

Tannenberg – Grunwald – Žalgiris 1410:

Krieg und Frieden im späten Mittelalter

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2012

Harrassowitz Verlag · Wiesbaden



Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek
Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen
Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet
über <http://dnb.d-nb.de> abrufbar.

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek
The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche
Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available in the internet
at <http://dnb.d-nb.de>.

Informationen zum Verlagsprogramm finden Sie unter
<http://www.harrassowitz-verlag.de>

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Gedruckt auf alterungsbeständigem Papier.

Druck und Verarbeitung: Memminger MedienCentrum AG

Printed in Germany

ISSN 0947-4226

ISBN 978-3-447-06661-7

The Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Beginning of the Union with Poland: the Background to Grunwald

Stephen C. Rowell

The great battle took place almost a quarter of a century after the day in late summer 1385 when Grand Duke Jogaila confirmed in Krėva to the representatives of the Polish Queen Mother along with certain of his kinsmen, boyars and other subjects that he would wed Queen Jadwiga of Poland and become king regnant of that country (by marriage, election and adoption); he pledged to compensate the young queen's Austrian betrothed for causing the cancellation of the planned Habsburg-Angevin marriage contract, to accept baptism in the Roman Catholic rite along with his heathen kin and subjects, regain through his own efforts and at his own expense lands which had been lost by the Polish Crown (primarily to the Teutonic Order) and join Lithuanian lands for ever to the Polish Crown (the infamous *perpetuum applicare* clause). We may accept Jan Tęgowski's arguments that (more or less) Jogaila fulfilled his vows, wherever possible.¹ Although arguments over the exact meaning of the deliberately-chosen inexact term *applicare* will no doubt continue and the Grand Duchy never became a province of the Polish Kingdom (Kingdom and Crown are not the same thing), by the time of the battle of Grunwald Poles and Lithuanians and their two Lithuanian rulers, Jogaila-Władysław II and Vytautas-Alexander collaborated closely on a whole range of shared interests. Indeed, in the case of Podole we might even claim that for a while at least Jogaila *applicavit* lands desired by Poland to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Over the two decades following the battle, this cooperation became ever more evident and complex. In this very brief sketch of the early history of the Lithuano-Polish Union we will concentrate on a few closely interlinked political factors, namely the consolidation of the position of the roman Church in the Grand Duchy, the creation of the Jagiellonian Dynasty and the shared military interests of Poland and Lithuania.²

1 JAN TĘGOWSKI, Wprowadzanie w życie postanowień aktu krewskiego w latach 1385-1399 [Die praktische Umsetzung der Bestimmung aus dem Vertrag von Krewno in den Jahren 1385-1399], in: *Studia z dziejów państwa i prawa polskiego* 9 (2006), pp. 77-91.

2 A subject as vast as the so-called Union of Krewa and its consequences cannot be dealt with in a short article. A wide bibliography and analysis of historical scholarship is provided by GRZEGORZ BŁASZCZYK in his magisterial survey: *Dzieje stosunków polsko-litewskich, II: Od Krewa do Lublina* [Geschichte der polnisch-litauischen Beziehungen, II. Von Krewno bis Lublin], cz.1 Poznań 2007. More recent discussion is provided by Jan Tęgowski (wie Anm. 1) and JAROSŁAW NIKODEM, *Akt krewski i jego znaczenie* [Die Union von Krewno und ihre Bedeutung], in: *Poznań-Wilno. Studia historyków w roku tysiąclecia Państwa Litewskiego*, hg. von ZBYŚLAWA WOJTKOWIĄKA, Poznań 2010, pp. 111-143.

