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DID PRINCE LEV WISH TO BECOME DUKE OF KRAKÓW IN 1280?¹

Two independent sources report that Prince Lev intended to gain power in Kraków by force in 1280. The first is the Ruthenian *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle*, the second is the Latin text which is the common basis of the *Dzierzwa Chronicle* and the *Annals of Traska*. Researchers have wrongly considered this detail to be reliable. In both sources, Prince Lev is portrayed in a bad light and the plan to illegally seize power in Kraków is taken as one piece of evidence for Lev's wickedness. It seems much more likely, therefore, that the authors of these sources had malicious intent, and Lev's aspiration to control Krakow was falsely attributed.

Keywords: Prince Lev, Leszek the Black, Kraków, princely power

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The oldest Polish narrative (in Latin) of Lev's (the Prince of Halych's) invasion of Lesser Poland at the beginning of 1280 is preserved in two historiographical works: the *Dzierzwa Chronicle*,² written sometime before 1320, and the *Annals of Traska*,³ written around 1340. Historians noticed long ago that both works contain entries praising the exploits of Leszek the Black, Prince of Kraków, Sandomierz, and Sieradz, which were probably written at his court.⁴ Wojciech Drelicharz even coined a title, *Gesta Lestkonis*, for this collection of short tales.⁵ As Wojciech Michalski has recently shown, it is quite certain that the *Annals of Traska* contain fuller and earlier versions of these entries lauding Leszek.⁶

The tale of the war against Lev is the only entry for 1280 in the *Annals of Traska*: 'In the first year after the election of Duke Leszek, came Lev, prince of Rus', with a great army of Tatars and Lithuanians and Rus', wishing to obtain the dukedoms of Kraków and Sandomierz. They were met by the inhabitants of Kraków and Sandomierz on the eve of the Feast of St Matthew the Apostle, a Friday, near Goźlice, namely the Voivodes Piotr, son of Albert, of Kraków, and Janusz, of Sandomierz, and Warsz, Castellan of Kraków, along with 600 men who were at hand, and they defeated an astounding number of Tatars, Lithuanians and Rus', since the Lord of Heaven granted them victory. He himself [Lev – P.Ż.] fled the next day, greatly ashamed. After fifteen days, Duke Leszek rode in pursuit, having with him thirty thousand cavalry and two thousand infantry, and miraculously plundered Lev's land, and destroyed the Rus' strongholds. And he returned home in peace and with glory, under the pontificate of Pope Nicholas, highest priest of the Church of Rome and Paweł, Bishop of Kraków.'⁷

2 KRZYSZTOF PAWŁOWSKI (ed.), *Kronika Dzierzwy* (Kraków: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, Monumenta Poloniae Historica series nova, vol. 15, 2013), 83.

3 AUGUST BIEŁOWSKI (ed.), *Rocznik Traski* (Lwów: Monumenta Poloniae Historica, vol. 2, 1872), 847.

4 BRYGIDA KÜRBIŚ, *Dziejopisarstwo wielkopolskie XIII i XIV wieku* (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1959), 263–265; JACEK BANASZKIEWICZ, *Kronika Dzierzwy XIV-wieczne kompendium historii ojczystej* (Wrocław – Warszawa – Kraków – Gdańsk: Ossolineum, 1979), 108.

5 WOJCIECH DRELICHARZ, *Annalistyka małopolska XIII-XV wieku. Kierunki rozwoju wielkich roczników kompilowanych* (Kraków: Polska Akademia Umiejętności Rozprawy Wydziału Historyczno-Filozoficznego vol. 99, 2003), 381–383, 454.

6 WOJCIECH MICHALSKI, "Two Medieval Traditions of Lublin and Their Influence on the Local Community's Sense of Identity (13th? – the Beginning of the 17th Century)," *Annales Universitatis Mariae Curie-Skłodowska*. Sectio F, 72 (2017): 162; WOJCIECH MICHALSKI, "Legenda fundacyjna dawnej lubelskiej fary św. Michała Archanioła," *Bibliotekarz Lubelski* 58–59 (2015–2016): 80.

7 AUGUST BIEŁOWSKI (ed.), *Rocznik Traski*, 847.

According to the author of this entry, the Rus' prince wanted to obtain the dukedoms of Kraków and Sandomierz. Placing this information within the same sentence mentioning Leszek's election clearly suggests the lawless and usurpatory nature of the Halician ruler's actions. Traska certainly wished to discredit the invader and emphasise the legitimacy of the defensive and retaliatory actions taken by the legally elected duke. The remark concerning the size of Lev's great army, mostly composed of Tatars and Lithuanians, also serves to demean him. The Rus' appear only as the final entry in this list. This specific order is hardly due to chance. It is repeated again as part of the sentence noting the outcome of the battle of Goźlice. Seen from the perspective of Lesser Poland, this usurper was in fact using the fiercest pagan enemies of Christianity at the time. The participation of Lithuanian troops in the expedition would seem to have been the result of artistic licence on the part of the historian as he praised Leszek. These supposed Lithuanians are mentioned neither by the contemporary Rus' source (which I shall address in more detail shortly, but in light of its narrative, any cooperation between the Lithuanians and the Tatars at the beginning of 1280 would be difficult to imagine), nor by any of the more laconic mentions of the battle of Goźlice in other chronicles.⁸ On the same basis, Jan Długosz enlarged the composition of the prince's army to include other local pagans, by adding the Yotvingians⁹ to the list. All this allows us to suppose that the author of the entry in the *Annals of Traska*, by mentioning Lev's desire to seize power in Lesser Poland, was less intent on recording his actual intentions in mounting the invasion, and more on vilifying him in a rather typical manner.

