boguszów or by the upper Kwisa and Bobr rivers (Gierczyn, Ciechanowice).

In the Middle Ages Silesia was famous for gold mining. Gold was extracted from the alluvial deposits in the valleys of the Izera, Kaczawa, Bóbr and Kamienna rivers, including through deep underground mining methods. In the Middle Ages the most famous extraction centres were in Złotoryja, the neighbouring parts of Lwówek Śląski and in the following centuries in Złoty Stok, Zlaté Hory, Jeżów Sudecki, some parts of Tarnowskie Góry and Złotniki Lubańskie. The fame and significance of Silesian gold are emphasized by the fact that on the map of central Europe from 1464 only two Silesian urban centres were marked: the capital city of Wrocław and Złotoryja – the hub of gold exploitation and trade.[16]

In the 17th century Silesia was the provider of steel to the European markets, at least on a regional scale. Production was based on local, not particularly impressive deposits of iron ores. They were mined near Kowary and also in the region of the Kaczawskie Mountains. Iron was present near Stronie Śląskie and Kudowa. Turf ores were also exploited, mostly in two locations: the Lower Silesian Forests and within the strip between Kluczbork and Żory in Upper Silesia.

[15] We can often come across classifications according to which the Bogatynia mines are viewed as Lower Silesian mines, which makes sense only when the term 'Lower Silesian' is used as a mental shortcut and refers to the 'Lower Silesian Voivodeship'.

[16] Cf: Julian Janczak, *Człowiek i przyroda*, Wrocław 1985, p. 58.

Arsenic ore deposits near Złoty Stok were of great value. In the 19th century Złoty Stok was the most important centre of arsenic production in the world.[17] The mining of tin ores in Gierczyn, cobalt in Przecznica or nickel in Szklary near Ząbkowice Śląskie was also of great importance. However, much more vital (and remains so today) was the mining of barite from the deposits in Jedlinka and Stanisławów as well as from the most important and largest mine – in Boguszów. Big resources of rock salt were found near Żory. However, of even greater importance were various types of building materials, whose resources in Silesia are quite abundant.

The most common resource from this category are sands and gravels (natural aggregates), generally of fluvio-glacial origin, but also earlier ones. Glass sands extracted, mostly, near Strzegom and Bolesławiec were used by glassworks in Szklarska Poręba, Lasówka, Wymiarki and Brenna. Various types of clay were in demand by dozens or even hundreds of Silesian brickyards. Clays, fire clays and loamy slates were also extracted which were necessary for the production of porcelain, stoneware and faience (Bolesławiec, Tułowice). For road-building materials (breakstone), gabbro and diabase were mined mainly on the fringe of the Owl Mountains. These rocks were also present near the Ślęża Mountain, Ząbkowice Śląskie and in the Kaczawskie Mountains. Basalt, utilized in road construction among other uses, can be found in the Sudetes and the Sudetes Foothills, and its main quarries were established in Gracze near Niemodlin, Złotoryja, Lutynia near Lądek Zdrój and in Piotrowice near Jawor. Granites were extracted in the quarries near Strzelin, Sobótka and Szklarska Poręba, whereas Silesian marble, well-known during in the feudal period, came from the neighbouring parts of Lubań and Gryfów Śląski. More important marble quarries were established near Wojcieszów Górny (the Kaczawskie Mountains), Przeworno (the Strzelin Hills), Kletno, Ołdrzychowice, Stronie Śląskie (Krowiarki) and Sławniowice near Nysa. Sandstone, whose resources are abundant, was extracted for millennia mostly in the quarries in the Table Mountains (Radków, Szczytna, Słupiec) and near Lwówek Śląski and Bolesławiec. Dolomite was mined near Rędziny (Rudawy Janowickie), while limestone was extracted between Bolesławiec and Złotoryja, but mainly in the terrain between Opole, Krapkowice and Strzelce Opolskie. Gypsum can be found near Niwnica, between Lwówek Śląski and Nowogrodziec, as well as near Kietrz and Rybnik, whereas marl beds are present in an area near Opole.

An important Silesian resource, both in an economic but also social sense, is mineral water. The first records on Silesian mineral water most likely date back to the 13th century, when they were used for therapeutic purposes in Cieplice.[18] Thanks to the mineral waters, a number of other Sudetes' localities transformed into health resorts (Szczawno, Lądek,

[17] Włodzimierz Koszarski, *Surowce mineralne Dolnego Śląska*, Warszawa 1963, p. 46.
[18] J. Janczak, *op. cit.*

Duszniki, Świeradów, Polanica, Kudowa, Jesenik, Jedlina etc.). In the 18th century the Beskid 'waters' (Ustroń) came into use, and the peak of the development of health resort tourism came in the 19th century. In Silesia this type of tourism is focused mainly on sorrel (e.g. in Kudowa, Duszniki, Polanica etc.) and sulphate waters (e.g. Cieplice, Lądek or Czerniawa).

Wood has always been a vital Silesian natural resource, obtained at the expense of vast forest areas, which only a thousand years before now covered almost the entire Silesian territory. Wood was used in the construction of buildings (both residential and industrial), the furniture industry, transport, for paper production, and most of all as an energy resource (for businesses, households, steam trains and recently power plants), but also for charcoal production.

Hydrography

The hydrographic network of the region of Silesia, excluding its mountainous areas, is of a relatively late, glacial and post-glacial origin. The key factors in its formation were the advent and withdrawal of the Scandinavian Ice Sheet. Waters from the melting ice sheet gathered at its front or flowed down, furrowing immense valleys. The ice-marginal valleys are latitudinal areas – the water escapes them in a westerly direction in accordance with the general inclination of the terrain, when the outflow to the south was blocked by the mountains and by the front of ice sheet to the north. Considerable fragments of ice-marginal valleys are utilized by contemporary rivers: the Warsaw–Berlin ice-marginal valley is utilized by the Odra; the Baruth–Głogów ice-marginal valley by the Barycz and Odra; and the Wrocław–Magdeburg ice-marginal valley by the Odra, Widawa and Kaczawa. In the mountains the layout of the river valleys depends on the resistance and structure of the rocks and on tectonics.

Silesia belongs to the catchment area of both the Baltic Sea (the Odra and the Vistula) and the North Sea (the Elbe – the patches of territory near Kudowa and Jakuszyce). Apart from a fragment of the south-east borderlands, the area of Silesia is located on the basin of the Odra. The springs of the Odra river are in the Oderskie Mountains in Moravia. The Odra flows through the Moravian Gate out onto the Silesian Lowlands and through them in accordance with the general inclination of the terrain – from south-east to north-west then, after crossing the strip of the moraine hills near Ścinawa, it lazily heads through the lowland and lake land areas towards the Szczecin Lagoon. The Odra is a regulated river, and along a considerably long section (Koźle–Brzeg Dolny) it has a drainage system. It is supplied by the waters of rivers flowing down from the Sudetes (left-bank inflows) and rivers which have their springs in the highlands and in the strip of moraines of the Trzebnica Embankment (right-bank inflows) (Table 1). In this context,

we can assert that the hydrographic network of Silesia is quite symmetrical in shape. The north-east fragment of the territory of Silesia belongs to the catchment area of the Odra through the river Warta.

The mountain rivers have a snow-rain regime, the lowland rivers have a snow regime, whereas the highland rivers have a rain-snow regime, which is also reflected in a characteristic periodic occurrence of low and high water levels or even freshets and floods. Low-water periods can be observed twice a year – in winter and in the period from the late summer to the beginning of autumn. Higher water levels, by contrast, are characteristic of spring thaw periods as well as of autumn falls with small evaporation. Moreover, intense rainfalls in the summer (most frequently at the turn of June and July) sometimes lead to inundations or floods (huge summer floods occurred in 1350, 1496, 1501, 1515, 1736, 1854, 1903, 1997[19] and 2010).

For economic reasons the river system of Silesia has been enriched by artificial waterways. One of the best-known is the Gliwice Canal,[20] connecting Gliwice and thus the entire territory of the Upper Silesian Industrial Region with the Koźle harbour on the Odra river. The canal was used for transporting the resources mined in the region of Upper Silesia. Moreover, the canal network of the Wrocław water node supplements the Odra waterway.

Silesia is basically devoid of lakes, which is characteristic of old glacial and even earlier landscapes. There are a few small lakes near Legnica (the Kunickie Lakeland)[21] and in the Karkonosze Mountains. The north-western part of the Łagów Lakeland is located within the boundaries of the areas of young glacial origin. During the last two centuries many water reservoirs have been built (Table 1), mostly for flood control and water storage purposes, but also for the purpose of entertainment or production (for energy production and to attract new settlers). There are plans to extend the number of reservoirs in Silesia; the most remarkable achievement of the last decade is the construction of the Odra flood prevention reservoir near Racibórz. This reservoir is supposed to provide adequate flood protection for the Odra neighbouring territories, so that the catastrophe of July 1997 would never again be repeated.

[19] Marek Kasprzak, *Wezbrania i powodzie na rzekach Dolnego Śląska* [in:] *Wyjątkowe zdarzenia przyrodnicze na Dolnym Śląsku i ich skutki*, ed. Piotr Migoń, Wrocław 2010 (=Rozprawy Naukowe Instytutu Geografii i Rozwoju Regionalnego, vol. 14), p. 81-140.

[20] The canal was opened in 1939; its predecessor was the Kłodnicki Canal.

[21] Wojciech Walczak consistently describes this lakeland as 'the lakeland near Legnica' cf: *idem, Nad Odrą*, Wrocław 1974, p. 60 and following. He notes, based on Homann's map, that only 200 years earlier there were at least several dozen lakes, and the lakeland stretched from Chojnów to the Odra river.

Table 1. The main rivers and reservoirs in the territory of Silesia

River	Length [km]	Reservoir (the year of construction)	Surface area [km²]
Odra*	854	Racibórz (planned)	-
Bóbr	272	Pilchowickie (1912) Bukówka (1988)	2.4 2.0
Nysa Kłodzka	182	Otmuchowskie (1933) Nyskie (1971) Topola (2003)	20.6 20.7 3.4
Barycz*	133		
Mała Panew	132	Turawskie (1939, 1948)	20.8
Kwisa*	127	Leśniańskie (1905) Złotnickie (1924)	1.4 1.2
Opawa	122		
Widawa	103		
Morawica*	97.7	Slezská Harta (1997)	8.7
Bystrzyca	95	Mietkowskie (1986) Lubachowskie (Bystrzyckie) (1914)	9.1 0.5
Oława	91.7		
Olza	86.2		
Kaczawa	83.9		
Ślęża	78.6		
Stobrawa	77.6		
Kłodnica	75.3	Dzierżno Duże (1964)	6.2
Strzegomka	74.7	Dobromierz (1986)	1.0
Osobłoga	65		
Ostrawica*	65	Vodni nadrž Šance (1969)	0.35
Ścinawka	62		
Szprotawa	57.5		
Biała Głuchołaska	54.9		
Nysa Szalona	51	Słup (1978)	4.9
Ruda	50.6	Rybnickie (1972)	4.6
Liswarta*	93		
Wisła*	1048	Goczałkowickie (1956)	32
Przemsza*	88		
Brynica*	55	Kozłowa Góra (1939)	5.5
		Żelazny Most (1977)	13.9 (water surface – 6.2)

* - a border river or river flowing through Silesia only at a certain distance.

Table made by the author on the basis of: *Mały Rocznik Statystyczny Polski 2011*, Warszawa 2011; *Przyroda Dolnego Śląska*, ed. Jerzy Fabiszewski, Wrocław 2005, *Wielka Encyklopedia* PWN, Warszawa 2004; http://cs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Odra (accessed 22.11.2011).

There are not many peat bogs left in Silesia. It is possible to distinguish their two main locations. In the Sudetes there are a few raised bogs, mostly ombrophilous ones (the Bystrzyckie Mountains, the Karkonosze Mountains, the Izera Mountains and the Table Mountains). In the region of the central Odra, from the Kunickie Lakeland to the north, several dozen lowland, rheophile bogs can be found.[22]

Swamps and wetlands have been dried in most cases and are now often used for farming purposes. Only a few of them have survived in the river valleys or in peripheral parts of Silesia, due to having been placed under protection. These swampy areas may have originated from the fish-breeding ponds, many of them set up as early as in the Middle Ages. The Milicz and Żmigród valleys by the Barycz river, as well as the valley of the Vistula river near Skoczów and Pszczyna, are two of the largest accumulated pond areas in Silesia. Single ponds can be found all over the territory, usually near monasteries and estates. An important role was played in this case by the Cistercians.[23]

All of this suggests that human interference in the hydrographic network of Silesia was immense. The rivers have been canalized and regulated, the Odra from Koźle is navigable, and a lot of work has been done protect the population against both excessive and insufficient water levels and to supply large population centres with drinking water and recreational facilities. The size and number of artificial fish-breeding ponds in relation to lakes also clearly shows the development and transformation of the natural and socio-economic landscape of Silesia. Not all of these changes are necessarily beneficial, which is illustrated by several catastrophic events – the canalization and regulation of the rivers (the so-called 'bank-concreting') was one of the main causes of the flood of July 1997.

Climate

Silesia, lying in the heart of central Europe, is located directly under the spot where different air masses mix together; we can, therefore, say that the climate of Silesia is transitional. These air masses are mostly comprised of north-eastern masses of sea and North Atlantic air, and masses of continental air from the east. The former masses are humid and cause drops in temperature in summer and thaws in winter; the latter are dry and cause hot temperatures in summer and severe frosts in winter. In summer the masses of tropical air from the south and south-east, being another cause of hot temperatures, are also important to a certain degree, but only when humidity is high. In winter the masses of Arctic air from the north are responsible for low temperatures and snow. Among the aforementioned masses of air the most important ones are the sea air masses. In the east, on the Silesian Highlands, the climate has, however, more continental features

[22] J. Kondracki, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

[23] One needs to acknowledge the accomplishments of the Cistercian monasteries of Lubiąż, Rudy, Henryków and Krzeszów in the areas of fish farming and land drainage systems.

than the areas between Wrocław and Zielona Góra. The dominating wind directions are west and north-west.

The local diversity of climate is influenced by the landform. The distinct orographic barrier of the Sudetes causes foehn winds: strong and dry, blowing from the mountains in spring, they make the snow cover melt rapidly, which may lead to inundations or local floods. Together, the mountains and slopes, being orographic barriers, increase the volume of rainfall on the windward slopes in comparison to the leeward slopes, which lie in a rain shadow. Therefore the Sudetes and the Beskids are the areas with the highest rainfall rates, reaching 1300 mm per year, whereas the average annual rate of rainfall for Silesia is ca. 600–700 mm.[24] The lowest levels of rainfall occur in the central part of the Silesian Lowlands and they reach, on average, ca. 550 mm.

The average annual air temperature is 8°C, (18°C in the hottest month and –2°C in the coldest month).[25] Winter usually lasts two months and the snow cover lingers from ca. 40 days on the strip of Legnica-Racibórz to 150 days in the mountains. There are about 100 days with ground frosts. Such data is not in any way unique, however – when we take all of its weather features into account, it transpires that Silesia enjoys a relatively long vegetative period, exceeding 220 days in the central part of the region on the strip of Raciborz-Zielona Góra, which is of great importance for the development of agriculture.

The aforementioned data is, unless otherwise stated, characteristic of the lowland and upland areas. In the mountains we can observe a typical altitudinal arrangement of the climate zones. We may differentiate five such zones; on average, the climate conditions change every 200 m and the highest level (over 1000 mamsl) relates only to the upper parts of a small number of mountain ridges. The climate there is the most severe: for instance the average annual temperature is little above 0°C. Generally, in the higher parts of the Sudetes and Beskids (i.e. over 600 mamsl) there is no summer and the vegetative period lasts less than 180 days.

In connection with the diversity of the climate features, different climate regions have also been identified. Depending on the regionalization of Silesia we can name

[24] The above data referring to Silesia (in the sense of a region we are discussing in our article) is approximate, as geographers generally do not carry out any research in the territories of historical regions. Even in the case of studies whose titles refer to a region, their scope turns out to be limited to the research of the territory of the voivodeship.

[25] Generally, Silesia is the warmest part of Poland and its Odra-neighbouring territories between Raciborz and Głogów are the warmest in Silesia. Besides this, we must take into account the UHI (urban heat island) effect, which, as in the case of Wrocław, causes temporary increases of temperature of ca. 1–2°C, depending on the season, cf. Mariusz Szymanowski, *Miejska wyspa ciepła we Wrocławiu*, Wrocław 2005 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislawiensis, No 2690, Studia Geograficzne, vol. 77), p. 188. Another fact is that the highest ever absolute temperature in Poland (40.2°C in 1921) was measured in Prószków, the peaks of the Izerskie and Karkonosze Mountains which are situated in the coldest and the most humid Polish locations.

between three and eight different regions.[26] To put it simply, for a general characterization of the region of Silesia one must take into account the climatic dissimilarity of the mountainous areas of the Sudetes and the Beskids, as well as the Silesian Highlands and lowland areas. These Silesian Lowlands that are the most convenient part of Silesia in terms of climate from both an economic and social perspective.

Soils, flora and fauna

A less distinctive but essential element of the environment is the soil – in previous centuries especially this was a key factor of economic development. Silesia, except for its mountainous areas, boasts diverse and relatively fertile soils whose potential has been exploited since the beginning of the region's history. Chernozem, formed on loess, has the greatest functional value and can be found mostly in the Głubczyce Plateau to the south of Wrocław and in the locality of the Trzebnica Hills. Slightly less fertile black soils and alluvial soils can be found near Wrocław and in river valleys. Brown soils and luvisols are present in the Sudetes Foothills and in the south of the lowlands of the Upper Silesia. Small patches of limestone soils (*rędziny*) can be found in the region of the hump of Chełm and on the Woźniki Upland.

More than half of the entire Silesian region is covered by less fertile soils, most of which are podzols and luvisols. Taking into consideration the central position of the Odra, they dominate the right-bank part of the region as well as in the west between Środa Śląska, Bolesławiec and Zielona Góra. In small local areas we can come across marshy soils (e.g. in the Barycz Valley) or – scattered in various spots – peat soils. In the mountainous areas we can find initial or weak podzolic soils of very small agricultural value, whereas in the Upper Silesian Industrial Region and in larger cities, such as Wrocław, Wałbrzych, Opole and Ostrava we find soils devastated by human activity (industrial soils), which are basically agriculturally useless, as well as soils which to a large extent have been adjusted to human needs (e.g. garden soils of the allotment garden areas).

The process of soil formation depends on many factors, the most important of which include bedrock type, the climate and hydrographic conditions. Soil constitutes the basis for the development of flora, but flora likewise influences soil's formation and development. Thus natural vegetation (and to some extent the lack of it) may be indicative of the type of soil. This is clearly observed in the example of Silesia and the distribution of its forests. Larger areas of forests have survived mainly in places where the soil conditions did not allow for intense land cultivation – a notable exception being the area of intense industrial development on the strip of Tarnowskie Góry-Ostrava, where mining

[26] For a comparison of different climate regionalizations see: J. Kondracki, *op. cit.*, pp. 101–103. Studies of the authors mentioned in this publication concern only the Polish part of Silesia, however these regions also stretched to the Czech part.

and various branches of industry, transport and human settlement have contributed to the thinning of woods.[27]

Larger forest complexes occur in the areas with podzolic and luvisolic soils, as well as initial soils (in the mountains). These include the Lower Silesian Forests and the forests near Zielona Góra and Krosno Odrzańskie in the western part of the region, the Stobrawskie and Lublinieckie Forests on the right bank of the Odra between Brzeg and Lubliniec and the (Sławięcicko-) Raciborskie Forests and the remains of the Pszczyna Forest (Puszcza Pszczyńska). Growing on the left bank of the Odra, the Forests of Niemodlin have also survived probably because their substratum consists of infertile podzolic soils. Larger forest areas may also be found in the Barycz Valley and near Wołów. The area of the Sudetes clearly reflects the range of the (previous) Sudetes primeval forest which survives today mainly on the slopes of the Karkonosze, Izera, Owl and Bystrzyckie Mountains, the Śnieżnik Massif and the Jeseniky Mountains, whereas the valleys and basins have been settled and cultivated. A similar situation can be observed in the Silesian Beskids.

In the mountains we can observe a number of vegetation zones. Both in the Sudetes and in the Silesian Beskids, the lower subalpine forest zone (400–1000 mamsl) is represented by beech forests with mixture of great maple, ash, larch, fir, pine and oak trees, which, however, in many regions have been replaced by spruce plantations. The upper subalpine forest zone (1000–1300 mamsl) is a natural spruce forest.[28] A subalpine zone, dominated by dwarf mountain pines (1250–1500 mamsl), is located only in the Karkonosze Mountains, the Śnieżnik Massif and on High Jesenik, whereas an alpine zone is found only in the upper parts of the Karkonosze Mountains. The cause of the degradation of the Silesian mountainous forests, aside from 'natural' forest thinning processes, is their human-induced conversion as a result of the harmful effects of farming activity – acid rains have been destroying the forests of the Izera Mountains and Beskids since the 1980s.

The majority of Silesian forests are coniferous. These comprise both original formations (lowland and upper subalpine forests) and later plantings, because in recent centuries the dominant forestry policy was to promote mainly pine tree monocultures (and spruce in the mountains).[29] Extensive oak-lime-hornbeam forests (*grądy*) have been cut down and the same process is currently underway in the riparian forests (*łęgi*).

Silesia, apart from its borderlands, belongs to the Silesian faunal region. Its northern peripheries are part of the south-Baltic region and its mountainous areas belong to the Sudetes-Carpathian region. Nevertheless, as a result of direct (hunting) and indirect

[27] Roughly speaking, in the Middle Ages nearly 80 percent of the territory of Silesia was covered with forests, cf. Jerzy Kostrowicki, *Środowisko geograficzne Polski*, Warszawa 1968, p. 408.

[28] Cf. Wojciech Walczak, *Sudety*, Warszawa 1968, pp. 190 and following.

[29] This process has been going on since the 18th century, cf. Wojciech Walczak, *Obszar przedsudecki*, Warszawa 1970, p. 170.

(husbandry, settlement) human interference with fauna, it is not very varied, at least in comparison to previous centuries.[30] The largest Silesian animal is the bison, which was brought to and began to be bred near Pszczyna in 1865. The biggest wild animals are deer, fallow deer, roe deer and wild boar. Moreover, in the Sudetes one may also come across mouflon, brought there from Sardinia at the outset of the 20th century. Apart from mouflon there are also many examples of smaller wildlife: foxes, hares, hedgehogs, squirrels and mice. Bird species are much more varied and the most common ones include titmice, woodpeckers, starlings, corvids, swallows, partridges and pheasants (brought from Asia). Pigeons are very common, especially in large cities and in Upper Silesia (domestic). The biggest reptile is the viper.

Natural shelters for wild animals include forests, stands of trees and marshy areas, hence, apart from the larger forest complexes, the richness of fauna also characterizes the basins in the Barycz river valley, partially placed under protection of the Barycz Valley Landscape Park. There are also other protected areas in Silesia. A total of two national parks and over twenty landscape parks protect the most precious elements of the terrestrial natural environment of Silesia.

Conclusions

The geographic environment of Silesia – its elements and features – is (and was) highly beneficial both for human existence and activity. What mainly fosters the development of Silesia is its mild climate and dense, water-rich river network. Its long vegetative period and fertile soils, distributed between the Odra and the foot of the Sudetes, provided the basis for the development of agriculture in this particular region. This in turn spurred the progress of human settlement, most of all in the lowland and flat areas. Farming and settlement was connected with the process of forest thinning, which constituted a serious barrier for further development of the region, but, nonetheless, forests were regarded as a precious natural resource, and wood as a basic building material. In the Middle Ages mineral resources of considerable economic (e.g. materials for the construction industry) and commercial (gold) value were discovered.

Throughout the centuries its environmental conditions have also highlighted the region's internal diversity, which was manifested for instance in its division into Higher, Upper ('upland') and Lower ('lowland') Silesia, separated throughout the centuries by the Silesian Cutting (*Przesieka Śląska*). The hearts of both parts of Silesia are populated with distinctive elevations which tower over their respective neighbouring areas: i.e.: St. Anna's Mount and the Ślęża Mount, which have performed the function of religious

[30] In the 18th century single bears, wildcats and lynxes lived in Silesia. The last pack of wolves was seen in 1787 near Ślęża. Similarly, at the end of the 18th century beavers were driven out of the Silesian territory cf. J. Janczak, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

centres (the latter one – in the past; the former – continually). The question of their significance is still to be answered fully.

The location of Silesia in the heart of Europe, at the intersection of the two major ancient trade routes – one on the east–west axis, the other north–south – contributed to its development to a large extent, but, at the same time, also to the changes to its natural environment. Yet, weren't the favourable environmental conditions the main reason for choosing this particular location for the trading routes? To what extent did the environmental conditions or/and its location, or, to put it simply, its geography, influence the decisions and actions which resulted in Silesia belonging to different nations at different times? What is certain is that the geographic environment of Silesia needs to be taken into account as an essential element which influenced both the development of the region and its various transformations.

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The formation of Silesia (to 1163). Factors of regional integration

Abstract:

Silesia took shape as a distinct region along with the development of state and church structures under Piast rule. The formation of these structures led to the dissolution of tribal relations. The central indicator of regional identity, the name belonging to the cultural legacy of *barbaricum,* acquired two new meanings, one territorial by nature and another new, far removed from its original, ideological sense within various traditions, not necessarily all of them Silesian. Cultural interpretation has led the Ślęża mountain, a source of myths and an essential part of both many legends and of the landscape, to undergo a similar transformation. In the period under consideration the influence of a so-called anthroporegional structure reaching back to prehistoric times on the structure of settlement is noticeable. When compared to the tribal era, the period of early state formation of the Piast monarchy saw the increased significance of the Odra river as an axis for the establishment of administration in both the state and Church. The region's integration progressed around its centre, located in Wrocław. The division of the Piast state into various territories after 1138 halted this process. The resulting divisions broke up regions formerly belonging to one diocese, and likely those previously belonging to one province as well.

Among the significant issues in the formation of the region during the second half of the 12th and beginning of the 13th centuries were the restriction of the meaning of the term "Silesia" to the latter-day Lower Silesia, as well as the definition of its regional identity by territorial authorities to the Silesian titulature, rather than that of Wrocław. This was a reference a naming convention which was as old as the *Ślężanie* tribe. Silesia as a region thus became an undeniable fact of the social and political life of the fragmented Poland, while the extension of Silesian territory to the upper part of the Odra river occurred only in the 15th century.

Keywords:

Origins of Silesia, Silesian tribes, Geographus Bavarus, Pagus Silensi, Ślęża mountain, Silesian province

Introduction

Silesia is the 'gift' of the Odra river.[1] The river had become the axis of the land whose borders were later to coincide with the frontiers of the Wrocław Diocese, but

[1] W. Semkowicz compared the role of the Odra river system in the development of settlement in Silesia to that of the bronchial tree, which 'supplies lungs with oxygen, filling them to the last branch'; Sławomir Moździoch quoted this metaphorical thesis, adding a general comment based on archaeological studies (see Sławomir Moździoch, *Krajobraz rzeczny jako źródło tożsamości ludności średniowiecznego Śląska*, [in:] *Radices Silesiae – Silesiacae radices. Śląsk: kraj, ludzie, memoria a kształtowanie się społecznych więzi i tożsamości (do końca XVIII wieku) / Schlesien: Land, Leute, memoria und die Herausbildung der sozialen Bindungen und der Identitäten (bis zum Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts),* eds. Thomas Wünsch, Stanisław Rosik, Wrocław 2011, pp. 49–51). For a Neolithic history of settlements, see Anna Kulczycka--Leciejewiczowa, *Osadnictwo neolityczne w Polsce południowo-zachodniej. Próba zarysu organizacji przestrzennej*, Wrocław 1993, pp. 163 and following.

the region thus formed was only assigned a permanent name, Silesia, in the 15th century. This was yet another phase in the historiography of a community which was identified with the dimension of 'Silesianness' through its name, and an integral element of the academic debate devoted to the subject is the reference to the tribal period, which was established in the 19th century as heritage of the *Silesiographia* created in the early modern period. At the time, the reception of Tacite's work looked to fill 'ancient' Silesia with Elysees and other peoples of Germania and the historiography of this time was not devoid of allegoric literary devices which favoured the 'Elysian' paradisiacal interpretations of the origins of the land.[2]

This myth-building trend in the shaping of a narrative about its most ancient history harmonized with earlier fantastical images of the lands' past. An excellent example can be found in the *Polish Chronicle* of Master Vincent called Kadłubek from the turn of the 13th century, which depicts Silesians as immemorial allies of the Poles – at least from the time of Alexander the Great.[3] The author mentions this while describing the legendary battle of Psie Pole (Hundsfeld). In a popular Polish translation of this passage, the local population, in Latin *Silencii*, is referred to as the *Ślężanie*, i.e. a tribal community. This strategy was designed to archaize the narration, most probably in order to accommodate the customary approach of the reader who, in accordance with the scholarly canon, perceived the ancient history of Poland as a transition from the world of tribes to the reality of the state.

However, considering that this particular narration speaks of the year 1109, we should be sceptical about the *licencia poetica* of the translator and remember that at that stage of the Piasts' history, and especially in the times of Kadłubek, such a community did not yet exist. Moreover, attributing this kind of perception of the past to the chronicler does not seem legitimate as his historical vision was characterized by presentism; therefore, it would be better to treat the *Silencii*, or *Silenciani*,[4] as a community associated with a Piast-ruled province. The awarding of its members with the name of Silesians was favoured by the functioning at the time of such names as *Zlesia* or *Slezia*;[5] it remains debatable, however, whether the territorial limits of this land corresponded to those of *Silentii provincia* mentioned by Kadłubek (see below).

This name has a native element to it, common to that of *Ślężanie*, but one should remember that this definition of group identity also results from a particular perception of the state and Church elites which went beyond the native cultural environment – the mythical origins of the Silesian communities recorded in the common memory of

[2] Przemysław Siekierka, *Ex Silesiae Antiquitatibus. Wątki ludów antycznych w traktacie Gentis Silesiae Annales Ioachima Cureusa. Historia i legenda*, [in:] *Radices Silesiae*, pp. 149–158, especially pp 150 and following.

[3] *Magistri Vincenti dicti Kadlubek Chronica Polonorum/Mistrza Wincentego zwanego Kadłubkiem Kronika Polska*, ed. Marian Plezia, Kraków 1994 (=MPH, ns, vol. 11), III, 18, p. 105.

[4] *Ibidem*.

[5] *Schlesisches Urkundenbuch* [hereafter referred to as: SUb], vol. 1, ed. Heinrich Appelt, Wien-Graz-Köln 1963, No. 45, p. 27, No. 117, p. 87.

the Latin *Christianitas* as a separate people is evidence of that. Thus, the identity of those *Silencii* is based on a lofty myth, not only by means of the reference to Antiquity but also by highlighting their role in the victory of Boleslaus Wrymouth (Bolesław Krzywousty) at Psie Pole, where they greatly contributed (according to the literary account) to the rout of the Holy Roman Emperor Henry V.[6] This identity would later be perpetuated by other medieval chronicles, especially Silesian ones.[7]

The year 1163 marks the end of the period covered in the present study, when the descendants of Ladislaus the Exile (Władysław Wygnaniec) returned to the lands of their ancestor's inheritance. However, the end of this period only indicates the approximate time when the proposed processual overview of social changes taking place in the upper and middle Odra will refer to functioning of the term Silesia within the wider realm of the Piast territories and the associated Church organization (the See of Gniezno). In this context, relations between Poland and Bohemia and the presence of the Přemyslid monarchy in the region should also be taken into account.[8]

When conducting such an analysis we need to refer to the proto-Silesian *Barbaricum* in regard to two basic aspects: on the one hand, the role of tribal heritage in the formation of the region (starting with the etymology of the name of the region); and on the other hand, the permanent physical features of the land, especially the elements of the landscape, which allow us to obtain a more complete picture of the processes of the formation of groups and identities, and finally of the formation of the region in the 12th century. In this aspect of our study we will refer both to the prehistoric era and to later periods. Treating the land as a region, we shall consistently recognize it as a part of a larger whole, which results in a bias towards a post-tribal perception.

Anthroporegions

From prehistoric times to the appearance of tribes, human settlement in Lower Silesia was relatively stable. It concentrated near the upper Odra, around the Moravian Gate, in the vicinity of Opole, by the Bystrzyca and Ślęza rivers up to today's Wrocław, then in a strip covering part of the Barycz river valley (Trzebnica–Milicz), and finally by the Odra near Głogów and Krosno Odrzańskie and by its tributaries. This distribution of human settlements is visible from the early Neolithic age, i.e. from the 6th millennium BC, when the first farmers arrived here from the Danube valley. They most likely lived side by side with the Mesolithic peoples in the Sudetes Foreland until as late as the 4th millennium BC.

[6] *Magistri Vincenti dicti Kadlubek Chronica Polonorum*, III, 18, p. 105 and following.

[7] Recently on this issue, see Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Od kiedy możemy mówić o istnieniu tożsamości śląskiej?*, [in:] *Radices Silesiae*, pp. 138–144.

[8] For recent information on the topic, with a reference to relevant literature, see Marie Bláhová, *Slezsko a české země ve středověku. Nárys problematiky*, [in:] *Radices Silesiae*, pp. 103 and following. Dependence of Silesian lands to Bohemia in the 10th century remain debatable; see below.

In the following millennia, settlement continued to concentrate in the above-mentioned areas and remained sporadic in other Silesian lands. Therefore, one can speak of certain anthropological regions (*anthroporegions*), i.e. territories where settlement had been permanently concentrated – based on natural conditions – from prehistoric times.[9] A key role was played here by the favourable conditions for soil cultivation and animal farming, including the fertility and irrigation of the soil as well as the relatively mild climate.[10] Thus, the Odra and its tributaries became axes for these areas, with three leading lands already established by the Neolithic era: in the vicinity of the Moravian Gate, an area from the Ślęza and Bystrzyca rivers to Wrocław and near Głogów. These lands stretched along the Odra and by its left bank, which has more tributaries than the right bank.

These areas were equally important in the era of the Lusatian culture, i.e. during the arrival of metallurgy (copper and bronze), but in that time the discovery of ores became an additional, non-agricultural settlement-shaping factor; for example, people began to settle in the area of Legnica.[11] The arrival of the Celts in Silesian lands constitutes a spectacular example of Bronze Age migrations. The Celts are associated with a significant boost in various types of production (pottery, metallurgy), although the largest growth in this respect is observed in the first centuries AD, namely in the period of the so-called 'Roman influence'.

Contact with the Mediterranean lands, and especially trade with the Roman Empire (for example iron), gave the elites of the Przeworsk culture significant wealth, as evidenced by impressive archaeological findings such as the famous so called 'dukes graves' in Zakrzów or the amber depot in Partynice in present-day Wrocław.[12] These sites are associated with the famous 'Amber Road', which should be considered as an additional factor integrating the anthroporegion upon the Ślęza river and around Wrocław. Analogically, the Moravian Gate played a similar role in settlements on both its northern and southern sides. We should also consider the earlier Neolithic period due to the influx of people from the Danube region which took place through the gate.[13]

Already in that period, local rivers proved important in long-distance transportation,[14] especially the Odra. On the other hand, it is believed that the Carpathians and Sudetes hindered the transfer of some cultural developments of the Neolithic age to the Silesian region.[15] This is important evidence showing that natural barriers existed which promoted the separate statuses of the upper and middle Odra basins (from the south) within

[9] For more information on anthroporegions in the context of historical geography see for example Jan Tyszkiewicz, *Geografia historyczna Polski w średniowieczu. Zbiór studiów*, Warszawa 2003, pp 24ff.
[10] A. Kulczycka-Leciejewiczowa, *Osadnictwo neolityczne*, pp. 19–39, 163–166.
[11] Andrzej Mierzwiński, *Przemiany osadnicze społeczności kultury łużyckiej na Śląsku*, Wrocław 1994; see also R. Żerelik, *Dzieje Śląska do 1526 roku*, pp. 28 and following.
[12] For example Michał Kaczmarek, *Zanim powstał Wrocław*, [in:] M. Kaczmarek, Mateusz Goliński, Teresa Kulak, Włodzimierz Suleja, *Wrocław. Dziedzictwo wieków*, Wrocław 1997, pp. 10 and following.
[13] A. Kulczycka-Leciejewiczowa, *Osadnictwo neolityczne*, p. 165.
[14] *Ibidem*, pp. 162-163, 167, 175, 182.
[15] *Ibidem*, pp. 162-163.

the North European Plain. However, in that period, neither this factor nor the presence of the main river artery led to the unification of local anthroporegions into one whole. This would not change until historic times.

The problem of the Germanic heritage

In the period of the Roman influence the Silesian lands became a destination for the migration of Barbarian peoples, of which some Germanic tribes are recognizable today. There is no evidence indicating that larger tribal unions were formed in that period in Silesian lands; however, in the light of the generations-long debate on the origins of the name Silesia, and more precisely its assumed connection with the Silingi Vandals, we must not fail to address this issue here.

Current discussions on ancient descriptions of Barbarian peoples have been unable to confirm the presence of the Silingi in the upper and middle Odra basin, and doubts have been raised over whether they were there at all.[16] In this debate the only argument for their presence concerns the homophony of their ethnonym with the name of the region; the argument thus runs that Silesia was derived from the name *Silingi*. Such reasoning might be perceived as a *petitio principii* (begging the question); it was, however, popular among academics of the 19th and 20th centuries, laying the ground for the interpretation of material relics of the Przeworsk culture as evidence of the presence of the Silingi, some of whom were to migrate to the south. Niemcza was allegedly an enclave of these Germanic remains, even in the period of the first Piasts; this information is based on a passage by a Saxon chronicler from Merseburg, Thietmar (d. 1018), stating that the town was founded by his compatriots (in his words: 'nostri').[17]

Thietmar spoke here about the connection of the name *Niemcza* with the Slavic name for Germans (*Niemcy*, or *niemcy,* meaning 'strangers'),[18] but within an oral tradition such a message could not reliably refer to events from five hundred years earlier. Thus, the account of Thietmar cannot confirm that remnants of Germanic peoples in Silesian lands from the times of the Przeworsk culture lasted to his day; moreover, associating the establishment of the stronghold with the Silingi should be considered a phantasm that has been introduced to the academic discourse (this is worth mentioning as such information has been disseminated in an internationally-known monograph of Wrocław).[19]

[16] Recently, see Przemysław Siekierka, *Silingowie u Klaudiusza Ptolemeusza. Problem na nowo otwarty?*, 'Sobótka', 65 (2010), No. 4, pp. 553–563.

[17] *Kronika Thietmara*, introduction, translation and commentary by Marian Zygmunt Jedlicki, Poznań 1953 (=Biblioteka tekstów historycznych, vol. 3) (hereafter referred to as: Thietmar), VII, 59, p. 555.

[18] For example Karol Modzelewski, *Barbarzyńska Europa*, Warszawa 2004, p. 9.

[19] See Norman Davies, Roger Moorhouse, *Mikrokosmos. Portret miasta środkowoeuropejskiego. Vratislavia, Breslau, Wrocław*, Kraków 2002 (the English edition: *iidem, Microcosm. A Portrait of a Central European City*, London 2002, 2nd edition 2003; German edition: *iidem, Die Blume Europas. Breslau - Wroclaw - Vratislavia: Die Geschichte einer mittel-europäischen Stadt*, München 2002), p. 70; the authors speak about contact between the Vandals, with the 'capital' at Niemcza, and the Roman Empire. Other examples that

As it is impossible to confirm the presence of the Silingi in the Silesian lands, we cannot verify whether the tribe gave the name to the territory which would later be adopted by peoples inhabiting the area after intense migration in the 4th and 5th centuries BC. This period of migration brought about the fall of the Przeworsk culture and a demographic decline in the territory of Silesia and neighbouring lands north of the Carpathians. In the 6th and 7th centuries these lands became a domain of the Slavs, at that time newly crystallized as ethnos under the considerable influence of – as has been indicated byrecent research proposals[20] – the contemporary migration-stimulated acculturation. As for the Silesian lands, it is possible that this domain also incorporated indigenous peoples, though thinly spread out it seems, as indicated by both Procopius of Caesarea – who spoke of an 'empty land' in 512 – as well as archaeological findings.[21]

The hypothesis of a complete depopulation of these lands seems unlikely as usually only the most thriving, militarily strongest and wealthiest groups of tribal communities attempted migration; even if the decision to migrate was taken by an entire community, smaller groups were most likely to stay.[22] This observation is supported by pre-Slavic (old European) river names. Here we return to the basic problem in the discussion on the factors of regional integration, namely that of the name of Silesia, in the context of its genesis, the most significant element of which appears to be – in the perspective of

raise doubts as to the accuracy of the authors include a reference to the Ślęża as the (alleged) mount 'Zober', so-called by the Germanic people (see *ibidem*, p. 74); however, the verses by Juliusz Słowacki, quoted therein, either refer to the mountain *Zobor* near Nitra or are a literary fantasy. In German, obviously, Ślęża is called *Zobtenberg*.

[20] It is worth noting that the academic tradition, popularized in the 19th and 20th centuries, according to which there existed a proto-Slavonic community which concentrated within one *proto-fatherland* after the break-up of the so-called Balto-Slavs around 1000 B.C., has met with criticism which brought new findings assuming the final formation of Slavdom during the migrations between the 4th and 6th centuries BC. The dispute centres on the mechanism of transformation which had become the basis for ethnos. Lech Leciejewicz, among other authors (see below, footnote 23), supported the theses of acculturation reaching to much of today's Polish territory, in contrast to Kazimierz Godłowski who saw the chief ethnogenic factor in the migrations of peoples from the basin of Dnieper from the 4th century AD. Another thesis is proposed by Florin Curta, who assumes that a single identity (manifested by a belief of common ancestry) was given to the peoples comprising early medieval Slavdom by the Byzantine discourse (see for example Walter Pohl, *Początki Słowian. Kilka spostrzeżeń historycznych*, [in:] *Nie-Słowianie o początkach Słowian*, ed. Przemysław Urbańczyk, Poznań-Warszawa 2006, pp. 11–25; Florin Curta, *Tworzenie Słowian. Powrót do słowiańskiej etnogenezy*, [in:] *Nie-Słowianie…*, pp. 27–55).

[21] According to Procopius of Caesarea, a Byzantine historiographer from the 6th century AD, this deserted area, hypothetically located in the Odra basin, was found by the Germanic Heruli, a part of whom, having been defeated by their neighbours, decided to leave the Danube territories and migrate to their former fatherland in the north (see *Procopii Caesariensis De bellis I - VIII*, ed. Jacob Haury, *Opera omnia I - II*, Lipsiae 1964, (*Bellum Gothicum III*), VI,15; see *Testimonia najdawniejszych dziejów Słowian. Seria grecka, zeszyt 2. Pisarze z V - X w.,* eds. Alina Brzóstowska, Wincenty Swoboda, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1989, p. 54). See Lech A. Tyszkiewicz, *Słowianie w historiografii wczesnego średniowiecza od połowy VI do połowy VII wieku*, Wrocław 1994 (=Acta Universistatis Wratislaviensis, No 924, Historia 63), pp. 21-24; see for example R. Żerelik, *Dzieje Śląska do 1526 roku*, p. 33.

[22] Lech Leciejewicz, *Słowianie zachodni. Z dziejów tworzenia się średniowiecznej Europy*, 2nd edition, Wodzisław Śląski 2010, pp. 42 and following; for general information on the aforementioned migrations of Germanic tribes, see for example Przemysław Urbańczyk, *Władza i polityka we wczesnym średniowieczu*, Wrocław 2000, p. 110–113.

currently developed studies – hydronymy. Yet, nonetheless, we should focus our attention on the appearance of the Ślężanie and other Slavic tribes in the Silesian lands.

The 'Silesian tribes' and the problem of their pre-state integration (the political-military aspect)

Discussions on the situation of the commonly-named 'Silesian tribes'[23] flared up with great intensity in the late 1990s. At that time – based on archaeological findings – scholars began to question long-standing views regarding the location of the Bobrzanie, which consequently led to the questioning of the location of the Trzebowianie.[24] Both names are an interpretation of the names *Pobarane* and *Trebouane* found in the so-called *Prague Document* (1086). Both are mentioned next to the names *Zlasane* and *Dedosize*, identified as the Ślężanie and Dziadoszanie respectively, and scholars have located all four in Silesia.[25]

The question remains whether the aforementioned names were already present in the original document or whether they correspond to settlement territories from the second half of the 11th century. Even so, it should be emphasized that two of them, the Ślężanie and Dziadoszanie, are of tribal origin as they have their counterparts in the ethnonyms *Slenzaane* and *Dadosesani* mentioned in the so-called *Bavarian Geographer* from the mid-9th century.[26] With the help of Thietmar of Merseburg's account from the 1120s we are able to, with a high degree of probability, define the location of both tribes, associating them with territories referred to as *Silensi* and *Diadesisi*; the former comprised the Ślęża Mountain and the stronghold Niemcza, and the latter bordered Milsko. These data allow us to assign the tribal communities to two of the aforementioned anthroporegions:

[23] For example Jerzy Lodowski, *Dolny Śląsk na początku średniowiecza (VI-X w.): podstawy osadnicze i gospodarcze*, Wrocław 1980, pp. 112–127; Lech A. Tyszkiewicz, *Plemiona słowiańskie we wczesnym średniowieczu*, [in:] *Słowiańszczyzna w Europie średniowiecznej*, vol. 1, ed. Zofia Kurnatowska, Wrocław 1996, pp. 51 and following.; Wacław Korta, *Historia Śląska do roku 1763*, ed. Marek Derwich, Warszawa 2003, pp. 48–51.

[24] Sławomir Moździoch, *Społeczność plemienna Śląska w IX-X wieku*, [in:] *Śląsk około roku 1000. Materiały z sesji naukowej we Wrocławiu w daniach 14-15 maja 1999 roku,* eds. Marta Młynarska-Kaletynowa, Edmund Małachowicz, Wrocław 2000, pp. 25–71.

[25] *Kodeks dyplomatyczny Śląska*, ed. Karol Maleczyński, vol. 1, Wrocław 1951 [hereafter referred to as: KDŚ], No. 8, p. 25.

[26] *Descriptio civitatum ad septentrionalem plagam Danubii, eds. Bohuslav Horák, Dušan Trávniček*, [in:] *iidem*, *Descriptio civitatum ad septentrionalem plagam Danubii*, Praha 1956 (= Československá Akademie Vêd: Rozpravy československé Akademie Vêd, Řada společenských věd 66.2), pp. 2–3. On the document and its date, see Henryk Łowmiański, *O pochodzeniu Geografa bawarskiego*, 'Roczniki Historyczne', 20 (1951–52), pp. 9–23; Jerzy Nalepa, *Geograf Bawarski*, [in:] *Słownik starożytności słowiańskich Encyklopedyczny zarys kultury Słowian od czasów najdawniejszych do schyłku wieku XII*, vol. 2, eds. Władysław Kowalenko, Gerard Labuda, Tadeusz Lehr-Spławiński, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1964, pp. 93 and following; for more recent studies, see for example J. Nalepa, *O nowszym ujęciu problematyki plemion słowiańskich u Geografa Bawarskiego. Uwagi krytyczne*, 'Slavia Occidentalis', 60 (2003), pp. 9–63 (here a comprehensive list of literature). Contrary to a common thesis that the text was created in the 9th century, J. Nalepa dates it to the 10th century (because Hungarians are mentioned next to Wiślanie, see *ibidem*, p. 10).

the Ślężanie – lands stretching along the Śleza river, perhaps as far as to Wrocław, and to the Dziadoszanie – lands upon lower sections of the Odra, near Krosno, Bytom Odrzański or Głogów.

As the so-called *Bavarian Geographer* mentions no communities with which the *Pobarane* and *Trebouane* could be associated, their character remains unknown. Traditionally, the former were located by the middle and upper Bóbr (in the *Chronicle of Thietmar* the river is called *Pober*),[27] and due to relatively poor evidence of settlements in this area in the 9th–10th centuries it was recognized as a section of Dziadoszanie. The *Trebouane,* on the other hand, while previously associated with Trzebnica, according to the concept which finally became established in the 20th century, lived near Legnica. As mentioned above, this view was questioned in the late 1990s when it was proposed that the name *Pobarane* should be associated with the previously unnamed settlement group by the Obra river, the *Poobrzanie*, or even the *Obrzanie*.[28]

Such conclusions were drawn by juxtaposing the aforementioned poorly-developed settlement by the Bóbr with much the better developed one by the Obra. An analogical criterion proved efficient in a discussion on the location of the Trzebowianie, who, in light of the thin settlement of the areas near Legnica, are indeed – albeit cautiously – being relocated towards Trzebnica, not only because of the denser population in the area but also because of the ethnonym being related to the name of the town. This relatively new concept of distribution of the so-called (Lower) Silesian tribes has inspired further studies and made scholars question the general tribal metrics of the names *Pobarane* and *Trebouane*.

As it is posited that the names could have been mentioned in the *Prague Document* only, but not in the original founding document of the Bishopric of Prague (973), one

[27] Thietmar (VI, 26) mentions that in the language of the Slavs, *Pober* corresponds to Latin *castor,* or 'beaver'; the hypothetical name *Bobrzanie* referring to people living by the river Bóbr is based on this name.

[28] Sławomir Moździoch, *Śląsk między Gnieznem a Pragą*, [in:] *Ziemie polskie w X wieku i ich znaczenie w kształtowaniu się nowej mapy Europy*, ed. Henryk Samsonowicz, Kraków 2000, pp. 173–176. Based on archaeological findings, the author of the hypothesis considered two alternatives: either to associate the Pobaranie with the Obrzanie, or assume the existence of two tribal settlement centres, namely the Obrzanie and the Poboranie (*Pobarane*); see: *idem, Społeczność plemienna*, pp. 35–38. However, one should remember that the name 'Obrzanie' was associated with the Obra river by Jerzy Nalepa (*Obrzanie – plemię nad Obrą w południowo-zachodniej Wielkopolsce*, [in:] *Słowiańszczyzna w Europie średniowiecznej*, vol. 1, pp. 67 and following) and is in fact a pseudo-ethnonym. The hypothesis which associates it semantically (based on a connection with the river Obra) with the Pobarane gives us an argument in favour of the existence of a community with a name derived from the river, but at the same time assumes that the hypothetical Poboranie lived there rather than the Obrzanie. On the other hand, the hypothesis assuming the existence of two separate tribes (the Pobarane or Poboranie and the Obrzanie) treats the ethnonym as equal to the pseudo-ethnonym, which, when locating both names on a single map (as in S. Możdzioch, *Społeczność plemienna*, p. 36) is semantically confusing. Thus, the suggestion to stop using Obrzanie as a tribal name seems justified. Therefore, if one chooses to recognize the two settlement centres by the Obra as two separate tribes, it is worth leaving one of them nameless – in the discussed variant of S. Możdzioch's hypothesis this would be that of the "Obrzanie", located north-west of the "Poboranie".

should consider either their late genesis (in the period of state formation)[29] or that they were related to smaller settlement territories within a tribal community (perhaps the so-called *opole*, pl. *opola*) or organisms referred to as 'small tribal' ones. At this stage of the analysis it seems important to not automatically consider all 'Lower Silesian' names mentioned in the *Prague Document* as derived from tribes (though such a possibility should not be ruled out); on the other hand, we should bear in mind that not all archaeological settlements of the tribal period must necessarily be reflected in those names.

Returning to the *Bavarian Geographer*, we should remember that apart from the Ślężanie and the Dziadoszanie it lists three more ethnonyms associated with the territory of the future Silesia: the *Opolini*, *Lupiglaa* and *Golensizi*. The latter, probably the Polish *Golęszyce*, are connected with the well-resourced tribal settlement on both sides of the Moravian Gate.[30] The traditional identification of *Opolini* as the Opolanie is based on the identification of Opole as their main centre. However, there is no archaeological evidence confirming the existence of a stronghold at the time the document was written, so we should assume that the name of the principal tribal centre was derived from the name of the tribe. Another hypothesis assumes that the name *opole*, being universal, need not have been associated with a particular tribe but with a smaller, neighbourly territorial unit.

What also remains unclear is the name *Lupiglaa*, which is most commonly associated with the inhabitants of the Głubczyce Plateau, the alleged 'Stupid Heads' (*Głupie Głowy*). In light of the associative nature of such arguments, as well as of the lack of strong archaeological evidence of a tribal community near Głubczyce, the question arises of whether the *Lupiglaa* should be located to the north of the Moravian Gate and thus in a part of the territory which was considered above to be that of Golęszyce, or whether we should reject the hypothesis which assumes their location in Silesia.[31]

In the period discussed here, there is no evidence of the presence of a single local habitat in the Odra basin comprising the above-mentioned tribes. Moreover, the hypothesis according to which the Silesian Przesieka (*Przesieka Śląska*, literally the 'Silesian Cutting') already existed in the 9th century[32] may only support the view that such integration

[29] This possibility was signalled by Stanisław Rosik, *Najdawniejsze dzieje Dolnego Śląska (do roku 1138)*, [in:] *Dolny Śląsk. Monografia historyczna*, ed. Wojciech Wrzesiński, Wrocław 2006, pp. 31 and following. In a discussion on this concept, Wojciech Mrozowicz pointed to the fact the names 'Trebouane' and 'Pobarane' sound similar to the ethnonym *Zlasane* which is clearly derived from tribal times. This suggests a tribal origin of all four names, but one also cannot exclude the possibility that the very method of creating names of territorial communities was preserved until the period of state administration. As such, the question is difficult to resolve. In any case, it still seems that we should not assume a static picture of the tribal situation from the 9th century on, and admit the possibility that in the 9–10th centuries there appeared new settlement territories and their new names.

[30] See for example J. Tyszkiewicz, *Geografia*, s. 39 n.; Stanisław Rosik, *Opolini, Golensizi, Lupiglaa… Ziemia opolsko-raciborska we wczesnym średniowieczu (uwagi w sprawie dyskusji historyków)*, ed. Anna Pobóg-Lenartowicz, Opole 2003, pp. 29–31, 34 (*Ibidem*, a list of literature).

[31] S. Rosik, *Opolini*, pp. 30 and following.

[32] For example R. Żerelik, *Dzieje Śląska do 1526 roku*, p. 36.

took place in Lower Silesia,[33] especially when considering that the region was enclosed from the west by the so-called Silesian Walls, dated by some historians to the 9th century (though usually to a later period).[34] When putting forward such a hypothesis, we should take into account that this may be a result of projecting later assumptions, namely those from the period when the existence of the *Przesieka* is undisputable, onto tribal times.[35]

According to the *Book of Henryków,* the Przesieka 'surrounded all the territory of Silesia'.[36] This information, however difficult it may be to interpret in a literary sense, suggests that up to the 13th century Silesia did not encompass the upper Odra basin, meaning that it was the ancient lands of the Ślężanie which proved ideologically most important for the formation of the historic land along the axis of the Odra. Such a conclusion can easily lead to recognizing Ślężanie as the 'central' and 'most important' tribe (*medii et potentissimi*), from which the integration of all 'Silesian' tribes begins, but this would mean entering the realm of a historiographical myth, as becomes visible when considering integration factors other than the danger of invasions linked with the Przesieka or the Silesian Walls.

The Ślęża – the geographical range of the cult and the semiotics of the landscape

Due to the uniqueness of the Ślęża as a landscape phenomenon, when discussing the oldest signs of spiritual life in Silesia the question arises of how influential the worship of the mountain was. Whether this extended beyond one tribe may be analyzed both based on findings of religious studies and by a comparison with religious cults of the nearby Polabian and Pomeranian Slavs (the mouth of the Odra and Rugia) in the 11–12th centuries. Such analogies, however, are not well grounded in the case of studies on the religious importance of the Ślęża because there is no evidence that a shrine or oracle existed on the mountain.[37]

[33] For recent information on the topic, with a reference to relevant literature, see L.A. Tyszkiewicz, *Plemiona słowiańskie*, pp. 51 and following.

[34] See for example J. Tyszkiewicz, *Geografia*, p. 41.

[35] The fact that the so-called Prague Document lists the communities from Lower Silesia one after another suggests that from the Bohemian perspective it was perceived as a separate whole, and this, consequently, gives grounds to assume that the borderland role of *Przesieka* was considered perhaps even in the founding document of the Bishopric of Prague (973), allegedly confirmed in the Prague Document.
Importantly, this perception is an external one, and thus we should consider that such grouping of these communities stems from the influence of the regal or Church authority, including not only the permanent dependence on this institutions but also their aspirations to gain control over Silesian lands. A good example is the so-called Meissen charters, which in light of recent research (see Thomas Ludwig, *Die Urkunden der Bischöfe von Meißen. Diplomatische Untersuchungen zum 10.-13 Jahrhundert*, Köln 2008) are all forged documents, confirming the Meissen Bishops' right to these lands granted to them allegedly by Emperors in the 10th century.

[36] *Liber fundationis claustri Sancte Marie Virginis in Heinrichow czyli Księga henrykowska*, ed. Roman Grodecki, Wrocław 1991, I, 9, p. 145.

[37] A synthetic recapitulation of cult Ślęża in the context of other Slavic sacred places can by found in the article by Lech Leciejewicz, *In Pago Silensi vocabulo hoc a quodam monte… O funkcji miejsc kultu pogańskiego w systemie politycznym Słowian Zachodnich*, 'Sobótka', 42 (1987), No. 2, pp. 125–135.

Related hypotheses are formulated in accordance with the incorrect interpretation of Thietmar, popularized by a Polish translation from nearly 60 years ago, and sometimes under the direct influence of the translation. The translation states that the Ślęża Mountain was worshipped 'because heathen rites were performed on it',[38] while in fact the chronicler indicated other causes, namely its size and height. Thietmar speaks about the unique role of the Ślęża in shaping religious beliefs of the local population, leading our thoughts towards the holy mountain having universal significance.[39]

From a phenomenological point of view, the natural features of the Ślęża seem to explain its function as an *axis mundi*, a 'world axis'. The idea that it linked three regions of the world – the sky, the earth and the underworld – corresponds to the fact that the top of the mountain is frequently covered by clouds. In such an interpretation the Ślęża appears as a cosmic mountain whose myth is linked to the concept of the 'origins' of the whole universe, treated within the ecumene as a prominent place, the mythical cradle of the world. Judging by Thietmar's chronicle, which states that the territory of the Silensi had derived its name from the Ślęża mountain,[40] we may assume that it was indeed regarded that way by the Ślężanie.[41] However, in the face of having no firm evidence to draw upon, we can safely assume, due to its mythical image, that it played a significant role in the life of the community.[42]

The uniqueness of the Ślęża in the local landscape made the Ślężanie, by virtue of their ownership of the holy mountain, predestined to become the most important people of the lower Odra basin. Even so, we have no evidence to determine whether they used this potential to build political power. Similarly, one cannot possibly verify whether the worship of the Ślęża was practised by other tribes as well.[43] It is because the region, which was developed outside the ecumene of the Ślężanie acquired the name referring to their ethnonym only after the establishment of the state, and therefore the thesis that the name *Silesia* is derived from the mountain (or the river) needs to be supplemented by a missing link in the form of the name and the domain of the tribe, and subsequent territorial units of the early monarchy, and finally of the *Silencii provincia* mentioned by Kadłubek.

[38] Thietmar, p. 554.

[39] For a recent article on the Ślęża in the context of religious studies, see: Stanisław Rosik, *Mons Silensis – axis mundi. Góra Ślęża między historią a fenomenologią*, [in:] *Sacrum pogańskie – sacrum chrześcijańskie. Kontynuacja miejsc kultu we wczesnośredniowiecznej Europie Środkowej*, eds Krzysztof Bracha, Czesław Hadamik, Warszawa 2010, pp. 179–192 (*ibidem*, a list of literature).

[40] Discussion, see below.

[41] This interpretation of the importance of the Ślęża for the tribal ecumene was extensively developed by Leszek P. Słupecki in his monograph on heathen places of worship, *Slavonic Pagan Sanctuaries*, Warsaw 1994, pp. 172 and following.

[42] For more on this issue, see Stanisław Rosik, *W cieniu „śląskiego Olimpu"... Uwagi nad możliwością kosmicznej waloryzacji góry Ślęży w badaniach nad historią religii*, [in:] *Origines mundi, gentium et civitatum*, eds Stanisław Rosik, Przemysław Wiszewski, Wrocław 2001 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No. 2339, Historia 153), pp. 62–72.

[43] See for example Leszek P. Słupecki, *Ślęza, Radunia, Wieżyca. Miejsca kultu pogańskiego Słowian w średniowieczu*, 'Kwartalnik Historyczny', 99 (1992), No. 2, p. 14.

The first stage of 'silesiation' (regio Zleznensis, dux Zlesie, episcopus Zlesie)

The area of the '*Silentii* province' in Kadłubek's chronicle is disputable, with two basic possibilities being the area ruled by dukes titled *dux Zlesie*,[44] or a larger area as indicated by the title *episcopus Zlesie* mentioned in a document from 1208. Bearing this in mind, it is highly likely that 'silesiation' reached beyond the Przesieka.[45] This is one of a number of hypotheses that should be taken into account when interpreting the territorial boundaries of *regio Zleznensis* at the turn of the 12th century in the light of Gallus Anonymous' account.[46] On the one hand, a territory similar to that of the former Ślężanie land (probably *Zlasane*, as in the *Prague Document*) should be considered, while on the other hand it is likely that the tribe-derived name already applied to the entire province, with Wrocław as the capital. The city's importance grew after it became a seat of the Bishopric, whose frontiers – according to documents from the 12th century – reached as far as Cieszyn.

Deriving the names of bishoprics from the names of lands was not uncommon in the 12–13th centuries (e.g. *Polonia*, *Pomerana*),[47] but in the case discussed here we need to admit the possibility that the name of the bishopric could have been a derivative of the connection between 'Duke' (of Silesia) and 'Bishop' (of Silesia)'.[48] The latter option would mean that the 'silesiation' process would not yet have begun, and that the Silesian title of the Bishop referred only to part of his territories. Even assuming this scenario, however, the Church administration remained an important factor integrating the region around Wrocław with that city at its centre, which in a later period resulted in extending the Silesian territory beyond the Przesieka. In the period discussed in the present article, however, this was prevented by the political fragmentation of Piast Poland.

The fragmentation slowed down the 'silesiation' of the entire middle and upper areas of the Odra basin, especially during the reign of Ladislaus Herman and his sons. We should note here that at that time Wrocław, as one of the 'main capitals of the kingdom',[49] was ranked right next to Cracow, which made it quite likely that its power extended to the border of Lesser Poland as regards both state and Church administration. This role of Wrocław had been determined by the stronghold structure network

[44] It is also disputable whether the Głogów district lay within the above-mentioned province, as it was described as a *March* – recently, see for example: W. Mrozowicz, *Od kiedy*, p. 143; Stanisław Rosik, *Najdawniejsza postać Śląska (do XIII w.). Pejzaż krainy a kształtowanie się śląskiej tożsamości regionalnej: przykład Ślęży i Trzebnicy*, [in:] *Radices Silesiae*, pp. 68 and following.

[45] The charter of Władysław Odoniec from 25 December 1208, see SUb., vol. 1, No. 117, p. 87.

[46] *Galli Anonymi cronicae et gesta ducum sive principum Polonorum*, ed. Karol Maleczyński, Kraków 1952 (=Monumenta Poloniae Historica n.s., vol. 2) [hereafter referred to as: Gall], II, 50, p. 119.

[47] Gall I, 30, p. 57; *Pommersches Urkundenbuch*, vol. 1: *786–1253*, part 1, *Urkunden*, ed. Klaus Conrad, Köln-Wien 1970, No. 23, p. 24.

[48] Such parallel titles of dukes and bishops is not only found in the 12th century Pomerania but also in the 13th century Kuyavia, see for example *Kodeks dyplomatyczny Wielkopolski*, vol. 1, ed. Ignacy Zakrzewski, Poznań 1877, No. 84: episcopus Cuiaviensis (1215 r.); No. 140: *dux Cuyavie* (1232).

[49] Gall, II, 8, p. 75.

dating back to the times of the first Piasts and restored after the crisis of their rule in the 1030s. By the first half of the 980s, Wrocław had already become a principal centre among the strongholds located along the Odra (as evidenced by dendrochronology). A key argument here is the fact that it became the seat of the Bishopric in the year 1000. It is possible that this was the decisive factor determining the importance of Wrocław in the following centuries.

The formation of the region's foundations: the role of the first Piasts, the contribution of the Přemyslids and the problem of the Great Moravia legacy

Over the centuries, the designation of Wrocław as a centre of state and Church administration proved to be a chief determinant of regional integration, and the establishment of the Wrocław Diocese was an element of the strategy for a new order in Europe, *renovatio imperii*, realized by Otto III in cooperation with Boleslaus the Brave (Bolesław Chrobry). The only piece of information on the first Bishop of Wrocław, John, is found in Thietmar, who lists him among the Gniezno suffragans, but this nevertheless seems credible as it refers to a contemporary period and to a community with which the chronicler was familiar.

During the crisis of the Piast monarchy in the 1030s, the Bishopric became disintegrated (though not its canonical or theological dimensions), to be later renewed by Casimir the Restorer (Kazimierz Odnowiciel). Hypothetical reconstructions of the history of the Bishopric draw on relatively late accounts from the 14th and 15th centuries, which speak about the Wrocław Bishops who were returning from exile in the times of Hieronymus (1046-1063), whose name opens the catalogues of Bishops written in the late middle ages (John and his possible successors from the period prior to this date are not mentioned). As Casimir the Restorer seized power over Wrocław in 1050, this year is given as the earliest possible date of the Bishop's return to the city.[50]

Literature mentions in this context the regaining of Silesia by Casimir the Restorer following its annexation by Břetislaus of Bohemia in 1038 or 1039. The legality of this Polish conquest in 1054 was established at an Emperor congress in Quedlinburg based on the tribute paid to the Přemyslids. Unfortunately, the sources do not mention the name Silesia or any similar name for the territory. Moreover, we can only hypothetically determine the scope of Bohemian territorial gains during the Polish crisis. According to Cosmas of Prague (the 1120s) Břetislaus incorporated two regions ('duas regiones')[51] to Bohemia in 1038 (or 1039) whose hypothetical identifications include the following ideas:

[50] For a discussion on this topic, see for example Tomasz Jurek, *Ryczyn biskupi. Studium z dziejów Kościoła polskiego w XI w.*, 'Roczniki Historyczne', 60 (1994), pp. 21–66; Kazimierz Dola, *Dzieje Kościoła na Śląsku. Średniowiecze*, Opole 1996, pp. 24–26.

[51] *Cosmae Pragensis Chronica Boemorum*, ed. Bertold Bretholz, Berolini 1923 (=*Monumenta Germaniae historica*. *Scriptores* n.s., vol. 2), II,2, p. 83.

1) lands from Silesia and Lesser Poland, 2) Silesia and the Kłodzko Valley,[52] 3) the divided Silesian territories (in the future, Lower and Upper Silesia). Despite these doubts, it is still possible that the compromise of 1054 (which lasted, with various perturbations, to 1137) concerned at least part of Silesia, which in the 10th century had already become an area of conflicting Polish and Bohemian influence.

Generations of academics have seen the victorious war against Boleslaus II of Bohemia over the *regnum ablatum* (lost kingdom, or rule) as the decisive moment in the incorporation of these territories to the statehood of Mieszko I.[53] The conflict was believed to have taken place in 990 and was hypothetically seen as a war over the Silesian lands,[54] but it is difficult to define the exact contested territory based on the aforementioned account. Thus, it is would worth noting here that the hypothesis, according to which the chronicle report refers to the middle and upper Odra basin, has been supported in recent decades by dendrochronology, which has helped to date the strongholds located on the river axis from Opole to Bytom Odrzański and Krosno Odrzańskie. They were probably founded around 985,[55] which supports the thesis that Mieszko annexed these lands at the cost of his brother-in-law, who unsuccessfully attempted to restore his power in the territory in 990. This concept is also in line with the account of the Monk of Sázava, according to which Bohemia lost Niemcza in that year, however, there are supporters of the view that this concerns Lusatian, not Silesian Niemcza.[56]

According to the current state of research, the hypothesis that *regnum ablatum* was located in Silesia still seems well founded. Nevertheless, one should be wary when using it to construct other hypotheses or to support other claims. This note of caution should be applied to the thesis that Silesian tribes found themselves within the Bohemian monarchy before being incorporated into Poland. The *Prague Document* – the only historical record stating *expressis verbis* that the Silesian territories were dependent on Prague – may indicate, even if its content is faithful to the original, either actual Bohemian control over the territories or merely its attempts to take such control.

The claim that the name 'Wrocław' derived from Wratislaus I (d. 921), the representative of the Přemyslid dynasty, however, should be considered a historiographical myth. According to the latest research, the stronghold was not built before 940; it is difficult to say if this reflected attempts to consolidate Bohemian influence in Silesia or if it was meant to protect the local population from intruders. Various archaeological finds from Bohemia provide evidence of contact between the inhabitants of the fortress and

[52] Or the Kłodzko Valley and the land of Golęszyce, see J. Tyszkiewicz, *Geografia*, p. 39 (links – sic! – the occupation of the two 'regions' with the outcomes of the Quedlinburg congress of 1054, i.e. anachronically in relation with the times of Bretislaus).

[53] Thietmar IV, 12.

[54] For more on this issue see Lech A. Tyszkiewicz, *Przyłączenie Śląska do monarchii piastowskiej pod koniec X wieku*, [in:] *Od plemienia do państwa. Śląsk na tle Słowiańszczyzny Zachodniej*, ed. Lech Leciejewicz, Wrocław-Warszawa 1991, pp. 120–152.

[55] For example S. Moździoch, *Krajobraz rzeczny*, p. 52 (the map).

[56] For a discussion on this topic, see for example L.A. Tyszkiewicz, *Przyłączenie Śląska*, pp. 144 and following.

the Přemyslids, but whether they really prove a Bohemian post was located in Wrocław is difficult to say. It is safer, then, to speak of a period of Bohemian influence in 10th-century Silesia that conflicted with the expansion of the Piasts, who eventually seized power over the territory at the end of the century.

This time of external influence, especially from Bohemia, stimulated inter-tribal consolidation of the land. However, we should begin our discussion here with the problematic (mainly as far as archaeological evidence is concerned) issue of Great Moravian influence in the territory. Already then, in the light of an expanding medieval European civilization, local inhabitants faced a choice of whether to access this circle of Christian monarchies.

The cradle of 'silesiation': *pagus Silensi* in *Thietmar's Chronicle*

The work of Mieszko I's and Boleslaus the Brave's contemporary Thietmar of Merseburg is a primary source of information about the reign of these two rulers over the territories of Silesia. His chronicle contains descriptions of events which were important to the Empire and which were taking place in two territories (called *pagus* in Latin) we are particularly interested: *pagus Diadesi* and *pagus Silensi* (or *Cilensi*)[57]. These names seem to be related to the ethnonyms *Dziadoszanie* and *Ślężan*ie, which raises a question as to the nature of these *pagi*. The suggestion that they are tribal territories incorporated into the Piast monarchy, which has been a dominant thesis in the literature, requires further discussion, firstly in the context of examination of historical sources.[58]

In the chronicle, the term *pagus* is not used exclusively in relation to the early-Piast monarchy,[59] and furthermore it is also repeatedly employed when characterizing western Slavdom. What is striking in this respect is the frequent identification of such units with tribes, starting in the first chapters of the chronicles depicting the Głomacze, who were also referred to as *Dalemińce* by their German neighbours. It was in these lands, 'in provintiam, quam nos Teutonice Deleminci vocamus, Sclavi autem Glomaci appellant', that Henry I made his victorious expedition (in 912). This piece of information became the basis for conjecturing how 'pagus iste nomine hoc signaretur', and thus the etymological origin of the name of the conquered tribal territory.[60]

These quotations suggest that *provincia* and *pagus* were synonyms; importantly, the name of such a unit is an ethnonym. Surprisingly, Thietmar abandons the terminology employed by Widukind of Corvey, in whose work, quoted in the chronicle, the territory is

[57] Thietmar VI, 57, pp. 395 (*Cilensi* used without *pagus*).

[58] Recently on this issue, see S. Rosik, *Najdawniejsza postać*, [in:] *Radices Silesiae*, pp. 67–71; Przemysław Wiszewski, *Region wrocławski – region śląski. Podziały terytorialne a kształtowanie wspólnoty regionalnej w XI – pierwszej połowie XIII w. Esej źródłowy*, 'Sobótka', 66 (2001), No. 3, pp. 12–16.

[59] For example *Hassegun* – see Thietmar, VII, 72, p. 571.

[60] Its etymology is based on the root Głomacz, see Thietmar I, 3, p. 7; see also another lection in *ibidem*, V, 36, p. 303: 'pagus, qui Zlomizi dicitur'.

called *Dalamancia*.[61] Therefore, Thietmar chose to treat territorial units synonymously with a particular human community, giving prominence to the latter aspect. The ethnonym *Daleminci*/*Glomaci* represents one type of name of such units,[62] and not the only one which is linked with an ethnonym.[63] In this context, it seems more likely that *Silensi* (*Cilensi*) is also a name – like other names ending with '-ci', '-zi', -si' – of a particular people, a tribe already positioned within the network of contemporary monarchies in the territories of the western Slavs.[64]

This conclusion is made problematic by Thietmar himself, who states that this *pagus* derived its name from the mountain, and thus not from the tribe. This observation has been made more viable by reading *Silensi* as the *ablativus* of *Silensis* (Silesian), and this version has held a dominant place in academic research, perpetuated by translating the phrase 'in pago Silensi' as 'in Schlesiergau'[65] or 'w kraju śląskim'.[66] In this context, 'Silesianess' would originally be associated with the mountain Ślęża and then extended on to *pagus* as an adjective emphasizing the central (ideologically) point. However, we should note here that a characteristic feature of Thietmar's chronicle is that he never inflects these adjectives (for example 'ad Diedesizi pagum', 'in pago Hassegun'),[67] so it seems unlikely to be true in the case of 'in pago Silensi'. Thus, it appears that there are no sufficient grounds to interpret *Silesi* as an *ablativus* of *Silensis*, though the deriving the name *pagus* from the mountain requires further etymological analysis.

Thietmar provides this information while describing the location of Niemcza: 'Posita est autem [haec] in pago Silensi, vocabulo hoc a quodam monte nimis excelso et grandi olim [sibi] indito'[68] ([it] is located in the land *Silensi*, and its name was given [to it] after a very high and large mountain). He claims, therefore, that the name was given 'a long time ago', or 'some time ago' (*olim*) which, although imprecise, seems unlikely to indicate that this could have happened in the times of Thietmar, when the territories were incorporated into the sphere of the Polish monarchy. It is worth noting here that in a later part of the sentence the chronicler states that in pagan times the mountain was worshipped by all local inhabitants;[69] pagan times, in the context of Thietmar's chronicle, end with the establishment of a Christian monarchy in a given area.[70]

[61] *Widukindi res gestae Saxonicae. Widukinds Sachsengeschichte*, ed. Rudolf Buchner, Darmstadt 1971 (*Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters* vol. 8), I, 17, p. 46.

[62] In this form in: Thietmar, I, 4, p. 9. Chudzice ('in pago Chutizi'; see II, 37: 'in pago Chutici'); and the Dziadoszanie (IV, 45, p. 203: 'ad Diedesizi pagum'; see VI, 57, p. 395: *Diedesi* – here without *pagus*).

[63] For example *ibidem* VI 23, p. 345: 'in pago Redirierun' (the Redarowie).

[64] See footnotes 44, 47, 49.

[65] *Thietmari Merseburgensis Episcopi Chronicon*, ed. Robert Holtzmann, transl. Werner Trillmich, 6. edition, Darmstadt 1992 (=Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters, vol. 9), VII, 59, p. 421.

[66] *Thietmar*, p. 554.

[67] *Ibidem* IV, 45, p. 203; VII, 72, p. 571.

[68] *Ibidem* VII, 59, p. 555.

[69] Literally: 'when the cursed paganism was practiced there', see *ibidem* VII, 59, p. 555. 'There' (*ibi*) refers to the *pagus* rather than to the mountain.

[70] Stanisław Rosik, *Interpretacja chrześcijańska religii pogańskich Słowian w świetle kronik niemieckich XI–XII wieku (Thietmar, Adam z Bremy, Helmold)*, Wrocław 2000 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis No. 2235. Historia 144), pp. 147 and following.

The etymological use of the name of the tribal land derived from its sacred pagan centre was an attractive theme for Thietmar, as emphasized by his similar treatment of the Głomacze. In this case, by explaining the name (*pagus*) *Silensi* Thietmar shows himself to be erudite; he may have repeated a particular topos, but the merit of his account in the context of historical study of nomenclature lies in linking the name of the territory with its sacred centre, in this case a mountain.

Thietmar's account should not therefore be taken as an answer to the question on the historical origin of the name *Silensi*. Even if the etymology is a genuine one (which is in line with one hypothesis, see below), it is provided by Thietmar based either on some local tale known to his contemporaries, or on the conjuncture (again, perhaps drawing on such tales) of the chronicler or an acquaintance, analogical to, for example, the case of Głomacze. Both solutions relate only to knowledge of Boleslaus the Brave's contemporaries and cannot be treated as valuable etymological evidence in academic research today.[71]

The very link between the name of the mountain and the territory may be treated as the basis for a study of the ideological importance of Ślęża as a sacred centre for local people (see below). The origin of the name of their land has sunk into oblivion. Rejecting the adjectival form of *Silensis* and considering its early pedigree as suggested by Thietmar, it seems most likely, by analogy to other western Slavic territorial names, that *Silensi* (*Cilensi*) was the original name of the Ślężanie tribe which found itself incorporated into the Piast state.

In this context, we should analyze the notes that appear in brackets in the above quotation which make the Dresden manuscript of the chronicle more legible. Due to the lack of the word *sibi* ('to it') unambiguously related to *pagus Silensi*, the original text emphasized the connection between the name (*vocabulum*), namely *Silensi*, with the mountain. It was only the addition of *sibi*, probably by Thietmar himself, that resulted in the interpretation that it was the *pagus* in which Niemcza lay that was given its name from the name of the mountain. However, as an ethnonym was probably used here, *sibi* does not change the core meaning of the etymological argument, but instead proves that *pagus* was for Thietmar most importantly a territory, even if it was used as the name of its inhabitants.

Pagus Silensi between the *barbaricum* and the regime of a Christian monarchy

Thietmar treated the worship of the holy mountain in *pagus Silensi* as a thing of the past, especially among the elites whose customs brought about a new order in this territory. This political change was marked by the founding of the Bishopric in Wrocław, which created a new, alternative (to the Ślęża mountain) sacred centre in this territory,

[71] But it can constitute indirect evidence, by confirming the uniqueness of the mountain in the eyes of Thietmar and his contemporaries, see S. Rosik, *Najdawniejsza postać*, pp. 72 and following.

but over a wider area. Importantly, we cannot be sure that Wrocław had belonged to *pagus Silensi* at all. Niemcza, on the other hand, raises no doubts in this respect; its military role was confirmed by Thietmar in 1017 and, importantly, it had its origins in the Great Moravian period; also, its nearby sites need to be considered in this case (such as, for instance, those in Gilów).[72]

In this context, it seems more likely that the main centres of the Silesian ecumene were located near the Ślęża. Based on the records contained in the so-called *Bavarian Geographer*, attributing 20 centres (*civitates*) to the Ślężanie, as well as providing analogical information on other territorial units (*regiones*), a view arises that the ecumene was in fact polycentric. In the case of this and other Silesian 'regions', the reported number of *civitates* is generally recognized by scholars as credible, at least in an approximate sense.[73] Such calculations are correct when based on an assumption that *regio* corresponds to a defined tribal unit, which is difficult to question in the case of the Ślężanie and their neighbours from the Odra basin. However, as the note does not give such details as the location of the ecumene and its peripheries, we should take into account that the list also contains centres of settlement which were within the sphere of influence of the tribes.

This is an important reservation as – assuming that *civitates* were fortified centres of local, neighbouring communities[74] – we cannot be certain if the first, pre-Piast Wrocław fortress was established near a settlement of the Ślężanie,[75] for the Odra river crossing could have lain outside their ecumene, which, as mentioned above, was most likely centred around the Ślęża. At any rate, there is no doubt that the rising status of Wrocław was an element of the new order which in the 11th and 12th centuries brought an end to the *barbaricum* and introduced the culture of the West in these territories. In the process, relics of the tribal past became incorporated into the culture of the new Piast state, making them essential components of the new Silesian identity which was destined to integrate the region in the following centuries.

[72] See for example Krzysztof Jaworski, *Znaleziska wielkomorawskie w Gilowie, Niemczy i Starym Książu na Dolnym Śląsku*, [in:] *Śląsk i Czechy a kultura wielkomorawska*, ed. Krzysztof Wachowski, Wrocław 1997, pp. 113–125.

[73] As opposed to those lying further north and east, where much larger numbers apply, see *Descriptio civitatum*, pp. 3 and following.

[74] While *civitates* are translated either as particular centres (e.g. *gords*) or as territories (e.g. districts), only the former interpretation seems fully justified here, especially in the context of an account on the Bulgars: 'Vulgarii regio est inmensa et populus multus, habens civitates V, eo quod multitudo ex eis sit et non sit eis opus civitates habere' (see *Descriptio civitatum*, p. 2) ('the Bulgars, whose land is vast and populous, have only five *civitates*, and it is because they are an enormous community and they do not need *civitates*'). In this context, *civitas* appears as a fortified centre rather than a territorial unit.

[75] We need to be cautious when referring to the *Bavarian Geographer* here: in the studies on the condition of the lands of Silesia in the 10th century this description is rather a source of analogies as to the structure and organisation of tribal communities rather than data on their exact number; it would be difficult to imagine that this number did not change over the years.

