FROM ALLIANCE TO ANTAGONISM: THE SHIFTING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MATTHIAS CORVINUS AND THE OPOLE PIASTS

DAVID RADEK

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The present study examines the evolving relationship between Matthias Corvinus and the Opole branch of the Piast dynasty in the context of late medieval Silesian and Central European politics. Initially marked by loyalty and mutual benefit, particularly during Corvinus's conflict with George of Poděbrady and the Jagiellonian dynasty, the alliance began to erode in the 1480s due to the king's increasingly assertive dynastic ambitions in Silesia. His efforts to create a hereditary power base for his illegitimate son John Corvinus, particularly through administrative reforms, territorial acquisitions, and coercive measures, gradually alienated many Silesian dukes. Although the dukes of Opole, Nicholas II and John II, remained formally loyal, their sympathies began to shift toward the growing anti-Corvinus opposition. Following the suppression of the Silesian rebellion in 1488, they were subjected to financial penalties and political humiliation. The most striking example was a loyalty oath to John Corvinus, issued in January 1490, in which the dukes pledged support for his succession against the terms of the Olomouc peace agreement. The omission of this document from the Registrum sancti Wenceslai—a key legal codex of the Opole–Racibórz principality—suggests that the event was viewed later as a shameful episode. The study highlights how the Opole Piasts' political fortunes were shaped by broader struggles over dynastic legitimacy and territorial control in late medieval Silesia, and how loyalty under pressure can evolve into coerced submission with lasting symbolic consequences.

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During his more than two decades of rule, Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary and later also of Bohemia, left a profound and lasting imprint on Silesia. In historiography, the king's indisputable contribution to the unification of the Silesian duchies into a cohesive territorial entity is frequently emphasized, becoming a land newly endowed with central administrative institutions that

were established through Corvinus' initiative. Chief among these were the all-Silesian assembly (*Fürstentag*) and the office of the High Silesian Captain (*Oberhauptmann*), which served as the principal instruments of governance in Silesia well into the early modern period. While the genesis of both institutions can be traced to earlier developments, it was not until 1474, under the auspices of Matthias Corvinus, that they assumed their definitive institutional form, a point marked by the first convening of the all-Silesian assembly.

Corvinus's rule in Silesia, however, was not defined solely by administrative reforms, his time was also characterized by a sustained conflict with the Silesian dukes, who increasingly viewed the king's ambitions for the region with apprehension, particularly during the 1480s, when he sought to establish a hereditary domain in Silesia at the expense of the native ducal houses. This growing discontent ultimately culminated in an uprising of the Silesian nobility. The revolt was quashed by Corvinus with his victory at the Battle of Tomaszów Bolesławiecki (Thomaswalde) and the subsequent capture of Głogów in 1488, at the time a stronghold of Silesian opposition.[1]

The title of this study echoes Josef Macek's pioneering work on the relationship between George of Poděbrady and Matthias Corvinus deliberately.[2] Just as with the Opole Piasts, who are the focus of the present paper, the relationship between George of Poděbrady and Matthias Corvinus began as an alliance. George played a significant role in Corvinus's election as King of Hungary, and their political partnership was further cemented by the marriage of George's daughter to the Hungarian monarch. However during the 1460s, the two rulers' political trajectories gradually diverged, ultimately culminating in Matthias Corvinus's intervention into the ongoing conflict within the Lands of the Bohemian Crown, where he sided with George's opposition and in 1469, had himself proclaimed King of Bohemia.[3] A similar path can be observed in Matthias's relationship

1 For Matthias's rule in Silesia, see also: RADEK. Zeměpanské strategie Matyáše Korvína v prostředí slezských knížat. In *Slezský sborník*, 2015, 63, no. 2, pp. 207-229; GRIEGER. Die Pläne des Ungarnkönigs Matthias Corvinus mit Schlesien. In *Jahrbuch der Schlesischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Breslau*, 1983, 24, pp. 163-180.

2 MACEK. Král Jiří a král Matyáš. Od přátelství k nepřátelství (1458–1469). In *Časopis Matice Moravské*, 1991, 110, pp. 297-311. Josef Macek was among the first Czech historians to depart from the interpretation of Matthias Corvinus as the "greatest enemy of the Czech nation," a view rooted in the work of František Palacký. For the image of Matthias in Czech historiography, see especially: KALOUS. Matthias Corvinus (Hunyadi) in Czech Historiography. In BARÁNY and GYÖRKÖS, eds. *Matthias and his legacy. Cultural and Political Encounters between East and West*. Debrecen 2009, pp. 31-41.

3 For the most comprehensive treatment of the figure and reign of Matthias Corvinus, see: KALOUS. *Matyáš Korvín (1443–1490) Uherský a český král*. České Budějovice 2009. For his foreign policy, see also: HOMOĽA. *Na vzostupe moci. Zahraničná politika Mateja Korvína*

with the most important city in Silesia—Wrocław (Breslau). In 1468, Wrocław's burghers enthusiastically welcomed Matthias's military engagement against George of Poděbrady, yet over time, this initial support gave way to disillusionment, particularly in response to Corvinus's administrative reforms, which involved interference in the appointment of city councillors and increasing fiscal demands on the municipality. By the time of Matthias's death in 1490, little remained of the enthusiasm that had marked the city's response in 1468. To the contrary, Heinz Dompnig, a leading supporter of Corvinus and senior member of the Wrocław city council, was demonstratively executed in the city's main square shortly after the king's death, accused of betraying the interests of the city.[4] Matthias's aggressive policies and harsh treatment of former allies and vassals during the 1480s were driven primarily by his efforts to secure the succession of his illegitimate—and only—son, John Corvinus, to the thrones of Hungary and Bohemia, thereby laying the foundations of a dynastic monarchy,[5] and as such, Matthias's actions toward the Opole Piasts must likewise be interpreted within this dynastic context.

In the second half of the fifteenth century, the Duchy of Opole was indisputably the most prominent principality in Upper Silesia, occupying a strategically important position between Moravia, Lower Silesia, and the Kingdom of Poland. Unlike many other Silesian rulers, the dukes of Opole succeeded in leading their domain out of the turmoil of the Hussite Wars. Through the shrewd political maneuvering of Bolko V (†1460) and his brother Nicholas I (†1476), they gradually extended influence into neighboring duchies. During the 1450s, Bolko V acquired control over most of the Duchy of Opava, while Nicholas I focused on the Duchy of Brzeg in Lower Silesia, which he successfully brought under his control. The Opole Piasts also played a significant role in Silesian politics with even Bolko V often regarded as the informal leader of the Upper Silesian Piasts. This became especially evident during negotiations concerning the recognition of George of Poděbrady as King of Bohemia, in which Bolko's support proved decisive in securing the allegiance of the Upper Silesian dukes. After Wrocław

v stredoeurópskom priestore v rokoch 1458–1471. Bratislava 2019.