8 This was noticed by DRELICHARZ, *Annalistyka małopolska*, 385. However, many historians have considered the participation of Lithuanians in this invasion as probable, or even certain: STEFAN KRAKOWSKI, "Obrona pogranicza wschodniego Małopolski za Leszka Czarnego," *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, Seria 1, Nauki Humanistyczno Społeczne, Historia* 15 (1960): 100; ZDZIŚŁAW SZAMBELAN, "Najazdy ruskie na ziemię sandomierską w XIII wieku," *Acta Universitatis Lodzianensis, Folia Historica* 36 (1989): 23; AGNIESZKA TETERYCZ-PUZIO, "Przyczyny i cele najazdów litewskich na ziemię sandomierską w XIII w.," *Rocznik Lubelski* 35 (2009): 17; AGNIESZKA TETERYCZ-PUZIO, *Bolesław II mazowiecki. Na szlakach ku jedności (ok. 1253/58 – 24 IV 1313)* (Kraków: Avalon, 2015), 54; ŁUKASZ JAROS, "Działalność militarna księcia krakowskiego, sandomierskiego i sieradzkiego Leszka Czarnego w latach 1279–1288," *Rocznik Oddziału Polskiego Towarzystwa Historycznego w Skarżysku-Kamiennej: Z dziejów regionu i miasta* 5 (2014): 19; GRZEGORZ BŁASZCZYK, *Dzieje stosunków polsko-litewskich od czasów najdawniejszych do współczesności*, vol. 1 (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM 1998), 48.

9 ZOFIA BUDKOWA et al. (eds.), *Ioannis Dlugosii Annales seu Cronicae Incliti Regni Poloniae*, lib. 7–8, (Varsaviae: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe 1975), lib. 7, Year 1280, 211.

The author of the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle*, in a tale most probably written at the same time the *Gesta Lestkonis* were recorded, in other words contemporaneously, also ascribed this desire to seize Kraków's throne to the Galician ruler. Originally, the Rus' source contained nearly no mention of what year events took place.¹⁰ Yet the historical circumstances surrounding this narration (the death of Bolesław the Chaste and the election of Leszek the Black) allow us to be certain that the chronicler meant to describe the same events as those recorded in the *Annals of Traska*. The creators of the Hypatian Codex in the fifteenth century (who provided the chronicle with an absolute chronology from the creation of the world) were already sure of this and correctly dated the tale to the year 6788.¹¹ We do not know in what specific format the dates in the Hypatian Codex are given, but in any case, the year 6788 from the creation of the world would translate to either 1279–1280 or 1280–1281 in the Anno Domini system.

The tale is presented in the following manner in the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle*: "After the death of the great prince Bolesław there was no one who could reign in the Polish land because he had no son. Lev wanted the [Polish] land for himself, but the [Polish] boyars were strong and would not give him the country. But Bolesław had five nephews: Konrad and Bolesław, the two sons of Siemowit, and Leszek, Siemomysł, and Władysław, the three sons of Kazimierz. From among them the Polish boyars chose Leszek and placed him on Bolesław's throne in Kraków. And [thus] Leszek began [his] reign. Then Lev wanted to conquer part of the Polish land for himself, the cities on the borderland. He went to the godless and cursed [Tatar governor] Nogai to ask him for aid against the Poles. And [Nogai sent] the cursed Konchak, Kozej, and Kubatan to help him. When winter set in, they set out [against the Poles]. Lev and his son Yuri marched gladly in Tatar company, but Mstislav [of Łuck], Volodymyr, and Mstislav's son Danilo went [only] because they were compelled to do so by the Tatars. And thus, they all advanced upon Sandomierz. Upon reaching Sandomierz, they marched across the frozen Wisła to its other bank in the vicinity of the city itself. Lev crossed first with his army and his son Yuri and was followed by Mstislav and his son Danilo, [who in turn] were followed by the Tatars. After crossing [the river], they camped outside the city. They remained

10 DARIUSZ DAŃBROWSKI, ADRIAN JUSUPOVIĆ et al., (eds.), *Kronika halicko-wołyńska (Kronika Romanowiczów)* (Kraków: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, Monumenta Poloniae Historica series nova, vol. 16, 2017), Wstęp, LXXVI–LXXXIII.