The heritage of the Śleżanie: the name of Silesia and its mountain (*Mons Silensis*). The significance of the rivers: the Ślęza and the Odra

Nomenclature based on the root of the ethnonym *Ślężanie* became the chief determinant of Silesian identity. Highlighting the difference between the 'Ślężanian' and the 'Silesian' substrates in interpreting the terminology of the 10–12th centuries is not a result of respect for variations in the contemporary language, but of respect towards the assumptions of historical reflection: considering the difference between the tribal communities and the later state regime which shaped Silesia as a region. For that reason, nomenclature containing an element of 'Silesianess' remains a part of the linguistic heritage of the Ślężanie. This, however, is a semiotic issue, as the (Śleżanie-)Silesian root has carried different messages over the centuries.

The stem 'śl-' in Silesian nomenclature is commonly associated with an Old European language substrate, meaning humidity, or an aquatic environment. Hence the strong position of the hypothesis that the name 'Silesia', and *de facto* the ethnonym *Ślężanie*, is connected with the river Ślęza,[76] by analogy to the Wiślanie, living by the Wisła river, or the Bużanie, living by the Bug river. According to this concept, the Ślężanie took over the nomenclature used by pre-Slavic inhabitants. However, the earliest record of the name Ślęza dates back to 1155 (*Selenza*),[77] therefore the claim that it served as a basis for the name of the people whose existence had been recorded some 300 years earlier, must remain a hypothesis. It is still possible that the hydronym was only established in the Slavic period.[78]

In the light of the above-mentioned analogies linking the hydronym with the ethnonym, the latter proposition seems less likely, but in the context of the special phenomenon of the Ślęża mountain, it should be nevertheless taken into account when discussing the origins of Silesia. The oldest records point to a name 'Ślęż' (*Slenz*),[79] which finds an analogical form in 12th-century Polabia: mount *Zlensgor*[80] contains this stem, while there were no rivers of a similar name in the vicinity. This example suggests that the holy mountain of the Ślężanie might have not acquired its name according to the sequence: river–land–mountain. It would be safer to assume that the Ślężanie took their name from

[76] See for example Lech A. Tyszkiewicz, *Wandali Silingi a Śląsk*, 'Sobótka', 51 (1996), No. 1-3, p. 334; Jürgen Udolph, *Der Name Schlesiens*, „Jahrbuch der schlesischen Friedrich-Wilhelm-Universität zu Breslau", 38-39 (1997–1998), Stuttgart 1998, p. 15–18.

[77] See the Wrocław Bishopric bull from 1155, in: KDŚ, vol. 1, No. 35, p. 90.

[78] This alternative line of thought would undermine the thesis that the remnants of the population connected with the Przeworsk culture were dominated by the more numerous (proto-) Slavs – see above.

[79] The names *Slenz*, *Zlenz* were recorded around the mid-13th century. See Stanisław Rospond, *Ślęża* (1), [in:] Słownik Starożytności Słowiańskich, eds Władysław Kowalenko, Gerard Labuda, Tadeusz Lehr-Spławiński, vol. 5, Wrocław 1975, p. 564. The current name 'Ślęża' (used after World War II) is based on this historical form. Historical and political forces most likely saw that 'Ślęża' was used instead of the more appropriate 'Ślęż' (see footnote 98).

[80] See Jerzy Nalepa (*Ślęża Góra na pograniczu wielecko-łużyckim*, 'Onomastica', 2 (1956), pp. 318–322) states that the name of the Lusatian *Zlensgor* mountain is connected with the boggy land in its vicinity.

some kind of water element whose form remains unknown. Thus, it is not beyond the realms of possibility that the role of the mountain as a fundamental element in the landscape of the Silesian ecumene was not secondary to that of the river.

The thesis concerning the myth-building potential of the Ślęża as a central place of the Silesian landscape is supported by clear evidence only in Thietmar's account. The Ślęża had continued to play a central role until the modern period, being typically called 'the Mountain of Silesia' or 'the Silesian Mountain',[81] with the first evidence of this perception dating back to the 12th century records, like for instance *Mons Silencij*.[82] In the following centuries it was employed in various legends (concerning the beginnings of the Piast dynasty[83] for example, or the Canons Regular of Blessed Virgin Mary in Wrocław at Piasek/Sand Island[84]) as a mountain at the heart of Silesia, but at least from the 14th century it began to lose these kinds of associations as a new name – *Zobtenberg*, or 'the mountain by Sobótka' – was beginning to be used.[85] Eventually, in the modern era, the latter name replaced the former one,[86] although the mountain maintained its significant role for the Silesians as a landmark and a characteristic feature of their land, evidence of which can be found in Stein's *Silesiographia* during the Renaissance.[87]

Compared to the tribal period, the Ślęza river also became less important to settlement processes as was the case of other Odra tributaries upon which anthroporegions were located. Instead, the Odra became a vital communication channel, but firstly (and

[81] In *Spominki wrocławskie*, ed. Aleksander Semkowicz, [in:] Monumenta Poloniae Historica, vol. 3, 2 edition, Warszawa 1961, p. 734 (footnote) from the 15th/16th-century the highest mountain of Silesia is mentioned: '*qui mons Silentii appellatur*', which literary means: 'which is called the Mountain of Silence'. The word 'Silentii', however, is probably related to the name 'the Mountain of Silesia' (*mons* 'Szlesie', *mons Silesiae*), which was still used at that time; see footnote 81.

[82] KDŚ, No. 22, p. 54.

[83] A good example can be found in a 14th-century version of the file of St Hedwig, in the legend of a Tatar Empress in Silesia, according to which the Piasts came from the Ślęża, and not from Gniezno; see *Vita s. Hedvigis* (*vita maior*), ed. Aleksander Semkowicz, [in:] MPH, vol. 4, 2nd edition, Warszawa 1961, p. 561 (footnote): '*in dy Schlesien an dy grantze des Czottenberges, etwan der Furstenbergk genandt, von welchem berge dy alden Cronicken sagen, das dy alden edeln fursten in Schlesien und Polan ire ursprungliche geburt haben und uff dy czeyt mechtiger schlosz czwey yn Schlesien seyn gelegen, als nemlichen Furstenbergk und Lewbes…'*; see Marek Cetwiński, *Chronica abbatum beatae Marie Virginis in arena o początkach klasztoru*, [w:] *idem*, *Metamorfozy śląskie*, Częstochowa 2002, pp. 93-94.

[84] *Chronica abbatum beatae Marie Virginis in arena*, ed. Gustav A. Stenzel, [in:] *Scriptores rerum Silesiacarum*, vol. 2, Breslau 1839, pp. 163 and following; discussion, see M. Cetwiński, *Chronica abbatum…* 87–94; Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Z dyskusji nad początkami klasztorów w średniowiecznej historiografii śląskiej*, [in:] *Origines*, pp. 171–178; Przemysław Wiszewski, *Zakonnicy i dworzanie – tradycje fundacji klasztorów w średniowiecznym dziejopizarstwie śląskim (XIII-XV w.)*, [in:] *Origines*, pp. 191 and following.

[85] See Stanisław Rosik, *Mons Silensis (Ślęża) a ukształtowanie się Śląska. Historyczny proces wobec najdawniejszej tradycji*", [in:] *Ślężańskie światy*, eds. Wojciech Kunicki, Joanna Smereka, Wrocław 2011, p. 69.

[86] Both names were in use still in the 16th century, as proved by a passage for the 'Chronicle of Benedictus': 'supra Montem Szlesie alias Czotenbergk' – see *Kronika książąt polskich*, ed. Zygmunt Węclewski, [in:] *Monumenta Poloniae Historica*, vol. 3, Lwów 1878, p. 558, footnote.

[87] Bartholomeus Stenus, *Descriptio tocius Silesie et civitatis regie Vratislaviensis*, ed. Hermann Markgraf, Breslau 1902 (=Scriptores rerum Silesiacarum, vol. 17), p. 5: '*unum, quod in mediterrenea longius extenditur, Montem Sequacem sua lingwa vocant, cui et ejusdem nominis oppidum subjacet; sequacis autem cognomen obtinuit, quod quocunque proficiscentes prosequi propter altitudinem videatur…*'. The aforementioned weakening influence of the Ślęża on Silesian myth was probably related to the processes of colonization and urbanization, see S. Rosik, *Mons Silensis (Ślęża)*, p. 69 and following.

more importantly for our period of interest) it acted as a defence line, with a system of strongholds acting as basic centres of state administration.[88] We discussed above the fundamental role of Wrocław as the key centre for the post-tribal state and Church regime, but ultimately it was the concentration of power in this very centre that hindered 'silensation' processes in the region.

Silesia steps out from under the shadow of Wrocław

The *Chronicle of Gallus Anonymous* shows that it was the central role of Wrocław rather than the Silesian element that mostly determined the sphere of the state and Church in the territories of our interest at the turn of the 12th century. Comes of Wrocław, Magnus, in the description of the events of 1093 is characterised as holder of ducal title, and the assembly under his leadership took decisions of the highest importance (for example regarding the support for Zbigniew in his struggle for power in Poland).[89] With a high degree of probability, we can assume (see above) that at that time the province of Wrocław, territorially identical to that of the Bishopric, had an alternative, less popular name which contained a Silesian element (*regio Zleznensis*).

In that period, 'Silesianness' was most likely associated with the former territory of the Śleżanie, and therefore the whole state and Church province had to be called by the name of its capital, Wrocław. This name was even more attractive considering that the land was in the early stages of Christianization, and using the name Silesia would have meant referring to the Ślęża, the worship of which was probably still practised by the local population. The idea of Piotr Włostowic to set up a monastery on the mountain can be explained, among other things, by his striving to suppress its cult, as mentioned by Thietmar. In this context, the figure of St. John the Baptist played a significant role, both as the patron of the Diocese and for the missionary activity in a country that was so strongly marked, with its very name, by the pagan tradition.

The situation changed within the generation of Boleslaus the Wrymouth's grandsons when Boleslaus the Tall (Bolesław Wysoki), in the Lubiąż Charter of 1175, established a ducal title for Silesia. The motivation for this decision, maintained by Henry the Bearded (Henryk Brodaty), remains a matter of speculation. Boleslaus, having returned to his patrimony, could in this way manifest independence from his uncles, Polish dukes who were responsible for the defeat of his father, Ladislas the Exile.[90] One should mention here a charter issued for Cistercian monks who came from Germany and in whose consciousness it was not the entirety of Poland, which at the time still included

[88] See for example Sławomir Moździoch, *Castrum munitissimum Bytom. Lokalny ośrodek władzy w państwie wczesnopiastowskim*, Warszawa 2002, pp. 64–67. Earlier, a comprehensive study: *idem*, *Organizacja gospodarcza państwa wczesnopiastowskiego na Śląsku. Studium archeologiczne*, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1990.

[89] Gall II, 4, pp. 70 and following.

[90] Recently on this issue, P. Wiszewski, *Region*, pp. 20–23.

Silesia, but Silesia itself that came to function as their homeland. On the other hand, promoting this Silesian tradition seems to be significant for international relations, specifically to foster closer ties with the Holy Roman Empire.

Other Polish rulers treated the dominance of the Empire more as a necessary evil (especially the activity of Barbarossa), whereas Boleslaus the Tall and Henry the Bearded were much more favourably inclined towards increased collaboration with the Germans, which did not mean – especially in the case of the latter ruler – withdrawing from Polish politics. Rather than a manifestation of separatism, this approach should be considered an effort to gain recognition for the rulers' own lands, analogies of which can also be found in the titles of the rulers of other parts of the fragmented Piast state.[91] Thus, the grounds were being prepared to found the separate tradition of the Silesian Piasts, the development of which saw some anti-Polish elements in the following centuries (for example, the dynasty being said to have originated not in Gniezno but on the Ślęża).[92] This was not yet the case in the times of Boleslaus the Tall or Henry the Bearded, but a question arises as to the social background of such traditions.

It is possible that magnate elites were key in this respect, as they were engaged in patronage on a regional scale and thus enjoyed a unique position in the region.[93] A prominent example of this elite, Piotr Włostowic (d. ca. 1151) is believed to have given rise to a local current in Latin literature in the 12th century. A key work to prove this was to be the so-called *Carmen Mauri* (The Song of the Moor), which was to praise this magnate as patron. The existence of the piece, however, is only indicated in *Chronica Poloniae Maioris* (*The Chronicle of Greater Poland*), from the 13th century at the earliest, on the basis of which it would be rather difficult to determine its Silesian origin. Simultaneously, based on the hypothesis whereby the title Moor was connected with the Benedictine Monastery of St. Vincent in Wrocław, a reconstruction of the song was created in the 20th century. This hypothetical reconstruction was published in the series *Monumenta Poloniae Historica*, as an appendix to *Cronica Petri comitis*, known from the first decades of the 16th century and used in the process of 'reconstruction'.[94] However, the current state of research does not lend enough evidence to support the hypothesis regarding the Silesian origin of *Carmen Mauri*, nor to date it to the 12th century, but most controversial is the linking of the piece with the aforementioned chronicle from a much later period.[95] Therefore, no sufficient evidence exists to support the thesis that a Silesian

[91] See for example the above, footnote 49.

[92] For example Marek Cetwiński, *Piastowie rodowitymi Ślązakami: średniowieczna „tradycja wynaleziona"*, [in:] *Radices*, pp. 129–134; see above, footnote 81.

[93] On their regional identity in the 12th century, recently: P. Wiszewski, *Region*…, pp. 19 and following, 23.

[94] See *Cronica Petri comitis Poloniae wraz z tzw. Carmen Mauri*, ed. Marian Plezia, Kraków 1951 (=Monumenta Poloniae historica, n.s., vol. 3). About the reconstruction of *Carmen Mauri*, see M. Plezia, *Wstęp*, [in:] *ibidem*, pp. I-LXIII.

[95] In the light of current research we can only conclude that some earlier poem was incorporated into the *Chronicle*, whose volume, not to mention the origin, remains unknown. Thus, linking the poem with *Carmen Mauri* is merely one element of the hypothesis whose components include not only the Wrocław

literary culture had already developed in the 12th century with the help of local, non-Piast elites.

Moreover, we should take into account the fact that contemporary elites owned land all over Piast Poland and carried out foundation actions in many locations. A good example comes from Piotr Włostowic himself, who became so strongly associated with Silesia only in the later Silesian tradition, and only for the sake of his office.[96] In this situation, we should consider that promoting the title *dux Zlesie* by the rulers might have been a tool to build this tradition and root it in the consciousness of the elites; Boleslaus the Tall was able to use the Cistercians to help him in this regard. These issues require further research. Here, we should emphasize that at the end of the period of our interest the Silesian element began to prevail over the Wrocław one in terms of defining the region's identity (for the time being, of course, this region did not extend beyond the Przesieka), thereby becoming a vital factor for fostering social ties in the area.

Conclusions

The above analysis of factors behind the formation of Silesia as a region within the monarchies of the 10th–12th centuries suggests that a principal driver of this complex process was the liquidation and re-evaluation of the significance of tribal components, promoted by the development of the state structures and Christianization.

A key determinant of regional identity, the region's name, while belonging to the cultural heritage of the tribal period, was not only given a new territorial dimension but most importantly received a dramatically different ideological meaning; it became an element of manifold traditions, not only of Silesian ones, as suggested by the *Chronicle of Wincenty Kadłubek* – a work which itself helped shape these traditions in terms of historiography. The central and myth-building element of the Silesian landscape, the Ślęża mountain, underwent a similar transformation as far as its cultural interpretation is concerned.

In the period discussed here a clear role in shaping settlement patterns in the region was played by the anthroporegions, being of ancient origin and closely connected to the local river network. In comparison to tribal times, the role of the Odra grew to become the axis for the state and Church administration, based on a system of strongholds. The integration of the region focused around the centre in Wrocław, but the process was

(Ołbin) origin of the piece but also a conviction that local Silesian literature was developed in a Slavic environment with a contribution of a representative of Romanesque culture (the 'Moor'), and as early as in the 12th century, before the Germanization of the Silesian elites (such thinking is clearly influenced by the socio-political discourse in Silesian historiography of the 19th and 20th century, now – hopefully – outmoded). For more on this issue, see Marek Cetwiński, *Historia i polityka. Teoria i praktyka mediewistyki na przykładzie badań dziejów Śląska*, Kraków 2008, pp. 172–191.

[96] In a copy dated to 1209 (after 1261) called 'comes Zlezie', see KDŚ, No. 243, p. 292.

slowed down by the fragmentation (after 1138) of the territory, which lay in one diocese and earlier, quite likely, within one state province.

What was also key to the formation of the region was that in the 2nd half of the 12th century and in the early 13th century the concept of 'Silesianess' was narrowed down to the territories of Lower Silesia, and that regional Silesian titles began to prevail over Wrocław ones, which meant a revival of the old Silesian naming tradition in these territories. Thus, Silesia as a region became a lasting element of the social and political life of Poland in the age of fragmentation, although the area of the upper Odra river was to be 'Silesianased' only in the 15th century.

In fact, in the case of most of the aforementioned aspects of regional formation the tribal roots had already been cut away in the period when the region covered only the territories of the present Lower Silesia. It is worth emphasizing this as today in Poland the name 'Silesia' is most commonly associated, due to various socio-political initiatives, with Upper Silesia. This proves that following the origins discussed in the present article, the formation of the various Silesian identities has been chiefly determined not by tribal factors but by later phenomena, to a variable extent linked to the political sphere, especially in the era of national states.

Therefore, what gains particular importance is the postulate that it is necessary to demythologize the views on the role of tribal heritage in shaping the cultural character of the region. This should be emphasized especially in the light of various scientifically-dubious ideas, based on unverified speculations and myths, which promote an unfounded image of the prominent role of *barbaricum* in the historical genesis of the land. The best example of this can be found in the renaming of the central mountain of the region to 'Ślęża' over sixty years ago.[97]

[97] Renaming the mountain officially to 'Ślęża' after World War II constituted an acknowledgement of its tribal origin as well as of the oldest records of its name (*Slenz*, see above, footnote 80), and was an element of the Polonization of the territories incorporated to Poland in 1945. One should remember, though, that the mountain already had a Polish name: Sobótka (with a Latin counterpart being *Mons Soboticus*, German: *Zobtenberg*), with which the tradition of Silesian origins had been linked. To give an excellent example, the title of one of the most important Polish historical journals published since 1946 was given the name *Sobótka* ('Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka'). Thus, the new name of the mountain contained a purely Slavic element, referring to the Ślężanie. The renaming operation was similar – though not identical – to the attempts to introduce the name Silingberg before World War II, in order to promote a belief that it had been the holy mountain of the Silingi (see M. Cetwiński, *Metamorfozy*, p. 264).

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The administrative structure of Silesia as a determinant of legal and constitutional cohesion (12th–15th century)

Abstract:

An analysis of crucial legal and systemic issues indicates that the most important aspect in the formation of Silesian regional cohesion was the 'transformation' that took place in the 13th century, including the reception of German law and the institution of the self-governing municipality. The main factor determining the functionality of administrative and judicial structures was the proceeding territorial fragmentation. In the 12th century the provincial *comites*, appointed by the *principes*, as well as the Bishops of Wrocław, performed the function of intermediaries between Silesia and the rest of the monarchy. After 1163, the Silesian dukes concentrated on the particular needs of their territorial dominions that were taking shape, and were sometimes also used as power bases for carrying out statewide political concepts. Hence the initiatives undertaken for the purpose of consolidating the duchies in their administrative and economic dimensions, utilizing innovative socio-systemic mechanisms such as the establishment of new towns, construction of castles and administrative reforms of both the Castellans and Weichbilds, as well as the promotion of migration by foreign knights.

Yet another breakthrough took place when the Silesian duchies fell under either the direct or feudal dominion of the Bohemian Crown. Seeing as the House of Luxembourg was not interested in the creation of centralized institutions and did not interfere in internal relations between the duchies, institutional differences deepened. Unification policies took shape only within individual duchies, with the limitations of such policies and a focus on short-term solutions being evident. Attempts to make the administrative structures uniform were rare, which is especially evident in the context of incorporated areas. Rapid changes in the feudal fragmentation also proved a hindrance to unification activities. Remaining within a unified Church structure and single political organism was, however, a cohesive factor.

Keywords:

medieval history, administrative structure, government of medieval Silesia

Duke, *comes*, bishop: 12th-century structures of administration

During the early reign of the Piast dynasty, Silesia's position on the political map of Poland was merely peripheral – as German medievalists had put it, the region was labelled as 'remote from ruler'. 12th-century sources do not indicate any particular Piast influences on Silesian domestic policy; they instead focus on their military contributions during the wars with the Holy Roman Empire and Bohemia. The only believable account of a superior ruler's sojourn in the province bearing no relation to any military activity is most probably the visit of *princeps* Boleslaus the Curly on the occasion of the consecration

ceremony of a monastic church at Ołbin in 1149.[1] What is more, the Piast dukes were not keen to engage in any large-scale construction investments within the province. It is worth noting that the two most important Church institutions of the Silesian capital until the last quarter of the 12th century – excluding the bishopric – were the monasteries of Benedictines and Regular Canons, and they were founded by magnates rather than dukes. A three-sided agreement signed between Gniezno, Cracow and Płock, the main power centres of the monarchy of Ladislaus Herman and Boleslaus the Wrymouth, slightly marginalized the importance of Wrocław. Nonetheless, the city was included in Gallus' list of '*sedes regni principales*', after Cracow and Sandomierz as the third capital of the southern district, bestowed on the young Boleslaus by his father. This seemingly peripheral and borderline – yet in military confrontations with Bohemia and the Reich somehow primary – position of Silesia in the first century of the so-called 'second Piast monarchy's' existence must have influenced its administrative structure, as well as the power of local governors and the consolidation of the local political community. It is probably no coincidence that 12th-century sources focus mainly on the governors of Silesia and Mazovia, the two provinces that were most vulnerable to outside attacks: the *voivodes* Magnus (who exercised power over both provinces), Żyro and – at the beginning of the 13th century – Krystyn. However, nothing definite can be said about the scope of their political and military power.

The *Chronicles of Gallus Anonymous*, containing a description of the dramatic events of the last decade of the 11th century, provide us with a unique perspective on the political structure of the province of Wrocław, governed by the *comes* Magnus. His sovereign power over the province, limited – as one would expect – as a rule only by the duke's will, was discredited, according to Gallus Anonymous, by Count Palatine Sieciech, who violated the accepted customs by appointing officials who were subordinate to himself rather than to Magnus. The superior status of the Wrocław governor was expressed by the title *dux* used in reference to Magnus by the chronicler, which in this case probably refers to a voivode, not a duke.[2] Magnus' decisions on the most crucial matters were, however, limited by the will of the local political community expressed at assemblies. Therefore we may say that, on a local scale, these political relations mirrored the three-sided system typical of early proto-parliamentarism: the *comes*/duke – the magnates – the assembled *populus*.[3] It is reasonable to suppose that the last of these three

[1] SUb., vol. 1, No. 19. Participation of sovereigns in the ceremonies of consecration of church buildings or their sections was an important element of political ideology at least from the times of the Ottonian rule.

[2] Proof that this was not merely Gallus' literary initiative is that the chronicler Wincenty Kadłubek also refers to Żyro as the Mazovian *comes*, see: Karol Modzelewski, *Comites, principes, nobiles. Struktura klasy panującej w świetle terminologii Anonima Galla*, [in:] *Cultus et cognitio. Studia z dziejów średniowiecznej kultury*, ed. Stefan K. Kuczyński, Warsaw 1976, pp. 403–412; controversial views on Magnus' Anglo-Saxon dynastic origins: Tomasz Jurek, *Kim był komes wrocławski Magnus?*, [in:] *Venerabiles, nobiles et honesti. Studia z dziejów społeczeństwa Polski średniowiecznej*, eds. Andrzej Radzimiński et al., Toruń 1997, pp. 181–192.

[3] A concise typology of the proto-parliamentary assemblies of the Early Middle Ages: Timothy Reuter, *Assembly politics in western Europe from eighth century to the twelfth*, [in:] *idem*, *Medieval Polities and Modern Mentalities*, Cambridge 2006, pp. 193–216.

aforementioned parties – composed of freemen – following the example of the Bohemian '*milites secundi ordinis*' or of the Pomeranian warriors known from the *Life of Saint Otto of Bamberg*, did not constitute an independent political power in the 12th century, but adhered to the opinions and approved of the decisions made by the members of the magnate elite.

The two-level administrative structure of the extensive Piast monarchy, in which provinces, territorial units of a higher rank, existed alongside the castle wards, should be recognized as proven beyond a doubt.[4] Also, the view expressed by Janusz Bieniak seems plausible – he pointed to the analogical status of the provincial *comites* and the younger members of the Piast dynasty who, upon reaching an appropriate age, often inherited power over certain districts during their father's lifetime. For this reason, the view that a new senior of the dynasty appointed his eldest son Boleslaus the Long as governor of the Silesian province as early as in 1138 seems reasonable.[5] Little is known, however, about the exact administrative and political structure of 12th-century Silesia. What is regarded by most scholars as the main source of controversy is the existence of the so-called March of Głogów. Mention of it can be found in both the chronicles of Wincenty Kadłubek, where it is described as the 'share' granted to Conrad, the youngest son of Ladislaus the Exile, and in a diploma issued by the Emperor Lotar III (1134) and presented in Merseburg, which mentions Henry *marchio Glogoviensis* as one of the witnesses among the Saxon and Bavarian magnates.[6] Despite the views expressed in Polish literature, it seems quite doubtful that Henry was actually a member of the local political elite. These doubts are justified by both his very name (German names were not used at that time by Polish magnates) and the fact that it is included in the list of witnesses of the imperial document issued for the Bishopric of Bamberg, where he is mentioned as one of the secular witnesses alongside Conrad Wettin, the Margrave of Meissen, and Dippold from Vohburg and Cham, the Margrave of Nordgau. Therefore, he either belonged to the Reich's aristocracy or possessed dynastic origins. His kinship or affinity with the Piasts through the person of Salomea of Berg should be considered as the most likely, although here we should exclude her brother, Graf Henry II of Berg. What we assume to be most likely is the link between Margrave Henry and Salomea's nephew – the son of her sister Richeza and Ladislaus I, the Duke of Bohemia. It was most probably he who received from his uncle the territory of Głogów as a benefice during his sojourn in Poland.[7]

[4] Especially Tadeusz Lalik, *Organizacja grodowo – prowincjonalna w Polsce XI i początków XII wieku,* [in:] *idem*, *Studia średniowieczne*, Warsaw 2006, pp. 386–391.

[5] Janusz Bieniak, *Powstanie księstwa opolsko – raciborskiego jako wyraz przekształcania się Polski w dzielnicową poliarchię*, [in:] *Sacra Silentii provincia. 800 lat dziedzicznego księstwa opolskiego (1202–2002),* ed. Anna Pobóg–Lenartowicz, Opole 2003, p. 53.

[6] SUb., vol. 1, No. 8, cf. Tadeusz Lalik, *Marchie w Polsce XII wieku*, 'Kwartalnik Historyczny', 73 (1966), pp. 818–824.

[7] An analogical solution was to grant the land of Kłodzko as a benefice to the young Boleslaus the Wrymouth by his uncle, the Duke of Bohemia Břetislaus II. Supporting the sons of Vladislaus I, the nephews

Tadeusz Lalik dates the separation of this administrative unit from the Silesian province to the years 1124–1134, and its demise to the beginning of the reign of Henry the Bearded. He also opined that the separation was caused mainly by military considerations. Even so, the issue remains cloudy. The very usage of the title *margrave*, found in two independent sources separated by several decades, suggests that the March of Głogów was a considerably durable administrative unit. It would be also reasonable to consider whether it was not *comes* Wojslaw, mentioned by Cosmas as *prefectus urbis Glogov,* who enjoyed the title of margrave before it was granted to Henry.[8] What distinguished the central position of Głogów on a regional scale was the establishment of a chapter, which had probably taken place as early as during the reign of Boleslaus the Wrymouth. This would make it one of the oldest ecclesiastical institution of its kind in Poland. If one acknowledges the views linking the foundation of the Głogów chapter with the person of Boleslaus the Wrymouth, or rather *comes* Wojslaw,[9] then one should also acknowledge the fact that Głogów achieved a status equal to that of other urban centres of Silesia and later shares of dukes, such as Sandomierz, Kalisz and Wiślica, as early as in the first quarter of the 12th century.[10] Another argument supporting views on the independent status of the Głogów province in the 12th century concerns its economic superiority (proven recently by Borys Paszkiewicz), which was manifested by the fact that as early as in the 13th century Głogów belonged to a separate monetary province, with the *denarius* as its currency, which naturally linked it more closely with Greater Poland than with the remaining lands of Silesia.[11]

of the Duchess Salomea of Berg, as potential claimants to the Czech throne was in the interest of Wrymouth because of the ongoing conflict with the then ruler of Bohemia, Sobieslaus I.

[8] *Cosmae Cronica Boemorum*, p. 231.

[9] Tomasz Jurek, *Kto i kiedy ufundował kolegiatę głogowską*, 'Sobótka', 49 (1994), No. 1/2, pp. 21–35, in an otherwise convincing analysis of sources showed that the information about the early foundation of the collegiate comes from a presently missing note from Głogów. However, what raises doubts is the view that the first one to attribute the famous foundation act to Wojslaw was the 16th century writer of annals, whereas the name of the founder mentioned in the note does not include the word '*dux*' – implying Boleslaus the Wrymouth. If a 12th-century note had actually been composed this way, it would not have performed its basic commemorative function. That is why we presume that if we indeed want to acknowledge the existence of such an early-dated note of the collegiate's foundation, we need to establish that it contained the name Wojslaw together with the title *dux*. Analogous is the ducal title (or rather the voivode title) of the Wrocław *comes* Magnus, found in Gallus' chronicles.

[10] Similar Bohemian examples prove clearly that both in the 11th century and at the outset of the 12th century the chapters were founded mainly in significant administrative and political centres (Wyszehrad, Litomierzyce, Sadska) and in the seats of duchies (Mělnik). On the foundation of the collegiate see Tadeusz Lalik, *Początki kolegiaty głogowskiej*, [in:] *Ze studiów nad średniowiecznym Głogowem i Krosnem*, Zielona Góra 1970, pp. 63–73; Henryk Gerlic, *Kapituła głogowska w dobie piastowskiej i jagiellońskiej (1120–1526)*, Gliwice 1993, pp. 14–22; excavations in the area of the Gothic collegiate church revealed the existence of a small Roman temple constructed in two stages, identified with the 12th-century castle church, cf. Olgierd Czerner, *Badania kolegiaty w Głogowie*, [in:] *Osadnictwo i architektura ziem polskich w dobie zjazdu gnieźnieńskiego*, eds. Andrzej Buko, Zygmunt Świechowski, Warszawa 2000, pp. 355–358.

[11] Borys Paszkiewicz, *Początki mennictwa głogowskiego*, [in:] *Glogovia Maior. Wielki Głogów między blaskiem dziejów a cieniem ruin*, eds Bogusław Czechowicz, Małgorzata Konopnicka, Głogów – Zielona Góra 2010, pp. 65–66.

Imprecise and unclear terminology does not make it easier to inquire about the status of particular castle centres and forms of their management in the 12th and 13th centuries. It is rather difficult, for instance, to interpret the expression *potestas Legnicensis* as mentioned in the Lubiąż forgery based on which tithes were paid to the Lubiąż monastery by its founder.[12] It is hard to determine whether this term implies a 'regular' castle area (as claimed by Marta Młynarska-Kaletynowa), or a territorial unit of a higher rank, somehow comparable to the Wrocław province or the March of Głogów.[13] The status of Legnica, where Henry the Bearded had already erected a western European-style brick palatium, seems to be considerably greater than that of other castellan castles in 13th-century Silesia. The aforementioned premises lead us to presume that alongside the political community focused around the urban centre of Wrocław – whose existence is unquestionably proven by the chronicler Anonymous called Gallus – there might have existed analogous communities whose political and judicial centres were located in other important Silesian castles. The existence of those supra-local structures might have been legitimized by the still ephemeral 12th-century dynastic divisions. On the other hand, it could also have been the allocation of provinces that generated the formation of connected institutions. The insufficient number of sources and deduction *per analogiam* prevent us from finding a good answer to these questions.

Castles and castellans

Another issue concerning the Piast kingdom on a global scale is the still-unsolved question of the genesis and function of castellanies. The scholarly consensus as to the formation of this basic administrative structure of the so-called second Piast monarchy in the second half of the 11th century was shattered by the ideas of Sławomir Gawlas, who sees the castellanies – in the context of 13th-century sources – as rather a product of the complex administrative-political reforms from the second half of the 12th and outset of the 13th centuries. Gawlas advocated the view earlier formulated by Marek Cetwiński, that the appearance of the title *castellanus* in Silesian sources is an indication of socio-political developments.[14] At the same time, he identified the first symptoms of the early stage of the process of feudalization of Silesian offices, claiming that in the 13th century these functioned as benefices, or castle fiefs. There is no doubt a castellany had existed before this period in Silesia – this is proven by both written records, such as the Papal Bull of Adrian IV from 1155, and material relics. Nonetheless, because of the scarcity of historical records from before the outset of the 13th century, it is difficult to define its fiscal, administrative and judicial functions. The study of these documents for relics of

[12] SUb., vol. 1, No. 45.
[13] Marta Młynarska - Kaletynowa, *Potestas Legnicensis*, [in:] *Cultus et cognitio*, pp. 393–401.
[14] Marek Cetwiński, *Kasztelanie i kasztelanowie na Śląsku w XIII i XIV wieku*, [in:] *Studia z dziejów polskiego średniowiecza*, Częstochowa 2001 (first ed. 1989), pp. 255–275.

the territorial and tribal structure of Silesia in the pre-state period has proven rather fruitless, mainly because the archaeological dating of the majority of the castles generally indicates that they were raised mostly in the second half of the 10th century or at the outset of the 11th century.[15] The advances in recent decades made in archaeological research on early medieval castles, focusing mainly on centres of local importance in the earliest phase of their construction at the very outset of statehood, do not provide sufficient material to extend our knowledge of the vast range of social phenomena of the time. For instance, the discovery of a substantial amount of carbonized corn in the castle area points to two different scenarios: either the place was used to store food supplies collected from the population, or supplies were gathered there in the event of war and were funded from the assets of the sovereign magnate.[16] What should be emphasized here is the continuity of the government structure, which is best illustrated by the list of castle centres contained in two papal bulls for the Bishopric of Wrocław from 1155 and 1245:[17] twelve out of seventeen castles (including the individually mentioned Sądowel and Koźle) specified in the first bull also appeared in the second one. What is remarkable is that local names, most difficult to interpret unequivocally, were erased from the bull's text and replaced with the new centres of governance, the location of which raises no doubts.[18] On this basis it can be concluded that, besides extending the list of the castellanies controlled by the Bishop of Wrocław – the 1155 bull was evidently incomplete or included only the borderland centres (which would explain the omission of Wrocław, Opole and Legnica) – it is also possible to distinguish on this basis the existence of a process of petrification of the Silesian governance structure at the turn of 12th and 13th centuries; this does not, however, mean that in the latter period this structure did not undergo any transformations.[19] It is impossible to disagree with Sławomir Gawlas, who opined that 'the office of castellan also must have evolved in the 13th century,' and that 'we must consider the *ad hoc* corrections of the centres' networks and attempts at their reorganization according to a better-thought-out strategy'.[20]

Is it possible that the crucial reorganization of the administrative structure took place in the period between the dates of the two Wrocław bulls, at the close of the 12th

[15] Sławomir Moździoch, *Organizacja gospodarcza państwa wczesnopiastowskiego na Śląsku, Studium archeologiczne*, Wrocław 1990, pp. 48–50. The results of the author's later research in Bytom Odrzański and Ryczyna, based on dendrochronological dating, prove that those castles were elevated in 1080s, therefore it seems to be appropriate to associate them with the Piast conquest., see *idem, Castrum munitissimum Bytom*, pp. 184–189; Sławomir Moździoch, Magdalena Przysiężna-Pizarska, *Gród Recen – refugium episcopi*, [in:] *Milicz – Clavis Regni Poloniae. Gród na pograniczu*, ed. Justyna Kolenda, Wrocław 2008, pp. 249–252.

[16] See S. Moździoch, *Castrum munitissimum*, pp. 193–194.

[17] SUb., vol. 1, No. 28; SUb., vol. 2, ed. Winfried Irgang, Köln-Wien 1977, No. 287.

[18] In the bull from the year 1245 we do not find the castles *Gramolin, Godivice, Szobolezske* nor *Sezesko*.

[19] On the organization of the new districts in the 13th century: i.e., Marta Młynarska-Kaletynowa, *Z zagadnień zarządu terytorialnego Śląska w XIII wieku. na Ślęży, w Urazie i Oleśnicy*, 'Archaeologia Historica Polona', 15/2, 2005, pp. 125–137.

[20] Sławomir Gawlas, *O kształt zjednoczonego Królestwa. Niemieckie władztwo terytorialne a geneza społecznoustrojowej odrębności Polski*, Warsaw 1996, p. 74.

century? The point of departure for the concept of the management structure's reformation at the outset the 13th century is the fact that documents of Henry I the Bearded from the years 1202–1203 abound in references to officials of territorial management named *castellani*: in the diploma issued for the Monastery of Lubiąż we find that this title was given to Imbram Gniewomirowic, *castellan* of Ryczyn, and to Stefan, *castellan* of Żagań, who, on behalf of the duke, demarcated the goods bestowed upon the abbey. The list of witnesses includes the castellans of Lubusz, Żagań, Głogów, Bolesławiec, Legnica, Nowogród Bobrzański and Sądowel. The diploma awarded to the Cistercian nuns of Trzebnica (from the same year) extends the aforementioned list by the castellans of Bytom Odrzański, Bardo and Krosno Odrzańskie.[21] It is not difficult to notice that those dignitaries managed the western part of Henry's realm. In the remaining Silesian castles, including those located in the areas controlled by the Dukes of Racibórz and Opole, castellans appeared about two decades later. From then on we may say that the presence of dignitaries called castellans was permanent. That said, here also we encounter certain terminological inconsistencies as far as the Silesian dukes are concerned: they present the most numerous and most distinguished category of witnesses, which is illustrated by the fact that in Henry's diplomas their names appear before those of court officials.[22]

The interesting and credible concept presented by Sławomir Gawlas, based on comparative material from the area of the Reich, can therefore be neither easily refuted nor supported by other indigenous historical sources. It touches on the same methodological dilemmas as in the case of other historiographical debates on the political foundations of medieval Europe: the origin of the institution of the county and the competences of the Carolingian counts in the eastern part of the Frankish Empire in the 9th century.[23] The concept of redeveloping the administrative structure of Silesia at the outset of the 13th century is definitely more vivid in terms of social, legal and constitutional transformations than in the case of other districts of the Piast state. Numerous examples of the innovative policies of the Silesian dukes, i.e. supporting the migration of knights and settlers, establishing settlements under German law and introducing new types of defensive and residential stone architecture, make it appear likely that they modelled their approach on that of the burgrave administration in the imperial territories of Pleissenland and Eger, so

[21] SUb., vol. 1, No. 83.

[22] Anna Doroszewska, *Otoczenie Henryka Brodatego i Jadwigi jako środowisko społeczne*, Warsaw 1978, pp. 27–30.

[23] For instance: the appearance of a substantial number of references to the Alemannic grafs in the Sangallensis documents issued during the reign of Ludwik Pobożny (the Pious) was explained by Michael Borgolte, (*Geschichte der Grafschaften Alemaniens in fränkischer Zeit*, Sigmaringen 1984 (=Vorträge und Forschungen, Sonderband vol. 31)) as a result of the extensive administrative reform in the first decades of the 9th century; whereas for his polemicist Hans K. Schulze (*Grundprobleme der Grafschaftverfassung. Kritische Bemerkungen zu einer Neuerscheinung*, 'Zeitschrift für Württembergische Landesgeschichte', 44 (1985), pp. 265–282) this was caused merely by the reform of the chancellery customs in Sankt Gallen.

well-known to the sons of Ladislaus the Exile.[24] This has to be interpreted as a drive to consolidate and improve control over the subordinate territory and to improve its economic exploitation. Despite the terminological controversy surrounding the interpretation of the word *beneficium* appearing in the Silesian sources, it is impossible to deny the essential role of castellans in forming the relations between dukes and the members of the political elite. It seems that the need to transform the relations between authorities so that the sovereign was obliged to grant 'castra et populus ad regendum' to his *fideles,* as articulated by Cosmas of Prague at the beginning of the 12th century, was also present in 13th-century political culture. Therefore, the existing ambivalent interpretations of the nature of the medieval administrative structure are not ruled out by the introduction of the notions of *beneficium* and *officium*, in accordance with Tomasz Jurek's polemic against the aforementioned views of Cetwiński.[25] The 13th-century castellanies are both offices and benefices (understood as sharing the income and the authority of a ruler), granted to the members of the political elite. When one considers factors associated with the regional and supra-regional cohesion of Silesia in the Middle Ages, it is impossible not to take into account the role of the then elite of magnates as an essential political element. Most researchers share a view about the nationwide character of the 12th-century elite, based on the arrangement of the oldest territorial possessions.[26] The turn of the 12th and 13th centuries marked the outset of the process of the territorialisation of the elites – either as a result of a natural reaction to the petrification of political divisions, or as a consequence of the deliberate policies of dukes. In Tomasz Jurek's opinion, this last phenomenon relates to Silesia, where, after the return of the descendants of Ladislaus the Exile, a significant turnover was observed among the elite of magnates. The large proportion of foreigners holding the post of castellan, as well as a relatively large rotation in the management structures of particular castellanies, allow us to conclude that Silesian rulers maintained full control over the process of awarding temporary (sometimes perhaps even lifelong, but not hereditary) nominations[27] throughout the entire period of the structure's existence.

[24] See esp. André Thieme, *Die Burgrafschaft Altenburg. Studien zu Amt und Herrschaft im Übergang vom hohen zum späten Mittelalter*, Leipzig 2001; František Kubů, *Die staufische Ministerialität im Egerland: Ein Beitrag zur Siedlungs- und Verwaltungsgeschichte* (=Quellen & Erörterungen: Otnant-Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Kultur in der Euregio Egrensis), Pressath 1995.

[25] Tomasz Jurek, (review:) *Studia z dziejów średniowiecza polskiego i powszechnego, Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, no. 979, Historia, vol. 59, Wrocław 1989*, 'Sobótka', 45 (1990), pp. 552–553.

[26] Tomasz Jurek, *Rotacja elity dworskiej na Śląsku w XII – XIV w.*, [in:] *Genealogia – władza i społeczeństwo w Polsce średniowiecznej*, eds Andrzej Radzimiński, Jan Wroniszewski, Toruń 1999, p. 7-27; *idem*, *Elity śląska w późniejszym średniowieczu*, [in:] *Kolory i struktury średniowiecza*, ed. Wojciech Fałkowski, Warsaw 2004, p. 404.

[27] A handy list of Silesian castellans in the 13th century: Ulrich Schmilewski, *Der schlesische Adel bis zum Ende des 13. Jahrhunderts. Herkunft, Zusammensetzung und politisch – gesellschaftliche Rolle*, Würzburg 2001, pp. 270–288.

Pro-integration practices of the authorities: journeys and residences of rulers

In the 12th and 13th centuries the only effective method of exercising power over subordinate territories – excluding castles and castellanies – was their regular inspection by rulers and their courts. Of highest importance during such visits were the administrative, control-related and economic functions of such excursions, but one should certainly not ignore their representative and legitimizing aspects. The mobility of medieval monarchs is a thoroughly explored subject; however, due to the scarcity of related diplomatic sources it is impossible for scholars (here we refer exclusively to the Polish context) to reach more definite conclusions on rulers' methods of evaluation of their subordinate lands, based on such sources as analysis of the Reich's royal itineraries from the period between the 10th and 13th centuries. In the context of the issue of consistency of rule – and also (although this is much less conspicuous) of the identity and identification of subjects with their ruler – the question of a ruler's presence or absence seems to be of fundamental significance. Therefore, we shall attempt to briefly outline this issue for the period starting from the beginning of the reign of Henry the Bearded until the first partition of Silesia in 1249. The unquestionably central role of Wrocław is illustrated in the sixteen ducal diplomas; together with the narrative sources they also provide proof of the sovereign's frequent stays at the ducal court in Leśnica, located 10 kilometres away from Wrocław and lying on the route leading westwards. The court was not only meant to serve dukes as a stopping place on the road to Legnica, it was also the centre of a ducal hunting forest.[28] The role of the Legnica residence, rebuilt by Henry or perhaps his father in imitation of imperial palaces, is somehow omitted in documents. More space is devoted to the ducal estate of Rokitnica located a dozen or so kilometres from Legnica.[29] We can therefore assume that the main transport axis in the realm of the Silesian dukes in the first half of the 13th century is determined by rulers' travels from Wrocław to Legnica and Rokitnica. Along this route, measuring more than 80 kilometres, lay Leśnica and Środa Śląska, the latter founded before 1235. Among the places visited periodically by the dukes we can also identify the most important ducal foundations – monasteries in Lubiąż, Trzebnica and Henryków, as well as the court in Brzeg, where, according to historical sources, Henry the Bearded was to meet Boleslaus the Chaste on Christmas of

[28] For the broadest description of the role of Leśnica in the 13th century see Marta Młynarska-Kaletynowa, *W sprawie początków dworu książęcego w Leśnicy*, [in:] *Viae historiae. Księga jubileuszowa dedykowana Prof. Lechowi A. Tyszkiewiczowi w siedemdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin*, eds Mateusz Goliński, Stanisław Rosik, Wrocław 2001 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No 2306, Historia 152), pp. 277–282; doubts as to the existence of a ducal residence built of brick in this location have been recently expressed by Małgorzata Chorowska, *Rezydencje średniowieczne na Śląsku. Zamki, pałace, wieże mieszkalne*, Wrocław 2003, pp. 64–66.

[29] On the ducal courts of 13th-century Silesia Karol Modzelewski, *Organizacja gospodarcza państwa piastowskiego*, Poznań 2000, (2nd edition), pp. 52–57.

1234.[30] Meriting extremely rare mention as a place of residence for rulers is Głogów.[31] Periodic amendments to ducal itineraries – revealed by scholars despite the scarcity of sources – were brought about not only by new dynastic divisions or the introduction of new and the disappearance of old administrative and residential centres, but surely by personal preferences of rulers as well. As an example, we can point to the changes introduced in this area in the brief period of the reign of the sons of Henry the Pious, between 1241 and 1249: the fact that not a single diploma was issued at that time in Rokitnica by Boleslaus Rogatka presents firm evidence that the castle was deprived of the status of a ducal residence, and in contrast to his predecessors the duke stayed at the Ślęża castle.[32] On this basis we can easily distinguish the regions enjoying the temporary but regular presence of rulers, where ducal power was demonstrated in a physical manner, from the peripheral regions – those visited rarely or never at all, where rulers were represented at best by their officials. The multiplication of dynastic divisions in the second half of the 13th century brought immediate consequences in the changes to administrative methods: the ducal tours ceased to be an indispensable condition of effective control over the territory and demonstration of power over small districts. So far, despite the considerable amount of sources, especially from the Late Middle Ages, there has been little progress in the area of studies on ducal itineraries in Silesia. Their broader analysis will allow for a better understanding of not only the matter of the territorial management of duchies, but also of mechanisms for exercising authority in the Late Middle Ages.[33]

The study of the administrative structure of Silesia – especially difficult due to the scarcity of sources from the period between the 12th and 13th centuries – yields no conclusions concerning the role of this structure in the formation of the region's identity and cohesion. The 13th-century growth in the number of courts and related official hierarchies of district duchies can be hardly treated as an integrating factor. Even the terminology indicating the existence of a Silesia-wide administrative unity seems to be erratic. In writings dating back to the second half of the 13th century by Piotr, Abbot of Henryków about the ducal notary Nicholas, founder of his monastery, Piotr states that Nicholas gained authority over all the lands of Silesia (*regimen totius terre Sleziensis)* by virtue of performing chancellery duties.[34] Even if we recognize the writer's *licentia*

[30] SUb., vol. 2, No. 79.

[31] On Christmas of 1208 the residence saw the meeting of Henry the Bearded with the Dukes of Greater Poland: Ladislaus Laskonogi (the Spindleshanks) and Ladislaus Odonic, combined with the baptism ceremony of the nameless son of the ducal couple, SUb., vol. 1, No. 116.

[32] SUb., vol. 2, nos. 231, 299, 339; on the castle and the Ślęża castellany: M. Młynarska-Kaletynowa, *Z zagadnień zarządu*, pp. 127–129.

[33] An appropriate example would be the study by Tomasz Jurek, *In sede viduali. Nad itinerarium księżnej świdnickiej Agnieszki z lat 1385–1392*, [in:] *Europa Środkowa i Wschodnia w polityce Piastów*, ed. Krystyna Zielińska-Melkowska, Toruń 1997, pp. 275–289. On the itineraries of the Bishops of Wrocław: Ewa Wółkiewicz, *Curia episcopalis. Organizacja rezydencji biskupów wrocławskich w późnym średniowieczu*, [in:] *Dom, majątek, klient, sługa – manifestacja pozycji elit w przestrzeni materialnej i społecznej Europy (XIII – XIX wiek),* eds Marcin Pauk, Monika Saczyńska, Warsaw 2010.

[34] *Liber fundationis*, p. 110.

poetica in creating the image of his character, it is still hard to accept that the term *terra Sleziensis* was understood by the Cistercian chronicler – neither at the moment of writing, nor in the period of the narration – as meaning something different than the reign of Nicholas's employer, Henry the Bearded, who did not, in fact, control the whole Silesian territory.

The Bishopric of Wrocław in the 12th and 13th centuries – ecclesiastical unification versus political decentralization

It is beyond doubt that Silesia remained the only province of the Piast state which was subordinate to one ecclesiastical superior, represented by the Bishop of Wrocław. This bears great similarity to the situation in Bohemia and Moravia, where during the reign of the Přemyslid dynasty two Bishoprics corresponded more closely to the basic political divisions of their realm than to those in the remaining Piast districts (divided, like Greater Poland and Mazovia, between two dioceses). The fact that the range of the ecclesiastical administrative unit founded in AD 1000 overlapped with the clearly-marked natural borders of the region defined in the oldest dated sources as Silesia makes it reasonable to view the ecclesiastical structure as playing a crucial role in laying the foundations of regional religious identity.[35] A crucial role in the medieval political value system might have been played by the cult of Bishoprics' patrons – a practice which served as a tool to develop a sense of togetherness in communities (which will be discussed in detail later in this chapter). A sense of a common obedience to the Church shared by the inhabitants of the Silesian province remains the oldest surviving evidence of the foundations of a shared Silesian identity, transcending the boundaries of communities based on kinship and neighbourly relations.[36]

The oldest recorded castle topography of Silesia, mentioned in the 1155 Bull of Adrian IV, causes a fundamental interpretative dilemma due to the incompleteness of the list of castles located in the territory of the Wrocław Bishopric. The act of extending the papal document by the list of castles in territories which were in nearly all cases geographically classified as parts of the southern frontier of the Silesian diocese, as well as by Milicz (located in the north), where according to the Bull of Gniezno (issued 1136 by Innocent II for the Polish Church) the ducal tithes were collected by the Archbishop, may be proof of the bishop's intentions to secure the canonical territory of the Bishopric of

[35] However, we must point out that bishoprics were described very precisely by their territorial name. Similarly to other Polish dioceses (excluding the one in Kuyavia), nomenclature derived from the name of diocesian capitals clearly dominates. An exception to the above is found in a document issued by Ladislaus Odonic for the Cistercian Nuns of Trzebnica in 1208, where Bishop Laurentius is referred to as *episcopus Zlesie* (SUb., vol. 1, No. 117).

[36] Recently discussed also by Stanisław Rosik, *Najdawniejsza postać Śląska (do XIII w.) Pejzaż krainy a kształtowanie się śląskiej tożsamości regionalnej: przykład Ślęży i Trzebnicy*, [in:] *Radices Silesiae – Silesiacae Radices. 'Śląsk: kraj, ludzie, memoria a kształtowanie się społecznych więzi i tożsamości (do końca XVIII wieku)*, eds Stanisław Rosik, Thomas Wünsch, Wrocław 2011, pp. 64–65.

Wrocław against the claims of the neighbouring bishops and possible attempts to contest the outline of the diocesan frontiers. This may appear all the more true as in those days there was no such thing as fixed linear frontiers. This situation could have lasted until the second half of the 11th century, when in addition to the recurring Czech claims and territorial expansion on the southern frontiers of Silesia, claims by the Bishop of Prague may also have been advanced as to the Church's power over certain territories on the northern side of the Sudetes and Beskids. To some extent they were legitimized by such documents as the forged imperial diploma of 1086, confirming not so much the historical borders of the diocese of Prague as the range of the Přemyslids' political influence in the second half of the 10th century.[37] Here we should recall that not only the dukes of the Přemyslid dynasty organized plundering raids on lands of left-bank Silesia, but in the times of Břetyslav II the Czechs attempted to take control over the borderland by demolishing the castle in Bardo and raising a new fortress in Kamieniec Ząbkowicki.[38] Territorial conflicts between the Bishoprics of Wrocław and Olomuc on the Moravian-Silesian borderlands took place until the first decades of the 13th century.

Unfortunately, little can be said about the position of the Bishop of Wrocław in the 11th- and 12th-century local and central structures of authority. In our opinion, the political role of bishoprics as an important integrating factor is underrated.[39] The ruler-dependent Church hierarchs, who, according to the oldest income records contained in the papal bulls, possessed remarkable economic potential and exercised control over secular authority, could have constituted an effective counterbalance to the growing influence of local magnates. Hence, among other things, rulers' tendency to fill the offices of bishopric capitals with candidates of foreign origin and members of the ducal *capella*. This topic deserves special focus in future research. Despite all the difficulties with reaching unequivocal conclusions as to the origins of Silesian hierarchs in the earliest period of the diocese's existence, what is certain is that they were mainly foreigners – just as in the case of other Polish dioceses. Nonetheless, the exact place of origin can be indicated only in the case of Walter of Malonne. It is his promotion from the cathedral provostry in Płock – and therefore from the Church circle closely connected with the Piast court in the first half of the 12th century – to the Bishopric of Wrocław in 1149, that seems to be extremely significant.[40] This nomination was awarded a few years after the expulsion of the senior of the dynasty, at the height of the political power wielded by the family of Piotr Włostowic; although the relations between the senior and the local

[37] SUb., vol. 1, No. 5.

[38] *Cosmae Pragensis Chronica Boemorum*, 3, 4, p. 164.

[39] The integrating aspect of the Bishop's nominations in the Reich is emphasized by Fink von Finkenstein, *Bischof und Reich. Untersuchungen zum Integrationsprozess des ottonisch – frühsalischen Reiches (919–1056),* Sigmaringen 1989.

[40] For an accurate description of the political circumstances of Walter's nomination see the recent publication by Piotr Boroń, *Biskup Walter i początki kultury umysłowej na Śląsku*, [in:] *Źródła kultury umysłowej w Europie Środkowej ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem Górnego Śląska*, ed. Antoni Barciak, Katowice 2005, pp. 120–121.

magnates were rather harmonious,[41] we must recognize that the person of a bishop who was closely connected with Boleslaus the Curly could have been an effective counterbalance to the growing influences of the secular political elite. Proof of the Bishop's strong position in the provincial hierarchy could be, for instance, his alleged participation in the rulers' minting activities.[42] As it stands, in the bull of 1155 Bishops and chapters owned extensive territory, and enjoyed both absolute secular jurisdiction over their people and certain ducal privileges in two castle districts, Otmuchów and Milicz. These were admittedly peripheral regions, but from the turn of the 12th and 13th centuries, assuming the proper colonization dynamics could be maintained, they displayed the potential to spur the development of the Bishopric's power.[43] Owing to the extensive material property and the growing role of the papacy in the relations between the secular authorities and the clergy, as early as the outset of the 13th century the Bishops of Wrocław enjoyed a favoured position in conflicts and dealings even with dukes who were as powerful and resistant to the Church's claims as Henry the Bearded.[44] Silesian rulers, unlike other Piast descendants, made two attempts at exploiting the archdiocese's potential for the benefit of the dynasty. This is how we may interpret Boleslaus the Tall's nomination in 1198 of his oldest son Jaroslaus, already destined for the priestly order, as ordinary of Wrocław.[45] This act temporarily resolved the controversies over the distribution of power between the members of the Silesian line of the Piast dynasty. What deserves

[41] See the participation of the Bishops in the foundation of the property of Włostowic – the Benedictine abbey in Ołbin.

[42] The oldest deniers with the image of St. John the Baptist, most probably produced by the Wrocław mint, are dated to the second half of the 11th century; this activity was also carried out on the initiative of Bishop Żyrosław (and according to more recent findings also of Jarosław or Laurentius) – cf. Stanisław Suchodolski, *Moneta możnowładcza i kościelna w Polsce wczesnośredniowiecznej*, Wrocław 1987, pp. 75–80; *idem, Początki mennictwa we Wrocławiu*, [in:] *Słowiańszczyzna w Europie średniowiecznej*, ed. Zofia Kurnatowska, vol. 2, Wrocław 1996, pp. 125; *idem, Zmiany w chronologii i atrybucji monet polskich z XII/XIII w. w świetle skarbu z Głogowa*, 'Wiadomości Numizmatyczne', 36 (1992), pp. 114 and 117.

[43] On the territorial development of the Bishops' property within the castellany of Nysa and Otmuchów see Josef Pfitzner, *Besiedlungs- Verfassungs und Verwaltungsgeschichte des Breslauer Bistumlandes*, Reichenberg 1926; Thomas Wünsch, *Territorienbildung zwischen Polen, Böhmen und dem Deutschen Reich: Jahrhundert*, [in:] *Geschichte des christlichen Lebens im schlesischen Raum*, eds Joachim Köller, Reiner Bendel, Münster 2002, pp. 199–264; an abbreviated version – *idem, Landesherrschaft und geistliches Territorium der Breslauer Bischöfe im 13. Jahrhundert – zur Präsenz eines westlichen Musters in der ostmitteleuropäischen Verfassungsgeschichte*, [in:] *Przełomy w historii. Pamiętnik XVI Powszechnego Zjazdu Historyków Polskich. Wrocław 15-18 września 1999 roku*, vol. 1, eds Krzysztof Ruchniewicz, Jakub Tyszkiewicz, Wojciech Wrzesiński, Toruń 2000, pp. 155–179; On the issue of extending the territory of the Nysa castellany see the recent publication by Ewa Wółkiewicz, *Patrimonium sancti Iohannis. U początków władztwa biskupiego w ziemi otmuchowsko – nyskiej*, [in:] *Milicz. Clavis Regni Poloniae*, pp. 225–232; the scope of authoritative rights of the Wrocław chapter in the Castellany of Milicz based on the classification of ducal and chapter competences from 1249 was summarized by Aleksander Paroń, *Ugoda w sprawie kasztelanii milickiej (26. VI. 1249)*, [in:] *Milicz. Clavis Regni Poloniae*, pp. 97–127; for the political system of the Nysa duchy see Kazimierz Orzechowski, *Dzieje i ustrój księstwa biskupiego na Śląsku*, [in:] *Szkice Nyskie. Studia i materiały*, ed. Zbigniew Kowalski, vol. 3, Opole 1986, pp. 7–43.

[44] The papal protection over the realm of Boleslaus the Tall certified by the 1198 bull of Innocent III must have also been of particular importance. See SUb., vol. 1, No. 64.

[45] See J. Bieniak, *Powstanie księstwa opolsko – raciborskiego*, p. 73.

special attention here is the fact of depriving the dynasty's senior members of the right to the bishop's investiture, which was a crucial tool used for controlling the Church by the Silesian dukes across their entire realm. A similar privilege was probably exercised by the Silesian dukes in relation to the Bishopric of Lubusz.[46] The increasingly popular practice of nominating the dynasty's members to the office of bishop is another piece of evidence that the western European concepts of power had been absorbed at that early stage of history.

The spread of settlement and the increasing drive of sovereigns to achieve full territorial control over the lands of Nysa and Otmuchów in the second half of the 13th century spurred another violent conflict between the Church and Silesian rulers. The plans of hierarchs to create an exclusive episcopal territorial lordship over the Archdiocese of Gniezno, finally realized at the turn of the 13th and 14th centuries, must be viewed as a manifestation of this province's socio-political autonomy in the 13th century. This attempt was successful not only due to purely political factors, but also to a general political order based on western European relations and characterized by a greater degree of feudalization of social relations. The political foundation of the bishop's authority was the special privilege issued by Henry the Righteous (Probus) in 1290, based on which ordinaries were granted 'plenum dominium perfectumque in omnibus ius ducale';[47] during the pontificate of Henry of Wierzbno, bishops enjoyed the status of territorial rulers. What is remarkable is that the formation of the Church's authority in Silesia was a process carried out by local, Silesian-born ordinaries, while in neighbouring states where similar occurrences took place in the 13th century (Moravia and Western Pomerania) this political strategy was followed by bishops of German origin (such as Bruno von Schaumburg and Herman von Gleichen), who brought time-tested methods and strategies to central Europe. The aspirations of the Wrocław hierarchs to enjoy political autonomy must be recognized as a factor responsible for intensifying the process of decentralization, which itself had a rather negative impact on the formation of a homogeneous political identity in the region. This, however, naturally has nothing in common with the strongly integrating sense of belonging to a common diocesan structure.

In this context we must also mention that researchers have not paid much attention so far to the political aspect of the cult of the patron of the St John the Baptist Cathedral, which may be regarded as one of the key factors in shaping the Silesian regional identity. This patronage – confirmed as late as in 1155 by a bull of Adrian IV – was granted to the Wrocław cathedral probably already at the time of its erection in AD 1000. The ideological significance of the cult of the patron of the cathedral – *matris ecclesiarum* of the entire diocese – certainly deserves more attention. The cult of St John the Baptist in

[46] Proof of this is the transfer of rights to the diocese patronage and chapter to Archbishop Wilbrand of Magdeburg as performed by Boleslaus Rogatka and included in the agreement concerning the transfer of the ownership of the Lubusz Castle, SUb., vol. 2, No. 368.

[47] SUb., vol. 5, ed. Winfried Irgang, Köln-Weimar-Wien 1993, no. 452.

13th-century Silesia was rather unique compared to other duchies of the Piast provinces – his name was included in the devotional formula of the ducal title. This means that Henry the Bearded viewed his rule as a grace from both God and St John the Baptist, which illustrates the ruler's unique attitude towards the patron of his realm.[48] Such a distinctive articulation of a particular cult, which may be compared only with the practice of using the figure of St Wojciech (Adalbert) by the superior dukes and the figure of St Wenceslaus by the rulers of the Czech Přemyslid dynasty for the purpose of legitimizing their authority, reveals the execution of a carefully-considered political strategy. The abandonment of this strategy in the 1330s may have been a consequence of the growing emancipation of the Bishops of Wrocław from their ducal counterparts. Following the early-medieval principle according to which the patron saints of particular Church institutions were proclaimed owners of land in the possession of the Church, Bishops chose St John as the patron of their emerging territorial lordship. The diocese patron's cult might also have been partially eclipsed by attempts to create a new dynastic cult of St Bartholomew after moving his reliquary to the ancestral Piast monastery in Trzebnica, and soon after – more obviously – by the canonization of Duchess Hedwig of Silesia. The issue of the political role of Silesian late-medieval cult practices – especially in the case of St John the Baptist – naturally requires more thorough research.

Silesia as part of the Bohemian Crown

Leaving the source literature with detailed descriptions of dynastic divisions behind, we should focus on the commonly accepted view of the primacy of Silesian provinces in the process of territorialisation of ducal power at the turn of the 12th and 13th centuries. The first signs of this phenomenon were manifested in the appearance of a particular nomenclature referring to territorial units in the charters of Boleslaus the Tall and Henry the Bearded, and also in the Duchy of Opole under Mieszko the Tanglefoot. The strategy behind the territorial divisions in the realm of the Silesian Piasts, where each of the duke's sons was entitled to receive a share of their father's land, did not diverge much from the legal practices of other lines of the dynasty – the problem was their prolific number. The years of 1248–9 and 1281 were key dates which marked the fragmentation of the territory of the monarchy belonging to Henry I and Henry II of Silesia, and soon after of the Duchy of Opole. The closing decades of the 13th century brought further provincial fragmentation. This was caused to a large extent by the participation of the Přemyslids in Silesian affairs, which steadily increased from the mid-13th century – one of the first mediators in the conflicts between the dukes was King Přemysl Otakar II

[48] The formula 'dei et beati Iohannis gratia Slesie dux' was used in the documents of Henry the Bearded for 20 years, between 1203 and 1223, but inconsistently, see SUb., vol. 1, Nos. 87, 235.

of Bohemia, guardian of the underage son of Henry III;[49] during the reign of King Wenceslaus II, Bohemian domination was even more conspicuous. The first cases of accepting Bohemian domination by the Silesian dukes date to the close of the century. At that time, Henry IV the Righteous most likely became the vassal of Rudolph of Habsburg, and the sons of Ladislaus of Opole paid homage to Wenceslaus II. This manifestation of submission, however, did not determine the political future of the region. Crucial were events that took place in the 1320s and 1330s. The skilful politics and military superiority of King John of Luxembourg led to his feudal dominance over the majority of the Silesian duchies (1327–1339).[50] From the geopolitical point of view, of extreme significance was his agreement with Henry VI resulting in the immediate incorporation of the Duchy of Wrocław into the Kingdom of Bohemia together with the region's most prominent city, which was also its capital (1335). Luxembourg also strengthened the relations between the regional Church administration and the kingdom. There was generally no feudal dependency between the Bishops of Wrocław and the Bohemian rulers. The latter were the protectors and patrons of Wrocław after Henry VI.[51] Even so, there was a case when one of the Bishops had no other choice than to pledge reverence to the Bohemian ruler after buying the land of Grodków[52] from the Duke of Brzeg. A diplomatic success of the Bohemian ruler was persuading the Polish King Casimir the Great to waive his claims to Silesia.[53] John's policies were continued by Charles IV, whose aim was to equip his monarchy with a more uniform administrative system. The concept of the Bohemian Crown (*Corona regni Bohemiae*) was born during the reign of Charles IV. The new kingdom was to include all the Silesian and Lusatian acquisitions of the Luxembourg dynasty.[54] The Emperor also managed to extend his feudal supremacy over several independent Silesian duchies. A number of informal links between the Silesian Piasts and the Prague court can also be indicated. During his reign, Charles IV was surrounded

[49] Wojciech Nowacki, *Śląsk a Królestwo Czeskie w dobie jednoczenia państwa polskiego. Obszar wpływów – lenno – kraj koronny*, [in:] *Wielkopolska. Studia z dziejów średniowiecza ofiarowane Profesorowi Bronisławowi Nowackiemu*, eds Zbyszko Górczak, Jacek Jaskulski, Poznań 2009, pp. 227–255. Cf. Přemysl Bar, *Vratislavský vévoda Jindřich IV. Probus a poslední Přemyslovci*, 'Český časopis historický', 106 (2008), pp. 753–787.

[50] For a detailed analysis of feudal acts see Otfried Pustejovsky, *Schlesiens Übergang an die böhmische Krone: Machtpolitik Böhmens im Zeichen von Herrschaft und Frieden*, Köln 1975 (=Forschungen und Quellen zur Kirchen und Kulturgeschichte Ostdeutschlands, 13). Cf. Gernot von Gravert-May, *Das staats--rechtliche Verhältnis Schlesiens zu Polen, Böhmen und dem Reich während des Mittelalters. Anfänge des 10. Jahrhunderts bis 1526*, Aalen 1971.

[51] *Lehns- und Besitzurkunden Schlesiens und seiner einzlenen Fürstenthümer im Mittelalter*, ed. Colmar Grünhagen, Hermann Markgraf, vol. 1, Leipzig 1881 (hereinafter LBUS, vol. 1), No. 3, pp. 6–8.

[52] *Lehns- und Besitzurkunden Schlesiens und seiner einzlenen Fürstenthümer im Mittelalter*, ed. Colmar Grünhagen, Hermann Markgraf, vol. 2, Leipzig 1883 (hereinafter LBUS, vol. 2), No. 15, pp. 208–209.

[53] Wojciech Nowacki, *Śląsk w polityce Jagiellonów do 1471 roku*, [in:] *Scripta minora*, vol. 6, eds Zbyszko Górczak, Jacek Jaskulski, Poznań 2011, pp. 343–508.

[54] Lenka Bobková, *Územní politika prvních Lucemburků na českém trůně*, Ústí nad Labem 1993; *eadem, 7.4.1348. Ustavení Koruny království českého. Český stát Karla IV*, Praha 2006, eadem, *Integrace Slezska do České Koruny podle představ Karla IV. Úvod k diskusi o identifikaci Slezska jako regionu a jeho postavení v České Koruně*, 'Sobótka', 66 (2011), No. 3, pp. 3–9.

by many dukes, who also accompanied him during his foreign journeys.[55] A frequent visitor to the Bohemian court was also Bishop Przecław of Pogorzela.[56]

At the close of the 14th century, the following legislative order was in place: feudal duchies, lands that were incorporated into the Bohemian Crown and the privileged Church duchy of the Bishops of Wrocław. Both hereditary Dukes and Bishops were guaranteed full independence in making decisions on domestic policy and constitutional matters. Although the Luxembourg dynasty had a firm grip over the incorporated Duchy of Wrocław and Duchy of Świdnica-Jawor, their political autonomy was still respected. What is conspicuous is that the ambition of Bohemian rulers was neither to integrate the lands of Silesia nor to enlarge the territory subordinate to the Crown. Lordless fiefdoms were ceded to other ducal lines, which further deepened the political divisions and fragmentation of the land's administrative structure.[57] What is more, there was no uniform initiative that would usher in any Silesia-wide institutions. The very limited powers of the governor of the duchy, an office introduced in 1335, applied mainly to the Duchy of Wrocław – a subordinate of the Bohemian Crown.[58] We can only point out incidental cases of regulations concerning issues of a greater than local scale being introduced (i.e. customs and transport along the Odra river, competences of governors regarding robbery).[59]

From the perspective of the Silesian political system, of crucial importance was the reign of Matthias Corvinus. His rule was strikingly different to that of the Bohemian kings and aimed at reducing the number of feudal duchies. At that time Silesia was subordinated directly to the king, which resulted in the formation of a separate political system for the region. The reign of Corvinus saw the introduction of the Silesian Parliament (*sejm*) – a platform for communication between dukes, state representatives and the king. The principal institution was the office of the Governor of the Province introduced in 1474, with power over political and fiscal issues in the hands of the governor.[60] These unifying factors were soon countered by factors that favoured further territorial fragmentation. One

[55] Lenka Bobková, *Slezšti Piastovci na dvoře Karla IV.*, [in:] *Piastowie śląscy w kulturze i europejskich dziejach*, ed. Antoni Barciak, Katowice 2007, pp. 168–180; eadem, *Společné pouto. Slezská knížata ve vztahu k Janu Lucemburskému a Karlu IV.*, [in:] *Slezsko, země Koruny české. Historia a kultura 1300 – 1700*, eds Helena Dáňová, Jan Klípa, Lenka Stolárová, Prague 2008, pp. 115–127.

[56] Regesta Imperii, no. 2243, 2261, 2262-3, 2266 *et. al*.

[57] Particularly meaningful in this case is the history of the part of the Duchy of Głogów temporarily incorporated into the Crown and later granted as a fiefdom to the Duke of Cieszyn, cf. Jana Wojtucka, *Začlenění Hlohovska do Koruny české a jeho vývoj w letech 1331-1384*, [in:] *Korunní země v dějinách českého státu. Integrační a partikulární rysy českého státu v pozdním středověku*, ed. Lenka Bobková, vol. 1, Prague 2003, pp. 96–160.

[58] Ewa Wółkiewicz, *Capitaneus Slesie. Królewscy namiestnicy księstwa wrocławskiego i Śląska w XIV i XV wieku*, [in:] *Monarchia w średniowieczu. Władza nad ludźmi. Władza nad terytorium*, eds Jerzy Pysiak, Aneta Pieniądz-Skrzypczak, Marcin Pauk, Warsaw 2002, pp. 193–195.

[59] Cf. Kazimierz Orzechowski, *Historia ustroju Śląska 1202 – 1740*, Wrocław 2005, p. 77.

[60] Kazimierz Orzechowski, *Generalny starosta Śląska. Ewolucja urzędu*, [in:] *Studia historycznoprawne. Tom dedykowany Profesorowi Doktorowi Alfredowi Koniecznemu*, ed. Kazimierz Orzechowski, Wrocław 2004 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No. 2616, Prawo 288), pp. 133-144; Mlada Holá, *Institucionální ukotvení mocy českých králů ve slezském prostoru. K problematice prosazení úřadu vrchního slezského hejtmana ve druhé polovině 15. století*, 'Sobótka', 66 (2011), No. 3, pp. 65–72.

of them was the emergence of the first free states, which became a permanent element of the Silesian political landscape in the modern period.[61] The reign of Ladislaus Jagiellon brought further developments in the area of territorial integration, to a large extent attributable to the territorial privilege of 1498. The document determined the organizational structure of *curias* in the Silesian Parliament, and introduced the ducal tribunal as a common judicial forum for all the political bodies of the region.[62]

Legislative and political transformations as a result of the 13th-century modernization

a) city law

Apart from political changes, it was economic transformations, and especially the 13th-century process of modernization, that had a crucial impact on the political system of Silesia. Changes in the legal order are classified by Sławomir Gawlas as follows:

1. from the exclusivity of Polish law to the domination of German law;
2. from a law common to all residents, modified only by the principle of personality of law, to the foundations of a state justice system;
3. from customary law and legal proceedings conducted exclusively in oral format to the prominence of written law and spread of legal principles in written form.[63]

A consequence of colonization processes and incorporation of new residents of foreign ethnic origins was the introduction of German law-based jurisdiction, guaranteeing the newcomers the settlement of disputes according to the law they were accustomed to. The adaptation of western laws was not a homogeneous process, and during the 13th century it underwent continuous transformations. The proximity of Saxony meant that the most frequently and commonly followed model was the Saxon one, and the majority of towns adopted the law of Magdeburg.[64] In the opening phase of the relocation process the Flemish law was also frequently applied, but in the Late Middle Ages its scope was narrowed and the law related mainly to the most economically backward lands of the Church duchy.[65] A marginal influence should be attributed to the laws of other regions,

[61] Marian Ptak, *Pozycja publiczno-prawna wolnych panów stanowych na Śląsku*, [in:] *Studia historyczno-prawne*, ed. Alfred Konieczny, Wrocław 1993 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No. 1477, Prawo 222), pp. 79–102.

[62] Kazimierz Orzechowski, *Rola przywileju króla Władysława z 1498 r. w dziejach śląskiego stanowego parlamentaryzmu*, [in:] *Vladislavské zřízení zemské a počátky ústavního zřízení v českých zemích (1500-1619). Sborník příspěvků z mezinárodní konference konané ve dnech 7. - 8.prosince 2000 v Praze*, eds Karel Malý, Jaroslav Pánek, Prague 2001, pp. 153–163.

[63] Sławomir Gawlas, *Przemiany systemów prawa na Śląsku w dobie kolonizacji w XIII wieku*, [in:] *Kultura prawna w Europie Środkowe*j, ed. Antoni Barciak, Katowice 2006, p. 45.

[64] For more details see Joseph Joachim Menzel, *Die schlesische Lokationsurkunden des 13. Jahrhunderts*, Würzburg 1977, *idem*, *Die schlesischen Städte am Ausgang des Mittelalters,* [in:] *Die Städte am Ausgang des Mittelalters,* ed. Wilhelm Rausch, Linz 1974, pp. 251–268. For a summary of the discussion and list of related sources see S. Gawlas, *Przemiany systemów*, pp. 68–71.

[65] Cf. Theodor Goerlitz, *Das flämische und das fränkische Recht in Schlesien und ihr Widerstand gegen das sächsische Recht*, 'Zeitschrift der Savigny Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte. Germanistische Abteilung', 57

such as the law of Głubczyce.[66] In comparison with the Kingdom of Poland, whose law was based almost exclusively on the law of Magdeburg, Silesia presented much more legal diversity. It must be remember, however, that in the neighbouring areas of Moravia and Bohemia this diversity was even more developed.[67] A common phenomenon was that of rulers striving to eliminate the dependence of municipal judicial bodies upon tribunals located outside their kingdom, visible through the last quarter of the 13th century in the introduction of high courts to the capitals of duchies. Such courts appeared in Wrocław, Środa Śląska, Lwówek, Złotoryja, Oleśnica, Legnica, Racibórz, Opole and Nysa.[68] For the reasons mentioned above, the adoption of this particular type of German law by dependent cities was seen by their sovereigns as highly beneficial. The drive of dukes to unify their realms has not been yet closely studied, therefore it would be desirable to conduct a preliminary survey in this area presenting the main aspects of the municipal policy of the Bishops of Wrocław. The Flemish law that was applied on the occasion of the location of the city of Nysa – most probably in the first decade of the 13th century – established the legal model present in the privileges granted to the settlers of other Episcopal centres, Ujazd and Wiązów. From the 1390s on, the authorities of Nysa, the then capital of the Episcopal duchy, gained the status of a court of appeal based under Flemish law.[69] Its sentences, *ortyle* (German: *urteil*), applied not only to all of the Bishop's municipalities located within the Episcopal state, but also to those located in other duchies. The legislative integration of Episcopal municipalities was facilitated by the policies of subsequent Episcopal governors. Bishop Przecław of Pogorzela, whose location of Otmuchów was also based on Flemish law, explained that in doing so he was simply following the model in place at the duchy's capital.[70] A similar attitude was held by Bishop Wenceslaus of Legnica. His privilege issued for the founder of the town Rychtal, which

(1937), pp. 138–181. For the itineraries of the Bishops of Wrocław see: Kazimierz Orzechowski, *Rola biskupów wrocławskich w ustrojowych dziejach średniowiecznego Śląska*, Sobótka, 53 (1998), No. 3-4, pp. 359–363; *idem, Wacław legnicki biskup wrocławski i jego 'Kirchenrecht'*, [in:] *Ludzie Kościoła katolickiego na Ziemi Śląskiej. Zbiór studiów*, ed. Krystyn Matwijowski, Wrocław 1994 (Prace Historyczne, vol. 10), pp. 23–31.

66 *Das Leobschützer Rechtsbuch*, prepared by Gunhild Roth, published by Winfried Irgang, Marburg 2006 (=Quellen zur Geschichte und Landeskunde Ostmitteleuropas, vol. 5).

67 For a concise survey of the types of city laws in the Bohemian crown see František. Hoffman, *České město ve středověku*, Praha 1992, pp. 247–252.

68 Cf. Theodor Goerlitz, *Die Oberhöfe in Schlesien*, Weimar 1938.

69 SUb., vol. 6, eds Winfried Irgang, Daphne Schadewaldt, Köln-Weimar-Wien 1998, No. 490; *Urkundensammlung zur Geschichte des Ursprungs der Städte und der Einführung und Verbreitung deutscher Kolonisten und Rechte in Schlesien und der Ober-Lausitz*, eds Gustav Adolf Tzschoppe, Gustav Adlof Harald Stenzel, Hamburg 1832 (hearafter UGUS), No. CXL: 'adjicientes, quod quocienscunque et quandocunque in aliis civitatibus nostris seu opidis aut villis Teutonicalibus, vel in aliqua earum, ubicunque et in quibuscunque ducatibus sitis, in quibus jurisdictio ad nos spectat, apud laycos in judicio, in quacunque causa suborta fuerit questio, sic quod dubitetur qualiter in causa hujusmodi sententia sit ferenda, semper ad civitatem nostram Nyzensem pro jure sive sententia, que vulgariter Urteyl dicitur, per homines loci illius, in quo dubitationem hujusmodi suboriri contigerit, recurratur'. Cf. also T. Goerlitz, *Oberhöfe*, pp. 37–38.

70 'In aliis vero omnibus et singulis ipsum advocatum Othmuchoviensem ritus et consuetudines laudabiles civitatis nostre Nyzensis et advocati inibidem volumus imitari', UGUS, No. CLXIV, pp. 564–566.

was to be located in the Episcopal manors in the Duchy of Namysłów, was clearly modelled after Nysa.[71] This well-regarded municipal policy was somehow disrupted by the temporary shift of Nysa to the law of Magdeburg initiated by Bishop Henry of Wierzbna (1308). This change put an end to the institution of the court of appeal and brought into question the legal cohesion of Episcopal towns. Even so, the Bishop soon realized the negative effects of his decision and revoked it on the grounds of the possible damage that could have been done to both the Bishopric and the townspeople.[72] At this point we may indicate one more aspect of Episcopal urban politics. At the outset of the 16th century, local elections in all Episcopal towns took place on the same date (around St. Martin's day). However, it would be difficult to verify whether this was the result of a purposeful regulation issued by the Bishop, or only the effect of his recommendation to copy the custom adopted by the capital city of Nysa. Nonetheless, what is certain is the unquestionable importance of introducing order and the unification of municipal structures within the duchy.[73]

Location processes resulted in the formation in Silesia of judicial districts known as *weichbilds* (*districtus*), which, in the 13th century, replaced the former castellan structure. The *weichbilds* were modelled on eastern Saxonian solutions, and comprised a number of rural communes subordinated to the *weichbild* town.[74] Their average number fluctuated between 15 and 20 rural settlements; however, in this matter there was no uniformity and there were *weichbilds* with over 70 settlements, or, on the contrary, undersized *weichbilds* composed of only a few of them.[75] The network of Silesian *weichbilds* developed mostly at the beginning of the 14th century while the towns, introduced some time later, unlike the *weichbilds* did not belong to separate districts.[76] Larger towns were usually the heart of particular judicial districts, but there were exceptions to this

[71] 'Decernentes, ipsius incolas eisdem uti et gaudere municipalibus juribus, statutis et consuetudinibus, quibus opidum nostrum Nyssense utitur sive gaudet, taliter, quod quociens casus dubius in judicio super aliqua ferenda sententia emerserit, ipsum jus in Nysa queri debeat et inde, ut moris est, reportari', *ibidem*, No. XCX, pp. 602–603.

[72] *Ibidem*, no. CXI, pp. 485–486: 'tam nobis et nostre Wratislaviensi ecclesie, quam ipsi civitati et ejus incolis nullam prorsus utilitatem aut commodum, sed potius incommodum multiplex ut experientia docuit, attulisset'.