4 On the reforms of Matthias Corvinus in Silesia, see, at least: HOLÁ. Integrační tendence ve správě Slezska za Matyáše Korvína. In BOBKOVÁ a kol. *Česká koruna na rozcestí. K dějinám Horní a Dolní Lužice a Dolního Slezska na přelomu středověku a raného novověku (1437–1526)*. Praha 2010, pp. 106-136; ORZECHOWSKI. *Historia ustroju Śląska 1202–1740*. Wroclaw 2005, pp. 85-101. On the figure of Heinz Dompnig, see: RADEK. Vratislavský měšťan Heinz Dompnig (1490) a symbolická komunikace na sklonku středověku. In ČAPSKÝ a kol. *Komunikace ve středověkých městech*. Opava 2014, pp. 123-137.

5 For a recent treatment of John Corvinus, see: KOZÁK. Listiny knížete Jana Korvína (1473–1504) a jeho úředníků uložené v českých archivech: Originály, opisy i výtahy a zmínky v písemnostech jiných vydavatelů. In *Sborník archivních prací*, 2021, 71, no. 1, pp. 137-204.

refused to acknowledge George's kingship, Bolko V and the other Upper Silesian dukes declared hostility toward the city and marched on its walls with their vassals in support of George. The attempt to bring Wrocław to heel by force ultimately failed, and as is well known, a compromise between the defiant city and the Bohemian king was mediated by the papal curia. [6]

From this brief outline of the relationship between the Opole Piasts and George of Poděbrady, it is evident that they stood on his side, at least in the early years of the Utraquist king's reign. This situation changed following the death of Bolko V of Opole in May 1460, though. His holdings within the Duchy of Opole passed to his younger brother, Nicholas I, who subsequently unified the entire duchy under his rule. However, Nicholas's inheritance of his brother's estates was preceded by a confrontation with George of Poděbrady, who viewed Bolko's death as an opportunity to strengthen his own position in Silesia. The king declared Bolko V's estates to be escheated fiefs of the Bohemian Crown, claiming exclusive sovereign rights over them.[7] This unexpected move by the Bohemian monarch undoubtedly came as a surprise to Nicholas I of Opole, not the least because the Opole Piasts had until then maintained a cordial relationship with the king. As previously noted, Bolko V had been one of George's foremost allies in Silesia. As a result of the king's decision, Nicholas I was deprived of his claim to his brother's possessions located outside the core of the Duchy of Opole, chiefly the Duchy of Opava, which would later become the power base of the Poděbrady dynasty in Silesia.[8] George of Poděbrady's decision to annex the Duchy of Opava significantly strained his relations with the Duke of Opole. Nicholas I never forgave the king for what he perceived as a grave injustice and in the years that followed, the duke emerged as one of George's most prominent opponents in Silesia and a key supporter of Matthias Corvinus.

The annexation of the Duchy of Opava did not mark the end of the contentious relationship between Nicholas I of Opole and George of Poděbrady. Two years later, in 1462, Henry IX of Głogów revived long-standing claims to a substantial portion of the Duchy of Opole for the Głogów branch of the Piasts. He promptly obtained a ruling from George of Poděbrady recognizing

6 For the consolidation of George of Poděbrady's position in Silesia, see, at least: FILIP and BORCHARDT. *Schlesien, Georg von Podiebrad und die römische Kurie*. Würzburg 2005. Through the prism of Bolko V, see: RADEK. *Bolek V. Opolský (okolo 1400–1460). Život a legenda*. Opava 2018, pp. 242-251.

7 RADEK, *Bolek V. Opolský*, pp. 256-258.

8 For a comprehensive treatment of the creation of the Poděbrady domain in Silesia, see: ŠANDERA. Jiří z Poděbrad a snahy o založení nové dynastie. In FELCMAN-FUKALA a kol. *Poděbradové. Rod českomoravských pánů, kladských hrabat a slezských knížat*. Praha 2008, pp. 60-83.

these rights, in accordance with an earlier decision issued by King Wenceslas IV.[9] Although it was unlikely that Nicholas I would acquiesce to the claims of Henry IX, the situation was certainly uncomfortable for the Duke of Opole. It also created a precedent for further intervention by the Bohemian monarch in the shifting power structure of the Silesian duchies. One may reasonably ask whether the initiative to revive the dispute did not, in fact, originate with the Bohemian king himself, since it undoubtedly provided him with a powerful tool to exert pressure on the Duke of Opole. This incident was not the only attempt by George of Poděbrady to undermine the authority of the Opole duke. According to chronicler Peter Eschenloer, a scribe based in Wrocław, George also sought to deprive Nicholas I of the Duchy of Brzeg in Lower Silesia.[10] George ultimately failed in this particular effort and the Duke of Opole retained possession of the Duchy of Brzeg. The Bohemian king, however, did achieve a more notable success in resolving a dispute between the Głogów and Opole dukes. In 1464, he brokered a compromise by which Henry IX renounced his claims to the Duchy of Opole in exchange for a payment of 14,000 gold coins, which Nicholas of Opole was obliged to pay.[11] In the first half of the 1460s, Nicholas I of Opole found himself under sustained pressure from the Bohemian king on multiple fronts. However, the actions of George of Poděbrady should not be interpreted solely through the lens of dynastic ambition. The king could not afford to entirely alienate the Duke of Opole—or the other Silesian dukes—since he regarded them as potential allies in the event of escalating tensions with the city of Wrocław. From the very beginning of his reign, Wrocław had resisted his rule and refused to recognize him as the legitimate King of Bohemia.[12] It cannot be ruled out that the Bohemian king harbored doubts about the loyalty of the Duke of Opole and through the measures outlined above, sought to bind

9 The conflict between the dukes of Opole and Głogów began as early as the early fifteenth century; for a detailed account, see: DZIEWULSKI. Terytorialne podziały opolszczyzny w XIII–XV w. In *Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka*, 1973, no. 3, pp. 323-348.

10 ROTH ed. *Petr Eschenloer, Geschichte der Stadt Breslau, T. I Chronik bis 1466, T. II Chronik ab 1467*. Münster; New York; München; Berlin 2003, p. 431. On the figure of Peter Eschenloer and his chronicle, see also: HONEMAN, Lateinische und volkssprachliche Geschichtsschreibung im Spätmittelalter: zur Arbeitsweise des Chronisten Peter Eschenloer aus Breslau. In *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 52, 1996, pp. 617-627; IWAŃCZAK. Piotr Eschenloer – świadek epoki. In IWAŃCZAK. *Od Kosmasa do Eschenloera. Piśmiennictwo czeskie w średniowieczu*. Wrocław 2017, pp. 245-261.

11 Národní knihovna v Praze, fond Oddělení rukopisů, sign. XVI C 7, *Registrum st. Wenceslai. Kopiář Jana knížete opolského a ratibořského 1254–1528*, f. 345.