Ecclesiastical Policy

Following the official conversion of pagan Lithuania, led by Jogaila and his mother-in-law's former chaplain, Bishop Andrzej Jastrzębiec of Vilnius in 1387, the new king supreme duke and his cousin Grand Duke Vytautas followed a similar or even jointly-organised ecclesiastical policy in the Grand Duchy and the Ruthenian lands of the Polish Crown. This policy was a response to problems caused by domestic issues, first and foremost relations with the large Ruthenian Orthodox population in both realms and accusations made by foreign enemies, mainly the Teutonic Order and its allies to the effect that Vytautas and Jogaila had not converted or had feigned to convert their pagan subjects and offered succour to schismatics (Russian Orthodox believers), as Grand Master Conrad von Jungingen wrote to Pope Boniface IX in 1403: *ficte catholicis et a demonio meridiano scismaticis et infidelibus*.³ Both rulers followed a common policy of compelling pagan Lithuanians to accept Roman Catholicism, sponsoring Dominican and Franciscan missions to pagan and Orthodox communities, founding or reviving Catholic dioceses and attempting to reunite the Roman and Greek Churches throughout Christendom and especially in their own lands. Although Polish armies had conquered south-western Rus' during the reigns of Casimir the Great and Louis of Anjou, thus permitting the foundation of Catholic sees across the region, it was Jogaila who revived and stabilised these foundations within the archdiocese of Lwow, as at Przemysl in 1391 where he renewed a Catholic see founded in 1375.⁴ Apart from sequestering the cathedral churches from the Orthodox (St Nicholas' Church in 1391 and the castle church of Our Lady and St John, in 1412) Jogaila founded Dominican and Franciscan priories in the city.⁵ He applied similar methods in the Diocese of Chelm, where a titular see had been founded in 1359. The bishopric was refounded in 1375 but it began to operate effectively only after 1417 when it was governed by Jogaila's Dominican protégé Jan Biskupiec.⁶ Vytautas followed a similar policy in Vladimir Volynskii (from 1428 the diocese of Lutsk), where he founded several churches such as Drohiczyn in 1409 (where he established a Franciscan friary), Perelejewo (1419), the area around Melnik (1420), Suraz and Porchow (later the Episcopal centre of Janów Podlaski).⁷

Vytautas, like his cousin, supported the work of the Dominican *Societas peregrinorum ad orientem propter Christum* a part of the Order of Preachers entrusted with missions to eastern Europe and Asia. The Franciscans had a similar organisation which likewise freed its members from certain restrictions placed on their ordinary brethren (such as the requi-

3 Codex diplomaticus prussicus Bd 5, hg. von JOHANNES VOIGT, Königsberg 1857, p. 187: 10 Dec. 1403.

4 JACEK KROCHMAL, Kościoły katolickie w Przemyślu w latach 1375-1412 [die katholischen Kirchen in Przemysl in den Jahren 1375-1412], in: Rocznik Premyski 32 (1996), 1, Historia, p. 3-19.

5 Ebd., p. 16-17.

6 WŁODZIMIERZ CZARNECKI, Rozwój kościoła łacińskiego w ziemi chełmskiej do początku XVII w. [Die Entwicklung der lateinischen Kirche im Chełmsker Raum bis zum Beginn des 17. Jahrhunderts], in: Roczniki Humanistyczne 48 (2000), 2, p. 34.

7 TOMASZ JASZCZOŁT, Fundacje kościelne na Podlasiu do końca XV wieku [Kirchenstiftungen in Podlasie bis Ende des 15. Jahrhunderts], in: Kościoły a państwo na pograniczu polsko-litewsko-białoruskim. Źródła i stan badań, hg. von MAREK KIELIŃSKI u.a., Białystok 2005, p. 22, 23, 41, 45. Vitoldiana. Codex privilegiorum Vitoldi magni ducis Lithuaniae 1386-1430, hg. von JERZY OCHMAŃSKI, Warszawa-Poznań 1986, Nr. 38, p. 47.