[73] Ewa Wółkiewicz, *Władze komunalne Nysy XIII – XVII w.* (currently in print).

[74] Benedykt Zientara, *Z dziejów organizacji rynku w średniowieczu. Ekonomiczne podłoże 'weichbildów' w arcybiskupstwie magdeburskim i na Śląsku w XII-XIII wieku*, 'Przegląd Historyczny', 64 (1978), pp. 681–696.

[75] Cf. Joseph Joachim Menzel, *Stadt und Land in der schlesischen Weichbildverfassung*, [in:] *Die mittelalterliche Städtebildung im südostlichen Europa*, ed. Heinz Stoob, Köln 1974 (=Städteforschung, Reihe A, vol. 4), p. 33. K. Orzechowski erroneously claims that the network of weichbilds was not established in Upper Silesia, K. Orzechowski, *Historia ustroju*, pp. 30, 71. On weichbilds: Heinrich von Loesch, *Die schlesische Weichbildverfassung in der Kolonisationszeit*, [in:] *idem*, *Beiträge zur schlesischen Rechts- und Verfassungsgeschichte*, Konstanz 1964, pp. 83–98. (first edition: 'Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte: Germanistische Abteilung', 58 (1938), pp. 311-336); Marian Ptak, *'Weichbild" w strukturze terytorialnej Śląska*, [in:] *Podziały terytorialne Polski. Przeszłość – teraźniejszość – przyszłość. Past – present – future. Materiały konferencji historyków prawa w Karpaczu (29 IX – 1 X 1997)*, Wrocław 1997, pp. 5–11.

[76] J.J. Menzel, *Stadt und Land*, p. 33.

rule (i.e. Paczków). Between the 14th and the 15th century, corrections to the original division were introduced, and as a result some *weichbilds* either swallowed others or were swallowed by others.[77] A radical reform of the administrative system was carried out in the Episcopal duchy in the mid-14th century, as well as in other locations. As a result, two new districts were formed following the liquidation of some districts and redistricting of the remaining ones.[78] What is more, the example of the Episcopal duchy highlights problems associated with the introduction of new administrative divisions. The system of *weichbilds*, replacing the former division into castellanies, had a completely different legal foundation. They were basically composed of villages linked with a town founded on German law. Therefore, villages based on Polish the legal system remained outside the new order. In the case of the Episcopal duchy this problem was dealt by isolating several villages which were in turn subordinated to the district of Otmuchów ('bona et ville eiusdem districtus locata iure polonicali'). However, this resulted in the formation of one of the largest *weichbilds* in Silesia, consisting of 69 villages based on German law and 51 settlements based on Polish law.[79] Over time, *weichbilds* also began to play a significant role in the process of building territorial noble communities.[80] In the modern era they served as the basis of the military system.[81] However, we should not forget that this development was gradual and not uniform throughout the region. For instance, in the Episcopal duchy the representatives of the nobility were elected in the so-called 'quarters' (*Viertel*), which only partially overlapped with district territorial divisions.[82]

The *weichbilds* focused mainly on exercising supreme jurisdiction over rural residents. Judicial duties could also be performed by *advocatus* (Vogt), residing in the *weichbild* town. In the first half of the 13th century the office of Vogt was frequently held by the town's founder (*scultetus*), hence in Silesia the term *advocatus* (hereditary) replaced

[77] I.e. the district of Uraz, *ibidem*, p. 32.

[78] *Liber fundationis* contains references to the district of Nysa and 'dystrictus versus Stynaviam', 'districtus versus Czigynhals' and 'districtus versus Vrienwalde'. It has been found that although there never existed a weichbild of Paczków (Paczcow caret provincia), several settlements were connected to the town: *Liber fundationis episcopatus Vratislaviensis*, eds Hermann Markgraf, Joseph Wilhelm Schulte, Breslau 1889 (=Codex Diplomaticus Silesiae, vol. 14), pp. 4–119. The Bishopric's register of property from the 1420s already contained the weichbilds of Nysa, Otmuchów, Widnawa and Głuchołazy. The majority of towns from the 'versus Stynaviam' district and the villages that were concentrated around Paczków were soon incorporated into the district of Nysa: *Quellen zur Geschichte der Besitzverhältnisse des Bistums Breslau*, eds Hermann Markgraf, J. W. Schulte, [in:] *Studien zur schlesischen Kirchengeschichte*, Breslau 1907, (Darstellungen und Quellen zur schlesischen Geschichte, vol. 3), pp. 227–254.

[79] *Quellen zur Geschichte der Besitzverhältnisse*, p. 249.

[80] Gustav Croon, *Die landständische Verfassung von Schweidnitz-Jauer. Zur Geschichte des Ständewesens in Schlesien*, Breslau 1912 (=Codex Diplomaticus Silesiae, vol. 27), p. 147.

[81] The examples (including medieval ones) were compiled by G. Croon, *ibidem*, pp. 149–151.

[82] In 1463 Bishop Jodok elected the local governors: a pair of them was assigned to each of the five circuits: the Otmuchów quarter, the so-called Nieder-Viertel, the Nysa weichbild, the Paczków quarter and the Grodków quarter, cf. *Liber fundationis episcopatus*, p. 14. During the military registration, the so-called *okazowanie*, of 1503, four quarters were designated as fundamental for military defence, the lower and higher Otmuchów quarter and two isolated Nysa quarters, see Mateusz Goliński, *Służba rycerska a potencjał militarny księstw śląskich w późnym średniowieczu,* cz. I. *Księstwo nysko-otmuchowskie*, 'Sobótka', 53 (1998), Nos. 1-2, pp. 58–59.

the term *scultetus*, used in a majority of areas of the Reich.[83] Initially this seemed to be a convenient solution; however, as time passed and further lands were gradually occupied, the judiciary duties of the town's *advocatus* became exceedingly onerous. For this reason, rulers often decided to appoint another official – *advocatus terrae* (*Landvogt)*. Because both the hereditary *advocatus* and *advocatus terrae* were titled with the same Latin term *advocatus*, it is often hard to determine the moment when the change and permanent separation of both offices took place. The term *advocatus provincialis*, which clearly reflected the differences between these two functions, was confirmed for the first time as late as 1261 in the Duchy of Wrocław.[84] So far, little attention has been devoted to studying the function of Silesian *advocatus terrae*. Preliminary research has shown that this office was not equally distributed across ducal territory. This was mainly associated with the territorial range of the authority enjoyed by *advocatus terrae*, which was extended to one *weichbild*, several neighbouring *weichbilds* or to a whole duchy.[85] We may also suspect that differences existed in the scope of their powers. A crisis of the office of *advocatus terrae* affected the majority of Silesian duchies starting from the second half of the 14th century. *Advocatus terrae* obligations were frequently taken over by new officials: governors (*starostas*).[86] Wrocław liquidated the office of *advocatus terrae* as early as in 1400, in other duchies its importance was gradually fading, and in the 15th century its role was peripheral.[87] Relatively strong was the position of the *advocatus terrae* in Upper Silesia and in the Episcopal duchy where, until the modern era, this post was granted mainly to members of the local nobility.[88]

b) feudal law

One of the most significant consequences of the so-called '13th-century transformation' was the introduction of the feudal system into central Europe. Due to its scope and stability, feudalism determined social relations in Europe in both the Middle Ages and beyond. This was undoubtedly manifested in the sociopolitical autonomy of Silesia in

[83] Heinrich von Loesch, *Die Verfassung im Mittelalter*, [in:] *Geschichte* Schlesiens, ed. Hermann Aubin, Breslau 1938, p. 339. Also: Cf. J.J. Menzel, *Stadt und Land*, p. 26.

[84] SUb., vol. 3, ed. Winfried Irgang, Köln-Wien 1984, no. 343.

[85] These officials usually supervised only one *weichbild* at a time, J. J. Menzel, *Stadt und Land*, p. 33. This was, however, not always the case. For instance, in the bishop's duchy, an official called *landwójt* supervised as many as four *weichbilds*.

[86] Cf. E. Wółkiewicz, *Capitaneus Slesie*, pp. 169–225. On the functioning of the Silesian offices of governors (*starostas*) of the province and duchies see several articles in the volume *Hejtmanská správa ve vedlejších zemích Koruny české*, eds Lenka Bobková, Martin Čapský, Irena Korbelářová, Opava 2009 (=Acta historica Universitatis Silesianae Opaviensis, Supp. 7).

[87] From the mid-14th century the office of landvogt was repeatedly resold and pledged, and eventually purchased by the council in 1434. For more details see Mateusz Goliński, *Naczelne organy komunalne i wójtostwo świdnickie do 1740 roku*, [in:] Mateusz Goliński, Jarosław Maliniak, *Urzędnicy miejscy Świdnicy do 1740 r.*, Toruń 2007, pp. 10–11. The office of landvogt in Środa Śląska was subjected to the office of burgrave, who supervised the terrestial court (*sąd ziemski*), cf. H. von Loesch, *Die Verfassung im Mittelalter*, p. 363.

[88] Throughout the entire medieval period there are records of the office of *landwójt* of Głogówek and Bytom, H. von Loesch, *Verfassung im Mittelalter*, p. 363.

comparison with the neighbouring territories of the Polish and Bohemian Kingdoms where, with some local exceptions, one could easily observe that ownership of land was mainly hereditary. It should not, however, be forgotten that the shape of feudal relations in late medieval Silesia differed according to the region. These new legal relations were best preserved in the area of the Duchies of Legnica and Wrocław, which in the second half of the 13th century and at the outset of the 14th century were primary destinations for heavy migrations of foreign knights.[89] A considerable number of fiefdoms owned by knights was located in the Episcopal duchy in the borderland of Lower and Upper Silesia. The feudal system was ideally suited to accommodate the needs of such specific political organisms as ecclesiastical lordships. What was characteristic about them is that they lacked dynastic continuity, which was the basis of secular realms. In this case feudal contracts, where the oath was renewed in the case of death of one of the parties, served as an instrument to strengthen the power of a priestly territorial sovereign. The first fiefdoms were introduced at a time when ecclesiastical power was only at the initial stage of its establishment, and sovereign rights over the territory were in the hands of the Silesian dukes. Feudal contracts were used to develop a system of personal relations different from those linking the owners of villages with their superior duke.[90] In certain areas of Silesia the scope of feudal law was, however, very limited. The basic form of ownership in the Duchies of Oleśnica and Głogów, which bordered with the Polish state, and in Upper Silesia, the basic form of ownership was hereditary ownership.[91] The introduction of the feudal system was of great importance from a number of perspectives (legal, constitutional, political and social), because it led to the refashioning of relations between dukes and the political elite.

c) judicial system

The setup of legal relations had particular consequences for the organization of the Silesian judicial system. At the end of the 13th century the former ducal court was transformed into two independent bodies – a manorial court for the owners of landed estates under German jurisdiction (*Hofgericht, iudicium curie*), and *czud* for the owners of villages under Polish jurisdiction (*Zaudengericht*). Initially, the system was more or less uniform in all the duchies of Lower Silesia; however, in time the differences and divergences grew rapidly. In duchies with high proportions of foreign knights the institution of *czud* was liquidated very quickly. In the Wrocław Duchy the *czud* was abolished as early as in 1327 on the initiative of the inhabitants.[92] In the case of its ecclesiastical

[89] Cf. Tomasz Jurek, *Obce rycerstwo na Śląsku do połowy XIV wieku*, Poznań 1996, pp. 176-177.
[90] For more details see Ewa Wółkiewicz, *Biskup i jego klientela. Recepcja prawa lennego we władztwach biskupich Europy Środkowej* (currently in print).
[91] Marian Ptak, *Własność alodialna i lenna na Śląsku*, [in:] *Kultura prawna w Europie Środkowej*, pp. 96–103.
[92] Georg Bobertag, *Die Gerichte und Gerichtsbücher des Furstenthums Breslau*, 'Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens', 7 (1866), p. 117.

counterpart it survived slightly longer, but by the mid-15th century the institution had been almost completely liquidated. One of the village owners at that time addressed the Bishop with a request to transfer his property to German jurisdiction. He explained that the reason for such a decision was that as Polish law had been almost completely forgotten, it was hard to enforce.[93] At the same time, the changes in the Duchy of Oleśnica went in a different direction – the owners of properties under feudal conditions attempted to transform feudal property into allodial property, and there the institution of *czud* functioned until the 18th century.[94]

The aforementioned example presents only one of the aspects of the progressing diversification of judicial institutions observed in the case of individual duchies. The Late Middle Ages brought about interesting particular solutions (i.e. the court of twelve in Świdnica). The concurrence of the names of particular institutions might also be misleading. For instance, the manorial court in Wrocław (*iudicium curiae*) in fact performed the function of the so-called *mański* court, that is the court for the duchy's vassals.[95] On the other hand, the town councillors, which were affiliated as members of an advisory body with the manorial court, debated in the Wrocław Episcopal duchy under the leadership of the *advocatus terrae*.[96] What must be emphasized is that such jurisdictional incoherence could also appear within individual dominions. This practice was followed in the newly incorporated territories (and due to frequent regional divisions was quite common). An excellent example here is the district of Grodków, bought by the Bishops of Wrocław in 1342. Whereas in all other ducal territories the councillors – as we have mentioned above – were an organ of the *advocatus terrae* court, Grodków possessed a traditional manorial court with district council (*Landscheppen*).[97] Maintaining a judicial body independent of the office of governor also seems to have been important. A similar situation occurred in the case of the Góra district, incorporated into the Duchy of Głogów at the end of the 15th century. This area gained special status, having its own separate feudal court, *czud* and governor office.[98] This practice most probably resulted from short-term considerations, including the desire to avoid conflict with the local elites of the newly-incorporated region. Maintaining traditional institutions inevitably led to the generation of judiciary particularism. Moreover, the incoherence of the system was enhanced by the existence of a network of ecclesiastic judicial bodies. The Church's property scattered around Silesia was subordinated to the manorial courts of the urban centres of Wrocław, Legnica, Głogów and Ujazd. The court of appeal to their sentences was the court in

[93] *Liber fundationis episcopatus*, p. 25.
[94] Marian Ptak, *Sądy prawa polskiego na tle organizacji wymiaru sprawiedliwości księstwa oleśnickiego XIV-XVIII w.*, Wrocław 1988 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No 946, Prawo 157).
[95] G. Bobertag, *op. cit.*, pp. 118–119.
[96] H. v. Loesch, *Die schlesische Weichbildverfassung*, p. 89.
[97] I.e. *Regesty śląskie*, vol. 2, ed. Wacław Korta, Wrocław 1983, Nos 646, 827; *Regesty śląskie*, vol. 3, ed. Wacław Korta, Wrocław 1990, No. 31.
[98] Felix Matuszkiewicz, *Die mittelalterliche Gerichtsverfassung des Fürstentums Glogau*, Breslau 1911 (=Darstellungen und Quellen zur schlesischen Geschichte, vol. 13), pp. 130–131.

the Episcopal Duchy of Nysa. This, however, was an infringement of the ducal jurisdiction and could constitute a potential source of jurisdiction-related conflicts.[99]

Supra-local structures

Powerful processes focused on differentiating the fused administrative and judiciary structures were coupled with activities aiming at supra-local cooperation. The relevant literature distinguishes two types of such connections:

a) town unions

The cooperation of cities in conducting military and political operations began in central and eastern Europe beginning in the second half of the 13th century.[100] The earliest documented example of such cooperation in Silesia is the confederation of towns of the Duchy of Głogów, which was formed in 1310 in order to prosecute outlaws.[101] According to the findings of Kazimierz Orzechowski, cooperation between urban centres was supported by the territorial sovereigns, who saw it as a factor to provide balance and to facilitate the maintenance of order.[102] However, this had particular consequences on the form of Silesian confederations. Almost all the unions of towns known to us involved groups of municipal centres from one political community. Rare cases involved agreements of towns with their counterparts from neighbouring duchies (such as the union of towns of the Duchy of Świdnica and Legnica from 1346).[103] It would not be reasonable to perceive these unions as aiming at introducing a broader unification strategy. Their objectives were short-term, and the territorial horizon was narrowed down to the local community. Nonetheless, they cannot be denied a certain importance in the formation of municipal representations, which played a political role as early as at the close of the Middle Ages.

b) unions of dukes

Unions of Silesian dukes were of various natures. Confederations created by the members of dynasties generally encompassed the majority of the region, and in some cases included representatives of Moravia and Lusatia. For instance, the *landfryd* of 1387 included 14 Silesian dukes, who entered into an agreement with Margrave Jobst

[99] These problems are reflected in the argument between Bishop Przecław and the Duke of Koźle about the jurisdiction in Gościęcin near Koźle (1365). The duke claimed that the villagers were not entitled to seek advice from priests outside his duchy: 'Item pro requizicione iuris, quod consuetum est a scabinis villanorum in districtibus, quibus iuncti sunt, comparari, pronuncciamus, quod antiqua consuetudo iuris provincialis in hoc servari debeat, ut, si villa Constantin ad districtum Cozlensem ab antiquo pertinuerit, ipsius ville inhabitatores merito iura eorum in districtu Kozlensi eo loco, in quo de iure sunt querenda, et non aliunde querere debeant quomodolibet et afferre', H. v. Loesch, *Die schlesische Weichbildverfassung,* p. 90.

[100] Jürgen Karl W. Berns, *Propter communem utilitatem. Studien zur Bündnispolitik der westfälischen Städte im Spätmittelalter*, Düsseldorf 1991.

[101] Kazimierz Orzechowski, *Ogólnośląskie zgromadzenia stanowe*, Warsaw 1979, pp. 97–98.

[102] *Ibidem*, pp. 98–99.

[103] *Ibidem*, p. 98.

(Jodocus) of Moravia and Bishop Nicholas of Olomuc.[104] It was frequently political goals and more broadly-undertaken military operations that determined the associations of dukes. The period of intensified union-forming activity is connected with the time of the Hussite Wars, which required the organization of joint military operations. Equally intense collaboration took place in the period of conflicts with George of Poděbrady.[105] Participants in these congresses alongside dukes and knights included the representatives of towns of lands incorporated into the Bohemian Crown which did not have their own ducal representatives. However, the incorporation of feudal duchies occurred very rarely.[106] The 15th-century Silesian congresses constituted an unquestionable prototype of the later Silesian Parliament (*sejm)* with respect to its participants, structure and the subject matter of sittings.[107]

Summary

This synthetic and necessarily abridged study of the most important legal and political issues in the history of medieval Silesia leads us to conclude that of crucial importance for the issues explored was the '13th-century transformation' and resultant legislative and political phenomena, including mainly the reception of German jurisdiction and the institution of the self-governing municipality. It cannot be doubted that the most crucial factor determining the functioning of administrative and judicial bodies was a progressing territorial fragmentation, especially from the mid-13th century on. In the 12th century, what linked Silesia with the remaining part of the monarchy was the office of *comes.* Provincial *comeses* were appointed by the holders of the office of *princeps* and by the Bishops of Wrocław. This situation changed after 1163. The members of Silesian dynasties were rather focusing on their individual interests and forming territorial dominions (only in favourable conditions) which, just as during the reign of Henry the Bearded and Henry IV The Righteous, served the realization of broader, Poland-wide political objectives. Hence the initiatives undertaken to consolidate ducal realms as well as to introduce an effective apparatus for their administration and economic exploitation by means of innovative sociopolitical mechanisms: municipal locations, erection of castles, reforms of both castellan and *weichbild* administration, and promotion of the migration of knights of foreign origin. Another turning point was the process of direct or feudal

[104] Felix Rachfahl, *Die Organisation des Gesamtstaatsverwaltung Schlesiens vor dem dreissigjährigen Kriege*, Leipzig 1894, p. 84.

[105] For the assemblies of Silesian dukes cf. Kazimierz Orzechowski, *Ogólnokrajowe zjazdy na Śląsku przed panowaniem Macieja Korwina*, 'Czasopismo Prawno-Historyczne', 24 (1972), pp. 65–67. For the role of the ducal meetings in the Hussite period see the recent publication by Martin Čapský, *Spolek slezských knížat a jeho pokus o společnou obranu jizní hranice Slezska proti husitům (Poznámky k významu a datování grotkovského sněmu)*, [in:] *Ad vitam et honorem. Profesoru Jaroslavu Mezníkovi přátelé a žáci k pětasedmdesátým narozeninám*, eds Tomáš Borovský, Libor Jan, Martin Wihoda, Brno 2003, s. 341-350; *idem, Spolek slezských knížat a jeho role v politice Zikmunda Lucemburského (K otázce kontinuity mocenských mechanizmů pozdního lucemburského období)*, [in:] *Piastowie śląscy w kulturze*, pp. 221–231.

[106] K. Orzechowski, *Ogólnokrajowe zjazdy*, pp. 74–75.

[107] *Ibidem*, pp. 87–88.

subordination of the Silesian duchies to the Bohemian Crown. The total lack of effort by the Luxembourg dynasty to create any central institutions and lack of engagement in the duchies' internal relations further deepened the institutional differences. The only evidence of unification-focused policies worth mentioning came not on the regional scale, but only in a few individual territorial domains. In this case, however, we can also observe numerous limitations and focus on short-term goals. Striving to unify administrative structures was not a common practice. This is particularly noticeable as far as incorporated territories are concerned. The cases of the districts of Góra and Grodków show that older institutions were maintained even when they differed from those functioning in the remaining parts of the state. Unifying activities were also hindered to a great extent by the instability of the regional divisions. Even if several dukes decided to issue certain regulations to order legal and administrative relations, every subsequent division of the territory could render them null and void.

However, we must acknowledge the function of two crucial integrating forces: one of them the region's participation in a uniform Church structure, and the other its role in a uniform political organism. Those two aforementioned characteristics are of crucial importance in the process of developing a sense of regional community, including in the modern era.

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Did Silesia constitute an economic region between the 13th and the 15th centuries? A survey of region-integrating and region-disintegrating economic factors

Abstract:

This article constitutes an attempt at answering the question of whether Silesia, aside from being a distinct historical region, was also a distinct economic region. The author starts with Robert E. Dickinson's theory of economic regions, the basic assumptions of which are shared by contemporary researchers of regional economies.

Economic resources, the similar economic policies of Silesian rulers in the 13th and 14th centuries, high levels of urbanization in comparison to neighbouring regions and the centralizing capacity of Wrocław are considered to be the forces which bound together Silesian as an economic region. Factors retarding the economic cohesion of Silesia were analyzed as well. Those included natural disasters, invasions, internal strife, criminal activity along trade routes and a crisis in the mining industry beginning in the middle of the 14th century. Beginning with the final years of the 13th century, Silesia stabilized as an economic region containing Upper Silesia, Lower Silesia and Opava. This was not, however, a perfect cohesion, as Lower Silesia was economically superior to the other regions, which themselves had strong ties to Lesser Poland. Despite that, the crisis that took place from about 1350 until 1450 did not break the economic bonds between these three constituent elements of Silesia.

In comparison to every historical and economic region on its borders, Silesia was distinguished by its advanced gold mining industry, the export of a red dyeing agent (*marzanna*) as well as the highest number of cities with a populations of between 3,000 and 14,000. Further distinct properties of the Silesian economy are noticeable when contrasted with other historical regions.

Keywords:

cities, trade, mining, agriculture, economic policy, demography, economic region

The concept of economic region and its application

The question of whether medieval Silesia constituted an economic region is ambiguous and complex. The aim of this article therefore is to answer two questions: 1. Did the formation of an economic region ever take place in Silesia and, if so, to what extent? 2. What were the economic specificities of this region? Our final answer needs to be preceded by an analysis of the factors and circumstances which might have been conducive to the integration of Silesia, as well as of the conditions and causes that might have hindered it or even prevented it from happening. What further complicates the answer to the key question is our intention to present the dynamics of the region within a period of ca. three hundred years – it would simply be nonsensical to assume in advance that there

were no variations in the degree of Silesia's economic integration or disintegration in such a long period.

Although the key question of this article has been asked throughout history by numerous historiographers, so far none of them has managed to answer it affirmatively. In 1935 Ludwig Petry expressed the opinion that Silesia had once had an opportunity to become an independent economic region ('ein eigenes Wirtschaftsgebiet') with Wrocław as its centre.[1] According to the German historian, its transformation was fostered by the fact that in the 15th century Wrocław was part of the Hanseatic League and that it had strong connections with the principal city of southern Germany, Nuremberg. Silesia had the potential to become a key link in the far-reaching chain of connections between the north and south and the east and west. The economic autonomy of Silesia – according to Petry – was based on the fact that Silesian cities acted as exclusive intermediaries between the remote countries of Europe. His negative answer to our question is grounded in the argument that in the 16th century Silesians (especially residents of Wrocław) had to hand over part of their land to expanding merchants from Nuremberg. Within the pioneering reflections of the German researcher there are, however, certain conspicuous weaknesses. Firstly, Silesia (especially Wrocław) has never been the only central European link in the area of long-distance trade between the north and south and the east and west. Other reservations regarding Petry's view include him limiting his perspective to the sphere of trade (mainly transit and re-exportation) and disregarding the question of Silesian manufacturing and exportation of its products. What is, however, of great importance is the very fact of him addressing the issue of the economic autonomy of Silesia, drawing attention to the role of Wrocław in the possible process of the formation of a Silesian economic region, as well as formulating clear conclusions on the subject.

An analysis of economic factors which can both integrate and disintegrate a region needs to be preceded by a definition of an economic region. Polish scholarly literature defines a region as 'an area characterized by a number of common features'.[2] For the purposes of our research let us add that these may include economic features. This definition needs to be further elaborated, since we need to establish certain criteria that, if they were met, would allow us to confirm that Silesia was an economic region for at least part of the period between the 13th and 15th centuries. Many theories on the division of economic space have been created and applied by medievalists. However, these theories mostly relate to areas much larger than geographical and historical regions. The notion of 'an economic historical region' has also been coined.[3] However, one serious weakness of this is the fact that, for the purposes of this notion, the issue of a particular region's

[1] Ludwig Petry, *Die Popplau. Eine schlesische Kaufmannsfamilie des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts*, Breslau 1935 (=Historische Untersuchungen, vol. 15), p. 135.

[2] Antoni Mączak, Henryk Samsonowicz, *Z zagadnień genezy rynku europejskiego: strefa bałtycka*, 'Przegląd Historyczny', 55 (1964), p. 198.

[3] Jerzy Topolski, *Pojęcie regionu historycznego. Cechy odrębności historycznej Wielkopolski*, [in:] *Dzieje Wielkopolski*, vol. 1, ed. Jerzy Topolski, Poznań 1969, p. 24.

economic specificities was examined not before but after researching the history of other spheres of activity of that region's community, and after claims had been made regarding its regional autonomy. In line with this approach, each region had simply been prejudged to constitute an autonomous economical unit. With this in mind, I do not assume *a priori* that Silesia was certain to constitute an economic whole, independent from its neighbouring territories. One must remember that historical studies proved years ago that economic territorial divisions often did not overlap with political, administrative or simply regional ones.[4] Of all the studies on these issues which are familiar to me, the most useful and up-to-date are, in my mind, the findings of Robert E. Dickinson on the economic regions of Germany.[5] This is not only due to his devoting one chapter to Silesia,[6] but because he presented a coherent and versatile and hence a universal theory of the concept of an economic region. Dickinson understood this type of region as a geographical unit inhabited by a community unified by means of internal economic links which are stronger than the community's relations with the inhabitants of neighbouring regions. The English scholar identified three universal aspects that bind every economic region: 1. the primacy within the region's boundaries of certain complementary branches of economy (in cases where we are dealing with several different branches), and which (if there are only one or two of them) determine the economic character of the whole region; 2. the economic dominance of one or more cities within the region's limits, which also perform the function of communication junctions; and 3. traditional (non-economic) political and cultural links which influence the region's economy.[7] The economic unity of a region should therefore come as a result of mutual connections and the mutual economic interests of its citizens which are, let us add, maintained over a longer period of time. At this point I must declare that in this article I refrain from analyzing any type of non-economic region-related relationships which are the subject of research of the other participants of the *Cuius regio* project. The advantage of limiting research to the economic sphere only enables me to examine whether the economy integrated the territory of Silesia or, perhaps, maintained its divisions. Medieval Silesia was divided into three subregions – Lower Silesia, Upper Silesia and Opava Silesia (*Opawszczyzna*).[8] Dickinson's old thesis has not lost its validity and harmonizes with the latest definitions of economic regions analyzed in the context of market economies at the outset of the third millennium. The criteria fostering the formation of a region as an autonomous entity include factors that lead to the integration of a region's centre, similarities between the components of a region's economy, the dominance of internal connections within this

[4] Marian Małowist, *Wschód a Zachód Europy w XIII – XVI wieku. Konfrontacja struktur społeczno–gospodarczych*, Warszawa 1973, p. 6.
[5] Robert E. Dickinson, *The Regions of Germany*, London 1945.
[6] *Ibidem*, pp. 156–166.
[7] *Ibidem*, p. 22.
[8] For the relationships between this particular land and other lands of the region see R. Żerelik, *Dzieje Śląska do 1526 roku*, pp. 17–18.

region over external ones and the possession of a unique regional economic profile.[9] With this in mind, a region is defined as 'a group of neighbouring territories, distinct from all other adjacent territories by common characteristics'.[10] Hence, it will also be necessary for us to examine the issue of the possible economic specificities of Silesia in the later Middle Ages, i.e. the potential economic differences from its neighbouring regions – Bohemia and Moravia (viewed as a whole), Lusatia, Greater Poland and Lesser Poland.

Geographical and historical conditions of economic activity

Of all the factors that helped foster the formation of Silesia as a distinct economic region, we must once again mention its relative **geographical and historical distinctiveness** as described by G. Kosmala above. It is worth supplementing his geographical characteristics by noting that historians have sometimes highlighted the amorphousness of certain borders of the Silesian region, inclining more towards defining them as borderlands rather than as distinct borders. It was assumed that Silesia was separated to the west by an area stretching between the Kwisa and Bóbr rivers.[11] What has also been highlighted was the amorphousness of the border dividing Upper Silesia and Lesser Poland following research into the inter-diocesan and inter-diaconal divisions, the range of frontier-castellanies as well as the rapidly changing outline of state borders in the Late Middle Ages.[12] While defining the eastern borders of the economic region of Silesia we should also take into consideration the number of galena deposits exploited at that time for their lead and silver content. Galena deposits were also located further to the east from the main mining centres, Bytom and Tarnowskie Góry. The strip of deposits stretched beyond the Czarna Pszemsza river as far as the nearby areas of Będzin and Zagórze.[13]

The flat landform of most of the territory of Silesia and the dominance of the extensive Silesian Lowlands was conducive to the flow of people and goods, especially on the east–west axis. It was not without reason that the area of Silesia was crossed by one of the most important trade routes of cismontane Europe, the Via Regia – and in particular the 'High Road' (*Hohe Strasse*). This road led from the Netherlands through, most notably, Legnica, Środa, Wrocław, Brzeg, Opole and Bytom as far as Lesser Poland and further on to Red Ruthenia.[14] We can say that a whole range of factors, including

[9] Stanisław Korenik, *Region ekonomiczny w nowych realiach społeczno–gospodarczych*, Warszawa 2011, p. 12.

[10] *Ibidem*, p. 9.

[11] In line with the views of Jan Muszyński, *Krosno Odrzańskie. Przeszłość i teraźniejszość*, Warszawa–-Poznań 1972, p. 72; R. Żerelik, *Dzieje Śląska do 1526 roku*, p. 17; W. Korta, *Historia Śląska do 1763 roku,* oprac. Marek Derwich, Warszawa 2003, p. 15.

[12] See W. Korta, *Historia Śląska*, p. 15; Jerzy Rajman, *Pogranicze śląsko–małopolskie w średniowieczu*, Kraków 2000 (2nd edition), pp. 56–75 (especially p. 69).

[13] See Danuta Molenda, *Górnictwo kruszcowe na terenie złóż śląsko–małopolskich do połowy XVI wieku*, Wrocław 1963, p. 35.

[14] To view the course of the entire route, see Friedrich Bruns, Hugo Weczerka, *Hansische Handelsstraßen. Textband*, Weimar 1967, pp. 467–470, 539–548, 550–552, 568–570, 681–690; Grzegorz Myśliwski, *Wrocław w przestrzeni gospodarczej Europy (XIII–XV wiek). Centrum czy peryferie?*, Wrocław 2009,

favourable geographical and territorial conditions, resulted, in the 13th–14th centuries, in the Silesian section of the *Hohe Strasse* joining the older route which, at least from the times of Abraham ben Jacob's visit (962–965) up to the 1240s, had stretched from Kiev as far as Prague, via Cracow and the Moravian Gate.[15] Simultaneously, from at least the 12th century the Pomerania–Bohemia trade route cut through Wrocław.[16] It was not, however, the only route of great international significance linking northern and southern Europe via Silesia.[17] As Janina Nowakowa's research has shown, the territory of the Silesian region was quite densely covered by a network of land routes.[18] Apart from the urban centres located on the Via Regia, another city that played a particularly important communication role was Nysa. After Wrocław it was the second most important transport junction of Silesia, enjoying the customary staple right perhaps even earlier than the Silesian capital.[19]

The growth of economic cohesion within Silesia was favoured by an extremely important element of its geographical environment – the Odra river. The gradual slump in trade with Western Pomerania carried out via this river, which intensified between ca. 1253 and the second quarter of the 16th century, is immaterial here.[20] For the whole period of

pp. 75–80. For the beginnings of the route in the Netherlands see Wim Blockmans, *Das westeuropeische Messenetz im 14. und 15 Jh.*, [in:] *Brücke zwischen den Völkern. Zur Geschichte der Frankfurter Messe*, vol. 1: *Frankfurt im Messenetz Europas. Erträge der Forschung*, eds Hans Pohl, Monika Pohle, Frankfurt am Main 1991, p. 47. To view the route of Via Regia in Silesia see especially Stefan Weymann, *Cła i drogi handlowe w Polsce piastowskiej*, Poznań 1938, pp. 113–116; Janina Nowakowa, *Rozmieszczenie komór celnych i przebieg dróg handlowych na Śląsku do końca XIV wieku*, Wrocław 1951, p. 54–69, 78–87, 96–99.

[15] Hermann Aubin, *Die Wirtschaft im Mittelalter*, [in:] *Geschichte Schlesiens*, vol. 1, ed. Hermann Aubin, Stuttgart 1961 (3rd edition), p. 410; Henryk Samsonowicz, *Przemiany osi drożnych w Polsce późnego średniowiecza,* 'Przegląd Historyczny', vol. 64, 1973, issue 4, p. 701.

[16] Marta Młynarska–Kaletynowa, *Wrocław w XII–XIII wieku. Przemiany społeczne i osadnicze,* Wrocław 1986, p. 38.

[17] See i.e. Heinrich Wendt, *Schlesien und der Orient. Ein geschichtlicher Überblick*, Breslau 1916, pp. 53–54; J. Nowakowa, *op. cit.*, p. 99; Henryk Samsonowicz, *Handel dalekosiężny na ziemiach polskich w świetle najstarszych taryf celnych*, [in:] *Społeczeństwo – gospodarka – kultura. Studia ofiarowane Marianowi Małowistowi w czterdziestolecie pracy naukowej*, eds Stanisław Herbst et al., Warszawa 1974, pp. 292, 294–295, 299–300; Józef Kaźmierczyk, *Czasy najdawniejsze*, [in:] *Opole. Monografia miasta*, eds Władysław Dziewulski, Franciszek Hawranek, Opole 1975, p. 33. For the Moravian Gate see i.e. W. Korta, *Historia Śląska*, p. 15. Cf: Jörg K. Hoensch, *Geschichte Böhmens. Von der slavischen Landnahme bis zur Gegenwart,* München 1997 (3rd edition), pp. 16, 17.

[18] J. Nowakowa, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

[19] Józef Leszczyński, *Zarys dziejów miasta do roku 1740*, [in:] *Miasto Nysa. Szkice monograficzne*, eds Janusz Kroszel, Stefan Popiołek, Wrocław 1970, p. 28. For the Nysa staple right see Krystyna Stachowska, *Prawo składu w Polsce do 1565 r.,* 'Sprawozdanie z posiedzeń czynności Akademii Umiejętności', Wydział Historyczno-Filozoficzny, 51 (1950), No. 9, pp. 587, 589.

[20] See, among others Konrad Wutke, *Die Versorgung Schlesiens mit Salz während des Mittelallters,* 'Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens', 27 (1893), pp. 246, 253; K. Stachowska, *op. cit.*, p. 590; Wolfgang Kehn, *Der Handel im Odraraum im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert*, (=Veröffentlichungen der Historischen Komission für Pommern, Series V) Köln-Graz 1968, pp. 153, 197, 210; Benedykt Zientara, *Odra: droga czy bariera?*, 'Przegląd Historyczny', 61 (1970), pp. 112–119; recently Grzegorz Myśliwski, *Początki związków Wrocławia i Hanzy niemieckiej*, [in:] *Europejczycy, Afrykanie, inni. Studia ofiarowane Profesorowi Michałowi Tymowskiemu*, eds Bronisław Nowak, Mirosław Nagielski, Jerzy Pysiak, Warszawa 2011, pp. 80–81.

the Late Middle Ages[21] and the beginnings of the modern era the Odra river played the role of one of the main communication and trading arteries on a regional scale. Timber transportation by water to Wrocław thrived both in the later Middle Ages and in the following era. At the beginning of the 16th century Barthel Stein wrote about the vast amounts of wood, cut down in the forests of the Sudetes and in the Western Beskids, that regularly flowed to the centre of Silesia.[22] The town of Racibórz also played an important role, being the place where transport ships and rafts were constructed.[23] More problematic was the issue of transport along the Odra river on the section between Wrocław and Krosno Odrzańskie. Max Rauprich opined that even at the end of the 13th century there had been trade between the centres of Lubiąż and Krosno Odrzańskie, though only by means of small ships.[24] Yet, from the 14th century onwards, travelling along the section of the Odra located north of Wrocław became, according to him, impossible due to numerous weirs and watermills whose construction was strongly opposed by John of Bohemia (1337) and his heir Charles IV (1349, 1355).[25] According to a census carried out before 1375 those constructions existed, among others, in Lubiąż, Dziewin, Ścinawa, Chobienia, Głogów, Bytom Odrzański, Kiełcz and finally in the town of Krosno Odrzańskie.[26] The same census confirms, however, the simultaneous functioning of custom houses in certain localities by the Odra section outside Wrocław: Ścinawa, Głogów, Bytom and Krosno Odrzańskie. These units collected two types of tolls: either per ship (Ścinawa, Bytom) or *ad placitum*. At the same time, the toll collected in Ścinawa was called *inconsuetum*, which indirectly proves its relatively short history. All the aforementioned source data show the durability of the shipping industry on the section between Wrocław and Krosno Odrzańskie in the second half of the 14th century. The subsequent political events and the revocation of the staple right in Frankfurt an der Oder in 1375 (which lasted until about 1415)[27] seem to yield evidence that the whole section of the Odra river located within the territory of Silesia was navigable, despite the existence of weir facilities and toll-customs houses.

In this context, the Via Regia and the Odra river, together with the regional land routes, could be viewed as constituting a communication and transportation network

[21] Hermann Markgraf, *Zur Geschichte des Breslauer Kaufhauses,* 'Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens', 22 (1888), p. 272; Max Rauprich, *Breslaus Handelslage am Ausgang des Mittelalters,* 'Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens', 26 (1892), p. 25.

[22] Józef Burek, *Dzieje Raciborza od czasów piastowskich do 1741*, [in:] *Racibórz. Zarys monografii miasta,* ed. Jan Kantyka, Katowice 1981, p. 56.

[23] *Historia Śląska,* vol. 1, part 2, eds Roman Heck, Ewa Maleczyńska, Wrocław 1961, p. 7.

[24] M. Rauprich, *Breslaus Handelslage,* p. 25.

[25] *Ibidem*. Cf: Mateusz Goliński, *Wrocław od połowy XIII do początków XVI wieku,* [in:] Cezary Buśko, Mateusz Goliński, Michał Kaczmarek, Leszek Ziątkowski, *Historia Wrocławia,* vol. 1: *Od pradziejów do końca czasów habsburskich,* Wrocław 2001, p. 142; G. Myśliwski, *Wrocław,* pp. 100–101.

[26] J. Nowakowa, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

[27] Andrzej Grodek, *Handel odrzański w rozwoju historycznym*, [in:] *Monografia Odry,* eds Andrzej Grodek, Maria Kiełczewska-Zaleska, August Zierhoffer, Poznań 1948, p. 387.

which connected the regions of Silesia and were conducive to its potential economic integration.

Native resources and dominant economic features

Besides their demographic potential, the significance and specificity of each state and region in the pre-industrial era were mostly shaped by a second production factor which, according to recent approaches, is defined as 'natural resources' in a much broader sense than the traditional concept of 'land'.[28] It is mainly on this basis that the main industrial branches of Silesia, or dominant economic features of the region, were formed and developed in the Middle Ages.[29]

A presentation of the native resources and leading industrial branches of Silesia should be opened with a description of its soil conditions and natural products (*naturalia*). In the Middle Ages Silesian soils were quite diverse and, moreover, on average their quality was much higher than that of the soils of most of the remaining lands of Poland. The most fertile ones were generally found in the following areas: to the left of the Odra river, especially between Pszczyna and Bolesławiec, including the territory of the Sudetes Foothills (loess soils); directly on the banks of the Odra and its tributaries and in several soil enclaves (near Głogów and Wrocław); and, more rarely, to the right side of the river (near Trzebnica, Chełm).[30] These favourable conditions gave rise to the development of **agriculture**, which had begun earlier (from the 12th century) and was more intense than in the case of the other Polish lands.[31] Crop production fulfilled mainly the internal needs of the region (i.e. of its numerous and populous cities, see Table 1), though this claim is particularly thought-provoking when juxtaposed with the aforementioned fact of transporting grains along the Odra river, at minimum to Bytom Odrzański (around 1375) and, sporadically, to Lusatia and Toruń in the second half of the 15th century.[32] However, the dynamic development of crop production influenced the formation and development of another branch of the natural products sector – **brewing**, where a key role was played by **barley** and **wheat**.[33] Even though beer production was nothing unusual either

[28] Carlo M. Cipolla, *Before the Industrial Revolution. European Society and Economy 1000–1700*, New York – London 1994, pp. 53, 91–96.

[29] S. Korenik, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

[30] Julian Janczak, *Środowisko geograficzne Śląska w rozwoju historycznym*, [in:] *Historia chłopów śląskich*, ed. Stefan Inglot, Warszawa 1979, pp. 9–10; Benedykt Zientara, *Heinrich der Bärtige und seine Zeit*, translation: Peter Oliver Loew, München 2002, p. 116–117.

[31] Zofia Podwińska, *Zmiany form osadnictwa wiejskiego na ziemiach polskich we wcześniejszym średniowieczu. Źreb, wieś, opole,* Wrocław 1971, p. 367.

[32] *Historia Śląska*, vol. 1, part 2, p. 49; Horst Jecht, *Zur Handelsgeschichte der Stadt Görlitz im Mittelalter,* [in:] *Oberlausitzer Forschungen. Beiträge zur Landesgeschichte*, ed. Martin Reuther, Leipzig 1961, p. 122.

[33] *Historia Śląska*, vol. 1, part 1, eds Wacław Hołubowicz, Karol Maleczyński, Wrocław 1960, p. 381.

in the case of cismontane Europe including Silesia,[34] where it was used to satisfy mainly local needs, in some urban centres (Świdnica, Wrocław, Głogów, Opava) its importance extended far beyond regional limits. This was proven by the export of their produce to the countries of central Europe.[35] Moreover, the cultivation of **grapevine** and the **wine-making** it gave rise to, although fulfilling mainly local consumption needs,[36] also provided produce for the needs of the regional market and long-distance trade. Also worth mentioning is the regular, one suspects, transport of local wine (*land win*) to Wrocław in the first half of the 14th century.[37] Among the wines of Silesia which were in great demand outside the borders of the region we must mention the produce of both Lubsko,[38] and, especially, Krosno Odrzańskie. These found purchasers in the neighbouring Greater Poland and (Western?) Pomerania,[39] in Lubeck (1368), Berlin (1504–1517)[40] and also in Toruń in the mid-15th century.[41]

One of the key and most unique resources of Silesia was **madder**. It was used for the production of precious red dye[42] for the textile industry. Madder was grown by peasants near Wrocław, Środa Śląska, Brzeg and Strzelin.[43] Even at the close of the Middle Ages it was exported to Frankfurt am Main, Greater Poland and Prussia, and perhaps even further west via Gdańsk.[44] However, it probably did not find application in the native **textile industry**, especially in cloth making, which started to develop from the 14th

[34] On popularization of beer production in villages from the 15th century see *Historia Śląska*, vol. 1, part 2, p. 43. For the main centres of Silesia see J. Kaźmierczyk, *op. cit.*, p. 50; Marian Haisig, *Podstawy gospodarczego rozwoju miasta. Jego przywileje i herb*, [in:] *Legnica. Monografia historyczna miasta*, ed. Marian Haisig, Legnica 1977, p. 39; Rościsław Żerelik, *W średniowieczu*, [in:] *Głogów. Zarys monografii miasta*, ed. Krystyn Matwijowski, Wrocław-Głogów 1994, p. 114; Stanisław Kotełko, *W średniowieczu – od początków miasta do 1526 r.*, [in:] *Świdnica. Zarys monografii miasta,* ed. Wacław Korta, Wrocław-Świdnica 1995, pp. 66, 72.

[35] It mostly concerns beer from Świdnica, to a lesser extent beer from Wrocław (H. Wendt, *op. cit.*, p. 30) certified in Cracow and Poznań, but also in Toruń and Buda. Beer from Głogów, too, was exported to the Kingdom of Poland (R. Żerelik, *W średniowieczu*, p. 114), whereas beer from Opava was marketed to Toruń (Krzysztof Kopiński, *Gospodarcze i społeczne kontakty Torunia z Wrocławiem w późnym średniowieczu*, Toruń 2005, p. 121).

[36] W. Kehn, *Der Handel*, p. 62.

[37] *Breslauer Urkundenbuch*, vol. 1 (hereafter referred to as BUb.), ed. Georg Korn, Breslau 1870, No. 122 (1327), p. 113 (pt. 19).

[38] Wolfgang Kehn, *Der Oderraum und seine Beziehungen zur Hanse im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert*, [in:] *Pommern und Mecklenburg. Beiträge zur mittelalterlichen Städtgeschichte,* ed. Roderich Schmidt, Köln-Wien 1981, p. 95.

[39] J. Muszyński, *op. cit.*, p. 68. Unfortunately, the author did not specify whether the wine was delivered to Western or Gdańsk Pomerania.

[40] Rolf Sprandel, *Von Malvasia bis Kötschenbroda. Die Weinsorten auf den spätmittelalterlichen Märkten Deutschlands*, Stuttgart 1998, pp. 42, 116, 147, 157.

[41] *Księga kamlarii miasta Torunia* (1453–1495), eds Krzysztof Kopiński, Krzysztof Mikulski, Janusz Tandecki, Toruń 2007, p. 272.

[42] For the value of red dyes and technological issues arising in the process of their production see Irena Turnau, *Historia europejskiego włókiennictwa odzieżowego od XIII do XVIII w.*, Wrocław 1987, p. 66.

[43] Marian Wolański, *Schlesiens Stellung im Osthandel vom 15. bis zum 17. Jahrhundert*, [in:] *Der Aussenhandel Ostmitteleuropas (1450–1650). Die ostmitteleuropäischen Volkswirtschaften in ihren Beziehungen zu Mitteleuropa*, ed. Ingomar Bog, Köln–Wien 1971, p. 133.

[44] Konrad Bund, *Frankfurt am Main im Spätmittelalter (1311–1519)*, [in:] *Frankfurt am Main. Die Geschichte der Stadt*, Sigmaringen 1991, pp. 58, 62; M. Wolański, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

century owing to, among others, native sheep husbandry.[45] The most important centres of cloth making were located in Wrocław, Świdnica, Namysłów and Strzegom (whose prominence began in the 13th century).[46] These cities produced the famous *pannus polonicalis*, which was successfully exported to Bohemia and Moravia, the Kingdom of Poland (Lesser Poland, Ruthenia), the Kingdom of Hungary (Sibiu/Hermannstadt), Switzerland and Upper Austria, Franconia and Venice.[47] In the 1380s a considerable amount of cloth produced in Opava was exported to Poland.[48] In the Middle Ages not much importance was attributed to Silesian linen manufacturing, whose development and export date back only to the turn of the 16th century.[49] Before that only Wrocław linen products were sold outside Wrocław – in Lublin (1453)[50] and, possibly, in England.[51] Wrocław was probably also the centre of production of linen exported around the mid-14th century to Toruń.[52] Perhaps the same claim be made about the manufacture and export (or maybe re-export?) of fustian to southern Germany in the 15th century.[53]

However, what brought Silesia most fame in the markets of Europe were minerals.[54] Despite the fact that the period of the Middle Ages abounded in discoveries of various mineral resources, only a few spurred the dynamic development of the Silesian mining industry – gold, silver, lead, iron and stone mining.[55] At that time precious ore mining

[45] *Historia chłopów*, p. 81.

[46] *Ibidem*. For the Silesian cloth making see H. Wendt, *op. cit.*, p. 15; Karol Maleczyński, *Dzieje Wrocławia od czasów najdawniejszych do roku 1618*, [in:] Wacław Długoborski, Józef Gierowski, Karol Maleczyński, *Dzieje Wrocławia do roku 1807*, Warszawa 1958, p. 94; W. Kehn, *Der Handel*, p. 61; Mateusz Goliński, *Podstawy gospodarcze mieszczaństwa wrocławskiego w XIII wieku*, Wrocław 1991, pp. 49–50; for Strzegom see Danuta Poppe, *Pannus polonicalis. Z dziejów sukiennictwa polskiego w średniowieczu*, 'Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej', 36 (1988), Nos 3/4, p. 625.

[47] Marie Scholz–Babisch, *Oberdeutscher Handel mit dem deutschen und polnischen Osten nach Geschäftsbriefen von 1444*, 'Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens', 64 (1930), pp. 62, 63; František Graus, *Česky obchod se suknem ve 14. a počatkiem 15. stoleti*, Praha 1950, p. 61; K. Maleczyński, *Dzieje*, p. 108; Hektor Ammann, *Wirtschaftsbeziehungen zwischen Oberdeutschland und Polen im Mittelalter*, 'Vierteljahresschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte', 38 (1961), issue 4, p. 440; Marian Małowist, *The Trade of Eastern Europe in the Later Middle Ages*, [in:] *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, vol. 2, eds Michael M. Postan, Edward Miller, Cambridge 1987, 2nd edition, pp. 539, 567; D. Poppe, *op. cit.*, pp. 618, 621, 623, 627, 631; Feliks Kiryk, *Z dziejów późnośredniowiecznego Kamieńca Podolskiego*, [in:] *Kamieniec Podolski. Studia z dziejów miasta i regionu*, vol. 1, ed. Feliks Kiryk, Kraków 2000, p. 102; G. Myśliwski, *Wrocław*, pp. 279, 302, 351–353, 409, 420, 473.

[48] *Opava*, eds Karel Müller, Rudolf Žáček, Praha 2006, p. 125.

[49] K. Maleczyński, *Dzieje*, p. 246.

[50] G. Myśliwski, *Wrocław*, p. 302.

[51] Rudolf Stein, *Breslau und Bremen, zwei Hansestädte*, 'Jahrbuch des Friedrich-Wilhelms Universität zu Breslau', 15 (1970), p. 8.

[52] *Hansisches Urkundenbuch* (hereafter referred to as *HUb.*), vol. 3: *1343-1361,* ed. Konstantin Höhlbaum, Halle 1882–1886, no. 559, p. 314. The expression '*de 100 ulnis tele'* was overlooked by p. Stefan Weymann's notice (S. Weymann, *op. cit.*, pp. 51, 121). It was also omitted by K. Kopiński, *op. cit.*, pp. 110–113, 121.

[53] M. Scholz–Babisch, *op. cit.*, p. 64. For the growing significance of Wrocław fustian production see Mateusz Goliński, *Kryzys a przemiany środowiska miejskiego w późnym średniowieczu*, 'Sobótka', 65 (2010), p. 270.

[54] Marian Małowist, *Le développement des rapports économiques entre la Flandre la Pologne et les pays limitrophes du XIIIe au XIVe siècle*, '*Revue belge de Philologie et d'Histoire'*, 10 (1931), issue 4, p. 1020.

[55] Karol Maleczyński, *Aus der Geschichte des schlesischen Bergbaus in der Epoche des Feudalismus,* [in:] *Beiträge zur Geschichte Schlesiens,* ed. Ewa Maleczyńska, Berlin 1958, pp. 236-237.

centres were concentrated in three areas of Silesia.[56] In the western part (near Legnica, Złotoryja and Lwówek) there were **gold** mining centres,[57] whereas in the Sudetes, from the aptly named city of Złoty Stok ('golden slope') up to the Opava Silesia (Bruntál, Benešov) both gold and **silver** mining was highly developed.[58] Silver was extracted from galena deposits (along with lead) also near Bytom.[59] The beginnings of the Silesian mining industry took place in the 12th century; however, the peak of its development would occur in the next century,[60] and from the fourth quarter of the 13th century it became intertwined with numerous crises (see part 8).

The exploitation of deposits of precious ores and lead helped form connections between different parts of Silesia. The Church institutions of Lower Silesia (the Cistercian monasteries in Lubiąż and Kamieniec Ząbkowicki, the Monastery of Regular Canons in Wrocław and the Wrocław Bishopric) received land grants in Upper Silesia from local rulers in the 13th century, sometimes together with permission to search for metal ores.[61] In the same century the Abbey of St. Vincent in Wrocław extracted lead ores near Tarnowskie Góry.[62] Frequent local border crossings led to the purchase of Złoty Stok by Bolko II of Świdnica, which granted him the opportunity to mint his own coins in 1356.[63] In addition the monasteries, whose incomes were paid in gold, were dependent on deposits of this precious ore (as was the case of the Cistercian abbey Lubiąż and gold mines around the town of Złotoryja).[64]

The extraction and processing of various mineral resources also engaged Silesian merchants who began sell them abroad. Precious ores were already being exported in the third quarter of the 13th century to Bruges and, much later, to Cracow.[65] Finally, stone mining provided the material to make millstones, which around the mid-14th century were exported to Prussia.[66]

All of the aforementioned branches of the Silesian economy were important elements of the economic map of central Europe, and possibly beyond, in the 13th–14th centuries. Key factors to spur potential regional integration were the formation of connections between the producers of natural products (farmers, breeders, winemakers,

[56] The location of the mining regions in Silesia can be found in: *Historia Śląska*, vol. 1, part 2, p. 462.
[57] For the characteristics of the region see D. Molenda, *Górnictwo*, p. 77–78, 80; Roman Gorzkowski, *Lokacyjne miasto średniowieczne (XIII–XV w.)*, [in:] *Dzieje Złotoryi*, ed. Ryszard Gładkiewicz, Złotoryja-Wrocław 1997, p. 50–52, 57.
[58] For information on the general characteristics of the whole territory and particular coal mines see Karl Peter, *Die Goldbergwerke bei Zuckmantel und Freiwaldau*, 'Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens', 19 (1885), pp. 35–62; K. Maleczyński, *Aus der Geschichte*, pp. 239–242; D. Molenda, *Górnictwo*, pp. 78–79, 156.
[59] For the characteristics of the region see *Historia Śląska*, vol. 1, part 2, p. 104; D. Molenda, *Górnictwo*, pp. 45–63; Jan Drabina, *Historia Bytomia*, Bytom 1994, pp. 43–45.
[60] D. Molenda, *Górnictwo*, pp. 48–49.
[61] *Ibidem*, pp. 53-54.
[62] *Ibidem*, p. 57.
[63] S. Kotełko, *op. cit.*, p. 51.
[64] R. Gorzkowski, *op. cit.*, p. 51.
[65] M. Małowist, *Le développement*, p. 1020; G. Myśliwski, *Wrocław*, p. 303.
[66] S. Weymann, *op. cit.*, p. 51; W. Kehn, *Der Handel*, p. 143; R. Żerelik, *W średniowieczu*, p. 115.

miners, stoneworkers) as well as, in the case of the textile and mining industries, artisans (weavers, steelworkers), and merchants who bought the products of the aforementioned industries. Let us emphasize that these connections were between producers, artisans and merchants from different localities of Silesia. Admittedly, it is known that in some cases Silesian goods were transported abroad by merchants from Austria, Lviv and perhaps also from Prussia.[67] It is less certain whether merchants from Austria transported Silesian cloth abroad in order to sell it in Germany, or whether they bought it in Prague, for example. However, it seems that the exportation of grains, cloth (including from Opava), linen, precious ores and millstones was made mainly by merchants from Wrocław. Obviously, we cannot exclude the participation of merchants from other cities of the region (Legnica, Świdnica, maybe Lwówek), who travelled, for example, to the markets of Frankfurt am Main.[68]

It is mainly the Silesian rulers and Bishops of Wrocław who deserve credit for constructing the development of the Silesian economy based on natural resources. Their economic policy constituted another crucial factor in facilitating the transformation of Silesia into a developed economic region.

Common trends in the economic policy of the Silesian dukes, bishops and Charles IV of Luxembourg

In spite of the fact that the period under discussion was characterized by political fragmentation (after it had been incorporated into the Crown of Bohemia the dukes retained power over their territories) and frequent internal political conflicts in the region, the economic activities of many Silesian rulers were similar.[69] Each ruler more or less assisted the economic development of their area of dominance and supported the transformation of their economic landscape from being forest-dominated to one more reliant on farm breeding infrastructure, as well as the urbanization of the economy and the development of commerce and mining in areas that were rich in ores. Among the rulers whose contributions to the economic transformation of Silesia were of greatest value were the dukes who ruled the parts of the region which belonged to Wrocław. This reformation activity was set off by the initiator of the internal colonization process, Boleslaus

[67] G. Myśliwski, *Wrocław*, pp. 352, 409. For a rather sceptical approach towards the issue of Silesian cloth trading on a 'mass' scale see K. Kopiński, *op. cit.*, p. 113. However, the Toruń list of custom houses contains an entry referring to the trade in cloth (of uncertain provenance) from Wrocław (via Wrocław?) to Toruń along the 'old route' (HUb., vol. 3, No. 559, p. 314).

[68] Michael Rothmann, *Die Frankfurter Messen im Mittelalter*, Stuttgart 1998, pp. 155–157. For the suggestion that the merchants from Lwówek participated in trading during the Frankfurt fairs see Grzegorz Myśliwski, *Strefa sudecko-karpacka i Lwów. Miejsce Śląska, Małopolski i Rusi Czerwonej w gospodarce Europy Zachodniej (połowa XIII–początek XVI w.)*, [in:] *Ziemie polskie wobec Zachodu. Studia nad rozwojem Europy*, ed. Sławomir Gawlas, Warszawa 2006, pp. 264-265.

[69] For synthetic characteristics see: Sławomir Gawlas, *Komercjalizacja jako mechanizm europeizacji peryferii na przykładzie Polski*, [in:] *Ziemie polskie wobec Zachodu*, pp. 98-107.

I the Tall.[70] However, the most ambitious economic policy was conducted by his son, Henry the Bearded, his grandson Henry IV the Righteous and the Bishops Laurentius (1207–1232) and Thomas I (1232–1268) who ruled the castellanies of Nysa and Otmuchów.[71] It was as a result of their initiative that an intense process of colonizing villages and cities based on German law and of stimulating the development of international trade and handicraft took place. The establishment of guilds occurred earlier in Wrocław (1273) than in Prague and the cities of the Hungarian Crown.[72] The roster of Silesian dukes that supported the economic development of the region also included other figures, for example Henry III the White, who engaged in rebuilding his ducal realm after a crisis in the aftermath of the Mongol invasion in 1241 and re-launched the process of founding villages and towns.[73] Others included the rulers of the Duchy of Głogów, Conrad I, and the more politically-ambitious Henry III.[74] Dukes from Opole and Racibórz – for instance Casimir I, Mieszko II the Fat, Ladislaus I and others – followed a similar strategy, albeit on a smaller scale.[75]

It should be noted here that from the end of the 12th century Silesia produced its own currency, denarii, and by the end of the 13th century Lower Silesian rulers had introduced three further monetary reforms.[76] Recently it has been claimed that similar activities were conducted at that time by Duke Ladislaus I of Opole and Racibórz, who after 1258 introduced the bracteat denarii.[77] Especially important was the emission of what were known as 'quarter' coins (*kwartnik*) (from ca. 1290), which enjoyed the status

[70] B. Zientara, *Heinrich der Bärtige*, pp. 117-124.

[71] Other literary sources see: *ibidem*, p. 117–139, 163–181; Colmar Grünhagen, *Breslau und die Landesfürsten*, 'Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens', 36 (1901), pp. 6–7; Leon Koczy, *Związki handlowe Wrocławia z Polską do końca XVI wieku*, Katowice 1936, p. 9; Zbigniew Zielonka, *Henryk Prawy*, Katowice 1982, p. 108, 120–124; Piotr Górecki, *Economy, Society, and Lordship in Medieval Poland (1100–1250)*, New York – London 1992, p. 236–275; J. Rajman, *op. cit.*, p. 84; J. Leszczyński, *op. cit.*, p. 20; Kazimierz Dola, *Znaczenie instytucji kościelnych dla organizowania osadnictwa średniowiecznego na Śląsku*, [in:] *Korzenie środkowoeuropejskiej i górnośląskiej kultury gospodarczej*, ed. Antoni Barciak, Katowice 2003, p. 60.

[72] Roman Heck, *Wrocław w latach 1241–1526,* [in:] *Wrocław, jego dzieje i kultura,* ed. Zygmunt Świechowski, Warszawa 1978, p. 60; M. Goliński, *Wrocław od połowy XIII w.*, p. 110; cf. *Dějiny Prahy*, vol. 1, Praha – Litomyšl 1997, pp. 107, 121; Pál Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen. A History of Medieval Hungary (895–1526)*, translation: Tamás Pálosfalvi, London – New York 2001, p. 259–260.

[73] Andrzej Jureczko, *Henryk III Biały książę wrocławski (1247–1266)*, Kraków 2007, pp. 119–124, 132, 135–138.

[74] R. Żerelik, *W średniowieczu*, p. 78; Tomasz Jurek, *Dziedzic Królestwa Polskiego. Książę głogowski Henryk (1274–1309)*, 2nd edition, Kraków 2006, pp. 155–160.

[75] Władysław Dziewulski, *Za Piastów opolskich*, [in:] *Opole. Monografia miasta*, ed. Franciszek Hawranek, Opole 1975, p. 57; J. Rajman, *op. cit.*, p. 83–88; Jerzy Horwat, *Formowanie się miast księstwa opolsko–raciborskiego do poł XIV w.,* Gliwice – Rzeszów 1996, p. 121; Wojciech Dominiak, *Polityka gospodarcza księcia Władysława I Opolskiego (1246–1281)*, [in:] *Korzenie środkowoeuropejskiej i górnośląskiej kultury gospodarczej*, p. 77–78, 86–90; Anna Pobóg–Lenartowicz, *Rozwój akcji osadniczej w księstwie opolsko–raciborskim w I poł. XIII wieku*, [in:] *Sacra Silentii provincia*, p. 149.

[76] Marian Gumowski, *Moneta na Śląsku do końca XIV w.*, [in:] *Historja Śląska od najdawniejszych czasów do roku 1400,* vol. 3, ed. Władysław Semkowicz, Kraków 1936, pp. 579, 583, 602–603, 649–650; Borys Paszkiewicz, *Mennictwo śląskie wobec 'Rewolucji handlowej' XIII wieku,* [in:] *Kultura średniowiecznego Śląska i Czech. 'Rewolucja' XIII wieku*, ed. Krzysztof Wachowski, Wrocław 1998, pp. 36, 49.

[77] Borys Paszkiewicz, *Polityka monetarna Władysława I*, [in:] *Sacra Silentii provincia*, p. 160.

of a genuine and valuable Silesian currency for over three decades.[78] The quarter coin reform at that point constituted a desired solution to the regional need to produce a coin that would be larger in size, and thus of more permanent value than the bracteats in use at the time. It was Ferdinand Friedensburg who first raised the number of quarter coin mints to 34, five of which were located in Upper Silesia (in Bytom, Cieszyn, Racibórz, Toszek and Sławęcice).[79] In the same period the decentralization of the mint industry also took place.[80] The incorporation of most of the Silesian duchies to Bohemia (1327–1335) resulted in the domination of the Prague *groschen* over the Silesian currency. At the same time, in Wrocław in particular, during the entire medieval period larger sums of money were counted in accordance with the so-called 'Polish counting system' (where 48 *groschen* = 1 *grzywna*) and not by using the Bohemian currency division.[81] This would confirm the observation made by Günther Meinhardt that Silesia constituted a kind of monetary borderland where the influences of different monetary systems clashed.[82]

The activity of the aforementioned dukes in the period between the second half of the 12th century and the outset of the 14th century accelerated the process by which the Silesian lands developed a common economic profile far earlier than in the case of other Polish lands, and at approximately the same time as that of the Bohemian Crown.[83] An opinion has been expressed that Henry III of Głogów (who died in 1309) was the last contestant in the race of duke-reformers of the Silesian economy.[84] This opinion, however, needs to be updated and corrected. We must not forget that by the first quarter of the 14th century the basic economic transformation of the Silesian region was completed. Reforms also contributed to the spread of economic life stimulators (monasteries, burghers) whose role in this period was increasingly important. As a result of immunization efforts and frequent cases of people being exempt from making payments to dukes, the material resources of the rulers were gradually shrinking.[85] Their role in the Silesian economy was thus restricted. At the same time, after the death of Henry III of Głogów Silesia was home to many dukes that played a favourable role in the economic history of their subject cities and territories. It is worth mentioning here the rational fiscal policy of Louis I of Brzeg, who granted permission to numerous Silesian cities to strike coins let

[78] M. Gumowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 555, 648, 649–650, 688, 690; Günther Meinhardt, *Schlesiens Währungssysteme*, 'Jahrbuch der Schlesischen Friedrich–Wilhems–Universität zu Breslau', 15 (1970), p. 48; B. Paszkiewicz, *Mennictwo*, p. 49; T. Jurek, *Dziedzic*, p. 163–164.

[79] M. Gumowski, *op. cit.*, p. 656–683.

[80] B. Paszkiewicz, *Mennictwo*, p. 49.

[81] Ferdinand Friedensburg, *Schlesiens Münzgeschichte im Mittelalter*, part. 2: *Münzgeschichte und Münzbeschreibung*, Breslau 1888 (=Codex Diplomaticus Silesiae, vol. 13), p. 52; *Historia Śląska*, vol. 1, part 2, p. 158; M. Goliński, *Wrocław od połowy XIII w.*, p. 165; G. Myśliwski, *Wrocław*, p. 520.

[82] G. Meinhardt, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

[83] For Bohemia see Jan Klápšte, *Studies of structural change in medieval settlement in Bohemia*, 'Antiquity', 65 (1991), p. 397; J.K. Hoensch, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

[84] So stated W. Kuhn, and accordingly T. Jurek, *Dziedzic*, p. 165. What corresponds with these data are the findings of J. Horwat, who confirmed the halt of urbanization processes in the Upper Silesia at the turn of the 14th century, mostly from the initiative of the dukes (J. Horwat, *op. cit.*, pp. 121, 124).

[85] See i.e. M. Haisig, *Podstawy gospodarczego rozwoju miasta*, p. 41.

alone other less spectacular privileges.[86] On the other hand, the monetary reforms introduced by rulers such as Wenceslaus I of Legnica, Louis I of Brzeg, Bolko II of Świdnica and Bolko II of Ziębice (the issuance of golden coins) turned out to be short-lived.[87] Even worse was the decision of Matthias Corvinus to introduce the Silesian *groschen* at end of 1470, which, despite being put into use, brought about monetary chaos.[88] As far as the financial policy of the late medieval period is concerned, the best results were obtained by the municipal authorities' actions to uphold the value of money, such as the joint resolution of the cities of Wrocław, Świdnica and Legnica in 1438 for example.[89]

Despite the conspicuous difference in the range of economic activity of the Silesian rulers in the second half of 12th century and at the outset of the 14th century, as well as their 14th-century successors (to say nothing of the relatively insignificant (in this area) rulers of the 15th century), the claim that there was a lack of great reformers in late medieval Silesia does not seem justified. What comes to mind in this context is the great figure of Charles IV of Luxembourg. As we know, Charles, as both King of Bohemia and the Holy Roman Emperor, carried out active and well-thought-out policies to develop his successive territories. On his initiative new trades were founded (e.g. the fustian industry in Germany, Austria and Bohemia) and he strove to make the Elbe river basin the major trading artery between Flanders and northern Italy (especially Venice).[90] When planning the economic flourish of the Bohemian Crown, he did not forget to pay attention to the interests of Silesia. Charles' intention was not only to restore trade along the Odra river within the region (see above) but he also engaged himself in activities aimed at the restoration of trade with Western Pomerania via the Odra. This was to be achieved through conquering Brandenburg (1373), his marriage to Elisabeth, the Duchess of Pomerania, as well as through revoking the detrimental staple right in Frankfurt an der Oder.[91] The fact of awarding the city of Wrocław two mint privileges (1360, 1362), and Świdnica two commercial privileges (1355, 1363)[92] needs to be viewed in the context of Charles' hopes of successfully achieving his plan to focus all the main trade and communication arteries between the north and northern Italy within his area of rule, although

[86] S. Kotełko, *op. cit.*, p. 74; M. Haisig, *Podstawy gospodarczego rozwoju miasta*, p. 38; G. Meinhardt, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

[87] *Historia Śląska*, vol. 1, part 2, p. 159; G. Meinhardt, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

[88] F. Friedensburg, *op. cit.*, pp. 85, 89; Borys Paszkiewicz, *Pieniądz górnośląski w średniowieczu*, Lublin 2000, pp. 86–88.

[89] F. Friedensburg, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

[90] Wolfgang von Stromer, *Der kaiserliche Kaufmann – Wirtschaftspolitik unter Karl IV.*, [in:] *Kaiser Karl IV. Staatsman und Mäzen*, ed. Ferdinand Seibt, München 1978, pp. 67, 69–70.

[91] Ferdynand Seibt, *Karol IV. Cesarz w Europie 1346–1378*, translated by Czesław Tarnogórski, ed., Warszawa 1996, p. 267–270. For information on the history of the 15th century Frankfurt staple right see M. Rauprich, *Breslaus Handelslage*, p. 13; A. Grodek, *op. cit.*, p. 387.

[92] See i.e. M. Gumowski, *Moneta*, p. 707, 715; Marian Haisig, *Wrocławskie pieczęcie, medale i monety,* [in:] *Wrocław, jego dzieje i kultura,* ed. Zygmunt Świechowski, Warszawa 1978, p. 82; S. Kotełko, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

in the case of Świdnica, which was the capital city of a still-independent duchy, the political aspect was of greater importance. Researchers assume that Charles' attempt to introduce the fustian industry to Wrocław in the 1350s was repeat of his earlier economic policy in southern Germany.[93] Although Charles failed to achieve the main target of his master plan (the Venetians did not accept his offer), his economic policy brought many benefits to the Silesian economy.

Both Charles' predecessors and his successors in the Luxembourg dynasty substantially contributed to the economic development of the region by supporting trade in Wrocław, to give one example.[94] Their actions were, however, politically motivated and did not result from a broader economic policy led by either King John or King Wenceslaus IV. Sigismund of Luxemburg, on the other hand, whose intellectual horizons were far broader than the political imagination of his grandfather and brother, decided to lead a risky policy of confrontation with the mighty Venice; hence, he proclaimed a blockade of the trade routes on the north–south axis.[95] His action simply could not have had a positive impact on the economic development of those Silesian cities where merchants were actively participating in long-distant trade. Despite the initial stand of Wolfgang von Stromer, who claimed the activity of Sigismund to be partly succesful, the ruler's attempt to change the hierarchy of the economic system of Europe resulted in utter failure. Both his actions and the actions of John of Luxembourg and Wenceslaus IV brought privileges to a number of municipal centres. In comparison to the economic activities conducted by the three Luxembourgs, the policies of the Dukes and Bishops of Silesia between the 13th and 14th centuries appear to be far more multidimensional. One of the crucial achievements in this area was the activity of founding and reorganizing cities on the basis of German and Flemish law, whose presence was far more evident in Silesia than in any other region of central Europe.

Advanced urbanization and high percentage of urban population

According to Henryk Samsonowicz, as many as 129 out of 169 (76.33 per cent) centres with municipal rights were established by the dukes.[96] The number of cities in medieval Silesia founded on the basis of German law was actually higher. The findings of Samsonowicz must be supplemented by data concerning the cities of the Opava area, including the first founded city of Bruntál (1213 r.), as well as Opava, Hlučin, Krnov and

[93] W. von Stromer, *Der kaiserliche Kaufmann*, p. 70. See also I. Turnau, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

[94] Samuel Beniamin Klose, *Von Breslau. Dokumentierte Geschichte und Beschreibung in Briefen*, vol. 2, part 2, Breslau 1781, p. 350–351; Colmar Grünhagen, *Schlesien am Ausgange des Mittelalters*, 'Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens', 18 (1884), p. 39; H. Wendt, *op. cit.*, p. 43; K. Maleczyński, *Dzieje*, p. 171; G. Myśliwski, *Wrocław*, pp. 101, 239–240, 243, 256, 408, 497.

[95] See especially Wolfgang von Stromer, *Landmacht gegen Seemacht. Kaiser Sigismunds Kontinentalsperre gegen Venedig (1412–1433)*, 'Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung', 22 (1995), issue 2, pp. 145-189.

[96] Maria Bogucka, Henryk Samsonowicz, *Dzieje miast i mieszczaństwa w Polsce przedrozbiorowej*, Wrocław 1986, p. 84. In Upper Silesia this proportion was even higher – over 89 percent (J. Horwat, *op. cit.*, p. 121).

Odry.[97] The apogee of urbanization passed soon after 1310.[98] Based on the list of municipal foundations created by Samsonowicz it is possible to extend this period to 1327 for Lower Silesia.[99] As a result, Silesia was covered with a dense network of urban centres of different sizes. This related especially to Lower Silesia, where the urban population reached 27.1 per cent, whereas Upper Silesia could boast only 14.9 per cent.[100] The aggregate population of the Silesian urban centres constituted 23.1 per cent of the total population of the region in the second quarter of the 14th century. In this respect, Silesia outperformed the majority of its neighbouring regions, perhaps even Bohemia.[101] Despite a drop in the population in the 15th century, the level of urbanization of the region of Silesia in the closing period of the Middle Ages was among the highest in central Europe (15 per cent), and is comparable with royal (Polish) Prussia and the indigenous regions of the Kingdom of Bohemia.[102] At the same time, the proportion of urban population in Silesia was higher than that in Lesser Poland (11–13 per cent), but lower than in the case of Greater Poland (19 per cent).[103] On the basis of the aforementioned data we may, therefore, draw the conclusion that the urban population of both parts of Silesia, although being substantially high in general, slumped in the 15th century when compared to the 14th century.

Simultaneously, late medieval Silesia had a higher number of towns than other regions, including Bohemia and Moravia.

Table 2. The largest towns of Silesia and its neighbouring regions in the Late Middle Ages[104]

Population	Silesia[105]	Bohemia and Moravia[106]	Lesser Poland[107]	Greater Poland[108]	Lusatia[109]
Over 20,000	–	Prague	–	–	–
15,000–20,000	Wrocław	–	Cracow	–	–
11,000–14,000	Świdnica, Legnica	–	–	Poznań	–

[97] Zdeněk Láznička, *K počátkům města Opavy*, [in:] *Opava. Sbornik k 10. výročí osvobození města*, eds Andělin Grobelný, Bohumil Sobotík, Ostrava 1956, p. 78; *Opava*, eds Karel Müller, Rudolf Žáček, Praha 2006, p. 46.

[98] M. Bogucka, H. Samsonowicz, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

[99] The Upper Silesian urbanization surge came to an end in the 13th century (J. Horwat, *op. cit.*, p. 124).

[100] Jan Drabina, *Życie codzienne w miastach śląskich XIV i XV wieku*, Wrocław 1998, p. 7–8.

[101] The urban population of Bohemia around the year 1400 is estimated to be 20 per cent of the total, Jan Čechura, *České zemé w letech 1310–1378. Lucemburkové na českém trůne*, Praha 1999, p. 160.

[102] M. Bogucka, H. Samsonowicz, *op. cit.*, p. 122. The list of population figures prepared by H. Samsonowicz, where the total population of the regions and towns is stated separately, shows that the Silesian population at the end of the Middle Ages was significantly smaller than that of Royal Prussia (27.5 %) (*ibidem*, pp. 120–121).

[103] *Ibidem,* p. 121.

[104] Most of the findings refer to the 15th century. We shall provide here several explanations. In the case of a substantial number of urban centres, the size of their population was estimated with a high degree accuracy to be over 2,000 (e.g. Głogów, Lwówek). In such cases we assume the lowest threshold. The population estimates vary in the case of different towns located mainly in Bohemia and Moravia (Kutná Hora, Ołomuniec, Pilzno, see below). Detailed estimates with explanations, see below.

5,000–10,000	Lwówek, Głogów	Olomuc, Plzeň, Kutná Hora, Brno, Hradec Králové	–		Zgorzelec, Budziszyn, Żytawa,
3,000–5,000	Brzeg, Dzierżoniów Nysa, Racibórz, Środa, Ząbkowice, Ziębice, Krosno, Opava	Jihlava, České Budějovice, Znojmo	Lublin, Sandomierz	Kalisz, Kościan	Lubań

[105] There are considerable divergences in the data on the size of the Wrocław population in the 15th century. For example, it has been discovered recently that the Wrocław population at the outset of the 15th century was around 13,000–22,000 and around 15,000–21,000 in the mid-15th century (M. Goliński, *Wrocław od połowy XIII w.*, p. 207). For a variety of different views on this subject see G. Myśliwski, *Wrocław*, p. 61. The town of Świdnica was to comprise a population of 14,000 people between the 15th and the 16th centuries, S. Kotełko, *op. cit.*, p. 40. Legnica on the other hand had 12,000–15,000 people, including the suburbs (Kazimierz Bobowski, *Etapy rozwoju miasta w okresie piastowskim*, [in:] *Legnica. Zarys monografii miasta*, ed. Stanisław Dąbrowski, Wrocław-Legnica 1998, p. 58). It is worth rememebering here the much lower estimates of Marian Haisig – 10,000 in 1329 and only 6,500 in the mid-15th century, see *idem, Zaludnienie i klęski żywiołowe*, [in:] *Legnica. Monografia historyczna*, p. 47; this drop was probably caused by the crisis in the local mining industry. How should we then reconcile this fact with Haisig's views on the peak development of the city in the first half of the 15th century? (M. Haisig, *Podstawy gospodarczego rozwoju miasta*, p. 41); I based my assumptions on K. Bobowski, see above. Other data: Lwówek had 9,000–11,500 people in 1329 (*Historia Śląska*, vol. 1, part 1, p. 249); Głogów – 9,000–11,000 (R. Żerelik, *W średniowieczu*, p. 115), Nysa – about 5,000 people. (J. Leszczyński, *op. cit.*, p. 34), which was similar for Brzeg, Dzierżoniów, Ziębice and Ząbkowice – all of them had about 4,500–5,000 inhabitants (cf. J. Drabina, *Życie codzienne*, p. 7). In the case of the remaining cities, I present the data for the 14th century: Krosno was inhabited by over 3,000 people (J. Muszyński, *op. cit*., p. 69), Racibórz – only a little over 3,000. (J. Burek, *op. cit*., p. 55–56); and the researchers are in agreement that the population of Opava amounted to 4,000 people (J. Čechura, *České země w letech 1310–1378*, p. 177; *Opava*, p. 30). It would be worth refering here to the view of Karl Borchardt, who like several other, mainly German researchers, has recently supported the view that Wrocław had 15,000 inhabitants in the 15th century and whose estimates of the sizes of the populations of other Silesian cities are generally lower than those of other Polish historians. According to his view, Świdnica was to have half of the population of the central city of Silesia, whereas Legnica, Głogów, Opole and Racibórz comprised a group of small cities with populations between 1,000 and 5,000 people (*idem, Breslau als Zentrum Schlesiens im 15. Jahrhundert. Überlegungen zur Genese gesamtschlesischer Einrichtungen*, 'Jahrbuch der Schlesischen Friedrich–Wilhelms–Universität zu Breslau', 42-44 (2001-2003), pp. 11-12. Nonetheless, it seems that although the size of the population of Wrocław may be still placed within the range of most actual estimates, the views on the populations of other cities are understated. What also provokes doubts is the fact that both cities with average populations of 1,000 and 5,000 people were included in one group (without mentioning their names).

[106] In the pre-Hussite period, the population of Prague was estimated at 30,000–40,000 people and in the post-Hussite period – at 20,000. (Jaroslav Mezník, *Der ökonomische Charakter Prags im 14 J.*, 'Historica', 17 (1969), pp. 46, 65). In the 15th century, Brno had about 8,000 inhabitants and Cheb – 6,800; Hradec Králové – 5,000 and Jihlava – 4,600; České Budějovice – 4,000 (Jaroslav Čechura, *České země w letech 1378–1437. Lucemburkové na českém trůne*, vol. 2, Praha 2000, p. 220). Josiah Cox Russell estimated the size of the population of Olomuc and Plzeň at 10,000 people, and the population of Kutná Hora at 8,000. (*idem, Medieval Regions and Their Cities*, Bloomington 1972, p. 100). Far lower were the estimates of 4,000 for Kutná Hora, Cheb, Plzeň, Olomuc, Znojmo and Litoměřice in the second half the 14th century mentioned by J. Čechura, *České země w letech 1310–1378*, p. 177. But the view that in the peak of their prosperity (14th century) the Bishop's capital city of Olomuc and the centre of silver mining Kutná Hora both had populations of only 4,000 people raises serious doubts. However, there is no doubt whatsoever that after the Hussite Wars the populations of most of the urban centres significantly shrunk in size.