11 *Ипатьевская летопись*, Полное собрание русских летописей, vol. 2, ed. 2 (Санкт-Петербург, 1908), col. 881.

there for a short time and did not give battle. Then, *with great pride at the thought of marching to Kraków*, Lev advanced with a great host of regiments upon Kropiwnica. Volodymyr, however, stayed behind with his army near the city. He was told that a great number of enemy soldiers had barricaded themselves in the forest with plenty of provisions. Their abatis had not been taken by any army because it was very well fortified. [Thereupon] Volodymyr dispatched his best men [against] it [led by] Kafilat the Selezenc. When they reached the abatis, the Poles engaged them in fierce battle [so that] they took it only with great difficulty, capturing many [enemy] soldiers and supplies. As we wrote before, Lev [had] already set out [toward Kraków] with his regiments. When the Rus' [and Tatar] broke their lines in order to loot, God visited His will upon [Lev]: the Poles killed many boyars and good servants from his regiments as well as some of the Tatars. Thus, Lev returned with great dishonor. Leszek set out against Lev and took the city of Przeworsk from him. He slaughtered all its inhabitants both young and old alike, set fire to the city, and returned home."¹

The Rus' tale of Lev's invasion of Lesser Poland is constructed in an extremely ingenious manner. It starts with information which seemingly justifies the Galician prince's pretensions: after Bolesław the Chaste dies without an heir, there is no one to rule in Kraków. However, immediately afterwards, the chronicler lists as many as five nephews of the deceased. This fact, when added to the mention of the election carried out by powerful Polish "boyars", who did not want Lev but chose Leszek, one of Bolesław's nephews, would indicate that according to the Rus' author, the prince did not have the right to lay claim to the throne of Kraków. It is quite probable that the chronicler knew that the blood ties between the Galician ruler and Bolesław were much more tenuous.² In fact, it is not

1 DĄBROWSKI, JUSUPOVIĆ et al., (eds.), *Kronika halicko-wotyńska*, 499–504. The Khlebnikovsky Codex formed the basis for this edition. It is missing four words, which not only add precision to the events, but would also seem key to the construction of the figure of Lev within this tale. This phrase has survived in the Hypatian Codex, the oldest manuscript copy of the chronicle: *Ипатьевская летопись*. col. 882. I have placed it in italics in the quote. The translation is based on GEORGE A. PERFECTY (translator and ed.), *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle*, The Hypatian Codex, Part 2 (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag 1973), 92.

2 For more on the kinship of King Danilo (Lev's father) with the Piasts through Danilo's grandmother, Agnes, Bolesław Wrymouth's daughter and the awareness of this kinship in the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* see DARIUSZ DĄBROWSKI, *Król Rusi Daniel Romanowicz. O ruskiej rodzinie książęcej, społeczeństwie i kulturze w XIII w.* (Kraków: Avalon 2016), 31–32.

long before there is mention of Lev's alternate plan – to seize Polish towns on the border. Whether this is a scaling down of the initial intention or simply the seizing of an opportunity which presented itself is a question that is not addressed.³ Further along in the narration, this intention of conquering Kraków features again in the statement that the prince left Sandomierz and rode to Koprzywnica with the intention of marching on the capital of Lesser Poland. The author's remark, preserved in the Hypatian Codex, that Lev rode on Kraków "с гордостью великою" (with great pride) proves to be of the utmost importance. These words contain an emphatic criticism of the prideful prince, who was attempting to claim what was not rightfully his.⁴

This interpretation is confirmed by the Tatar issue. The chronicler condemned Lev for visiting Nogai to ask for reinforcements for an expedition against the Poles. The author's disapproval reveals itself through the insults directed at the khan. For understandable reasons, the Rus' chronicler disliked the Tatars and looked askance at any collaboration with them which was not strictly necessary. This name-calling directed at Mongols appears quite frequently in the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle*. In the tale of the Galician ruler's expedition against Lesser Poland, the term "cursed" is used repeatedly in relation to Konchak and the other chieftains sent by Nogai with the Rus'. However, the strongest effect was achieved by contrasting the fate of the expedition's leader, and that of the Tatars accompanying him, with the adventures of one of the princes, who set out against the Poles on the orders of Nogai, but against their own will: Volodymyr Vasylykovich, the ruler of the city of Volodymyr and son of Lev's uncle. Furthermore, there is no doubt that this fragment of the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* was written to praise the prince of Volhynia,

3 It was only Bronisław Włodarski who first rationalised and ordered these intentions. Lev initially desired the throne in Kraków, but Leszek's election forced him to adopt a more modest "plan B": BRONISŁAW WŁODARSKI, "Udział Rusi halicko-włodzimierskiej w walce książąt na Mazowszu w drugiej połowie XIII wieku," in *Wieki średnie. Prace ofiarowane Tadeuszowi Manteufflowi w 60 rocznicę urodzin*, ed. ALEKSANDER GIEYSZTOR, MARIAN H. SEREJSKI, STANISŁAW TRAWKOWSKI (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1962), 175.