rement for papal permission to build a new convent).⁸ Vytautas founded a Dominican priory in Lutsk and Kiev. The Lutsk house was established in 1390 by both Vytautas and Jogaila. In 1393 the Lithuanian leader granted the friars there a mill and pond.⁹ It was the Lutsk prior and titular papal chaplain, Gregorz Buczkowski whom Vytautas presented to the see of Vladimir Volynskii in 1400. Grzegorz remained a close grand-ducal adviser. Also in 1393 Vytautas confirmed his cousin Vladimir Algirdaitis' donations to the Dominicans in Kiev.¹⁰ Two years later Švitrigaila, governor of Podole expressed his generosity to the missionary friars in Kamieniec Podolski, a house which had been founded in the 1370s along with a friary in Smotrycz by two other Gediminid princes, dukes Aleksandras and Petras Karijotaičiai.

It is within the general context of Polish-Lithuanian ecclesiastical policy or rather Jogaila and Vytautas' efforts to resolve the schism between Roman and Greek Christians, rather than the alleged Lithuanian separatist circles exaggerated by later historians that we should review the Battle of Vorskla (1399). This battle involving among other contingents a joint Lithuanian and Polish force (the latter much reduced by reaction to the death of Queen Jadwiga in the summer of 1399) was a direct consequence of Lithuanian and Polish cooperation over issues of Church Union. In 1396 and 1397 Jogaila and Vytautas considered seriously the possibility of effecting Catholic-Orthodox reunion on their lands. They proposed that the Byzantine emperor summon a Church Council in Poland-Lithuania to resolve the issue. The wily Greek responded with a counter proposal, namely that the cousins join forces with Emperor Sigismund and march against the Ottoman armies then encircling Constantinople.¹¹

In autumn 1397 Vytautas began his first campaign against the Tatars, marching towards the Black Sea, presumably with the intention eventually of crossing to Constantinople. He was assisted in this by Jogaila, whose support was not merely moral for afterwards the Lithuanian ruler shared his war booty with the Lithuanian king of Poland (I use this formulation to counter the tendency to equate Jogaila simply with Poland). Jan Długosz in his

8 Summarised with literature in S. C. ROWELL, *Keletas pamokslininkų ordino veiklos aspektų lotynizuojant Bažnyčią LDK (iki 1501 m.)* [Einige Aspekte der Tätigkeit der Dominikaner bei der Christianisierung des Grossfürstentums Litauen], in: *Šviesa ir šešėliai Lietuvos evangelizacijos istorijoje / Light and shadows in the history of Lithuania's evangelisation*, hg. von J. BORUTA / V. VAIVADA, Vilnius 2011, pp. 184-196.

9 6 Feb. 1393: *Vitoldiana* (as n. 7) Nr. 10, p. 16-17.

10 Ebd. Nr. 15, p. 21-22.

11 The battle is discussed in the context of a joint Lithuanian and Polish response to Byzantine requests and Church Union issues rather than the primitive accusation of Rus'ian chronicle traditions to the effect that Vorskla resulted solely from Vytautas' ambitions to conquer the whole of Rus' (for which a war en route to the Black Sea would be a very curious circumambulation rather than a reasonable invasion in two recent articles, viz. S. C. ROWELL, *Naujieji kryživiai: LDK ir Bizantijos santykiai XIV-XV a. sandūroje*. Ar Vytautas Didysis buvo Lietuvos kryžiaus žygių prieš turkus bei totorius pradininkas? [Die neuen Kreuzritter: Die Beziehungen zwischen dem Grossfürstentum Litauen und Byzanz um 1400 – war Vytautas der Grosse der Urheber der Kreuzzüge gegen Türken und Tataren?], in: *Kryžiaus karų epocha Baltijos regiono tautų istorinėje sąmonėje*, hg. von R. TRIMONIENĖ, Šiauliai 2007, pp. 180-205, and IDEM, *Nevisai primintinos kautynės: ką byloja šaltiniai apie 1399 m. mūšį ties Vorsklos upe?* [Die Schlacht, an der keiner sich erinnern wollte: Was sagen die Quellen über die Schlacht bei Vorskla 1399 aus?], in: *Istorijos šaltinių tyrimai*, 1, Vilnius 2008, pp. 67-90.