[107] The population of Cracow was estimated in the first half of the 15th century at about 15,000. (Jerzy Wyrozumski, *Dzieje Krakowa,* vol. 1: *Kraków do schyłku wieków średnich*, Kraków 1992, pp. 315–317); the population of Lublin in the 15th century – at about 4,000. (M. Bogucka, H. Samsonowicz, *op. cit*., p. 119),

This list needs to be supplemented by two remarks. Firstly, it does not illustrate the changes in the population of the largest cities of Silesia and its neighbouring regions. For example, in the case of Bohemia and Moravia, the turning point, after which the number of municipal inhabitants started to fall radically, was the outbreak of the Hussite Wars (1419). The same may also be said about the population of Zgorzelec.[110] The wars had no impact on the size of the population of Wrocław, which grew during the 15th century. A similar tendency was evident in the case of the cities of the Kingdom of Poland.

The impact of developing a dense network of fairly populated Silesian towns on the integrity of the region is obvious. These cities served as unifying forces of the economy, to say nothing of their formidable political, legal (sources of municipal law, *weichbilds*)[111] and cultural significance. Perhaps the urbanization process could be regarded as the reason why, despite the early and intensive development of agriculture, the export of grains did not become one of Silesia's commercial strengths – it was probably the case that the large populations of the Silesian cities consumed the majority of any agricultural produce surpluses.

Based on the above table we can see that in Silesia there was little disproportion between the main city of the region and the other larger centres, which cannot be said for its neighbouring regions. In urbanized Bohemia, Prague was considerably outpacing other cities as far as the number of its inhabitants was concerned. The demographic advantage enjoyed by Silesia is even better demonstrated in the case of Lesser Poland, where Lublin, its second most densely populated city, probably had only 4,000 inhabitants. Similarly, in Greater Poland Poznań, which was medium-sized but distinguished by a royal-diocesan tradition, significantly outgrew other small cities. The urbanization of

Sandomierz – 3,000. (Zbigniew Morawski, *Sandomierz od końca XIII do początków XV wieku*, [in:] *Dzieje Sandomierza*, vol. 1, ed. Henryk Samsonowicz, Warszawa 1993, p. 122).

108 For the year 1430, the population of Poznań is estimated at 6,000–6,500 people, and for the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries at 10,000–12,500 people (Jacek Wiesiołowski, *Socjotopografia późnośredniowiecznego Poznania*, Poznań 1997, 2 edition, pp. 234–235). At the close of the Middle Ages, the population of Kalisz was about 4,000 people (Stanisław Herbst, *Kalisz renesansowy*, [in:] *Osiemnaście wieków Kalisza. Studia i materiały do dziejów miasta Kalisza i regionu kaliskiego*, vol. 3, ed. Aleksander Gieysztor, Kalisz 1961, p. 95). Similar are the estimates regarding the population of Kościan (*Kościan. Zarys dziejów*, eds Zbigniew Wielgosz, Kazimierz Zimniewicz, Warszawa – Poznań 1985, p. 17).

109 Data for the 15th century from Norbert Kersken, *Górne Łużyce od założenia Związku Sześciu Miast do włączenia do Elektoratu Saksonii (1346–1635)*, [in:] *Dzieje Górnych Łużyc. Władza, społeczeństwo, kultura od średniowiecza do końca XX wieku*, ed. Joachim Bahlcke, translated by Marek Słoń, Rafael Sendek, coop., Warszawa 2007, p. 131.

110 *Ibidem*.

111 Slightly modified versions of legal regulations from Magdeburg and Halle, as well as Flemish laws, were adopted by Silesian cities as to create Wrocław, Środa Śląska, Krosno, Lwówek, Głubczyce and Nysa versions and, exceptionally, the Chełmno version. For the so-called w*eichbilds* of Silesia see S. Gawlas, *O kształt zjednoczonego Królestwa*, Warszawa 1996, p. 54–55; Hugo Weczerka, *Schlesiens zentrale Orte: Kontinuität und Wandel vom Mittelalter bis zur Mitte des 20. Jahrhunderts*, 'Jahrbuch der Schlesischen Friedrich–Wilhelms–Universität zu Breslau', 59 (2008), pp. 41–45 and the chapter by M. Pauk i E. Wółkiewicz above in the book.

Lusatia on the other hand (especially in Upper Lusatia) was dominated by a group of towns with similar but not large populations.

Even the largest of these towns (Zgorzelec) was much smaller than Wrocław. Wrocław was the undisputed regional metropolis and one of the driving forces of the Silesian economy.

Wrocław and smaller urban centres

This city on the Odra river had always enjoyed the status of the political, administrative (residence of the captain of the Duchy of Wrocław) and diocesan centre of the region. At the same time, its influence on the aforementioned areas was volatile and spatially restricted, even as far as the administrative-church sphere was concerned (i.e. the diocese did not include Opava).[112] It is worth mentioning the issue of the so-called 'Peter's Pence' payment, which in 1329 flowed to Wrocław from almost the whole territory of Silesia, including the city and Duchy of Racibórz.[113] The spread of Wrocław's version of German law did not reach Upper Silesia, although it included Olomuc.[114]

In an economic sense, Wrocław was a center of Silesia. Its formidable manufacturing potential may be illustrated by the number of guilds (which was usually lower than the number of professions registered in the city). Even by 1303, 29 guilds were in operation in the city, whereas their number in other Silesian towns was much smaller: 16 in Świdnica (1374), 11 in Legnica (1352), and 6 in Brzeg – just as in the case of the principal urban centres of Upper Silesia at the end of the 14th century such as Opole and Racibórz (1362).[115] In the period of the Late Middle Ages the leading branches of industry were the textile industry, metalworking, clothing (including fur clothing) and food manufacturing.

However, Wrocław's advantage over other cities of the region was most evident in its flourishing long-distance trade and the immense size of its commercial network. Being a centre of commerce with a vast commercial network reaching as far as the Netherlands, England, southern Germany, northern Italy, Hungary, Wallachia, Novogrod and Scandinavia, Wrocław also played an important role as an international fair centre.[116] It is known that in the Late Middle Ages it was involved in the series of international commercial

[112] František Papoušek, *Opavské mincování*, [in:] *Opava. Sbornik*, p. 87.
[113] *Henricus Pauper. Rechnungen der Stadt Breslau (1299–1358)*, [in:] *Codex diplomaticus Silesiae*, vol. 3, ed. Colmar Grünhagen, Breslau 1860, p. 89.
[114] Theodor Goerlitz, *Verfassung, Verwaltung und Recht der Stadt Breslau,* part 1: *Mittelalter*, Würzburg 1962, p. 108–109.
[115] Roman Heck, *Die gewerbliche Produktion der mittelalterlichen Stadt Wrocław*, [in:] *Gewerbliche Produktion und Stadt-Land-Beziehungen*, eds Konrad Fritze, Eckhard Müller-Mertens, Johannes Schildhauer, Weimar 1979 (=Hansische Studien, vol. 4), p. 44.
[116] G. Myśliwski, *Wrocław*, p. 92.

meetings that took place in various locations from Vilnius to Leipzig.[117] However, the purpose of raising the issue of the importance of the fairs organized in Wrocław in the context of the formation of the Silesian economic region is to determine whether these markets were the main driving forces of the alleged series of commercial meetings that took place in the region. The historical process behind the development of the Wrocław fairs and the perturbations concerning the dates of their organization is a well-known issue.[118] After the monastic fair organized on the day of St. Vincent (6th June), later revoked by Henry I the Bearded in 1232,[119] the fair of St. John, the oldest in the city, started on 24th June. After 1337, the so-called 'mid-fast fair' was introduced (every year it commenced on a different date between the 1st May and the 4th of April), and from 1374 the St. Elizabeth fair also took place (from 19th October). In 1481 Matthias Corvinus founded the Holy Cross fair, which commenced on the 14th September. It is hard to evaluate the importance of the St. John fair for the economic life of Silesia before the 14th century partly due to the fact that the dates of many fairs in other cities of the region are unknown. It does not seem, however, that there was any overlap between it and the old fair in Nysa (which commenced on 21st January), or the fair in Brzeg (8th September), provided it was launched soon after the founding of the city, that is in the second half of the 1270s;[120] the time between the fairs was too great. There is substantial evidence that a chronological relationship between fairs in certain cities developed by the Late Middle Ages. What is noticeable is a close relationship between the fair in Brzeg and the series of fairs in Wrocław, which was successfully supplemented in 1412 with the fair of St. Bartholomew (24th August)[121] – the Brzeg fair was at that time established enough in the economic life of Silesia to make the capital city adopt the tradition of the meetings of wholesale merchants at a slightly earlier time. One could also look for a compatibility of dates among certain fairs in Głogów and Wrocław[122] – for example the Głogów fair of the Virgin Mary (15th August) and the fourth Wrocław fair (14th September), as well as the Głogów fair that was launched in 1472 (and started on 30th November) and that of Wrocław, which started on 19th November. Furthermore, the purpose behind the foundation of the Easter fair in Legnica (1443)[123] could have been the strengthening of commercial relations with Wrocław and its 'mid-fast fair'. In light of

[117] Henryk Samsonowicz, *Warszawa w handlu średniowiecznym*, [in:] *Warszawa średniowieczna,* issue 2, ed. Aleksander Gieysztor, Warszawa 1975 (=Studia Warszawskie, vol. 19), p. 28.
[118] M. Goliński, *Wrocław od połowy XIII w.*, p. 153; G. Myśliwski, *Wrocław*, p. 129.
[119] M. Młynarska–Kaletynowa, *op. cit.*, p. 110.
[120] For dates of fairs in Nysa and Brzeg see J. Leszczyński, *op. cit.*, p. 18; Władysław Dziewulski, *Brzeg od lokacji na prawie zachodnim do wygaśnięcia dynastii Piastów*, [in:] *Brzeg. Dzieje – gospodarka – kultura,* Opole 1975, p. 88.
[121] G. Myśliwski, *Wrocław*, pp. 133–134.
[122] R. Żerelik, *W średniowieczu*, p. 114.
[123] Marian Haisig, *Rzemiosło, handel i pieniądz* miejski, [in:] *Legnica*, p. 63.

all the available historical data it does not seem however that the oldest fair of Świdnica (16th October) was also part of this series.[124]

The issue of compatability of the fairs of Upper Silesia together with their Wrocław counterparts in unequivocal.[125] What is less certain is the issue of a potential chronological compatibility between the Upper Silesian annual meetings with the fairs of Cracow. In the Late Middle Ages Cracow had three fairs which started on 3rd May, 11th June and 29th September.[126] With this perspective in mind, we may divide the fairs of Upper Silesia into four groups: (a) fairs that were potentially related to the Wrocław fairs; (b) fairs that were potentially related to both the Wrocław and Cracow fairs; (c) fairs that related only to fairs in Cracow; (d) fairs that related neither to the Wrocław nor Cracow fairs. The fourth of these groups is omitted in my analysis. The groups under scrutiny comprise both towns with wider and more local influences, which may have been the places in which the distribution of goods purchased either in both or at least in one of the metropolises of Silesia and Lesser Poland took place.

A town of the first group that is especially worth noting is Bytom, whose autumn (30th November) and summer (15th August) fairs could have been related to the St. Elizabeth fair and – from 1481 – to the Holy Cross fair in Wrocław. What is especially interesting is that the third fair of Bytom (22nd July) did not have anything in common with the annual meetings of merchants either in the capital city of Silesia or in the capital city of the Kingdom of Poland. The St. Elizabeth fair in Wrocław was probably connected with the Pyskowice fair (6th December) located on the Via Regia.[127] The Holy Cross fair could be connected with the Zator fair, which commenced on the 24th August. All these Upper Silesian towns were located about 150–200 km away in a straight line from Wrocław. As at that time the average daily travelling distance was ca. 20–30 km,[128] we can reasonably say that the journey from Pyskowice (closest to Wrocław) to the centre of Wrocław took the merchants about 58 days.

At the same time, I would include Zator in the group of cities whose fairs were compatible with some of the fairs of Wrocław and Cracow. We should also name here the fairs in Czeladź (27th September) and Oświęcim (after 21st May).

[124] Actually, perhaps this was the fair that Charles IV had in mind when in 1374 he asked Wrocław to choose between two possible dates for the newly-founded fair. In accordance with one of these options the fair was to commence on the day of St Simon and Juda (October 28). The emperor's intention could be justified by his knowledge of the economic regulations and with the fact that he wanted to establish a closer economic relationship between Świdnica and Wrocław. Naturally, Świdnica was the capital of an autonomous duchy, and Charles IV undertook a number of steps in order to subordinate it in the second half of the 14th century. Nevertheless the authorities of Wrocław, who were very faithful to their ruler, had chosen a different, later date, thus preventing the hypothetical plan of developing the link between the fair of Świdnica and Wrocław.

[125] The dates of Upper Silesian fairs after: J. Rajman, *op. cit.*, p. 288.

[126] J. Wyrozumski, *Dzieje*, p. 390.

[127] General information on Pyskowice see J. Horwat, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

[128] H. Samsonowicz, *Warszawa*, p. 28; Norman J. G. Pounds, *An Economic History of Medieval Europe*, 2nd edition, New York 1994, p. 358.

A typical example of the third group was the summer fair in Opole (24th June). It was impossible to attend the St. John fair in this city for those who also wanted to visit the St. John fair in Wrocław. On the other hand, Opole could have been visited in that period by the merchants who participated in the Cracow fair slightly earlier, which started on 11th June and lasted five and half days. Moreover, the date of the Opole fair in the Late Middle Ages could have collided with the date of the Brzeg fair (from 1369), which started usually nine weeks after Easter, that is between 24th May and 27th June.[129] Because of this, in 1513 Ladislaus Jagiellon changed the date of the opening of the Opole fair to St. Lambert's day (17th September).[130] The newly designated dates collided with the dates of the Holy Cross fair in Wrocław. At the same time, it should be noted that Władysław Dziewulski did not take into account the fact that Easter sometimes takes place earlier – which could have occasionally prevented the fair dates from overlapping and most importantly enabled a situation where the Opole and Brzeg fairs took place sequentially. The fair on the day of St. Lambert would then match the dates of the subsequent Cracow fair, which started 29th September. This fair could also have been connected with one of the fairs of Gliwice (15th October) and a prior fair in Sławkow (14th September). The late-spring Cracow fair (11th June 11) could have been connected with fair in Siewierz.

Table 3. Selected Upper Silesian fairs and their correlation with the dates of fairs in Wrocław and Cracow between the 14th and 15th centuries

Wrocław	Upper Silesia	Cracow
from September 14	Bytom—from August 15	—
from November 19	Bytom—from November 30	—
from September 14	Czeladź—form September 27	from September 29
—	Gliwice—from October 15	from September 29
—	Opole—form June 24	from June 11
—	Opole—from September 17 (from 1513)	from September 29
from June 24	Oświęcim—after May 21	from June 11
from November 19	Pyskowice—from December 6	—
—	Siewierz—from June 24	from June 11
—	Sławków—from September 14	from September 29
—	Zator—from April 23	from May 3
—	Zator—from June 24	from June 11
from September 14	Zator—from August 24	—

As we can see, Cracow's force of attraction in the 15th and at the outset of the 16th centuries was stronger than the impact of Wrocław on other cities of Upper Silesia. So in

[129] W. Dziewulski, *Brzeg*, p. 88.
[130] *Ibidem*, p. 89.

this context the fact of conceiving a fair on 14th September needs to be viewed as an attempt to develop bonds between Wrocław and a number of Upper Silesian towns.

The region-bonding role of Wrocław could be also manifested by the fact that the city was also attractive for Silesians as a spot where they could meet merchants from outside the region. Sometimes these were foreigners who played the role of middlemen in contracts with merchants from various Silesian towns. The majority of these Silesian merchants were burghers, but the fairs also attracted knights, clergymen and the representatives of dukes. The contracts agreed upon during these meetings varied in nature. Besides transactions or demands connected with the realization of commercial or credit contracts, Silesians were also involved in various contracts as representatives or guarantors of the contracting parties.

Table 4. Meetings between Silesian citizens and international merchants in Wrocław between the 14th and the 15th centuries[131]

	Brno	Cheb	Erfurt	Gdańsk	Florence	Frankfurt (Oder)	Hamburg	Cracow	Leipzig	Lithuania	Lublin	Magdeburg	Nuremberg	Olomouc	Plauen	Prague	Prussia	Regensburg	Sopron	Toruń	Venice	Zgorzelec
Brzeg						X[132]		X					X								X	
Głogów								X														
Jawor											X											
Near Jelenia Góra––Rybnica							X[133]															
Kłodzko	X[134]																					
Legnica				X[135]				X								X					X	
Near Legnica––Klebanów								X														
Lipa															X							
Lubiąż																				X		
Lwówek								X														
Next to Lwówek––Gryfów													X									

[131] Most of the data is based on G. Myśliwski, *Wrocław*, pp. 162, 259, 263–264, 320–321, 389–390, 391–392, 434, 438, 460, 494–495.

[132] Archiwum Państwowe we Wrocławiu (State Archives in Wrocław, hereafter referred to as APWr.), Akta miasta Wrocławia (hereafter referred to as AWr.), *Libri excessuum et signaturarum* (hereafter referred to as *Lib.exc.sign.*), vol. 26, p. 54 (1426).

[133] *Mittheilungen aus Breslauer Signaturbüchern*, [part 3], ed. Otto Stobbe, 'Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens', 7 (1866), issue 2, p. 350 (1423).

[134] APWr., AWr., *Liber Magnus* (hereafter referred to as *L.Mag.*), p. 24 (1397).

[135] *Mittheilungen aus Breslauer Signaturbüchern*, [part 1], ed. Otto Stobbe, 'Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens', vol. 6, issue 2, 1865, p. 346–347 (1408).

Namysłów										X[136]										X[137]		
Nosseldorf (?)													X						X			
Nysa		X	X	X[138]									X			X				X[139]	X	
Oleśnica/ Kąty					X																	
Oława								X														
Opava				X[140]																		
Next to Opole– –Gryżów																	X[141]					
Next to Opole– –Siedlice																X[142]						
Next to Opole– –Wołczyn													X[143]									
Strzegom																					X	
Strzelce																X						
Środa									X[144]				X				X[145]	X				
Świdnica													X			X				X[146]	X	
Toszek																X						
Next to Wrocław– –Gębczyce													X									
Next to Wrocław– –Osiek					X																X	
Next to Wrocław– –Rogowo													X									
Next to Wrocław– –Sarby													X									
Next to Wrocław – –Źródła													X			X		X				
Ząbkowice	X[147]																					
Ziębice																					X	X
Zlaté Hory					X									X[148]								
Żagań								X				X	X								X	X

[136] *Lib.exc.sign.*, vol. 24, p. 17 (1423).
[137] APWr., AWr., *Laurentius Nudus*, p. 234 (1368).
[138] *Lib.exc.sign.*, vol. 3, k. 6v (1390).
[139] *Mittheilungen aus Breslauer Signaturbüchern*, [part 1], p. 347 (1408).
[140] *Lib.exc.sign.*, vol. 22, p. 17–18 (1418).
[141] *Ibidem*, vol. 26, p. 55 (1426).
[142] *Ibidem*, vol. 26, p. 73 (1427).

The above findings also prove that the significance of Wrocław was to a large extent recognized only by the cities of Lower Silesia. What is surprising is that there is no trace of any merchants from the largest city of Upper Silesia. Merchants from beyond Lower Silesia that rarely visited Wrocław mainly came from the Opava region (Opava, Zlaté Hory) and from the Opole region (Toszek, Strzelce Opolskie, Gryżów, Rogów, Siedlice and Wołczyn). However, in light of the sources I am familiar with, commercial meetings between Wrocław and Opole and Opole citizens were more frequent than one could assume on the basis of recorded meetings with outsiders in Wrocław. The intense activity of a wealthy financier, Abraham of Opole, in Wrocław and other cities (see part 7), is just one example of commercial meetings between Wrocław and Opole. Wrocław merchants coming to Opole were offered customs allowances as early as 1310 thanks to the initiative of Duke Bolko II of Opole.[149] Bolko's successors at the turn of the 15th century simply robbed the visiting merchants from Wrocław,[150] what also testifies a continuation of trade trips of Wrocław merchants through Opole. The inhabitants of both cities traded real estate between each other (only in Cracow).[151] In the 1430s the citizens of Opole brought to Wrocław various goods of an undefined nature.[152] The fact that commercial contact also took place on an individual level may be proven by an enigmatic document issued by the Wrocław municipal council in 1427 for Dukes Bolko IV of Opole and Bernard of Niemodlin concerning an undefined 'harmful company' ('von schedlicher und bozer geselschaft wegen').[153] We are lacking the same various data that would prove that there was more frequent contact between the citizens of Wrocław an Opava. The surviving notes about guarantees of safety granted by the municipal authorities of Wrocław (*treuga pacis, salva conductus*) to the visitors from the heart of the Opava region allow us to assume that mutual contact intensified in the 1430s and 1440s.[154] The three earliest guarantees related to all the citizens of Opava present at the St. John fair who were indebted to the creditors of their city. Another was granted to an individual citizen of Opava for the period following the closing of the fair.

[143] *Ibidem*, vol. 55, p. 37 (1477).
[144] *Ibidem*, vol. 27, p. 90 (1428).
[145] *Regesta Historico-diplomatica Ordinis p. Mariae Theutonicorum (1198–1525)*, eds Erich Joachim, Walter Hubatsch, vol. 1: *Index Tabularii Ordinis p. Mariae heutonicorum Regesten zum Ordensbriefarchiv*, part 1: 1198–1454, Göttingen 1948, Nos 12683–1454, p. 825.
[146] *Lib.exc.sign.*, vol. 32, p. 235 (1439).
[147] *L.Mag.*, p. 24 (1397).
[148] *Lib.exc.sign.*, vol. 45, p. 101 (1465).
[149] W. Dziewulski, *Za Piastów opolskich*, pp. 71–72.
[150] *Ibidem*, pp. 58, 72.
[151] G. Myśliwski, *Wrocław*, p. 323.
[152] *Lib.exc.sign.*, vol. 28, p. 114 (1431).
[153] APWr., Dokumenty miasta Wrocławia, no. 1761 (formerly: no. 1817) (1427).
[154] *Lib.exc.sign.*, vol. 32, p. 130 (1439); vol. 34, p. 137 (1442); vol. 35, p. 145 (1444); vol. 37, p. 258 (1449). About *treuga pacis* see Peter Laband, *Die Breslauer Stadt- und Gerichts-Bücher,* 'Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte und Altertum Schlesiens', 4 (1862), p. 10–11; Th. Goerlitz, *Verfassung*, pp. 104–105.

Finally, the last *treuga pacis*, from 1449, related to the city and its people and their debts towards Opava and to the financial commitments of the dukes.

In light of the broadly-understood commercial relationships, Wrocław as a place annuities were traded was much less significant for the Silesian inhabitants. Based on the surviving records from 1334–1426, only the inhabitants of the sovereign cities of Brzeg, Legnica and Środa, and probably of Laasan (though there are some doubts as to the accuracy of this), had purchased annuities in the central municipal centre of Silesia.[155] It is worth mentioning here that in Świdnica also, albeit for a short period (1377–1382), purchasers of annuities from outside the city constituted only a minority.[156]

After reviewing the contents of both of the tables above, it is clear that Silesia, especially its lower region, was polycentric rather than concentric in its structure. Despite the marked economic advantage over the remaining Silesian cities, Wrocław was not the principal magnet for all of the most important Silesian municipal centres in the period of the Late Middle Ages. Rather, it tended to attract Lower Silesian more than Upper Silesian centres. At the same time, a considerably numerous group of cities with populations of between 3,000–12,000 also played an important role in the regional economy and rivalled the central city of Wrocław in this field. From 1345 Świdnica enjoyed a privileged and more advantageous position in terms of business contact with Halych Ruthenia than Wrocław, whose prospects here were intentionally blocked by Casimir the Great.[157] It also excelled in the area of brewing. *Glogovia maior* had gained much prominence by the end of the 15th century, when the trade routes moved westwards and Wrocław focused on renewing its staple rights.[158] Nysa, the centre of the Bishop's authority, was the second most important communication junction. It was also the main distributor of Hungarian and Moravian wine in Silesia.[159] Another rival was the small-sized town of Racibórz, which was situated at the crossing of eight road trails and from 1290 enjoyed the exclusive right to supply Upper Silesia with salt from Wieliczka.[160] Legnica, thanks to its close proximity to gold mines, experienced a long period of economic development and thus a high degree of independence in the first half of the 14th century, which was soon unfortunately lost due to the popular uprising in 1454 and the political repercussions that followed.[161] As early as in the 13th century, Strzegom saw a marked development of the textile industry, and until 1360 as many as eight guilds functioned

[155] APWr., AWr., *Antiquarius*, vol. 1, p. 37, 115; vol. 2, pp. 334, 369. The accuracy of the identification of *Lazany* is questionable. The very word suggests the name to be related with the name contained in the preserved sources either with Laasan/Łażany (like in Tomasz Jurek, *Obce rycerstwo na Śląsku do połowy XIV wieku*, p. 414) or with Bohemian word 'Lažan' (see G. Myśliwski, *Wrocław*, p. 257).

[156] Mateusz Goliński, *Wokół socjotopografii późnośredniowiecznej Świdnicy*, part 2, Wrocław 2003, pp. 58–60.

[157] Stefania Kalfas–Piotrowska, *Stosunki handlowe polsko-śląskie za Kazimierza Wielkiego*, 'Roczniki Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Nauk na Śląsku', 5 (1936), p. 251.

[158] R. Żerelik, *W średniowieczu*, p. 114.

[159] J. Leszczyński, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

[160] J. Wyrozumski, *Dzieje*, p. 56.

[161] Marian Haisig, *Ruchy społeczne w mieście i powstanie pospólstwa w 1454*, [in:] *Legnica*, p. 70.

there – only Wrocław, Świdnica and Legnica could boast more. Silesian cities with a mining tradition (Złotoryja, Lwówek, Zlaté Hory, Złoty Stok and Bytom) at various moments in time attracted entrepreneurs and diggers, and thus became mining hubs, an industry that was developing dynamically and one of the major spurs of the Silesian economy.

Less certain and secondary factors

A question arises whether there are any other factors that could have had a significant impact upon the Silesian economy. Despite their being hypothetical or of secondary importance, it is worth discussing them briefly. One of these factors is the activity of Jewish communities that operated intermittently (due to pogroms and expulsions) in as many as 33 cities of Silesia until the mid-14th century.[162] Although they were driven out of Lower Silesia in the second half of the 15th century, in Upper Silesia they survived until the 16th century (to 1510 in Racibórz and to 1563 in Opole), likewise in the Opava region.[163] Despite enjoying a special legal status, being a separate religious entity and having distinctive habits and customs, they did not constitute isolated communities, but actively participated in the economic life of their cities. Jewish communities were an integral part of the group of Silesian burgesses and helped to develop the economic potential of the region. The reason for their separate description in this part of my article is the nature of the financial activity they specialized in, specifically their loan-related ventures. In the course of recent research it was possible to trace the financial connections between the most renowned Jews from Lower and Upper Silesia with members of Roman Catholic communities. The most famous usurers (Abraham of Opole, Moshe of Legnica) gave loans mainly to the burghers and dukes from Legnica, Świdnica, Środa, Brzeg, Chojnów and Cieszyn.[164] Izaak of Świdnica had financial control over the entire Lwówek based on the pending debt of Duke Bolko II of Świdnica.[165] The two aforementioned examples of Jewish tycoons are sufficient proof of the development of financial bonds between Lower and Upper Silesia and, in consequence, of the growing economic cooperation between the two regions.

It is also worth considering the potentially-integrating impact of craft (other than the examples already mentioned) on the leading branches of Silesian manufacture. This was apparent in the unification of professional law and, more broadly, of common principles in

[162] M. Bogucka, H. Samsonowicz, *Dzieje*, p. 158.

[163] *Historia Śląska*, vol. 1, part 2, p. 35; Adolf Turek, *Přehled vývoje národnostních poměrů v Opavé do poloviny 19. století*, [in:] *Opava. Sbornik*, p. 98.

[164] About Abraham see Henryk Samsonowicz, *Początki banków prywatnych w Polsce,* 'Sobótka', 36 (1981), No. 1, p. 130; about Abraham and Moshe see Mateusz Goliński, *Wrocławskie spisy zastawów długów i mienia żydowskiego z 1453 roku. Studium z historii kredytu i kultury materialnej*, Wrocław 2006 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No 2852, Historia vol. 173), pp. 55–60.

[165] S. Kotełko, *op. cit.*, p. 64, 70.

artisanal culture. One example here is the convention of Silesian tailors which took place in 1361 in Świdnica,[166] where the principles governing clothing production processes and the type of clothes worn by masters and journeymen were established. What is of importance is the fact that the convention was attended by visitors from as many as 24 Silesian cities (including Opole) and from Lusatian Lubań.[167] This may be regarded as firm evidence of the existence of a close-knit professional community which undertook actions focused on the unification of its laws and customs. For a similar example of such an attitude one may look to the recently-discussed convention of cauldron makers in Strzelin around 1377, which gathered representatives of this profession from several cities of Lower Silesia and from Upper Silesian Głogówek.[168] Another example, this time of a bilateral transfer of professional law, was the act of sending the statutes of the belt makers from Wrocław to their colleagues from Legnica as a pattern to adopt and follow.[169] A similar strategy was adopted by Wrocław furriers towards the furriers of Legnica (1405, 1424).[170] In turn, these same craftsmen of Legnica were a brilliant example of organizational integration by opening their membership beyond the borders of their city, although its range was not extraordinarily broad. The furriers of Legnica unified their guild with those of Złotoryja, Lubin, Chojnów and Prochowice.[171]

Factors responsible for the weakening and destruction of the economic unity of Silesia

A rich chapter of Silesian history, the period between the 13th and 15th centuries yields many events and processes that were potentially destructive for economic relationships within the Silesian region. Among them are purely economic, biological and natural factors as well as political and military ones which have an economic impact. It should be stressed here though that the histories of various Silesian cities are very distinct.

A suitable illustration would be natural disasters (floods, fires, famines and, epidemics), whose frequent occurrence was part and parcel of the grim everyday life of medieval Europe. According to the valuable findings of historian Marek L. Wójcik, in the period between the 13th and 15th centuries the entire area of Silesia had been repeatedly struck by as many as 15 epidemics and 22 famines (some even two or three years'

[166] J. Drabina, *Życie*, p. 21; Mateusz Goliński, *Śląski cech kotlarzy i jego 'czarna lista'*, 'Sobótka', 54 (2009), No. 1, pp. 2, 6–7.

[167] From Wrocław, Świdnica, Legnica, Brzeg, Strzegom, Dzierżoniów, Kamienna Góra, Jawor, Bolesławiec, Lwówek, Jelenia Góra, Środa, Chojnów, Złotoryja, Lubin, Ziębice, Strzelin, Ząbkowice, Kłodzko, Oława, Opole, Namysłów, Oleśnica, Bierutów (*Schlesische Urkunden zur Geschichte des Gewerberechts insbesondere des Innungswesens aus der Zeit vor 1400*, ed. Georg Korn, Breslau 1867 (=*Codex diplomaticus Silesiae*, vol. 8), pp. 52–54).

[168] M. Goliński, *Śląski cech*, pp. 1–3, 6, 8–10, 14–17.

[169] *Schlesische Urkunden*, No. 80 (before 1424), pp. 120–121.

[170] M. Haisig, *Rzemiosło*, p. 54; *Schlesische Urkunden*, No. 79 (before 1424), pp. 118–120.

[171] K. Bobowski, *Etapy*, p. 53.

long).[172] At the same time, Wójcik claims that some epidemics took place only in Wrocław, but at a different time.[173] It is also worth mentioning here that endemic epidemics occurred in Głogów,[174] Legnica[175] and probably in Nysa.[176] However, Silesia did not experience a cataclysm that could be comparable to that of the Black Death, which exterminated the rural populations and decimated the populations of large cities. That is why the epidemics may constitute a set of ominous landmarks in the history of particular Silesian centres, but not on the scale of the entire region.[177] What was Silesian-wide was the floods caused by the melting of extensive masses of snow or heavy rainfall, for example in 1445 and 1464.[178] Food shortages or even famines were probably more varied, to a large extent because of the fact that it was simply easier to feed oneself in villages than in large urban centres. Fires were more local cataclysms as they occurred independently in various Silesian cities.[179] They differed in the extent of the damage they caused – from the burning-down of individual buildings and their immediate surroundings to the complete erasure of entire urban developments.

Among the military activities which affected the majority of the Silesian cites, historians mainly name those related to the Mongol invasion and the Hussite Wars. Curiously enough, the Mongols did not in fact wreak economic havoc on the region, an assertion which historians until recently claimed to be certain.[180] Their stay in Silesia was short and a one-off experience. It naturally brought some material losses to the local community, but its main result was the migration of terrified settlers and chaos in private estate relations, so vividly described in the *Henryków Book*. Even if Silesia constituted at that time an economic whole, which seems just about probable, the disruption to its functioning could have lasted a couple of years at most. In this respect, the Silesian economy was much more influenced by the events from 1425 to 1434, when Silesia was regularly subjected to the Hussite military policy of scorched earth.[181] Historians assume

[172] Marek L. Wójcik, *Klęski elementarne w średniowiecznym Wrocławiu. I. Pożary i zarazy*, 'Rocznik Wrocławski', 6 (2000), p. 34; *idem, Klęski elementarne w średniowiecznym Wrocławiu. III. Głód, trzęsienia ziemi i zjawiska astronomiczne*, 'Rocznik Wrocławski', 8 (2002), p. 10.

[173] *Ibidem.*

[174] R. Żerelik, *W średniowieczu*, pp. 110, 116 (1295, 1315, 1362, 1395, 1464, 1484).

[175] M. Haisig, *Zaludnienie*, p. 47 (1412).

[176] J. Leszczyński, *op. cit.*, p. 31 (1267, 1301, 1333).

[177] Cf. the comments of M. Goliński, *Kryzys*, p. 269.

[178] *Historia Śląska*, vol. 1, part 2, p. 8.

[179] Cf. the list of dates of annual fires in Brzeg, Głogów and Legnica after: J. Dziewulski, *Brzeg*, p. 113 (1309, 1380, 1476, 1494); R. Żerelik, *W średniowieczu*, pp. 102, 110 (1402, 1420, 1433, 1438, 1442, 1445); M. Haisig, *Zaludnienie*, p. 48 (fires of 1338, 1411, p. 1438, 1454). Only in 1438 both Głogów and Legnica suffered from fires.

[180] *Historia Śląska*, vol. 1, part 1, p. 355; R. Żerelik, *Dzieje*, p. 58; *Opava*, p. 45;traditional views on the material consequences of Mongol invasion were expressed by Wacław Korta (*Historia*, p. 82) and Wojciech Dominiak on the Upper Silesia (*Polityka*, pp. 84, 89).

[181] Emil Schieche, *Politische Geschichte von 1327–1526*, [in:] *Geschichte Schlesiens*, ed. H. Aubin. p. 249–258; *Historia Śląska*, vol. 1, part 2, pp. 59, 235–236, 238, 241, 243; Richard C. Hoffmann, *Land, Liberties and Lordship in a Late Medieval Countryside. Agrarian Structure and Change in the Duchy of Wrocław*, Philadelphia 1988, pp. 28, 275–276.

that as a result of this activity about 40 Silesian urban centres suffered extensive damage.[182] The size of the destruction depended on the location. For example, Duke Bolko V, a Hussite from the Opole branch of the Piast dynasty, made an agreement with the Hussites which saved his ducal capital city from destruction.[183] According to other examples – e.g. part of Wrocław located on the western bank of the Odra river, Legnica and Racibórz – some cities managed to defend[184] themselves at the price of losing their suburban areas and farming facilities. This was also the case in many other urban centres. The Hussite raids were especially destructive for villages and agriculture. The result was a slump in the level of the population and many villages were completely emptied of inhabitants.[185] It does not seem, however, that the negative consequences of the Hussite raids led to the disintegration of ties between the inhabitants of Silesian regions. What it could have caused was the rearrangement of the routes of the communication trails, for example the Via Regia between 1430 and 1440,[186] which may have weakened ties as a result of the increasingly less frequent contact between inhabitants. Conversely, there were also cities which took advantage of the Bohemian heretic eruption. For example, for Wrocław the international isolation of the Bohemian Crown meant a drop in the importance of Prague, a far more important and wealthier competitor. This resulted in the relocation of the long-distance trade routes to Silesia and the influx of foreign, wealthy merchants (especially from Nuremberg) to the provincial capital.[187] A negative consequence of the Hussite activity was the fact that it spurred the military quests of Casimir Jagiellon, and soon afterwards of George of Poděbrady and Matthias Corvinus, which also brought extensive human and material losses.[188] These losses were nonetheless incomparably less acute than those inflicted upon Silesia by the Hussites.

Both during the 15th century and earlier Silesia saw a number of internal military conflicts which constituted the most destructive economic effects of the political divisions inside Silesia. These conflicts more often than not erased whole cities, as in the examples of Nysa (in the second half of the 13th century), Opole (at the outset of the 14th century) and even larger areas of Silesia (for example the lands of Krosno, Opole and

[182] J. Drabina, *Życie*, p. 9. Compare the maps illustrating the extent of damages brought by the Hussites: Schieche, *Politische Geschichte*, p. 250; R.C. Hoffmann, *op. cit.*, p. 276.

[183] W. Dziewulski, *Za Piastów opolskich*, p. 62; J. Drabina, *Miasta*, p. 43–44.

[184] *Ibidem*, p. 121–122; K. Maleczyński, *Dzieje*, p. 72; J. Leszczyński, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

[185] *Historia Śląska*, vol. 1, part 2, pp. 11–12, 47.

[186] At that period, the merchants began to avoid visiting the Opole region and travelled mainly via Częstochowa and Kluczbork (W. Dziewulski, *Za Piastów opolskich*, p. 62).

[187] Wolfgang von Stromer, *Nürnberg–Breslauer Wirtschaftsbeziehungen im Spätmittelalter*, 'Jahrbuch für fränkische Landesforschung', 34–35 (1974/1975), p. 1089.

[188] Zob. W. Dziewulski, *Za Piastów opolskich*, p. 62–64; R. Heck, *Wrocław*, p. 72; J. Drabina, *Miasta*, p. 43–44; R.C. Hoffmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 276, 279–280. Hermann Aubin on the other hand stressed the phenomenon of the growth in the cities' expenditure on military defence, which was financed from the introduction of new taxes (*idem*, *Die Wirtschaft*, p. 478–479).

Racibórz in the 14th century, and the Głogów Duchy in the fourth quarter of the 15th century).[189]

Another consequence of the frequent military upheavals in Silesia was the distortion of political and legal order and the spread of criminal activity, both spontaneous and commissioned (as in the example of Leonard Assenheimer, who was hired by Queen Elizabeth).[190] Władysław Dziewulski claimed that the period between 1440 and 1452 was a time of utter chaos in the region.[191] The main force behind it were the Hussite raids;[192] nevertheless, according to symptomatic data from the 14th century – the establishment of municipal confederations (1339, 1369) and the launching of local initiatives against banditry[193] – criminal activity on the communication routes was a serious problem for Silesia long before the outbreak of the Hussite Wars. In a way this can be seen as evidence which indirectly supports the development of long-distance trade – increasingly affluent merchant convoys were attractive prey for robber barons and common bandits. The lack of statistical data prevents us from evaluating the scale of the criminal activity and its evolution. Crime could have also weakened the ties between the individual cities and regions of Silesia. It does not seem, however, that it could have caused their total disintegration.

It is also useful to mention certain negative phenomena of a purely economic origin and their possible consequences for the Silesian economy and its integrity. What comes to mind is the growing crisis of the mining industry. Starting from 1274, the first cases of mine flooding occurred, which became more frequent in the 14th century and continued until the beginning of the 15th century.[194] From the mid-14th century overflowing waters prevented the exploitation of deposits in Bytom, Będzin, Złotoryja and Zlaté Hory.[195] In the case of the first two aforementioned cities it proved impossible to re-launch efforts to extract silver and lead before the end of the medieval period. In other mining centres deposits of gold were exhausted as early as in the in the second quarter of the 14th century.[196] What was particularly harmful was the cessation of the extraction of galena deposits (silver and lead) in the mines of Bytom, the main mining centre of Upper Silesia. This further deepened the economic crisis of the eastern part of the province of Silesia, which from the beginning of the 14th century was constantly plagued by a gradual halting of the urbanization process, the negative commercial consequences of divisions between

[189] J. Leszczyński, *op. cit.*, p. 31; W. Dziewulski, *Za Piastów opolskich*, p. 62–64; J. Drabina, *Miasta*, p. 43; J. Muszyński, *op. cit.*, p. 77, 79; J. Horwat, *op. cit.*, p. 125.
[190] *Historia Śląska*, vol. 1, part 2, pp. 266, 268; R. Heck, *Wrocław*, p. 72.
[191] W. Dziewulski, *Brzeg*, p. 46.
[192] Krystyna Pieradzka, *Związki handlowe Łużyc ze Śląskiem*, 'Sobótka', 4 (1949), p. 95.
[193] Colmar Grünhagen, *Schlesien unter Kaiser Karl IV*, 'Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens', 17 (1883), p. 26; Krystyna Pieradzka, *Bolko II świdnicki na Łużycach,* 'Sobótka', 2 (1947), p. 99; W. Dziewulski, *Brzeg*, p. 42.
[194] K. Maleczyński, *Aus der Geschichte*, pp. 251-253, 265.
[195] D. Molenda, *Górnictwo*, p. 156; J. Drabina, *Historia*, pp. 44–45.
[196] For example M. Haisig, *Rzemiosło*, p. 65.

districts and internal conflicts.[197] Another damaging factor was Silesia's political and commercial conflicts with the Kingdom of Poland in the 14th and 15th–16th centuries (because of the importance of contact with the former Silesian motherland), and also the purposeful interference into the Silesian economy by the rulers of Poland. Granting Świdnica priority in commercial contacts with Ruthenia (which might have brought advantages for Namysłów)[198] in connection with the customs war of Casimir the Great against Wrocław[199] could have only strengthened the divisions within Silesia and further weakened the contacts between the two principal cities of the region, although, based on the surviving data, we cannot be fully certain that this was the case. If it was indeed so, it was only for a short period. The wars of the years 1490–1515,[200] as a consequence of which Głogów gained advantages over Wrocław, involved the relocation of the trade routes and a drop in the importance of the *Hohe Strasse*, as well as the weakening of Wrocław's position. It did not result, however, in any catastrophe involving either this affluent urban centre or other cities located along the Via Regia.

All the aforementioned events and processes are certain to have contributed in this period to a deterioration of the region's economic potential and disruptions to connections between the Silesian cities and remaining territories, thus damaging its integrity. Were the foundations of economic relations within Silesia developed before 1425 indeed strong enough to allow historians to confirm that they survived the forthcoming critical decades?

Summary

According to the traditional approach to studying the economic history of Silesia based on the history of its rural areas, throughout the period of feudal fragmentation three stages, interwoven by warfare, can be identified.[201] The period of economic growth initiated in the times of Boleslaus the Tall was only briefly paused by the Mongol invasion of 1241. From the mid-13th century there was a rejuvenation of the region's economy followed by further development, which lasted until about 1420 when the Hussite Wars began, which marked a long period of regression in Silesia; one can even call this an economic crisis. In the context of recent scholarly deliberations, however, it would be reasonable to update this periodization. It would be also desirable to view the fifth decade of the 14th century as another important landmark brought about by the crisis of Silesian mining. This is augmented by the blockade of eastern trade introduced at that time

[197] J. Horwat, *op. cit.*, pp. 124-125.
[198] After Hermann Aubin, who assumed the fact of the simultaneous journeys of merchants from this city to Ruthenia (*idem*, *Die Wirtschaft*, p. 473).
[199] S. Kalfas-Piotrowska, *op. cit.*, pp. 258-261; G. Myśliwski, *Wrocław*, pp. 291-296, 331-336.
[200] Max Rauprich, *Der Streit um die Breslauer Niederlage (1490–1515),* 'Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens', 27 (1893), pp. 54-116.
[201] *Historia Śląska*, vol. 1, part 2, pp. 46-49.

by the King of Poland. From then on it would be advisable to speak of a divergence in the paths of the economic histories of different parts of Silesia. On the whole, we can say that there was a trend of economic growth on a regional scale, but at the same time certain parts of Silesia suffered regression. We would also need to change the year 1420 to 1425, when the Hussite Wars started to wreak havoc in Silesia, followed by other military conflicts which were accompanied by criminal activity interwoven, as in the preceding centuries, by natural disasters. Nonetheless, it seems that in this period the dual economic history of the region continued to play out, although it is true to say that in general the regression spread over the whole region and the number of prosperous areas shrunk. When examined in the context of the entire Silesian region, the regression-crisis trend must have finally triumphed over that of economic growth, which was augmented by the crisis in Wrocław commerce from the close of the 1450s. It seems that the first symptoms of revival appeared no sooner than at the close of the Middle Ages. Owing to the gradual popularization of land drainage technology, excavation works were resumed, an example of which can be seen in Złotoryja.[202] The gold mining industry in Złoty Stok was only fully developed at the close of the century.[203] The crisis of farming in Wrocław's outlying areas came to an end no sooner than in ca. 1480.[204]

We should then decide whether region-integrating economic factors were strong enough to transform the territories between the rivers of Kwisa and Wisła, Barycz and Odra and the Sudeten into an economic zone, and if so, for how long? Did Lower and Upper Silesia as well as the Opava region merge into one economic entirety or did they evolve into completely independent regions? Our considerations on the subject above often yielded evidence on the existence of significant differences between the economies of Lower and Upper Silesia. Besides, although the links between Lower Silesian centres were strong, diverse and durable, their connections with the Upper Silesian economy seemed to be weaker. Another criterion of evaluation would be the industrial resemblance of both economies, independent of their connections and regional or professional identity. One may say that at a more advanced stage of the Middle Ages there was much more common ground between the economies of Lower Silesia and the regions of Opava and Lesser Poland than there were between the economies of Lower and Upper Silesia. This is especially the case from the mid-14th century, when the production of silver and lead in Bytom came to a halt. Nonetheless, the theory of economic regions does not insist upon economic homogeneity; we could also view economic regions as lands of diverse constituent industries. The proximity of urban centres to rural production areas in Lower Silesia would have naturally spurred a greater growth in meetings within its own boundaries than those which took place with the centres of Upper Silesia. A less advanced urbanization process in Upper Silesia resulted in the fact that the total number of

[202] H. Aubin, *Die Wirtschaft*, p. 476; R. Gorzkowski, *op. cit.*, p. 52.
[203] G. Molenda, *Górnictwo*, p. 78.
[204] R.C. Hoffmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 319–320, 326.

Upper Silesian merchants was smaller when compared to that of the merchants of Lower Silesia, and they were less affluent than their Lower Silesian counterparts as well. Moreover, they were less eager to undertake business investments beyond their native centres and outside the areas of Upper Silesia. Additionally, we need to re-emphasize the fact that in Upper Silesia the presence of Jewish communities lasted longer than anywhere else. This must have been a definite economic advantage for a region whose level of industrial development was lower than that of its neighbours. Paradoxically, the impact of Wrocław on the development of Opole was considerable, although this was in fact a destructive influence. A view has been recently expressed that it was the flourishing affluence of the Lower Silesian centre that deprived Opole of the chance for economic growth.[205]

From an economic perspective, what brought the Silesian lands closer together was mostly their territorial proximity as well as the important communication and trade routes – the Via Regia (joining Wrocław with Opole and Bytom) and the transport of timber on the Odra river (between e.g. Wrocław and Racibórz). We also need to bring up the issue of the granting of the lands of Upper Silesia to the Church institutions (such as monasteries and the Wrocław Bishopric) whose headquarters were located in Lower Silesia. Sometimes this involved the exploitation of Upper Silesian mineral deposits. One should also take note of the process by which certain towns of Upper Silesia (Racibórz, Strzelce Opolskie, Głogówek, Zator, Cieszyn and Opava) adopted regulations of German law from the cities of Lower Silesia (Wrocław, Środa, Świdnica, Lwówek)[206] and credit agreements between two regions (e.g. loans granted by the authorities of Opole to the authorities of Brzeg).[207] The conventions of tailors and cauldron makers in the second half of the 14th century prove the existence of a sense of common regional and professional identity among the Lower Silesian population and the citizens of Opole and the cauldron makers of Głogówek. I would further attribute less importance to the chronological concordance between some of the Wrocław and Upper Silesian fairs, because in most cases this did not occur before 1481 (see part 5).

Hence, despite a number of differences in the levels of economic development between Lower Silesia, the Opava region and eastern Silesia and the less frequent contact between the cities and their merchants, we may surely claim that these three lands were strongly linked and characterized by many similarities. These common features allow us to define them as constituents of a uniform economic system with, however, some obvious restrictions. This view is mostly true for the Opava region and, until the second half of the 14th century, Bytom and its surrounding areas, and to lesser extent for Opava and

[205] A. Pobóg–Lenartowicz, *Rozwój*, p. 146–147. Contrary to this was the opinion of Józef Kaźmierczyk, according to whom the main factor that slowed down the growth of Opole was the weakness of its economic background, caused directly by infertile soils and small population (*idem, op. cit.*, p. 35).
[206] Th. Goerlitz, *Verfassung*, pp. 108–109; J. Horwat, *op. cit.*, pp. 80, 88, 112, 117; S. Kotełko, *op. cit.*, p. 55.
[207] W. Dziewulski, *Za Piastów opolskich*, pp. 62, 64.

the lands of Racibórz. I am not convinced whether the similarity between the Opava region and the economy of Lower Silesia (mining) and the Odra-related link of this land with Racibórz (which adopted German laws from Świdnica in 1293) were stronger bonding factors than the town's key position as a communication centre or Opava's position in relation to Cracow in terms of connections with the Kingdom of Bohemia. When we compare these findings with the hypothetical relationship between several Upper Silesian fairs and Cracow fairs, we may reasonably assume that the lands of Racibórz and especially those of the Opava region were no less connected with Lesser Poland and the Bohemian Crown than with the rest of Silesia. The level of integration within the economic region of Silesia differed according to its constituent parts – Lower Silesia's bonds were strongest with the region of Opole, weaker with the region of Racibórz and weaker still with the region of Opava.

At what point did this uniform economic region in fact come into being? It seems that no earlier than at the close of the 13th century when the rural and urban settlement process was at its peak. One may think that the symptoms of a crisis in the region's uniformity started to surface as early as in the 1340s together with the beginnings of the crisis in the mining industry and the long-term crises of Bytom and Opole. It does not seem, however, that the disintegration of the economic region of Silesia actually took place. Even the compatibility of a part of Upper Silesian fairs with the fairs of Cracow did not result in the strengthening of links with Lesser Poland. Also, the subsequent political and military conflicts – local, regional and international – along the natural disasters and crime did not lead to the permanent disintegration of the Silesian economic region. Another question arises as to the nature of Silesia's economic specificity in comparison with its neighbouring regions. When viewed in the context of the western part of central Europe and eastern Germany, the region of Silesia was not different to the rest of its neighbours. All the regions of this territory were subject to identical long-term economic processes. What differentiated Silesia from its neighbours was gold mining (so scarce in Bohemia that it is almost never mentioned in the scholarly literature) and the production of madder for export purposes. Silesia had least in common with Greater Poland, where there was no mining industry, wine production for export purposes or populous urban centres (except for Poznań). The economic trends of both regions were also crucial here – the steady economic growth of Greater Poland[208] and the major decline of Silesia from the 1420s and 1430s. These three characteristics also differentiated Silesia from Lesser Poland (which thrived throughout the entire Late Middle Ages), which in contrast to Silesia boasted a more advanced fustian industry,[209] but, at the same time, was outdistanced by Silesia in the area of textile production (Silesian textiles were exported abroad). Compared to Lusatia, on the other hand, gold mining was more advanced in Silesia and,

[208] This was supposed to constitute the specificity of Greater Poland throughout the extensive period of the Middle Ages and the modern era (J. Topolski, *op. cit.*, pp. 26–27).
[209] I. Turnau, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

given the similarities in terms of the main cities' populations (Silesia was slightly ahead of Lusatia), it had developed a distinct economic centre – Wrocław. At the same time, in contrast to Lusatia, Silesia did not boast the tradition of zinc mining,[210] but neither did Lusatia with silver. The greatest similarities may be found between the Silesian economic region and Bohemia and Moravia. Nevertheless, even in this case certain key differences, mentioned above, were apparent.

[210] Danuta Molenda, *Powstawanie miast górniczych w Europie Środkowej w XIII – XVIII*, [in:] *Czas, przestrzeń, praca w dawnych. Studia ofiarowane Henrykowi Samsonowiczowi w sześćdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin*, eds Michał Tymowski, Andrzej Wyrobisz, Warszawa 1991, p. 162.

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Region-integrating or region-disintegrating? The social groups of medieval Silesia examined in the context of their political activity (from the last decades of the 12th century to the 15th century)

Abstract:

Activities of social groups, which develop relations between the members of a society, constitute a crucial aspect of every region's character. Did the political and social elite of the Odra region in the period from the latter part of the 12th century to the latter part of the 15th century engage in intentional and coordinated activity? Or did they, after being forced by external factors to take such action, continue to coordinate their activities after these external factors ceased to be operative? Yet another question is whether the members of this political elite considered the notion of a unified, territorial unit called "Silesia" in their activities?

Various political undertakings of the Odra region's elite in the Middle Ages makes establishing a unified model of the formation of regional unity unfeasible. Joint political actions undertaken by the dukes maintained an awareness of Silesia's unity despite their and their courts' tendency to focus on the importance of their particular duchies. The dukes, via conventions and confederations, focused their activities on building a sense of regional community. Despite extensive cooperation on various issues which crossed the borders of individual duchies, separatist tendencies were still visible in the latter part of the 14th and early 15th centuries. Silesian society, forged through the political activities of its elite, was by nature a network which reacted dynamically to influences from its external environment. At times the structure may have hardened, although its members valued their local identity at least as greatly as their regional one.

Keywords:

Silesia, social history, regional history, regiogenesis

Every large community consists of social groups which change dynamically in terms of size and character, and which by mutual contacts develop into a network of relations that constitutes a society. However, it should be kept in mind that this general statement is far from the commonly accepted definition of 'a social group'. Curiously enough, the vast majority of researchers emphasize a fixed set of features that determine the phenomenon of interest to us here. These features are: detachment of certain groups from a wider social context based on their mutual social relations (determined either by personal factors or by common tasks), shared objectives, a sense of isolation from external entities and a sense of belonging to a defined group. The relation of such a group to its social environment is especially visible if we establish that the group 'as such' exists only when it is recognized as a group by an individual or individuals who comprise it. Finally, groups contain a defined

structure which is correctly identified by its members.[1] Although scholars generally agree as to the basic set of characteristics exhibited by social groups, there are significant differences in views on the hierarchy of particular group formation features and of the characteristics of additional group defining factors (i.e. sense of identity, uniqueness and uniformity), not to mention the issue of groups' scope and persistence.[2]

On the one hand, what is vital for our discussion on the subject of this article is a phenomenon that has a potentially destructive impact on regional cohesion, namely social groups that isolate themselves from the rest of the society of a given region and whose members are linked to one another through strong social relationships. As opposed to so-called 'networks', social groups are characterized by fixed boundaries within which their members develop a sense of identity. Another impediment to social cohesion is the presence within a society of dynamically-functioning groups characterized by potentially high fluctuations in membership numbers and character. On the other hand, social groups that come to life as a result of interactive relations between their members (groups viewed as 'interactive units') despite the aforementioned clear manifestation of their independence participate in the creation of a network of relations that fosters the maintenance of social cohesion. This takes place both in consequence of inter-group relations and of the activities of individual group members who, due to their varied social roles, can indirectly and to varying degrees create bonds with other groups and their members. The activity of social groups responsible for the development of networks of social relations is a crucial condition of a region's existence. A region is understood here as a group of people, perceived by outsiders in the context of their affiliation with this group, populating a territory viewed by its members as distinct from the surrounding environment based on their particular, historically justified sense of common ownership of this territory. In turn, this unique historical and cultural affiliation with the populated territory justifies the efforts of its inhabitants to achieve common goals.[3] Particular social groups may either shape a region so defined, or lead to its disintegration.[4] Due to the limited scope of our study, analysis will be carried out with special emphasis on examining how

[1] For a list of definitions of a social group and detailed presentation of their common features, see Charles Stangor, *Social Groups in Action and Interaction*, New York 2004, pp. 15-27 or Richard M. Hodgetts, Kathryn W. Hegar, *Modern Human Relations at Work*, 10th edition, Mason 2008, pp. 128-141; among academic textbooks see by Rajendra K. Sharma, *Fundamentals of Sociology*, New Delhi 2007, pp. 123–127. Stanley Wasserman, Katherine Faust, *Social Network Analysis. Methods and Applications*, Cambridge 1994 (=Structural Analysis in the Social Sciences, vol. 8), pp. 13-15, 19-20 described 'social groups' from the point of view of network analysis. For the purposes of this paper, crucial were remarks by Richard Jenkins, *Social Identity*, 3rd edition, Abingdon-New York 2008, pp. 8-12, who focused on relations between an identity of an individual or individuals and the reality of the existence of social groups of different scale and character.

[2] The term 'social group' may also describe a relatively small and rather impermanent group of individuals focused on a common goal, see Donelson R. Forsyth, *Group Dynamics*, 5th edition, Belmont 2010, p. 12.

[3] See Aansi Paasi, *Deconstructing regions. Notes on the scales of spatial life*, 'Environment and Planning', 23 (1991), pp. 239–256.

[4] 'Social organization is the organization of social groups, and social groups are the units of social organization. Hence, the organization and disintegration of the social organization is dependent upon the integration or disintegration of the social groups', R.K. Sharma, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

the phenomenon of regional cohesion is influenced by political elites – social groups viewed as the most powerful driving forces in establishing the network of relations between both individuals and groups that constitute regional communities. It was they who determined the conditions and the spatial scope of a community's lifestyle, and it was they who had a crucial impact on the character of the bonds between a region's inhabitants.[5]

Hence, the basic questions we pose in this work relate to the activity of political sovereigns of the Odra region from the close of the 12th century until the close of the 15th century. Did the contemporary political and opinion-forming elites jointly engage in consciously-coordinated activities? When forced to do so by external factors, did they continue their activities together after the pressures had subsided? Finally, did the activities of political elites, both those engaged in joint initiatives and those avoiding them, have a common denominator: the concept of a uniform community encompassing the entire territory called 'Silesia'? Was the organization of social life in the area identified as historical Silesia dominated by bonds between groups of people who populated or were active within a number of smaller territorial spaces?

Current research on the history of Silesia has not yet yielded a full picture of the functioning of the social groups in this region between the close of the 12th and 15th centuries.[6] For this reason also, independently of the aforementioned theoretical conditions, I would like to focus in this article only on aspects connected with the functioning of elites in the context of their political activity. As this activity not only exerted a major influence on social reality but actually shaped this reality, research undertaken in the area of social history can not be divorced from political realities.[7] In accordance with my perception of the notion of the region presented above, it is my view that the so-called 'grass-roots' political activity of the inhabitants of Silesia, that is to say activity which was not initiated at the level of state authorities, was the most important factor in fostering the development of the forces driving the process of integration and disintegration of social cohesion in the region. At the same time, that very same activity may be viewed as an indicator of the existence of relations that fostered or curbed the formation of the region itself. Establishing the importance of Silesia in the policy of local political

[5] Andreas Rüther, *Region und Identität. Schlesien und das Reich im späten Mittelalter*, Köln 2010 (=Neue Forschungen zur schlesischen Geschichte, vol. 20), admitted that his study was an attempt at identifying the hierarchical relations within the circle of dukes of medieval Silesia 'in einer sich selbst organiesierenden Landschaft', *ibidem*, p. 86. Unfortunately, this yielded only a sum of observations on various examples of political and familial relations, on the basis of which the author failed to produce – nor even propose – any general conclusions.

[6] See for instance Thomas Wünsch, *Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte*, [in:] *Historische Schlesien forschung. Methoden, Themen und Perspektiven zwischen traditioneller Landesgeschichtsschreibung und moderner Kulturwissenschaft*, ed. Joachim Bahlcke, Köln 2005 (=Neue Forschungen zur schlesischen Geschichte, vol. 1), pp. 159–184 and Mateusz Goliński, *Średniowiecze*, [in:] *Śląskoznawcze deficyty badawcze nauk historycznych*, eds Marek Czapliński, Jacek Dębicki, Tomasz Przerwa, Wrocław 2007, pp. 18–23.

[7] Patrick Joyce, *What is the social in the social history?*, 'Past and Present', 206 (2010), pp. 213–248, here pp. 232–244.

elites is a fundamental prerequisite for identifying determinants of other social groups' functioning in the context of the development and destruction of the region of Silesia.

Although the political decisions of Silesian dukes until at least the mid-14th century were determined by their sense of belonging to the political community encompassing the entire territory of the Piast realm, at the turn of the 13th century the Dukes of Wrocław extended the political discourse of the time with a new notion of Silesia as a territory subject to their rule. What is especially noticeable is the consistent usage of the title of 'Duke of Silesia' by Henry the Bearded and all his ruling descendants. A uniform Silesian titular nomenclature was maintained in ducal documents until the 1270s. Only in 1272 was Henry IV the Righteous referred to in a document he issued as 'Henricus dei gratia dux Slesie et dominus Wratislauie'.[8] The introduction of this title might have been resulted from preparation of the final version of the document by its recipient, the Commandery of the Order of Saint John in Strzegom. Owing to their close relations with Bohemia, the knights might have transferred to Silesian land (probably with the consent of Henry IV) the habit of extending the titular structure of Prague sovereigns. The then King of Bohemia and the mentor of the Righteous, Přemysl Otakar II, used the title 'dei gratia Bohemiae rex, dux Austriae, Stiriae, Karinthiae marchio que Morauiae, dominus Carnioliae, Marchiae, Egrae ac Portus Naonis' (1271).[9] Yet despite the opportunity to make use of the option of *imitatio imperii*, neither Henry IV nor his relatives were keen to adopt the titles which, as well as highlighting the regional (Silesian) aspect of their authority, also accentuated its local dimension as the most important, or even the only nomenclature describing the scope of their duties. Henry's documents contain both the exclusively Silesian title and the newly introduced title format throughout the entire eighth decade of the 13th century. Curiously enough, its presence was not correlated with the content of documents (such as those issued for a special occasion), but with the habits of certain officials of the ducal chancellery.[10] The decision to use the title of 'Duke of Silesia' united the local rulers for over a century in a community characterized by a shared ruling tradition of common origin and character. What legitimized the activity of dukes within a common, shared sphere of concepts of authority was the fact that the change introduced by Henry IV the Righteous spread independently of mere political conditions. Around 1288, he introduced a round seal with an inscription in the rim which read '*SIGILLUM HENRICI QUARTI DEI GRATIA DVCIS SLESIE ET DOMINI WRATIZLAVIE*'.[11] At more or less the same time Duke Henry V the Fat of

[8] *Schlesisches Urkundenbuch*, vol. 4, ed. Winfried Irgang, Wien 1988, No. 163, p. 118, lines 2–3, see Winfried Irgang, *Die Urkunden- und Kanzleiwesen Herzog Heinrichs IV. von Schlesien (1270-1290)*, [in:] *idem*, *Schlesien im Mittelalter. Siedlung–Kirche–Urkunden. Ausgewählte Aufsätze*, eds Norbert Kersken, Jürgen Warmbrunn, Marburg 2007 (=Materialien und Studien zur Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung, vol. 17), pp. 428–429, who emphasize that this form of title was used quite early in a document prepared by the Knights of the Order of Saint John.

[9] SUb., vol. 4, No. 147, p. 106, lines 23–24.

[10] W. Irgang, *Die Urkunden- und Kanzleiwesen Herzog Heinrichs IV.*, pp. 409, 414.

[11] Zenon Piech, *Ikonografia pieczęci Piastów*, Cracow 1993, pp. 224–225.

Legnica, the local political rival of the Righteous, changed the legend of his seal, which until then had only emphasized the Silesian aspect of his power to '*SIGILLUM HENRICI DVCIS SLEZIE ET DOMINI DE LIGNIT*'.[12] The new form of the ducal title reflected the increased importance of power over individual duchies at the expense of the concept of a unified Silesia as a means of raising the prestige of rulers.

From the middle of the 13th century Conrad I, Duke of Głogów (*Glogau*), used a seal with the legend '*CONRADVS DEI GRATIA DVX ZLESIE ET POLONIE*', which accentuated his and his brothers pretences to some of the lands of Greater Poland, a legacy of Henry II the Pious.[13] The title presented both provinces as equal and indivisible holdings. It was, however, seldom used by the descendants of Henry the Pious, and hence may be found only on Conrad's official documents.[14] When power went into the hands of his son Henry of Głogów, the new ruler began using a seal with the inscription '*SIGILVM HENRICI DEI GRATIA DVCIS SLESIE ET GLOGOVIE*'[15] (from ca. 1281). Considering his father's dual titles, this way of defining the scope of Henry's authority suggested that Głogów, which was in fact his property, was viewed as separate from Silesia – the common inheritance of his dynasty. Głogów gradually came to enjoy a status comparable to that of Silesia as a whole – an indivisible political entity governed by the Piast dynasty. It is hard to say whether this was perhaps a distant echo of an older political creation, the so-called 'March of Głogów'.[16] What is certain is that these titles served as means of underlining Henry's independence from his relatives of the Piast dynasty's remaining lines. By the same token, equating the status of local and regional authority could potentially lead to the erasure of the concept of Silesia as a political space cemented by the sense of familial ownership of this territory felt by the members of the Piast dynasty – descendants of Henry the Bearded. It could have been replaced by a concept known from the later history of Upper Silesia, involving the formation of an independent community consisting of both living and deceased rulers of particular local duchies. This is accurately illustrated in an excerpt from the document describing the terms of the homage paid by Duke Leszek of Racibórz to King John of Luxembourg in 1327. Lestek declared that 'suo heredum et successorum suorum ducum Rathiborensium

[12] *Ibidem*, p. 227.

[13] In 1256 Conrad, together with brothers Ladislaus and Henry III, demanded that Pope Alexander IV return these territories, see Sub. III, nr 201, s. 117 (a petition was delivered '*ex parte dilectorum filiorum… ducum Zlesie*', without giving the title relating to Greater Poland); About the duke, see Tomasz Jurek, *Konrad I głogowski, studium z dziejów dzielnicowego Śląska*, 'Roczniki Historyczne', 54 (1988), pp. 111–141.

[14] Actually, we will only find the title '*Conradus dei gracia dux Zlesie et Polonie*' in a document that came into being as a result of strong Lubiąż influences in 1251, SUb., vol. 3, Nr. 20, p. 27. Even the bull of Alexander IV of 1256, by which the Pope extended protection over Henry and Ladislaus, contains only the laconic title 'duces Zlesie', SUb., vol. 3, No. 202, p. 137.

[15] Z. Piech, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

[16] SUb., vol. 1, No. 8, p. 8 (1134); *Magistri Vincenti dicti Kadlubek Chronica Polonorum*, IV, 8, 2, p. 147 (ca. 1178).

nomine'.[17] The basis for the identification of a community contained in this expression is neither a genealogical association with the Piast dynasty nor one with a wider territory subject to their rule, but with a group of rulers of a particular local dominion.

However, the title of Dukes of Głogów (Conrad and Henry), which proved to be more suitable than ones accentuating the position of a narrow familial ruling clan for the purposes of building a sense of community, was a form put forward by Henry IV the Righteous. This title concisely presented both the legal and hierarchical status of the particular local dominion (duchy) along with the dominant position of Silesia as evidence of the link between the descendants of Henry the Bearded and their common familial tradition.[18] Viewing Silesia as a fixed element in the common identification of rulers, despite the existence of other options for determining the scope of their authority (for instance, the titles of Duke of Poland or Duke of Wrocław, Legnica, Głogów), disproves the hypothesis that this name's character remained purely geographical until the 15th century. It also refutes suggestions that between the 13th and 14th centuries the term Silesia did not designate a regional community, which was said to have come into being as late as in the 15th century from the merging of the lands of the middle and southern course of the Odra (Lower and Upper Silesia).[19] In this context, the close of the 13th century may be viewed as a breakthrough moment when the conviction of having been granted both special and common rights to Silesia began to grow among the Silesian Piasts. These rights were particularly unique in that they did not apply to any other territory of the former Poland. While Silesian rulers in the 13th century controlling even the smallest fragments of Greater Poland would refer to themselves as the Dukes of Poland (having in mind Greater Poland), in the 14th century, changes in this respect had already reached their peak. The ceremonial title of Duke of Głogów as taken by Henry, which imitated the titles of the rulers of Bohemia[20] and was consistently present in charters issued between 1301 and 1309, accentuated his right to exercise power over the whole of Poland[21] and contained a detailed description of its actual extent with special attention

[17] LBUS, vol. 2, No. 1, p. 380.

[18] See Tomasz Jurek, *Die Entwicklung eines schlesischen Regionalbewußtseins im Mittelalter*, 'Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa Forschung', 47 (1998), issue 1, p. 25-26.

[19] Gottlieb Biermann, *Seit wenn sahen sich die oberschlesischen Piasten als schlesische Fürsten an*?, 'Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesien', 8 (1867), pp. 31–54; Halina Manikowska, *Świadomość regionalna na Śląsku w późnym średniowieczu*, [in:] *Państwo, naród, stany w świadomości wieków średnich. Pamięci Benedykta Zientary*, eds Aleksander Gieysztor, Sławomir Gawlas, Warsaw 1990, pp. 255–256.

[20] This is manifested in the additional element of the title '*dominus X et X*'. A similar title, without the aforementioned additional element and containing the names of entire provinces, was normally used by Ladislaus the Elbow-high, and in one particular case by Henry I (III), see Rościsław Żerelik, *Dokumenty i kancelaria Henryka III księcia głogowskiego*, Wrocław 1984 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No. 683, Historia 42), pp. 51–53; Winfried Irgang, *Das Urkunden und Kanzleiwesen Herzogs Heinrichs III. (I.) von Glogau (+1309) bis 1300*, [in:] *idem, Schlesien im Mittelalter*, pp. 455–456. As opposed to the inscription on the seal of Henry we are familiar with, the one taken over from the chancellery of Ladislaus the Elbow-high was not accepted in Silesia.

[21] Tomasz Jurek, *Dziedzic Królestwa Polskiego. Książę głogowski Henryk (1274–1309)*, Poznań 1993, pp. 49–50.

paid to presenting Silesia as his principal inheritance (an entry found in a charter: 'heres Regni Polonie dux Slezie dominus Glogovie et Poznanie'; an entry found on a seal: 'SIGILLUM HEINRICI DEI GRACIA HEREDIS REGNI POLONIE DVCIS SLEZIE DOMINI GLOGOVIE ET POZNANIE').[22] This title was copied by his descendants, who aspired to power over Poznań and Gniezno as early as in the 1330s.[23] The clear manifestation of political hierarchy in Henry of Głogów's title was firm proof that Silesia had been considered by the Piasts and their circles as a transitory form somewhere between a state – the Kingdom of Poland, later the Kingdom of Bohemia – and a local dominion – the Duchy of Głogów.[24] Rather than seeing themselves as part of a more extensive political organization – a kingdom – local Piasts openly supported the idea of Silesia; this approach was continued until the 17th century, when their line died out. The emergence and the successful functioning of the notion of 'Silesia' understood as a territorial, political and cultural space shared by the members of the ruling elite may serve as a prerequisite for our viewing this elite as a group of conscious creators acting in the context of a regional community.

Of crucial importance was that Silesia began to be perceived as an independent political community of elites surrounding the ducal court in the period of the reign of Henry the Bearded. On the one hand, this duke can be seen as consistently striving to establish his position as sovereign of all the Piasts.[25] On the other hand, he manifested his consent for the independence of individual territories – his own dominions – by introducing varied official ducal titles. And though Silesia was most frequently granted priority over all other territories subject to his power, curiously enough, the land named first in documents concerning Greater and Lesser Poland was the land of Cracow. After 1236, under the reign of Henry the Bearded, the two of them – Silesia and the land of Cracow – were listed alongside Greater Poland as provinces of equal status.[26] Henry's efforts to introduce a uniform system of personal sovereignty of the duke and his designees over the entire dominion was a clear attempt at building a state with a highly centralized

[22] R. Żerelik, *Dokumenty i kancelaria Henryka III*, pp. 82–83. The seal issue date was different according to Tomasz Jurek, *Studia nad dokumentami księcia głogowskiego Henryka I (III)*, 'Studia Źródłoznawcze', 32–33 (1991), pp. 51–52. In this case we advocate the view of the specialist in the area of ducal sphragistics, Z. Piech, *op. cit.*, pp. 233–234, who supported the views on the seal issue date presented by R. Żerelik.

[23] Z. Piech, *op. cit.*, pp. 236–237. About its usage in documents see Rościsław Żerelik, *Dokumenty i kancelarie książąt głogowskich w latach 1250-1331*, Wrocław 1988 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No 902, Seria Historia 59).

[24] In the context of Henry's rivalry with Weneclaus II, and afterwards with Ladislaus the Elbow-high, it seems unlikely that the tile of 'regnum Polonie' referred only to Greater Poland. This view was cautiously advocated by T. Jurek, *Dziedzic Królestwa*, pp. 49–50. Notwithstanding this issue, the very clarification of the types of dominions is clear proof of their hierarchy (*regnum–ducatus–dominium*).

[25] See the canon work of Benedykt Zientara, *Henryk Brodaty i jego czasy*, 2nd edition, Warsaw 1997, pp. 303–320.

[26] For instance SUb. II, No. 73, p. 46; No 80–81, pp. 52–53 and others; Z. Piech, *op. cit.*, pp. 221–222. As Henry, Duke of Cracow and Silesia: Sub. II, No. 83–85, pp. 54–55, and as Duke of Cracow, Silesia and Greater Poland *ibidem*, No. 112, p. 75. In the eyes of the papal curia, Henry the Bearded was simultaneously the Duke of Silesia and Cracow, *ibidem*, Nos 97–99, pp. 62–63.

administrative apparatus and territory far larger than that of Silesia. This ran counter to the affirmation of cases of regional political independence manifested not only by the ducal title, but also by clerical hierarchies associated with certain lands rather than with Henry's state as a whole. In so far as the Bearded's supreme status bonded his state together, what became conspicuous after 1238 (the date of his death) was the activity of regional communities destructive for this 'monarchy'. During the reign of Henry the Pious, this activity initially resulted in the loss of power over the Duchy of Opole, and soon after in the establishment of a practical autonomy of the land of Cracow as well as growing independence of the elite of the original territory of Silesia. Consequently, what became especially evident was the independence of political activity undertaken by Silesian elites from that of the knights of Opole and the elites of other territories ruled by Henry II.[27]

Henry's death during the battle of Legnica in 1241 speeded up the process of regionalization of political elites. His descendants focused on forming a system of equal dominions in the territory inherited from Boleslaus the Tall and Henry the Bearded. Political activity reaching far beyond the borders of Silesia was of secondary importance compared to the primary aim – competing for hegemony within one's circle.[28] This process was capped at the close of the 13th century with the introduction of a hierarchy (known to us thanks to the analysis of titles; see above) of political entities in which the status of Silesia was viewed as halfway between that of a kingdom and of a local dominion. The fact that the activity of Silesian dukes between the 13th and 14th centuries focused on establishing their position in the system of alliances with their cousins who ruled Silesia[29] may be evidence that they shared the sense of being part of this particular social group. Additionally, narrative sources inform us that their sense of independence from non-Silesian representatives of the Piast dynasty was acute until at least the close of the 13th century. Around AD 1300, alongside the *Life of St Hedwig* there appeared a work on the genealogy of the Silesian line of Piasts.[30] Slightly earlier, before 1290, the so-called Silesian '*Polish Chronicle*' was written, where strong emphasis was put on

[27] See Przemysław Wiszewski, *Henryk II Pobożny. Biografia polityczna*, Legnica 2011, pp. 155–168, 180–184.

[28] Rościsław Żerelik, *Dzieje Śląska do 1526 roku*, pp. 59–62, 65–70, 82–91; Marek Wójcik, *Dolny Śląsk w latach 1138–1326*, [in:] *Dolny Śląsk. Monografia historyczna*, pp. 55–72; Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Dolny Śląsk w latach 1327-1526*, [in:] *Dolny Śląsk. Monografia historyczna*, pp. 105–126.

[29] T. Jurek, *Dziedzic Królestwa*, pp. 26–28, 35–36, 43–44, 51 and further; *idem*, *Plany koronacyjne Henryka IV Probusa*, [in:] *Śląsk w czasach Henryka IV Prawego*, ed. Krzysztof Wachowski, Wrocław 2005 (=Wratislavia Antiqua, vol. 8), pp. 13–30.

[30] See Kazimierz Jasiński, *Genealogia św. Jadwigi. Studium źródłoznawcze*, [in:] *Mente et litteris. O kulturze i społeczeństwie wieków średnich*, Poznań 1984, pp. 195–204, and generally on the cult of the Saint in Silesia, see Winfried Irgang, *Die heilige Hedwig. Ihre Rolle in der schlesischen Geschichte*, [in:] *Das Bild der heiligen Hedwig in Mittelalter und Neuzeit*, eds Eckhardt Grunewald, Nikolaus Gussone, München 1995 (=Schriften des Bundesinstitut für ostdeutsche Kultur und Geschichte, vol. 7), pp. 23–38; on the genesis of the manuscript of the 'Lives of St. Hedwig', accompanied by the 'Genealogia', see Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Św. Jadwiga – jej żywot i kult (wraz z uwagami na temat rękopisu IV F 192 biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej we Wrocławiu*, [in:] *Legenda o św. Jadwidze/Legende der hl. Hedwig*, translated and edited by Trude Ehlert, academic consultation and afterword by Wojciech Mrozowicz; translated into Polish by Jerzy Łukosz, Wrocław, 2000, pp. 597–620.

presenting the history of Silesian rulers as separate from the general history of the Polish Piasts.[31] Nonetheless, the manifestation of Silesian rulers' independence in both these works was not proof of them breaking off their relations with the remaining Piasts and abandoning the concept of their being part of the community of Polish rulers. The concept of the Silesian rulers having an identity separate from the remaining Piasts was very slow to reach the lowest rungs of the social ladder. Curiously enough, in the 13th century Silesian documents issued outside the circles of ducal officials, just as in the case of charters from the surrounding territories,[32] designated the Silesian Piasts as '*duces Polonie*' with no reference whatsoever to them being Silesian.[33] When in the first half of the 14th century the Bohemian kings gained in importance as guarantors of political order within provincial borders, this further strengthened their independence.[34] Even so, the titles analyzed above lead to the conclusion that Bohemian influences on the formation of the region were of a very complex nature. The spread of the idea of Silesia as a unique patrimony of a political community of rulers – descendants of Henry the Bearded – predated the period of Bohemian kings' dominance. Henry IV, having introduced dual titles, thereby led to emphasizing the local or sub-regional dimension of ducal power, while pointing to a traditional regional identity which had developed before the Odra region was subdued by Bohemian kings.[35]

Did this signal the foundation between the 13th and 14th centuries of a Silesian political elite whose members engaged in coordinated political activity that transcended the boundaries of local duchies? Such assumptions require the highest degree of cautiousness. After 1241, in Silesia there were no particularly strong signs of tradition in the regional activity of the mighty. The ever-increasing fragmentation of Henry the Bearded's realm did not evoke any protests on their part. For the vast majority of the population, the duchies became a principal arena for political courting. Fragmentary findings on the subject give certain grounds for the assumption that the second half of the 13th century saw

[31] About the 'Kronika polska', with a list of older literature, see Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Śląska 'Kronika polska'. Wstęp do studium źródłoznawczego (part 1)*, [in:] *Studia z historii średniowiecza*, ed. Mateusz Goliński, Wrocław 2003 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis. Historia, vol. 163), pp. 105–128; *idem, Cronica principum Polonie und Cronica ducum Silesie - die Hauptwerke der Fürstenchronistik Schlesiens (Einige Überlieferungs- und Deutungsprobleme)*, [in:] *Die Hofgeschichtsschreibung im mittelalterlichen Europa: Projekte und Forschungsprobleme*, eds Rudolf Schieffer, JarosławWenta, Toruń 2006 (=Subsidia Historiographica, vol. 3), pp. 147–159, and an important supplementation *idem, Śląska Kronika polska w średniowiecznej tradycji historiograficznej: (przekaz w rękopisie I F 218 Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej we Wrocławiu)*, [in:] *Z Gorzanowa w świat szeroki: studia i materiały ofiarowane Profesorowi Arno Herzigowi w 70-lecie Urodzin*, eds Krzysztof Ruchniewicz, Marek Zybura, Wrocław 2007, pp. 139–150.

[32] SUb. II, No. 104, p. 69; Nos 145–146, pp. 94–95.

[33] See the documents of Magdalenes Sisters of Nowogrodziec at the Kwisa river, in SUb. III, No. 282, p. 187 from 1259 (here Boleslaus Rogatka is called 'Bolezlaus dux Polonie') and *ibidem*, No. 442, p. 291 from 22nd May 22 1263 (Conrad I of Głogów as 'dei gratia dux Polonie').

[34] See Robert Antonín, Dalibor Prix, *Slezský a opolský region ve 13. století a prvních desetiletích 14. věku*, [in:] *Slezsko w dějinách českého státu*, vol. 1: *Od pravěku do roku 1490*, ed. Zdenek Jirásek, Praha 2012, pp. 257–260; Martin Čapsky, Dalibor Prix, *Slezsko v pozdním středověku (until 1490)*, [in:] *Slezsko w dějinách*, vol. 1, p. 263-272.