12 In addition to the works already cited, see also: ČAPSKÝ. *Město pod vládou kazatelů. Charizmatičtí náboženští vůdci ve střetu s městskou radou v pozdně středověkých českých korunních zemích*. Praha 2015, pp. 79-105.

him more closely to his person, thereby securing his potential—albeit coerced—support in the event of a serious conflict with Wrocław. Yet, such a strategy did not produce the desired outcome. On the contrary, the city of Wrocław supported the domestic opposition to George of Poděbrady, which coalesced in 1465 into the so-called *Zelená Hora Alliance* (*Zelenohorská jednota*). Silesian dukes soon followed suit, most notably Balthasar of Żagań and in 1467, Nicholas I of Opole himself. Armed conflict with the Bohemian monarch broke out definitively in the Silesian duchies and the Duke of Opole took an active part in it, as is confirmed by numerous references in the chronicle of Peter Eschenloer as well as in other contemporary sources.[13]

A new impetus to the conflict within the Bohemian lands came with the intervention of the Hungarian king, Matthias Corvinus, who at the end of March 1468 declared war—initially not on George of Poděbrady himself, but on his son, Victorin of Poděbrady. The move was presented as a response to Victorin's raid into Austrian territory, with Matthias aligning himself with Emperor Frederick III.[14] A few days later on 8 April, Matthias proclaimed himself the protector of Catholics in the Bohemian lands and did not hesitate to equate the struggle against Bohemian heresy with the fight against the Ottomans.[15] In Silesia, Matthias's declaration had a significant impact. It was not long before the city of Wrocław began to acknowledge him as its sovereign, with Matthias succeeding in winning over the majority of the Silesian dukes to his cause.[16] Despite achieving partial successes in his war against George of Poděbrady and securing the support of the other lands of the Bohemian Crown, Matthias was ultimately unable to defeat George. Nevertheless, this did not prevent him from having himself elected King of Bohemia in Olomouc in early May 1469.[17] Shortly thereafter, the newly elected King of Bohemia visited Silesia, entering the gates of Wrocław on 26

13 On the *Zelená Hora Alliance* and the opposition to George of Poděbrady, see: ČORNEJ and BARTLOVÁ. *Velké dějiny zemí Koruny české VI. 1437–1526*. Praha 2007, pp. 227-250. On situatin in Silesia, see: ČAPSKÝ and PRIX. Slezsko v pozdním středověku (do roku 1490). In JIRÁSEK a kol. *Slezsko v dějinách českého státu I. Od pravěku do roku 1490*. Praha 2012, pp. 382-402.

14 For a detailed account, see: KALOUS, *Matyáš Korvín*, pp. 126-135; HOMOĽA, *Na vzostupe moci*, pp. 91-105.

15 For Corvinus's manifesto, see: *Scriptores rerum Silesiacarum IX*, MARKGRAF ed., Breslau 1874, number 390, pp. 262-263.

16 As early as March 1469, he was referred to in official charters as *"unser her der konig von Ungern,"* see: KRONTHAL and WENDT, eds. *Scriptores rerum Silesiacarum XIII. Politische Correspondenz Breslaus 1469–1479*. Breslau 1893, number 1, p. 1.

17 The war between George and Matthias, as well as the Olomouc royal election, are clearly summarized by: ČORNEJ and BARTLOVÁ, *Velké dějiny VI.*, pp. 250-261; KALOUS, *Matyáš Korvín*, pp. 126-139; HOMOĽA, *Na vzostupe moci*, pp. 91-105.

May in a ceremonial procession and five days later, the city's burghers paid him homage and formally recognized him as their sovereign. The action taken by the Wrocław townsmen was soon followed by a substantial number of Silesian dukes, who traveled to the city to pay homage to the king. The first group of Silesian dukes did so on the same day as the city of Wrocław—that is, on 31 May—followed by a second group on 4 June, and finally, on 8 June, Nicholas I of Opole himself paid homage to the monarch.[18]

In the years that followed, Nicholas I of Opole remained a steadfast supporter of Matthias Corvinus and assisted him in the struggle against George of Poděbrady. In 1470, he responded to a call to arms issued by Matthias, who summoned the military contingents of his vassals. Wrocław chronicler Peter Eschenloer recorded a description of the army, including the contingent sent by the Duke of Opole. According to Eschenloer, Nicholas I dispatched 100 cavalrymen and 200 infantry troops—a modest force, considering the size of the Duchy of Opole. This fact did not go unnoticed by the king's envoys, who later accepted Nicholas's explanation that the remainder of his troops were needed elsewhere—presumably to defend the southern border of his duchy, which neighbored the Opava holdings of George of Poděbrady, or possibly the domains of the remaining Opava–Racibórz Přemyslids, who continued to support the Utraquist king.[19]

It is well known that the death of George of Poděbrady in 1471 did little to alter the course of the conflict with Corvinus, and contrary to expectations, it did not lead to the general recognition of Matthias Corvinus as the sole King of Bohemia. Instead, the Bohemian Estates elected the young Władysław II Jagiellon king, thereby transforming the struggle over the Lands of the Bohemian Crown into a broader conflict between the Jagiellonian dynasty and Matthias Corvinus.[20] The entry of the Polish Jagiellonians into the war posed an even greater threat, particularly to the Silesian duchies, which now faced a potential danger along their northern frontier. For the Duke of Opole, this threat took on a concrete

18 Peter Eschenloer provides a detailed account of the homage ceremonies and Matthias's stay in Wrocław – ROTH, ed. *Petr Eschenloer, Geschichte der Stadt Breslau*, pp. 767-769. See also: ČERNÝ. Zklamané naděje. Pobyt Matyáše Korvína ve Vratislavi roku 1469. In DOLEŽALOVÁ; NOVOTNÝ and SOUKUP, eds. *Evropa a Čechy na konci středověku. Sborník příspěvků věnovaných Františku Šmahelovi*. Praha 2004, pp. 186-193. For a detailed account of the homage journeys, see: HOLÁ, "Fuit honorifice susceptus" Holdovací cesty českých panovníků do Vratislavi v pozdním středověku. In BOBKOVÁ and KONVIČNÁ, eds. *Rezidence a správní sídla v zemích české Koruny ve 14.–17. století. Korunní země v dějinách českého státu III*. Praha 2008, pp. 273-301.