account notes how Polish, Lithuanian and Lithuanian-Rus'ian troops took part in the campaign.¹² There is no mediaeval evidence, apart from highly ideologised Muscovite, chronicle writing from the second half of the fifteenth century and the sixteenth century, which credit Vytautas with ambitions to conquer all Rus' in the period 1397-99.¹³

On 26 February 1398 the grand master of the Teutonic Order, Conrad von Jungingen, informed his envoy to the German Lands, Johann Ryman, that during the summer Vytautas was planning to attack the Order along with his Tatar allies and the Polish king. This very report is the only (surviving) source to claim that Jogaila was seeking to gain a crown for his cousin so that it would be possible to use joint pagan (Lithuanian!) and Rus'ian military forces to fight against *the Teutonic Order* (not, *nota bene*, against Poland – according to historical tradition any crown for Vytautas was an anti-Polish aspiration).¹⁴

The following year, as a Tatar threat to Kiev, the mother city of Rus'ian Orthodox culture, Vytautas recognised an opportunity to prove himself a champion of Orthodoxy. Our main source for this campaign, Długosz, presents a highly ambiguous account of events leading up to and including the battle of Vorskla: Vytautas gloried in his power to wage war on the Tatars, a war in which almost no Poles took part because the saintly Queen Jadwiga warned them against such vanity. However, the main hero of the tragic battle was to be a Pole, of course, not Vytautas. The great hero was the palatine of Kraków, Jogaila's favourite, Spitko of Melsztyn. Another twisting of facts to blame a Lithuanian Vytautas for the whole debacle comes in Długosz's assertion that it was in 1399 that Jogaila acknowledged Vytautas' right to rule Lithuania for life. Such a recognition would come in fact only in 1401. The joint Lithuano-Polish campaign at Vorskla thus becomes associated in the consciousness of subsequent historians with (either foolhardy or unsuccessful) Lithuanian yearning for separation from Poland.¹⁵

Długosz cannot resist stressing Polish participation (albeit apparently limited) in the battle where important Polish lords, members of Jogaila's close entourage fought with distinction. Kęstutis' feckless son is the scapegoat of this narrative. Dashing Poles such as Spitko of Melsztyn, Sędiwoj of Ostroróg and Dobrogost of Szamotuły must save the day (and the grand duke's life). The account is placed in the chronicle *before* rather than after the death of Jadwiga, thereby impressing us with the saintly monarch's wise words of warning (to be used in John Paul II's case for canonising the queen almost six centuries later). A less than full contingent of Polish forces and Jogaila's own absence can be explained quite easily by the need for arranging the royal funeral, which also took place in August 1399.

12 IOANNIS DLUGOSSII, *Annales seu cronicae incliti regni Poloniae, liber decimus 1370-1405*, hg. von D. TURKOWSKA, Warsaw 1985, p. 221: exercitu ex Polonis, Lithuanis et Ruthenis congesto; cf. the account of Dietmar von Lübeck in *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum* 3, p. 216.

13 ROWELL, *Nevisai primintinos* (wie Anm. 11), esp. pp. 78-79.

14 CDP (wie Anm. 5) Bd. 6, p. 66.

15 *Rozbiór krytyczny Annalium Poloniae Jana Długosza z lat 1385-1444* [Kritische Analyse der Annalen von Jan Długosz], t. 1, [Rozbiór krytyczny] ed. JAN DĄBROWSKI, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1961, p. 53.