[35] Such a picture is presented by M. Čapsky, D. Prix, *op. cit.*, p. 263.

the strengthening of a region-wide migration. It was fostered by the formation of networks comprising ducal courts and related elites, coupled with Silesia being flooded by an influx of foreign knights in search of new masters to provide them with material security and knightly fame.[36] At the same time, frequent changes of boundaries posed a major obstacle for the formation by individual duchies of a tradition of political independence. Compared with Silesia, a regular participant in political discourse – which is reflected, for instance, in Silesian ducal titles – the duchies were short-lived, transitory and of somewhat lower priority in the political hierarchy. It was only the introduction (see above) in the 1270s of local names into the titles of rulers, as well as the fixing of borders and designation of capitals (14th century) that could have encouraged the formation of local political elites in spite of remaining widespread respect of the more expansive political entity that was Silesia. The elites were not, however – at least as of the close of the 13th century and the outset of the 14th century – isolating themselves from their surroundings. At that time the circle of Henry of Głogów abounded in ordinary representatives of local knighthood, as well as of newcomers from other parts of Silesia and Germany. One of his primary specialists in diplomatic affairs was Lutko Pakosławic, who had betrayed Henry V the Fat, Duke of Wrocław, and sold him out to the Duke of Głogów. At the same time, many mighty families of the Głogów Duchy had only a few or no representatives whatsoever at their disposal to appear before the Duke. And these representatives, it should be said, were not fortunate enough to develop their careers outside the borders of the duchy. Migrants of various ethnic backgrounds were attracted to the Głogów court mostly by the favourable conditions resulting from the death of Henry IV the Righteous of Wrocław. Most of them, having settled in the realm of Henry of Głogów, became loyal servants to him and his family, and a smaller group migrated further, to Wrocław, Legnica and Świdnica.[37] In so far as it is possible to distinguish here a so-called 'common Silesian factor' which determined to a certain extent the migration decisions of local knights, the same can not be said in respect of their political activities. Their dependence on the decisions of particular dukes remained too extensive.

This relative political mobility of knights would be observed in Silesia throughout the entire 14th century. Of considerable importance in this process was the free will of the individuals aspiring to serve the Duke, which they viewed as a gateway to a potential career, or at least knightly adventure. Equally important was a factor beyond their influence, namely the rearrangement of borders and related changes of political affiliation. Increased mobility was accompanied by the growing convergence between the representatives of Polish- and German-speaking knighthoods, connected with the definitive declassing of their poorer local representatives. We may suspect that this led to the formation

[36] See Tomasz Jurek, *Die Migration deutscher Ritter nach Polen*, [in:] *Das Reich und Polen*, Ostfildern 2003 (=Vorträge und Forschungen, vol. 59), pp. 243–276, a collection of results of research devoted to the knights of medieval Silesia.

[37] See T. Jurek, *Dziedzic Królestwa Polskiego*, pp. 98–114.

of unique cultural characteristics of the entire population of Silesian (or, as we would say today, Lower Silesian) knights.[38] However, this hypothesis as well requires caution.[39] For one thing, alongside the dominant group of German-speaking knights there also functioned (especially on the right bank of the Odra) groups having close ties with Polish culture. It was only in the 15th century that these communities of petty knights based on Polish knightly laws finally disappeared.[40] Also, the 14th century was a period of consolidation of local elites involved in the expansion of their landed property.[41] This would lead in the 15th century to the formation of a narrow group of magnates. Their political activity as viewed from a Silesia-wide perspective was, however, almost inconspicuous. And so it was, because this activity failed to produce any tangible benefits for society at large while political divisions and the formation of small duchies with their newly-established courts created favourable conditions for advancing the careers of knights supporting the new dukes.[42] At this point it should be added that the extent of this so-called 'localness' did not necessarily overlap with the existing borders of duchies. The network of knightly families – identified by Tomasz Jurek – who owned landed properties around Lwówek Śląski, Złotoryja and Legnica survived the fragmentation of the Duchy of Boleslaus Rogatka, who was himself a major perpetrator of the crisis. A crucial change in this situation, that is in the dominance of the local context over the regional context of political activity conducted by knights, could only have been initiated by the Bohemian kings (see above). They were the only ones with enough power to establish primary provincial offices and have knights from across the entire province perform certain tasks.

[38] Marek Cetwiński, *Polak Albert i Niemiec Mroczko. Zarys przemian etnicznych i kulturalnych rycerstwa śląskiego do połowy XIV wieku*, [in:] *idem, Śląski tygiel. Studia z dziejów śląskiego średniowiecza,* Częstochowa 2001 (2nd edition, updated, first printing: *Niemcy – Polska w średniowieczu,* Poznań 1986, pp. 157–169), pp. 62–74; Tomasz Jurek, *Vom Rittertum zum Adel. Zur Herausbildung des Adelsstandes im mittelalterlichen Schlesien*, [in:] *Adel in Schlesien,* vol. 1: *Herrschaft – Kultur – Selbstdarstellung,* eds Jan Harasimowicz, Matthias Weber, München 2010, pp. 61–67.

[39] This was highlighted by Na M. Cetwiński, *Polak Albert*, pp. 74, who contested the views of Klaus Zernack.

[40] T. Jurek, *Vom Rittertum zum Adel*, pp. 69–70.

[41] While there is no particulae information on the nature of this relationship, lords from Brzezimierz, connected in the 13th century with the court of Legnica, were distantly related to Bishops Thomas I and Thomas II of Wrocław. And despite meeting all the prerequisites for them to have played a definite political role in the context of the whole Silesia (or at least their local territory), in the second half of the 13th century and in the 14th century they concentrated on conducting commercial activity, resigning from holding ranks in royal courts, see Marek Cetwiński, *Ród Jeszka Poduszki i kościół w Brzezimierzu*, [in:] *idem, Śląski tygiel,* p. 234–235.

[42] An interesting example of the mobility of knightly families and their careers at local courts is the history of the House of Busswoy, connected initially with Henry of Głogów, and after his death with the Piasts of Legnica. The Busswoys were said to have founded an estate in their territory not far from Chojnów, which first supported the most outstanding representative of their family – Wolff von Busswoy (a councillor of Frederick II of Legnica), to finally be dramatically expanded by his lord. Alongside the Busswoy line of Legnica, in the 15th century there were also the lines of Świdnica, Głogów and Opava. Nonetheless, we know nothing about their mutual cooperation or common family traditions of the time. See Przemysław Wiszewski, *Legnicka tablica kommemoracyjna rodu Budziwojowiców (von Bußwoy). Przyczynek do poznania mechanizmów kształtowania się tradycji genealogicznej na Śląsku (1 połowa XVI w.),* 'Genealogia. Studia i Materiały Historyczne', 12 (2000), pp. 70–74.

Nonetheless, in Silesia this process only reached a primary stage. A measure of the lack of perspectives and engagement on the general provincial level was the fact that in the 15th century the majority of Silesian knights gave priority over political activity in smaller duchies (not even to mention the province as a whole) to mercenary service for Teutonic Knights, the Crown of Poland, the Luxembourg dynasty and western states. In the second half of the 15th century, a politically fragmented Silesia, devoid of larger courts and of a clear provincial administrative structure that would offer the knights prospects for an attractive career, became one of Europe's prime mercenary recruitment zones.[43]

At the same time, the ducal title '*duces Slesie*' clearly indicated that the Piasts were cultivating their sense of community in the context of their common right to a particular space. For their lieges, this was not of major importance in their everyday political affairs, as these were determined by the bonds between the subjects and rulers of particular local duchies. This relationship had been evolving from the second half of the 13th century. The ruler ceased to be the natural, sole centre of power. On the contrary, it was increasingly often the lieges who decided on the succession to the throne, and this was openly applauded by the rulers. When Henry V the Fat, Duke of Legnica, claimed the right to rule Wrocław with support from the burghers and local knights in 1290, in the official document decreeing the city's privileges he declared 'post solum deum per fideles et karissimos cives nostros Wratizlavienses pariter et per terrigenas Wratizlavienses sumus ducatum Wratizlauiensem et dominium consecuti'. A clear message had been addressed to all who would acquaint themselves with the document-Henry had been made ruler of the duchy thanks in almost equal measure to the courtesy of the local elites and that of mighty God. This is not all accomplished by Henry the Fat. For the Piasts, wielding control over people and territories was for centuries a natural state, while Henry declared that he regarded the privileges of the city as 'ut beneficia beneficiis reconpensemus'.[44] Gaining power over a duchy treated as a 'benefice' and granted to the duke by the local elites required that he repay this act of generosity with his own 'benefice' – this was a completely new concept in the Piast language of power relations. As a phenomenon punctuating the subjectivity of local elites in relations with their rulers, this concept is especially important to our study. In this system the rulers were, on the one hand, entitled to choose their political partners; on the other, the elites could define the obligations of their sovereigns. Naturally, the character of the Silesian dukes' authority remained unchanged; they were still predestined to exercise power over smaller

[43] Tomasz Jurek, *Obce rycerstwo na Śląsku do połowy XIV wieku*, pp. 83–90, see also passages on the economic activity of Silesian knights between the 12th and 13th centuries – this was partially a consequence of the political situation of the time, but mostly a result of economic expansion: Marek Cetwiński, *Rycerstwo śląskie do końca XIII w. Pochodzenie, gospodarka, polityka*, Wrocław 1980, pp. 96–113.

[44] SUb. V, No. 461, p. 354.

duchies. However, the power-related hereditary tradition became visibly less important than the clearly accentuated cooperation with local elites.

Mutual relationships and related choices led to the formation of a rapidly shifting network of Silesian political relations. As a result, from the second half of the 13th century the connections of elites with defined geographic locations were mostly the product of personal relations. The residing of dukes in towns or castles resulted in the strengthening of their symbolic importance as centres of individual realms. Of major importance was the establishment of a tradition according to which particular dukes were to reside in permanent locations, independently of changes in the ruling Piast lines or even dynasties. Powerful noble protectors were also drawn to centres of ducal memory, deliberately created by members of various Piast lines in ac institutions of high importance for them and their authority.[45] Finally, for knihgs of special importance were churches founded or financed by mighty families. From the 14th century the generosity of elites from all around Silesia was exploited by Wrocław's Church institutions – the donators' place of residence was of no importance to them. At the same time, the role played by Wrocław, as the region's hub and seat of the bishop and the oldest Silesian abbeys, in building an identity determined by the geography of the so-called 'sacred familiarity' was always crucial. This does not mean, however, that this role did not evolve. Beginning at the close of the 13th century some of Wrocław's functions were taken over by Legnica, Głogów, Świdnica, Oleśnica, Brzeg and finally Żagań. From the 14th century the permanent presence of courts, the attitude of municipal elites who battled with Wrocław for prestige (including in the sphere of the municipal symbolic), and finally, the rise in the number and concentration of prestigious sacred foundations resulted in an acceleration in these ducal capitals of the formation of the ducal elites' political identity with a regional accent.[46] On a lower, local level, an important factor for the development of the sense of

[45] See Marcin Pauk, *Program fundacyjny Piastów śląskich w XIII w. i jego środkowoeuropejskie konteksty*, [in:] *Piastowie śląscy w kulturze i europejskich dziejach*, ed. Antoni Barciak, Katowice 2007, pp. 73–100 (focused on the European perspective). On convents see Przemysław Wiszewski, *Związki fundatorów z klasztorami żeńskimi na Śląsku (XIII-połowa XIV w.) Wybrane aspekty*, [in:] *Genealogia – władza i społeczeństwo w Polsce średniowiecznej*, eds Andrzej Radzimiński, Jan Wroniszewski, Toruń 1999, pp. 303–332.

[46] See about the adoption of Wrocław's iconographic and symbolic patterns by the capitals of other Silesian duchies in the 14th century, Przemysław Wiszewski *Między konwencją, polityką i modą: średniowieczne śląskie pieczęcie miejskie z wizerunkami świętych*, [in:] *Formuła, archetyp, konwencja w źródle historycznym: materiały IX Sympozjum Nauk Dających Poznawać Źródła Historyczne, Kazimierz Dolny 14-15 grudnia 2000 r.*, eds Artur Górak, Krzysztof Skupieński, Lublin 2006 (=Biblioteka Wschodniego Rocznika; no. 4), pp. 275–285, 292–293, 302–303. Perhaps in the context of the process of building ducal capitals with a focus on making them sacred centres of duchies, we should also examine the moving of cloisters of canons regular – both from Ślęża Mountain to Wyspa Piaskowa, and from Nowogród Bobrzański to Żagań; on the role of monasteries (incl. the Abbey of Our Lady in the Sands) in the sacred topography of Wrocław see Halina Manikowska, *La topographie sacrée de la ville: le cas de Wroclaw du XIIe au XVe siècle*, [in:] *Anthropologie de la ville médiévale*, ed. Michał Tymowski, Warszawa 1999, p. 65–82. The circumstances surrounding transfer of the Żagań monastery have recently been presented by Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Wokół przeniesienia klasztoru kanoników regularnych św. Augustyna z Nowogrodu Bobrzańskiego do Żagania. W świetlenie znanego dokumentu z 20 IX 1284 roku*, [in:] *Memoriae amici et magistri. Studia historyczne poświęcone pamięci Prof. Wacława Korty (1919 - 1999)*, ed. Marek Derwich, Wrocław 2001, pp. 101–108 (see also earlier literature). The question of the crucial importance

community of small clans was the existence of monasteries and parish churches in the close vicinity of their landed properties.[47] At the same time, the heightened importance of urban centres (*districtus, Weichbild*) as territorial administrative units fostered the formation of strong bonds between urban communities and the knightly elites who controlled the outlying villages.

In the Late Middle Ages the role of districts in delimiting the borders of local economic (but also political) communities had grown in importance to such an extent that the inhabitants were more supportive of preserving their original frontiers than of incorporating them into ducal dominions. When, in the second half of the 1330s, Głogów became a subject of negotiations between the Piasts and John of Luxembourg, the latter awarded the city a special privilege in 1337, in which he stated that '[civitatem nostram Glogoviensem] ipsam cum territorio, districtu et possessionibus suis in sua integritate volumus inviolabiter permanere'.[48] Although the German publisher claims that the words 'territorium, districtus' are a clear reference to the duchy, this seems rather unlikely. At the same time, the royal chancellery used these words numerous times in reference to the lands surrounding Głogów, but with no intention of presenting them as a separate duchy.[49] This expression rather meant 'the lands of Głogów', that is a territory whose inhabitants were an integral part of both the city and its community. The charter from King John clearly accented the meaning of this relationship for the whole community: 'quoniam a capite membra diminuere non convenit, plerumque manencia cum eo vigorem sumunt, separata vero in se deficiunt et languescunt'.[50] What the document presents even more clearly by means of the organismic concept of community as suggested by the author is not only the role of Głogów as the head of this community, but also the fact that its distinctiveness from its surroundings had gained widespread acceptance.

A decisive role in the crystallization of political identity of such communities as subjects engaging in relations with their rulers was played by the period of uncertainty and reoccurring political divisions following the reign of Henry I (III) of Głogów. In the whirlwind of the redrawing of borders and reshuffling of higher authorities, the only thing that seemed durable was the local community, and guaranteeing its security was given the highest priority. In 1337, Duke John of Ścinawa granted King John power over 'terram Goram cum civitate castroque Gora et territorio suo necnon vassallis et utilitatibus suis una cum civitate Frowenstat'. In order to make this act legally valid, both

of ducal capitals for ducal families is punctuated in a passage from a document of Bishop Weneclaus, Duke of Legnica, who on endowing Louis II of Brzeg with his duchy at the outset of the 15th century named its constituent parts (most likely on purpose): 'unser haws stad land und lewthe zu Legenicz', LBUS, vol. 1, No. 55, p. 358.

[47] With reference to the Duchy of Świdnica-Jawor see analyses by Dagmara Adamska, *Fundacje dewocyjne rycerstwa księstwa świdnicko-jaworskiego w średniowieczu*, Poznań-Wrocław 2005 (=Badania z Dziejów Społecznych i Gospodarczych, vol. 64), especially the summary, pp. 225–230.

[48] LBUS, vol. 1, No. 22, p. 145.

[49] *Ibidem*, Nos 20–21, pp. 143–144.

[50] *Ibidem*, No. 22, p. 145.

the Duke and the King had to take an oath to retain the privileges of this community ('vasallos, terras, civitates et earum homines'), and the king additionally had to swear he would treat his liegemen 'prout alii principes Polonie vasalli sui habent'.[51] This latter issue is of particular significance to us, as it points to the ruler's eagerness to secure the stability of the position of the local elites as knights subject to the Polish law, unique for Silesia at the time. However, it seems unlikely that the king himself would have favoured such a solution. This specific privilege was of primary importance to the knights, who saw it as an integral part of their identity and independence from the elites of other lands, and one they were not keen on losing with the advent a new ruler.

Appreciating the strength of ties binding these local communities, what should be kept in mind is that, firstly, they could be rapidly shattered by political decisions independent of the will of their members. This very thing happened in 1360, when Duke Henry V of Głogów concluded an agreement with Charles IV under which they divided Głogów and Bytom Odrzański along with their outlying lands into equal parts among the rulers. According to the charter which precisely described the newly-delineated borders between the towns, each of them was divided in half. What is more, the charter also mentioned several churches and production facilities (slaughterhouse, mill, etc.) that were to be kept in common for both cities, while at the same time it clearly declared the formation of two separate communities with two distinct legal systems for the cities and their districts.[52] Other divided towns and their districts, such as Ścinawa, Góra and Chobienia, encountered similar situations.[53] The will of the ruler, who was supported by more powerful elites, was definitely of far greater weight than the forces binding local communities. It could bring about a transformation of the newly-formed 'semi-communities' into real subjects of political activity.[54]

Secondly, people of the time had no doubt that local communities, like those of the lands of Głogów and Góra, were part of a larger whole – ducal communities. Duke John of Ścinawa – frequently mentioned here – when transferring his duchy with the consent of barons in 1337 to the brothers Henry of Żagań and Conrad of Oleśnica wrote that he had done this 'commoditatem nihilominus et utilitatem nostram et omnium subditorum nostrorum ac incolarum dicti ducatus sperantes ex hoc imposterum non modicum provenire'.[55] He punctuated this statement with another to the effect that 'terram nostram seu ducatum Stinaviensem' comprised towns (including Góra), castles and villages together

[51] *Ibidem*, No. 23, p. 146.
[52] *Ibidem*, No. 47, pp. 172–178.
[53] See also the document on the division of Góra (1375) with very similar content to the document of Głogów-Bytom, *ibidem*, No. 57, pp. 187–192; however, it must be clear that the division was made 'den herren den mannen und den steten yren rechten unschedelich' (p. 191).
[54] Even in connection with the necessity of paying homage to the new ruler following the death of the previous head, see *ibidem*, No. 55, p. 185 (Karol IV commands 'landluyten, rittern und knechten, burgern und insessen des halbenlandis und der halben stad czu der Steinaw' and paying homage to King Weneclaus after the death of Duke Bolko of Świdnica, 1368).
[55] *Ibidem*, No. 24, p. 148.

with all the listed categories of inhabitants. He also noted the fact that in the event of his involvement in any arrangement 'cum nostris feodalibus, civibus et rusticis', his brothers should not engage themselves in any way in such a matter. A similar demand was addressed in a different charter to Boleslaus of Legnica by King John of Luxembourg (1329). In exchange for Bolesław's allegiance, John promised him that neither he himself nor his successors would engage in any disputes with the Duke or his successors 'cum rusticis, colonis, scultetis, civibus aut aliis quibuscunque subditis eorum cuiuscunque conditionis extiterit', this excluding the liegemen.[56] Two different entries point to the growing detachment of communities of duchies. King John reserved for himself the right to exercise power over the liegemen, but only a few years later, as the perpetual ruler of the duchy, along with his subjects he was part of a uniform community reluctant to be disturbed by external influences.

The force of the unique regional characteristics of duchies' inhabitants surfaced in the specificity of Silesian political life until at least the close of the 14th century. What is striking in this context is the record of the author of the *Chronicle of Dukes of Poles* about the alleged cause of Wrocław burghers' reluctance in 1290 to accept the sovereignty of Henry of Głogów, who was designated by the dying Henry the Righteous as his successor. The burghers were said to claim that Henry of Głogów would not only advocate aggressive policies, but would also be prone to breaking promises.[57] They were more open to the potential reign of the Duke of Legnica, Henry the Fat, whose peaceful introduction would guarantee the burghers a calm existence in a land where justice prevailed.[58] The cited passages of the chronicle, written in the second half of the 14th century, demonstrate how vital political stability was for elites within their duchy, including for conducting political affairs with reference to their inhabitants, or rather – their elites. After Henry the Fat refused on his deathbed to hand Sobótka to his brother Bolko in exchange for him taking care of his infant sons, Henry was actually chided by his subjects – knights and vassals – who instructed him that in the long run it would be much less painful to face a small loss at once rather than a great loss of everything at a later time.[59] As Marek Cetwiński noted, in the eyes of the chronicler, those surrounding the duke demanded that he maintain peace and security, and in exchange the duke could count on them guarding his honour and the duchies' borders. Although the chronicler is far from praising the relationship between the main architects of local policy, nor does he criticize it.[60] The ambitions of rulers to dominate in Silesia, not to mention the broader

[56] *Ibidem*, No. 3, p. 305.

[57] 'Scientes non esse ipsum pacis zelatorem et, ut dicebatur, non fuit firmus in verbis', *Kronika książąt polskich*, p. 502.

[58] 'Henricus (…) pacifice et quiete adeptus est totam terram et districtum Wratislaviensem, regens huius modi dominium multum honeste fonesque iusticiam in omnibus et honorem', *ibidem*.

[59] *Ibidem*, pp. 506–507.

[60] Marek Cetwiński, *Porwanie Henryka Grubego. Próba interpretacji*, [in:] *Genealogia. Władza i społeczeństwo w Polsce średniowiecznej*, eds. Andrzej Radzimiński, Jan Wroniszewski, Toruń 1999, s. 32-34.

political horizon, could have been regarded as a harmful expression of hubris, and not as a sign of a justified desire to offer their authority to the community of Silesians existing beyond the ducal borders. The political horizon of the lesser dukes was confined to the limits of their own, narrow communities. According to the chronicler, the rulers were not blameless in this situation. Describing the dukes' feuds following the death of Henry the Pious, the author showed that a combination of their ambitions and misdeeds that prompted the downfall of the entire dynasty, which lost power over Greater Poland and Cracow while maintaining control over '*sola Slezia*'.[61]

This though concerned 13th-century Silesia disquisition serves as a rationalization of the functioning of a 14th-century phenomenon: a group of dukes controlling single realms, while claiming the exclusive right to rule all of Silesia. Dukes without the slightest chance to rule Poland in its entirety, but at a minimum laying their claims to the legacy of Henry the Bearded. In the eyes of the contemporary ruling elites, Silesia was not the same type of legal and political entity as duchies, which were their nearest points of reference in terms of the struggle for influence and power. The charters of John of Luxembourg from April 6th 1327 served as good illustrations of the acceptance by outside observers of both the clearly-defined distinctness of the duchy's political elite from the political community of the remaining Silesian lands and this elite's intellectual distance to the idea of a united Silesia. In the first charter, John received from Henry VI the Duchy of Wrocław, thereby becoming his suzerain and assigning him the title 'dux Slezie dominus Wratislaviensis' or 'dominus Wratislavie'. The area under Henry's authority was 'tota terra sua Wratislaviensis' – this was the inheritance he took possession of after his father's lands had been divided between him and his brothers. It was the Duchy of Wrocław that was the real target of political campaigns undertaken by elites. In the charter's narrative, Silesia went unmentioned apart from the duke's title. The purpose of this charter was to protect Henry from possible expulsion from his real dominion, which for contemporary political players was the Duchy of Wrocław, not Silesia.[62] The fact of Silesia being placed on the back burner of local political elites' interests was well illustrated by the privilege issued for the knights and townsmen of the Duchy of Wrocław that very same day by King John, in which he promised to maintain all their existing ducal privileges 'dive memorie ducum Silesie ac dominorum Wratislaviensium', and granted new economic privileges to the inhabitants of the duchy within the borders of the Bohemian Crown. Finally, he made a solemn promise that the duchy would be permanently incorporated into Bohemia and that the allegiance would be unbreakable.[63] Charles IV struck a similar tone when in 1352 he approved the privileges of the Duchy of Wrocław and officially incorporated Namysłów, bought from Wenceslaus Duke of

[61] *Kronika książąt polskich*, p. 491.
[62] LUBS, vol. 1, No. 8, pp. 66–67.
[63] *Ibidem*, No. 9, pp. 67–68.

Silesia and Legnica in 1359.[64] 'Silesia' is present only in the titles of Piast rulers, but absent from the political language of elites belonging to individual political entities.

This was not, however, caused by replacement of this vision with the idea of association with the Bohemian Crown and hence the functioning of the duchies within its limits. The concepts of Silesia and the Bohemian Crown were perceived as structural elements of contemporary reality, but they had much less impact on inhabitants' sense of identity than did the concept of a duchy. In 1349, the entire community of the city of Głogów – mayor, councillors, artisans, burghers – requested that Charles IV renounce a pledge he and his father had made to maintain a permanent link between Głogów, the Crown and the Duchy of Wrocław. Their intention was to make Henry IV the Faithful their ruler, whom they referred to not as the Duke of Silesia and ruler of Głogów, but simply as '*herczogin zu Glogow*'.[65] Even the Bishop of Wrocław, Przecław, followed the trend of emphasizing the identity of political communities with the exclusion of the idea of Silesia as a cementing factor. In 1345, having issued a charter on the debts of the Dukes of Legnica, he called them 'duces Wenceslaus et Ludwicus, domines Lignicenses', and his companion Henry of Żagań and Głogów – 'dei gracia dux Saganensis et dominus Glogoviensis'.[66] In a sign of support for Bohemian rule over the Duchy of Wrocław ('civitas et terra Wratislaviensis'), in 1367 he issued a charter which, while confirming the Bohemian claims towards Wrocław, failed to mention the Silesian context, even with regard to the titles of the Piast dukes. In his eyes, the last Duke of Wrocław was simply 'illustris princeps dominus Heinricus olim dux Wratislaviensis sextus et ultimus'.[67]

Among the Piast ruling the mid-Odra region, they were few who wanted to constitute a counterbalance to the idea of Silesia. In the foregoing passages I have already mentioned the specific title of Conrad I, Duke of Głogów, who granted equal status to Silesia and the lands of Głogów. His attitude was mirrored in the 1320s by his grandchildren, most notably evident in the charters decreeing their feudal dependence on King John of Luxembourg. In 1329, Duke Conrad of Oleśnica issued a charter in which he referred to himself as 'nos Conradus dei gratia dux Slesie et Glogovie et dominus in Olsna'. He stressed that his brothers' lands were to belong 'ad fratres nostros principes illustres dominum Henricum videlicet ducem Slesie et Glogovie Saganensemque dominum ac dominum Johannem ducem Slesie et Glogovie ac dominum Stynavie heredesque suos'.[68] Having recognized the rights of John – as King of Bohemia and Poland – to rule these territories, he authorized the charter with a seal referring to him as 'the heir to the Polish Crown'. Perhaps it was the pride felt by the sons of Henry I (III) of Głogów

[64] *Ibidem*, No. 15, 17, pp. 70–72.
[65] *Ibidem*, No. 44, p. 169.
[66] *Ibidem*, No. 26, p. 324.
[67] *Ibidem*, No. 22, p. 75.
[68] LUBS, vol. 2, No. 16, pp. 19–20.

of being successors to the Polish throne that lied at the roots of their desire to highlight their and their lands' unique status in relation to the remaining Silesian Piasts. This was no less than well-regarded by King John and his chancellery. In both John's feudal charter and a later charter by which he granted Conrad a special privilege, the duke and his brother Henry were referred to as 'duces Slesie et Glogovie', lords of Oleśnica and Ścinawa. In that, they were clearly distinguished from Henry VI the Good ('dux Slezie et dominus Wratislaviensis') and Boleslaus (Bolko) of Niemodlin, who, originating from outside the line of Henry the Bearded's descendants, were not even awarded the title of Duke of Silesia ('de Valkenberg [dux]').[69]

The Duchy of Głogów, inherited by Henry I (III) and subsequently divided between his sons, was thereby assuming a similar character to that of Silesia, which was inherited from Henry I the Bearded and, just like the Duchy of Głogów, divided after his son's death. Such a comparison would doubtlessly be a great distinction for the entire Głogów line. This attempt to create a uniform familial community with a vast amount of political power over the Głogów legacy, therefore making it, in a sense, a region equal in status with Silesia and its potential competitor, ended in failure.[70] Perhaps this was so because the idea was advanced during a time when the family was embroiled in a major crisis. The Dukes of Głogów lost the lands of Greater Poland and recognized the overlordship of the Bohemian King, who began soon afterwards to deprive them of their rights to Głogów.[71] Earlier, while sharing Henry I (III) of Głogów's lands, his sons displayed no keenness to mention either Głogów – at that time controlled by their mother – or Silesia.[72] They rather focused on their local realms, thereby contenting themselves with the prestige thus brought to them. Nonetheless, the very appearance of the tendency to establish a region that was to compete with Silesia, the Głogów 'region of inheritance', is an important sign that in the 14th century Silesia, as a region and a point of reference for the realization of the common political interests of various rulers, was not the only option available for the Piasts of the time. A decision to allow Silesia to be eclipsed by the Głogów lands might also have met with acceptance beyond the limits of narrow familial circles. For instance, Bolko of Świdnica, in an official speech given in 1331 on behalf of his sister Constance, widow of Duke Przemko II of Głogów, referred to the duke

[69] *Ibidem*, No. 17, p. 22.

[70] Only nine years later that very same king granted Conrad a supreme privilege according to which, in the event of the lack of a male successor, Conrad would be entitled to use the title of 'dux Slesye [sic!] et dominus Olsnicensis', *ibidem*, No. 21, p. 24, which was also used in identical form by the Duke himself.

[71] LUBS, vol. 1, No. 13, pp. 134–135. What is especially striking in this document are the various titles of the sons of Henry of Głogów. John of Ścinawa calls himself 'dux Slesie et dominus in Stynavia', while his father Henry I (III) and late brother Przemko – both ruling Głogów – were 'duces Glogoviae'. The difference was that it was John who by this very charter transferred his power over Głogów to King John of Luxembourg. He did so in the presence of 'Bolezlai videlicet ducis Slezie domini Lignicensis, domini Conradi fratris nostril carrissimi ducis Glogovie et domini Stynavie'. Most probably the Głogów title was meant for those members of the family having at least partial rights to the patrimony. In such a context these rights were of much greater value than his still-valid rights to Silesia.

[72] *Ibidem*, No. 4, pp. 120–125.

as ‘quondam ducis Glogovie’, but he called himself ‘dux Slesie dominus de Forstenberg et Swidniczensis’.[73]

It would be difficult to determine the chronology and the durability of the process of the transformation of ducal and urban political elites into groups detached from the more common Silesian identity and supporting the independence of elites within the borders of smaller polities. The activities of elites operating outside the duchy’s borders as representatives of the ducal community surfaced in moments of crisis. When in 1443 the citizens of the Duchy of Ziębice were to accept William of Opava as their ruler, they were represented by the abbots of Henryków and Kamieniec Ząbkowicki, knights Hans von Burschwitz, Heintze Friedrich von Stosch and Christoff Stosch, the parish priest of Ziębice and burghers called ‘manne in der Münsterbergischen fürstenthumb’. They unanimously agreed to accept William of the Přemyslid dynasty, associated with the Piasts on the distaff side (mother Catherine, Duchesse of Ziębice), as their overlord in the event of an immediate threat to the security of their community. That is why they designated him as ‘als seinen herrn, der do gerchtigkeit hat zu dem lande und eingeboren fürst ist des lands, zu einem vorweser dem lande und der stadt’.[74] The universal message – with the Silesian context absent – is only a prerequisite for the primary aim of ensuring the survival of the Duchy’s community in times of hardship.

A similar diminishing of importance of the idea of Silesia can be observed in later disputes over succession rights in the Piast duchies. During the feud over the inheritance following the death of Conrad VII the White (the Elder) duke of Oleśnica, his sons Conrad the White (the Younger) and Conrad Kantner focused on arguments in favour of their personal interests, alternatively of the interests of the Dukes of Oleśnica. Silesia was virtually absent not only in their considerations, but also in the political plans of opponents.[75] This strategy’s foundations were presented in 1490 by Conrad X the White, who bequeathed his duchy to the young Dukes of Legnica. He wrote as follows: ‘wir unser landt und furstenthum in voller macht als eyn freyer furste und in rechten erblehen innehabin (…) vormols unser landt unde furstenthum von frunden an frunde fursten des geslechtis komen und geerbitseyn’.[76] A true, hereditary duchy of territory controlled by the duke’s family was the factor that brought the Piasts closer together and gave direction to their and their partners’ political activities. In the end, it was the king’s – not the Piast dukes’ – place to accept Conrad’s decision through the majority of ‘*fursten des landes*’.[77] The strive to constitute a common and uniform set of rules adhered to by the entire political elite of Silesia was in the king’s interest, not in that of the heirs to the former architects of the region’s political identity. The establishment of the superior

[73] *Ibidem*, No. 12, p. 133.
[74] LUBS, vol. 2, no. 31, p. 148.
[75] *Ibidem*, Nos 67–69, pp. 70–71, Nos 71–73, pp. 73–85.
[76] *Ibidem*, No. 84, p. 100.
[77] *Ibidem*, No. 85, p. 103.

status of monarchic laws in relation to the privileges of the Piasts, forced through by central authorities, resulted in undesirable outcomes for the Piast dynasty. Oleśnica, as a fiefdom of the king, was handed down to the House of Poděbrady. Only Wołów went into the hands of the Piasts of Legnica. Ladislaus Jagiellon, King of Bohemia and 'herczog in Sleszien', having granted Oleśnica to Henry of Poděbrady, did not fail to stress that Henry had been one of the 'fursten aus der Sleszie', and could hence be judged only by a member of this circle.[78] The breaking of the agreement between Conrad the White (the Younger) and Duchess Ludmila of Legnica was a clear sign that the era of acceptance of political domination in Silesia by elites representing their particular interests – i.e. those of particular duchies and their ruling families – was coming to a close. By the end of the 15th century, every attempt to impose one's will required efforts be made to influence both the entire community of local rulers and the king's court. Silesia gradually assumed the role of a platform for this sort of cooperation, which was revived by the mutual desire (of both central authorities and local elites) to create a certain middle ground between the Kingdom of Bohemia and the duchies.

This was a result of a long term process under which Silesia had always remained a concept uniting all the parties that felt a responsibility to share the hereditary rights to the legacy of the Henry I the Bearded. The durability of this idea is validated by the act of incorporation to the Bohemian Crown of duchies belonging to Charles IV's liegemen in 1348. It confirms that some dukes and their subordinate political elites were perceived as part of a common Silesian political space; it also verifies the superior status of Wrocław and the existence of a division of liegemen into 'Silesian ones' and 'Polish ones', that is – surely – the heirs of Henry I the Bearded and those of Mieszko the Tanglefoot.[79] The overlordship of the King of Bohemia could have united his dependent dukes, but not to the extent which led to the erasure of the older and deeper divisions within the political community of Piast dukes, who viewed Silesia as a much less meaningful entity, but at the same time as one more tangible than the new space formed as a result of their dependency on the King of Prague. Charles IV, having incorporated the Odra region to the Bohemian Crown, wrote explicitly about 'duces Polonie et Slesie', who had long before paid tribute to the Bohemian rulers, and soon after paid feudal homage to King John of Luxembourg. This binary interpretation of the Odra community under Bohemian

[78] *Ibidem*, No. 92, pp. 109–113, citation from p. 112.

[79] The document, however, contains a very imprecise classification of the ruler's affiliations. It mentions, in general, 'duces Polonie et Slezie', and the homage paid to the Bohemian King by 'illustrum Slezie et Polonie ducum videlicet Lignicensis, Bregensis, Munsterbergensis, Olnensis, Glogoviensis, Saganensis, Opoliensis, Falckenbergensis, Strelicensis, Teschinensis, Coslensis, Bithumiensis, Stinaviensis et Osvetiensis'. Alongside the inclusion of the Duke of Ścinawa in the circle of the dukes of what is now called Upper Silesia, the division of the remaining territories seems to illustrate the duality of both communities – dukes of 'Silesia' and 'Poland'. We hasten to add here that Charles IV consistently referred to the Duchy of Wrocław and its duke as 'ducatus Wratislaviensis et Slezie' and 'Henrico Wratislavie et Slezie duci', LUBS, vol. 1, No. 4, pp. 9–10. So, the so-called Duchy of 'Wrocław and Silesia' was not the Duchy of 'Wrocław, Silesia and Poland'. The identity and separateness of both communities was maintained.

rulers would gradually proliferate in the language of communication with the court of Prague. Louis I of Hungary, having renounced in 1373 on his and his wife's behalf the rights to Silesian duchies, listed them and informed of his abandonment of all claims towards any dukes and duchies in 'Bohemia, Moravia, Slesia, Polonia, Saxonia, Bavaria, Franconia' being part of 'regni et corone Bohemie'.[80] We must also remember that in the second half of the 14th century, authors of historiographical works whose main function was to present an idealized vision of the past, claimed that the only rulers of Silesia were the descendants of Henry the Bearded and those of St Hedwig. The Dukes of Opole comprised a different community.[81] The distinctness of the dukes residing in the upper-Odra region from their Silesian cousins ceased to be highlighted only in the 14th century when, according to scholars, the name of Silesia was incorporated into the titles of Upper Silesian rulers (those of Opole, Racibórz, Opava and others).[82]

At the time, it was also clear that the permanent domination of Bohemian kings over the Silesian duchies and their taking direct control over Wrocław, Świdnica and Jawor would slowly but irrevocably and fundamentally transform the situation of the Odra region's population. The supreme status of the Bohemian king and his officials was gradually gaining strength beyond the sphere of the ducal administration. This change, however, was neither immediate nor uniform for the entire affected territory. The power of the royal authority was definitely more conspicuous in duchies directly dependent on the Bohemian monarch, represented in these duchies from the second half of the 14th century by his governors of duchies (*starostas*).[83] The rulers of feudal duchies retained their previous position, and at times they even opposed the king.

In the 14th century, two separate trends could be observed in the activity of the rulers of Silesian territories. On one side there were sovereigns of the southern duchies, and on the other, the rulers of the territory considered to be the real Silesia. When, following the death of Duke Leszek of Racibórz, King John handed all his territory to Nicholas II of Opava from the Přemyslid dynasty (husband of Anna, the sister of Leszek), his act was contested by relatives of the deceased. A complaint was filed in 1337 to the king's court by Dukes Ladislaus of Bytom, Casimir of Cieszyn, Boleslaus of Niemodlin, Bolko of Opole, Albert of Strzelin and John of Oświęcim. None of them could call himself a Duke of Silesia, for they descended from the Piast line of Mieszko the Tanglefoot.

[80] *Ibidem*, No. 8, p. 18.

[81] Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Dlaczego Piotr z Byczyny nic nie wiedział o książętach opolskich? Książęta opolscy w średniowiecznej historiografii śląskiej*, [in:] *Jak powstawało Opole? Miasto i jego książęta*, ed. Anna Pobóg-Lenartowicz, Opole 2006, pp. 89–107.

[82] An extensive number of earlier sources on the subject has been collected and summarized by Sławomir Gawlas, *Ślązacy w oczach własnych i cudzych. Uwagi o powstaniu i rozwoju tożsamości regionalnej w średniowieczu*, [in:] *Ślązacy w oczach własnych i obcych*, ed. Antoni Barciak, Katowice 2010, pp. 51–52.

[83] See description of the office of governor of duchy or of the province and survey of related publications, Ewa Wółkiewicz, *Capitaneus Slesie. Królewscy namiestnicy księstwa wrocławskiego i Śląska w XIV i XV wieku*, [in:] *Monarchia w średniowieczu. Władza nad ludźmi. Władza nad terytorium*, eds Jerzy Pysiak, Aneta Pieniądz-Skrzypczak, Marcin Pauk, Warsaw 2002, pp. 169-225.

Their complaint was rejected by the king, who cited the superiority of feudal law over the rules of male primogeniture to succession.[84] His decision was announced in a place of symbolic importance – Wrocław – which he had inherited a short time before (in 1335) from Henry VI the Good. This was done in the presence of Boleslaus III the Generous, the Duke of Silesia and Legnica, who was a trusted partner of John at the time.[85] Although Boleslaus supported the king's decisions, in 1308 he had single-handedly claimed the Duchy of Opava, thereby depriving Nicholas I (Nicholas II's father) of the chance to become its ruler. What is more, between 1328 and 1329 he had questioned King John's claim to take over the lands of Wrocław. Nonetheless, he favoured the royal verdict in the case of Opava and rejected the arguments of the Upper Silesian Piasts. He did so as the fate of Silesia—understood as his family's legacy—was close to his heart. Ultimately, the laws and the lands of his distant relatives, which were not part of 'his' Silesia, were not worth cooperation with the discontented nor entering into a conflict with the king.

In the 14th century, the policies of Bohemian rulers had a mixed impact on the formation and the activity of groups focused on effecting the unification of the province. For one thing, the Bohemian kings underlined the link between the Silesian elites based on their joint dependency on the king and the Bohemian Crown. For another, their interference in local disputes deepened the divisions between the actors of the political arena. In November of 1347, Charles IV issued a charter for Silesia in Nuremberg, invoking the concept of the so-called 'landfryd'. The document did not impose an obligation to maintain the peace on all the inhabitants. It rather called on all the 'ducibus in partibus Polonie consitutis nostre dicioni subiectis' to cease their battles, in order to guarantee peace in 'terre nostre dicioni subiecte et specialiter Wratislauiensis'. It also forbade giving shelter to all individuals bringing harm to 'terrarum nostrarum presertim terre Wratislauiensis'.[86] While the king was of the view that everyone was meant to be equal ('in all the Polish lands of my sovereignty'), the lands of Wrocław were given special treatment in this respect. This was especially beneficial for maintaining the king's supremacy over his vassals and facilitating his rule over the kingdom, yet it did not contribute to a strengthening of bonds between representatives of Silesian elites at the regional level. Worthy of note was the novelty that the dukes of Silesia and Opole were viewed by the royal authorities as one and the same collective political subject. This approach was, however, often applied inconsistently, and hence the concept of Silesia continued to encompass the lands of the central and northern Odra regions.

What proved the validity of the elite's conviction of the ideological unity of Silesia, coupled with the simultaneous evolution of their self-identification, was the political

[84] See Wojciech Nowacki, *Piastowski Śląsk wobec opawskich Przemyślidów*, [in:] *Ślązacy w oczach własnych i obcych*, pp. 118–120.
[85] LUBS, vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 380–383.
[86] BUb., No. 188, p. 167.

activity of the clergy. On the one hand, the superiority of the bishop over the entire ecclesiastical community, excluding the majority of religious orders, favoured the emergence of a sense of belonging to a community extending beyond the ducal borders. This does not mean, however, that its members and their administrative framework instantly identified themselves with the concept of Silesia. This is well illustrated by, for instance, the charter of Bishop Przecław of Pogorzela (1342), in which he confirmed the homage, which was paid to John of Luxembourg by Boleslaus of Brzeg, Bolko of Niemodlin, Bolko of Opole, Ladislaus of Koźle, Casimir of Cieszyn, Nicholas of Opava and Racibórz and Siemowit of Gliwice, and called them 'duces nostre wratislaviensis diocesis'.[87] None of them save Boleslaus of Brzeg was ever referred to by the title of Duke of Silesia, and it was evident that the Bishop did not view them as part of a uniform community linked by a so-called 'Silesian factor'. They were bound by the diocese, which in terms of nomenclature was completely unassociated with Silesia; rather, as tradition dictated it was bound with the capital of the Bishopric-Wrocław. The distinctiveness of Silesia from the diocesan territory was accentuated in a document from 1358, in which the Bishop, accepting Charles IV as the patron of 'episcopatus wratislaviensis' pointed to the dependence of the dukes from 'the lands of Silesia and Opole' on the king. Curiously enough, he failed to mention that these dukes were in control of the lands within the borders of his diocese. On the contrary, he claimed that some of the diocesan properties were located 'in terris et principatibus ducum et principum Slezie et Opuliensis'.[88] Finally, we must not forget that the connection with the province was not necessarily a natural one for clergymen serving here. This is well-illustrated by the example of Bishop Nanker, for whom the fact of being transferred from Cracow to Wrocław was a source of much discomfort; indeed, this was to such a degree that, in 1327, after putting much effort into the process, he managed to obtain a papal privilege of primacy – based on him being the head of the Diocese of Cracow – in the congregation of Polish bishops. This was accepted by the pope as 'ad tuam consolacionem'.[89] Also, Nanker regarded only Cracow liturgical customs as 'his'. Nanker himself wrote that as a child he had been taught the canonical agenda of the Cracow Diocese, and he – the Bishop of Wrocław! – was reluctant to learn new 'Wrocław' customs.[90]

Frequent conflicts at the end of the 13th century between Episcopal authorities and the dukes and their urban centres broadened the gap between the two administrative systems. At the same time, they hindered cooperation in strengthening the regional community, particularly in cases when the Bishops – for instance, Przecław of Pogorzela – cooperated with the Bohemian kings in order to strengthen diocesan bonds with the Bohemian

[87] LUBS, vol. 2, No. 3, p. 6.
[88] LUBS, vol. 1, No. 6, p. 15.
[89] *Vetera monumenta Poloniae et Lithuaniae gentiumque finitimarum historiam illustrantia*, ed. Augustyn Theiner, vol. 1, Rome 1860, No. 391, p. 305.
[90] *Ibidem*, No. 405, p. 313.

Crown, while the dukes aimed to maintain the widest possible political autonomy within the borders of their duchies.[91] This situation only began to change during the 15th century. Appointing Duke Wenceslaus of Legnica to the office of the Bishop of Wrocław, and following his resignation, assumption of this post by Duke Conrad of Oleśnica, created grounds for closer – yet not completely free from conflict – cooperation between the head of the diocese and the rulers of duchies. A cultural community between partners originated by Piast families fostered the development of new links between the Bishop and the Dukes, and thereby in them working together to make political decisions. One illustrative example is the formation in 1413 in Legnica of the so-called 'Hound Collar Order', whose leaders were Bishop and Duke Wenceslaus of Legnica, Duke Louis II of Brzeg, Duke Conrad IV of Oleśnica (future bishop), his brother Conrad V Kantner, Duke John of Żagań and Przemko of Opava. The society included over 40 members comprised of knights from various duchies located in the Odra and Lusatia regions. The creation of this Order was part of a broader cultural trend characteristic of the contemporary Holy Roman Empire. This society, like other similar organizations, was focused on protecting its members, providing a common religious framework and organizing annual knightly tournaments, held interchangeably in Legnica and Zgorzelec.[92] According to scholars, with the reign of Herman (Margrave of Brandenburg) it may have taken on another, political dimension: securing the succession of Louis II to the throne of Legnica after the death of Wenceslaus II, or establishing closer connections between Silesian and Lusatian supporters of Sigismund of Luxembourg as the successor to King Wenceslaus IV.[93]

The political cooperation which followed between Bishop Conrad and both the Luxembourgs and Silesian dukes during the conflict with the Hussites led to the strengthening of the sense of ideological and political community felt by the clerical and secular elites of the region. The testimony of witnesses during the trial of 1436 concerning the ban on clerics from outside the diocese assuming ecclesiastical offices within the Wrocław Bishopric proves the clergy held a vivid conviction that they were part of both the diocese of Wrocław and the community of Silesia, the latter viewed as a nation separate from its neighbours, including the Czechs.[94] Nonetheless, at the close of the century the Bishops 'of Wrocław' highlighted the supreme status of their diocese and their authority in relation

[91] See Zdenka Hledíková, *Některé personální aspekty českého vlivu ve vratislavském biskupství kolem poloviny 14. století*, [in:] *Tysiącletnie dziedzictwo kulturowe diecezji wrocławskiej*, ed. Antoni Barciak, Katowice 2000, pp. 80–81.

[92] Hermann Markgraf, *Über eine schlesische Rittergesellschaft am Anfange des 15. Jahrhunderts*, [in:] *idem, Kleine Schriften zur Geschichte Schlesiens und Breslaus*, Breslau 1915 (=Mitteilungen aus dem Stadtarchiv und der Stadtbibliothek zu Breslau, vol. 12), pp. 81–95, the edition of the copy of the Society's foundation charter *ibidem*, pp. 93–95, on the organization of tournaments *ibidem*, p. 93.

[93] See Romuald Kaczmarek, *Stowarzyszenie 'Obroży Psa Gończego'. Z dziejów świeckich zakonów rycerskich na średniowiecznym Śląsku*, 'Sprawozdania Poznańskiego Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Nauk. Wydział Nauk o Sztuce', 108 (1991), pp. 13–21; Martin Čapský, *Spolek slezských knížat a jeho role v polityce Zikmunda Lucemburského (K otázce kontinuity mocenských mechanizm pozdního lucemburského období)*, [in:] *Piastowie śląscy w kulturze*, pp. 210–211.

[94] T. Jurek, *Die Entwicklung eines schlesischen Regionalbewußtseins*, pp. 36–37.

to Silesia, viewed at that time as part of the Bohemian Crown.[95] The Diocese of Wrocław was yet another point of reference for the common identity of the region's population. The formation of a community based on this affiliation could have served as a strong bonding factor for the region. The coexistence of two platforms of identification for the population of the Odra region, one being the Wrocław Diocese, the other being the territory referred to by the historical name of Silesia, created as a result of the political needs and top-down initiatives of monarchs to develop an effective tool for administration of the Odra region, facilitated the strengthening of bonds within the large community of these two entities.

The terms of office of the Bishops of Wrocław – the Piast dukes – between the close of the 14th century and the first half of the 15th century collided with fundamental changes in the political identity of various groups of inhabitants of the upper- and mid-Odra region. This was a consequence of the efforts of the Kings of Bohemia – the suzerains of Silesian duchies – to treat the province as a unified territory, despite its administrative fragmentation and the threat of Hussite invasion. The first steps in this direction were taken by John of Luxembourg, through his approach to the matter of reclaiming power over the duchies. King John, having described in his charter (see above) the dispute with the dukes of the southern Odra region concerning authority over the Duchy of Racibórz, contended that their greatest error was their demand that the issue be pursued according to the Polish law effective in their duchies. John, however, decided to grant to Nicholas II the Duchy of Racibórz, based on the principles of the feudal law. He justified his decision saying that Nicholas was not subordinate to the Piasts' rule of inheritance, but to the king, who did not apply the Polish law in this area. Disregarding the preferences of Nicholas II's opponents, he decided to resolve this dispute according to the rules of the feudal law.[96] So as to avoid any potential doubts in this respect, he issued a separate charter in which he clearly stated that the issue of Nicholas' power over Racibórz may only be resolved 'more et iure principum Alemanie vassalorum aliorum et non Polonie'.[97] John's firm attitude should come as no surprise – feudal law helped him keep the dukes of the Odra region in check. It also helped him subdue the Duchy of Wrocław,[98] and it was thanks to feudal law that he strengthened his power as a suzerain of the Piasts. The rules imposed by John – as can be seen in the example of the dispute over Racibórz – failed to bring provincial political elites closer together. On the contrary, they may have even deepened the divisions between them, for they enjoyed varying degrees of acceptance by dukes and Piast lines. It would be a tremendous simplification to believe that

[95] See *Statuta capituli ecclesiae cathedralis Wratislaviensis ex anno 1482/1483. Statuty wrocławskiej kapituły katedralnej z roku 1482/1483*, ed. Kazimierz Dola, trans. Norbert Widok, Wrocław-Opole 2004, pp. 2, 4, 6 (pledges to the new bishop, by the new bishop and the members of the Wrocław chapter).

[96] LUBS, vol. 2, No. 2, p. 381.

[97] *Ibidem*, No. 3, p. 384.

[98] See his emphasis on defining the order of the mutual feudal duties of the Wrocław knights when Henry VI was still alive, LUBS, vol. 1, No. 8, pp. 66–67.

they met with a favourable response in the north while an unfavourable reception greeted them in the south. This is mostly evident in the history of the Duchy of Głogów, where the male descendants of Henry of Głogów fought a continual battle over the ducal capital, and later over a portion of it controlled by the King of Bohemia. The hereditary right to the capital of their familial realm was of much higher importance than the obligations towards their formal senior. Meanwhile, to remedy this situation in 1384 Wenceslaus IV handed his portion of Głogów over to the Duke of Cieszyn, Przemysł Noszak. This was a major sensation – the capital of one of the major lines of Silesian rulers was to be controlled by a Piast from outside the Silesian line, a vassal of the King of Bohemia, a politician of great ambitions but one active principally in the southern Odra region and in Bohemia. At the time, he was probably the most outstanding member of the Piast dynasty to have sit on the Silesian throne.[99] His political activity, supported by the king, also unexpectedly brought an end to elites from the north and the south pursuing their political activities in isolation. At the close of 14th century, Noszak was actively involved in the formation of the 'Silesian Union', uniting dukes and cities from different parts of the Odra region to keep the peace in the event of internal conflicts erupting within the Bohemian Crown.

In the second half of the 14th century and at the outset of the 15th century the dukes of the Odra region formed their first unions (a hypothetical union in 1382, and a real one in 1387) and political associations (in 1402).[100] While exhibiting many differences, they all served to advance the common initiatives of dukes, including ones from outside the Piast dynasty with the exception of representatives of the lands of the monarchy – the governors of the Duchies of Świdnica-Jawor and Wrocław.[101] The so-called *landfryd* of 1387, which may have been an extension of the former Union to the lands of Moravia, concerned not only the rulers of Silesia, but also the Margrave of Moravia and the Bishop of Olomuc.[102] The imitation of past links between Silesian and Lusatian cities may indicate that the formation of both *landfryds* was an attempt at finding a broader platform for cooperation between the rulers dependent on the Bohemian king within the borders of the Bohemian Crown, whose territory was constantly shaken by political conflict. Although these activities were not necessarily an expression of the aspiration to strengthen

[99] See Idzi Panic, *Książę cieszyński Przemysław Noszak (ca. 1332/1336–1410). Biografia polityczna*, Cieszyn 1996.

[100] In the face of the lack of original documents confirming the formation of the coalition, scholars base their studies on the findings of Felix Rachfal, *Die Organization der Gesamtstaatsverwaltung Schlesiens vor dem dreissigjährigen Kriege*, Leipzig 1894 (=*Staats- und Socialwissenschaftlische* [sic!] *Forschungen*, ed. Gustav Schmoller, vol. 3o, issue 1), p. 84, footnotes 1–2, partially adopted from the lost manuscript of H. Grotefend.

[101] The coalition of 1389 comprised the Bishop of Wrocław, Dukes Louis of Brzeg, Henry of Lubin, Przemysł and Siemowit of Cieszyn, Conrad II of Oleśnica with his son Conrad III, Ruprecht of Legnica, Henry of Głogów and Henry of Kożuchów, Dukes Nicholas and Przemko of Opava (from a side line of the Přemyslid dynasty) and Ladislaus and Bolko of Opole, *ibidem*, p. 84, footnote 1.

[102] See Veronika Slezáková, *Počátky a vývoj nejstarších moravských landfrýdů z let 1387, 1396, 1405 a 1412*, 'Časopis Matice Moravske', 120 (2001), No. 2, pp. 315–336.

the region's uniformity, they doubtlessly gave rise to the conviction of the dukes that they shared a common cause. Of a much different character was a relationship initiated in 1402, perhaps by Wenceslaus, the Bishop of Wrocław and Duke of Legnica. His aim was to support King Wenceslaus of Luxembourg, whose position was being threatened by his brother, Sigismund. To this end Bishop Wenceslaus joined forces with the Dukes Rupert of Legnica, Przemko of Opava, Bolko, Bernard and Ofka of Opole, Henry of Lubin, John of Oświęcim, Louis of Brzeg and John of Głogów; in an act which went far beyond anything seen in the former *landfryds*, he also entered into partnerships with the governors (*starostas*) of Wrocław, Środa and Namysłów. Most importantly, the Bishop and the Dukes were collectively referred to as '*von denselben gnaden herren und in Slesien herczoge*'.[103] The engagement of all major political actors of the region in a common cause, in spite of them being potential competitors in a battle for dominance of Silesia, was an unprecedented phenomenon. The cooperation of royal governors of duchies, starostas and estates of dependent duchies was a sign of their appreciation of the Bohemian rule and proof of the development of a particular bond between them and that was their relationship with Bohemian Crown. It may be said that in political terms, dukes united by this relationship could be seen as – metaphorically speaking – standing in the middle ground between the level of state and of particular duchies. One important player remained on the outside – the royal governor of the Duchy of Świdnica-Jawor. His views on the political situation in Bohemia were considerably different from those represented by the remaining members of the Silesian elites. Even when faced with the ongoing process of a regional community taking shape within state structures, it was possible to choose not to be a part of it.[104] The response to the internal political shufflings in Bohemia was not a sufficient impulse for the permanent unification of the Odra region's political elites.

As it soon turned out, this impulse would come from the Hussites. The Czechs were increasingly turning against the German-speaking elites connected with the Roman Catholic Church, the royal court and the magnates. This in turn strengthened the sense of insecurity felt by affluent and influential Silesians. For these individuals, the ethnic aspect of the confederation could have been of considerable significance in their evaluation of potential threats from the south. It was not a coincidence that in 1421 the Bishop of Wrocław and dukes from the entire province of Silesia-not only its historical territory-joined forces with the dukes and states of the Reich in a coalition of dukes and knights '*dewtschir czunge*' against the Hussites.[105] In contrast, the inhabitants of the Odra region

[103] LUBS, vol. 1, no. 9, p. 19.

[104] Nonetheless, King Weneclaus was not as considerate as one could expect in this situation. When the battles ended, he instantly deprived the governor of his office on the grounds of him having neglected his duties by refusing to participate in the common initiative of the King's liegemen and officials. For more information on the confederations of cities and dukes between the 14th century and the beginning of the 15th century see Kazimierz Orzechowski, *Ogólnośląskie zgromadzenia stanowe*, pp. 113–119.

[105] *Geschichtsquellen der Hussitenkriege*, ed. Colmar Grünhagen, Breslau 1871 (=Scriptores rerum Silesiacarum, vol. 6), No. 11, p. 8.

were less hasty in forming an alliance to fight the threat. Quite the contrary, during the first two years following the Defenestration of Prague, King Sigismund of Luxembourg was rather trying to apply traditional political mechanisms that had divided the inhabitants of the province. As soon as in November 1420 he sought support in fighting the rebels, but his plea was addressed only to the royal cities of Wrocław and Środa Śląska. In his letter he emphasized the necessity of fulfilling the obligation of faithfulness to the king, and principally to the Bohemian Crown, in the face of the Hussite atrocities inflicted upon Prague.[106] Shortly thereafter, in May of 1421, adhering to the division of his realm into duchies directly subordinate to the king and those based on feudal law, Sigismund gathered a military contingent commanded by the governor Albrecht von Colditz composed of divisions supplied by the Duchy of Wrocław, Świdnica-Jawor and Namysłów; he also called on all those concerned for the fate of Christendom to unify under the command of his paternal uncle, Duke Henry Rumpold of Głogów.[107] This traditional approach – one which encouraged divisions between the inhabitants of the province – to the issue of feudal obligations was completely alien to the Hussites. On 7th June 1421, the Parliament of Bohemia issued an official reprimand to all, without exception, '*illustres princpies et barones, milites, clientes ceterique districtus Slesie civitatum communitates*'. All of them – in the eyes of the authors of the document – owed loyalty and faithfulness to the Bohemian Crown. The act of showing support for King Sigismund and the military atrocities inflicted by the Silesian contingent constituted breaches of feudal contract. The charter made clear reference to a single political elite of the entire 'district of Silesia', obliged in its entirety to show subservience to the abstractly-described Bohemian Crown.[108] In line with this approach, the elites of Silesia (in general), whose formation was encouraged by the political decisions taken by Bohemia, were presented as the subject of a political game. These elites were namely those from the entire territory of the Odra region, which is now regarded as Silesia. This interpretation of the political situation was met with strong protest by the other side of the conflict. The Congress of Zgorzelec, which took place on 24th June that very same year and saw the formation of an alliance between the dukes of the Holy Roman Empire against the Hussites, was attended by representatives of the Silesian dukes, cities (royal) and state – meaning the nobility of the royal duchies. Firstly, Louis of Brzeg and Bernard of Opole, who appeared at the congress, were presented as representatives of the entire community of Silesian dukes. Nonetheless, a clear mark of the dual nature of the province was that this did not contradict the fact that they were appearing on behalf of all the princes. Secondly, the distinction between the representatives of the royal portion of Silesia and the dukes was observed during the entire event.[109] Royal cities were bound to

[106] *Ibidem*, No. 2, pp. 1–2.
[107] *Ibidem*, Nos 4–5, pp. 3–4.
[108] *Ibidem*, No. 6, p. 4.
[109] *Ibidem*, No. 8-9, pp. 4-5.

address a plea for the king to include them in the alliance.[110] The distinct situation of duchies directly subordinate to the king was highlighted by the fact that, having been granted special privileges by the king they were simultaneously obliged to defend the kingdom against the Hussites.[111]

In the end, the forces driving cooperation between members of the Silesian elite were stronger than the forces dividing them. Sigismund's failures in combat with the Hussites forced them to seek solutions other than those put forward by the king. The Zgorzelec alliance may have been of vital importance for the formation of the military alliance in Grodków (18th September 1421) by the Bishop of Wrocław, representatives of the Duchies of Wroclaw and Świdnica and dukes from the northern and southern parts of the Odra region.[112] Almost all local rulers joined the initiative, save for those of the northern-most duchies of Głogów and Żagań, who were actually major players in Silesian politics. Independently of their formal and legal status (hereditary Piast dukes, Duke-Bishop, representatives of royal cities simultaneously serving as capitals of duchies directly dependent on the Bohemian king) all of them became partners. The growing closeness of their cooperation was induced by the rules of the union formed in 1427 in Strzelin, itself a continuation of the activity of the union from 1421. Among numerous detailed rules introduced on that occasion we find, most notably, that the union would continue its activity and protect its members in the event of interregnum. Another entry holds that all potential disputes between members of the union were to be resolved solely by the union court.[113]

This growing integration of the actors on the Silesian political scene is reflected in the content of an agreement from 1427 between all the dukes and representatives of royal duchies on one side, and representatives of Bohemian nobility supporting the king on the other. It marked the formation of an equal partnership between representatives of the whole of Silesia and of Bohemia. They did not, however, forget to emphasize the complex internal political structure of Silesia and the issue of the independence of the two groups of Silesian rulers. The former was accomplished by separating the bishop and dukes from the residents of hereditary duchies ('lantman und stete'). The latter was indicated by the representatives of the dukes – Bishop Conrad of Oleśnica and Duke Przemysł of Cieszyn, both representing the body of 'ffürsten [sic!] uss der Slessien'. In addition, the document contains a complementary remark on the organization of an annual presentation of military forces, which is supposed to be two separate presentations of two contingents. The first one was composed of troops led by 'die ffursten nedewenig gesessin', that is Bishop Conrad and Duke Louis II of Brzeg. The other is made up of forces under the command of 'die fursten oberwenig gesessin', that is Duke Przemysł of

[110] *Ibidem*, No. 13, p. 9.
[111] *Ibidem*, No. 12, p. 8, No. 14, p. 9.
[112] *Ibidem*, No. 17, pp. 10–11.
[113] *Ibidem*, No. 72, p. 52.

Cieszyn and Duke Bernard of Niemodlin, who used his family title of 'Duke of Opole'.[114] Although the confederation was rather short-lived, the perpetual threat to the entire Odra region fostered a growing sense of a shared fate among the politically active elites in the confederated realms. Taking collective action to protect the interests of the residents of the Odra region led to changes in the official titles of particular rulers. Princes from the south, who had formerly been designated as Silesian dukes only unofficially in the company of other rulers, were more frequently referred to using this title as the dukes of Silesia, such as 'Bernhard dux Slesie heres Opolinensis' in 1432, to give but one example.[115]

Based on the preferences of political elites, one may come to the conclusion that a conviction developed which said that cooperation within the community of the entire region of Silesia (not only within the borders of duchies) brought extensive benefits. However, on the other hand, one should not disregard the fact that the detachment of the political elites of the so-called old Silesia and Opole region remained a salient issue. In 1428, a separatist alliance with Hussites was formed by the Dukes of Opole, Racibórz, Cieszyn, Ziębice and Oława against the will of the remaining rulers of the province. In reaction to this subversive act, a deeply resentful Bishop Conrad wrote that there existed 'the first group of Silesian dukes' and 'the second group of Silesian dukes'. His division mirrors the composition of the two previously-mentioned contingents presented during the military celebrations of the union of Strzelin. Although at that point the rulers differed in terms of their decisions, Bishop Conrad still saw them as part of a uniform, Silesian community.[116] Political cooperation between Silesian elites in the period of the Hussite Wars would not have been possible if not for prior experiences in forming a confederation, which guaranteed the internal security of the duchies. However, at the same time the historical political divisions of Silesia were strengthened by the royal apparatus' use of these experiences to manage the lands that were subservient to Bohemia. It was only the Hussite factor, which threatened the foundations of the entire political structure and the physical existence of the elites of the Odra region, and which could not be removed by the king through the use of traditional methods, that forced almost all the actors on the political scene to form a coalition. The eventual success of the initiative, although not free from major military defeats, had the potential to encourage the formation of other similar communities focused on achieving particular political objectives.

In this context, there is nothing surprising about the fact that the 15th century saw considerable growth in the number of confederations comprising both dukes and ducal states. This was coupled by significant growth in the frequency with which congresses of representatives of Silesian political elites were held (dukes, nobility and representatives of the cities). Between 1378 and 1469 the number of such assemblies that took place in the Odra region was 129, and as many as 117 of them occurred in 1419–69. In the 14th

[114] *Ibidem*, No. 73, pp. 53–54.
[115] *Ibidem*, No. 161, pp. 111–112.
[116] *Ibidem*, No. 93, p. 70.

century there were, however, no assemblies whose participants included both representatives of cities and dukes. It was not until the beginning of the 15th century that this situation changed. From 1419, these assemblies were supplemented by representatives of knights from the Crown-dependent duchies. Kazimierz Orzechowski demonstrated that at least 50 such assemblies took place in 1402–69, the majority of which gathered selected Silesian dukes.[117] These assemblies, closely connected with confederations of the time, not only fostered but also proved the intentionality of the cooperation between representatives of provincial political elites, which was most frequently independent of – but not contrary to – the monarch's will.

Nonetheless, these assemblies did not constitute an institutionalized form of cooperation between dukes and representatives of the remaining participants in provincial political life. They were organized intermittently, and their compositions reflected particular aims. At the same time, this type of activity was supplemented by political alliances between dukes, the nobility and cities. It is not always possible to clearly understand the range of notions used to designate the concept of 'Silesia'. One good example is the petition submitted to the pope in 1459 by dukes and 'Silesian' states full of details on the genealogy of dukes and the dependence of their duchies on the Bohemian Crown. In this document, the term 'Silesia' refers to territories that were incorporated to the Bohemian Crown. However, the geographic scope of this term is designated by the city of Wrocław, Duchy of Świdnica-Jawor and the realms of Duke Henry of Głogów, Balthasar and John of Żagań, Conrad the White of Oleśnica and Frederick of Legnica. It is impossible to say definitively whether the authors used the name 'Silesia' in reference to the entire territory of the Bohemia-dependent Odra region or rather in reference to what we now call Lower Silesia. Based on the fact that these political players had strong connections with the entire Wrocław clergy, it is highly probable that in referring to Silesia the authors meant something more than a relatively small territory in the mid-Odra region. In another charter issued for the same purpose, Silesia is viewed as a province, a land of the Bohemian Crown – but even in this case it would be hard to determine its exact borders.[118] What is certain is that the charter of 1459 (cited above) presents a highly controversial idea floated by Silesian dukes which was the outcome of the alleged relationship between Lestek and Julia, the daughter of Julius Caesar.[119] Bringing up their alleged close genealogical bond with Rome was an idea which strongly appealed to the rulers who sought the pope's support in their conflict with George of Poděbrady. For our study, this thread is significant in that it confirms the decisive and intentional step

[117] K. Orzechowski, *Ogólnośląskie zgromadzenia stanowe*, pp. 127–130, 132–133.

[118] *Politische Correspondenz Breslaus 1454-1483*, Breslau 1873 (=Scriptores Rerum Silesiacarum, vol. 8), No. 19, pp. 16–18, also *ibidem*, no. 20, p. 21, where Silesia is viewed as part of a heretic Bohemia devoted to the Church: 'Slesiam saniorem regni [Bohemie – P.W.] partem tam in principibus nobilibus civitatibus et plebe gloriosiorem'.

[119] *Ibidem*, No 19, p. 17, with the caveat that Silesia never renounced its Church.

towards the Silesian rulers being united by not only temporary political interests but also by broader ideological considerations.

The grass-roots initiative of dukes and hereditary duchies to unite all the participants in regional politics into one community gained the support of the king. In 1466, during the conflict between Wrocław and King George of Poděbrady, the chancellery of the latter prepared a document in which the king's supporters – Henry of Głogów, Conrad IX the Black and Conrad the White of Oleśnica, Nicholas I of Opole, Przemysł of Oświęcim and Frederick I of Legnica and Brzeg – pledged allegiance to the king as the dukes of Silesia, which they viewed as part of the Bohemian Crown: 'nobilissimus Slesie principatus incorporatus est'.[120] It must be mentioned that the idea of incorporating Silesia into the Bohemian Crown was actually imposed on the dukes by the king, but they did not oppose it. Eventually, on the initiative of King Matthias Corvinus in 1469, Wrocław saw the organization of the first joint assembly of Silesian states, traditionally viewed as the first Silesian *sejm*. Matthias Corvinus' objective was to centralize power over the province, and thereby enhance the sense of political community felt by its residents.[121] He also promoted modifications to official language by consistently applying a description of the political realities indicated by the term 'Silesia' that defined the scope of his power as encompassing the entire territory of the Odra region. All political subjects, both the dukes and the ducal states subordinate to the king, were becoming part of the Silesian community.[122] At the same time, with respect to tradition, Corvinus introduced the notion of the so-called 'both Silesias': the old one, called Lower Silesia and a new one named Upper Silesia.[123] He gave his consent to Upper Silesia for individual acceptance of him to become the sovereign of the province in 1479.[124]

One attempt to create a common political space to bring all the participants in political life closer than ever before produced mixed results. On the one hand, confederations encouraged by the king advocated the formation of a group of rulers who would collectively call themselves 'the Dukes of Silesia'.[125] In 1479, the Bishop of Wrocław together with the Dukes of Legnica, Racibórz, Opole and Ujazd on paying homage to Mathias introduced themselves as the representatives of all 'Silesians', in contrast to the states of Hungary and Bohemia. Silesian elites were supposed to be partners of the king on equal terms with the states of his two 'crowns'.[126] Their stand referred to

[120] *Politische Correspondenz Breslaus im Zeitalter Georgs von Podiebrad*, ed. Hermann Markgraf, Breslau 1874 (=Scriptores Rerum Silesiacarum, vol. 9), no. 333, pp. 192 (the passage on the incorporation of Silesia), 195 (the list of dukes).

[121] See H. Manikowska, *Świadomość regionalna*, p. 258.

[122] LUBS, vol. 1, No. 16, p. 31, containing the list of dukes from the entire Odra region and 'Silesian' states accepting the agreement between Matthias and Ladislaus of 1479.

[123] In a document containing the conditions of the Peace of Olomouc (1479) concluded between Mathias Corvinus and Ladislaus Jagiellon, the Hungarian king is referred to as '*dux Slezie*', but his properties are referred to as 'in utraque Slesia', *ibidem*, No. 13, pp. 21–22.

[124] *Ibidem*, No. 18, pp. 32–33.

[125] LUBS, vol. 2, No. 80, p. 96.

[126] LUBS, vol. 1, No. 15, p. 30.

the historical claims of the Czech states of the Bohemian Crown against Silesians at the initial stage of the Hussite Wars. It proved the existence of the Silesian community – including the territories located above the upper Odra region – as a hierarchical group aware of its political independence from other major political actors in one kingdom (Hungary) or another (Bohemia). King Mathias also confirmed this in 1479 by presenting the Bishop of Wrocław, the dukes and the representatives of the Duchies of Wrocław and Świdnica-Jawor as both parts of and 'supplements' to 'land und stete der ganczen Slesien'. The united body of Silesia was a political creation comparable to Lusatia. Its politically active members were responsible for making vital decisions on behalf of the entire community.[127]

The reign of Mathias may be regarded as a breakthrough in the long-term formation of the community of Silesians and their means of expression. The common Parliament of Silesia organized on Mathias' initiative was convened until the mid-16th century at least once a year, but usually much more often – on average 3.5 times a year.[128] At the same time, the states of the Duchy of Świdnica-Jawor persistently opposed the policy to unify the province, and even Mathias Corvinus himself seemed to accept their separatist attitude towards Silesia.[129] The confederation formed immediately following his death for maintaining peace in the province did not include all the political players and representatives of authorities. In April 1490, the Bishop of Wrocław, the Dukes of Oleśnica, Ziębice, Legnica, Racibórz, Cieszyn, Ujazd, 'landen und steten der furstenthumer' of Wrocław, Środa Śląska, Namysłów, Świdnica-Jawor, as well as Hans Haugwitz, the Lord of Syców and his brother Hynko, the Lord of Wąsosz presented a united political front. Out of this group only Bishop John, Dukes Conrad X the White of Oleśnica, Henry I the Older of Ziębice and Hans Haugwitz appeared in the charter in person, and only Conrad used the title of 'herczog in der Slezien'.[130] As we see, the initiative was not participated in by every member of the region's highest political class. What is more, its active members decided to reintroduce the division between the dukes of 'proper Silesia' and 'the rest' from the south of the region. This happened independently of all the political mechanisms and new forms introduced by the late King Mathias. When another confederation was formed a few months later between the states of Moravia and representatives of Silesia in order to secure a consensus election of the new king, it comprised the entire political community of Moravia but only selected Silesian duchies, who declared through emissaries their willingness to participate in the arrangement.

[127] In this case, the voluntary payment of a special tax to the king, who in exchange promised not to introduce any other taxes, and charge his subjects with respect to the privileges of bishops, dukes, duchies, country and states of Silesia, *ibidem*, No. 17, p. 32.

[128] K. Orzechowski, *Ogólnośląskie zgromadzenia stanowe*, pp. 154–163.

[129] In 1474, Stefan Zapolya was named 'supremus capitaneus Slesienecnon in Sweydnicz Jawer et advocates Lusatie superioris etc.', LUBS, vol. 2, no. 70, p. 72, which actually made the Duchy of Świdnica-Jawor equal to Silesia in terms of status – a similar act was performed in the 1320s by the sons of Henry I (III) in reference to the lands of Głogów.

[130] LUBS, vol. 1, No. 20, pp. 33–34.

And, curiously enough, these duchies were not presented as representatives of the entire province of Silesia. On the contrary, it had been clearly stated that one side was composed of all the inhabitants ('alle inwoner') of the Margrave of Moravia, and the other of all the inhabitants of 'der genanter furstenthumer in der Slesie'.[131] The existence of Silesia as a certain self-contained whole also including the south-eastern territories is an irrefutable fact, but the concept of political unity above all ducal divisions was still beyond reach.

This did not prevent the royal authorities from treating the inhabitants of the entire Odra region as a uniform political community, though at times divided into Lower and Upper Silesia.[132] In 1498, on the occasion of paying homage to King Ladislaus dukes were titled 'von gotes gnaden herzeoge in Slezien', independently of the location of their realms within the borders of the province – and what was equally important – independently of their dynastic background.[133] This corresponded with the efforts of the royal authorities to centralize Silesia's political system,[134] although resistance to this could have influenced the adoption of changes at the local level. Later in the charter confirming the homage of 1498, alongside the aforementioned dukes, the pledge was also made by the Wrocław city councillors as the holders of the title of royal governors of the Duchy – but the group of delegates of provincial authorities did not include representatives of the Duchy of Świdnica-Jawor. The unique status of this duchy in respect of the remaining provincial lands was again accented. At the same time, although the office of the governor of Silesia introduced by Corvinus in 1474 was reintroduced by Ladislaus Jagiellon in 1498, from that time on it was only associated with the person of the current duke of Silesia.[135] This decision was ideologically consistent with the principles of the 14th-century privileges granted by the Luxembourg dynasty to the Duchies of Wrocław and Świdnica-Jawor, and allowed for the assumption of the office of governor of the duchy by nobles who originated from these duchies (*terrigena*). However, the 14th century privileges reflected the strength of the influence wielded by local elites, who pushed the aspect of 'regionality' within the borders of a particular duchy.[136] At the end of the 15th century the notion of region was to refer to the entire Silesia.

This was, however, rather a long-term target, for one of many problems on the way was reluctance towards common political activity on a provincial scale. One expression of this was the reluctance of the Duchies of Świdnica-Jawor and Opava to acknowledge the competences of the ducal court appointed by royal privilege in 1498 for the entire Silesia. This resistance was durable and effective, and it waned no sooner than in the modern era. Nonetheless, the very activity of the court, just like the activity of the Parliament of Silesia, laid the groundwork for cooperation between the Silesian rulers

[131] *Ibidem*, No. 22, p. 36.
[132] *Ibidem*, No. 24, p. 39.
[133] *Ibidem*, No. 27, p. 48.
[134] See the article by Marcin Pauk and Ewa Wółkiewicz earlier in this volume.
[135] LUBS, vol. 1, No. 28, p. 49.
[136] *Ibidem*, No. 9, p. 68.

and their collective influence – within a defined political framework – on the royal administration.[137] The existence of a Silesian-wide political community ceased to be part of the royal agenda, but became a permanent element of the Silesian public sphere.[138] This was so in spite of the fact that the interests of particular duchies remained dearer to those involved in politics than did the 'Silesian interest'. At the close of the Middle Ages the regional dimension of the Silesian community's political activity was still being pulled in opposite directions by the idea of Silesia as the legacy of Henry I the Bearded and St. Jadwiga (which was gradually losing strength), by the concept of Silesia as a community of the Bohemian king's subjects populating the entire Odra region and, finally, by the sense of identity of the people of particular duchies – both feudal and hereditary.

The multidimensionality of the political activity of the dukes of the Odra region and other representatives of the medieval political elite prevents us from positing an evolutionary model of the formation of the region's community in the context of top-down administrative forces (the King of Bohemia or the states of the Bohemian Crown) or of grass-roots initiatives by dukes and Silesian states. It seems, however, that it was the activity of the dukes from the Piast dynasty that was vital for the formation of the unique network of social relations responsible for the creation of – a fragile and contested – community of Silesia at the close of the 15th century. Firstly, it was their activity in the areas of ideology and practical authority that maintained social awareness of the functioning of the community of Silesia in spite of tendencies to emphasize the significance of particular duchies. It was also their activity that helped overcome the tendency to create confederations at the level of groups of duchies (mostly hereditary ones), and within the borders of urban communities. Finally, it was the collective activity of dukes during the Silesian assemblies and confederations that spurred the formation of a community linking two formerly separate groups of elites from the southern and mid-Odra regions. The results of studies done on the selection of appropriate partners for dynastic marriages of Piasts controlling both parts of the Odra region particularly draw our attention to the second half of the 14th century. It was in that time when Silesian Piasts were most keen to marry their closest, Silesian relatives. Both before as well as after that period the domination of external connections in the matrimonial policy of Odra-region Piasts is conspicuous (see Table 1). The strengthening of their cooperation in many areas beyond the borders of particular duchies observed between the second half of the 14th century and the mid-15th century did not mean that the strength of separatist social tendencies, including that of political elites or particular duchies, was disregarded. At the close

[137] It was not a coincidence that King Ladislaus had to justify in 1504 in front of the ducal court his breach of the rules of the great privilege of 1498, LUBS, vol. 1, No. 31, pp. 53–54.

[138] It is well illustrated by the privilege issued by King Ladislaus in November of 1498 for the entire Silesia at the request of Duke Casimir of Cieszyn and Sigismund Kurzbach, the owner of the town Żmigród, who represented 'geistliche und wertliche fursten, pralaten, herren, ritterschaft, mannschafft', who in turn expressed the will 'stetten und gemeine die inwonner unnser ober und nider Slesischen lanndt', LUBS, vol. 1, No. 28, p. 49.

of the Middle Ages, the Silesian community which developed as a result of political activity may be described as a dynamic network that was extremely sensitive to external impacts. This network's coherence gained strength in favourable conditions, but its constituent groups rarely acted in line with the idea of a regional community comprising the entire upper and mid-Odra region. The so-called local factor was no less attractive than the sense of regional community.

Table 5. Marriages of the members of the Piast dynasty ruling the Odra region in 1201–1500

	1201–1250			1251–1300			1301–1350			1351–1400			1401–1450			1451–1500		
	With Piast descendants of Boleslaus I the Tall	With Piast descendants of Mieszko I the Tangle-foot	Other	With Piast descendants of Boleslaus I the Tall	With Piast descendants of Mieszko I the Tangle-foot	Other	With Piast descendants of Boleslaus I the Tall	With Piast descendants of Mieszko I the Tangle-foot	Other	With Piast descendants of Boleslaus I the Tall	With Piast descendants of Mieszko I the Tangle-foot	Other	With Piast descendants of Boleslaus I the Tall	With Piast descendants of Mieszko I the Tangle-foot	Other	With Piast descendants of Boleslaus I the Tall	With Piast descendants of Mieszko I the Tangle-foot	Other
Wrocław line			8		1	4			3									
Legnica line						4	1	2	3	2	3	5	1	2	3			1
Głogow line			3			3	3	2	7	2	2	1	1	1	4	0	2	8
Świdnica line						3	1	1	8		1	3			2			
Oleśnica line								2	1			1	1		7			2
Opole line			2	1		7	4		6	2	3	12	2	1	3		1	
Cieszyn line							1		5	3	1	3	2	1	5	1	4	9

From Kazimierz Jasiński, *Rodowód Piastów śląskich*, vol. 1–3, Wrocław 1973–1977.