4 Dariusz Dąbrowski also understood this passage in this way. But as he was convinced of the existence of a pro-Galician faction in Lesser Poland, he assumed that Lev had really laid claim to Kraków: DARIUSZ DĄBROWSKI, "Stosunki polityczne Lwa Daniłowicza z sąsiadami zachodnimi w latach 1264–1299/1300 r.," in *Галичина та Волинь у добу середньовіччя. До 800-річчя від дня народження Данила Галицького*, ed. Я. ІСАЄВИЧ (Львів: Інститут імені Івана Крип'якевича НАН України 2001), 50.

and probably at his court as well, as historians have long argued based on numerous considerations.⁵ In the chronicle's telling, Volodymyr did not, like Lev, advance on Kraków "with great pride," but remained on the eastern bank of the Wisła. Having learned of a nearby "abatis" (Осекь) full of people and riches, he sent an army which conquered it. In this manner, Volodymyr's expedition met with success. But God punished Lev and the Tatars, who were filled with pride, dealing them a defeat at the hands of the Poles. Finally, the Rus' chronicler once again underlined his negative opinion of the Galician ruler, by emphasising the dishonour that the defeat had brought upon him, by the will of God.

Generally speaking, Lev is the villain of this part of the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle*, which was written by someone in the entourage of Volodymyr Vasylykovich.⁶ This must have arisen from a rivalry between the two cousins, but the precise accusations are different. The chronicler burdened the prince of Halych with the responsibility for the death of Vaišvilkas, the son of Mindaugas, who became a monk after being baptised in the Orthodox Rus' rite, ceding his rule over Lithuania to Shvarno Danylovich. But Lev was envious of his brother being preferred. One day, feigning friendship, he came to drink with Vaišvilkas and, inspired by the devil, killed him.⁷ A further accusation against the murderer is that – as another fragment of the chronicle makes clear – the monk-prince was also the godfather of Yuri, Lev's son.⁸ Another, equally spectacular

5 DĄBROWSKI, JUSUPOVIĆ et al., (eds.), *Kronika halicko-wołyńska*, Wstęp, LXII–LXIX, LXXIV–LXXVI; Владимир Т. Пашуто, *Очерки по истории Галицко-Волынской Руси* (Москва: Издательство Академии Наук СССР, 1950), 109–130.

6 MARIUSZ BARTNICKI, "Wizerunek "бесчестного князя" w Kronice halicko-wołyńskiej," in *Actes testantibus. Ювілейний збірник на пошану Леонтія Войтовича*, ed. М. Литвин. Україна: культурна спадщина, національна свідомість, державність. Збірник наукових праць. Вип. 20 (Львів: Національна Академія Наук України, 2011), 93–100.

7 DĄBROWSKI, JUSUPOVIĆ et al., (eds.), *Kronika halicko-wołyńska*, 464–468; BARTNICKI, "Wizerunek "бесчестного князя," 97; ADRIAN JUSUPOVIĆ, *Kronika halicko-wołyńska (Kronika Romanowiczów) w latopisarskiej kolekcji historycznej* (Kraków – Warsaw: Avalon, 2019), 122. Leontii Wojtowycz's belief that, according to the chronicler, the death of Vaišvilkas was accidental, since both murderer and victim had had too much to drink, is misguided: ЛЕОНТИЙ ВОЙТОВИЧ, "Лев Данилович: Спроба відтворення справжнього портрету "бесчестного князя"," *Średniowiecze Polskie i Powszechnie* 4(8) (2012): 81. According to the chronicler, Lev committed a crime, the heinous nature of which was further exacerbated by the convivial setting. It is difficult to determine the how and why, but a note attesting to the murder of Vaišvilkas by Lev found its way into the *Annals of Traska*, where it is recorded under the year 1267: "Dux Leo filius Danielis regis Rusie occidit Woyslaum filium Mendogi ducis Lithwanorum" – BIEŁOWSKI (ed.), *Rocznik Traski*, 840.

8 DĄBROWSKI, JUSUPOVIĆ et al., (eds.), *Kronika halicko-wołyńska*, 440.

example of Lev's wickedness in the chronicle was his great friendship with Duke Traidenis of Lithuania. Unlike the converted Vaišvilkas, the chronicler presents the Lithuanian ruler as a hardened pagan and harsh persecutor of Christianity, similar to the greatest ancient enemies of God such as Antiochus, Herod and Nero. Lev came out the worse for wear from this camaraderie, since Traidenis unexpectedly betrayed his "friend" and seized Drohiczyn from him. Seeking revenge, the ruler of Halych sent an envoy to the "great emperor" of the Tatars, Mengu-Timur, to ask for help against the Lithuanians. The khan gave him an army and ordered many Rus' princes to attack Traidenis. During this expedition, Lev deceived the other Rus' princes and with only the Tatars by his side, captured the outer city of Novgorodok. Due to this, there was great anger among the Rus' princes, Volodymyr Vasylykovich among them. They considered that Lev had slighted them, preferring the Mongols to his own kin and countrymen. This was the reason they turned around at Novgorodok and the expedition ultimately failed.⁹