Military and Diplomatic collaboration

Following Jogaila's acceptance of Vytautas' governance of Lithuania in 1392, confirmed by Jogaila's recognition of his cousin as ruler of Lithuania for life in 1401 military and political cooperation between Poland and Lithuania at the level of grand duke and king-supreme duke and gradually at magnate and boyar level (the families which supported the Union agreement approved at Vilnius and Radom in 1401 and further strengthened on a broader social base at Horodło twelve years later) steadily grew in strength. If Vorskla marks collaboration in the east with regard to the Orthodox world, the first major joint campaigns against the Teutonic Order to the north and west come in 1401-1404. In March 1401 the Žemaitijans rose up against their Teutonic overlords. By the 1398 Treaty of Salinwerder between the Teutonic Order and Grand Duke Vytautas, which established peaceful relations and clearer spheres of interest between the two parties, Vytautas had recognised that Žemaitija should belong to the Order forever. However, this did not mean that the grand duke would surrender entirely Lithuanian rights to the land. When the rebels submitted themselves to Vytautas, the latter did not turn them away.¹⁶ On March 20 1401 Vytautas published an official complaint to the whole of Christendom bewailing the Order's treatment of Žemaitija.¹⁷ At the beginning of the conflict Jogaila sent an armed Polish contingent to Vytautas to assist him in fighting the Order. In 1402 the Order ravaged Grodno and the area south of Vilnius, including the capital itself. In May of that year a Žemaitijan force ravaged Memel and Vytautas attacked Gotteswerder (not far from Kaunas on the other side of the Nemunas river). Meanwhile Švitrigaila saw his chance to enlist the support of the Order to claim the Lithuanian throne for himself. At Lublin on June 19 1403 Vytautas promised not to make peace with the Order without consulting the king of Poland. At the same time (June 20) Vytautas granted a charter to the merchants of Kraków permitting them free trade within the Grand Duchy. On September 9 Pope Boniface IX responded to a Polish (?) request for aid against the Order. The pontiff forbade the Teutonic Knights from waging war on Christian Lithuania. Von Jungingen replied with a scathing account of Lithuanian religious duplicity, denouncing them as false Catholics who support schismatics and infidels.¹⁸ By May 1404 all three parties were ready to sign a peace treaty. At Raciążek a treaty was drafted on May 22-23, the first time that a joint Polish-Lithuanian delegation approved such a document with the Teutonic Order.¹⁹ The agreement reinforced the 1343 Polish-Teutonic Treaty of Kalisz and the Lithuanian agreement with the Order at Salinwerder in 1398. Vytautas recognised the Order's dominion over Žemaitija as foreseen in the 1398 treaty. The Order renounced its support for Švitrigaila's rebellion against both Vytautas and Jogaila. Vytautas was allowed to accept 250 refugees from Žemaitija, thereby granting him an opportunity, however slight, to interfere in the internal affairs of the Teuto-

16 V. ALMONAITIS, *Žemaitijos politinė padėtis 1380-1410 metais* [Die politische Situation Schemaitens 1380-1410], Vilnius 1998, pp. 135-141.

17 *Codex epistolaris Vitoldi magni ducis Lithuaniae 1376-1430* [CEV], hg. von A. PROCHASKA, Kraków 1882, Nr. 238, pp. 75-76.

18 *Wie Anm. 3*: the papal bull is given in full in a notarial copy of 10 December 1403. A regest of the papal text is printed in *Bullarium Poloniae* [BP] Bd. 3 1378-1417, hg. von IRENA SUŁKOWSKA-KURAŚ / STANSIŁAW KURAŚ, Rome-Lublin 1988, Nr. 929, p. 155-156.

19 CEV (wie Anm. 17) Nr. 283-290, pp. 96-99.

nic province. The Knights also conceded Dobrzyń to Poland in return for payment of a 50,000 zł. mortgage. Thus Jogaila fulfilled another of his Krėva pledges to the Poles, viz. to recuperate lost Poland lands through his own efforts. The Žemaitijan Question was far from being resolved and would smoulder on for more than a decade during which time the greatest confirmation of joint Polish-Lithuanian interests would come with overwhelming defeat of the Teutonic Order at Grunwald. In the east Polish troops took part in Vytautas' campaigns against Moscow in 1406-1408.