19 ROTH, ed., *Petr Eschenloer, Geschichte der Stadt Breslau*, p. 803.

20 On the war between the Jagiellonians and Matthias Corvinus, see: BACZKOWSKI. *Walka Jagiellonów z Maciejem Korwinem o Koronę Czeską w latach 1471–1479*. Kraków 1980.

form in 1474 when King Casimir Jagiellon of Poland launched a major offensive against Silesia. During the summer of 1474, Matthias Corvinus crushed the remaining supporters of George of Poděbrady—or rather, of the Jagiellonians—in Silesia, particularly in the Opava region, and continued his advance deeper into Silesian territory.[21] The Jagiellonians sought to take advantage of the presence of the Hungarian and Bohemian king in the region by provoking a decisive battle intended to bring an end to the protracted conflict.[22]

Given the geographical position of the Duchy of Opole serving as a corridor between Lesser Poland, Lower Silesia, and Moravia, it was evident that Polish king's army would have to pass through the territory of Nicholas I of Opole. This placed the duke in a strategically important role within the defensive plan devised by Matthias Corvinus. In view of the Jagiellonians' numerical superiority, Matthias intended to fortify himself in Silesian towns—Wrocław above all—and thereby repel the Jagiellonian offensive.

Nicholas's seat, the town of Opole, was reinforced with royal troops, and likely also with contingents of the Silesian levy. The town of Brzeg, likewise under Nicholas's control, also received reinforcements. The duke himself, however, did not wait for the arrival of the Polish forces. As noted by Peter Eschenloer, he relocated with his entire family to the royal court in Wrocław.[23]

The Polish army did not launch an offensive from Lesser Poland until the end of September. According to Kraków chronicler Jan Długosz, the troops entered Silesia on 26 September and shortly thereafter captured two towns belonging to Nicholas I of Opole, Kluczbork and Byczyna, before advancing toward the ducal seat of Opole. It was before the gates of Nicholas's capital that the Polish campaign began to encounter serious setbacks. The town offered determined resistence, bolstered by royal reinforcements, with supplies and provisions delivered continuously. Moreover, tensions were running high within the Polish army. The Polish nobility showed little willingness to campaign beyond the kingdom's borders, pay for mercenaries was delayed, and there was no consensus as to whether the army should engage in the piecemeal conquest of Silesian towns or instead push rapidly toward Wrocław in an attempt to force Matthias Corvinus into a decisive battle. These internal divisions may explain

21 The campaign through the Opava region has been examined by TUREK and JISL. Ostravsko za česko-uherské války ve světle písemných pramenů i archeologických nálezů, In *Časopis Slezského muzea* 3, 1953, pp. 1-24. See also: ČAPSKÝ and PRIX, Slezsko v pozdním středověku, pp. 396-399.

22 This is how the campaign is described by the Kraków chronicler Jan Długosz – WYROZUMSKI et alii ed. *Ioannis Dlugossii Annales seu Cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae liber XII 1462–1480*. Varsaviae 2005, pp. 331-347.

23 ROTH, ed. *Petr Eschenloer, Geschichte der Stadt Breslau*, p. 951.

why Jan Długosz omitted the siege of Opole from his account or merely noted that the Polish army bypassed the town, claiming that King Casimir IV did not wish to endanger the lives of his men. In contrast, Peter Eschenloer offers a detailed and vivid description of the fighting before the walls of Opole, filled with concrete details that make it unlikely to have been entirely invented by the Wrocław chronicler.

One of the most decisive moments of the entire campaign also occurred near Opole. The town's garrison seized a tactical opportunity and launched an attack at a crossing of the Oder River, successfully destroying a Polish supply convoy, which created a critical shortage of provisions for the advancing Polish forces.[24]

As it pressed on toward Wrocław, the Polish army moved primarily through the lands of the Duke of Opole, equally within core territory of the Duchy of Opole and in the neighboring Duchy of Brzeg in Lower Silesia, which was likewise under Nicholas's control. Both contemporary chroniclers, Peter Eschenloer and Jan Długosz, agree that the Polish army engaged in extensive plundering of the areas it traversed. This was due in no small part to the shortage of provisions caused by successful attacks on its supply lines.[25]

In late October, the Polish army joined forces with the Bohemian troops led by King Władysław II Jagiellon and resolved to capture Wrocław.[26] The siege lasted for approximately two weeks, ending in disaster for the Jagiellonian side. The primary causes were inadequate supply lines and the outbreak of disease, which spread rapidly through the Czech-Polish camp. Ultimately, Matthias Corvinus agreed to enter into truce negotiations, in which all three monarchs took part. Although these talks did not result in a permanent peace at the time—a formal peace treaty would not be concluded until 1478—the debacle suffered by the Jagiellonian forces in Silesia in the autumn of 1474 undoubtedly contributed to the subsequent de-escalation of hostilities. The following years were marked by relative calm militarily, and above all, the Polish side showed little willingness to undertake a campaign of similar scale again.[27]

In the context of Silesian history, the year 1474 is significant not only for the defeat of the Jagiellonian army before the gates of Wrocław, but also because it marks the first convening of the all-Silesian assembly (*Fürstentag*) at the initiative of Matthias Corvinus. Through this institutional innovation, Matthias

24 ROTH, ed,. *Petr Eschenloer, Geschichte der Stadt Breslau*, p. 948.

25 WYROZUMSKI et alii ed., *Ioannis Dlugossii Annales seu Cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae liber XII 1462–1480*, pp. 342-344.

26 Długosz dates the arrival of the Bohemian army to 24 October – WYROZUMSKI et alii ed., *Ioannis Dlugossii Annales seu Cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae liber XII 1462–1480*, p. 341.

27 The peace negotiations and subsequent developments are clearly summarized by BACZKOWSKI, *Walka Jagiellonów z Maciejem Korwinem*, pp. 121-171.

made a substantial impact on the governance of Silesia and played a decisive role in the formation of Silesia as a politically unified land.[28] It should be added that the administrative system established by Corvinus in Silesia, centered on the institution of the all-Silesian assembly headed by an *Oberhauptmann* who acted as the king's principal representative in the region, endured for centuries with only minor modifications. The system was not abolished or fundamentally transformed until 1742, following the annexation of Silesia by King Frederick II of Prussia.[29] Although many of the reforms implemented by Matthias Corvinus in Silesia were not initially welcomed by his contemporaries, the Silesian estates gradually came to accept the changes as their own. Matthias's reforms were later continued and further developed by Władysław II Jagiellon, who completed the Silesian administrative structure, most notably by establishing a judicial tribunal, the *Ober- und Fürstenrecht*, and by redefining the role of the Silesian *Oberhauptmann*.[30]

We do not know how Duke Nicholas I of Opole perceived the administrative reforms introduced by Matthias Corvinus. What we do know is that during the Polish invasion, he remained in close proximity to the king in Wrocław. Eschenloer's account further indicates that Nicholas took part in the inaugural session of the all-Silesian assembly.[31] It is possible that Duke Nicholas I of Opole was more concerned with the potential rewards for his house than with administrative reform at that moment. As has already been noted on several occasions, Nicholas was one of Matthias Corvinus's principal allies in Silesia. He had fought in the king's name against his enemies, and during the Jagiellonian invasion of Silesia, his lands suffered greatly from the military operations. Matthias was undoubtedly aware of the duke's loyalty and contributions, even honouring him during the siege of Wrocław by the Jagiellonian forces. While the city was still under attack, royal envoys arrived with joyful news: Ferdinand of Naples had agreed to the marriage of his daughter Beatrice to Matthias. Despite the ongoing siege, Matthias ordered the news to be celebrated in grand fashion.[32] Nicholas II, the son of Nicholas I, was selected as a member of the ceremonial

28 For a detailed account of the process of forming a territorial entity in Silesia, see: ČAPSKÝ. *Zrození země. Komunikující prostředí pozdně středověkého Slezska*. Praha 2013.