The presence of a developed black legend of Lev in the Volhynian part of the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* is evident. The desire to take Kraków which is attributed to the prince is certainly an element of it. The appearance of the same accusation in the Rus' source and the *Annals of Traska* would seem to derive from its obviousness, rather than being a reflection of Lev's true intentions. But this does not have any greater significance from the point of view of understanding the meaning of both chronicles, for even if Lev had really wanted to take over Lesser Poland, his dream of doing so and resultant failure were used against him in both cases. This detail cannot be separated from the tendency of both sources to be hostile towards the prince and it would seem more probable that this was an invention on the part of their authors, since they were undoubtedly unfavourable towards him. Despite this, many modern historians have treated Lev's plan to seize power in Kraków and Sandomierz as reliable and "objective" information, provided without any malicious intent.

Many years ago, I was myself certain that the ruler of Halych had presented his candidacy to the magnates of Lesser Poland, and that

9 DĄBROWSKI, JUSUPOVIĆ et al., (eds.), *Kronika halicko-wołyńska*, 469, 474–482. For more on the tenor of this tale, which is deeply hostile towards Lev, see МИКОЛА КОТЛЯР (ed.), *Галицько-Волинський літопис* (Київ: Наук. Думка, 2002), 323–324. Here also, the good Prince Volodymyr is contrasted with the evil Lev: БАРТНИКІ "Wizerunek "бесчестного князя", 97.

they had rejected it.¹⁰ Other historians who claimed that the prince truly desired the throne of Lesser Poland often presupposed the existence of a pro-Galician faction among the local elite.¹¹ The source on which this hypothesis was based is an entry in a document issued by Leszek the Black on 22 January 1284 at Osiek for the Cistercians in Koprzywnica. The duke confirmed his predecessors' grants and among other things, added the following: "Furthermore, we have added for these brothers, for the love of God, a part of the hereditary estate in Beszyce which belonged to Niemsta, son of Krzywosąd, who was disinherited according to the law, because having fled to the schismatics, he planned with them the destruction of our lands."¹² The duke's chancery prepared two original copies of this charter. The entry concerning Niemsta appears in only one of them, according to Zygmunt Mazur, precisely because the duke had decided to bequeath Beszyce to the monks.¹³

It would seem that Duke Leszek, when describing the reasons for the confiscation of Niemsta's property, did in fact have his participation in Lev's invasion of the dukedom of Sandomierz in mind. Such an assumption

10 PAWEŁ ŻMUDZKI, *Studium podzielonego Królestwa. Książę Leszek Czarny* (Warszawa: Neriton, 2000), 265. Before I took this view, it was also held by TOMASZ JASIŃSKI, *Przerwany hejnał* (Kraków: Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, 1988), 71.

11 JAN BASZKIEWICZ, *Powstanie zjednoczonego państwa polskiego (na przelomie XIII i XIV wieku)* (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1954), 157, note 69; BRONISŁAW WŁODARSKI, *Polska i Ruś 1194–1340* (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1966), 196–197; PIOTR K. WOJCIECHOWSKI, "Ugrupowania polityczne w ziemiach krakowskiej i sandomierskiej w latach 1280–1286," *Przegląd Historyczny* 70, vol. 1 (1979): 57–58, 61; DĄBROWSKI, "Stosunki polityczne Lwa Daniłowicza z sąsiadami," 50; AGNIESZKA TETERYCZ-PUZIO, *Geneza województwa sandomierskiego. Terytorium i miejsce w strukturze państwa polskiego w średniowieczu* (Słupsk: Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej, 2001), 45, 126–127; TETERYCZ-PUZIO, *Bolesław II mazowiecki*, 58; MARIUSZ BARTNICKI, "Elita księstwa krakowsko-sandomierskiego wobec stosunków z księstwami ruskimi w XIII wieku," *Couïym* 7 (2007): 21–22; LEONTII WOJTOWYCYZ, *Lew Daniłowicz, książę halicko-włodzimierski (ok. 1225 - ok. 1301)* (Kraków: Avalon, 2020), 191; JUSUPOVIĆ, *Kronika halicko-wotyńska*, 127. STANISŁAW PIEKARCZYK thought that even in 1282, the magnates in Lesser Poland had wanted to place Lev on the throne: *Studia z dziejów miast polskich w XIII–XIV w.* (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1955), 120–121; similarly: ZYGMUNT MAZUR, *Studia nad kancelarią księcia Leszka Czarnego* (Wrocław: Prace Wrocławskiego Towarzystwa Naukowego, seria A, no. 169, 1975), 19.