Dynastic Interests

Hitherto we have concentrated much on what Vytautas wanted, what Jogaila decided and how the cousins collaborated in matters of ecclesiastical policy and military diplomacy. Such a view 'from the top' has tended to go out of favour with modern historians (except perhaps where medieval Poland and Lithuania are concerned). However, one must never underestimate the dynastic factor in the formation of the Jagiellonian Union. The kings are as important as the cabbages in this case. Jogaila was adopted formally by his mother-in-law; Lithuanian boyars were adopted by their Polish counterparts at Horodło in 1413. The ruling classes came to understand (separately perhaps and in slightly different ways) the importance of sticking with the House of Jogaila whatever temporary temptations to do otherwise arose from time to time. Indeed the most important event of 1399 was not really the defeat at Vorskla. After that Vytautas lost interest in a war to win Byzantine support for a religious settlement at home and concentrated his forces elsewhere. The most important event of 1399 was the death of Queen Jadwiga and Jogaila's firstborn heir, Princess Elisabeth-Bonifacia, which led inevitably to a rethinking of how the union would be implemented. Lithuanian lands would no longer pay dowry tribute to the Polish queen. Jogaila had been crowned and anointed king of Poland, not king-consort, Mr Jadwiga. He had every chance of consolidating his position in Kraków and, like some mediaeval Greta Garbo, he could tantalise the Cracovian elite with his threats to go home. In this case Vytautas supported fully his cousin – not because he had been so weakened by defeat at Tatar hands (indeed he was planning to enlist the Teutonic Knights' aid in continuing the war in spring 1400) but because he hoped to keep his competitor away from Vilnius. It is very probable that he knew about and even added impetus to Jogaila's search for a second wife. The best available candidate turned out to be his dead queen's cousin Anne of Cilly, who, like Jadwiga was a great granddaughter of King Władysław Łokietek. Such a renewal of a connection with the Piast bloodline was of *no* significance to Jogaila himself for he was already the fully-fledged lord of the Polish Crown but it *was* useful to confirm the claims of any of his future heirs. Indeed the Mazovian and other Piasts were never considered seriously as possible rulers, whatever threats might be made to soften a Jagiellonian candidate's actions (or rather inaction). During the last decade of his life Jogaila turned to exacting public oaths from nobles and townsfolk in both his realms recognising his sons' rights of succession as natural princes of Poland and propagating the title *filius regius* to booster their legitimacy

further.²⁰ In 1400-1401 Jogaila sought to gain the blessing of Count Herman of Teck, the orphaned Lady Anne's uncle, and the permission of Pope Boniface IX to marry Jadwiga's kinswoman.²¹ While these negotiations were taking place Jogaila's relationship with Vytautas and his boyars was also being re-examined.

On 18 January 1401 in Vilnius Vytautas and his boyars (to a large degree the very same who would witness the Polish-Lithuanian treaty with the Order at Raciążek in 1404)²² recognised that Jogaila had acknowledged Vytautas as grand duke of Lithuania for his lifetime and that after his death government of Lithuania would return to Jogaila or the heirs of his body. The treaty speaks of Jogaila and *his* Crown of Poland, that is, in Lithuanian eyes the Crown of Poland belonged to Jogaila (as indeed did Lithuania) and was not some mystical concept to which Jogaila was subject. Vytautas pledged after his death that the whole of the Grand Duchy would escheat to Jogaila and his Crown and realm, except for his personal patrimony: *eidem domino Wladislao regi Coronaeque et regno ac regnicolis ipsius*, that he would not desert *Dominum Wladislaum regem, regnum et coronam ac regnicolis regni ipsius Poloniae*.²³ A similar pledge is given by the lords temporal and spiritual of Lithuania: – *dominum nostrum Wladislaum regem et ad coronam regni eius Poloniae, Wladislao regi et coronae eius*.²⁴ It is quite understandable that the version of this treaty issued by the Polish lords at Radom on 11 March 1401 does not speak of *ipsius* or *eius* (sc. Jogaila's) kingdom or Crown, merely the Kingdom and Crown *tout court*.²⁵ It was agreed that if Jogaila died *sine prole* the Polish lords would have no right to elect another ruler without first consulting and gaining the agreement of Vytautas and the Lithuanian lords. Even though the words *ipsius regni* and *sine prole* are small they highlight how each side viewed Jogaila's position with regard to the Polish Crown and the treaty stresses the inclusion of Vytautas and the Lithuanian boyars in the process of selecting who would be the next king of Poland after the extinction not only of Jogaila but the heirs of his body. As for Jogaila, he regarded the Crown as belonging to him and considered that his children would be the legitimate and natural heirs to both Poland and Lithuania. It is in this light that we should examine the question of *domini naturales* in late Polish political thought. It is reasonably clear what this meant for the high Piast period.²⁶ It is also clear, *pace* Professor Bac-