29 Matthias Corvinus's reforms have received considerable attention in historiography; see footnote 4. See also: CONRADS. *Książęta i stany. Historia Śląska (1469–1740)*. Wroclaw 2006.

30 For recent research on the establishment of the judicial tribunal, see: RADEK. Král jako soudce. Dlouhá cesta k vytvoření knížecího soudu (1498) ve slezských knížectvích. In BOBKOVÁ and VĚLIČKA, eds. *Doznívající středověk. Klíč k podobě České koruny raného novověku*. Praha 2024, pp. 99-116.

31 ROTH, ed., *Petr Eschenloer, Geschichte der Stadt Breslau*, pp. 973-974.

32 ROTH, ed., *Petr Eschenloer, Geschichte der Stadt Breslau*, pp. 954-955.

delegation tasked with escorting the future Queen of Hungary and Bohemia from Italy.[33] The delegation set out for Naples in 1476 and in addition to Nicholas II, the group included Bishop Rudolf of Rüdesheim, Bishop John of Oradea, Duke John of Racibórz, and numerous other nobles. According to Eschenloer, the entire entourage numbered over 800 horsemen.[34]

Nicholas I died in 1476 and the Duchy of Opole was inherited by his two sons, Nicholas II and John II, later known as "the Good." At first, they were able to benefit from their father's legacy and the favorable relationship he had maintained with Matthias Corvinus, as evidenced by their participation in the aforementioned delegation to Italy. In the late 1470s, the dukes of Opole continued to reap benefits from their loyalty to the king. Chief among these was Matthias's decision concerning the Duchy of Brzeg, a matter that had undoubtedly been brought to the king's attention by Nicholas I during his lifetime, as the dispute over Brzeg had erupted in the mid-fifteenth century, with Nicholas I playing a central role. Given that the policies of Nicholas I and his sons were heavily influenced by this conflict, it is necessary to outline the basic contours.

At the beginning of 1442, Nicholas married Magdalena, daughter of Louis II of Brzeg, Duke of the eponymous duchy. Louis II died in 1437 without leaving a male heir, and the rights to the Duchy of Brzeg passed to his daughters, Magdalena and Hedwig. Two years before his death, Louis II had issued a charter settling the succession of his daughters. The administrator of his estate was Bernard of Opole, uncle of Nicholas I, and it is likely that Bernard orchestrated the marriage between Magdalena and Nicholas, thereby opening the path for Nicholas to claim Brzeg. Shortly after the marriage, Nicholas assumed control over Brzeg under a pledge arrangement. From the very outset, however, Nicholas, and later his sons, had to contend with the claims of other relatives of Louis II of Brzeg, who refused to recognize the inheritance rights of his daughters and sought to seize the duchy for themselves.[35] In this context, a unique legal treatise was drawn up by Nicholas I in which the Duke of Opole set out and justified his claims to the duchy.[36] The importance of Brzeg to the Duke of Opole was well understood by the Bohemian king George of Poděbrady, who as we have already seen, attempted to exert pressure on him in connection with this duchy as well.

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33 KALOUS, *Matyáš Korvín*, p. 170.

34 ROTH, ed., *Petr Eschenloer, Geschichte der Stadt Breslau*, p. 990.

35 For a clear overview, see: HORWAT. *Księstwo Opolskie i jego podziały do 1532 r. Książęta. Miasta. Kościół. Urzędy. Własność prywatna*. Rzeszów 2002, pp. 229-234.

36 The source was identified and edited by JASIŃSKI. Rozważania księcia Mikołaja I opolskiego o prawie lennym i o sukcesji po księciu Ludwiku II legnickim. In *Homines et societas. Czasy Piastów i Jagiellonów. Studia historyczne ofiarowane Antoniemu Gąsiorowskiemu w sześćdziesiątą piątą rocznicę urodzin*. Poznań 1997, pp. 285-294.

Thanks to Matthias Corvinus, the dukes of Opole were presented with new opportunities for expansion in the late 1470s, this time into the territories of the Opava–Racibórz Přemyslids. In early 1478, the sister of the dukes of Opole, Magdalena, married John the Younger of Opava–Racibórz. As part of the marriage agreements, inheritance arrangements were concluded that offered the Opole Piasts the prospect of eventually acquiring the neighboring Duchy of Racibórz, a prospect that materialized following the death of Valentin the Hunchback in 1523. The marriage agreements were concluded with the consent of Matthias Corvinus, who marked his confirmation with the issuance of an official charter.[37]

From the relationship between the dukes of Opole and Matthias Corvinus outlined above, one might be tempted to conclude that theirs was an idyllic bond between monarch and vassal, mutually advantageous to both parties. During the wars against George of Poděbrady and the Jagiellonians, Matthias gained a valuable ally in the Duchy of Opole, while through this alliance, the Opole dukes significantly strengthened their position within Silesia. The dukes of Opole also played a role in Matthias Corvinus's diplomacy, taking part in prominent negotiations. In addition to the aforementioned ceremonial journey to Italy, Nicholas II attended the king's wedding in Buda.[38] Among other diplomatic engagements, the dukes of Opole participated in the negotiations with King Władysław II of Bohemia at Broumov, which resulted in the conclusion of a truce lasting until May 1478.[39] The dukes of Opole also participated in the peace negotiations at Olomouc in 1478 and 1479, which brought an end to the long-standing war between Matthias Corvinus and the Jagiellonians. These negotiations ultimately resulted in the division of the Lands of the Bohemian Crown between the two monarchs, with both recognized as legitimate Kings of Bohemia.[40]

During the 1480s, however, their relationship deteriorated significantly. The sources offer vague references to the imprisonment of the Opole dukes by the king, the imposition of fines, and conversely, to their support for the rebellion of

37 WATTENBACH and GRÜNHAGEN, eds. *Codex diplomaticus Silesiae VI, Urkunden vorzüglich zur Geschichte Oberschlesiens nach einem Copialbuch Herzog Johanns von Oppeln und Ratibor in Auszügen mitgetheilt*. Breslau 1865, number 309, p. 103.