12 MAZUR provided this fragment based on the original: *Studia nad kancelarią księcia Leszka Czarnego*, 138:

13 MAZUR, *Studia nad kancelarią księcia Leszka Czarnego*, 137. For more on the double original copies, see FRANCISZEK SIKORA, "Ze studiów nad dokumentami i kancelarią Leszka Czarnego", in FRANCISZEK SIKORA, *Małopolskie późne średniowiecze. Ludzie i instytucje, wybór pism*, eds. WŁODZIMIERZ BUKOWSKI, ANTONI GĄSIOROWSKI, GRAŻYNA RUTKOWSKA (Warsaw – Kraków: Instytut Historii PAN, 2017), 38–47.

would seem to be the likeliest. But as Stefan Krakowski noted,¹⁴ it is entirely arbitrary to hyperbolise Niemsta's position and turn a single man into a whole pro-Galician "faction." In particular since neither the reasons for which he fled to the "schismatics," nor when it occurred are known. Furthermore, Niemsta was quite probably merely a common knight. There is no indication that he held any office, nor that he could have had a significant influence on the election of a ruler. Even Leszek did not accuse the fugitive of wanting to install Lev on the throne of Kraków, but only of helping to plan a devastating invasion. If we combine the ducal document with the events of 1280, it merely confirms the plunderous nature of the prince's raid.

The conjecture, unconfirmed in the sources, that a group closely connected to the duchess-widow,¹⁵ or simply she herself,¹⁶ had taken the side of the Galician prince, seems somewhat tenuous. The first trace of Kinga's dispute with Leszek is a commentary added to the attestation of the founding charter for the monastery of the Order of St Clare at Sącz, issued by the widow on 6 July 1280. After the duke, lay testators and Prokop, the ducal chancellor, a separate list of clerical witnesses was added: "and in the presence of these monks and venerable priests, the above-mentioned provincial superior, Brother Stefan, custos of Esztergom, Brother Bogusław, lector of the Order of Preachers, appointed by the papal legate to ensure agreement between the duke and ourselves."¹⁷ This sentence informs us, laconically yet precisely, of the various steps taken by Kinga because of her dispute with Leszek. She had to have sent envoys to Philip, bishop of Fermo, the papal legate staying in Hungary, since he appointed his trusted men – the Franciscan provincial superior

14 KRAKOWSKI, "Obrona pogranicza wschodniego Małopolski," 99, note 13. Krakowski has since changed his opinion on this matter. Earlier, he was convinced of the existence of a pro-Rus' faction in Lesser Poland which desired to place Lev on Kraków's throne: STEFAN KRAKOWSKI, *Polska w walce z najazdami tatarskimi w XIII wieku* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Ministerstwa Obrony Narodowej, 1956), 208–209.

15 DĄBROWSKI, "Stosunki polityczne Lwa Daniłowicza z sąsiadami," 50.

16 For more on the alliance between the widow and the Rus' prince, see MARTIN HOMZA, "Dzieje wczesnośredniowiecznego Spisza," in *Historia Scepisii*, eds. MARTIN HOMZA, STANISŁAW A. SROKA (Bratislava – Kraków: Avalon, 2010), 166; for Homza: WOJTYWYCZ, *Lew Daniłowicz*, 192; ZUZANA ORSÁGOVÁ, "Ruthenian – Polish – Hungarian relations in regards to the dynastical politics of Bela IV," in *Ruś średniowieczna a sąsiedzi (IX – połowa XIII wieku)*, ed. VITALIJ NAGIRNYJ (Kraków: Uniwersytet Jagielloński, *Colloquia Russica* vol. 1, 2011), 67.

17 FRANCISZEK PIEKOSIŃSKI (ed.), *Kodeks dyplomatyczny Małopolski*, vol. 2 (Kraków: Akademia Umiejętności, 1886), no. 487, 146.

Nicholas, the *custos* Stefan and Bogusław the Dominican – as conciliators. As we can see from the foundation charter, which clearly attests to the agreement reached, their intervention did have the effect desired by the widow. Leszek accepted Kinga's sovereign title ("domina et princeps de Sandech") and on 6 July 1280 personally certified the foundation of the Sącz monastery and affixed his seal to the charter issued by the widow.¹⁸ It would seem very unlikely that Kinga undertook any steps to promote Lev's candidacy for the throne of Kraków, other than her complaint to the papal legate. In particular, it is difficult to imagine how the Rus' and Tatar invasion could have contributed to achieving the main goals of the widow: the establishment of a new monastery for the Order of St Clare and maintaining full control of her lands near Sącz.¹⁹

The term "schismatics," used in Leszek the Black's charter for the Cistercians in Koprzywnica, and which mentions Niemsta, points to a very clear drawback to Lev's potential candidacy for the thrones of Kraków and Sandomierz, as Stefan Krakowski has previously noted. In Lesser Poland, the Galician ruler was seen as a religious dissenter;²⁰ if he had adopted the Latin rite, maintaining power in Rus' would have been problematic. Perhaps when the author of the entry preserved in the *Annals of Traska* underlined that the victory over Lev had taken place during the pontificates of Pope Nicholas and Paweł, bishop of Kraków, this was also due to denominational reasons.