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The multi-ethnic character of medieval Silesian society and its influence on the region's cohesion (12th–15th centuries)

Abstract:

From the end of the 13th century the number of German settlers rapidly grew in what had been a mostly Polish-speaking community of Silesians. Piotr Górecki indicated that the presence of newcomers from Germany in the Piast realm led to an assimilation that did not involve the complete adoption of the norms of one ethnic group by another. On the contrary, those involved in these relations acknowledged the differences between the two groups. At the same time, in order to avoid conflict it was important to gain knowledge about the other group, thus enabling the stable coexistence of the two communities in the same territory. However, this well-proven hypothesis leaves open the question of how this dynamic process affected regional cohesion. Did it lead to the strengthening of local communities by forcing their members to focus on cooperation in the local context, ignoring the broader regional setting? Or perhaps, on the contrary, the need to mediate between groups of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds stretched beyond local boundaries?

Dynamically changing ethnic relations in Silesia between the 13th and 15th centuries had a mixed impact on the cohesion of the regional community. This diversity ultimately strengthened the sense of the region's separateness from its neighbours. A common administrative framework set up in the 15th century did not, in the eyes of contemporaries, overshadow the specificity of the multiethnicity, multilingualism and inter-ethnic relationships within Silesian society. These were perceived as unique when contrasted with similar phenomena taking place in neighbouring countries. At the local level, the possibility to make reference to the situation in the region as a whole when resolving ethnic conflicts sustained awareness of the importance of the regional dimension in the proper functioning of the local community. This was not a static system. Silesians demonstrated diverse perceptions and attitudes towards multiethnicity and the impact of this phenomenon on the cohesion of various communities operating within the region was diverse as well. A presentation of these phenomena in the context of time and in the pragmatic perspective of the sources describing them paves the way for a new approach towards Silesian multiethnicity as a dynamic phenomenon which does not necessarily take one course throughout the entire territory.

Keywords:

multiethnicity, multilingualism, inter-ethnic relations

In a 2003 article, Piotr Górecki indicated that the presence of newcomers from Germany in the territory of the Piast realm in the 13th century among the much larger Polish-speaking community led to a particular kind of assimilation. This assimilation did not involve complete adoption of the customs and norms of one ethnic group by another, which would result in a unique union of the two and the emergence of a new ethnic community. On the contrary, Górecki opined that these contacts, which required management of conflict situations, made those who were involved in these relations realize the differences

between the two groups. At the same time, in order to avoid conflict it was important to gain knowledge about the other group, thus enabling stable coexistence of the two communities in the same territory.[1] As we shall see, these arguments, largely based on the analysis of the *Henryków Book*, describe the unique character of a certain stage of contacts between different ethnic groups in the society of Silesia. However, they leave open the question of how this dynamic process affected regional cohesion? Did it lead to the strengthening of local communities by forcing their members to focus on cooperation in the local context, ignoring the broader regional setting? Or perhaps, on the contrary, the need to mediate between groups of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds stretched beyond local boundaries? This might have paved the way for members of certain groups to interpret the elements comprising ethnic background (law, customs) from the perspective of the situation as observed in the whole region. Knowledge acquired this way might then be used in local contexts.

Between the close of the 12th century and the beginning of the 16th century, the upper and middle Odra region became a destination of large-scale migration for newcomers from the Holy Roman Empire. The population living in this area was confronted with new definitions of acceptable cultural behaviour, which from the second half of the 13th century were promoted by local elites as the optimal behaviour for the functioning of the local community. Migrants arriving in Silesia did not constitute a homogeneous community in terms of culture or language. At the close of the 12th century and during the 13th century, despite the diversity of immigrants from German-speaking countries of the Holy Roman Empire, Silesia was also a destination for speakers of Romance languages.[2] Moreover, the presence of Jewish communities in the fortresses, and later in the towns, further diversified the local society.[3] Despite the linguistic, cultural and, to a lesser extent, religious diversity, not necessarily corresponding to social divisions resulting from profession, state, place of residence or social function, all residents were united in their sharing some sort of dependence on the power of local dukes and their officials. Historical traditions and political activity associated with the Piast dynasty created a vision of the regional unity extending beyond local divisions. In such a situation, did the diverse 'ethnicity' of the Odra region's medieval inhabitants affect regional cohesion through the end of the Middle Ages? What is even more important, did the 'national identity' of the Czechs, Poles or Germans that was formed between the 12th and the 14th centuries

[1] Piotr Górecki, *Assimilation, Resistance, and Ethnic Group Formation in Medieval Poland: A European Paradigm?*, [in:] *Das Reich und Polen. Paralellen, Interaktionen und Formen der Akkulturation im hohen und späten Mittelalter*, eds Thomas Wünsch, Alexander Patschovsky, Ostfildern 2003 (=Vorträge und Forschungen, vol. 59), pp. 447–476.

[2] For basic data concerning source references see Benedykt Zientara, *Waloons in Silesia in the 12th and 13th Centuries*, 'Quaestiones Medii Aevi', 2 (1977), pp. 127–150.

[3] See Ludwig Oelsner, *Schlesische Juden im Mittelalter*, Breslau 1854; Bernhard Brilling, *Die jüdischen Gemeinden Mittelschlesiens. Entstehung und Geschichte*, Stuttgart 1972 (=Studia Delitzschiana, vol. 14).

have any influence on the functioning of the community of the area's inhabitants?[4] Benedykt Zientara pointed out in 1977 that in the Middle Ages national identity was shaped through accepting a vision of the past which was transmitted within a group and contained the idea of the origins of a community. A community built in this way was bonded by a unity, or at least similarity, of customs. The crucial factor, however, in differentiating tribal identity, which did not refer to the relationship of the community with a specific area, from national identity, was the commitment to a specific territory, the homeland. The sense of separateness from the social environment established on those foundations was closely connected with the sense of a community of communication, concerning in particular the language. In demonstrating their affiliation with such a group, both its members and outsiders used a name which, in its appropriate forms, designated the language, territory and people living there. The determining factor for the formation and sustainment of the cohesion of such a group was the functioning of a centre of power whose sovereignty extended over the entire group, or at least over its ideologically critical part, and the use of the concept of an ethnic community for political purposes. Medieval national identity differed from the modern concept in its range, relating merely to a small group of political elites.[5]

This description of a 'national' community in the Middle Ages could equally apply to a regional community. Inasmuch, however, as the people inhabiting a region developed a tradition that emphasized their exclusive relationship with the territory as the indigenous people of that land, they used the collective term for all residents, while being aware of belonging to a larger political body or ethnic community. In the medieval Odra region the situation became complicated as a result of the aforementioned migrations

[4] Cf. František Graus, *Die Bildung eines Nationalbewußtseins im mittelalterlichen Böhmen*, 'Historica. Les sciences historiques en Tschécoslovaquie', 13 (1966), p. 5–49; Aleksander Gieysztor, *Więź narodowa i regionalna w polskim średniowieczu*, [in:] *Polska dzielnicowa i zjednoczona*, Warszawa 1972, pp. 9–36; Rainer Christoph Schwinges, *'Primäre' und 'sekundäre' Nation. Nationalbewusstsein und sozialer Wandel im mittelalterlichen Böhmen*, [in:] *Europa Slavica – Europa Orientalis. Festschrift für Herbert Ludat zum 70. Geburtstag*, eds Klaus-Detlev Grothusen, Karl Zernack, Berlin 1980, pp. 490–532; Anežka Merhoutová, Dušan Třeštík, *Ideové puvody v českém umění 12. století*, Praha 1985, pp. 47–81; Jerzy Strzelczyk, *Auf der Suche nach der nationalen Identität im Mittelalter. Der Fall Polen*, [in:] *Das europäische Mittelalter im Spannungsbogen des Vergleichs. Zwanzig internationale Beiträge zu Praxis, Problemen und der historischen Perspektiven Komparatistik,* ed. Michael Borgolte, Berlin 2001 (=Europa im Mittelalter, vol. 1), pp. 359–369; František Šmahel, *Idea národa v husitských Čechách*, Praha 2000 (2nd edition). Issues concerning the vision of history promoted in 12th–14th century historiographies shaping medieval nations were synthetically presented by Norbert Kersken, *Geschichtsschreibung im Europa der 'nationes'. Nationalgeschichtliche Gesamtdarstellungen im Mittelalter*, Köln/Weimar/Wien 1995 (=Münstersche Historische Forschungen, vol. 8).

[5] See Benedykt Zientara, *Struktury narodowe średniowiecza. Próba analizy terminologii przedkapitalistycznych form świadomości narodowej*, 'Kwartalnik Historyczny', 84 (1977), pp. 287–311; *idem*, *Świt narodów europejskich. Powstawanie świadomości narodowej na obszarze Europy pokarolińskiej*, Warsaw 1985, pp. 9–28 (German translation: *idem*, *Frühzeit der europäischen Nationen. Die Entstehung von Nationalbewusstsein im nachkarolingischen Europa*, trans. Jürgen Heyde, preface by Klaus Zernack, Osnabrück 1997 (=Klio in Polen, vol. 1)); *idem*, *Świadomość narodowa w Europie Zachodniej w średniowieczu. Powstanie i mechanizmy zjawiska*, [in:] *Państwo, naród, stany w świadomości wieków średnich. Pamięci Benedykta Zientary (1929–1983)*, eds Aleksander Gieysztor, Sławomir Gawlas, Warsaw 1990, pp. 11–26.

and settlement of migrants alongside members of the existing Polish-speaking community. In the course of the 13th and the 14th centuries, migrations across central and eastern Europe strengthened the sense of ethnic-national identity of the residents of the various kingdoms and border regions. A similar situation, negatively affecting the cohesion of the regional community, should also be considered in respect of the inhabitants of the medieval Odra region. Wojciech Mrozowicz in the chapter on regional identity indicates that the literature on Silesian history reflects a sense shared by the residents of Silesia that they belonged to a community broader than the regional one, linked through a common history, and the resulting political consequences for the present. In the case of this study, apart from the hypothetical national bond connecting the residents of the Odra region, it is also necessary to take into account ethnic bonds, meaning a community defined in terms of common language, customs and laws, leaving open the question concerning the nature of its members' territorial frames of reference.[6] Such a distinction between national and ethnic community becomes especially important in the case of a community formed by multiple groups whose members speak different languages and observe different laws, and yet indicate the same area as their territory in geographical and cultural terms. In our case, this territory is the Odra region, called Silesia. However, as we shall see further on, in most cases it is impossible to prove what form of relationship with the 'homeland', if there was any, was seen as characteristic of the communities inhabiting Silesia and perceived as ethnic groups.

The discussion about the role of ethnic issues in the history of Silesia has so far been determined by deliberations taking place in medieval studies of the 19th- and 20th-centuries, which on the one hand have concerned the roots of Silesia's German character, while on the other hand have focused on the origin of the 'separation' of Silesians from the Polish national community. Nowadays, both of these trends can be regarded as anachronistic. In this debate, historians applied the concept of the modern nation living in a unitarian state, although they were studying social phenomena taking place between the 12th and 15th centuries, when the organization of societies was dominated by polycentric structures, multi-faceted relationships between social groups differentiated in terms of law.[7] At the same time it cannot be denied that the problems indicated by our

[6] From the abundant literature on ethnic bonds in the Middle Ages, with an emphasis on the role of language and customs, but also on the function of oral and written narratives as reinforcing a sense of bond, we shall quote Patrick J. Geary, *Before France and Germany: The Creation and Transformation of the Merovingian World*, p. 53 (=New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), Walter Pohl, *Die Germanen*, Munich 2000, pp. 7, 72–78, as well as the comments of Stephen J. Harris introducing issues of ethnicity in the context of early medieval literature, *Race and Ethnicity in Anglo-Saxon Literature*, New York/London 2003 (=Studies in medieval history and culture, vol. 24), pp. 7–10.

[7] For a comparative study on issues related to the migration of settlers from the Holy Roman Empire to the east and the social changes thus caused see the articles in *Historiographical Approaches to Medieval Colonization of East Central Europe. A Comparative Analysis against the Background of Other European Interethnic Colonization Processes in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jan M. Piskorski, Boulder/New York 2002 (=Columbia University Press. East European Monographs, vol. 611). The older German and Polish literature is presented in the volume *Deutsche Ostforschung und polnische Westforschung im Spannungs-*

predecessors played an important role in the history of the community of Silesia. As has already been pointed out, between the last quarter of the 12th century and the middle of the 14th century, the arrival of a large number of migrants from the Holy Roman Empire to Silesia led to a great cultural change. In the period between the time when the dukes of the Piast dynasty started the broad economic reconstruction of their lands (the twilight of the 12th century), and the emergence of Silesia as one province under the rule of the Kings of Bohemia (the second half of the 15th century), the language of the newcomers dominated communication between the residents of the Odra region. This was brought about by the large-scale establishment of towns and villages following western European legal models, which began in the second half of the 13th century and saw significant participation of settlers from the Holy Roman Empire. Over several decades they had come to form an elite of power and wealth in local communities, especially in urban areas. At the same time, they maintained their own separate culture.[8] On the other hand, the knights, who had been increasingly migrating to the courts of the Silesian dukes since the mid-13th century, upheld their own customs despite their ties to local elites. What is more, by adopting these customs and language as the model of court life, the dukes created conditions conducive to gradual adoption of the German language and the behaviour of the arrived knights as the standard for all Silesian knights.[9]

Although the official language used by the Silesian elites of court, knights and burghers until the close of the 14th century was Latin, from the beginning of the 14th century the German language was used with growing frequency.[10] In the 15th century, German was used almost as often as Latin as a language of urban historiography,[11] although, in contrast to the official nature of Latin, it served mostly purposes of dissemination. The move away from Polish in written communication at that time in Silesia points to a specific division of its community. This division did not stem from

feld von Wissenschaft und Politik. Disziplinen im Vergleich, eds Jan M. Piskorski, Jürgenn Hackmann, Rudolf Jaworski, Osnabrück 2002.

[8] A collection of more recent publications concerning city location with the German law in Poland is presented in *Rechtsstadtgründungen im mittelalterlichen Polen*, ed. Eduard Mühle, Köln 2011 (=Städteforschung A 81) containing articles on Silesia by Mateusz Goliński, Stanisław Rosik and Rościsław Żerelik. For a review of the studies see Marta Młynarska-Kaletynowa, *O procesach lokacyjnych miast w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej*, [in:] *Procesy lokacyjne miast w Europie środkowo-wschodniej. Materiały z konferencji międzynarodowej w Lądku Zdroju, 28th–29th October, 2002*, eds Cezary Buśko, Mateusz Goliński, Barbara Krukiewicz, Wrocław 2006 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, no. 2985), pp. 9–17.

[9] See Tomasz Jurek, *Die Migration deutscher Ritter*, pp. 243–276, *idem*, *Vom Rittertum zum Adel*, pp. 61–67, both publications refer to earlier published literature.

[10] See Tomasz Jurek, *Die Urkundensprache im mittelalterlichen Schlesien*, [in:] *La langue des actes*, ed. Olivier Guyotjeannin, digital publication, address: http://elec.enc.sorbonne.fr/CID2003/jurek, accessed on 5th February 2013.

[11] Volker Honemann, *Lateinische und volkssprachliche Geschichtsschreibung im Spätmittelalter. Zur Arbeitsweize des Chronisten Peter Eschenloer aus Breslau*, 'Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters', 52 (1996), pp. 617-628 and *idem*, [in:] V. Hoenmann, *Literaturlandschaften. Schriften zur deutschsprachigen Literatur im Osten des Reiches*, eds Rudolf Suntrup, Maryvonne Hagby, Franziska Küenzlen, Nine Miedema, Friedel H. Roolfs, Frankfurt am Main 2008 (=Medieval to Early Modern Culture. Kultureller Wandel vom Mittelalter zur Frühen Neuzeit, vol. 11), pp. 333–346.

a lack of non-western patterns for the use of local language in written communication. The example of the neighbouring Bohemia, closely linked with Silesia politically, could encourage authors to reach for the native language. The so-called *Chronicle of Dalimil*, a poem in verse, was written in the Czech language in the early 14th century. It presented a clearly reluctant attitude towards the burghers, or perhaps towards German or German-associated cultural influences in general.[12] In spite of the fact that German was used in 15th-century Bohemia as well as Latin for writing charters and other forms of documentation, there were also numerous charters written in Czech in circulation alongside them (see below). This contrasted sharply with the situation in Silesia. German urban communities were the first to use their local language as a medium confirming their internal cohesion and their distinctness from the external community. Burghers used German to record the legal order which was followed solely by them, referring to the models which were used by their feudal lords, the dukes of Silesia. At the request of Henry III, Duke of Wrocław, in 1261 the Magdeburg council issued to the burghers of Wrocław an extensive legal instruction in German.[13] As a result of this act, in the last quarter of the 13th century the burghers of Wrocław became the first in Lower Silesia to posses and use the norms of city rights written in German.[14] This is evidenced by the legal instruction for Głogów of 1280, issued by burghers of Wrocław at the request of Duke Henry of Głogów.[15] In 1302, an extended version of this instruction was decreed to the burghers as a ducal privilege by Duke Henry of Głogów in person. He also issued a charter in German for the burghers of Głogów, which was the capital city of his duchy. This first known charter written by a Silesian duke in a language other than Latin included-as had four decades earlier the instruction from the councillors of Magdeburg for Wrocław-the fundamental rights and privileges of the urban community.[16] Regardless of the languages used by the residents of the city in their family or professional circles, the language of legal norms defining the shape of life for all of them was to be German.

The symbolic significance of this charter is strengthened by the fact that at that time Henry of Głogów tried strenuously to unite all of Poland under his authority, which was divided into duchies.[17] Officially he used the title of the 'heir to the Kingdom of Poland', which in a document of 1302 was translated as 'eyn Erbe des Kunicriches czu Polennerlant'. In the document this phrase preceded the German version of the traditional title

[12] *Staročeská kronika tak řečeného Dlimila. Vydání textu a vešer'eho textového materiálu*, eds Jiří Daňhelka, Karel Hádek, Bohuslav Havránek, Naděžda Kvítková, vol. 1–2, Praha 1988, vol. 3: Marie Bláhová, *Staročeská kronika tak řečeného Dlimila v kontextu středověké historiografie latinského kulturního okruhu a její pramenná hodnota. Historický komentář. Rejstřík*, Praha 1995. See also Jindřich Toman, *The Question of Linguistic Nationalism in Medieval Bohemia*, [in:] *Langue et nation en Europe centrale et orientale du XVIIIe siécle á nos jours*, ed. Patrick Sériot, Lausanne 1996 (=Cahiers de l'Institut de linguistique et des sciences du langage de l' Université de Lausanne, vol. 8), pp. 349–356.

[13] BUb., No. 20, pp. 18–27.

[14] SUb., vol. 3, No. 381, pp. 248-255; Th. Goerlitz, *Verfassung*, pp. 15-22.

[15] BUb., No. 50, pp. 48–49.

[16] UGUS, No.102, pp. 443–446.

[17] See Tomasz Jurek, *Dziedzic Królestwa*, pp. 48–75.

of the Duke of Silesia, indicating the two capitals of Henry's rule: Głogów in Silesia and Poznań in Greater Poland: 'Herczoge von Zlezien, Herre czu Glogow und czu Pozna'.[18] Undoubtedly, the Duke felt he was a member of the 'political nation' of Poland, while stressing his special relationship with Silesia and Głogów. It did not bother him in this particular case to depart from the tradition of using Latin in the charters, which he had used in other documents that he had issued, including in ones issued to the residents of Głogów.[19] In this case the choice of German was probably determined by the language used in the Wrocław charter of 1280. It is also probable that in 1302 he received the German version of the legal instruction from Wrocław, according to which the ducal charter was prepared. The uniqueness of this situation is further demonstrated by the fact that contemporary charters issued by the municipal authorities of Wrocław were also written in Latin. German was used in them in the second half of the 14th century, but it began to dominate no sooner than in the 15th century.[20] Both the document of 1280 and the one of 1302 were, therefore, unique. This is significant for the issue explored here, as they clearly indicate the existence of a communication community created by the burghers which extended beyond the borders of particular duchies in Silesia. This community was based on ethnicity, and was accepted by its surroundings. Pragmatic considerations, meaning the pursuit of unambiguous formulation of the terms of municipal law, played a decisive role. As analogies with Czech suggest, definitions of Latin counterparts of these terms were not sufficiently precise at that time.[21] This pragmatic use of language, however, provided even stronger emphasis of the linguistic identity of both urban communities (of Wrocław and Głogów) in contrast to Latin, which was commonly used in the region as the language of law. On the other hand, it suggests a cohesion-building role for the ethnic factor, closely blended with the legal factor, within the social space of the contemporary, politically divided Silesia.

In comparison with the situation in the neighbouring Bohemia, the German language had been used in Silesian documents slightly earlier. However, an increasing amount of documents issued in local languages at the expense of Latin over time is visible in both countries. In both cases, the turning point is at the close of the 14th century and the beginning of the 15th century. In Bohemia, the significance of the German as well as Czech languages alongside Latin in written documents was growing steadily.[22] Meanwhile, in

[18] UGUS, p. 443.

[19] The exceptions are two charters known only from summaries and copies: for the Hospital of the Holy Spirit at Ścinawa of 1296, known from a charter of 1444, with spelling that suggests a translation rather than original quote, and for the clothiers from Góra of 1304 (a copy of 1586, lost), see Tomasz Jurek, *Dziedzic Królestwa*, No. 28, p. 142; No. 67, p. 150.

[20] See BUb., *passim*.

[21] Ivan Hlávaček, *Die Nationalsprachen in den böhmisch-mährischen Stadtkanzleien der vorhussitischen Zeit*, [in:] *La langue des actes*, digital publication, address: http://elec.enc.sorbonne.fr/CID2003/hlavacek accessed on 5th Febuary 2013.

[22] Věra Uhlířová, *Zur Problematik der tschechisch verfaßten Urkunden der vorhussitischen Zeit*, 'Archiv für Diplomatik', 11/12 (1965/1966), pp. 469–544; Ivan Hlávaček, *Zum Phänomen der Sprachbenutzung im böhmischen diplomatischen Material bis zur hussitischen Revolution*, [in:] *The Development of Literate*

the original territory of Silesia, that is in the lands governed by the dukes whose title was 'duces Slesiae', the only language used in writing besides Latin was German. On the other hand, documents in Czech appeared in the 15th century, in the duchies of the southern Odra region, in what was later Upper Silesia. The scale of this phenomenon, however, was not large and it differed significantly from the situation in Bohemia. Among 629 preserved documents which circulated among various institutions in the territory of Upper Silesia between 1401–1450, the vast majority were written in Latin and German. Only 32 of them were written in Czech, nine of which were issued by institutions and individuals from outside of Silesia.[23] Others were mostly issued by the Dukes of Opava from a side line of the Přemyslid dynasty and in the territory of a duchy subordinate to them.[24] Equally numerous documents in Czech were issued by the Dukes of Cieszyn of the Piast dynasty, and the entities operating within their duchy.[25] This resulted from the distant location of the duchy, which lied next to Opava, the southernmost of the Silesian lands. Of unique character were the charters issued by Conrad of Oleśnica, Bishop of Wrocław. His chancellery issued charters in Latin and German, but in 1438 one of them was written in Czech. Its content is fairly standard, and it refers to the pledge of the bishop's properties in Jelcz in Lower Silesia. The choice of the language must have been determined by the requirements of the recipient of the charter, tenant Milota of Raduně, and his relatives from the Duchy of Opava.[26] However, this case clearly indicates that ethnic autonomy reflected also in the preferred language of legal documents was not an obstacle to the implementation of significant forms of economic and social activity in relationships with individuals representing a different cultural circle. The official trilingualism of the Duchies of Opava and Cieszyn in the 15th century, which had no equivalent in other territories of Silesia, did not lead to the isolation of the local people and their rulers. It is enough to indicate that the Dukes of Cieszyn were for many years simultaneously the rulers of Głogów, and their daughters were the superiors of the Abbey of the Order of Saint Claire in Wrocław.[27]

Analyzing the situation in Bohemia, Ivan Hlaváček pointed out that the introduction of a particular local language alongside Latin into documents was associated not so much with the ethnicity of the issuer, whether a duke, a lord or a city elite, but with the ethnic character of the entire social environment. In this context, the predominant usage of German in charters issued by all legal entities observed in Silesia in the 15th century, considering the extremely rare appearance – apart from the southern lands,

Mentalities in East Central Europe, eds Anna Adamska, Marco Mostert, Turnhout 2004 (=Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy, vol. 9), pp. 289–310.

[23] *Regesty listin uložených v Horní Slezsku. Regesty dokumentów przechowywanych na Górnym Śląsku*, vol. 2: 1401–1450, edited by team led by Antoni Barciak, Karl Müller, Opava-Opole-Katowice 2011, Nos 85, 103, 157, 315, 317, 486, 502, 524, 617.

[24] *Ibidem*, nos. 323, 350, 361, 487, 488, 519, 558, 562, 564, 610, 629.

[25] *Ibidem*, nos. 429, 454, 525, 542, 545, 547, 570, 572, 592, 605, 624.

[26] *Ibidem*, no. 503, p. 191.

[27] See Patrycja Gąsiorowska, *Klaryski z dynastii Piastów*, 'Nasza Przeszłość', 94 (2000), pp. 119–134.

which were more strongly associated with Czech culture – of other local languages would indicate unification of the region's ethnicity. This is contradicted, however, by testimonies in sources from the second half of the 15th century, which clearly refer to two language communities in Silesia: German and Polish (see below). It is more likely that the growing significance of the German language reflects the ousting from the life of the Silesian community of those legal norms which had been rooted in the old, Polish-language tradition. Polish may still have been the language of everyday life for many people, but German was gradually becoming the language for describing the world of social norms, in relation to religious life as well. In Silesia, a pragmatic bilingualism and (in exceptional cases) trilingualism was a factor offering cohesion, because it did not exclude non-dominant cultural traditions from the regional community.

Language may have been a unifying factor for the community, taking into consideration the elites that accepted certain norms in terms of official communication. However, in relation to people who did not create or practice the law, but were merely subject to it, questions concerning the negative impact of ethnic divisions on the sense of cultural and ethnic bonds with other residents of the province could be considered rhetorical. Separation from the social environment resulting from cultural otherness is most evident in the example of the history of the Jews in Silesia. As in other parts of central Europe, they lived in urban spaces clearly identified by their contemporaries, often with specific terminology. From the mid-13th century, they were tolerated and protected by the authorities as a source of capital ensuring financial market liquidity.[28] When economic, political or religious tensions were heightening within local communities, they fell victim to brutal persecution and were officially removed beyond the framework of community life.[29] A classic example are the persecutions that affected the Jewish community of Silesia in 1453. That year, Jews living in several Silesian cities located in the duchies under direct rule of the King of Bohemia were accused of desecration of a Host. These events were linked with sermons given in these urban centres or nearby by John of Capistrano. Persecutions were of an official character and their core was constituted by legal proceedings. These led to the confiscation of property, death sentences or the exile of Jewish

[28] With regard to Silesia see an analysis by Marcus Brann that remains accurate, *Geschichte der Juden in Schlesien*, vol. 1–5 (until 1526 r.), Breslau 1896–1907 (=Jahresbericht des Jüdisch Theologischen Seminars Fraenckel'scher Stiftung for 1896, 1897, 1901, 1907), about decentralized settlement in Wrocław see Marta Młynarska-Kaletynowa, *Wrocław w XII-XIII wieku. Przemiany społeczne i osadnicze*, Wrocław 1986, pp. 52–56, about the situation in Legnica, Silesia's second-largest, see Mateusz Goliński, *Jews in Medieval Legnica – their Location in Municipal Area*, [in:] *Jews in Silesia*, eds Marcin Wodziński, Janusz Spyra, Cracow 2001, pp. 17–32. For the history of the Jews in medieval Poland see Roman Grodecki, *Dzieje Żydów w Polsce do końca XIV wieku*, [in:] *idem, Polska piastowska. Pisma pośmiertne*, ed. Jerzy Wyrozumski, Warsaw 1969, pp. 595–702 and Hanna Zaremska, *Żydzi w średniowiecznej Polsce. Gmina krakowska*, Warsaw 2011. In relation to Cracow, but in a broader comparative perspective see Hanna Zaremska, *Jewish Street (Platea Judeorum) in Cracow: the 14th – the first half of the 15th c.*, 'Acta Polonie Historica', 83 (2001), pp. 27–56.

[29] See Marek Cetwiński, *Narodziny antysemickich stereotypów. Pogromy Żydów na Śląsku w XIV-XV wieku*, [in:] *idem, Śląski tygiel*, pp. 299–314.

citizens, and ultimately to the issue of a royal privilege for Lwówek Śląski (1454), Wrocław (1455) and Świdnica (1457) forbidding Jewish settlement in these cities.

Religious motivations underlying the quickly-aroused hostility, discussed together with the events, were perceived by contemporary historians as an element of a larger mechanism of sublimation of negative social emotions. Recent studies by Mateusz Goliński also indicate an additional and powerful economic stimulus for the actions of both royal officials and urban communities. The result of the *pogroms* was, on the one hand, annulment of debt obligations of Christians to the Jews; on the other hand, there was confiscation of Jewish property by the King and city authorities.[30] While this event was the largest in scale, it was not the first such act by Silesian burghers against the Jews, who were well aware of the reasons for this behaviour. In the spring of 1349, the Jews living in Wrocław informed the councillors that 'timent sibi propter famem communem'.[31] In fact, that year witnessed riots and persecution of the Jews, whose property was transferred the city and royal authorities.[32] The Jews were plainly the archetypal Other in the Christian regional community of Silesia. However, the nature of their otherness was deeper than just ethnic. It was connected with the role they played according to their Christian fellow residents in the order of the Universe stemming from religious beliefs. Their fate cannot, therefore, be an analogy for the relationships between Christian ethnic groups, which clearly identified their representatives – at least up to a point – but showed no desire to provoke conflict arising from diversity.

The first clear evidence of the division of the Christian community living in the Odra region along ethnic lines – save the debatable message of Thietmar of Merseburg concerning the residents of Niemcza[33] – is the foundation charter issued in 1175 by Boleslaus I the Tall, Duke of Silesia, for the Abbey in Lubiąż. Here we read that the Cistercians settled in the monastery had the right to bring to their landed property settlers from 'Teutonia', where their mother monastery Pforta was located ('quod est in Theotonia super Salam fluvium'). These 'Teutons' were to be eternally exempt from all 'iuris Polonici' burdens. On the other hand, 'Poloni' who did not belong to any other estate and became peasants (*coloni*) subject to the abbot were to pay tribute to him alone.[34] This did not mean their status was made fully equal with that enjoyed by German settlers, but only implied a limitation on their services, which from then on were to be provided only to the monastery. Analysis of the charter is complicated due to the fact that alongside 'Germans' and 'Poles' it uses a third term to define the population living in a certain area. The

[30] M. Goliński, *Wrocławskie spisy zastawów*, pp. 7–17 (here also previous works).
[31] BUb., no. 189, p. 169.
[32] *Ibidem*, p. 170.
[33] See Thietmar, VII,60, pp. 554–555; Stanisław Rosik, *Der Christianizierungprozeß von Schlesien am Anfang des 11. Jahrhunderts nach der Chronik des Thietmar von Merseburg*, [in:] *Geschichte des christlichen Lebens im schlesischen Raum*, Teilband 1, eds Joachim Köhler, Rainer Bendel, Münster 2002 (=Religions- und Kulturgeschichte in Ostmittel- und Südosteuropa, vol. 1), pp. 191–198 and the article by S. Rosik in the present publication.
[34] SUb., vol. 1, No. 45, p. 28.

witnesses to the document issued by Boleslaus, 'Duke of Silesia', were to be 'Misico dux maximus et princeps cum clero et populo Polonie'. These 'clerus et populus' were not qualified in terms of ethnicity, but through their relationship with Poland as a political entity of a traditional character. The hierarchy described in the document was clear: the Duke of Silesia was subordinate to the princeps and the most supreme duke ruling Poland. To the latter were subjected all – regardless of differences in social status – who were connected with Poland. The names 'Theotoni' and 'Poloni' in this document were indicative of the autonomy of groups of people who were equally dependent on the ruler. He determined the way in which they had to live under his rule. As Mieszko ruled the clergy and the people of Poland, so Boleslaus ruled the clergy and the people of Silesia. The ethnic autonomy of both groups was felt by the author of the document so clearly and unequivocally, and so integrally encompassing entire populations, that it required reference to proper names describing their communities. This community was composed in equal parts of members of different family, business and state social groups. The keystone of this dual community structure remained Boleslaus, the lawmaker who assigned places to all the subjects in his duchy. For him, and within his duchy, they were all equal as residents of Silesia.

Division of the region's population into two groups not only persisted in later years, but even grew stronger, overshadowing everything that they shared. The charter of 1175 envisaged only the possibility to embed Germans in the landed property of Lubiąż Abbey. However, the charter of Henry I the Bearded describing and approving the status of this property in 1202 explicitly emphasized that the Germans receiving their privileges from him lived 'in possessionibus eorum [i.e. monachorum Lubensium – P.W.] segregatim a Polonis'.[35] They were entitled to a special procedure for the settlement of disputes before a court of appropriate jurisdiction and in rulings restricted to them. The unique position of the Germans in the then social order in Silesia – without prejudging their numbers in the Silesian estates at the beginning of the 13th century – is proved by a passage in the same document from Henry I describing the privileges of other subjects of the Abbot of Lubiąż. They were 'Poloni vel aliarum nationum homines'.[36] The dictate's author did not allow for speculation. The abbot's landed property, and thus in a broader sense Silesia, was inhabited by many 'nations', but while others shared the legal status of the Poles (in this case they were subject to the same laws as other subjects of the Church in Henry's duchy), the Germans had a special place reserved. This legal separation of the Germans – or more broadly, the settlers under German law (*ius Theutonicum*) – from other residents was not unique to Silesia at that time. It could also observed during nearly the exact same period in Moravia, bordering with Silesia,[37] and also later in Hungary.

[35] *Ibidem*, No. 77, p. 51.
[36] *Ibidem.*
[37] SUb., vol. 1, No. 91, p. 63; *Codex Diplomaticus et Epistolaris Moravie*, vol. 2, ed. Antoni Boczek, Olomouc 1839, no. 17, p. 22.

This did not lead to the disintegration of the Silesian community at the beginning of the 13th century for at least two reasons. First, the dependence of the position of the Germans on the power of the duke as a guarantor of their position in society had continued since 1175 and was strongly emphasized, and the ducal officials clearly took care that they should be thoroughly included in legislation applicable to them. As a result, although they were separated from the general public, they were inscribed in the generally applicable legal system. Secondly, and of potentially greater significance, their numbers were initially rather scarce. For years the landed property of Lubiąż had been an exception. Apart from this entity, until the second decade of the 13th century there was little mention in charters about settlement of tightly-knit groups of Germans in the estates of the Church or of the dukes of the Odra region. Even in the great Cistercian abbey in Trzebnica founded by Henry I, in 1203 the duke applied separate law to the settlement of so-called 'guests' – 'hospites', but most of them bore Slavic names and came from local settlements. In the absence of ethnic terms relating to them alone, it can be inferred that they were 'local' inhabitants of Silesia who spoke the local language.[38]

Nonetheless, in the same group we may observe interesting exceptions. Besides Dalko, Boguchwał, Radosz and Siestrzewit there was also – mentioned in one sentence among the foregoing as given to the abbey in Trzebnica by the Duke – a certain 'Bertholt filius Riner'.[39] Among the various names another conspicuous one is also the son of a duke's 'guest', nameless, whose father was 'Lodvicus'.[40] It is possible to indicate other names besides those, less obvious due to their phonetic inscription, which may have been carried by people with non-local cultural roots. Clearly, the duke used the term 'guests' for settling both his own subjects and newcomers with new laws established on an ad hoc basis. He created new a social group with a specific position in the legal system, rendering it unnecessary to emphasize their ethnic affinity. On the contrary, what is evident is rather a consciously constructed cohesion of small groups merged only through economic responsibilities, without any other reference to their origin, language or culture.[41] This corresponds precisely with the term used in the document for the Lubiąż Abbey – 'other nations', that is 'strangers' settled in Silesia with the status of guests, residing in small numbers among the dominant local community, blended in with the 'Polish nation'. The situation was different for the newcomers, who settled in tightly-knit groups. Walloons thus occupied in the first quarter of the 13th century the entire district of Wrocław, named the 'Walloon district' after them. In their case, the process of assimilation is difficult to grasp. The oft-cited example of Albert with Beard, a Silesian knight, son of a Walloon woman from Wrocław and a knight who had arrived from

[38] SUb., vol. 1, No. 93, p. 64.
[39] *Ibidem.*
[40] *Ibidem*, p. 65.
[41] A functioning model of the asset in Trzebnica at the close of the 12th and in the 13th century was presented by Roman Grodecki, *Książęca włość trzebnicka na tle organizacji majątków książęcych w Polsce XII w.*, 'Kwartalnik Historyczny', 26 (1912), pp. 433–474; 27 (1913), pp. 1–66.

Germany, indicates that at the close of the 12th century 'foreigners' kept their distance from local elites. Only the dynamic changes occurring in the course of the 13th century enabled in Albert's generation complete assimilation of the children of newcomers with the local elites of Silesia.[42] At the same time, the ongoing legal and physical separation of the Germans, who settled whole communities in large and well-organized groups, from the Poles led to a deepening and consolidation of ethnic divisions within the Silesian community.

This phenomenon was evident by the mid-13th century as a result of economic reforms introduced by Silesian dukes. However, only in the second half of the 13th century did the migration of peasants, burghers and members of poor and middle-class knightly families lead to the emergence of a peculiar duality of society. This duality and coexistence of the Poles and the Germans was not viewed uniformly by Silesian elites. A view on the history of Silesia favourable to newcomers is presented in a well-known account of the author of the Silesian *Polish Chronicle* (*Chronica Polonorum*), probably written in the late 13th century in the monastery in Lubiąż. It described the alleged battle of Studnica (Rothkirch) between the sons of Henry I the Bearded: Henry II the Pious, and Conrad, who 'hated Germans' and wanted to expel the few living in Silesia. Henry II was supposed to fight together 'cum Theutinicis advenis, tam agricolis quam militibus, quos aliunde congregaverat', while Conrad fought the battle 'congregatis ex diversis provinciis Polonis'. Henry won, and countless Poles died at the battlefield.[43] Thus, the narrative presented could be a reflection of ethnic conflicts, but it more probably showed the dislike and fear felt by people of German origin outnumbered by the Poles. A certain reluctance of the author of *Chronica Polonorum* towards the Poles and his attempt to emphasize the importance of the Germans and imperial power is also visible in other parts of his work.[44] Particularly intriguing is his suggestion that Henry II was supposed to fight only at the head of a small group of Germans of diverse status against Conrad, who led Poles gathered from 'various provinces' but not from Silesia. The chronicler does not mention what the Poles living in Silesia were doing at that time. In this form the story, regardless of its origin, reflected a specific perception of the consequences resulting from fear and hostility towards others: those feelings had no right to shatter the peace in the region. For his hatred, Conrad was punished with a defeat, but the defeated ones were not Poles from Silesia.[45] A little less than a century after this account, a different interpretation of the events can be found in the work of Canon Peter of Byczyna, the author of *The*

[42] For information about Albert see Marek Cetwiński, *Rycerstwo śląskie do końca XIII w. Biogramy i rodowody*, Wrocław 1982, p. 63, C.4; Tomasz Jurek, *Obce rycerstwo na Śląsku do połowy XIV wieku*, p. 195.

[43] *Kronika polska*, ed. Ludwik Ćwikliński, [in:] *Monumenta Poloniae Historica*, vol. 3, p. 647.

[44] See Przemysław Wiszewski, *Dlaczego cesarz został kuchcikiem, a Piastowie przestali być królami? Przyczynek źródłoznawczy z historii mentalności i polityki XIII-wiecznych Ślązaków*, [in:] *Klio viae et invia. Opuscula Marco Cetwiński dedicata*, ed. Anna Odrzywolska-Kidawa, Warsaw 2010, pp. 91–98.

[45] See Benedykt Zientara, *Konrad Kędzierzawy i bitwa pod Studnicą*, 'Przegląd Historyczny', 70 (1979), pp. 27–55 and further in T. Jurek, *Obce rycerstwo*, p. 121.

Chronicle of Dukes of the Poles (*Chronica principum Poloniae*), written for the Silesian Duke Louis II of Brzeg in the second half of the 14th century, whose attitude towards the presence of the Poles in Silesia was favourable. According to that story, Henry II relied on the Germans but he assembled his army from all the inhabitants of Silesia, including the Poles.[46] On the other hand, Conrad led the army of the 'Poles' without specifying their territorial affiliation. Naturally, the outcome of the battle was the same in both versions, but the overtone of the later relation was slightly different than that of the earlier work. Here, the sanctity of the cohesion of the regional community was emphasized more strongly, with a clear emphasis on its dual nature. The Poles from outside could have posed a threat to the community, but the Poles in Silesia were equal partners of the local Germans.[47]

The two differing views of the chroniclers might either reflect the diversity of opinions on the multi-ethnicity of Silesia in general, or reveal the changes happening over time. While in the 13th century the Germans in Silesia could still feel insecure, the coexistence of both ethnic groups in the 14th century is a fact and the threat of aggression was not really felt from any of them. Nonetheless, it must be clear that in both cases the sense of belonging to the Silesian community transcended all ethnic differences. The cultural identity of Silesian knights and the elites of other lands governed by the Piast dynasty had already diverged at the end of the 13th century. Joint political and economic activity, as well as family ties, had led to the formation of a specific group. Their neighbours from the west identified them as Poles, and for the residents of the Piast duchies outside Silesia they were Germans.[48] Silesian knights constituted an ethnically complex group, perceived as consisting of representatives of two cultural circles and deliberately accentuating this dichotomy.[49] However, even though it cannot be ruled out that in the history of Silesia in the 13th and 14th centuries there were social tensions of ethnic origin, in the sources there is no evidence to support this thesis. Undoubtedly, the autonomy of the newcomers and the later coexistence of two ethnic groups were recognized. Still, there is no correlation between ethnic and political divisions. There is also no case in which national bonds would be preferred over regional – or rather local – loyalty towards political communities, duchies and rulers. The approach to ethnic issues as secondary in the context of the objectives and functioning of the whole community is clear in the actions of Duke Henry I the Bearded. This pioneer in supporting large-scale settlement of Germans in Silesia had no doubt that when he fought against the Archbishop of Magdeburg for the land of Lubusz, he was fighting 'contra Theutonicos', as it was written in his charter.[50]

[46] 'Henricus cum Theutonicis tam advenis quam eciam Polonis militibus et aliis, de locis quibus potuit recollectis', *Kronika książąt polskich*, p. 487.
[47] See Przemysław Wiszewski, *Henryk II Pobożny. Biografia*, pp. 85–87.
[48] Marek Cetwiński, *Polak Albert i Niemiec Mroczko,* pp. 62–65.
[49] Tomasz Jurek, *Obce rycerstwo*, p. 122 quoted an example of the knights of the Głogów land appearing in confederation with the cities as 'Polen und Ducze gemeynlichen' in 1334 and in 1410.
[50] SUb., vol. 1, No. 305, p. 225, No. 314, p. 231.

But neither for him nor for his German subjects was that a threat of ending cooperation. Similarly, half a century later it was nothing unusual for the Canon of Byczyna that the Silesian Poles fought shoulder to shoulder with Silesian Germans alongside their hero, Henry II, against the evil Conrad supported by Poles who came from other lands.

In this context it is worth drawing attention to the profound change in the situation of newcomers from Germany within the community of Silesia which occurred in the 13th–14th centuries. Observing the effect of their entry into the local community, historians automatically and not entirely consciously accept the notion that the newcomers had intended from the start to settle there permanently. Starting from the observations of legal norms that appear in written sources, they describe the social situation while omitting a significant factor which was the uncertainty of the newcomers' situation. Moreover, the uncertainty was of a dual nature. It referred to both their own assessment of their position in a new place and to the expectations of the person who extended the invitation, who could not be certain how long the newcomers would remain under his sovereignty or in his social environment. While for the poorer newcomers it might have been hard to leave the newly obtained possessions and livelihoods, 13th-century mayors and village administrators, urban elites and knights showed considerable mobility. They wandered from duchy to duchy within the borders of Silesia, and they moved freely beyond its borders. Tomasz Jurek, tracing the fate of the knights who came to Silesia between the 13th and the first half of the 14th centuries, estimated that about one third of them stayed there temporarily, from a few weeks to five years.[51] Such precise data are at our disposal neither for burghers nor for peasants. For economic reasons, their mobility was probably lesser, especially after the end of the great economic changes occurring between the 13th and the first half of the 14th centuries. Nevertheless, of significance for this discussion is the fact that the vast majority of newcomers decided to stay despite the fact that it was relatively easy to leave Silesia. This means that they chose to accept the existing social reality with full awareness, including their position as strangers in a Polish-speaking legal and economic order, as this was where they could accomplish their most important objectives. Behind these decisions lied economic and prestige-related motives, while the pragmatic reasons for the newcomers' arrival to Silesia influenced the way in which they were perceived in the context of the surrounding environment. The position of the first generation of newcomers in the eyes of outsiders is evaluated in a passage from a bull of Pope Innocent III to Duke Henry I the Bearded of Silesia of 1217. In this bull, the pope wrote of the dispute between the Duke and the Bishop of Wrocław concerning the collection of tithe 'a quibusdam Teutonicis, qui de novo ad illius terre inducti fuerant incolatum'.[52] What is striking is the choice of an ambiguous phrase: 'ad incolatum illius [i.e. ducis] terre',[53] which could have meant both bringing

[51] T. Jurek, *Obce rycerstwo*, pp. 20–21.
[52] SUb I, No.153, p. 111.
[53] See J. F. Niermeyer, *Mediae latinitatis lexicon minus*, Leiden 1984, p. 522.

settlers 'to settle in his land' and 'to populate his land' from the beginning, that is to live on land that had not yet been inhabited. In the context of the economic objectives behind the duke's actions suggested in the bull, as he was expanding the area of arable land, the latter interpretation seems more likely. This in turn pointed to the issue of their otherness, or perhaps 'novelty' constantly raised in the contemporary discourse on the theme of the newcomers' position, which was emphasized by the fact that they settled lands that previously had not been cultivated or permanently settled.

As time passed and the multi-ethnicity of society was more widely accepted, the memory of the first period of settlement, which was a time of immersion into the new community, could have faded, gradually replaced with a vision of cooperation with Silesians. This does not mean, however, that the deep historical differences between the newcomers and the Poles had been duly forgotten by all. Not in the least. Two interpretations of the battle of Studnica presented by two chronicles have already been compared above, and they prove to have perceived and described ethnic otherness in different ways. Now we will describe yet another source, one which concerns the way medieval Silesians perceived the moment of encounter between the two ethnic groups. In the second half of the 14th century the Cistercian monastery in Lubiąż still followed the traditional way of thinking about the difference between the newcomers and local residents. However, a very important point in the ensuing discussion arose – the ethnic aspect played no major part in this narrative, contrary to the oft-repeated opinion of medievalists.[54] In a work known today as *The Verse of Lubiąż* (*Versus lubenses*), an anonymous monk described the early days of the monastery. In this narrative, the monks who came from the home abbey in Pforta were supposed to have encountered local people participating in heathen cults and unfamiliar with the basic amenities of civilization. This situation was to be changed no sooner than with the activities of the Cistercians. The juxtaposition concerns the relationship between the monks, newcomers from Pforta, and the generally recognized 'gens Polonie' who 'pauper fuit haut operosa'. There is no further indication whether the changes that transformed Lubiąż into a thriving economic landed property took place due to the settlers brought from Germany. It was solely the monks who accomplished this with their own effort and work, which is to say: with the local people.[55] We also do not know if the anonymous author wanted the phrase 'gens Polonie' to hold

[54] German historiography used *Versus lubenses* to emphasize the importance of German 'Kulturträgern' to civilize the primitive Polish population in Silesia. From the 1970s, some medievalists from Germany supported researchers who indicated the topical nature of the themes used in the work and the lack of archaeological evidence for the picture painted of how backward the areas transferred to the abbey at the time of the foundation were (see notes by Siegfried Epperlein, *Zur Mittelalterforschung in der DDR – eine Reminiszenz,* [in:] *Mittelalterforschung nach der Wende 1989,* ed. Michael Borgolte, Munich 1995 (=Historische Zeitschrift, Beiheft 20), pp. 65–66). Polish researchers often treated the work as an example of German chauvinism, biased and discrediting the Poles, see review of the literature in: Konstanty Klemens Jażdżewski, *Lubiąż. Losy i kultura umysłowa śląskiego opactwa cystersów (1163–1642)*, Wrocław 1992, pp. 113–114.

[55] *Versus lubenses*, [in:] *Monumenta Lubensia*, ed. Wilhelm Wattenbach, Breslau 1861, p. 15.

ethnic content. It is just as likely that he was trying to use this expression to emphasize geographical differences: the monks came from Pforta to Poland, and the local people were characterized by the aforementioned unfavourable traits. Finally, the phrase 'gens Polonie' is very similar to the term 'Polonia populus' known from the foundation charter for the abbey of 1175, which was kept there for the whole time it existed. As mentioned above, the term was used in the charter mainly to emphasize social relations with regard to a wider political order, moving the context of ethnicity into the shadows. It is worth noting that the author of *Versus lubenses* did not contrast the monks as the Germans with local residents as Poles. He could have done so, as he called Casimir I the Restorer, the supposed founder of an earlier Benedictine monastery in Lubiąż, 'the King of the Poles'.[56] Apparently, however, from his point of view it was irrelevant to this perfect narrative whether 'the people of Poland' were ethnically homogeneous ('the Poles') or diverse. The practical objective of *The Verse of Lubiąż* was to prove that the monks owed their wealth to nobody but themselves. Even the family of the founder dukes provided them with only a humble beginning. The division of the community in *The Verse of Lubiąż*, so apparent, runs not along ethnic but rather community boundaries, with extreme emphasis on the rank of the group 'we', that is the Cistercians, as opposed to 'they', that is everyone outside the order and convent. It fit perfectly into the universal narratives about the early days of monasteries, which were also popular in Silesia. Written down after centuries, these stories emphasized the bravery of the first monks as well as both the wildness of nature and vulgarity and poverty of the local people.[57]

The ambivalent nature of the perception of ethnic diversity is brilliantly captured by the narrative of the *Henryków Book*, which was written in two stages: one shortly after 1268 and the second around 1310. Its authors, two Peters, Abbots of the Cistercian monastery in Henryków, which was a daughter monastery of Lubiąż, were aware of the ethnic diversity of the people surrounding the monastery in their times and before. They had to be aware of that, because this diversity implied peculiar legal practices regarding real estate transactions. The *Henryków Book* was written largely with the aim of defining and protecting the rights to the properties of the monastery.[58] Hence, the first of the authors, Peter (III), describing in the 1270s the way in which the monastery obtained the village of Bobolice, repeatedly indicated that it resulted from acting 'more polonico' of the duke and the current owners of the property, as well as members of the latter's family. This 'Polish custom' required that four men who were imprisoned for their crime

[56] *Ibidem*, p. 14.

[57] See Siegfried Epperlein, *Mit fundacyjny niemieckich klasztorów cysterskich a relacja mnicha lubiąskiego z XIV wieku*, 'Przegląd Historyczny', 58 (1967), pp. 587–604; Robert Bartlett, *Tworzenie Europy,* transl. Grażyna Waługa, trans., Poznań 2003, pp. 234–236 (original: *The Making of Europe. Conquest, Colonization, and Cultural Change 950–1350*, 1993). With regard to Silesia see Przemysław Wiszewski, *Zakonnicy i dworzanie – tradycje fundacji klasztorów w średniowiecznym dziejopizarstwie śląskim (XIII–XV w.)*, [in:] *Origines mundi*, pp. 179–198.

[58] Piotr Górecki, *A local Society in Transition. The 'Henryków Book' and Related Sources*, Toronto 2007, pp. 13–15.

by the duke, mentioned by name, were to pay a fine if they wanted to avoid death for their offences. If these owners wanted to sell their village in order to obtain money to buy their rescue from death, by 'Polish custom' they had to ask their relatives for permission beforehand.[59] The right of repurchase (*ius retractus*), that is the primacy of family members in the sale of properties,[60] well-known from numerous testimonies from the lands under Piast rule, was without fail associated by Abbot Peter with the correct ethnic group. Strong emphasis of the connection with a particular ethnic group is clear especially in the context of legal terminology known from other sources describing the same principle. These sources consistently used the phrases *ius propinquitatis* and *ius proximitatis*. Only Abbot Peter treated this particular rule as a part of *ius/mos polonicum*.[61]

The *Henryków Book* also offers many examples of the complex mechanisms behind the reception of ethnic-based multiculturalism by the inhabitants of Silesia. A man named Michał, son of Dalibór, who – as the Slavic name of his father shows – knew very well the culture of the Polish ethnic group, owned a landed property at the border of the monastery gardens. And as, according to the writings of Abbot Peter, that Michał 'studebat sepius claustrum gravare', he settled 'Theutonicos' in this land. This turned out to be a huge problem for the monks, since as a result 'corizabant sacris diebus mulieres et puelle in pomerio nostro'. The dances of German women posed a threat to the monks' morality, and the monks' consent to that behaviour could in time lead to 'in consuetudinem senescunt', bringing the most terrible danger to the souls of the residents of the monastery. Therefore, Abbot Bodo urged Michał to change landed properties, giving him other land estates in exchange. The abbot bought the lands from the Germans and removed them from the disputed area.[62] In the ducal charter of 1254 quoted in the *Henryków Book* confirming the exchange and purchase of land from the Germans, there is no mention of the dances in the garden. This was probably an element of the oral tradition cherished in the monastery, which justified the not particularly beneficial-in the eyes of posterity-deal made by the abbot. This tradition is important to the issue discussed here, because it sustains the memory of 1) the distinctiveness of *Theutonicos* from the rest of the world's population, 2) the novelty of the customs brought in by them, 3) the gradual change in the nature of these customs from novelties brought in by strangers into local habits typical for the area's residents.[63]

[59] *Liber fundationis claustri sancte Marie Virginis in Heinrichow*, I,4, p. 124.

[60] See the classic study by Zygfryd Rymaszewski, *Prawo bliższości krewnych w polskim prawie ziemskim do końca XV w.*, Wrocław–Warszawa 1970, for whom the *Henryków Book* was one of the most important sources.

[61] On *ius polonicum* in the *Henryków Book* see *ibidem*, pp. 10–12.

[62] *Liber fundationis claustri sancte Marie Virginis in Heinrichow*, I, 7, pp. 132–133.

[63] On this passage of the *Henryków Book* in the context of the pragmatic aspect of the narrative of Abbot Peter referring to moral values see Marek Cetwiński, *Corizabant mulieres et puelle in pomerio nostro. 'Księga henrykowska' o słabościach natury ludzkiej*, [in:] *Mundus hominis – cywilizacja, kultura, natura. Wokół interdyscyplinarności badań historycznych*, eds Stanisław Rosik, Przemysław Wiszewski, Wrocław 2006 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis no. 2966, Historia 175), pp. 221–229.

The author of the form of the narrative analyzed here was Abbot Peter (III), closely linked to the German-language culture.[64] However, he apparently did not identify himself and his fellow monks with 'Germans' in general, nor did he treat them in any special way as compared with the group of local Polish residents.[65] He skilfully used Polish in his narrative following the course of events concerning small parts of monastic landed properties. His narrative unveils complex toponomastic processes, in which ethnically-developed cultural elements concerning the residents surrounding the monastery played a significant role.[66] Thus, writing about the name of a forest which in his 'apud modernos' times was called 'Bucuwin' – 'Bukowina', he pointed out that its initial name was completely different. Boleslaus I the Tall, the founder of Lubiąż, shared the 'suis rusticis' land, including this interesting portion, with a peasant named Głąb (*Glamb*). The peasant grubbed out the forest in a place which is now called 'Magnum Pratum, in Polonico vero Vela Lanca [that is Great Meadow]'. And the whole area (*circuitus*) of the forest was named Glambowitz – Głąbowice, that is the lands of Głąb and his descendants, 'qui nomen eadem silva hodierna die apud quosdam Polonos obtinet'.[67] It is worth noting that although each of the names mentioned by the monk from Henryków came from the Polish language, 'Bucowine' was a name used commonly irrespective of the ethnic affiliation of the speaker. However, in Polish circles a separate tradition was still followed which bound the name of the area with the already-absent peasant called Głąb and his descendants.

On the other hand, the traditional name of this area derived from the Polish language could have been replaced by a generally accepted name of German origin, as a result of the actions of one of its owners. So it was with 'Heinrichow', (Polish Henryków), which was created following the unification of several estates clustered around the dominant estate, named Januszowo ('Ianusowe, Ianusov') after the original owner, a knight ('militellus') named Janusz. Over time and in difficult circumstances his lands were taken by another *militellus*, whose name was Heinricus. Although this name is of Germanic origin, in 13th-century Silesia it did not determine the ethnic affiliation of its owner.[68] Nonetheless, the link between this particular Henry with German-speaking culture is indicated by the fact that his land was called 'Heinrichow' – 'Heinrichau', in accordance with the rules of the German language. The name of the entire settlement was

[64] See Piotr Górecki, *A local Society*, pp.17–19.

[65] On the contrary, he sometimes pointed to the problems of the monastery that resulted from the activity of the Germans in Silesia, despite the clear treatment of German in the *Henryków Book* as the language which was commonly used by Peter and the recipients of his work, the monks of Lubiąż. See P. Górecki, *Assimilation*, pp. 458–459.

[66] On numerous fragments included in the *Henryków Book* containing information about the origin and meaning of place names in the area of the monastery see Piotr Górecki, *Communities of Legal Memory in Medieval Poland, ca. 1200–1240*, 'Journal of Medieval History', 24 (1998), pp.140–146.

[67] *Liber fundationis claustri sancte Marie Virginis in Heinrichow*, I,8, p. 134.

[68] On the 13th-century phenomenon of adopting German names by Silesian knights connected with Polish-speaking culture (the names derived from their dukes, mainly Conrad and Henry) see Marek Cetwiński, [Review:] *Benedykt Zientara, 'Henryk Brodaty i jego czasy', Warszawa 1975,* 'Sobótka', 31 (1976), No. 3, p. 492.

sealed by the decision of Abbot Mikołaj. He took over Henry's land and cut down a tree which stood in the middle of territory, and in doing so he changed the entire arrangement of the names existing in this land. The fallen tree was the sycamore tree – in Polish *jawor* – which gave its name to the brook Jaworzyca ('the daughter of the sycamore tree'). That brook flowed through the village when it was still called Januszów. The last trace of the original, Slavic toponymy was gone. Next, for the sake of Duke Henry, the founder, he named the entire neighbourhood Heinrichow, stretching the toponomastic custom so far reserved only for this part of the area.[69] Accurately recording the unique character of Silesian multiculturalism, Abbot Peter indicated the processes of assimilation and persistence of cultural traditions of distinct ethnic groups. However, neither did he in any way offer an evaluation of this situation, nor did he emphasize the moments in which the diverse ethnic background of the local cultures could have lead to conflict. Even if, as in the case of the cutting down of the eponymous tree – the sycamore – we can speak of violence whose consequences symbolically affected the acculturation of the local Polish population. For the chronicler, the significance of the culture of a given group of people was defined only through the pragmatic context of their relationship with the abbey. Similarly as in the case of the narrative of *Versus lubenses*, ethnic issues were of secondary importance when confronted with the needs of the local society. At the same time, problems arising from ethnic differences between cultures were identified and resolved by reference to supra-local structures, such as *ius polonicum* and its regional context, presented by experts in that law. Ethnic distinctiveness was inconvenient at that time for the local community, but through their identification in the context of the history and characteristics of the region it could not only be overcome, but actually used for the good of an interested group.

We shall note, however, that between the 14th and the first half of the 15th centuries, not everyone perceived cultural diversity as a fact that did not require evaluation. Ludolf, the Abbot of the monastery of Canons Regular in Żagań, writing about the convent at the time of his predecessors, mentioned scandalous habits developed by the brothers. Living at first in a rural monastery in Nowogród Bobrzański, they were then transferred to the abbey in Żagań, the capital of the duchy. Yet 'fratres (…) de campis silve in medium populi translati, silvestres adhuc in moribus erant'. Their numerous transgressions against monastic morality also stemmed from the fact that 'nam et plures fratrum Poloni erant in Newinborg, quorum proprium est plus bibere quam orare'.[70] It should be added, however, that this allusion concerning a distinguishing characteristic of the Poles (*proprium est*) did not further affect the narrative of the chronicle, in which issues of ethnicity play no part, for the evaluation of the monks from the rural provostry as deprived of some particular characteristics of civilized people was of a limited ethnic basis. It was

[69] *Liber fundationis claustri sancte Marie Virginis in Heinrichow*, I,2, pp. 118–119.
[70] *Catalogus abbatum Saganensium,* ed. Gustav Adolf Stenzel [in:] *Scriptores rerum Silesiacarum,* ed. *idem*, vol. 1, Breslau 1835, VIII, p. 184.

rather in large part due to contrasting the residents of the city, who were more advanced in terms of civilizational standards, with the rural population in general.[71] Identification of the population of the city at the time of Abbot Ludolf with German culture and the population of the countryside with Polish culture led to the realization that the Poles living in the provostry of Nowogród Bobrzański were really so different in their habits that they could be perceived as 'silvestres in moribus'.

This situation is perfectly illustrated by miniatures adorning the so-called *Schlackenwerth Codex* from the second half of the 14th century, which presents scenes from life of Saint Hedwig of Silesia. Especially noteworthy is the miniature depicting the meeting of Henry I the Bearded with his future father-in-law, the Count of Andechs, giving him his daughter, Hedwig, as a wife. The unknown author showed German knights and courtiers accompanying the Count alongside the representatives of Henry's court. The differences are striking – the members of Duke Henry the Bearded's court are different from the Germans in every respect: in hair, dress and type of arms. Henry and his family stand out against them, as they always presented by the standards of the German court.[72] On the other hand, the miniatures of the battle of Legnica from the same codex show the knights accompanying Henry II, son of Henry the Bearded, as fully following the standards of western knights.[73] The coats-of-arms of the knights clearly indicate that all of the families taking part in the battle, with no exception, descended from local elites of Polish culture.[74] Although half a century had passed since the beginning of the migration of Germans to Silesia, and a century since assimilation of newcomers changed into acculturation of the local community, the separateness of the two communities was still felt. The local residents, Silesians-Poles, differed from the people of the west and from Silesians of immigrant descent. Nonetheless, these differences were shrinking. The epicentre of the cultural influences that were shifting this reality towards acculturation of the local population was to be the duke's court.[75]

Researchers studying the history of the Silesian knights uniformly highlight the unique character of the transformation of the local Polish-speaking elites at the turn of the 12th and the 13th centuries into knights cultivating behaviour typical for the elites of the west in the 15th century. This did not mean, however, that elements of the customs

[71] See Anna Pobóg-Lenartowicz, *Silvestres in moribus erant. O wyższości miasta nad wsią na przykładzie kanoników regularnych z Żagania*, [in:] *Człowiek, sacrum, środowisko*, ed. Sławomir Moździoch, Wrocław 2000 (=Spotkania Bytomskie, vol. 4), p. 235–242.

[72] See Tomasz Jurek, *Fryzura narodowa średniowiecznych Polaków*, [in:] *Scriptura custos memoriae*, Poznań 2001, pp. 635–651; Przemysław Wiszewski, *Dlaczego Henryk syn Bolesława Wysokiego został Brodatym, czyli wokół różnych znaczeń brody księcia*, [in:] *Wędrówki rzeczy i idei w średniowieczu*, ed. Sławomir Moździoch, Wrocław 2004 (=Spotkania Bytomskie, vol. 5), pp. 41–59.

[73] Jakub Kostowski, Jacek Witkowski, *Książę Henryk II Pobożny i bitwa legnicka w ikonografii (XIII–XX w.)*, [in:] *Bitwa legnicka. Historia i tradycja*, ed. Wacław Korta, Wrocław–Warsaw 1994, pp. 283, 297–298.

[74] Tomasz Jurek, *Herby rycerstwa śląskiego na miniaturach Kodeksu o św. Jadwidze z 1353 roku*, 'Genealogia. Studia i Materiały Historyczne', 3 (1993), p. 32.

[75] M. Cetwiński, *Polak Albert i Niemiec Mroczko*, pp. 68–69, the beginning of this process stretches to the rule of Duke Boleslaus I the Tall.

or legal status of the local knights linked to the Polish cultural milieu had been completely abandoned. Even in 1337, the knights of the Góra district agreed to approve of King John of Luxembourg as their supreme master on condition that they would be treated 'prout alii principes Polonie vasalli sui habent'.[76] According to Tomasz Jurek, knights who were entitled to land and jurisdiction under Polish law resided in Silesia as late as in the 15th century.[77] Differences in the legal situations of individual knights had no greater significance for the functioning of the regional community. However, the particular position of an entire tight-knit group settled in a territory defined by administrative boundaries could weaken the sense of cultural unity of the elites of the region in favour of local ties.[78]

If, however, in the Silesian sources, especially those of the 15th century, we can point to statements presenting a reluctant attitude towards other nations, in particular against the Czechs, but also against the Poles, it would be very hard to identify any clearly negative assessment of Silesian community members because of their ethnic affiliation. This did not mean, of course, the actual absence of ethnic-related conflicts among the medieval Silesians. As was mentioned above, they were, however, of an exceptional character and were usually associated with periods of deep political and social tensions, and consequently with destabilization of the society's normal functioning. Although this was well illustrated by the aforementioned persecution of the Jews, we have already mentioned that these events cannot be used as an analogy for relations between groups of different ethnic affiliation united by their professed religion. However, an interesting message may be found in a short note from the second half of the 15th century in an annal written by a monk from Lubiąż, concerning the conflict which erupted in his mother convent in 1468: 'In die Appolonie virginis facta est contencio magna in monasterio Lubensi inter polonos monachos et almanos'.[79] Unfortunately, we can say nothing more about this conflict. Waldemar Könighaus, author of a monograph on the medieval history of the monastery in Lubiąż, suggested that it was a dispute between the Silesian monks – the ones living 'in Polonia' in the eyes of John Bartwa, the Hungarian-born monk who wrote the note – and strangers from outside Silesia, that is from Germany.[80] This assumption can neither be excluded nor confirmed. However, as John Bartwa became a monk in Lubiąż as late as in 1471, he must have described these events either on the basis of oral history or on previous records written by monks, which suggests that either this event was firmly embedded in the monks' memory, or that it was important to ensure it was not forgotten. In both cases, the ethnic nature of the conflict was emphasized

[76] LUBS, vol. 1, No. 23, p. 146.
[77] T. Jurek, *Vom Rittertum zum Adel*, pp. 69–70.
[78] See also the chapter on social groups by P. Wiszewski included in this volume.
[79] *Annales lubenses*, [in:] *Monumenta Lubensia*, p. 23.
[80] Waldemar P. Könighaus, *Die Ziesterzienserabtei Leubus in Schlesien von ihrer Gründung bis zum Ende des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Wiesbaden 2004 (= Deutsches Historisches Institut Warschau. Quellen und Studien, vol. 15), pp. 109–110.

while its actual cause was ignored, which suggests that the ethnic aspect of the dispute within the convent was such an extraordinary phenomenon that it overshadowed the reason behind it. Thus, the opinion may be ventured that although ethnic-related conflicts might have arose in Silesia (including in monasteries), they were of an extraordinary character, and they were long remembered as such, though without clear evaluation by participating parties. This lack of assessment, however, was not due to any hesitation in passing judgement on the behaviour of ethnic groups. When the army of the Polish king Casimir Jagiellon ravaged the villages of the abbey in 1474, Bartwa did not hesitate to say that it happened '*per perfidos polonos*'.[81] However, the Poles that he referred to, similarly to the narratives describing the battle of Studnica written in the preceding two centuries, were not Silesians.

As there was a wide panorama of different social groups in medieval Silesia, the world-view of the majority of them remains unknown to us. Representatives of the Church and government institutions formulated official written statements describing their perceptions of the surrounding community. However, most residents of the Odra basin had no such possibility. Their opinions are revealed to us accidentally, on the margins of legal proceedings, through analyzing the popularity of certain iconographic motifs. However, these kinds of sources have yet to be sufficiently explored in order for us to conduct discourse on the subject. Inevitably we can only speak of random information giving us the chance to look at a few examples of the relationships between social groups in Silesia which involved a display of ethnicity. Therefore, on this basis it is difficult to identify trends that would apply to the whole community.

Nevertheless, it is striking that almost all sources from this period show a clear and lasting ethnic diversity of the whole community, emphasized by contemporaries, particularly the distinction between Germans and Poles. At the same time it is evident that the region and the local Silesian community were unified without denying this diversity.[82] This phenomenon may be perceived from the perspective of the languages used for communication. From the 13th century at least three of them were frequently used by the residents of the Odra region: German, Polish and Latin. We hasten to add that German was initially used in the form of dialects spoken by the newcomers in their home regions. The process of language convergence to the form typical of Silesia took place over the 14th century and the first half of the 15th century, but the lack of sources makes it difficult to grasp its course.[83] On the other hand, the variety of Polish used at the time

[81] *Annales lubenses*, p. 23.

[82] I discuss the aforementioned example of the knights of Góra district in the chapter on social groups, where I point to the tendency appearing in the mentioned charter to treat the community of the district as a whole, indicating the particular legal status of knighthood but without breaking the ties linking them with the rest of the community.

[83] See *Anfänge und Entwicklung der deutsche Sprache im mittelalterlichen Schlesien*, eds Gundolf Keil, Josef Joachim Menzel, eds., Sigmaringen 1975 (=Schlesische Forschungen, vol. 6); Winfried Irgang, *Elemente der deutschen Sprache im Schlesischen Urkundenbuch*, [in:] *idem, Schlesien im Mittelalter.*

was very similar to the Czech language. It is possible that this similarity facilitated communication between people who knew the language of the indigenous residents and representatives of Bohemia, as well as with residents of Bohemia during frequent visits to the Czech Basin. This also meant a further, though somewhat random, extension of the language skills possessed by the inhabitants of Silesia. In our analysis of the *Henryków Book* we pointed out that its author, Abbot Peter, had a great but rather passive knowledge of Polish. Although his mother tongue was undoubtedly German, and the scholarly language was Latin, he understood Polish words and phrases and quoted them as evidence for his narrative. He crossed the borders of languages without any hesitation, not using them as markers for divisions within the local community.[84] We may observe a similar phenomenon taking place two years later in Wrocław. During the conflict with the King of Bohemia, George of Podiebrad, in December 1467 the city received two letters from the king: one in Latin, the other one in Czech. A witness to those events, Johann Frauenburg from Zgorzelec, noted that the letter in Latin was read by an urban writer, Peter Eschenloer, but this letter 'vulgarisata fuit' by him. We can only surmise, judging by Peter German's written version of the chronicles of the history of the city during the wars with that king, that he had translated the document into the local dialect of German. What is more interesting is the fact that the Czech letter was not translated to the residents of Wrocław – at least this witness to the event did not bother to mention if it had been, although he described its content.[85] We may thus assume that, while Latin was already considered by the elites of Wrocław to be a foreign language, Czech was perceived as comprehensible and colloquial, along with the local version of German. The phenomenon of Czech-German bilingualism in late medieval towns in Bohemia was already pointed out many years ago by Czech researchers.[86] In Silesia, we are dealing with the of at least four spoken languages – those spoken by Christians (German, Polish, Czech) were complemented with Hebrew. This multiplicity of languages was not visible in only the private sphere, but also in legal matters, strengthening the cultural distinctiveness of ethnic groups. However, it was not necessarily the case that this diversity supported trends that could be destructive for the regional community.

When preparing a history of the Kingdom of Bohemia and a historical and geographical description of Europe at the close of the 15th century, Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini repeatedly raised issues connected with Silesia. Although they had never been his primary focus, he provided us with two pieces of information crucial for our subject. In describing the geography of Europe, he mentioned a division of the population of Silesia

Siedlung – Kirche – Urkunden. Ausgewählte Aufsätze, eds Norbert Kersken, Jürgen Warmbrunn, Marburg 2007, pp. 481–494.

[84] See P. Górecki, *Assimilation*.

[85] Volker Honemann, *Kanzlei, Stadt und Kultur im Leben und Werk des Johann Frauenburg von Görlitz*, [in:] *idem*, *Literaturlandschaften*, p. 254.

[86] Emil Skála, *Vznik a vývoj česko-německého bilingvismu*, 'Slovo a slovesnost', 38 (1977), pp. 197–207; F. Šmahel, *Idea národa*, pp. 22–24, 267–268.

according to a language criterion. In his opinion most people used German, but Polish prevailed in the area on the right bank of the Odra river. He added, however, that this did not mean that the Odra was a border river for the reach of the German language, because in its lower reaches residents used German on both sides of the river.[87] Such an approach would imply that Aeneas' informers – beeing outsiders – noticed a clear rupture of the regional community along ethnic lines. Linking them to a particular area strengthened this effect, creating the impression of the existence of two distinct cultural and territorial units. The author, however, was not consistent in this regard. In *History of Bohemia* he clearly wrote that the Kingdom of Bohemia 'ad orientem vergens latus Moravi obtinent et Sclesitarum natio, septentrionem iidem Sclesitae ac Saxones, qui et Misenenses et Thuringi appelantur'.[88] The *natio* of Silesians was then, in his opinion, some entity inhabiting the lands at the edge of Bohemia, between Moravia and Saxony. However, we should refrain from saying with excessive certainty that in Piccolomini's view ethnic divisions were not relevant to the existence of a regional community ranked higher in the hierarchy of the individuals who created the community. That same author added just one passage later that the territory bordering Czech lands was none other than 'Theutonum terra'.[89] From his point of view, Moravia was a separate administrative entity and its borders with Hungary, Rus and Poland were not Czech borders. We will therefore conclude that the author and his informants perceived the people of Silesia as a unity, emphasizing Silesian affinity with 'Germanic provinces' and the whole Holy Roman Empire. The language spoken by the population did not, in their eyes, play a significant role in the classification of the entire community, because as a region, as '*natio*', it belonged to the greater community of the residents of the Holy Roman Empire, the Germans. Writing about Silesians and Silesia at the close of the 12th century, Master Vincent Kadłubek classified them within the community of Poles subordinate to the authority of the Piast dynasty, also without exploring potential ethnic divisions of the community. Three centuries later the situation was similar, what had changed was only the view of the writers, for whom the residents of the Odra region should comprise a community of a higher order.

Dynamically changing ethnic relations within the community living in Silesia had a mixed impact on the cohesion of the regional community. While further research remains to be done, we can venture the opinion that this diversity ultimately strengthened the sense of separateness of the region from neighbouring ones. Simple facts, such as that a common administrative framework over the entire community had been set up in the 15th century and that benefits could be achieved from joint political activity, did not, in the eyes of contemporaries, overshadow the specificity of the multiethnicity, multilingualism and

[87] See Wojciech Iwańczak, *Problematyka śląska w 'Historii czeskiej' Eneasza Sylwiusza Piccolominiego*, [in:] *Korzenie wielokulturowości Śląska*, ed. Antoni Barciak, Katowice 2009, p. 142.

[88] *Aeneae Silvii Historia Bohemica*, eds Dana Martínková, Alena Hadravová, Jiří Matl, Praha 1998 (=Fontes rerum regni Bohemiae, vol. 1), p. 8.

[89] *Ibidem.*

inter-ethnic relationships within Silesian society, whose character had been perceived as unique when contrasted with similar phenomena taking place in neighbouring countries. Similarly, at the local level, the possibility to appeal to the situation in the whole region when resolving ethnic conflict sustained awareness of the importance of the regional dimension for the proper functioning of the local community. This was not a static system: in the way Silesians perceived multiethnicity we may see diverse attitudes; the impact of this phenomenon on the cohesion of various communities operating there between the 13th and the 15th centuries was diverse as well. Presentation of these phenomena in the context of time and in the pragmatic perspective of the sources describing them pave the way for a new approach towards multiethnicity as a dynamic phenomenon, which does not necessarily have one purpose and one course for the whole of Silesia. Only detailed study, however, will allow us to verify the hypotheses posed above.

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The cultural identity of medieval Silesia: the case of art and architecture

Abstract:

The cultural identity of architecture and visual arts of the Middle Ages in Silesia can be analyzed in the following frameworks: 1.) the distinct formal features of local artwork; 2.) the specific content expressed through it. Macro factors (the type of materials and their availability) are important in architecture, as are architectural patterns and styles. Of greatest frequency in this context are brick buildings, with sandstone used for details. In the 14th century distinct and formal patterns of style in architecture took shape (such as the basilica form of town churches), as was the case with detailed construction and aesthetic solutions applied in walls and vaults. Factors shaping the specific nature of Silesian art were the influence of dominant styles (initially from the Czech state, later southern Germany, including Nuremberg), political contexts (affiliation with the Bohemian Crown) and religious ones (mostly the selection and popularity of patron saints).

Keywords:

vaults, ducal tombstones, Piast dynasty, St Hedwig, St John the Baptist

The subject of Silesia's cultural identity in the Middle Ages, viewed from the narrow perspective of architecture and fine arts, has not had much scholarly attention devoted to it in recent decades, notwithstanding a few attempts to identify unique Silesian characteristics in certain groups of work or artistic genres. One obvious reason for this restraint may be to some extent the decision to disqualify texts which attempted to develop a more general approach to this subject. These texts, produced directly before the outbreak of World War II, were to various degrees burdened with nationalist or even racialist ideals, and as a consequence their authors attempted to describe certain features specific to Silesian art within the framework of concepts such as nation (*Nation*), tribe (*Stamm*), tribal territory (*Stammesboden, Stammesgebiet*), cultural nationality (*Kulturnation*) and colonization (*Kolonization*).[1]

[1] The length restrictions imposed upon this paper make it impossible to examine here the work published in the pre-war period (and, partially, right after the World War II), which relate to the specific artistic image of Silesia. The most extensive of them, devoted to art from two pivotal periods – the 14th/15th centuries and 17th/18th centuries – was written by Dagobert Frey, *Schlesiens künstlerisches Antlitz*, [in:] *Die Hohe Strasse. Schlesische Jahrbücher für deutsche Art und Kunst im Ostraum*, vol. 1, ed. Gustav Barthel, Breslau 1938, pp. 12–45. A closer look on this subject was also presented by August Grisebach, *Die Kunst der deutschen Stämme und Landschaften*, Wien 1946, pp. 309–329, where in the chapter entitled *Schlesien und der Nordosten* we read about medieval art, see *ibidem*, pp. 309–316. In reference to architecture see Hans Tintelnot, *Die mittelalterliche Baukunst Schlesiens*, Kitzingen 1951, whose methodological assumptions were criticized in the review by Mieczysław Zlat 'Roczniki Sztuki Śląskiej', 1 (1959), pp. 155–161. Cf. also the critical characteristics of these and other pre-war German scholarly papers – Marian Kutzner, *Schlesische Sakralarchitektur aus der ersten Hälfte des 14. Jahrhunderts: zwischen allgemeinen Stil und regionalem*

However, starting from the assumptions of the geography of art and making use of analyses of artistic work that consider the historical and social contexts in which they were produced, we may in fact conduct a preliminary attempt to identify the specific characteristics of medieval Silesian art. To do this, we need to look for unique features which expressed or reflected the particular historical, civilizational and social processes that were prevalent within the examined region. The identification of such features is naturally a long-term process which may, in the end, produce a complex pattern of results: the uncovered features may not relate to the entire territory of the region or the wider spectrum of artistic culture equally and the intensity of such expressions may vary from piece to piece, and may be subject to changes or modifications in time, including – in the context of the history of art – evolutions that take place within a particular style period. We may, however, assume that certain specific formal-ideological entities, having once appeared in a particular moment, simply inspired other artists and were copied over a period of time. The cultural identity of a region, as expressed in art, is developed by drawing on local history and tradition. It is grounded in a particular group of features that allow local art to be easily distinguished from the art of neighbouring and more remote territories. Therefore, this study will not focus on incidental cases – even though they may document the public memory of particularly important historical figures – unless they are part of a more extensive system or series of representations. What is therefore of great significance is the presence of a certain repetitiveness (as regards formal or iconographic works); if a particular event or person from medieval Silesia is rediscovered and later presented as an element of local identity, this would be always done in relation to those later, non-medieval, times. Silesian historiographers, commissioners and artists of a modern era were in possession of extensive, mainly historic, material, based on which it was possible to shape the regional identity in a fully conscious manner.

Searching for identity in the art of medieval Silesia is undoubtedly exceptionally difficult. For example, for the period of Roman art it would be advisable to refrain from formulating any type of conclusion on the subject of regional specificity and, most importantly, on its role in the process of building a cultural identity. The reason for this is that there is a relatively small number of preserved monuments of art and architecture from the period of the 12th to mid-13th centuries. In the case of Gothic art it is necessary, it seems, to classify its manifestations as follows: 1.) those which became characteristic mostly as a result of an unplanned accumulation or repetition, and which are expressed on a typological, formal and stylistic rather than iconographic level; 2.) works which were intentionally constructed in order to give expression to phenomena related to the history and contemporary social and political situation of the region (which should be easily traceable in iconographic sources).

Modus, [in:] *King John of Luxemburg (1296-1346) and the Art of his Era* (Proceedings of the International Conference, Prague, September 16–20, 1996), ed. Klara Benešovská, Prague 1998, pp. 167–168.

When it comes to fields such as construction and architecture and their decorative features, it is necessary to discuss macro-factors such as the type of building materials available and their accessibility. Architectural models and styles, usually coming to the region from distant lands, were subject to transformation not only on their way to the new location and after finding themselves in their destination (under the influence of active local artists), but also as a result of the way designers and builders had to adapt them in accordance with the type of building materials that were accessible locally. What was specific to Silesia was undoubtedly the issue of uneven distribution of building stone deposits. This resulted in brick becoming the dominant building material of Gothic architecture but simultaneously, with the popularization of brick constructions from the beginning of the 13th century, they began to be abundantly adorned with stone elements (mostly sandstone) obtained from materials imported to central parts of Silesia from the west of the region and to its northern parts from the south. If one looks at the construction and architecture of medieval Silesia from the perspective of its neighbouring lands, it becomes obvious that the richness of stone details in Silesian brick buildings is one of their principal characteristics.[2] In the case of Silesia's neighbours we can usually observe the use of either slightly different materials or the same materials in different proportions. Because of this, the buildings of Greater Poland are mainly examples of brick architecture, at times enriched with artificial materials that were to replace stone; the architecture of Lesser Poland often combined brick and limestone, with contrasting colours and textures; in Lusatia and the region of Lubusz parts of buildings were sometimes constructed using lightly hewn natural stone blocks. Nevertheless, the boundaries between the territories where the aforementioned material compositions were used cannot be drawn with a clear line. From both the west (Lusatia and Saxony) and the south (Czech, Moravia) these boundaries are blurred, but the number of buildings of hammered ashlar grows larger the farther one moves away from the region of Silesia.