38 ROTH, ed., *Petr Eschenloer, Geschichte der Stadt Breslau*, p. 996.

39 ROTH, ed., *Petr Eschenloer, Geschichte der Stadt Breslau*, pp. 1013-1018.

40 Both Opole Piasts adhered to the terms of the Olomouc peace agreements in Olomouc in 1479; see: PALACKÝ, ed. *Archiv český čili staré písemné památky české i moravské V.* Praha 1862, number 14, pp. 387-389. For the Olomouc peace agreements, see also: VÁLKA, Matyáš Korvín a Česká koruna. In *Časopis Matice Moravské* 110, 1991, pp. 313-323; KALOUS, *Matyáš Korvín*, pp. 179-185. There, references to further literature can be found as well.

the Silesian dukes against the monarch. What had transpired between Matthias Corvinus and the Opole Piasts?

It must be emphasized that we do not know and are unable to determine precisely the moment when their relationship shifted into open hostility. Financial demands imposed by the king undoubtedly played a role in the decline. Shortly after the conclusion of peace with the Jagiellonians, Matthias levied new financial obligations on the Silesian dukes, including the dukes of Opole, in order to compensate for the costs of the protracted war. In the following years, Silesia continued to serve as a critical source of funding for Corvinus's expensive military campaigns, whether against the Ottoman Turks or Emperor Frederick III.[41] However, in relation to the Silesian dukes, it was Matthias Corvinus's political ambitions concerning Silesia that carried greater weight in fueling their dissatisfaction. The local ducal houses also viewed his intentions with considerable apprehension.

As has already been noted, Matthias Corvinus intervened significantly in the governance of Silesia; the creation of the all-Silesian assembly and the office of the Silesian Oberhauptmann played a central role, while the *Landfrieden* (regional peace alliances) also proved important instruments, which Matthias skillfully exploited as tools of political control, as we shall soon see. The primary source of conflict between Matthias Corvinus and the Silesian dukes was not, however, the administrative reforms he introduced. Rather, as in the case of George of Poděbrady, it was Matthias's ambition to establish a hereditary domain in Silesia, which he intended to pass on to his son in order to strengthen the latter's claim to the Bohemian throne. The efforts of Matthias Corvinus to create a dynastic power base in Silesia have already been the subject of extensive scholarly attention.[42] It must be emphasized, however, that for a long period of time, it is not possible to speak for certain of a systematic effort to build a hereditary domain. This idea had its own genesis, and the realization was closely tied to the personal circumstances of Matthias Corvinus, particularly the fact that his marriage remained childless. The Hungarian king seems to have reached this conclusion around 1479. The principal evidence for this is a *Landfrieden* issued in 1479 for Lower Silesia and Lusatia, the establishment of which enabled Matthias to implement his plans for the creation of a dynastic domain within the Silesian duchies. Although some scholarly literature suggests that the *Landfrieden* of 1479, like the earlier peace agreement of 1474, applied to the

41 On Matthias Corvinus's financial demands on Silesia, see: ORZECHOWSKI, *Historia ustroju Śląska*, pp. 94-95.

42 In addition to the studies already cited (footnote 1), see also: ČAPSKÝ and RADEK. Paralela ke zhořeleckému vévodství? K rodové politice Matyáše Korvína v Horním Slezsku. In HOP. *Historie – Otázky – Problémy*, 1, 2015, pp. 172-179.

entirety of Silesia, closer examination reveals that this was not the case; the king explicitly exempted certain Upper Silesian duchies from its provisions.[43] This was not an accidental step, as Upper Silesia represented an ideal space for Matthias's efforts to build a consolidated domain that he could bequeath to his son. The local Piast and Přemyslid ducal dynasties were relatively weak—with the notable exception of the Opole Piasts—and their territories were often fragmented, making them an ideal target for Corvinus's ambitions. His principal objective, as in the case of George of Poděbrady, was the ancient possessions of the Opava Přemyslids, particularly the Duchy of Opava itself. Given Opava's economic importance, this was an understandable goal, as it was one of the most significant towns in Upper Silesia and had strong connections to international trade networks.[44]

Among the first acquisitions of the king in the Moravian-Silesian borderlands was Krnov, which Corvinus seized as early as 1474 from John IV of Opava–Racibórz, who had been a supporter of George of Poděbrady and later of Władysław II Jagiellon.[45] In the second half of the 1470s, the Bohemian king also acquired smaller possessions at the expense of Conrad X the White, Duke of Oleśnica. These acquisitions primarily concerned Conrad's Upper Silesian holdings of Bytom, Gliwice, and Koźle. In the autumn of 1479, Matthias thwarted the efforts of the indebted Conrad X to sell the Duchy of Oleśnica and compelled the duke to agree that the duchy would pass into royal hands upon his death.[46] For the Opole Piasts, the king's expansionist ambitions represented a potential threat. Moreover, it is clear that their own plans for territorial expansion may have overlapped with those of Matthias.

Another and significantly more substantial acquisition by the Bohemian king occurred in 1485, when Matthias compelled Victorin of Poděbrady to relinquish the Duchy of Opava in exchange for estates in Hungary.[47] Historiography has repeatedly pointed out that this was not an equitable exchange and that it is

43 The theory of the Landfrieden's applicability to all of Silesia was supported by JUREK. *Śląskie pokoje krajowe*. Wroclaw 1991. However, among the signatories of the Landfrieden, we do not find the Upper Silesian dukes, except for the dukes of Opole, who also owned the Duchy of Brzeg in Lower Silesia, which explains their participation in the Landfrieden. For a detailed account, see: RADEK, Zeměpanské strategie, pp. 215-217.

44 On the significance of Opava, see also: ČAPSKÝ and PRIX, Slezsko v pozdním středověku, pp. 335-338, pp. 410-413.

45 PALACKÝ, ed. *Archiv český čili staré písemné památky české i moravské IV*. Praha 1846, number. 16, p. 338.

46 GRÜNHAGEN and MARKGRAF, eds. *Lehns und Besitzurkunden Schlesiens und seiner einzelnen Fürstenthümer II*. Leipzig 1883. number 77, p. 91.

47 PALACKÝ, ed. *Archiv český čili staré písemné památky české i moravské I*. Praha 1840, number 10, pp. 313-314.

highly likely Matthias pressured Victorin into the transaction, whether motivated by personal animosity or simply by the desire to bring the prosperous Duchy of Opava under his control. It is probable that the remaining Silesian dukes were observing the king's actions with increasing caution.