But above all, the idea that some unspecified group of knights and magnates in Kraków and Sandomierz had desired to elect a Rus' ruler as duke is in blatant opposition to the text of the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle*. The chronicler twice emphasised the strong will of the "Polish boyars," both when refusing to accede to the prince's desires and in relation to Leszek's election. In this tale, there is no place for any supporters of Lev in Lesser Poland, since it is concerned with the groundlessness of his claim, which, resulting from hubris, was rightly punished by God. In fact, the beginning of the *passus* in the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* relating

18 Doubts not shared by MARTIN HOMZA, "Svätá Kunigunda a Spiš," in *Terra Scepusiensis: Stav bádania o dejinách Spiša*, eds. RYSZARD GŁADKIEWICZ, MARTIN HOMZA (Levoča – Wrocław: Kláštorisko, 2002), 399, who thought that the widow had extracted Leszek's approval for the monastery by threatening to facilitate another attack by Lev and the Tatars on his land.

19 PIEKOSIŃSKI (ed.), *Kodeks dyplomatyczny Małopolski*, vol. 2, no. 487, 145–146.

20 KRAKOWSKI, "Obrońca pogranicza wschodniego Małopolski," 99; ŻMUDZKI, *Studium podzielnego Królestwa*, 288.

the Galician prince's expedition on Kraków seems somewhat deliberately lacking in specifics,²¹ in contrast to the detailed presentation of the course of this expedition itself. This is the main reason that my former attempt at translating the tenor of the chronicler's fleshing out of this tale into language appropriate for modern historians now looks so unconvincing upon closer inspection of the source. The sentence "Lev wanted the [Polish] land for himself, but the [Polish] boyars were strong and would not give him the country" does not represent real and factual events, as once outlined by me, namely Lev presenting his candidacy for the throne of Kraków and it being rebuffed by the great nobles of Lesser Poland. This matter is not made any easier by the fact that we know nothing about the details of Leszek the Black's election or the exact composition of the electors. We can merely try to form some general idea based on the artful literary descriptions of the elections of Kraków's rulers in the late twelfth and early thirteenth century penned by Kadłubek.²² But Master Vincentius's tales fail to suggest that anyone could have introduced their own candidacy.²³

I now return to the entry in the *Annals of Traska*. As I have already noted, the details of the Polish victory against Lev are tightly linked to the mention of Leszek's election and the claim that the Rus' ruler's expedition was motivated by his desire to obtain the dukedoms of Kraków and Sandomierz. The inhabitants of both cities, without the participation of their newly elected duke, set out to defend their chosen ruler against the usurper. Six hundred men, led by Piotr and Janusz, voivodes of Kraków and Sandomierz respectively, as well as Warsz, the castellan of Kraków, defeated a great army of Tatars, Lithuanians and Rus'. For the author of this entry, emphasising these specific details was the best way of glorifying Leszek. We can see this when we contrast it with the tale from the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* which, while recounting the events of the same battle, fails to mention these dignitaries from Lesser Poland, even though one of the victors at Goźlice, Castellan Warsz, was known to the chroniclers.²⁴ But the Rus' author did not wish to glorify Leszek, merely to vilify Lev. Comparing these two sources leads us to another,

21 As noticed by – WŁODARSKI, *Polska i Ruś*, 197.

22 MARIAN PLEZIA (ed.), *Mistrza Wincentego zwanego Kadłubkiem Kronika polska* (Kraków: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, Monumenta Poloniae Historica nova series vol. 11, 1994), Book 4, Chapter 21, 175–178 and Chapter 26, 190–194.

23 DĄBROWSKI, JUSUPOVIĆ et al., (eds.), *Kronika halicko-wołyńska*, 499.

24 DĄBROWSKI, JUSUPOVIĆ et al., (eds.), *Kronika halicko-wołyńska*, 274, 456.

more generalised conclusion. There is no reason to doubt the historicity of the fact that it was Warsz, Piotr and Janusz who defeated the Rus' and Tatar forces at Goźlice. But the fact that the details of the tale conform to how the events transpired cannot be the only explanation for why it was written in this specific way, and not another. The selection, composition and arrangement of information, even that taken from real life, is generally subject to the overall goals of the story.

Analogies exist for the construction used in the chronicler's tale of the victory of the dignitaries over Lev. The first can be found in a source of a similar genre to the *Annals of Traska*, namely the continuation of the chronicle of Regino of Prüm, written by Adalbert of Magdeburg. It presents the conflict between King Henry I, the founder of the Saxon dynasty, and Charles the Simple. Adalbert was obviously on the side of the former, while the ruler of West Francia was the object of his scorn, as evidenced by his posthumous characterisation in the entry for the year 925.²⁵ However, two years earlier, we find the following entry: "Charles wanted to usurp for himself Alsace and that part of Francia next to the Rhine as far as Mainz, so he advanced with hostile intent as far as the estate Pfeddersheim by Worms. From there, since King Henry's faithful men had gathered at Worms, he fled in a manner not fitting for a king."²⁶ We see that the usurper fled, terrified solely by the fact of the men of the rightful ruler gathering. Gallus Anonymous recounts a similar tale. When Bolesław III was with his army at Głogów, Silesia was invaded by the forces of Zbigniew and the Bohemians. Yet even before the duke could notice this, the invaders were routed by the local marchiones.²⁷ The point of this type of tale is to show that a good and legitimate ruler does not need to personally defend himself against the pretensions of his evil rivals. His loyal subjects will do it for him.