Of crucial importance for the development of architectural stylistic forms was the great construction boom of the 14th century which, to a large extent, determined the basic types and forms of architecture present in Silesia at the close of the Middle Ages. One indicator of the specificity of the Silesian architectural landscape of the Gothic era was usually the basilica form of parish churches which began to replace the earlier hall churches,[3] and which to a large extent remained unchanged until the end of the Middle Ages. The reduced number of architectural forms that were used at the time, influenced by

[2] Marian Kutzner, *Śląsk. Okres 1200-1350 roku*, [in:] *Architektura gotycka w Polsce*, Teresa Mroczko, Marian Arszyński, Warszawa 1995 (=Dzieje sztuki w Polsce, vol. 2), p. 1, p. 126; Mieczysław Zlat, *Śląsk. Okres 1350-1550 roku*, [in:] *ibidem*, p. 134.

[3] Marian Kutzner, *Społeczne uwarunkowania rozwoju śląskiej architektury w latach 1200-1330*, [in:] *Sztuka i ideologia XIII wieku*, ed. Piotr Skubiszewski, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1974, pp. 223–224, 229–232; *idem, Kościoły bazylikowe w miastach śląskich XIV wieku*, [in:] *Sztuka i ideologia XIV wieku*, ed. Piotr Skubiszewski, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1975, p. 305; *idem, Śląsk. Okres 1200-1350*, pp. 130–131; *idem, Schlesische Sakralarchitektur*, pp. 134, 139–141, 152–153.

trends developed from the turn of the 14th century in the western and eastern part of the Reich, included, however, designs which, having been modified and adapted to local needs, became permanent elements of the Silesian construction style. These included, among others, the characteristic form of a polygonal elongated pier which accentuated the wall planes and a tunnel-like interior style (fig. 1–2), as well as using lesenes as final elements of wall articulation and, optionally, a shortened lesene underlay for rib bundles placed on walls (fig. 3). Extending cross-rib vaultings using lierne ribs and combining stellar-like vaults in the nave with tripartite vaulting in the aisles (fig. 4) became highly popular in Silesia.[4] From the end of the 14th century net-like vaults also became characteristic of certain places (Legnica, Środa Śląska, Strzegom, Jelenia Góra) (fig. 5), which in various styles were applied until the second quarter of the 16th century (Opole, Świdnica, Dzierżoniów), in naves, chapels and porches in cloisters. In the beginning of the period Parler in Prague was an important influence, but this was later replaced by inspirations from Saxony and Brandenburg. Compared to neighbouring regions, 14th-century Silesia saw a considerable growth in the number of figural carvings (corbels, bosses) placed in interiors, which to a large extent softened the austere character of architectural forms of the time (fig. 6). Outside of Wrocław – where this trend applied to the majority churches (except the Church of Saint Mary Magdalene and the Church of Saint Dorothy) – they may be observed, in the parish churches in Strzegom, Świdnica and Jawor, for instance.[5] The achievements of the period of 'the golden bishopric' of the 14th century undoubtedly shaped the local tradition, but they also resulted in the architecture of the following periods, which only duplicated formerly-developed solutions, being strongly traditionalistic.[6]

As far as fine arts are concerned, local characteristics regarding both style and form were developed mostly based on the strong political and administrative connection between Silesia and the Crown of Bohemia and, between AD 1300 and the outset of the 15th century, in the context of the dominant status of Prague. This easy, two-way transfer of works, artists and formal novelties resulted in the fact that the Silesian art that developed was unique when compared to that of other territories that were not part of this political structure. It was influenced by Bohemian or Prague variants of, for example, the Parler style and the international Gothic style in sculpture and painting (fig. 7–8). At the same time, some features that are specific to Silesian art developed as a result of a local

[4] H. Tintelnot, *op. cit.*, pp. 179-180; M. Kutzner, *Kościoły bazylikowe*, pp. 275–277, 287–288; Dalibor Prix, *Silesian-Bohemian Relations in the Medieval Architecture of the Luxembourg Period,* [in:] *Silesia - a Pearl in the Bohemian Crown. History - Culture - Art*, eds Mateusz Kapustka, Jan Klipa, Andrzej Kozieł, Piotr Oszczanowski, Vit Vlnas, Praha 2007, pp. 162, 165-169; Romuald Kaczmarek, *Średniowieczna architektura sakralna*, [in:] *Leksykon architektury Wrocławia*, eds Rafał Eysymontt, Jerzy Ilkosz, Agnieszka Tomaszewicz, Jadwiga Urbanik, Wrocław 2011, pp. 45–48.

[5] Tadeusz Jurkowlaniec, *Wystrój rzeźbiarski prezbiterium kościoła Św. Marcina w Jaworze i dzieła pokrewne na Śląsku*, 'Ikonotheka. Prace Instytutu Historii Sztuki Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego', 6 (1993), pp. 123–166; Romuald Kaczmarek, *Rzeźba architektoniczna XIV wieku we Wrocławiu*, Wrocław 1999.

[6] M. Zlat, *Śląsk. Okres 1350-1550,* p. 146.

transformation process and drawing on external influences. This is evident in the case of characteristic forms of the 'Madonna on lions' style, which was not restricted to works depicting the subject of the Madonna only (fig. 9). Claims of its political, Czech genesis are probably too far-fetched;[7] what is certain, however, is that it became one of the more widespread artistic phenomena over the entire territory of Silesia in the second half of the 14th century and was probably exported to places even further away. What should be noted in connection with this style is the formation, at the end of the century, of an extremely popular formal and iconographic structure of altarpieces, where the representation placed in the central panel (the coronation of the Madonna) is flanked by four Holy Virgins figures.[8]

The following century brought another important point of reference both for the economy as well as the forms of artistic expression in Silesian fine arts: the art of Franconia and Nuremberg. The growth of importance of familial and commercial connections, especially with the Wrocław patrician families, brought about a change of paradigm in Silesian art in the second quarter of the 15th century. The introduction of both foreign artists and their works to Silesia, together with the indirect impact of foreign art, was a crucial force in shaping the Silesian artistic landscape, most notably Silesian painting (fig. 10).[9] In this context, the impact of Nuremberg on Silesia in the late Gothic period naturally complemented (or perhaps amplified) another important factor – the location of Silesia and its capital on the 'High Road' leading to Cracow.[10] At the same time, the role played by the art of Lesser Poland was significant, especially for the territories of Upper Silesia, but at the end of the 15th century it also influenced the art of Lower Silesia, which is best illustrated by copies of the Cracow works of Veit Stoss (fig. 11).[11]

The traditional connection between Silesia, Cracow and Poland (which extended beyond art) was reflected in Silesian artistic iconography from the mid-13th century until

[7] This was suggested by Robert Suckale, *Die 'Löwenmadonna', ein politischer Bildtyp aus der Frühzeit Kaiser Karls IV.?*, [in:] *Iconographica. Mélanges offerts à Piotr Skubiszewski*, eds Robert Favreau, Marie-Hélène Debiès, Poitiers 1999, pp. 221–229.

[8] Cf. for example Erich Wiese, *Schlesische Plastik vom Beginn des XIV. bis zur Mitte des XV. Jahrhunderts*, Leipzig 1923, pp. 21–28, 58–62; Dagobert Frey, *Die Kunst im Mittelalter*, [in:] *Geschichte Schlesiens*, Bd. I, *Von der Urzeit bis zum Jahre 1526*, ed. Hermann Aubin, Breslau 1938, pp. 462–464; Zofia Białłowicz-Krygierowa, *Studia nad snycerstwem XIV wieku w Polsce*, part 1: *Początki śląskiej tradycji ołtarza szafowego*, Warszawa-Poznań 1981; Romuald Kaczmarek, *Art in Silesian Duchies and in the Lands of Bohemia in the Period of the Luxembourg Patronage. Between Complicated Neighbourhood Relations and Complete Acknowledgement,* [in:] *Silesia - a Pearl in the Bohemian Crown,* pp. 131-132.

[9] Cf: Jacek Witkowski, *Gotycki ołtarz główny kościoła Świętych Piotra i Pawła w Legnicy*, Legnica 1997; Anna Ziomecka, *Malarstwo tablicowe na Śląsku*, [in:] *Malarstwo gotyckie w Polsce*, vol. 1: *Synteza*, eds Adam Labuda, Krystyna Secomska, Warszawa 2004, pp. 229–232, 238–241, 246; Robert Suckale, *Die Erneuerung der Malkunst vor Dürer*, Petersberg 2009, vol. 1, pp. 104, 250, 382, vol. 2, pp. 24–29.

[10] Cf: Romuald Kaczmarek, *Wrocław w sieci. Uwagi na temat artystycznych powiązań miasta od początku panowania Luksemburgów do końca epoki Jagiellonów*, 'Quart', 4/26 (2012), pp. 22, 25.

[11] Mieczysław Zlat, *Sztuki śląskiej drogi od gotyku*, [in:] *Późny gotyk. Studia nad sztuką przełomu średniowiecza i czasów nowych*, Warszawa 1965, p. 178; Anna Ziomecka, *Wit Stosz a późnogotycka rzeźba na Śląsku*, [in:] *Wit Stosz. Studia o sztuce i recepcji*, ed. Aleksander S. Labuda, Warszawa-Poznań 1986, p. 144n.

the outset of the 16th century in the person of Saint Stanislaus, who, together with Saint Wenceslaus, the patron of Bohemia, was one of the most famous local patron saints, together with Saint John the Baptist and Saint Hedwig of Silesia.[12] In the second half of the 15th century the circle of traditional patron saints was extended by two saints of Nuremberg – Sebaldus and Laurentius – who were depicted on several Wrocław epitaphs and altarpieces. This was a conspicuous sign of the aforementioned shift in the main economic and cultural trends of the time. Of all the saints that were popular subjects of central European medieval iconography, it was John the Baptist who enjoyed the greatest interest of Silesian artists. There is a logical justification for this: John became the patron of the Wrocław diocese in AD 1000. The saint's image appears both in places that typically contained such artistic representations and in works whose function was to represent the diocese, the cathedral chapter or the cathedral itself (which actually housed St John's relics following their donation by Charles IV). Although the saint was usually presented in a traditional manner, what was unique about his representations was the fact that he was incorporated into three-member altarpiece figural groups, presented together with patrons of other churches or chosen as an individual patron. Remarkably, the way St John's image is used in the municipal iconography of Wrocław is completely non-standard. It was first manifested in the representation of the Saint placed on the municipal seal from 1292. From the 14th century onwards what begins to dominate – *pars pro toto* – is the representation of the Saint's head on a platter. This representation was probably inspired by a skilfully carved relief situated under an oriel of the town hall chapel (1356–58). In the following century, the image became widely popular: it was placed on keystones of vaults and church facades, private homes, as well as in the Great Hall of the Wrocław town hall (fig. 12 a-b). In the 15th century it spread even further but its meaning was also extended: John's head was included in heraldic representations placed on coats-of-arms. Finally, it was placed in the central field of the new coat-of-arms of Wrocław, approved in 1530.[13]

A most unique status was granted in all of Silesia to Saint Hedwig, probably for the reason of her personal connection with the region she was introduced to as the wife of Henry I the Bearded.[14] Hedwig was included in a small group of most eminent and pious women of mid-13th-century Poland, and surely her unique charisma and cult that

[12] Cf. works devoted to the issue of patrocinium: Werner Marschall, *Mittelalterliche Heiligenkulte in Schlesien*, [in:] *Heilige und Heiligenverehrung in Schlesien*, ed. Joachim Köhler, Sigmaringen 1997, pp. 19–30, and Winfried Irgang, *Die politische Bedeutung der Heiligen im Mittelalter (Wenzel, Adalbert, Stanislaus, Hedwig)*, [in:] *ibidem*, pp. 31–50.

[13] Paul Knötel, *Siegel und Wappen*, [in:] *Die Kunstdenkmäler der Stadt Breslau*, ed. Ludwig Burgemeister, Breslau 1930 (=Die Kunstdenkmäler der Provinz Niederschlesien, vol. 1, part 1), pp. 28–35; Romuald Kaczmarek, *Znaki czeskiego panowania w średniowiecznym Wrocławiu*, [in:] *Wrocław w Czechach, Czesi we Wrocławiu. Literatura - język - kultura*, eds Zofia Tarajło-Lipowska, Jarosław Malicki, Wrocław 2003, pp. 207–220.

[14] Recently: Winfried Irgang, *Die heilige Hedwig – ihre Rolle in der schlesischen Geschichte*, [in:] *Das Bild der heiligen Hedwig in Mittelalter und Neuzeit*, eds Eckhard Grunewald, Nikolaus Gussone, München 1996, pp. 23–38.

developed immediately after her death (1243) resulted in the fact that she was soon canonized (1267). Her earliest, and famous, representations in Silesian art date to the period following the mid-14th century, but from then on they come in all typologies and genres – from miniatures of the so-called *Pictorial Legend of St Hedwig* (1353) illustrating the text of her *Vita maior*, through painted representative images carved in stone and destined to decorate the facades and interiors of sacred buildings (the Castle Church at Brzeg, ca. 1370; the Castle Chapel at Lubin, ca. 1350; Wrocław Cathedral, ca. 1350/60 and ca. 1468, the Collegiate Church of the Holy Cross, ca. 1380/90), wooden cult figures (e.g. in Trzebnica, ca. 1450/60) and figural groups of saints in altarpiece central panels (the oldest one from ca. 1380 from Pełcznica), representations of Saint Hedwig together with other individual patron saints on pictorial epitaphs, series of paintings in church altarpieces or walls, and finally the saint's representation in goldsmithery (including reliquaries). The process of shaping Silesian identity by means of Saint Hedwig's iconography was based on the strategy of filling the cultural landscape with the saint's representations.[15] Two artistic works exist that are pivotal examples of this intensive and purposeful activity. The aforementioned *Pictorial Legend* ordered by Duke Louis I of Brzeg was developed on the basis of a well-thought-out concept, where Hedwig plays a key role in the history of Silesia and the Piast dynasty. A historical approach (the history of the Piasts and the battle of Legnica in 1241 concluded with the death of Henry II – the so-called 'absolute time') makes a clear statement on the status of Saint Hedwig by comparing her to Virgin Mary (fig. 13).[16] The accuracy of her choice is confirmed by her canonization, which gives the saint not only universal significance, but also strengthens the dynasty. From a historical point of view, the Silesian past is ultimately included in the overall Salvation plan, where Virgin Mary plays a special role. However, what needs to be highlighted is the fact that the impact of the manuscript with *Pictorial Legend* (although it was copied many times) must have been restricted. Nonetheless, it is one of the most important pieces of evidence that matters of local history were reflected upon by the members of the dynasty (this was to some extent probably attributed to Cistercians) and was an attempt to highlight its universal message.

Another work that may be viewed as especially intriguing in the context of the issue of regional identity is a herm reliquary of Saint Hedwig from the Collegiate Church of the Holy Cross, whose base contains a pair of shields with coats-of-arms of Silesia and Poland (fig. 14). They communicate, by means of heraldic language, Hedwig's descriptions

[15] Alicja Karłowska-Kamzowa, *Fundacje artystyczne księcia Ludwika I brzeskiego. Studia nad rozwojem świadomości historycznej na Śląsku XIV-XVIII w.*, Opole-Wrocław 1970; Romuald Kaczmarek, Jacek Witkowski, *Dzieje relikwii i relikwiarze świętej Jadwigi*, [in:] *Święta Jadwiga Śląska. W 750 rocznicę śmierci*, ed. Tadeusz Krupiński, Wrocław 1993, pp. 31–47, 59, 64–66, 77–82; Romuald Kaczmarek, *Das Bild der heiligen Hedwig. Zeugnisse in der Kunst vom 13. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert*, [in:] *Das Bild der heiligen Hedwig*, pp. 137–144.

[16] Such an interpretation was presented by A. Karłowska-Kamzowa, *Fundacje artystyczne*, p. 17. It was repeated by Dariusz Tabor CR, *Malarstwo książkowe na Śląsku w XIV wieku*, Kraków 2008, pp. 213–229.

contained in various texts devoted to the saint, including the papal bull of her canonization ('Polonorum patrona') and her *Vita minor* ('ducissa Slesie tociusque Polonie').[17] The fact that these representations are found in the Collegiate Church established by Henry IV the Righteous also seems to be a result of a conscious analytical reflection on the Church's history and figures of its duke-founder placed there.[18] However, in this case we are probably dealing with an attempt to highlight the universal and historical themes connected with the Piast dynasty by placing emphasis on its key figure, that is the canonized duchess-ancestor.[19]

Other events that had a very significant impact on the character of Silesian identity between the 14th and 15th centuries as expressed in fine arts included the growing fragmentation of its duchies and the process of Silesia's incorporation to the Crown of Bohemia and the way it functioned thereafter . The dynamics of these changes may be observed on representative ducal tombstones,[20] the vast majority of which have survived until today. Figural sculptures alone commemorate a dozen or so representatives of nine various branches of the Silesian Piasts. This impressive number is therefore surely evidence of the fragmentation of territorial authority. However, the vast majority of these monuments are sculptures of rulers who were liegemen of the King of Bohemia. One could also wonder whether it was not in fact caused by another stimulus: the intention to commemorate the members of a once-mighty and independent dynasty with a long-standing tradition, which at the time was in a state of utter decline? Historical awareness was supported here by the contents of annals and chronicles. In the initial period of Luxembourg's expansion in Lower Silesia, the creation of tombstones of former sovereigns could be viewed as a manifestation of their political views. Centuries later, it is much easier for us to deduce this message from the content of the inscriptions placed on the tombs than from the form of the work. Praising the virtues of the young Duke Przemysł (Przemko) II of Głogów (d. 1331), with special attention devoted to highlighting his Polish character, may be properly understood only in the context of the death of the Duke, which coincided with the military annexation of Głogów by John of Luxembourg.[21] Dynastic and historical reasons appear to dominate later, which is proven by the fact that the foundation of the tombstone of the hero of the battle of Legnica, Henry II the Pious, took place almost 140 years following his death. At the same time, the battle

[17] W. Irgang, *Die politische Bedeutung*, p. 47; *idem*, *Die heilige Hedwig*, p. 37.

[18] R. Kaczmarek, J. Witkowski, *op. cit.*, p. 66; Romuald Kaczmarek, *Kolegiata Krzyża Świętego we Wrocławiu jako fundacja Henryka IV Probusa. Impuls i następstwa - świadectwa ikonograficzne*, [in:] *Śląsk w czasach Henryka IV Prawego*, pp. 95–96.

[19] Cf: A. Karłowska-Kamzowa, *Fundacje artystyczne*, pp. 134–136.

[20] Janusz Kębłowski, *Nagrobki gotyckie na Śląsku*, Poznań 1969; *idem*, *Pomniki Piastów Śląskich w dobie średniowiecza*, Wrocław 1971 (=Monografie Śląskie Ossolineum, 20).

[21] Romuald Kaczmarek, *'QVE DEDIT IN DONIS DEVS ET NATURA POLONIS...'. Kwestia identyfikacji i datowania jednej z płyt nagrobnych w Lubiążu*, [in:] *Visibilia et invisibilia w sztuce średniowiecza. Księga poświęcona pamięci Profesor Kingi Szczepkowskiej-Naliwajek*, eds Artur Badach, Monika Janiszewska, Monika Tarkowska, Warszawa 2009, pp. 375–390.

with the Tatars, which was referred to in the national legends and which is known to us from several medieval artistic representations, became a myth of the genesis of Silesia. However, from about the mid-14th century the dependence of the majority of Silesian lands on the Crown of Bohemia became a fact that was widely accepted and manifested. Although – to be honest – evidence of this fact in fine arts, mainly in heraldry, is known to us only from duchies that became directly subordinated to the Crown. Only in this context can we interpret the meaning of the tomb inscription of the last Duke of Wrocław, Henry VI (d. 1335) (fig. 15). There is no doubt that this vast collection of Piast tombstones was related with historical and dynastic interests showed especially by Duke Louis I,[22] which were most likely also familiar to monastic circles – although for quite different reasons.

[22] A. Karłowska-Kamzowa, *Fundacje artystyczne*, pp. 99–143.

Illustration 1. Wrocław, Church of St Mary Magdalene, the nave looking to the east.

Illustration 2. Brzeg, Church of St Nicholas, the nave vault looking to the east.

Illustration 3. Wrocław, former Franciscan Church of St Jacob, the north side of the nave viewing from the south aisle.

Illustration 4. Wrocław, Church of St Mary, view of vaults in the nave and in the aisles.

Illustration 5. Strzegom, Church of St Peter and St Paul, the nave vault looking to the east.

Illustration 6. Wrocław, Church of St Mary, view of vaults with sculptured corbels in the north aisle.

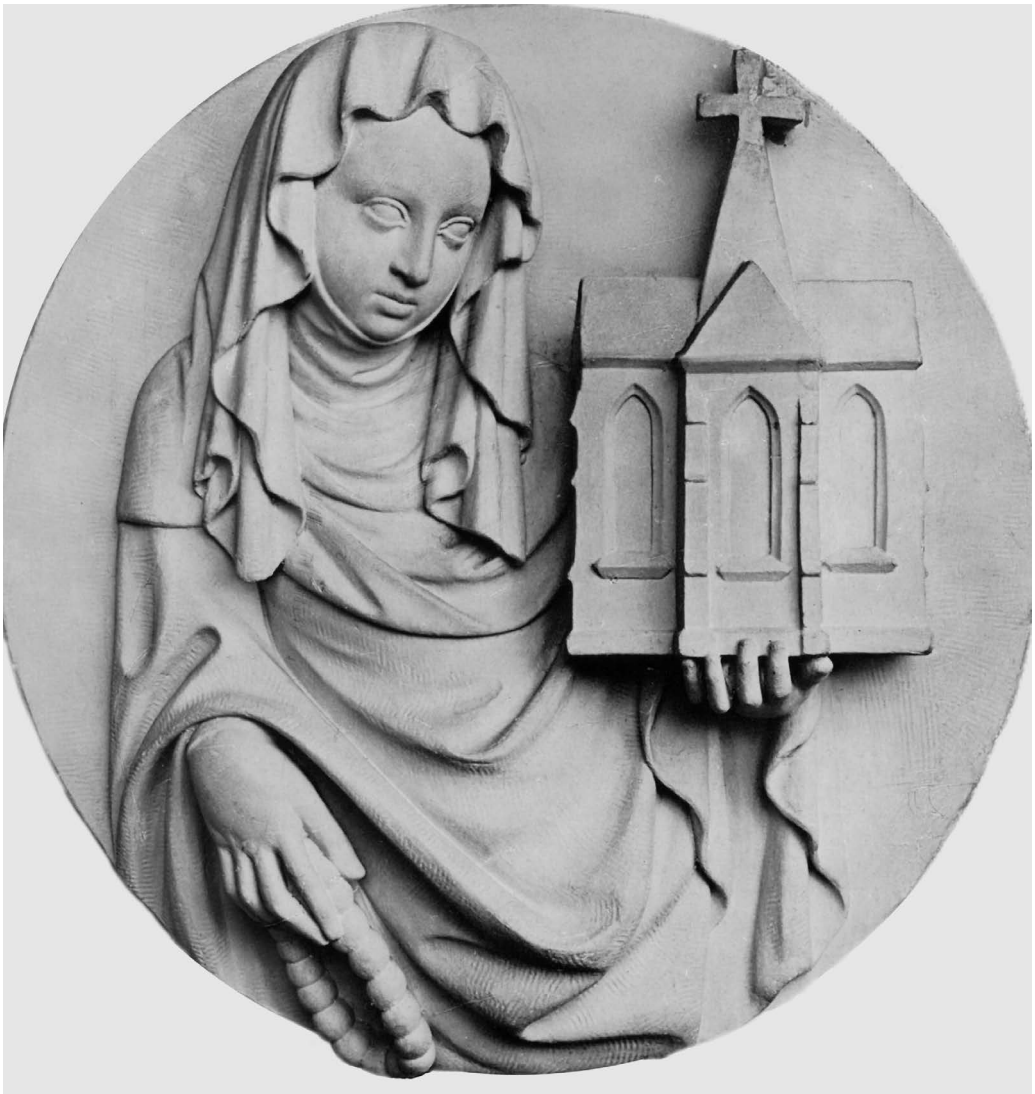

Illustration 7. Wrocław, Church of the Holy Cross, keystone with image of St Hedwig.

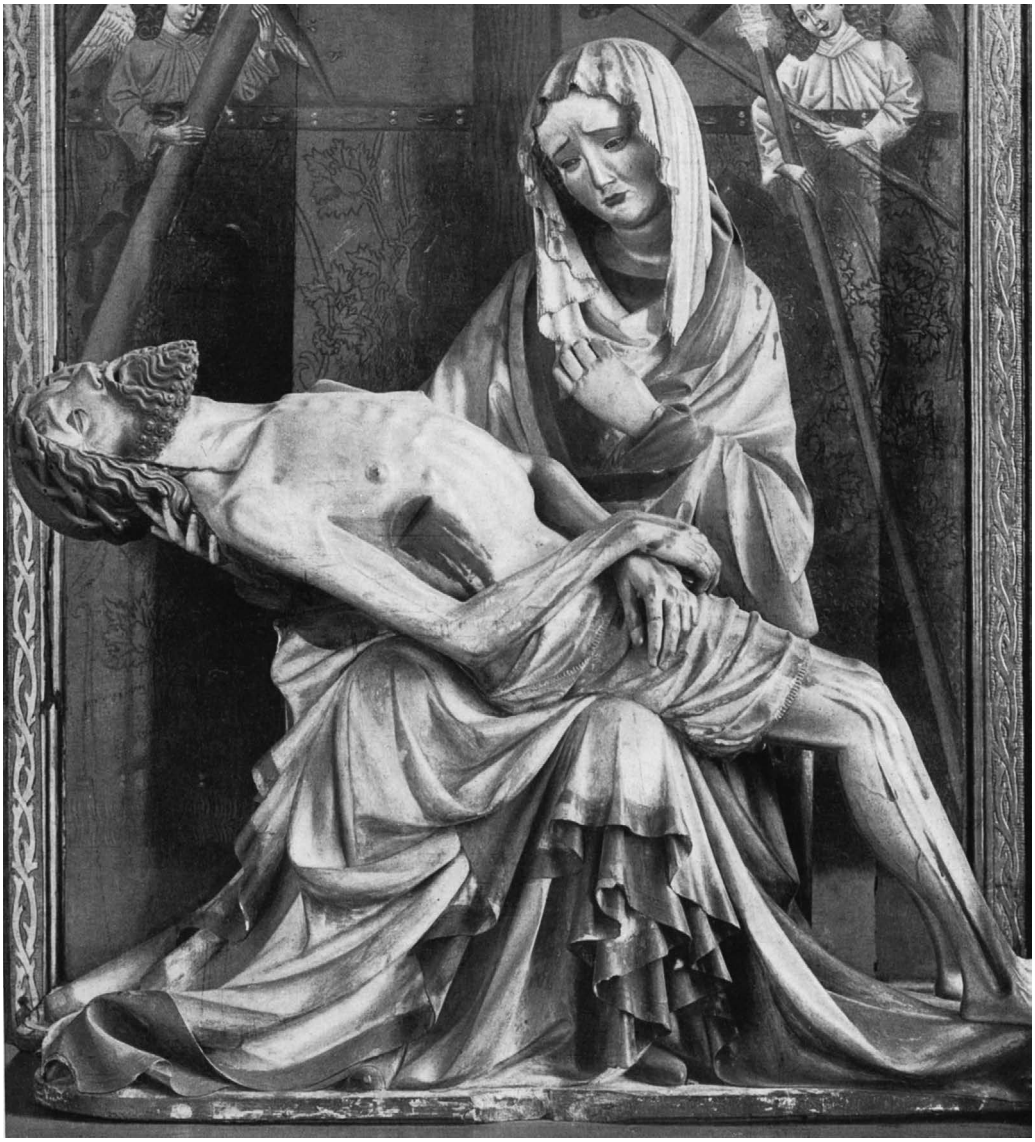

Illustration 8. Wrocław, sculpture of the Pieta, Church of St Elizabeth (lost).

Illustration 9. Madonna on lion from the Church of St Matthias in Wrocław (Archdiocesan Museum in Wrocław).

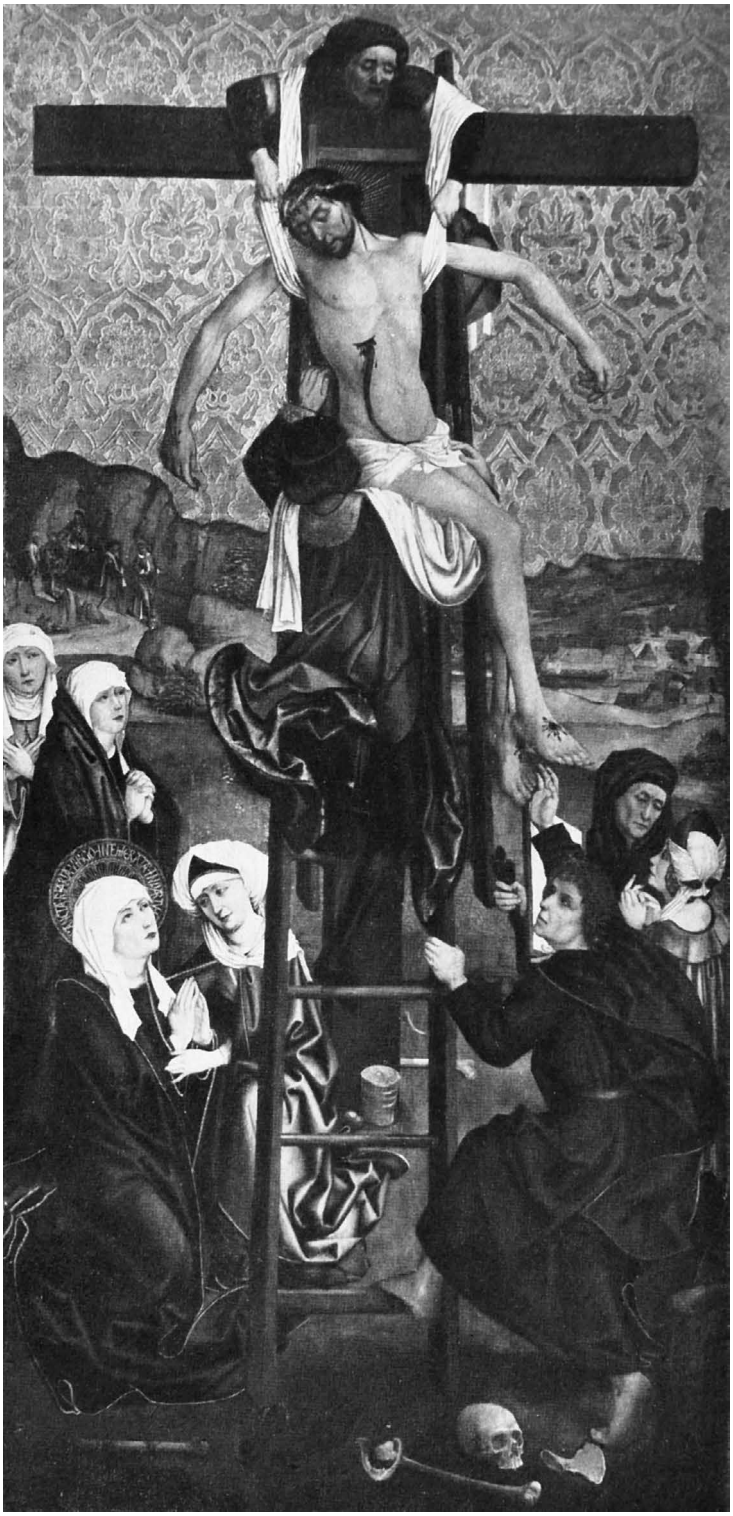

Illustration 10. Hans Pleydenwurff, panel representing the Descent from the cross from former retable (1462) of the main altar in the Church of St Elisabeth in Wrocław.

Illustration 11. *Dormition of the Virgin*, central scene of the retable (1492) from the Church of St Stanislaus and St Wenceslaus in Świdnica.

Illustration 12 a-b. Head of St John the Baptist on a platter, sculptures from building facades in Wrocław.

Illustration 13. St Hedwig with the remains of her son, Henry II the Pious, on the battlefield near Legnica; woodcut from The Legend of St Hedwig, pub. Konrad Baumgarten, Wrocław 1504.

Illustration 14. Reliquary of the mandible of St Hedwig (1512)
from the Church of the Holy Cross in Wrocław.

Illustration 15. Tombstone of Henry VI, Wrocław, Church of St Clara.

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Regional identity in Silesia (until 1526)

Abstract:

During the search for factors constituting proof of the existence of a Silesian regional identity in the Late Middle Ages, the author analyzed the process of formation and functioning of common traditions. Among the contributing factors analyzed is the name *Śląsk*/*Silesia* and the process through which it entered the collective consciousness. The Piast dynasty was a significant element of this tradition, considering the attempts made at preserving their memory, primarily within historiographical works. Saint Hedwig of Silesia (d. 1243) was of particular significance to this dynasty; her cult changed from one dynastic in nature into regional, as she became the patron saint of Silesia. In Silesian tradition Piotr Włostowic (d. circa 1151) is another very important figure; his literary and historiographical prowess allowed him to rise to the status of regional hero. The local Church was also significant in the forging of regional identity. The author analyzed the actions it took for the purpose of preserving and strengthening knowledge about the Bishops of Wrocław, indicating such sources as the bishop catalogues which were widespread in Silesia. Much attention was paid to the regional discourse present within chronicles and other publications; in the Late Middle Ages these became the main platform for expression of regional issues. Analyzing the particulars of some events, the author indicated the tangled paths to the formation of a Silesian regional identity. This was primarily the result of the far-reaching ethnic changes taking place in Silesia at the turn of the 12th and 13th centuries, alongside the influence of cultural traits imported from bordering regions.

Keywords:

Śląsk / Silesia, Wrocław, historiography, middle ages, regional identity, patriotism, Church, chronicles, annals, catalogues of bishops, Piast dynasty, St. Hedwig of Silesia, Piotr Włostowic, Henryków Book, German language, Polish language, Latin

The issue of regional identity has already been explored by scholars in a variety of ways;[1] I have decided therefore to refrain from defining it here. Nevertheless, as the aim of my study is to identify the beginnings and the earliest traces of regional identity in Silesia, it would be reasonable to briefly describe my practical understanding of this concept. In my view, these are factors which prove the existence of this specific identity and distinguish the social group of our interest (Silesians) from other communities. The

[1] Cf. Jürgen Petersohn's deliberations on Franconia, *Franken im Mittelalter. Identität und Profil im Spiegel von Bewußtsein und Vorstellung*, Ostfildern 2008 (=Vorträge und Forschungen. Sonderband, 51), p. 52 and following. See also collective volumes on this subject: *Regionale Identität und soziale Gruppen im deutschen Mittelalter*, ed. Peter Moraw, Berlin 1992 (=Zeitschrift für historische Forschung, 14); *Identité régionale et conscience nationale en France et en Allemage du Moyen Âge à l'Époque Moderne. Actes du colloque organisé par l'Université Paris XII – Val de Marne, l'Institut universitaire de France et l'Institut Historique Allemand à l'Université Paris XII et à la Fondation Singer-Polignac, les 6, 7 et 8 octobre 1993*, eds Rainer Babel, Jean-Marie Moeglin, Sigmaringen 1997 (=Beihefte der Francia, vol. 39); *Spätmittelalterliches Landesbewusstsein in Deutschland*, ed. Matthias Werner, Ostfildern 2005 (=Vorträge und Forschungen, 61). Cf. valuable observations on national consciousness/identity: Benedykt Zientara, *Świt narodów europejskich*. See also W. Mrozowicz, *Od kiedy,* pp. 135–147.

point of reference for these factors must be, in every case, a particular region (Silesia), and it is between this region and a particular community that there develops, over a long historical period, a conscious and positive emotional bond. These factors, without doubt, include: a shared space designated by one universal name (understood dynamically, that is with consideration of its political-territorial transformations), a shared language or languages, a shared culture and religion, shared interests and legal system, as well as a shared leadership.

From the perspective of this study, the most important factor to prove the existence of cultural/regional identity is a shared tradition. This refers to values and symbols that develop over a region's history, including nomenclature, and is founded on experiences shared by inhabitants of that region, which means that this tradition refers to the past and to the memory of the past, and nurtures the memory of common heroes of the bygone era. These are the central issues to be examined in the following presentation of the origins of regional identity in Silesia.

A particular concept may only take root in the collective consciousness when it is named. This somewhat clichéd statement refers to the usage of geographical names by individuals who see a certain value in the designatum of a given name, as well as by external observers. The process by which the name Silesia emerged may be only traced back through written sources. The discussion on the subject of the earliest names that were once used to identify Silesia and its inhabitants falls outside of the parameters of the period this study is focused on. My principal interest is the period from the mid-12th century onwards when the name of Silesia (originating from the name of the tribe of Ślężanie) – known already in the 9th century – was becoming increasingly widespread and replaced all other tribe-related names found in the sources from between the 9th and 11th centuries.

The oldest records where the name of Silesia can be found are written in Latin and occurred in a Latin linguistic context. They reflect the Slavic form of the name only slightly. During the Middle Ages varied forms of this name appeared in writing, which were adjusted to the specificity of each of the four major languages used in Silesia at the time. These included first and foremost the Latin form of the name used by educated individuals (*Silesia*), then the name used by Silesian citizens of Polish and Czech origin (*Śląsk* and *Slezsko*, respectively), and eventually that used by the German settlers (*Schlesien*).

The name derived from the tribe of Ślężanie started to define a region which was far more extensive than that initially occupied by the tribe.[2] Evidence of this fact may be

[2] As regards the name of Silesia, its origin and meaning, see Wacław Korta, *Spór o nazwę Śląska*, 'Sobótka', 41 (1986), No. 2, pp. 165–186; Winfried Irgang, *Oberschlesien im Mittelalter: Einführung in Raum und Zeit*, [in:] *Oberschlesien im späten Mittelalter. Eine Region im Spannungsfeld zwischen Polen, Böhmen-Mähren und dem Reich vom 13. bis zum Beginn des 16. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Thomas Wünsch, Berlin 1993 (=Tagungsreihe der Stiftung Haus Oberschlesien, vol. 1), pp. 14–20; W. Mrozowicz, *Od kiedy*, pp. 135–136. It would be worth mentioning here the recent attempt to relaunch the discussion on the connection of the tribe of Silingi with Silesia, and in consequence the origins of the name of Silesia: see Przemysław Siekierka, *Silingowie u Klaudiusza Ptolemeusza*, pp. 553–562.

found in sources produced outside Silesia, dating to the first decades of the 12th century. These include, especially, the oldest Polish and Czech chronicles.[3] The name of the Silesian region (recorded as *regio Zlesnensis* or *regio, que Slezsko vocatur*) was adopted mostly by the inhabitants of its surrounding territories. However, it needs to be emphasized that this process occurred very slowly. This is proved by another Polish chronicle, written around the turn of the 13th century by Master Vincent Kadłubek, which still lacks a uniform geographic-ethnic terminology. What we find there are two references to the province of *Silencii* or *Silenciani*,[4] two references to the name 'divina Silencii provincia' and 'sacra Silencii provincia',[5] as well as three references to the inhabitants of Silesia: *Silenciades*, *Silencii* and *Silenciani*.[6] It would seem that this abundance of names reflects the slow process of development of the Silesian region within the new political structure of the Polish lands that resulted from feudal fragmentation. From the outset of the 13th century the region of Silesia and Silesian dukes played a crucial role in this structure (as the so-called monarchy of the Henrys of Silesia).[7]

At the same time, the charters issued by successive Silesian dukes – who were becoming increasingly independent rulers – contained the title of Duke of Silesia (*dux Zlesie* and variations thereof). The first one to use this title in 1175 was Duke Boleslaus the Tall.[8] His son Henry I the Bearded and his successors followed his example. This title referred only to dukes which exercised power over the territory of Lower Silesia. Almost at the same time, the dukes of Upper Silesia started to use the title of Dukes of Opole (*dux de Oppul*).[9] In the oldest Silesian chronicle, produced ca. 1260s–1270s in the Cirstercian monastery of Henryków – the so-called *Henryków Book* – the name Silesia occurs numerous times as part of ducal titles and as a geographical term. The most characteristic were expressions such as 'the province of the Silesian land' (*Sleziensis terre provincia*, I 1), 'Silesian land' (*terra Sleziensis*, I 1) or simply 'the land of Silesia' (*terra Slesie*, I 8, 9), which prove that at the time Silesia was already perceived as an independent geographic

[3] *Anonima tzw. Galla Kronika czyli dzieje książąt i władców polskich*, ed. Karol Maleczyński, Kraków 1952 (=Monumenta Poloniae Historica, nova series, vol. 2), II, 50, p. 119; Canonici Wissegradensis, *Continuatio Cosmae a. 1126-1142*, ed. Josef Emler, [in:] *Fontes rerum Bohemicarum*, vol. 2, Praha 1874, p. 216. Cf: Marek Cetwiński, *Ślązacy w kronikach polskich (Anonima tzw. Galla i Wincentego zwanego Kadłubkiem)*, [in:] *Ślązacy w oczach własnych i obcych*, pp. 68–70; Antoni Barciak, *Śląsk w źródłach czeskich do końca XIV w.*, [in:] *Przełomy w historii. XVI Powszechny Zjazd Historyków Polskich, Wrocław 15-18 września 1999 roku. Pamiętnik*, eds Krzysztof Ruchniewicz, Jakub Tyszkiewicz, Wojciech Wrzesiński, vol. 2, part 1, Toruń 2000, p. 117.

[4] *Magistri Vincenti dicti Kadlubek Chronica Polonorum*, I 9 6, II 22 16. See also T. Jurek, *Die Entwicklung eines schlesischen Regionalbewußtseins*, p. 24; M. Cetwiński, *Ślązacy*, pp. 70–73; W. Mrozowicz, *Od kiedy*, pp. 138–139.

[5] Magistri Vincentii, *Chronica…*, III 18 11, III 30 7.

[6] *Ibidem*, III 18 11, III 18 13, III 18 14.

[7] See B. Zientara, *Henryk Brodaty*, 2nd edition, pp. 271–381; P. Wiszewski, *Henryk II Pobożny*, pp. 149–205.

[8] SUb., vol. 1, Nos 45 (1175), 49 (1177). The subject was examined in more detail by T. Jurek, *Die Entwicklung eines schlesischen Regionalbewußtseins*, pp. 25–26.

[9] For more information on ducal titles see T. Jurek, *Die Entwicklung eines schlesischen Regionalbewußtseins*, p. 25; A. Rüther, *op. cit.*, pp. 189-191.

unit and, in connection with the ducal titles, as an independent political unit also.[10] The occurrence of the name Silesia in both medieval documents and in the *Henryków Book* allows one to assume that throughout the 13th century its popularity gained in force, and the name appeared not only in scholarly chronicles but was also fully recognized and used at Silesian courts and by the clergy.

In light of the surviving sources it becomes obvious that in the period this paper is concerned with it was rather uncommon to examine the origins of the name of the region. One of the first contemporary scholars that addressed the issue was Wincenty Kadłubek, who presented the quasi-etymology of the term. It is, however, difficult to deduce exactly what he meant when calling Silesia 'a divine [or sacred] province of silence'. These words rather did not refer to the ecclesiastical province of Silesia,[11] for this was designated in the 13th century as the Church (*Ecclesia Wratizlaviensis*) or diocese of Wrocław (*dyocesis Wratizlaviensis*).[12] Nevertheless, the extent to which one can justifiably attribute a metaphoric or mystical sense to this expression is unclear.[13] Neither the authority of modern Silesian mystics nor one of Kadłubek's methods of concealing the true meaning of the described phenomenon (*integumentum*) seem to be convincing in this respect.[14]

A quite contrary approach to the origins of the name of the region was presented by an anonymous annalist who, in the second half of the 15th century, completed and then continued an anonymous Czech annual chronicle. Its completed version is known as *Historia Bohemica, Polonica et Silesiaca*.[15] The Czech annalist is also famous for adapting the tale of three brothers – Czech, Krak and Lech – to the Silesian cultural context. According

[10] *Liber fundationis claustri sanctae Mariae Virginis in Heinrichow, passim*. More information on the term *terra* in *The Henryków Book* and other sources see Kazimierz Orzechowski, *'Terra' w śląskich źródłach narracyjnych do końca XIV wieku*, 'Sobótka', 36 (1981), No. 2, pp. 219-241; *idem, 'Terra' w dokumentach śląskich do końca XIV wieku*, 'Sobótka', 40 (1985), No. 2, pp. 226–251; see also Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Wyobraźnia przestrzenna śląskiego dziejopisarstwa średniowiecznego*, [in:] *Śląsk w czasie i przestrzeni*, eds Joanna Nowosielska-Sobel, Grzegorz Strauchold, Wrocław 2009 (=Spotkania Dolnośląskie), pp. 11–13.

[11] M. Cetwiński, *Ślązacy*, p. 72.

[12] See for example *Liber fundationis claustri sanctae Mariae Virginis in Heinrichow*, p. 193.

[13] Mistrz Wincenty (tzw. Kadłubek), *Kronika polska*, translated and edited by Brygida Kürbis, Wrocław 1996, p. 139, footnote No. 93.

[14] Zbigniew Kadłubek, *Integumentum i 'święta kraina milczenia' Mistrza Wincentego*, Mediewistyka.net (http://www.mediewistyka.pl/content/view/81/40/; accessed on December 4th, 2012).

[15] The manuscript IV F 104 housed in the University Library in Wrocław contains valuable information on the subject, see Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Die Acta quedam notatu digna im Lichte einer neuentdeckten Handschrift. Plädoyer für die Neuausgabe des Werkes*, [in:] *Editionswissenschaftliche Kolloquien 2003/2004. Historiographie, Briefe und Korrespondenzen. Editiorische Methoden*, eds Matthias Thumser, Janusz Tandecki in cooperation with Antje Thumser, Toruń 2005 (=Publikationen des deutsch-polnischen Gesprächskreizes für Quelleneditionen, vol. 3), pp. 90–91, 96; Marie Bláhová, *Společné dějiny? Slezská redakce anonymní České kroniky 15. století*, [in:] *Slezsko – země koruny české. Historie a kultura 1300-1740*, eds Helena Dáňová, Jan Klípa, Lenka Stolárová, Praha 2008, pp. 233–244; *eadem, Tercius Lech… plantavit totam Silesiam. Die Widerspiegelung des Wissens um die Zusammengehörigkeit der Schlesier zur Böhmischen Krone in der Historiographie des Spätmittelalters*, [in:] *Geschichte, Erinnerung, Selbstidentifikation. Die schriftliche Kultur in den Ländern der Böhmischen Krone im 14.-18. Jahrhundert*, eds Lenka Bobková, Jan Zdichynec, Praha 2011 (=Die Kronländer in der Geschichte des böhmischen Staates, 5), pp. 14–26.

to earlier Polish chronicles, mainly those of Wincenty Kadłubek, as well as of *Chronica Polonorum* which was produced in Silesia and based on Kadłubek's work, the last of these brothers was viewed as the founder and the eponym of the Polish state inhabited by the tribe of Lechites. In the discussed tale, both Poland and Cracow (Polish: Kraków) derive from Krak, and Lech is viewed as the eponym of Legnica ('fundavit Lechnicz, que civitas dicitur Legnicz, et plantavit totam Slesiam'). At the same time, Legnica is viewed as the centre of Silesia and symbolic of the region as a whole.

A vital role in the process of founding a regional identity is played by the people in power. In the feudal era, when society was organized in a hierarchical fashion, a special task was entrusted to individuals occupying the top positions – the rulers and, more generally speaking, the families they descended from. They fulfilled their mission either actively – as part of their rulership, for example, by leading military campaigns or undertaking actions related to the territory under their control, or passively – by making their image available to writers and artists who in turn made them the subjects of courtly narratives, local chronicles or artistic representations.

The common belief that power comes from God had been introduced as early as Antiquity and over the centuries it was further strengthened by the contents of the Holy Bible, most notably by the words of Saint Paul – 'non est enim potestas nisi a Deo' (Romans 13, 1). This view was reflected in the oldest Polish chronicles of Gallus Anonymous and Wincenty Kadłubek, whose views on the origins of the Piast dynasty (although this name was not yet used at that time) presented a coherent vision of the sacred character of the rulership of the descendants of Piast or Mieszko I.[16] The message of these chronicles was gradually absorbed by local Silesian historiography. A legend telling the story of Piast's visitation of two pilgrims, who transpired to be divine angels, was included in *Chronica principum Poloniae*.[17] This chronicle also describes the dynasty (*progenies*) that was established by Piast as being created in an act of divine providence (*Divina disposicione*),[18] while it was widely known that one of the Piast dynastic branches controlled Silesia as a consequence of territorial divisions introduced by Boleslaus the Wrymouth.

[16] For more information on the divine origins of Piast power presented in the chronicles see Jacek Banaszkiewicz, *Podanie o Piaście i Popielu. Studium porównawcze nad wczesnośredniowiecznymi tradycjami dynastycznymi*, Warszawa 1986, especially pp. 149–155; Czesław Deptuła, *Galla Anonima mit genezy Polski. Studium z historiozofii i hermeneutyki symboli dziejopisarstwa średniowiecznego*, 2nd edition, Lublin 2000, pp. 156, 166–167; Przemysław Wiszewski, *Domus Bolezlai. W poszukiwaniu tradycji dynastycznej Piastów (do około 1138 roku)*, Wrocław 2008 (=Złota Seria Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, vol. 1), especially. pp. 174–186.

[17] *Kronika książąt polskich*, pp. 435–437. For more information on the circulation of the chronicle's manuscripts see Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Cronica principum Polonie und Cronica ducum Silesie – die Hauptwerke der Fürstenchronistik Schlesiens (Einige Überlieferungs- und Deutungsprobleme)*, [in:] *Die Hofgeschichtsschreibung im mittelalterlichen Europa: Projekte und Forschungsprobleme*, eds Rudolf Schieffer, Jarosław Wenta, Toruń 2006 (=Subsidia historiographica, vol. 3), pp. 150–152.

[18] *Kronika książąt polskich*, p. 435.

The Piast dynasty, whose power was viewed as being ordained by God, enjoyed great respect in Silesia. Its memory was nurtured by monastic circles, which in turn were offered strong support by the Piasts in the early stages of their settlement in Silesia. What needs to be highlighted is that the creation of *Chronica Polonorum* is probably closely related to the foundation by the Piast Duke Boleslaus I the Tall of the Cistercian monastery of Lubiąż.[19] The chronicle was produced in the 1280s when the process of feudal fragmentation in Silesia was reaching its peak and the rulers of remaining Polish territories were increasingly inclined towards the idea of state unification.[20] It is not completely certain whether the principal founder of the chronicle was actually the later duke-unifier of the lands of Poland, Henry IV the Righteous.[21] It is suspected that at the time he was in need of an ideological tool to support his political actions which focused on gaining power over the restored Kingdom of Poland.[22] *Chronica Polonorum*, although unfinished and lacking editorial finishing touches (perhaps due to the sudden death of the author?), could have functioned as such a tool. This may be manifested, for instance, in the great attention devoted by the anonymous chronicler to the history of the 'monarchy' of Cracow, the purpose of which could be to direct the thoughts of Silesian dukes towards the Crown of Poland. What he actually presented was the earliest history of the Duchy of Silesia in connection with the role played in the capital by Ladislaus the Exile,[23] as well as the process of Henry I the Bearded's assuming power over Cracow.[24] According to *Chronica Polonorum*, the Silesian branch of the Piast dynasty was simply predestined to rule over both Cracow and the entire Kingdom of Poland. This approach is crucial for the process of founding a regional identity in Silesia.[25] According

[19] Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Śląska Kronika polska. Wstęp do studium źródłoznawczego (część 1)*, [in:] *Studia z historii średniowiecza*, ed. Mateusz Goliński, Wrocław 2003 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No 2512, Historia 163), pp. 105-128.

[20] See also a recently published work by Wojciech Drelicharz, *Idea zjednoczenia królestwa w średniowiecznym dziejopisarstwie polskim*, Kraków 2012 (=Monografie Towarzystwa Naukowego Societas Vistulana, vol. 1); for the earlier literature see especially Janusz Bieniak, *Zjednoczenie państwa polskiego*, [in:] *Polska dzielnicowa i zjednoczona. Państwo – społeczeństwo – kultura*, ed. Aleksander Gieysztor, Warszawa 1972, p. 208–216.

[21] Heinrich von Loesch, *Zum Chronicon Polono-Silesiacum*, 'Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthums Schlesien', 65 (1931), p. 225; Wacław Korta, *Średniowieczna annalistyka śląska*, Wrocław 1966, p. 345; Gerard Labuda, *Kroniki genealogiczne jako źródła do dziejów rozbicia i zjednoczenia monarchii w Polsce średniowiecznej*, 'Studia Źródłoznawcze', 22 (1977), pp. 49–50; *idem, Nowe spojrzenie na śląską 'Kronikę polską*', [in:] *Ojczyzna bliższa i dalsza. Studia historyczne ofiarowane Feliksowi Kirykowi w sześćdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin*, eds Jacek Chrobaczyński, Andrzej Jureczko, Michał Śliwa, Kraków 1993, pp. 26–32; Elżbieta Wilamowska, '*Kronika polsko-śląska'. Zabytek pochodzenia lubiąskiego*, 'Studia Źródłoznawcze', 25 (1980), pp. 88–92; Roman Michałowski, *Princeps fundator. Studium z dziejów kultury politycznej w Polsce X-XIII wieku*, Warszawa 1993, p. 115; Tomasz Jurek, *Plany koronacyjne Henryka Probusa*, [in:] *Śląsk w czasach Henryka IV Prawego*, p. 26. See also controversial views of Jerzy Mularczyk, *Kronika polska i jej relacja o bitwie pod Studnicą*, 'Kwartalnik Historyczny', 95 (1989), No. 2, pp. 25–55.

[22] On these actions see especially T. Jurek, *Plany*, p. 13–27.

[23] *Kronika polska*, pp. 629–643.

[24] *Ibidem*, pp. 641, 647, 648.

[25] Cf: Roman Heck, *O piastowskich tradycjach średniowiecznego Śląska (Problemy świadomości historycznej i narodowej)*, 'Kwartalnik Historyczny', 84 (1977), No. 1, p. 15, 17–21.

to the author of the chronicle, just as Silesia was to retain its political connection with Poland – independent of the ethnic transformations of the time – so the identity of the Silesian community was to be permanently connected with the idea of 'Polishness'. Silesia was be perceived as being part of a Polish community, which in turn was unified – at the time only idealistically, although the past this had really been the case – by such values as a shared religion and the cults of saints, shared symbols (the crown, art) and shared leadership.[26]

The memory of the Piast dynasty was further cultivated by the monks of Lubiąż in the following century. In the second half of the 14th century *The Epitaphs of the Dukes of Silesia* (*Epytaphia ducum Slezie*) were produced,[27] a work combining obituary annals and a genealogical chronicle which outlines the links between the chosen representatives of the Piast dynasty.[28] At this point it is worth mentioning that these links often exceeded regional boundaries. Based on the contents of the annals and their structure, it has been claimed that the Dukes of Głogów had aspirations to both unify the lands of Poland and to assume the Crown of the Kingdom of Poland.[29] This assertion is somewhat in opposition to the source's actual practical function, however, which was to commemorate the founder of the monastery and his family as part of the liturgical obligation of the monastic community.[30] Moreover, it would require an (involuntary?) transmission of an ideological message on the part of the authors which would have been utterly unthinkable to the German Cistercians from the Lubiąż monastery. It appears that the content that is closest to their hearts is contained in the so-called *Versus Lubenses* – somewhat a work of propaganda which praised the contributions of the Lubiąż monks to the cultural transformation of Silesia between the 12th and the 14th centuries.[31] In my view, these ambiguities demonstrate that the formation of a distinct Silesian identity was a complicated process.

[26] Cf: W. Drelicharz, *op. cit.*, pp. 199–240.

[27] *Nagrobki xiążąt szląskich (Epytaphia ducum Slezie)*, ed. August Bielowski, [in:] *Monumenta Poloniae Historica*, vol. 3, pp. 710–714.

[28] W. Korta, *Średniowieczna annalistyka*, pp. 260–262.

[29] J. Kębłowski, *Pomniki Piastów śląskich*, p. 72; Michał Kaczmarek, *Nekrolog lubiąski. Próba krytyki przekazu*, 'Studia Źródłoznawcze', 26 (1981), p. 125; W. Drelicharz, *op. cit.*, pp. 291-295; for the political strategy of Henry (III) of Głogów see especially Tomasz Jurek, *Dziedzic Królestwa Polskiego*, pp. 48–50, 70–75.

[30] See i.e.: Georg Tellenbach, *Die historische Dimension der liturgischen Commemoratio im Mittelalter*, [in:] *Memoria. Der geschichtliche Zeugniswert des liturgischen Gedenkens im Mittelalter*, eds Karl Schmid, Joachim Wollasch, München 1984 (=Münstersche Mittelalter-Schriften, vol. 48), pp. 209–210; Otto G. Oexle, *Memoria i przekaz memoratywny we wczesnym średniowieczu*, translated by Stefan Kwiatkowski, [in:] *idem, Społeczeństwo średniowiecza. Mentalność – grupy społeczne – formy życia*, Toruń 2000, pp. 69–70; M. Kaczmarek, *Nekrolog Lubiąski*, pp. 114–115.

[31] *Wiersz o pierwszych zakonnikach Lubiąża*, ed. August Bielowski, [in:] *Monumenta Poloniae Historica*, vol. 3, pp. 708–710. On this work see i.e.: Konstanty K. Jażdżewski, *Lubiąż. Losy i kultura umysłowa śląskiego opactwa cystersów (1163-1642)*, Wrocław 1992 (=Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, No 1081), p. 25, 111–115, 160; Siegfried Epperlein, *Gründungsmythos deutscher Zisterzienserklöster östlich der Elbe im hohen Mittelalter und der Bericht des Leubuser Mönches im 14. Jahrhundert*, 'Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte', 3 (1967), pp. 303-335 (I quote the Polish edition: *idem, Mit fundacyjny*, pp. 587–604); E. Wilamowska, *op. cit.*, p. 81; Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Średniowieczne śląskie dziejopisarstwo klasztorne*, [in:] *Tysiącletnie dziedzictwo kulturowe diecezji wrocławskiej*, pp. 146–147; *idem, Z dyskusji*

The impact of this work was not limited to the enclosed world of the monastery; its message spread outside the thick walls of the complex, which is best evidenced by *Chronica principum Poloniae*, written around the mid-1380s by the Canon of the Collegiate Church of Brzeg, Piotr of Byczyna. The work refers directly, and at times indirectly, to the content of *The Epitaphs of the Dukes of Silesia*.[32] In this context, it would seem reasonable to adopt a similar interpretation of the message of *Chronica principum Poloniae*, which – created out of inspiration and on commission of the Dukes of Legnica-Brzeg with Louis I at the head – was to provide ideological support for his efforts to win power over Poland during the period of instability following the death of King Louis I of Hungary.[33]

His attempts did not, however, yield the result he expected. In the Late Middle Ages in the territory of Silesia a somewhat archaic territorial division into duchies still survived, but their significance within the Bohemian Crown was rather minor and was systematically losing strength. At the same time, the importance of the Piast dukes was also weakening, especially with regard to their position in the complex political, national and religious arrangement of late medieval central Europe.[34] The declining importance of the Piast dukes in Silesia, together with the decline of their impact on the formation of Silesian identity (related to the ruling dynasty), suffered even more damage following the emergence of dukes from other ruling families of central Europe: the descendants of the King of Bohemia, George of Poděbrady (from 1453) in the Duchy of Ziębice and Oleśnica, Saxon electors (from 1474) in part of the Duchy of Żagań, as well as the Hohenzollerns (from 1482), who assumed power over Krosno Odrzańskie, formerly part of the Duchy of Głogów. In the north-eastern borderlands of Silesia there emerged a so-called 'free state lords'.[35] All the transformations that strongly weakened the position of the dukes resulted in the fact that, when viewed in a wider social context, they ceased to constitute a building factor of regional identity. From then on they were only rarely mentioned in local chronicles, like, for example, *Chronica principum Poloniae* (dated at

nad początkami klasztorów w średniowiecznej historiografii śląskiej, [in:] *Origines mundi*, pp. 177–178; P. Wiszewski, *Zakonnicy i dworzanie*, pp. 186–187, 192–193; *idem*, *Świat XIII-XIV-wiecznych cystersów lubiąskich w kilku lustrach uchwycony* (unpublished text – I would like to thank the author for making it available to me); R. Bartlett, *Tworzenie Europy*, pp. 234–236; W.P. Könighaus, *Die Zisterzienserabtei Leubus*, m.in. pp. 11, 15–16, 27–28.

[32] *Kronika książąt polskich*, chapter 18 and *passim*; *Monumenta Lubensia*, p. 7; W. Korta, *Średniowieczna annalistyka*, p. 260.

[33] See also further pages.

[34] Cf: R. Heck, *O piastowskich*, pp. 16–20.

[35] For more information on these transformations see Marian Ptak, Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Die territorialrechtliche Binnenstruktur Schlesiens. Ein historischer Überblick vom Mittelalter bis zum Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts*, [in:] *Adel in Schlesien*. vol. 2: *Repertorium: Forschungsperspektiven – Quellenkunde – Bibliographie*, eds Joachim Bahlcke, Wojciech Mrozowicz, München 2010 (=Schriften des Bundesinstituts für Kultur und Geschichte der Deutschen im östlichen Europa, vol. 37), pp. 37–67; in this volume see also the article of Marcin Pauk and Ewa Wółkiewicz.

the turn of the 16th century),[36] which needs to be regarded more as a curiosity than a reminiscence of the former glory of the Piast dynasty with a more profound ideological message. *Chronica*, formerly attributed to Benedict of Poznań, should by no means be treated as a call 'to return Silesia to Poland'.[37]

The only representative of the dynasty of Silesian rulers, also remembered vividly in the Late Middle Ages, was Duchess Hedwig (d. 1243), the wife of Henry I the Bearded.[38] Although originally a member of the Bavarian ducal family of Andechs, she became part of the Piast dynasty through marriage and not long after occupied an honourable place in Piast history. This was to a large extent due to her being canonized soon after her death, as early as 1267. The ceremony, held in Trzebnica, gathered numerous Piast dukes, including from outside Silesia, and Hedwig was the first member of the Piast dynasty to be proclaimed a dynastic saint. Thanks to Saint Hedwig, the entire Piast dynasty was sanctified (*beata stirps).* This is best illustrated by the work devoted to the genealogy of Saint Hedwig.[39] The unusual case of this German-born duchess proclaimed a saint and patron of the Polish dynasty is more evidence of the complexity of the process of the development of identity of Silesia.

The mother of Henry II the Pious, a tragic hero from the battle of Legnica, enjoyed a special place in the cult tradition of the Piasts of Silesia. Her worship gained in strength when Bishop Przecław of Pogorzela extended it to the entire diocese in 1344.[40] It developed further due to various widely-disseminated tales of Hedwig's life, and these included not only biographic-hagiographic or preacher's texts (in Latin, German and Czech), but

[36] Published only partially in footnotes to the edition of *Kronika książąt polskich*, pp. 489–490, 492–493, 495, 498, 500–507, 509–510, 512–517, 520–523, 525–529, 531–533, 535, 540, 542–544, 548–552, 554, 556–565. On this subject see W. Mrozowicz, *Cronica principum*, pp. 153–159.

[37] Zofia Grabowiecka, *Benedykt z Poznania – szesnastowieczny badacz polskiej przeszłości Śląska*, [in:] *Z dziejów postępowej ideologii na Śląsku w XIV-XVI w.*, ed. Ewa Maleczyńska, Warszawa 1956, pp. 125–150, here 150.

[38] On this subject see especially Joseph Gottschalk, *Sankt Hedwig, Herzogin von Schlesien*, Köln 1964; Benigna Suchoń, *Święta Jadwiga, księżna śląska*, 'Nasza Przeszłość', 53 (1980), pp. 5-132; Antoni Kiełbasa, *Święta Jadwiga Śląska*, Warszawa 1990.

[39] *Tractatus sive Speculum genealoye sancte Hedwigis quondam ducisse Slesie*, ed. Aleksander Semkowicz, [in:] *Monumenta Poloniae Historica*, vol. 4, Lwów 1884, pp. 642–651. For more information on this source and the notion of *beata stirps* see Kazimierz Jasiński, *Franciszkanin Henryk z Breny propagatorem kultu św. Jadwigi*, [in:] *Księga Jadwiżańska. Międzynarodowe Sympozjum Naukowe 'Święta Jadwiga w dziejach i kulturze Śląska', Wrocław-Trzebnica 21-23 września 1993 roku*, eds Michał Kaczmarek, Marek L. Wójcik, Wrocław 1995, pp. 339–350.

[40] [Sigismundi Rosiczii] *Gesta diversa transactis temporibus facta in Silesia et alibi*, [in:] *Geschichtsschreiber Schlesiens des XV. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Franz Wachter, Breslau 1883 (=Scriptores rerum Silesiacarum, vol. 12), p. 39. More information on the cult of Saint Hedwig see Stanisław Araszczuk, *Kult św. Jadwigi na Śląsku w świetle przedtrydenckich wrocławskich ksiąg liturgicznych*, Opole 1995 (=Opolska Biblioteka Teologiczna, vol. 7); Winfried Irgang, *Die politische Bedeutung*; Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Św. Jadwiga – jej żywot i kult (wraz z uwagami na temat rękopisu IV F 192 Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej we Wrocławiu)*, [in:] *Legenda o św. Jadwidze / Legende der hl. Hedwig*, ed. Wojciech Mrozowicz, Wrocław 2000, pp. 597–620; *idem*, *Die politische Rolle des Kultes der heiligen Adalbert, Stanislaus und Hedwig in Polen im 13. Jahrhundert*, [in:] *Fonctions sociales et politiques du culte des saints dans les sociétés de rite grec et latin au Moyen Âge et à l'époque moderne. Approche comparative*, eds Marek Derwich, Michel Dmitriev, Wrocław 1999 (=Opera ad historiam monasticam spectantia, Series I, Colloquia 3), pp. 120–122.

also works involving other forms of artistic expression such as books and panel painting.[41] With the engagement of the members of the Piast dynasty, especially Duke Louis I of Legnica-Brzeg (d. 1398)[42] as well as the members of the Church, Saint Hedwig acquired the status of the main patron of Silesia, and the place of her burial – Trzebnica – was gradually becoming a major centre of her cult and pilgrimage. In the liturgical calendar of the Wrocław diocese, Saint Hedwig's day was deemed to have the highest status of the *triplex* rite. In literary texts or prayers devoted to her, Hedwig is often associated with Silesia. A good example of this is liturgical poetry containing calls to joy addressed to the citizens of Silesia on the occasion of Saint Hedwig's day. These include such expressions as 'Iubilat Silesia', 'Gaudeat Ecclesia, gaudeat et Slesia', 'Gaudet solum Silesiae' or 'Verus sol Silesie', and 'ductrix Slesiae'.[43]

Over time, the cult of Saint Hedwig underwent a major transformation. In the process of its formation it was strongly influenced by early Franciscanism, although the model of sanctity from the preceding era – where kings and dukes were regarded as holy – was not yet completely forgotten. Ascetic piety with origins in Franciscan philosophy is strongly accentuated in the works describing the life of the saint produced before the end of the 13th century. It was both piety and miraculous events connected with Hedwig's life that constituted the main content of her hagiographies and formed the basis for her canonization. A pictorial version of her life, produced in 1353, was supplemented by, most notably, descriptions of the battle of Legnica, of which there is no mention in other texts of the life of the saint. The work presents the saint as the mother of Henry the Pious (who died in the battle of Legnica while defending Christianity) and the patron of the fight with the infidels. The latter aspect would attain a new dimension in the mid-15th century in the face of the growing threat from the Turks.[44]

Let us add that due to insufficient academic attention devoted to this subject it is today difficult to determine whether the cults of other saints, mainly those of Saint Wenceslaus, Adalbert and Stanislaus, were equally important to the formation of Silesian

[41] Halina Manikowska, *Legenda św. Jadwigi – obieg i transformacja*, [in:] *Kultura elitarna a kultura masowa w Polsce późnego średniowiecza*, ed. Bronisław Geremek, Wrocław 1978, pp. 155-171; Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Materiały rękopiśmienne dotyczące św. Jadwigi w zbiorach Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej we Wrocławiu*, [in:] *Księga Jadwiżańska*, pp. 233–248 (here, among others, the list of known to historians narrative sources devoted to Saint Hedwig). More information of iconographical versions of Saint Hedwig's life and other artistic representations see the article of Romuald Kaczmarek contained in this volume.

[42] One of his greatest contributions included the foundation of the first illuminated code with the legend of Saint Hedwig as well as of the chapel and a collegiate church of her patronage in Brzeg, see Alicja Karłowska-Kamzowa, *Fundacje artystyczne*; *Der Hedwig-Codex von 1353. Sammlung Ludwig*, ed. Wolfgang Braunfels, vol. 1–2, Berlin 1972; Michał Kaczmarek, *Okoliczności powstania i twórca Kodeksu lubińskiego z Legendą obrazową o św. Jadwidze*, 'Roczniki Historyczne', 77 (2011), pp. 51–79.

[43] Examples selected from the source annex to the paper of W. Araszczuk, *op. cit.*, pp. 153–184.

[44] Alicja Karłowska-Kamzowa, *Zagadnienie aktualizacji w śląskich wyobrażeniach bitwy legnickiej 1353-1504*, 'Studia Źródłoznawcze', 17 (1972), pp. 91–118; H. Manikowska, *Legenda*, *passim*; Stanisław Solicki, *Rola kultu św. Jadwigi w przygotowywaniu akcji antytureckiej na Śląsku w końcu XV i w początkach XVI wieku*, [in:] *Księga Jadwiżańska…*, pp. 371–384. For more information on the manifestations of the cult of Saint Hedwig see the article by Romuald Kaczmarek in this volume.

identity as the cult of Saint Hedwig.[45] It is mainly thanks to Church liturgy and preaching that these practices were widespread in Silesia and they fostered identification with the Church of Wrocław, and indirectly also with the whole of the Silesian province. Could they have influenced the awareness of Silesians to a similar extent as the cult of Saint Hedwig? It seems just about possible, but the issue requires further study. A similar conclusion can be reached for figures that were worshipped locally as saints, but were never canonized – Duchess Anna (the wife of Henry the Pious), Gertrude (the daughter of Saint Hedwig) and Bishop Nanker – as well as other saints of the common Church worshipped in Silesia from the very introduction of Christianity, especially the patron of the Wrocław diocese, Saint John the Baptist, his co-patron Saint John the Evangelist, Saint Vincent of Saragossa, Saint Vincent of Bavegna and Saint Bartholomew.[46]

Another figure who played a major role in the history of the region and whose memory was actively nurtured (albeit for different reasons) is Peter Wlast, (d. ca. 1151),[47] presented by Silesian historiography and literature as a true local hero. Although nothing is certain about Wlast's descent (scholars mostly point to his probable Scandinavian (Danish) or Slavic (Silesian) background and link him with a local magnate, Łabędź), he achieved one of the highest distinctions – the title of voivode – under Duke Boleslaus III the Wrymouth, and following his death under the Senior Duke and Duke of Silesia, Ladislaus II the Exile. It was probably the political position of Wlast and his connections with a circle of junior dukes that resulted in the fact that he was blinded and removed from power in 1145–1146. There are historical records proving Wlast's strong dedication to the wellbeing of the Church, which manifested itself in the foundation of 77 churches, but this was less a result of Wlast's utmost piety as it was a form of expiation for the abduction of Duke Volodar Rostislavich of Przemyśl in 1120 for which he was responsible.

Peter Wlast's biography became a frequent motif in Silesian historiography and the subject of chivalric novels which were very popular in the Middle Ages. We find extensive references to Peter Wlast in the *Chronica Polonorum*.[48] He is also the main protagonist of a work known as *Cronica Petri comitis Poloniae*[49] written by an anonymous Norbertine monk from Saint Vincent abbey at Ołbin. He is believed to be the subject of the mysterious Song of Maurus (*Carmen Mauri*), mentioned in one of the manuscripts of the *Chronica Polonorum*, sometimes identified with the 16th-century rhymed

[45] For synthetic work on the cult of these Saints in Silesia see Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Die Heiligen und ihre Verehrung im mittelalterlichen Schlesien (ein Kurzüberblick)*, 'Concilium medii aevi. Zeitschrift für Geschichte, Kunst und Kultur des Mittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit', 6 (2003), pp. 4-7 (see online: http://cma.gbv.de/dr,cma,006,2003,a,01.pdf), for more literature on the subject.

[46] W. Mrozowicz, *Die Heiligen*, pp. 1–4. See also above the remarks on the cult of Saint John the Baptist in the article by M. Pauk, E. Wółkiewicz.

[47] Stanisław Rosik, *Peter Wlast († um 1151)*, [in:] *Schlesische Lebensbilder*, vol. 11, ed. Joachim Bahlcke, Insingen 2012, pp. 11–24, where we find, most notably, a list of essential literature on the subject of Peter Wlast.

[48] *Kronika polska*, pp. 628–629, 630–633.

[49] *Cronica Petri comitis Poloniae*, pp. 1–30.

tragedy ('ritmico contextu descripta tragedia').[50] That latter reference occurred in one of two biographies of Wlast rewritten by Benedict of Poznań (d. ca.1525–1529), a Wrocław monk of the Canons Regular of Saint Augustine, from the works of Jan Długosz.[51] Nevertheless, at the close of the Middle Ages, despite the significance of Peter Wlast in Polish affairs being strongly emphasized, 'he was recorded as a figure that was mostly connected to Silesia', where the memory of him would be actively nurtured in the centuries to follow.[52]

One institution whose impact on the formation of identity of the citizens of historical Silesia might have been crucial was the Church and its dependent units. The integrating force of the local ecclesiastical structure was widespread throughout the entire region and the influence of the office of the Bishop of Wrocław, which was filled several times by members of the Piast dynasty, has been already characterized in a separate study.[53] At this point it would be reasonable to turn one's attention to another aspect of the unifying role played by the Church. The Church was the first institution to use writing in its everyday activities and to inspire the production of literary works that focused, among others, on local issues. Yet what needs to be stressed here is that the contents of these works were always strongly connected with the current activity of the Church and, at the same time, were evidence of the continuity of its tradition. These works included, most importantly, catalogues of bishops, whose number in the case of the Bishopric of Wrocław was quite extensive (there are as many as 10 medieval catalogues dated to the period between the second half of the 13th century and the close of the 15th century). These include the earlier catalogues of Henryków and Lubiąż and later catalogues of Cracow, Krzeszów, *Series episcoporum Wratislaviensium* and the so-called catalogue of Stenzel, which are part of the so-called *Institutio* group (catalogues contained in *Chronica principum Poloniae – Institutio Ecclesie Wratislaviensis*, in *The Annals of Rosicz* and *The Annals of Głogów* (*Rocznik głogowski*) by Mikołaj Liebenthal).[54] The oldest catalogue of the Bishops of Wrocław, the so-called *Chorus Wratislaviensis*, is known only from brief citations.[55]

[50] *Cronica Petri comitis Poloniae*, p. 34; Ryszard Gansiniec, *Tragedia Petri comitis*, 'Pamiętnik Literacki', 43 (1952), pp. 52–139.

[51] Lech Krzywiak, *Benedykt z Poznania. Śląski miłośnik historii z początku XVI wieku*, 'Roczniki Historyczne', 57 (1991), pp. 73–116; Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Dziejopisarstwo średniowieczne we Wrocławiu*, 'Sobótka', 61 (2006), No. 1, pp. 18–19.

[52] S. Rosik, *Peter Wlast*, pp. 20–23, citation from page 21.

[53] See the article by M. Pauk, E. Wółkiewicz in the book and Blanka Zilynská, *Role církevních institucí v procesu integrace slezského regionu*, 'Sobótka', 66 (2011), No 3, pp. 37–49.

[54] An edition containing all texts: *Katalogi biskupów wrocławskich*, ed. Wojciech Kętrzyński, [in:] *Monumenta Poloniae Historica*, vol. 6, Kraków 1893, pp. 534–585; for analyses of the editions see Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Kataloge der Breslauer Bischöfe. Überlegungen über alte und die Möglichkeiten neuer Editionsansätze*, [in:] *Quellen kirchlicher Provenienz. Neue Editionsvorhaben und aktuelle EDV-Projekte. Editionswissenschaftliches Kolloquium 2011*, eds Helmut Flachenecker, Janusz Tandecki in cooperation with Krzysztof Kopiński, Toruń 2011, pp. 59–70. For more information on the catalogues see especially Odilo Schmidt, *Untersuchungen zu den Breslauer Bischofskatalogen*, Breslau 1917 (=Darstellungen und Quellen zur schlesischen Geschichte, vol. 25); W. Mrozowicz, *Od kiedy*, pp. 139–140. I am currently preparing a more extensive study on the subject of Silesian catalogues.

[55] See especially O. Schmidt, *op. cit.*, pp. 42–43, 135–141.

It probably dates to the very beginnings of the Bishopric. In order to provide a complete picture of the matter, it is necessary to mention a widely-disseminated (in the modern era) catalogue produced outside Silesia by Jan Długosz, and dedicated to the Wrocław Bishop Rudolph of Rüdesheim (d. 1482).[56]

The catalogue of bishops, modelled after the lists of Roman bishops (popes), was developed for the purpose of performing a commemorative liturgy for the late bishops, during which their names were read in public.[57] The catalogue also documented, by means of a constantly-updated list of bishops, the continuity of bishoprics, which was evidence 'not only for their long history but also for their dogmatic relationship with the entire Church organism'.[58] At the same time, it legitimized the authority of bishops and could be used as a propaganda tool.[59] Most of all, and especially important from the perspective of the main subject of this study, the depiction of the beginnings and undisturbed continuity of bishoprics constituted a crucial element of the Church's own identity and impacted the way it was perceived from the outside.

Although the production of catalogues of bishops was a purely pragmatic activity, it also created opportunities to present the local past from the perspective of concise biographies of the Wrocław Bishopric's masters. Attempts were also made to enrich the texts with information on the history of the particular ecclesiastic units they were written in, such as abbeys, for example. Most of the entries found in the catalogues of bishops are rather concise; those few that are more extensive never stray too much from the standards known in the Western Church.[60] In some cases the descriptions of bishops were extended by, for instance, information on the foundation of the Wrocław Bishopric – in the case of *The Catalogue of Lubiąż* these were written in verse[61] – or by extensive

[56] *Catalogus episcoporum Wratislaviensium*, ed. Alexander Przezdziecki, [in:] Joannis Dlugossi Senioris Canonici, *Opera omnia*, ed. Alexander Przezdziecki, vol. 1, Cracoviae 1887, pp. 439–477; for information about his manuscript tradition and various editions see O. Schmidt, *op. cit.*, pp. 17–29.

[57] Otto Gerhard Oexle, *Die Gegenwart der Toten*, [in:] *Death in the Middle Ages*, eds Herman Braet, Werner Verbeke, Leuven 1983 (=Mediaevalia Lovaniensia, vol. I/9), p. 41, see also Józef Szymański, *Z zagadnień średniowiecznej biografistyki. Katalogi dostojnicze. Studium źródłoznawcze*, Warszawa 1969, pp. 145–147; Meta Niederkorn-Bruck, *Dziejopisarstwo w tekstach liturgicznych średniowiecza*, trans. Edward Potkowski, [in:] *Historia – pamięć – pismo. Studia z dziejów tradycji historycznej i historiografii*, eds Edward Potkowski, Jerzy Kaliszuk, Jacek Puchalski, Warszawa 2002 (=Kultura, historia, pismo, vol. 1), pp. 30–34.

[58] J. Szymański, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

[59] *Ibidem*, pp. 156–178. An interesting example of using the catalogue of Wrocław Bishops in the 14th century as a source of information that 'raised his [the bishop's] dignity, legitimized his authority and proved the ancient origins of the Wrocław Bishopric' was presented by Rościsław Żerelik, *Praktyczne wykorzystanie katalogu dostojniczego w kancelarii Henryka z Wierzbna biskupa wrocławskiego*, 'Sobótka', 48 (1993), No. 1, pp. 65–69.

[60] See the typology of the forms of the catalogue entries developed by J. Szymański, *op. cit.*, pp. 13–37. See also Reinhold Kaiser, *Die Gesta episcoporum als Genus der Geschichtsschreibung*, [in:] *Historiographie im frühen Mittelalter*, eds Anton Scharer and Georg Scheibelreiter, München 1994 (=Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung, vol. 32), pp. 459–480.

[61] The poem together with its translation into Polish was published as *De institutione pontificatus in civitate Vratislaviensi* / *O ustanowieniu biskupstwa we Wrocławiu*, trans. Kazimierz Liman, [in:] Kazimierz Liman, *Antologia poezji łacińskiej w Polsce. Średniowiecze*, Poznań 2004, pp. 302–303.

descriptions of Piotr and Ekhard, two great benefactors of the Henryków abbey – found in *The Catalogue of Henryków*.[62]

As regards the number of catalogues produced, the Wrocław Bishopric stands out against all other bishoprics.[63] Both the impressive number of catalogues as well as the variety of contexts they were produced and used in are evidence of the growing need of the time to make records of local history and, in consequence, for the development of a much richer historical culture and the formation of historical consciousness and regional identity. Furthermore, if one considers the fact that written sources often link the catalogues of bishops with other historiographical works, especially universal chronicles (like in the case of *Series episcoporum Wratislaviensium* and *The Catalogue of Cracow* (*Katalog krakowski*) linked with the *Chronicle* of Martin of Opava and its extracts),[64] this is firm proof of the emergence of a new historiographic approach involving the establishment of a link between general and local history.