Their fears, provoked by Matthias's approach, were realized two years later in 1487, when Matthias accused Victorin of treason and confiscated his Hungarian estates without compensation.[48]

The harsh assault on Victorin of Poděbrady provoked a wave of discontent among the Silesian dukes which could be described as the last straw. The leading figure of the opposition became John II of Żagań, Duke of Głogów, who also felt threatened by Matthias's ambitions since he only held the Duchy of Głogów for the duration of his lifetime by the king's grant, after which it was to revert to royal control. The figure of John II of Żagań, also known as "the Mad," has received considerable scholarly attention. Alongside him, Henry of Münsterberg, brother of Victorin of Poděbrady, also played an important role. Henry had been an opponent of Matthias Corvinus from the beginning. Although he paid homage to Matthias in 1479, their relationship remained strained thereafter.[49] In 1487, John II of Żagań announced the marriages of his three daughters to the sons of Henry of Münsterberg. Theoretically, this arrangement meant that Henry's sons could lay claim to the Duchy of Głogów after John's death, an outcome that was entirely unacceptable to Matthias Corvinus. This was not merely a theoretical threat, evidenced by an incident that took place during the wedding celebrations where John II attempted to compel the estates of the Duchy of Głogów to swear homage to the newly married couples. The representatives of the estates refused, citing the fact that they had already sworn allegiance to Matthias Corvinus in 1482 under the condition that the duchy would revert to the king in the event of John II's death without a male heir.[50] In doing this, John II of Żagań effectively declared war on the king. Although the opposing dukes sought to secure support for their cause at the court of Władysław II Jagiellon in Bohemia as well as within the Holy Roman Empire, their efforts proved unsuccessful. In the spring of 1488, Matthias Corvinus dispatched an army into the Duchy of Głogów. The royal forces first defeated the contingents of the Silesian dukes at the Battle of

48 See: FUKALA. Synové husitského krále. In FELCMAN-FUKALA a kol. *Poděbradové. Rod českomoravských pánů, kladských hrabat a slezských knížat*. Praha 2008, pp. 97-99; ČAPSKÝ and PRIX, Slezsko v pozdním středověku, p. 413.

49 See: FUKALA, *Synové husitského krále*, pp. 106-110.

50 The 1482 act of homage was rendered to George of Stein, who represented the king. In general, he was the leading figure of Corvinian administration in Lower Silesia and Lusatia, see: GRÜNHAGEN and MARKGRAF, eds. *Lehns und Besitzurkunden Schlesiens und seiner einzelnen Fürstenthümer I*. Leipzig 1881, number 96, p. 236. For the figure of George of Stein, see: KNESCHKE. *Georg von Stein. Versuch eine Biographie*. Leipzig 1913.

Tomaszów Bolesławiecki (Thomaswalde), and then went on to capture Głogów itself.[51] The dukes of Opole largely remained on the sidelines of these events, but the sources clearly indicate that their sympathies lay with the opposition. In this context, the literature frequently mentions their participation in the Imperial Diet of 1487 alongside Henry of Münsterberg and John II of Żagań, where the representatives of the Silesian dukes sought to negotiate support against Matthias Corvinus.[52]

Following defeat of the opposition, Matthias Corvinus imposed punishments on the Silesian dukes. John II of Żagań lost the Duchy of Głogów, and another opposition leader, Henry of Münsterberg, likewise forfeited his duchy. The dukes of Opole were not spared either.

One year later, the king summoned them to a diet in Vyškov, Moravia, where he decreed a fine to be paid for their support of the opposition. The dukes of Opole were ordered to pay the king 15,000 florins. If they were unable to do so, the dukes would be required to cede several towns within their duchy, Prudnik, Głogówek, and Biała, to the king.[53] In connection with the punishment imposed on the dukes of Opole, it is also necessary to mention a report found in the so-called *Ratibor Annals*, which states that Jan Bělík of Kornice, Matthias's governor in Upper Silesia, imprisoned both brothers on the king's orders and released them only after the payment of a ransom. The anonymous chronicler dated this event to the year 1484. Given that the *Ratibor Annals* are not considered a reliable source and contain numerous errors, this dating has repeatedly sparked debates among historians. Some scholars accept the 1484 date and associate the imprisonment of the Opole brothers with Matthias Corvinus's demand made that same year in which he called on the Silesian dukes to either provide military support or to pay a financial contribution for his planned campaign in Austria. The dukes of Opole apparently refused, which led to their imprisonment by Jan Bělík of Kornice, released only after payment of the required sum. Another possible interpretation shifts their imprisonment to 1488, viewing it as punishment for their support of the rebellion led by John II of Żagań. Both theories are logicial, and given

51 The basic circumstances of the conflict are clearly summarized by ČORNEJ and BARTLOVÁ, *Velké dějiny VI.*, pp. 467-471. For a recent account of the Battle of Tomaszów, see: BEŇA. Jedna udalosť, dva naratívy: stredoveká bitka u Thomaswaldau (Tomaszów Bolesławiecki) z roku 1488 v československej a maďarskej historiografii. In *Historie a vojenství*, 2021, vol. 70, no. 2, pp. 70-86.

52 HORWAT, *Księstwo Opolskie i jego podziały*, pp. 244-245. Also compare a letter from Henry of Münsterberg addressed to Frederick I of Legnica: KRONTHAL and WENDT, *Scriptores rerum Silesiacarum XIII. Politische Correspondenz Breslaus in Zeitalter des Königs Matthias Corvinus 1479-1490*, č. 454, pp. 119-120.

53 KALOUSEK ed., *Archiv český čili staré písemné památky české i moravské XVI*, Praha 1897, č. 389, p. 326.

the current state of sources and knowledge, it is impossible to determine with certainty which version is correct. Whether the dukes of Opole were jailed in 1484 or in 1488, the very fact of their imprisonment clearly indicates that their relations with the king had deteriorated significantly and that there was no trace left of the cooperation that had characterized their relationship in the 1470s.[54]

Following the defeat of the Silesian opposition in 1488, nothing further stood in the way of Matthias's efforts in realizing his plans for Silesia. In the final years of his life, he concentrated primarily on securing the succession of his son, John Corvinus, to both the Bohemian and Hungarian thrones. Although Matthias's plans are well known in historiography, it is important to highlight in this context a previously unknown—or at least hitherto unused—source, a charter issued by Nicholas II of Opole and his brother John II the Good at Esztergom on 24 January 1490.[55] The aforementioned fine imposed at the Vyškov assembly did not mark the end of the punishment for the dukes of Opole. Matthias intended to humiliate them further and to use them as instruments in advancing the claim of John Corvinus to the Bohemian throne.

John II and his brother Nicholas II were once again required to reaffirm their loyalty to the king. In the first part of the charter, the dukes of Opole assured Matthias that they had never supported his opponents and that no enemies of the king had ever been harbored on their estates. They then proceeded to declare continued loyalty to Corvinus. It is noteworthy that the charter makes no reference to the recent events in Silesia. Instead, the king's enemies are identified specifically as the Czechs and Poles, who are mentioned repeatedly. The Opole brothers went to great lengths to assure the king that they had neither allied themselves with these enemies nor would they do so in the future.