Another, and much more typical device used by the author of the tale of the victory over Lev is the huge disparity in the size of the belligerent forces. Six hundred knights from Lesser Poland routed an innumerable

25 FRIDERICUS KURZE (ed.), *Reginonis abbatis Prumiensis chronicon cum continuatione Treverensi* (Hannoverae: Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores rerum Germanicum in usum scholarum separatim editi, 1890), 157.

26 SIMON MACLEAN (ed. and transl.), *History and Politics in Late Carolingian and Ottonian Europe: The Chronicle of Regino of Prüm and Adalbert of Magdeburg* (Manchester University Press, 2009), 237.

27 KAROL MALECZYŃSKI (ed.), *Anonima tzw. Galla Kronika czyli dzieje książąt i władców polskich* (Kraków: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, Monumenta Poloniae Historica nova series vol. 2, 1952), Book 3, Chapter 19, 144–145.

enemy force. The evident conclusion drawn from this by medieval writers was that the “Lord of Heaven” himself had granted victory to the Poles. It was only when a higher power had shown who was right within this dispute that Leszek himself could assemble a great army which, according to the chronicler, numbered thirty thousand cavalry and two thousand infantry, and invade his opponent’s lands. It is quite certain that this exaggeration of the retaliatory force was intentional, as it served to evidence the might of Kraków’s ruler.

In the *Annals of Traska*, the consequences of the revenge wrought by such a great army upon Lev are presented in a highly spectacular manner, but also without any great precision: the duke “miraculously” plundered Rus’ and destroyed its towns. In the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle*, the goal of Leszek’s attack is defined in a more modest, but precise manner. This was the city of Przeworsk, which belonged to Prince Lev, and was taken and burned to the ground by the Polish ruler, and all of its inhabitants slaughtered.²⁸ The chronicler returned to Leszek’s invasion in a later passage, as part of a retrospective: “During the aforementioned years when Lestko took Lev’s city of Przeworsk, the Poles also ravaged the outskirts of Brest along the Krosna. They took ten villages and started back. [Thereupon] the men of Brest assembled and gave chase. There were two hundred Poles and [only] seventy Brestians, [but] they were led by the voyevoda tit, who was renowned for his bravery during campaigns and hunting expeditions. Having caught up with them, they engaged them in battle, and with God’s help the Brestians defeated the Poles, killing eighty of them and capturing the others. They [also] recaptured their [stolen] property and thus returned to Brest with honor, glorifying God and His Virgin Mother [as long as they lived].”²⁹

Removing the motive for Lev’s march on Kraków and his desire to rule it, the Rus’ tales of the tussle between the Galician prince and Leszek can be reduced to a typical neighbourly feud, on what is essentially a minor scale. The Rus’ and the Tatars ravaged the surroundings of Sandomierz, from whence they were beaten back. In revenge, Leszek conquered and razed a relatively unimportant town on the border, Przeworsk (mentioned for the first time in the chronicle), but an expedition by another group of

28 DĄBROWSKI, JUSUPOVIĆ ET AL., (eds.), *Kronika halicko-wotyńska*, 504.

29 *Ibid.*, 524–525. I have underlined the fragment from the Hypatian Codex, which contains the original version – *Ипатьевская летопись*, col. 890. Translation based on: PERFECKY (translator and ed.), *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle*, 95–96.

his men to Brest ended in failure.³⁰ The author of the entry preserved in the *Annals of Traska* told of these events as of a great war and a magnificent victory for the Poles. The details and descriptions he chose create this impression. Leszek was supposed to have marched on (seemingly the entirety of) Rus' with a huge army, wreaked exceptional devastation there and destroyed Rus' goods. The depiction of border skirmishes in the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* is certainly more credible from a historical perspective, and also makes it impossible to consider Lev's intention of capturing Kraków a real plan.

Translated by Michał Hamerski

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30 This contradicts the opinion of Leontii Wojtowycz, who thought that Lev truly desired to become Duke of Kraków and Sandomierz and that his success would have made Lev a serious rival to Rudolf I of Germany. Furthermore, Wojtowycz considered that Lev might have renounced his fealty to the Tatars – Wojtowycz, *Lew Daniłowicz*, 191–192. The prince’s biographer apparently forgot that the Rus’ expedition against Lesser Poland had been carried out with Nogai’s permission, and that this was the best proof that Lev accepted his dependency on the Horde.

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