Naturally, the catalogues of the Bishops of Wrocław were not the only Silesian historiographic works where regional discourse was used.[65] Most probably, the richest in regional discourse are annals and chronicles whose oldest surviving examples come from as early as the 1260s and 1270s. From the period starting from the second half of the 13th century to the outset of the modern era, Silesia produced an impressively extensive number of historiographic works, of which almost 70 have survived today: more than 40 annals, 13 chronicles (including five devoted to the subjects universal to all of Silesia, five monastic chronicles and three municipal chronicles), 12 shorter narrative chronicles, two biographical works, one extensive poem, one geographic-historical description and one description of a journey. The majority of these pieces are rather short historiographic forms, mainly chronicle works, which also include quite voluminous annals with almost several hundred entries (like the so-called *Annals* of Rosicz or *Annales Glogovienses*). The most prolific creators of historiographic works were clerics – members of monastic communities, especially Cistercians and Canons Regular, as well as representatives of the secular clergy, in particular from collegiate circles in Brzeg, Głogów and Wrocław. In the Late Middle Ages, with the growth of literacy in society

[62] *Initium ordinationis Wratizlaviensis Ecclesie episcoporum*, [in:] *Liber fundationis claustri Sancte Marie Virginis in Heinrichow*, pp. 194–195, 197.

[63] By the end of the Middle Ages, the number of catalogues grew significantly (15 in Mainz, 17 in Passau 17, 12 in Salzburg, 11 in Tours, 10 in Metz and 10 in Trier), see J. Szymański, *op. cit.*, pp. 82–85. See also Markus Müller, *Die spätmittelalterliche Bistumsgeschichtsschreibung. Überlieferung und Entwicklung*, Köln-Weimar-Wien 1998, pp. 17–250.

[64] Cf: Jacek Soszyński, *Śląski zabytek rękopiśmienny w Wenecji*, [in:] *E scientia et amicitia. Studia poświęcone Profesorowi Edwardowi Potkowskiemu w sześćdziesięciopięciolecie urodzin i czterdziestolecie pracy naukowej*, ed. Marcin Drzewiecki, Warszawa-Pułtusk 1999, pp. 179–188; *idem*, *Kronika Marcina Polaka i jej średniowieczna tradycja rękopiśmienna w Polsce*, Warszawa 1995 (=Studia Copernicana, 34), pp. 100–102.

[65] Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Początki śląskiej historiografii regionalnej*, [in:] *Kronikarz a historyk. Atuty i słabości regionalnej historiografii. Materiały z konferencji naukowej Cieszyn, 20-21 września 2007*, ed. Janusz Spyra, [Cieszyn 2007], pp. 100–129 (www.sbc.org.pl/dlibra/docmetadata?id=7767&from=pubstats).

and the popularization of pragmatic writing, Silesian historiography was enriched by the works of, among others, Peter Eschenloer and Johannes Froben.[66]

The great majority of historiographic works push issues of general history to the background.[67] Gradually, they become less and less focused on Polish matters and turn to issues connected with Bohemia, which are first presented in connection with the incorporation and gradual merger of Silesia with the territory of the Bohemian Crown of Saint Wenceslaus.[68] At the same time, the thematic scope of Silesian historiography becomes restricted mainly to the Silesian region – and often only to the writers' most immediate surroundings, such as the the monastery, church estates, group of monasteries in a particular congregation, town or duchy. These limits are rarely exceeded, and when they are they are mainly connected with the interests of Silesia.[69] When it comes to the micro-scale, a brilliant example is the oldest Silesian chronicle – the *Henryków Book*,

[66] Colmar Grünhagen, *Wegweiser durch die schlesischen Geschichtsquellen bis zum Jahre 1550*, Breslau 2nd edition 1889; updated list of Silesian historiographical works is recently prepared by Mario Müller and Axel Kriechmus, *Verzeichnis der historiographischen Schriften zur schlesischen Geschichte von den Ursprüngen bis zum Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts,* [in:] *Studien zur neuzeitlichen Geschichtsschreibung in den böhmischen Kronländern Schlesien, Oberlausitz und Niederlausitz*, eds Lars-Arne Danneberg and Mario Müller, Görlitz-Zittau 2013 (=Beihefte zum Neuen Lausitzischen Magazin, vol. 11), pp. 19-109; for the list of editions see Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Die mittelalterliche Geschichtsschreibung in Schlesien. Stand und Bedürfnisse im Bereich der Quelleneditionen*, [in:] *Die Geschichtsschreibung in Mitteleuropa. Projekte und Forschungsprobleme*, ed. Jarosław Wenta, Toruń 1999 (=Subsidia historiographica, vol. 1), pp. 216–227. Apart from several individual works only Silesian annals have so far been studied analytically – W. Korta, *Średniowieczna annalistyka, passim* (however this requires further updating), cf. Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Mittelalterliche Annalistik in Schlesien. Ein Beitrag zur neuen Ausgabe schlesischer Annalen*, 'Quaestiones medii aevi novae', 6 (2001), pp. 277–296. Earlier synthetic studies approach Silesian historiography either from a Polish perspective (see especially Heinrich Zeissberg, *Die polnische Geschichtsschreibung des Mittelalters*, Leipzig 1873, reprinted in Weimar 1968, Polish translation: *Dziejopisarstwo polskie wieków średnich*, Warszawa 1877) or German perspective (see especially Ottokar Lorenz, *Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen im Mittelalter seit der Mitte des dreizehnten Jahrhunderts*, 3th edition, ed. Arthur Goldmann, vol. 1-2, Berlin 1886-1887, reprinted in Augsburg 1999). Such an approach brought about the loss of the unique character of Silesian historiography as regional historiography. From newer synthetic publications see especially Roman Heck, *Główne linie rozwoju średniowiecznego dziejopisarstwa śląskiego*, 'Studia Źródłoznawcze', 22 (1977), pp. 61–75.

[67] This issue is still relatively superficially examined; for partial research results see W. Korta, *Średniowieczna annalistyka*, pp. 366-368; Michał Kaczmarek, *Dzieje powszechne w średniowiecznej historiografii śląskiej (do schyłku XIV w.)*, [in:] *Dawna historiografia śląska. Materiały sesji naukowej odbytej w Brzegu w dniach 26-27 listopada 1977 r.*, Opole 1980, pp. 104–115; *idem*, *Motywy bamberskie w dziejopisarstwie cystersów śląskich w XIII wieku*, [in:] *Mente et litteris. O kulturze i społeczeństwie wieków średnich*, ed. Helena Chłopocka, Poznań 1984, pp. 145–152; Antoni Barciak, *Postrzeganie Czech i Czechów na Śląsku w XIV i w początkach XV w.*, [in:] *idem*, *Między Polską a Czechami. Śląsk i jego mieszkańcy w źródłach czeskich doby średniowiecza*, Wrocław 2012, pp. 189–198; *idem*, *Władcy czescy w relacji autora Kroniki książąt polskich*, [in:] *Korunné země v dějinách českého státu*, eds Ludék Březina, Jana Konvíčná, Jana Wojtucka, Praha 2005, pp. 309–317.

[68] Cf: W. Korta, *Średniowieczna annalistyka*, pp. 367–368.

[69] In reference to the issue of German historiography cf. Rolf Sprandel, *Was wußte man im späten Mittelalter in Süddeutschland über Norddeutschland und umgekehrt? Studien zur spätmittelalterlichen Geschichtsschreibung 1347-1517*, [in:] *Nord und Süd in der deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters. Akten des Kolloquiums veranstaltet zu Ehren von Karl Jordan 1907-1984, Kiel, 15.-16. Mai 1987*, ed. Werner Paravicini, Sigmaringen 1990 (=Kieler Historische Studien, vol. 34), pp. 219–230. See also W. Mrozowicz, *Wyobraźnia*, pp. 11–22.

produced in the monastery of Cistercians in Henryków.[70] Its authors focus on the matters of their home monastery and its landed properties, which constitute a unique micro-region.[71] Nonetheless, their conception of the world is much broader: the work mentions localities and lands located a considerable distance away from Henryków, both in Silesia (such as other Cistercian centres – Lubiąż, Trzebnica, Krzeszów and Kamieniec – and certain towns, like Leśnica, Oleśnica, Niemcza or Lwówek Śląski), as well as the neighbouring Bishoprics (of Poznań, Kraków, Miśnia and Lubusz), and even more remote lands (Brandenburg and Prussia). Even so, these only appear in connection with issues that are of greatest interest to the monks of Henryków. It is the territory of Henryków that is their small homeland[72] whose history and mysteries have been recorded on the pages of the chronicle. However, the Wrocław diocese, synonymous with Silesia as a whole, was regarded by the monks of Henryków as superior in quality and value. Its masters were actually benefactors of the monastery, hence they deserved reverence and 'pro ipsis devotione ardentissima semper […] orare'.[73] Paradoxically, the interests of German-originating Cistercians and their abbey led to the production of records – in a Latin monastic chronicle – on the unique Slavic character of the Silesian region and especially on the local legislative system within the institution of the Polish Church which controlled the Wrocław diocese. This again shows how complex the process of developing a unique identity for the multi-ethnic Silesian community was.[74]

In the regional discourse of Silesian ducal historiography, which includes, first and foremost, *Chronica Polonorum* and *Chronica principum Poloniae*, the so-called 'small homeland' is viewed in a slightly different way. According to the 1280s work *Chronica Polonorum*, this homeland is defined as the whole of Silesia, granted to Ladislaus the Exile by his father Boleslaus the Wrymouth.[75] It is to this patrimonial land (*patrimonium Slesie*) that the sons of Ladislaus returned in order to quickly divide it between themselves with the aid of the Senior Duke Casimir the Just.[76] Despite these and subsequent divisions whose main boundaries are well known to the author of the chronicle, Silesia is still viewed as part of one whole.[77]

A century later, the *Chronica principum Poloniae*,[78] written – by common consensus – by a Canon of the Collegiate Church of Brzeg, Peter of Byczyna, mostly repeats the contents found already in *Chronica Polonorum* and simultaneously devotes special

[70] *Liber fundationis claustri Sancte Marie Virginis in Heinrichow, passim*. On this subject see especially Józef Matuszewski, *Najstarsze polskie zdanie prozaiczne. Zdanie henrykowskie i jego tło historyczne*, Wrocław 1981; P. Górecki, *A local society*.

[71] His maps are published by P. Górecki, *A local society*, pp. 262–264.

[72] W. Mrozowicz, *Wyobraźnia*, pp. 11–13; *idem*, *Od kiedy*, pp. 140–141.

[73] *Liber fundationis claustri Sancte Marie Virginis in Heinrichow*, p. 193.

[74] On this subject, mainly in reference to *The Henryków Book*, cf. Piotr Górecki, *Assimilation, resistance, and ethnic group formation, passim*.

[75] *Kronika polska*, pp. 629–630, 644.

[76] *Ibidem*, pp. 634, 637–638, 644.

[77] *Ibidem*, pp. 643, 649, 651, 652. See also K. Orzechowski, *Terra w śląskich*, pp. 227–229.

[78] *Kronika książąt*, pp. 423–578.

attention to the political fragmentation of Silesia by presenting the history of some new and former duchies. In spite of this fact, Silesia is viewed as one political and geographical whole, mostly in the opening parts of the work.[79] This approach is further complemented by its administrative-ecclesiastical aspects, for it is characteristic for *Chronica principum Poloniae* to associate Silesia with the Wrocław Bishopric, whose formation (presented in the catalogue of the Wrocław Bishops by Peter of Byczyna) is linked by the writer with 'king' Casimir the Restorer. The chronicler also emphasizes the connections of the Bishopric with the Silesian branch of the Piast dynasty.[80] What is striking about the literary piece by Peter of Byczyna is that the history of Silesian dukes is presented from a Polish perspective. This, in turn, is interpreted as evidence of claims to the royal crown made by Duke Louis I, who in the 1380s was interested in assuming the throne of Cracow.[81] At the same time, *Chronica principum Poloniae* seems to present an approach where the Polish dimension is linked with the Silesian one, which is viewed from the perspective of individual duchies, and especially the Duchy of Legnica-Brzeg. In spite of this fact, the work is still viewed as the most important Silesian medieval chronicle, which stands out from other similar works due to its rich regional discourse. The chronicle, with all its qualities, plays a pivotal role in the history of Silesia, which is proved by the existence of numerous copies of the original manuscript, its adaptations and German translation, in some cases extended by an independent continuation.[82]

The regional discourse of urban historiography is very different; in this study an analysis of its most common characteristics will be restricted to the great chronicles produced at the close of the Middle Ages in Wrocław and Namysłów. In the first of these towns, two chronicles were produced by the writer Peter Eschenloer (d. 1481). The earlier one, written in Latin, presents the history of Wrocław between 1438 and 1471. The later one, much more extensive and written in German, depicts the history of the town from 1440 to 1479.[83] The *Chronicle of Namysłów*, also written in German and describing the period between 1347 and 1509, was prepared by Johannes Froben (d. ca. 1510).[84]

[79] *Ibidem*, pp. 453, 465, 476, 486-492, 554, importantly, the name Silesia appears only in the part based on other sources (chronicle of Anonymous and Master Wincenty's *Chronica Polonorum*), and the separate part mentions the names of smaller duchies, cf. K. Orzechowski, *Terra w śląskich*, pp. 231–236.

[80] *Kronika książąt*, pp. 545, 547, 551–553, see also pp. 428–429.

[81] W. Mrozowicz, *Cronica principum*, pp. 153–154, for further documentation.

[82] There are (or were) 15 complete and 5 incomplete known manuscripts of the chronicle and 10 manuscripts of its German so-far-unpublished translation, see Leo Santifaller, *Liebentals Kopialbücher des Prämonstratenserstiftes zum Hl. Vinzenz in Breslau*, Innsbruck 1947 (=Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung. Ergänzungsband 15), pp. 88-100; W. Mrozowicz, *Cronica principum*, pp. 150–151; Joachim Schneider, *'Liegnitzer Chronik' ('Chronik der alten Fürsten und Herren von Polen')*, [in:] *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters. Verfasserlexikon*, vol. 11, Berlin-New York 2002, col. 923–924.

[83] Peter Eschenloer, *Historia Wratislaviensis et que post mortem regis Ladislai sub electo Georgio de Podiebrat Bohemorum rege illi acciderant prospera et adversa*, hrsg. von Hermann Markgraf, Breslau 1872 (=Scriptores rerum Silesiacarum, vol. 7); *idem, Geschichte der Stadt Breslau*, ed. Gunhild Roth, vol. 1-2, Münster 2003 (=Quellen und Darstellungen zur schlesischen Geschichte, vol. 29/I-II).

[84] The full version of the chronicle has not yet been published. A doctoral thesis on this subject by Roland Czarnecki is currently being prepared for print: *Kronika Namysłowa autorstwa Johannesa Frobena jako utwór dziejopisarstwa miejskiego*; the author is also planning to publish the full text of the chronicle.

The main subject of interest of the authors of these chronicles which were produced on the initiative of municipal councils were, of course, the towns of Wrocław and Namysłów, their interests and histories. Although the authors were perfectly aware of these towns' relationships with Silesia, they were so concentrated on municipal matters that they paid scarce attention to even their closest surrounding region, and even if they did so, they treated it more like a geographical point of reference than a socio-political whole they were part of.[85] Municipal historiography was by then becoming a platform for expressing or shaping the awareness of citizens and therefore – in contrast to other areas of Silesian historiography discussed above – did not constitute an important region-integrating factor. Quite the contrary: by giving priority to municipal interests which were often divergent from the interests of neighbouring duchies, as for example in the case of the conflict between the town of Wrocław and the dukes from the Poděbrady family, such texts could even hamper the processes of integration.

Another novel feature of the regional historiographic discourse in late medieval Silesia is the tendency to break away from the Polish perspective to which it was traditionally tied. This is probably best represented by a monk from the abbey of Canons Regular in the Wrocław Sand Island, Benedict Johnsdorff (d. 1503) who, in his chronicle (the *Chronicle of Bohemia*), perceives the history of Silesia as part of the history of Bohemia.[86] For him, such an approach did not seem unreasonable because his monastery 'in suburbio civitatis Wratislaviensis, que caput est ducatus Slesie, […] cum ipsa civitate et ducatu ad regnum Bohemie pertinere dinoscitur'.[87] This new approach towards the history of Silesia reflects the final stage of the process of its incorporation into the territory of the Crown of Bohemia. Similar ideas are presented in *Annales devolutionis Silesiae ad regnum Bohemiae* (*The Annals of the Passing of Silesia to the Kingdom of Bohemia*) from the second half of the 15th century, which regard all key Czech moments in the history of Silesia – from the proclamation of tributes in mid-11th century to of Silesian dukes paying homage '*in perpetuum*' to John of Luxembourg in the 1330s – as stages leading to the integration of this land with the Crown of Bohemia.[88] A slightly different strategy was used by the compiler of the aforementioned *Historia Bohemica, Polonica*

[85] Cf: Gunhild Roth, *Vorwort*, [in:] Eschenloer, *Geschichte*, pp. 116–117.

[86] *Die böhmische Chronik des Benedict Johnsdorf*, [in:] *Geschichtsschreiber Schlesiens des XV. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Franz Wachter, Breslau 1883 (=Scriptores rerum Silesiacarum, vol. 12), pp. XIX–XX, 109–124; *Česká kronika Benedikta Johnsdorfa*, ed. Jaromír Mikulka, Ostrava 1959. For the commentary on this chronicle see Blanka Zilynská, *Die Böhmische Chronik Benedikt Johnsdorfs über die Böhmische Krone im Rahmen der Kronländer*, [in:] *Geschichte, Erinnerung*, pp. 82–108.

[87] *Česká kronika*, p. 15. See also W. Mrozowicz, *Początki*, pp. 127–128; *idem*, '*Regno Bohemie in perpetuum applicavit'. Śląsk a Czechy w śląskiej historiografii średniowiecznej*, 'Sobótka', 66 (2011), No. 3, p. 30; B. Zilynská, *Die Böhmische Chronik*, pp. 106–108.

[88] The text of *Annales* as *Alte Regesten zur Geschichte der Devolution Schlesiens an Böhmen* is mentioned by Wilhelm Schulte, *Die politische Tendenz der Cronica principum Polonie*, Breslau 1906 (=Darstellungen und Quellen zur schlesischen Geschichte, vol. 1), pp. 168–169; for the Polish translation see Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Dolny Śląsk w latach 1327-1526*, pp. 151–152; see also *idem*, *Regno Bohemie*…, p. 29.

et Silesiaca,[89] who simply adapted an anonymous annals produced in Bohemia to the Silesian context, thereby augmenting its content by applying local themes. All in all, the effect was identical: Silesian history, presented either as one whole or with a strong focus on its capital, Wrocław, was shown in the piece as part of the history of Bohemia.

Some of the presented issues connected with regional discourse in selected hagiographic literature prove that Silesian chronicles and annals, especially in the Late Middle Ages, became the main platform for expressing region-specific issues.[90] They reflect both the state of regional consciousness and the direction of its development. What needs to be emphasized is that Silesia is not always viewed in these works as an entire whole, since its perception depends on the authors' territorial location and position in the institutional hierarchy. What is characteristic for Silesian historiography of the Late Middle Ages is that it questions the Polish tradition, which is clearly present in the annals and chronicles of the 13th and 14th-centuries, and of the contemporary and later periods also.[91] The new Silesian identity was to be based on a depiction of the history of the region whereby the Polish tradition was replaced by a Czech tradition. By contrast, by the close of the 13th century there is no evidence in the surviving hagiographic literature of an evolution of a regional discourse tradition connected with the German settlers, whose presence, beginning from the 13th century, completely transformed the ethnic composition of the region. Their original works either referred directly to the former Polish traditions, as one can observe in the example of *Chronica principum Poloniae* especially,[92] or restricted their view of the region from the angle of a narrow history of selected towns.[93]

From the second half of the 13th century, the role of written German started to gain importance in Silesia, to the extent that the number of its direct and indirect receptors outnumbered that of Latin – formerly the only language reserved for literature. German was not only restricted to the aforementioned types of literature; it more and more frequently became a language used in other literary genres, including poetry.[94] German was

[89] *Cronica Bohemorum ab ipsorum inicio conscripta* […], [in:] *Monumenta historica Boemiae nusquam antehac edita*, ed. Gelasius Dobner, vol. 3, Prague 1774, pp. 43–59. See also literature mentioned here in the footnote no. 15.

[90] See also H. Manikowska, *Świadomość regionalna*, pp. 253–267.

[91] An piece of interesting evidence on the vivid Polish traditions in Silesia – the figure of a Silesian cantor John of Poznań, a witness during the trial between Poland and the Teutonic Knights in 1422 – was presented by Tomasz Jurek, *Nacionis de Slesia. Ze studiów nad świadomością historyczną na późnośredniowiecznym Śląsku*, [in:] *Nihil superfluum esse. Prace z dziejów średniowiecza ofiarowane Profesor Jadwidze Krzyżaniakowej*, eds Jerzy Strzelczyk, Józef Dobosz, Poznań 2000 (=Publikacje Instytutu Historii UAM, 33), pp. 441–448.

[92] *Liegnitzer Chronik. Fortsetzung der deutschen Uebersetzung der chronica principum Poloniae*, [in:] *Geschichtsschreiber Schlesiens*, pp. 95–106; J. Schneider, *op. cit.*, pp. 923–924.

[93] Cf. above for the subject of municipal historiography in Silesia. See also Wojciech Mrozowicz, *Die deutschsprachige Annalistik Schlesiens im Spätmittelalter. Aus den Arbeiten an der Gesamtedition*, [in:] *Editionswissenschaftliche Kolloquien*, pp. 69–84.

[94] Arno Lubos, *Geschichte der Literatur Schlesiens*, vol. 1, part 1: *Von den Anfängen bis ca. 1800*, Würzburg 1995, pp. 21–77 and footnotes on pp. 348–362 (regarding Middle Ages and early Humanism); Marian Szyrocki, *Wczesne zabytki literatury niemieckojęzycznej na Śląsku*, [in:] *Dawna kultura literacka na Śląsku. Zbiór studiów*, eds Marianna Borysiak, Adam Galos, Wrocław 1994, pp. 7–23.

dominant in both municipal records and from ca. mid-14th century documents issued in Silesia also.[95] There is no question about the fact that German, including its written form, was one of the key determiners of regional identity in Silesia, and that it spurred the formation of a new community of Silesian citizens, in historiography known as 'the new Silesian tribe'.[96] At the same time, Polish does not seem to play even the slightest role in this context,[97] although its position as a language of education in Silesia was strongly defended by the Polish Church.[98] Czech, on the other hand, became widespread as an official language in Upper Silesia only at the close of 15th century.[99]

The above remarks, either due to length restrictions or the lack of adequate studies, do not in fact exhaust the subject of regional identity in 15th–16th-century Silesia. What certainly requires more thorough study are issues such as the range of the social impact of the name Silesia and, most notably, whether the fact of living in Silesia and being 'Silesian' related also to non-members of the elite communities (in the understanding of a 'political nation'). It is also important to examine the transformation of the content of

[95] From earlier papers on the history of the Silesian German language see Joseph Klapper, *Mittelalterliche Kulturlandschaften im schlesischen Raum*, 'Schlesisches Jahrbuch', 8 (1935/36), pp. 85–102; Wolfgang Jungandreas, *Zur Geschichte der schlesischen Mundart im Mittelalter*, Breslau 1937. From more recent papers see especially *Anfänge und Entwicklung der deutschen Sprache im mittelalterlichen Schlesien. Verhandlungen des VIII. Symposions vom 2. bis 4. November in Würzburg 1989*, eds Gundolf Keil, Josef J. Menzel, Sigmaringen 1995 (=Schlesische Forschungen, vol. 6); Tomasz Jurek, *Die Urkundensprache im mittelalterlichen Schlesien*. It is also worth mentioning publications and papers devoted to German Silesian municipal records: *Der Sachsenspiegel aus Oppeln und Krakau*, eds Ilpo Tapani Piirainen, Winfried Waßer, Berlin 1996 (=Schriften der Stiftung Haus Oberschlesien. Landeskundliche Reihe, vol. 10); *Zweisprachige Stadtbücher aus Oppeln/Opole*, eds Stanisław Borawski, Astrid Dormann-Sellinghoff, Ilpo Tapani Piirainen, Wrocław 2002 (=Beihefte zum Orbis Linguarum, vol. 14); Ilpo Tapani Piirainen, Ingmar ten Venne, *Der Sachsenspiegel aus der Dombibliothek in Breslau/Wrocław. Einleitung, Edition und Glossar*, Wrocław 2003 and other paper by Ilpo Tapani Piirainen: *Erforschung deutschsprachiger Handschriften des 14.-18. Jahrhunderts in schlesischen Archiven in Polen*, 'Kwartalnik Neofilologiczny', 41 (1994), No. 3, pp. 239–250; *idem*, *Frühneuhochdeutsche Sprach- und Rechtsdenkmäler in Wrocław/Breslau*, 'Neuphilologische Mitteilungen', 89 (1988), pp. 333–357; *idem*, *Die Schöffenbücher von Legnica/Liegnitz. Ein Beitrag zum Frühneuhochdeutschen in Slask/Schlesien*, 'Neuphilologische Mitteilungen', 91 (1990), pp. 417–430; *idem*, *Das Stadtbuch von Legnica/Liegnitz aus den Jahren 1371-1445. Ein Beitrag zum Frühneuhochdeutschen in Slask/Schlesien*, [in:] Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, 1356. Studia Neerlandica et Germanica, Wrocław 1992, pp. 287–293. A recently published valuable information on *Psałterz floriański* see Rudolf Hanamann, *Der deutsche Teil des Florianer Psalters. Sprachanalyse und kulturgeschichtliche Einordnung*, Frankfurt am Main 2010 (=Regensburger Beiträge zur deutschen Sprach- und Literaturwissenschaft, B 96).

[96] Earlier Polish publications downgraded the importance of the German language in Silesia, see i.e.: Stanisław Rospond, *Dzieje polszczyzny śląskiej*, Katowice 1959, pp. 173–179.

[97] What is remarkable is that it was in Silesia where the oldest and one of the most important monuments of Polish literature appeared, including the renowned Polish sentence from *The Henryków Book* and, most importantly, the Polish part of *Saint Florian Psalter* see J. Matuszewski, *op. cit.*; S. Rospond, *op. cit.*; Mieczysław Walter, *Śląskie polonica rękopiśmienne w zbiorach Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej we Wrocławiu*, part 1–2, Wrocław 1949–1977.

[98] See resolutions of the synod of Łęczyca (1257) against Bolesław Rogatka – *Kodeks dyplomatyczny Wielkopolski*, vol. 1, No. 361; Wilhelm Schulte, *Zur Geschichte des mittelalterlichen Schulwesens in Breslau*, 'Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens', 36 (1901), Nr. 1, pp. 79–80; see also Antoni Karbowiak, *Dzieje wychowania i szkół w Polsce w wiekach średnich*, part 1: *Od 966. do 1363. roku*, Petersburg 1898, pp. 188–195.

[99] T. Jurek, *Die Urkundensprache*; S. Rospond, *Dzieje polszczyzny*, pp. 119–129; Jan Vilikovský, Josef Vašica, Antonín Grund, *Starší česká literatura ve Slezsku*, 2nd edition, Ostrava 1999, pp. 9–15.

this concept, especially in the context of political, administrative and demographical changes. We know almost nothing about the regional discourse of numerous surviving sermons, especially those devoted to patron saints, although the significance of preaching in the development of public awareness is obvious. Similarly, our knowledge of the role of Silesian education – relatively much is known of its organization and range, whereas our knowledge of the curriculum does not exceed far beyond general and obvious features[100] – means that we may only speculate that this factor played a meaningful role in the formation of regional identity. The role played by Silesian institutional and private book collections was also not insignificant, but so far it has been examined only partially; as regards the issues discussed in this paper, only the medieval libraries of Wrocław have been the subject of a thorough study.[101] We are also lacking research that would bring us closer to the issues of circulation and readership of works (or manuscripts) devoting attention to regional discourse. A wider and a more thorough study of these and possibly other aspects connected with the issue of Silesian identity would allow us, in my view, not only to confirm current observations on the existence of a specific regional identity in medieval Silesia, but also to supplement it with new content.

[100] More significant works are presented by Rościsław Żerelik, *Szkolnictwo na średniowiecznym Śląsku*, 'Sobótka', 53 (1998), Nos 3–4, pp. 391–399.

[101] Stanisław Solicki, *Historiografia w średniowiecznych bibliotekach wrocławskich*, [in:] *Dawna historiografia…*, pp. 135–157.

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Many communities, too little community? Conclusions on the analysis of region-integrating forces in medieval Silesia

Abstract:

The contents of this volume may disappoint those readers who would wish to find simple answers to traditional questions about the moment at which the Silesion region came to life and the role played in it by different social groups. The results of research performed by historians prove that these questions are in fact anachronistic. The authors reject the deterministic concept of the region's evolution from a polycentric community to a monocentric (with Wrocław as its capital city) unit of state and Church administration. Indeed, phenomena which are typically recognized as elements of this process are highlighted, but attributed different meanings. The picture of the region provided in the course of research is very dynamic. The authors' aim was not to discover the nature of phenomena taking place within 'the region', but rather to determine the true number of the many regions co-existing at the time, to examine the dynamics and factors behind the constantly-changing affiliations of their members, and to shed light on how the community was affected by top-down political decisions. A continuous interplay of various factors, among which the connection of political and economic elites with the traditions of local duchies was of pivotal importance, meant that although Silesia would undoubtedly prove a durable entity, at the end of Middle Ages an understanding of its past, present and future as a region remained far from certain.

Keywords:

regiogenesis, region as network, unstability of a region, polycentric structure of region

The contents of this volume may bring disappointment to those readers who would wish to find answers to the following questions: From when can we speak of the emergence of Silesia? Which social groups were primarily responsible for the formation of the region of Silesia? And finally, when did Silesia eventually break its bonds with Poland and Bohemia, starting to function as an independent region? The results of research performed by historians from a range of backgrounds prove that these questions are in fact anachronistic. This is because the authors reject the deterministic concept of the region's evolution from a polycentric community (whose dependence on larger units of political authority was limited) to a monocentric (with Wrocław as its capital city) unit of state and Church administration. Indeed, phenomena which are typically recognized as elements of this process are highlighted, but attributed different meanings.

The picture of the region provided in the course of research is very dynamic. The authors' aim was not to find answers to questions on the nature of the phenomena taking place within 'the region', but rather to determine the true number of the many regions co-existing at the time, to examine the dynamics and factors behind the constantly-changing

affiliations of their members, and to shed light on how the community was affected by top-down political decisions regarding the appointment of state and Church administrative units of the entire Odra region. Only after providing this dynamic picture could one revisit the fundamental issues of the pivotal factors and landmarks in the process of formation and continuity of the Silesian regional community. Yet the answers to these questions remain unequivocal. What is remarkable, at the close of the 15th century the region called Silesia was not a particularly coherent whole. It may rather be described as a dynamic network of relations which, during subsequent stages of its history, could have developed quite different characteristics than these of the 19th- and 20th-century Silesia we are well familiar with.

The unique diversity of this region, which came into existence along the banks of the Odra river, was undoubtedly connected with local geographic conditions. These were by no means determiners of Silesia's historical boundaries. The territory of the Odra region is not limited by any natural boundaries, except for its southern part where it is flanked by the majestic Carpathian mountains. However, even this natural barrier is not airtight: a gap located in its south-eastern section links the region with the lands further south. As far as the issue of landform is concerned, today's Silesia may be divided in two parts, which bear more similarities to their neighbouring regions than to the structure they are technically part of. And so, the south-eastern part of Silesia resembles Lesser Poland, while its northern part resembles Greater Poland. What is more, also the south-western and central parts with the mixed landscape of the Sudetes and lowlands of the Wrocław region are of a very unique character. Certainly this picture can be further supplemented by details on a number of smaller territorial units with unique geographic and topographic characteristics. It is of no less importance for the formation of territorial communities that diversity of landscape translates into diversity of soil types, as well as into conditions for crop cultivation and animal breeding. Also, it is hard to point to a specific geographical element that could be considered crucial for the formation of Silesia within the territorial limits that are known to us from its most recent history.

A natural consequence of this was the absence of a uniform political structure shared by all the tribes residing within Silesia between the 9th and 10th centuries. The continual rivalry between the members of the Přemyslid (Bohemia) and the Piast (Poland) dynasties, providing numerous occasions for the Silesian community to wage joint battles against a common enemy, did not translate into its unification. Only at the turn of the 11th century were the first attempts made to create an administrative unit that was to encompass residents of both the middle and the upper Odra regions – the bishopric, with Wrocław as its capital. Throughout the 11th century and at the outset of the 12th century the province (*provintia*) of the Odra region became one of the principal units of political administration of the Piast state. Nonetheless, it was not until the 12th century when its inhabitants started to be designated as Silesians (*Ślązacy*). Another question that still

needs to be answered is whether this name was a reference to the name of the tribe of *Ślężanie*, who occupied the region in the 11th century, or perhaps to the name of the mountain peak of *Ślęża*, worshipped between the 10th and 11th centuries by pre-Christian inhabitants of the region. The formation of the so-called Silesian identity within the community of residents of the Odra region was not a homogeneous process. Initially it involved – to a varying degree – primarily political elites from the entire territory of the Odra river basin. However, from the second half of the 12th century a new aspect of Silesian identity started to gain strength. From this moment onwards, Silesia was considered to comprise only territories of the upper and middle Odra region controlled by the descendants of Boleslaus I the Tall (1163–1201) and his son Henry I the Bearded (1201–1238). The south-eastern territories of the Odra region were incorporated into the Duchy of Racibórz (also referred to as the Duchy of Opole) and went into the hands of the descendants of Mieszko the Tanglefoot (1163–1211), who was Boleslaus I's brother.

It is beyond any doubt that by the 12th century – and more specifically, from the moment Boleslaus I the Tall accepted the title of Duke of Silesia – we may speak of Silesia as a political organism. The new region was formed in the course of decisions made by elites, who had much regard for the bonds linking the members of Silesia's social groups and their beliefs. The Silesia of the time was a malleable structure crucially dependent on the fate of its sovereign Piast rulers. It was they who, between the 13th and 14th centuries, repeatedly divided the region into as many as several dozen duchies of various sizes. The only durable and uniform structure which extended its power over the entire Odra region was the Wrocław Bishopric. However, the impact of Church administration on the formation of the sense of the region's continuity is not quite clear. Of greater visibility was its inhabitants' demonstration of affiliation to their local communities. Regional affiliation was expressed through identification with communities of individual, minute duchies. The gradual territorial fragmentation of Silesia did not, however, wipe out the memory of a greater Silesian political and religious community and its ideals that were attractive for the 'dukes of Silesia'.

Nonetheless, for a long time this awareness did not translate into conscious and joint political decisions on the part of the elites of all the duchies. Instead, we may observe some degree of convergence when it comes to local dukes' investment strategies. Between the 13th and 14th centuries the territories of the northern and middle part of the Odra region – at that time referred to as 'Silesia' – were subject to a particularly intensive process of colonization accompanied by the establishment of villages based on German law and location of towns. As a result of this process – while it is not yet possible to speak of any sort of economic activity that was particularly unique for this region – Silesia undoubtedly stood out against its neighbours with its exceptionally high level of urbanization and efficient agricultural production. What is clear in this respect is the impact of model investment processes developed by the dukes of Silesia on changes introduced by

the dukes of the southern Odra region in their duchies. This spurred the formation in the north and south of the Odra region of two distinct economies whose functioning was in fact based on similar principles. The common characteristics of these two economic models (a dense urban network and well-developed financial administration in villages) made it easier for them to maintain mutual relations. In the end, even their differences, whose growing number started to push the regions away from each other starting in the mid-14th century, were not powerful enough to break commercial contacts associated with main trading routes. Nonetheless, at the close of the Middle Ages, Silesia did not yet constitute a coherent economic region. In fact, to the contrary, its southern extremes – the lands of Racibórz and Opava – were much more closely associated with Bohemia and Lesser Poland than with other Silesian territories. The fact of their continuous affiliation with the Silesia region was, however, determined by political factors.

The assumption of power over the entire territory of the upper and middle Odra region in the first half of the 14th century (1327–1339) by John of Luxembourg, King of Bohemia did not result in the formation of a uniform system of royal administration in Silesia. Neither did it lead to the development in its inhabitants of a sense of belonging to a uniform political community of the Bohemian Crown. Again, to the contrary, the political strategy of the sovereigns of Bohemia towards the inhabitants of the Odra region highlighted various types of relations between the rulers of Prague and local authorities. Firstly, the rulers of 'Silesia' (which comprised the northern and middle part of the Odra region) were distinguished from those of 'Poland' (which comprised the southern part of the Odra region). Secondly, emphasis was placed on the independent character of relations between the kings and dukes-vassals of the Crown, which stood out against their relations with the subjects of duchies whose exclusive sovereigns were the rulers of Bohemia (the Duchies of Wrocław and Świdnica-Jawor). Despite this fact, the administrative dependence of all local political subjects on Prague favoured the development of a general sense of shared interests. Its most conspicuous sign was the fact of undertaking joint political campaigns against the Hussites.

The Hussite Wars (1420–1434) led to the unification of all political forces independently of the actions of Bohemian sovereigns. Even though this unification proved not durable, in the first half of the 15th century it turned out to be crucial for the spread of the name 'Silesia' in reference to the entire Odra region. However, this did not mean full acceptance of its political or administrative community. Despite the painful Hussite experience and the efforts of King Matthias Corvinus (1469–1490) to build a uniform system of administration for the whole of Silesia, at the close of the 15th century the sense of unique identity felt by elites and ducal families of particular duchies continued to weaken the power of regional identity.

Alongside dukes and associated political elites, certain social groups also facilitated integration across the territory of Silesia to a limited degree. On one hand, the economic

and political activity of the vast majority of knights and burghers was limited to individual duchies. We cannot say much about the activity of the peasantry. On the other hand, traceable routes of migration followed by many generations of urban elites were most frequently found within the lands of the Odra river basin, with their central junctions in Wrocław, Opole and Nysa. At the same time, Silesian burghers were migrating to Prussia and – on a smaller scale – to Greater and Lesser Poland. Based on the current state of research on the subject, it is quite difficult to assess whether the migrants' choice of final destination was dependent on their sense of sharing a common language, economy and customs (relating to Silesia), or by economic resources which determined the actual range of their migration. Finally, it may be said that the social diversity of the inhabitants of the Odra region played a rather neutral role in the formation of the regional community. What was more crucial for this process was the issue of ethnic diversity. A clear tendency among Silesians to respect distinct legal traditions of various ethnic groups, understand them and incorporate them into their own legal system was not countered by the contemporary political context. Similar issues surfaced independently of the territorial boundaries of duchies, and they were solved in the common context of the entire province. The emergence of a unique 'nation of Silesia' out of the cultural mixture of Polish-speaking inhabitants and German-speaking newcomers of the time did not take away their ethnic identity. The identity of Silesians was founded on their acceptance of diversity as a fundamental element of life. This acceptance did not equal a broad, ideologically grounded tolerance. To the contrary, it came as a result of their pragmatic approach to the issue of ethnic diversity. This very pragmatic approach meant that in the 13th and 14th centuries, Jews – who possessed the capital Christians were keen to borrow – were permitted to reside in Silesian towns. What is especially remarkable in the context of the region's diversity is that, although they were finally driven out of the towns of northern and middle Silesia in the 15th century, those residing in the south remained there until the close of the century.

Two distinct trends, one being a lasting sense of being part of a larger, Silesian community – the strength of which varied according to geographical location – and the growing identification of Silesians with the local context of duchies and towns, found their manifestation in culture. Numerous works of Silesian historiography, created in monasteries and ducal courts, highlighted both the common history of the lands comprising the province and its fragmentation into territories ruled by various members of the Piast dynasty and later by various ducal families. What is more, from the mid-14th century we may notice a tendency to sacrifice the independence of Silesia and its duchies for the sake of strengthening relations with the Bohemian Crown. The case with Silesian art was similar. In fact, while we can observe some tendencies in Gothic architecture and sculpture specific to the region, a unique, typically Silesian art style did not really develop. Moreover, strong Bohemian influences did not manage to eradicate unique artistic tendencies within

the duchies. Nonetheless, some characteristics did exist that were particular to the so-called 'Silesian' art, especially when it comes to the period of the Late Middle Ages.

The sense of Silesian independence and the geographic range of Silesian identity was mostly determined by political factors, especially the need to manage a subservient, remote community first by the rulers of Poland and later by those of Bohemia. No less important were the dynastic traditions of the Piasts and the ambitions of this family's members – as well as later dukes of other dynasties – to build a state which, while very small, would be as independent as possible. For one thing, they had a crucial impact on shaping the sense of belonging to a Silesia which was perceived as part of a larger community juxtaposed with other political formations, such as the Piast duchies ruled by non-members of its Silesian line, and later the Kingdoms of Poland and Bohemia. For another, their emphasis on the independence of individual duchies hindered every attempt at permanent integration of the community of the entire Odra region. Social and economic phenomena which determined political decisions were until the 15th century of an ambivalent nature for the formation of a uniform Odra region.

The vision of the province's history that was widely popularized in the Middle Ages evolved from the dynastic traditions of the local dukes. It was this vision that determined the favourable conditions for the development of the sense of unity of the inhabitants of Silesia – the land of the descendants of Boleslaus I the Tall and Henry I the Bearded, and later those of Ladislaus the Exile. The shape of this community, its coherence and durability were not consolidated neither at the close of the 12th century – when the region was being born – nor at the close of the 15th century, when its position among various contemporary political and administrative units was established. A continuous interplay of various factors, among which the connection of political and economic elites with the traditions of local duchies was of pivotal importance, meant that although Silesia would undoubtedly prove a durable entity, at the end of Middle Ages an understanding of its past, present and future remained far from certain.

Maps and illustrations

Map 1. Political fragmentation of Silesia, c. 1350 (Dariusz Przybytek) 18
Map 2. Region of Silesia - relief (G. Kosmala) 22

Photo. 1. View of the Ślęża Mount (G. Kosmala).....24
Photo. 2. Southwest view of the Mount St. Anna (G. Kosmala) 26

Illustration 1. Wrocław, Church of St Mary Magdalene, the nave looking to the east. 202
Illustration 2. Brzeg, Church of St Nicholas, the nave vault looking to the east. 203
Illustration 3. Wrocław, former Franciscan Church of St Jacob, the north side of the nave viewing from the south aisle. 204
Illustration 4. Wrocław, Church of St Mary, view of vaults in the nave and in the aisles. 204
Illustration 5. Strzegom, Church of St Peter and St Paul, the nave vault looking to the east. 205
Illustration 6. Wrocław, Church of St Mary, view of vaults with sculptured corbels in the north aisle. 206
Illustration 7. Wrocław, Church of the Holy Cross, keystone with image of St Hedwig. 207
Illustration 8. Wrocław, sculpture of the Pieta, Church of St Elizabeth (lost). 208
Illustration 9. Madonna on lion from the Church of St Matthias in Wrocław (Archdiocesan Museum in Wrocław). 209
Illustration 10. Hans Pleydenwurff, panel representing the Descent from the cross from former retable (1462) of the main altar in the Church of St Elisabeth in Wrocław. 210
Illustration 11. *Dormition of the Virgin*, central scene of the retable (1492) from the Church of St Stanislaus and St Wenceslaus in Świdnica. 211
Illustration 12 a-b. Head of St John the Baptist on a platter, sculptures from building facades in Wrocław. 211
Illustration 13. St Hedwig with the remains of her son, Henry II the Pious, on the battlefield near Legnica; woodcut from The Legend of St Hedwig, pub. Konrad Baumgarten, Wrocław 1504. 212
Illustration 14. Reliquary of the mandible of St Hedwig (1512) from the Church of the Holy Cross in Wrocław.....213
Illustration 15. Tombstone of Henry VI, Wrocław, Church of St Clara.....214

Tables

Table 1. The main rivers and reservoirs in the territory of Silesia 33
Table 2. The largest towns of Silesia and its neighbouring regions in the Late Middle Ages 108
Table 3. Selected Upper Silesian fairs and their correlation with the dates of fairs in Wrocław and Cracow between the 14th and 15th centuries 114
Table 4. Meetings between Silesian citizens and international merchants in Wrocław between the 14th and the 15th centuries 115
Table 5. Marriages of the members of the Piast dynasty ruling the Odra region in 1201–1500 166

Bibliography

by Aleksandra Filipek, Katarzyna Polak

Abbreviations

APWr. – Archiwum Państwowe we Wrocławiu (State Archive Wrocław)
AWr. – Akta miasta Wrocława (fond: Acts of the City of Wrocław)
BUb. – *Breslauer Urkundenbuch*
HUb. – *Hansisches Urkundenbuch*
LBUS – *Lehns- und Besitzurkunden Schlesiens und seiner einzlenen Fürstenthümer im Mittelalter*, eds Colmar Grünhagen, Hermann Markgraf, vol. 1, Leipzig 1881; vol. 2, Leipzig 1883.
Lib.exc.sign – APWr., AWr., *Libri excessuum et signaturarum*
LMag. – APWr., AWr., *Liber Magnus*
SUb. – *Schlesisches Urkundenbuch*
UGUS – *Urkundensammlung zur Geschichte des Ursprungs der Städte und der Einführung und Verbreitung deutscher Kolonisten und Rechte in Schlesien und der Ober-Lausitz*, eds Gustav Adolf Tzschoppe, Gustav Adlof Harald Stenzel, Hamburg 1832

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Index

by Przemysław Wiszewski

A

Abraham of Opole, merchant, 117, 119
Adalbert
  Saint cult, 79
Adalbert, bishop of Prague, saint, 224
Adrian IV, the Pope, 69, 75
advocatus, 85
advocatus provincialis, 86
advocatus terrae, 86, 88
Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, 190
Agnes of Austria, Duchesse of Świdnica, 16
agriculture, 99
Albert of Strzelin, 150
Albert with Beard, 178
Albrecht von Colditz, 157
Alexander the Great, 42
amber, 44
Anna, Duchesse of Silesia, wife of Henry II the Pious, Duke of Silesia, 225
annals, 200, 221, 228-230, 232-233
arsenic ore, 30
Austria, 101, 103

B

Balthasar I, duke of Żagań, 160
Barania Mountain, 26
Bardo, 76
  castellan of, 71
barite, 30
Barthel Stein, 98
Bartholomew, Saint cult, 225, 79
Barycz, river, 31, 34, 38
basalt, 30
Bavarian Geographer, 47, 58
Benedict Johnsdorff, chronicler, 232
Benedict of Poznań, chronicler, 223, 226
Benešov, 102
Berlin, 100
Bernard, Duke of Niemodlin, 117, 156, 157, 159
Beskids Mountains, 21, 76, 98
Będzin, 96, 123
bilingualism, 175, 190
Bobolice, 183
Bobrzanie, tribe, 47
Boguszów, 29, 30
Bohemia, 10, 11, 13, 14, 21, 43, 54, 65, 75, 80, 83, 96, 97, 101, 108, 127, 128, 132, 135, 158, 174, 190, 191, 237, 240
  Crown of, 12, 16, 80, 90, 103, 106, 145, 146, 149, 150, 153-156, 160, 161, 200-202, 222, 229, 232, 240
Boleslaus I the Brave, King of Poland, 14, 53, 55, 57
Boleslaus I the Cruel, duke of Bohemia, 14
Boleslaus I the Tall, duke of Silesia, 14, 16, 61-63, 79, 104, 176, 185, 217, 220, 239, 242
Boleslaus II Rogatka, Duke of Legnica, 74, 137, 139, 234
Boleslaus II the Bold, duke of Poland, 14
Boleslaus II the Pious, duke of Bohemia, 14, 54
Boleslaus III the Generous, Duke of Legnica, 16, 144, 151
Boleslaus III the Wrymouth, Duke of Poland, 14, 43, 66, 68, 219, 225, 230
Boleslaus IV the Curly, Duke of Poland, 14, 65, 77
Boleslaus the Elder (Firstborn), Duke of Niemodlin, 147, 150, 152
Boleslaus V the Chaste, Duke of Cracow, 73
Bolesławiec, 29, 30, 99
  castellan of, 71
Bolko I the Strict, Duke of Świdnica, 144
Bolko II the Small, Duke of Świdnica, 16, 102, 106, 119, 147
Bolko II, Duke of Opole, 117, 150, 152
Bolko II, Duke of Ziębice, 106
Bolko IV, Duke of Opole, 117, 156
Bolko of Niemodlin *see Boleslaus the Elder (Firstborn), Duke of Niemodlin*
Bolko V the Hussite, Duke of Gogówek, 122
Bóbr, river, 48, 96
Brandenburg, 21, 106
Brenna, 30
Břetislaus I, Duke of Bohemia, 14, 53
Břetyslav II, Duke of Bohemia, 76
brewing, 99, 118

Bruges, 102
Bruno von Schauenburg, bishop of Olomouc, 78
Bruntál, 102, 107
Brynica, river, 21
Brzeg, 37, 73, 96, 100-112, 114, 118, 119, 141, 228
  Castle Church, 199
  Duchy of, 141, 231
Brzeg Dolny, 31
Bug, river, 59
Bull, papal
  of 1155 for Wrocaw Bishopric, 70, 75, 78, 200
  of 1255 for Wrocaw Bishopric, 70, 75
  of Gniezno, 75
Burschwitz von, Hans, 148
Bużanie, tribe, 59
Bystrzyckie Mountains, 34
Bytom, 29, 48, 54, 96, 98, 105, 113, 119, 123, 125, 126
Bytom Odrzaski, 98, 99, 143
  castellan of, 71

C

Carmen Mauri, 62, 225
Carpathian Mountains, 238
Casimir I the Restorer, Duke of Poland, 14, 53, 183, 231
Casimir I, Duke of Cieszyn, 150, 152
Casimir I, Duke of Opole, 104
Casimir II, Duke of Cieszyn, 164
Casimir II the Just, Duke of Cracow, 230
Casimir Jagiellon, King of Poland, 17, 122, 189
Casimir the Great, King of Poland, 80, 118, 124
castellanies, 72, 84, 85, 90
castellanus, 69
Catherine, Duchesse of Ziębice, 148
Celts, 44
Charles IV of Luxembourg, King of Bohemia, 80, 98, 106, 113, 143, 145, 146, 149, 151, 198
Chełm, 99
Chobienia, 98, 143
Chojnów, 119, 120
Chronica Poloniae Maioris, 62
Chronica principum Poloniae, 144, 180, 219, 222, 230
Ciechanowice, 29
Cieszyn, 52, 105, 119, 126, 166
  Duchy of, 174
Cistercians, 34, 63, 199
coal, depostis, 28
cobalt ores, 30
coins
  bracteats, 105
  denarii, 104
  golden, 106
  groschen, 105, 106
  grzywna, 105
  minting, 77, 102
  quarter coins, 104
colonization, 77, 82, 170, 239, *see also settlers*
comes, 90
comes provintiae, 67
communication community, 169, 171, 173
confederations, 89, 156, 159, 160, 180
  of duchies, 164
  of dukes, 89, 159, 160
  of towns, 89-90, 123
Conrad, son of Henry I the Bearded, 179, 180
Conrad I, Duke of Głogów, 104, 133, 134, 137, 146
Conrad I, Duke of Oleśnica, 143, 146, 147
Conrad IV the Older, Duke of Oleśnica, Bishop of Wrocław, 153, 158, 159, 174
Conrad V Kantner, Duke of Oleśnica, 148, 153
Conrad VII the White, Duke of Oleśnica, 148
Conrad IX the Black, Duke of Oleśnica, 161
Conrad X the White (the Younger), Duke of Oleśnica, 148, 149, 160-162
Conrad Spindleshanks, Duke of Głogów, 14, 67
Conrad Wettin, the Margrave of Meissen, 67
Constance, wife of Przemko II, Duke of Głogów, 147
copper, 29
Cosmas of Prague, the chronicler, 53, 72
court of twelve, 88
Cracow, 15, 66, 97, 102, 117, 135, 136, 152, 175, 197, 219, 220, 231
  fairs, 113, 114, 127

crafts
belt makers, 120
cauldron makers, 120
furriers, 120
tailors, 120, 126
Cronica Petri comitis Poloniae, 225, 226
cultural identity, 180, 190, 199-201
custom houses, 98, 103
Czarna Pszemsza, river, 96
Czech language, 172, 173, 190, 234
Czech, legendary founder of the Czech nation, 223-224
Czeladź, 113-114
czud court, 87-88

D

Dalemińce *see Głomacze*
Danube, river, 43
diabase, 30
Dippold from Vohburg and Cham, the Margrave of Nordgau, 67
dolomite, 30
ducal court, 138
ducal titles, 135, 137, 138, 150, 172, 217
Dziadoszanie, tribe, 48, 55
Dziewin, 98

E

Eger, 72
Elbe, river, 31, 106
Elisabeth, the Duchess of Pomerania, 106
England, 101, 111
epidemics, 120
Epitaphs of Dukes of Silesia, 221
Epytaphia ducum Slezie see Epitaphs of Dukes of Silesia
ethnic divisions, 179
Eufemia (Ofka), Duchesse of Opole, 156

F

fairs, 126
Ferdinand I Habsburg, King of Bohemia, 17
feudal law, 154
feudal system in Silesia, 87
fiefdoms, 87
Flanders, 106
Franconia, 101, 197
Frankfurt am Main, 100, 103
Frankfurt (Oder), 98, 106
Frederick I Barbarossa, Emperor, 14, 62
Frederick I, Duke of Legnica, 160, 161
fustian, 101
fustian industry, 107, 127

G

gabbro, 30
galena deposits, 96, 102
Gallus Anonymous, chronicler, 52, 61, 66
Gdańsk, 100
genealogical relations, 134
George of Poděbrady, King of Bohemia, 16, 90, 122, 160, 190
dynasty, 222, 232
German language, 189, 191, 223, 231
in Bohemia, 172
in Silesia, 175, 234
German law, 82, 177
Germany, 12, 111, 138
Gertrude, abbesse of Trzebnica, daughter of Henry I the Bearded, 225
Gierczyn, 29, 30
Gilów, 58
glass smelting, 30
Gliwice, 32
Gliwice Canal, 32
Głogów, 14, 15, 23, 28, 43, 48, 68, 74, 88, 98-100, 112, 118, 121, 124, 133, 141-143, 146, 172, 174, 228
castellan of, 71
Duchy of, 87-89, 123, 135, 138, 147, 155, 222
March of, 133
the collegiate chapter, 68
Głogówek, 120, 126
Duchy of, 122
Głomacze, tribe, 57
Głubczyce, 49
Głubczyce Plateau, 36, 49
Gniezno, 62, 66, 135
Archbishopric, 43
archdiocese, 14, 78
gold, 102, 118, 125, 127
mining, 29
Golęszyce, tribe, 49
governor, 88, 150, 163
governor of Silesia, 163
of Niemodlin, 156

of Środa Śląska, 156
of Świdnica-Jawor Duchy, 155, 156
of Wrocław Duchy, 155, 156
Góra, 142, 143, 188
district of, 88, 91
granites, 30
grapevine, 100
Great Moravia, 13, 55, 58
Greater Poland, 15, 21, 68, 75, 96, 100, 110, 127, 134, 135, 145, 195, 238, 241
Grodków, 80, 88
alliance in (1421), 158
district of, 91
Gryfów Śląski, 30
Gryżów, 117
guilds, 111, 119, 120
gypsum, 30

H

Habsburgs, 11
Halych Ruthenia, 118
Hanseatic League, 94
Haugwitz
Hans von, lord of Syców, 162
Hynko, lord of Wąsosz, 162
Hebrew, 190
Hedwig of Andechs, Silesian duchesse, saint, 198
cult, 79, 200, 224
iconography, 199
Heinrichau *see Henryków*
Henry *marchio Glogoviensis*, 67
Henry of Wierzbno, Bishop of Wrocław, 78, 84
Henry I (III), Duke of Głogów, 15, 104, 105, 133, 134, 138, 142, 144, 172
Henry I the Bearded, Duke of Silesia, 15, 61, 62, 68, 71, 73, 77, 79, 90, 104, 112, 132, 135, 149, 164, 177, 178, 180, 181, 186, 187, 217, 220, 223, 239, 242
Henry I the Older, Duke of Ziębice and Oleśnica, 149, 162
Henry I, the German king, 55
Henry II of Berg, brother of Salomea, 67
Henry II the Pious, Duke of Silesia, 15, 74, 79, 133, 136, 179, 199, 200, 224
Henry III the White, Duke of Wrocław, 80, 104
Henry III, Emperor, 14
Henry IV the Faithful, Duke of Żagań, 143, 146
Henry IV the Righteous (Probus), Duke of Wrocław, 15, 80, 90, 104, 134, 138, 144
Henry V of Iron, Duke of Głogów, 143, 146
Henry V the Fat, Duke of Legnica and Wrocław, 138, 144
Henry VI the Good, Duke of Wrocław, 16, 147, 151, 201
Henry IX, Duke of Lubin, 156
Henry IX the Older, Duke of Głogów, 160, 161
Henry X Rumpold (the Younger), Duke of Głogów, 157
Henryków, 185
Bodo, Abbot, 184
Cistercian abbey, 73, 148, 183, 230
dances of German women, 184
Peter (III), the Abbot, 74, 183, 185, 190
Henryków Book, 50, 183, 190, 217, 229
Herman von Gleichen, Bishop of Kamień, 78
Hieronymus, Bishop of Wrocław, 53
High Road *see via regia*
Historia Bohemica, Polonica et Silesiaca, 218
historiography, 219, 225, 229, 233, 241
ducal, 230
urban, 171, 231
Hlučiin, 107
Hofgericht see manorial court
Hohe Strasse see via regia
Hohenzollern dynasty, 222
Holy Roman Empire, 62, 65
Hound Collar Society, knights order, 153
Hungary, 21, 101, 111
Hussite Wars, 90, 110, 121, 123, 124, 240
Hussites, 16, 156

I

Imbram Gniewomirowic, *castellan* of Ryczyn, 71
Innocent III, the Pope, 181
iron ores, 29
Italy, 106, 111
iudicium curie see manorial court
Izaak of Świdnica, usurer, 119
Izera Mountains, 25, 34

J

Jakuszyce, 31
Jan Dugosz, chronicler, 53, 226, 227
Jaroslaus, Bishop of Wrocaływ, 14
Jawor, 196
Jedlinka, 30
Jelcz, 174
Jews, 119, 168, 176, *see Abraham of Opole, Izaak of Świdnica, Mosze of Legnica*
  persecutions, 175
Jeżów Sudecki, 29
Jobst (Jodocus) of Luxembourg, margrave of Moravia, 90
Johann Frauenburg from Zgorzelec, 190
Johannes Froben, chronicler, 229, 231
John Bartwa, 188
John I, Duke of Żagań, 153, 156
John II the Mad, Duke of Żagań, 160
John of Capistrano, 175
John of Luxembourg, King of Bohemia, 16, 80, 107, 133, 142, 144-146, 149, 150, 154, 188, 200, 232, 240
John of Oświęcim, 150, 156
John the Baptist, Saint, 61, 78, 198, 225
John the Evangelist, Saint, 225
John the Luxembourg, King of Bohemia, 142
John, Bishop of Wrocław, 53
John, Duke of Ścinawa, 142, 143
Julius Caesar, 160

K

Kaczawa, river, 31
Kaczawskie Mountains, 25, 28, 30
Kalisz, 68
Kamieniec Ząbkowicki
  Cistercian abbey, 102, 148
  fortress, 76
Kamienna Góra, 29
Karkonosze Mountains, 25, 28, 29, 32, 34, 37
Kazimierz the Great, King of Poland, 80
Kiełcz, 98
Kiev, 97
Kletno, 30
Kluczbork, 29
Kłodzko Valley, 21, 54
knighthood, 138, 140, 143
Kowary, 29
Koźle, 31, 34, 70
Kraków, 15
Krapkowice, 30
Krnov, 107
Krosno Odrzańskie, 23, 37, 43, 48, 54, 98, 100, 122, 222
  castellan of, 71
Krystyn, voivode of Mazovia, 66
Kudowa, 31
Kunickie Lakeland, 32
Kwisa, river, 25, 96

L

Ladislas the Exile, 61
Ladislaus, Duke of Bytom and Koźle, 150, 152
Ladislaus Habsburg, King of Bohemia, 16
Ladislaus Herman, Duke of Poland, 14, 52, 66
Ladislaus I, Duke of Bohemia, 67
Ladislaus II the Exile, Duke of Poland, 14, 43, 220, 225, 230, 242
Ladislaus Jagiellon, King of Bohemia, 17, 82, 114, 149, 163
Ladislaus the Elbow-high, King of Poland, 15
Lasówka, 30
Latin, 171, 174, 189, 216, 223, 231, 233
  Latin in Silesia, 173, 175
Laurentius, bishop of Wrocław, 104
Laurentius, Saint, 198
lead, 102, 123
lead-zinc ores, 29
Legnica, 15, 28, 32, 35, 44, 48, 73, 88, 96, 103, 106, 111, 112, 118-122, 138, 139, 141, 153, 219
  battle of, 15, 136, 187, 199, 201, 224
  castellan of, 71
  castle, 69
  Duchy of, 87, 89, 231
  municipal court, 83
Leipzig, 112
Leonard Assenheimer, 123
Lesser Poland, 15, 21, 52, 54, 96, 101, 108, 110, 127, 135, 195, 238, 240, 241
Leszek, Duke of Racibórz, 16, 133, 150
Leśnica, ducal court, 73
limestones, 30

linen, 103
linen manufacturing, 101
Liswarta river, 21
loess soils, 99
Lothair III, the Emperor, 67
Louis I of Hungary, King of Hungary and Poland, 150, 222
Louis I, Duke of Brzeg, 105, 146, 199, 201, 222, 224, 231
Louis II, Duke of Brzeg and Legnica, 153, 156, 157, 158
Louis Jagiellon, King of Bohemia, 17
Lubań, 30
Lubeck, 100
Lubiąż, 98
  Benedictine monastery, 183
  charter of 1175, 61, 176
  Cistercian abbey, 69, 71, 73, 102, 176, 182, 188, 221
Lubin, 120
  Castle Chapel, 199
Lublin, 101, 110
Lubliniec, 37
Lubsko, 100
Lubusz, 180
  Bishopric, 78
  castellan of, 71
Ludmila, Duchesse of Legnica, 149
Ludolf, Abbot of Canons Regular in Żagań, 186
Lupiglaa, tribe, 49
Lusatia, 25, 89, 96, 111, 120, 127, 153, 195
Lusatian culture, 44
Lutynia, 30
Luxembourg dynasty, 81, 91, 140
Lviv, 103
Lwówek Śląski, 29, 30, 102, 103, 119, 126, 139, 176
  municipal court, 83
Łagów Lakeland, 24, 32

M

madder, 100
Magdeburg, 172
Magnus, comes, 66
manorial court, 87, 88
mański court see manorial court
marbles, 30
marl beds, 30
Martin of Opava, chronicler, 228
Master Vincent, chronicler, 42, 63, 67, 191, 217, 218, 219
Matthias Corvinus, King of Bohemia and Hungary, 17, 81, 106, 112, 122, 161, 240
Mazovia, 66, 75
merchants, 94, 102, 103, 113, 115, 117
  guilds, 104
Merseburg, 67
metallurgy, 44
metalworking, 111
Miedzianka, 29
Mieszko I, Duke of Poland, 14, 54, 55
Mieszko I the Tanglefoot, Duke of Racibórz and Opole, 14
Mieszko II, King of Poland, 14
Mieszko II the Fat, Duke of Opole, 104
Mieszko III the Old, Duke of Poland, 14
Mieszko the Tanglefoot, Duke of Racibórz and Opole, 79, 149, 150, 239
migrations, 10, 45, 138, 171, 181
  Germans, 61, 177
  Waloons, 178
Milicz, 75, 77
Milicz-Głogów Depression, 23
military conflicts
  internal, 122
mill stones, 102, 103
Milota of Raduně, 174
mineral resources *see coal, gold, iron, lead, silver*
mineral waters, 30
mining, 101, 123, 125, 127
Mohács, battle of, 17
Mongol invasion of 1241, 15, 104, 121, 124
Monk of Sázava, chronicler, 54
Moravia, 21, 25, 31, 75, 78, 83, 89, 96, 101, 128, 155, 162, 191, 195
Moravian Gate, 21, 25, 27, 31, 43, 49, 97
Mosze of Legnica, usurer, 119
multiculturalism, 184, 186
multiethnicity, 180, 189, 192
multilingualism, 190, 191, 234
Mysłowice, 28

N

Namysłów, 101, 145, 231
  Duchy of, 84, 157
Nanker, Bishop of Wrocław, 152, 225

Netherlands, 96, 111
Nicholas, Bishop of Olomouc, 90
Nicholas I, Duke of Opava, 16
Nicholas I, Duke of Opole, 161
Nicholas II, Duke of Opava, 150, 152, 154
Nicholas, notary of Henry I the Bearded, Duke of Silesia, 74
nickel ores, 30
Niemcza, 45, 54, 56, 58, 176
Niemodlin, 30
Novogrod, 111
Nowa Ruda, 28
Nowogrodziec, 30
  Magdalenes Sisters cloister, 137
Nowogród Bobrzański, 187
  Canons Regular cloister, 141, 186-187
Nuremberg, 94, 122, 197, 198
Nysa, 83, 84, 97, 104, 112, 118, 121, 122, 241
  Duchy of, 89
  land of, 78
  municipal court, 83

O

Oderskie Mountains (Góry Oderskie), 31
Odra, river, 31, 36, 42, 48, 50, 52, 58, 81, 97, 106, 126, 134, 191
Oleśnica, 141, 149
  Duchy of, 87, 88, 222
  municipal court, 83
Olomuc, 111
  Bishop of, 155
  Bishopric, 76
Opava, 10, 12, 16, 100, 101, 103, 107, 111, 117, 119, 126, 240
  Duchy of, 151, 174
Opolanie, tribe, 49
Opole, 12, 15, 30, 36, 43, 49, 54, 96, 111, 114, 117, 119, 120, 122, 126, 241
  Duchy of, 136
  municipal court, 83
Ostrava, 25, 28
Oświęcim, 113
Otmuchów, 77, 83, 85, 104
  land of, 78
Otto III, Emperor, 53
Owl Mountains (Góry Sowie), 25, 30

P

Paczków, 85
pagus, 55
Parlament of Silesia, 81, 90, 161, 162
Partynice, 44
peat bogs, 34
Pełcznica, 199
Peter Eschenloer, chronicler, 190, 229, 231
Peter of Byczyna, chronicler, 179, 181, 222, 230, 231
Peter Wlast, 61, 62, 63, 76, 226
Pforta, Cistercian abbey, 176, 182
Piast dynasty, 12, 223
Pictorial Legend of S. Hedwig, 199, 224
Piotr Włostowic *see Peter Wlast*
Piotrowice, 30
Pleissenland, 71
Płock, 66
Poděbrady, House of, 149
Poland, 10, 12, 43, 56, 62, 145, 172, 197, 199, 220, 221, 237
  Crown of, 140
  Kingdom of, 83, 101, 110, 135
Polish language, 185, 189, 191, 234
  in Silesia, 171, 175
Polish law, 85, 143, 154, 176, 188
Polkowice, 29
Pomerania, 97, 100
  Western, 106
ponds, 34
Poznań, 15, 135
Prague, 97, 103, 104, 110, 122, 196
  Bishop, 76
Přemysl Otakar II, King of Bohemia, 79, 132
Přemyslid dynasty, 12, 14, 16, 75, 76, 79, 174
Prochowice, 120
Procopius of Caesarea, 46
Prussia, 100, 102, 103, 241
Prussia, Kingdom of, 12
Przecław of Pogorzela, Bishop of Wrocław, 81, 83, 146, 152, 223
Przecznica, 30
Przemko I, Duke of Opava, 153, 156
Przemko II, Duke of Głogów, 147, 200
Przemsza, river, 21
Przemysł, Duke of Oświęcim, 161

Przemysł Noszak, Duke of Cieszyn, 155, 158
Przeworno, 30
Przeworsk culture, 45
Psie Pole
  battle of, 42
Pszczyna, 34, 99
Pyskowice, 113

R

Racibórz, 15, 16, 32, 35, 98, 105, 111, 118, 119, 122, 126, 127, 240
  Duchy of, 111, 154
  municipal court, 83
Red Ruthenia, 96
region, 11, 12, 17
  anthroporegions, 44, 63
  climate regions, 35
  economic region, 96, 125
  subregions of Silesia, early, 69
Richeza of Berg, Duchesse of Bohemia, 67
right of repurchase *(ius retractus)*, 184
Rogów, 117
Rokitnica, ducal estate, 73
Roman Empire, 44
Rudawy Janowickie, mountains, 25
Rudna, 29
Rudolph of Habsburg, 80
Rudolph of Rüdesheim, Bishop of Wrocław, 227
Rugia, island, 50
Rupert, Duke of Legnica, 156
Ruthenia, 101, 124
Rychtal, 83

S

Salomea of Berg, Duchesse of Poland, 67
salt deposits, 30
Sandomierz, 66, 68
sandstone, 30
Sardinia, 38
Saxony, 21, 82, 84, 191, 195
Sądowel, 70
  castellan of, 71
Scandinavia, 111
Schlackenwerth Codex, 187
seals
  ducal, 132, 135
  of town, 198
Sebaldus, Saint, 198
settlers, 10-11, 15, 83, 121, 176-177, 182
shipping industry, 98
Sibiu, 101
Sieciech, palatine of Ladislaus Herman, 66
Siedlice, 117
Siemowit, Duke of Bytom and Gliwice, 152
Siewierz, 114
Sigismund of Luxembourg, King of Bohemia, 16, 107, 153, 156, 157
Silesian Cutting, 38, 49, 50
Silesian Highlands, 23, 26, 34
Silesian Lowlands, 23, 31, 35
Silesian Polish Chronicle, 136, 179, 219, 225, 230
Silesians, tribe, 42
Silingi, tribe, 45, 46
silver, 102, 123
silver mining, 29
Skoczów, 34
Slovakia, 21
Sławęcice, 105
Sławków, 114
Sławniowice, 30
Sobótka, 30, 144
Song of Mauro *see Carmen Mauri*
Srebrna Góra, 29
Stanislaus, bishop of Cracow, saint, 198, 224
Stanisławów, 30
St Anna's Mountain, 26, 28, 38
starost *see governor*
steel production, 29
Stefan, castellan of Żagań, 71
Stosch von, 148
  Christoff, 148
  Friedrich, 148
Stronie Śląskie, 29, 30
Strzegom, 28, 101, 118, 196
  commendary of the Order of Saint John, 132
Strzelce Opolskie, 30, 117, 126
Strzelin, 28, 30, 100, 120
  union (1427), 158
Studnica, battle of, 179, 182, 189
Sudetes Mountains, 21, 24, 28, 31, 35, 76, 98, 238
swamps, 34
Switzerland, 101

Syców, 29
Szklarska Poręba, 30
Szklary, 30
Ścinawa, 23, 28, 31, 98, 143
Ślęza, river, 48
Ślęża Mountain, 24, 30, 56, 57, 59, 62, 239
  castle on, 74
  heathen cult, 51, 61
Ślężanie, 56
Ślężanie, tribe, 47, 48, 50-52, 55-59, 216, 239
Śnieżka Mountain, 23
Śnieżnik Mountain, 25
Środa Śląska, 36, 73, 96, 100, 118, 119, 126, 157
  municipal court, 83
Świdnica, 29, 100, 103, 106, 107, 111, 113, 118, 119, 120, 124, 126, 138, 141, 176, 196
  Duchy of, 89, 158, 240
Świdnica-Jawor, Duchy of, 81, 157, 163

T

Table Mountains, 25, 30, 34
Tarnowskie Góry, 28, 29, 36, 96, 102
Teutonic Knights Order, 140
textile industry, 100, 111
Thietmar of Merseburg, 45, 47, 51, 55, 176
Thomas I, bishop of Wrocaw, 104
Timber, 98, 126
tin ores, 30
tolls, 98
Toruń, 99, 101
Toszek, 105, 117
town law, 107
  Flemisch law, 82, 83
  German law, 126
  law of Głubczyce, 83
  law of Magdeburg, 82, 84
trade, 106, 107, 110
treuga pacis, 118
trilingualism in Silesia, 174, 175
Trzebnica, 99
  Abbey Church, 199
  Cistercian nuns abbey, 73, 79, 178, 224
Trzebnica Embankment, 23, 31
Trzebnica Hills, 36
Trzebowianie, tribe, 47, 48
Tuowice, 30
turfy ores, 29

U

Ujazd, 83, 88
unions *see confederations*
urban centres
  network of towns, 108
  population, 108
urbanization, 239

V

Vandals, tribe, 45
Veit Stoss, 197
Venice, 101, 106, 107
Verse of Lubiąż, 182, 221
Versus lubenses *see Verse of Lubiąż*
via regia, 96, 97, 113, 122, 124, 126, 197
Vilnius, 112
Vincent of Bavegna, saint, 225
Vincent of Saragossa, saint, 225
vineyards, 24
Vistula, river, 21, 25, 34
Volodar Rostislavich, Duke of Przemyśl, 225

W

Wallachia, 111
Walloons, 178
Walter of Malonne, Bishop of Wrocław, 76
Wałbrzych, 28, 29, 36
Warta, river, 32
watermills, 98
weichbild, 84, 86, 90, 142
Wenceslaus I, Duke of Legnica, 106, 145, 146
Wenceslaus II, King of Bohemia, 15, 80
Wenceslaus III, King of Bohemia, 15
Wenceslaus IV of Luxembourg, King of Bohemia, 107, 153, 155, 156
Wenceslaus, Duke of Bohemia, Saint, 198, 224
Wenceslaus, Duke of Legnica, Bishop of Wrocław, 83, 153, 156
Wenceslaus, saint
  cult, 79
Western Pomerania, 78
wetlands, 34
Wiązów, 83
Widawa, river, 31

Wieliczka, 118
Wielka Sowa (Great Owl) Mountain, 25
William, Duke of Opava, 148
winemaking, 100
Wiślanie, tribe, 59
Wiślica, 68
Wojciech, saint *see Adalbert, saint*
Wojslaw, comes, 68
Wołczyn, 117
Wołów, 37, 149
wood (resources), 31
Wrocław, 10, 15, 16, 35, 43, 61, 88, 94, 96, 99, 100, 101, 103, 104, 106, 110, 111, 115, 117, 119, 120, 122, 124, 126, 138, 141, 149, 157, 163, 173, 176, 190, 196, 228, 231, 241
  Abbey of Canons Regular, 60, 66, 102, 226, 232
  Abbey of Saint Claire Order, 174
  Abbey of St Vincent
    Benedictine, 62, 66
    Premonstratensian, 102, 225
  bishop of, 75, 76, 80, 83, 226
  Bishopric, 14, 52, 53, 57, 61, 64, 75, 76, 102, 154, 198, 218, 225, 230, 238, 239
  capital of province, 52
  catalogues of Bishops of Wrocław, 228
  Cathedral, 199
  Church of Saint Dorothy, 196
  Church of Saint Mary Magdalene, 196
  coat-of-arms, 198
  Collegiate Church of the Holy Cross, 199
  Duchy of, 81, 86, 87, 145, 151, 157, 158, 240
  municipal court, 83
  seal, 198
  Waloon district, 178
Wymiarki, 30

Z

Zagórze, 96
Zakrzów, 44
Zator, 113, 126
Ząbkowice Śląskie, 29, 30
Zgorzelec, 110, 153
Zielona Góra, 24, 28, 35, 37
Ziębice, 148
  Duchy of, 148, 222
Zlaté Hory, 29, 117, 119, 123
Zlensgor Mountain, 59
Złotoryja, 29, 30, 102, 119, 120, 123, 125, 139
  municipal court, 83
Złoty Stok, 29, 30, 102, 119, 125
Żagań, 28, 141
  Abby of Canons Regular, 186
  castellan of, 71
  Duchy of, 222
Żory, 29, 30
Żyro, 66
Żytawa, 29

Polish-German Concordance of Topographic Names

Barania Góra m. – Widderberg
Bardo – Wartha
Będzin - Bendzin
Bobolice - Bublitz
Boguszów – Gottesberg
Bóbr r. – Bober
Brynica r. - Brinitz
Brzeg – Brieg
Brzeg Dolny – Dyhrenfurth
Bug r. – Bug
Bytom – Beuthen
Bytom Odrzański – Beuthen an der Oder
Chobienia – Köben
Chojnów – Haynau
Ciechanowice – Rudelstadt
Cieszyn – Teschen
Dziewin – Dieban
Gdańsk – Danzig
Gierczyn – Gieren (Giehren)
Gilów – Girlachsdorf
Gliwice – Gleiwitz
Głogów – Glogau
Głogówek – Oberglogau
Głubczyce – Leobschütz
Gniezno – Gnesen
Góra – Guhrau
Góry Kaczawskie m. – Bober-Katzbach-Gebierge
Grodków – Grottkau
Gryfów Śląski – Greiffenberg
Gryżów – Griesau
Henryków – Henrichau
Jakuszyce – Jakobsthal
Jawor – Jauer
Jedlinka – Blumenau
Jelcz – Jeltsch
Jeżów Sudecki – Grunau
Kaczawa r. – Katzbach

Kamieniec Ząbkowicki – Kamentz
Kamienna Góra – Landeshut
Karkonosze m. – Riesengebierge
Kiełcz – Költsch
Kletno – Klessengrund
Kluczbork – Creutzburg
Kotlina Kłodzka / Valley – Glatzer Kessel
Kowary – Schmiedeberg im Riesengebierge
Koźle – Cosel
Kraków – Krakau
Krapkowice – Krappkowitz
Krosno Odrzańskie – Crossen an der Oder
Kudowa Zdrój – Bad Kudowa
Kunice - Kunitz
Kwisa r. – Queis
Lasówka - Kaiserswalde
Legnica – Liegnitz
Liswarta r. – Lisswartha
Lubań – Lauban
Lubiąż – Leubus
Lubin – Lüben
Lubliniec – Lublinitz
Lubsko – Sommerfeld
Lubusz – Lebus
Lutynia – Leuthen
Lwówek Śląski – Löwenberg in Schlesien
Łagów – Lagow
Miedzianka r. – Küpper
Milicz – Militsch
Mysłowice – Myslowitz
Namysłów – Namslau
Niemcz – Nimptsch
Niemodlin – Falkenberg
Nowa Ruda – Neurode
Nowogród Bobrzański – Naumburg am Bober
Nowogrodziec – Naumburg am Queis
Nysa – Neisse
Oderskie Góry m. – niem. Oderberge / Odergebirge; tschech. Oderské Vrchy
Odra r. – Oder

Oleśnica – Öls
Ołomuniec – Olmütz
Opawa – Oppau
Opole – Oppeln
Oświęcim – Auschwitz
Otmuchów – Ottmachau
Paczków – Patschkau
Partynice – Hartlieb
Pełcznica – Polsnitz
Piotrowice – Peterwitz
Polkowice – Polkwitz
Poznań – Posen
Przemsza r. – Przemsa
Przeworno – Prieborn
Psie Pole – Hundsfeld
Pszczyna – Pless
Pyskowice – Peiskretscham
Racibórz – Rattibor
Rogów – Rogau
Rokitnica – Röchlitz
Rudawy Janowickie m. – Landeshuter Kamm
Rudna – Raudten
Sądowel – Sandelswalde
Siedlice – Seidlitz
Siewierz – Sewerien
Skoczów – Skotschau
Sławęcice - Slawentzitz
Sławniowice – Gross Kunzendorf
Sobótka – Zobten am Berge
Sowie Góry m. – Eulengebirge
Srebrna Góra – Silberberg
Stronie Śląskie – Seitenberg
Strzegom – Striegau
Strzelce Opolskie – Gross Strehlitz
Strzelin – Strehlen
Sudety m. – Sudeten
Syców – Gross Wartenberg
Szklarska Poręba – Schreiberhau
Szklary (near Ząbkowie Śląskie) – Gläsendorf

Ścinawa – Steinau an der Oder
Ślęza r. – Lohe
Ślęża m. – Zobtenberg
Śnieżka m. – Schneekoppe
Śnieżnik m. - Schneeberg
Środa Śląska – Neumarkt
Świdnica – Schweidnitz
Tarnowskie Góry – Tarnowitz
Toszek – Tost
Trzebnica – Trebnitz
Ujazd – Ujest
Wałbrzych – Waldenburg
Wiązów – Wansen
Widawa r. – Weide
Wielka Sowa m. – Hohe Eule
Wołczyn – Konstadt / Constadt
Wołów – Wohlau
Wrocław – Breslau
Wymiarki – Wiesau
Zakrzów – Sacrau
Ząbkowice Śląskie – Frankenstein
Zgorzelec – Görlitz
Zielona Góra – Grünberg
Ziębice – Münsterberg
Złotoryja – Goldberg
Złoty Stok – Reichenstein in Schlesien
Żagań – Sagan
Żory – Sohrau
Żytawa – Zittau

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This collection of articles represents the output of the first stage of research on the history of the region of Silesia, conducted under the patronage of the European Science Foundation as part of the project 'Cuius regio. An analysis of the cohesive and disruptive forces determining the attachment and commitment of (groups of) persons to and cohesion within regions'. Silesia, one of the regions analyzed in the project, is an example of a borderland territory whose historical development was substantially influenced by various cultural traditions. The primary goal of the research on the Silesian history was to determine the factors that led to disintegration and subsequent re-creation of the region, for there are arguments indicating that the history of the local community has been – and continues to be - the product of a dynamic process whose course was not determined solely by the factor of its constant existence within the limits demarcated within the 16th-century Kingdom of Bohemia.

We are hopeful that the book will inspire a discussion in the academic community on a new dimension of the social history of Silesia, on issues connected with the development of Europe's regions and on universal mechanisms present in the formation of regional social cohesion.

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