The second part of the charter is particularly noteworthy, as it clearly reveals Matthias Corvinus's broader plans not only for Silesia, but for his entire share of the Lands of the Bohemian Crown. The dukes of Opole were required to pledge—and to do so also on behalf of their still-living mother, Princess Magdalena—that in the event of Matthias Corvinus's death, they would recognize his illegitimate son, John Corvinus, as their sovereign. They acknowledged John as the *"true and hereditary offspring"* of the king and accepted him as their "natural lord," (*"…tehdy Nayosweceniegssimu kniezeti a panu panu Hanussovi Korwinovi synu geho kralovske milosti yakozto prawemu a diedicznemu geho milosti*

54 WELTZEL, ed. Ratiborer Chronik. In *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens* 4, 1862, pp. 114-126, Specifically on the capture of the Opole Piasts, see p. 124. The development of views on the dating of their imprisonment is clearly summarized by: LOJEK. *Książę Janusz Dobry. Ostatni Piast opolski (ok. 1455/1460–27 marca 1532)*. Kraków 2025, pp. 164-166.

55 The charter is preserved in Archiwum Państwowe Opole, fond Akta miasta Opola, sig. 21.

potomku a panu naassemu przirozenemu slibugem takz poslussni byti a geho milost za našeho praweho a diedicznehо pana mieti…"). They also bound all the inhabitants of their duchy to loyalty toward John Corvinus. Such a provision clearly represented a violation of the Olomouc peace agreements, which had not envisaged the hereditary succession of Corvinus's possessions. Nevertheless, the fact that Matthias Corvinus had no intention of adhering to the terms of the Olomouc agreements is well known in historiography, and the charter issued by John II and Nicholas II merely confirms this reality.[56]

It is in this context that the charter should be understood. Matthias Corvinus anticipated that his plans would be difficult to realize after his death and expected that King Władysław II Jagiellon of Bohemia—likely supported by his father, King Casimir IV of Poland—would oppose the succession of John Corvinus, which ultimately occurred. Consequently, Matthias sought to secure as much support for his son as possible.[57] As has been repeatedly emphasized, at this time, the Duchy of Opole represented the largest and probably the most significant principality, at least within Upper Silesia. It also constituted a logical link between the Kingdom of Poland and the remaining lands of the Bohemian Crown. From Matthias Corvinus's perspective, it was therefore crucial that the local lords remained loyal to John Corvinus.

The oath of loyalty to John Corvinus was, in fact, a form of punishment for the activities undertaken by the Opole brothers against the king in the second half of the 1480s. Matthias Corvinus forced them to violate the Olomouc peace agreements and contrary to those terms, support the candidacy of John Corvinus. This step was exceptional, and in the case of the Silesian dukes, we know of no comparable precedent. That is, there is no evidence that Matthias imposed a similar obligation on any other Silesian noble house. The only known parallel in Silesia is Matthias Corvinus securing homage from the estates of the Duchy of Głogów, both to himself and to his son.[58] However, looking into the Hungarian context, we find several examples where Matthias forced Hungarian nobles to swear allegiance to John Corvinus as the future King of Hungary.[59] In this case as

56 See: KALOUS, *Matyáš Korvín*, pp. 299-302.

57 On the takeover of Corvinus's lands by Władysław II after 1490, see: ČORNEJ and BARTLOVÁ, *Velké dějiny VI.*, pp. 472-476. The war for the Hungarian throne following Corvinus's death is extensively discussed by: BACZKOWSKI. *Habsburgowie i Jagiellonowie w walce o Węgry w latach 1490–1492*. Grojec 2014.

58 GRÜNHAGEN and MARKGRAF, eds. *Lehns und Besitzurkunden Schlesiens und seiner einzelnen Fürstenthümer II*., č. 22, p. 656. The situation in the Duchy of Głogów is clearly described by KOZÁK. *Zrod stavovského Hlohovska. Mocenská uskupení ve slezském pozdním středověku*. Opava 2008, pp. 64-75.

59 In 1489, Matthias allegedly forced the entire royal council to swear allegiance, see: KALOUS, *Matyáš Korvín*, pp. 301-302. Unfortunately, Hungarian literature on the subject was

well, it was a violation of existing agreements, primarily the 1463 agreement with Emperor Frederick III, which provided the Emperor, or the Habsburgs, with a path to the Hungarian throne in the event of Matthias's death without a legitimate heir.[60] Matthias Corvinus had planned to formally proclaim the succession of John Corvinus at the all-Silesian assembly during Easter of 1490. However, this never came to fruition as the king died during the Easter holiday.[61] Shortly after his death, Matthias's plans collapsed and the dukes of Opole did not honor their earlier pledge. Instead, they promptly recognized Władysław II Jagiellon as their sovereign, in accordance with the provisions of the Olomouc peace agreements.

The humiliating nature of the aforementioned charter and the fact that it functioned as a form of punishment for the dukes of Opole is further underscored by its absence from the so-called *Kopiář sv. Václava* (*Registrum sancti Wenceslai*). This manuscript was compiled at the behest of Duke John II of Opole after he assumed control of the Duchy of Racibórz and contains copies of 523 charters issued between 1297 and 1528.[62] The *Registrum sancti Wenceslai* includes copies of charters from both the Opole and Racibórz ducal archives, and its selection clearly reflects those documents that held essential legal significance for the newly established Opole–Racibórz principality. The absence of the charter in which John II and Nicholas II of Opole pledged loyalty to John Corvinus is therefore telling; it may be interpreted as a deliberate omission, and/or an attempt by the dukes of Opole to forget this humiliating episode. The issuance of this charter thus represents a bitter epilogue to the relationship between the Opole Piasts and Matthias Corvinus.

About the author

Mgr. David Radek, Ph.D.
Ústav historických věd, Slezská univerzita v Opavě / Institut of Historical Sciences, Silesian University in Opava
Masarykova třída 375/1, 746 01 Opava
Czech Republic

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not accessible to me.

60 The treaty signed in Wiener Neustadt in 1463 is extensively discussed by NEHRING. *Kaiser Friedrich III, und das Reich: zum hunyadisch-habsburgischen Gegensatz im Donauraum*. München 1975, pp. 13-23.

61 Matthias died on April 6th in Vienna, see: KALOUS, *Matyáš Korvín*, pp. 331-332.

62 The Kopiář survives in a single copy, which is preserved in: Národní knihovna v Praze, fond Oddělení rukopisů, sign. XVI C 7, Registrum st. Wenceslai. Kopiář Jana knížete opolského a ratibořského 1254–1528. In the 19th century, the sources contained were published in the form of registers, see: WATTENBACH and GRÜNHAGEN, eds., *Codex diplomaticus Silesiae VI, Urkunden vorzüglich zur Geschichte Oberschlesiens nach einem Copialbuch Herzog Johanns von Oppeln und Ratibor in Auszügen mitgetheilt*.

e-mail: david.radek@fpf.slu.cz
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4267-341X
https://www.scopus.com/authid/detail.uri?authorId=58482117200

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