20 See S. C. ROWELL, Kodėl Jogailai reikėjo tiek kūrų? Arba: Lietuvių dinastinės politikos Lenkijoje pradų tęsinys [Wozu brauchte Jogaila soviel Schwager? Oder: die Fortsetzung der dynastischen Politik Litauens in Polen] (forthcoming).

21 JAN TĘGOWSKI, Pierwsze Pokolenie Giedyminowiczów [Die erste Generation der Gedimiden], Poznań-Wrocław 1999, pp. 127-128 – discussions with Hermann of Teck took place in November 1400 and Anne arrived in Poland in January 1401; the pope granted Jogaila and Anne's supplication in April 1401 – BP, Bd. 3 (wie Anm. 18), Nr. 753, p. 126.

22 For the main members of Vytautas' inner circle of advisers in the period 1392-1404 see RIMVYDAS PETRAUSKAS, Lietuvos diduomenė XIV a. pabaigoje-XV a. Sudėtis-Struktūra-Valdžia [Der litauische Hochadel Ende des 14. und im 15. Jahrhundert: Zusammensetzung – Struktur – Herrschaft], Vilnius 2003, pp. 69-70. For the Treaty of Raciążek, see above n. 19.

23 Akta unji Polski z Litwą 1385-1791 [Die Unionsakten Polens mit Litauen, 1385-1791], hg. von STANISŁAW KUTRZEBA / WŁADISŁAW SEMKOWICZ, Kraków 1932, Nr. 38 p. 35 (18 Jan. 1401, Vilnius, Vytautas' document).

24 Ebd., Nr. 39, p. 40.

25 Ebd., Nr. 44, pp. 44-47.

26 EWA A. MAJDROWSKA, Domini naturales. Portret polskich władców w *Chronicon Polonorum* mistrza

kowski, that the Jagiellonians were regarded widely as the natural rulers of Poland even though on occasion the concept of *domini naturales* was introduced into political debate in an unsuccessful attempt to weaken confidence in the rights of Władysław III and Casimir IV to their thrones often by the same political agents as proclaimed that Jogaila's sons *were* the natural heirs of the Polish throne (here we have in mind Cardinal Oleśnicki, as depicted by Długosz.²⁷ Little by little Vytautas inserted himself into enacting Jogaila's dynastic policy being the godfather of Princess Jadwiga and the protector of Władysław Jagiellończyk and regent of Poland in the event of his outliving Jogaila.

In January and February 1401 Jogaila hunted in Lithuania. In February 1402 he married Anne of Cilly in a ceremony attended by, among others, Vytautas and his grand duchess, Anne. When Jogaila's first living heir, Jadwiga was born in 1409 Vytautas became her protector, thereby strengthening his position in Polish affairs in accordance with the Treaty of Vilnius (should Jogaila predecease him). It is worth noting that after the birth of the heir one noble (or rather ignoble) faction in Poland spread rumours that the queen had been unfaithful to her husband. Jakub of Kobylany was accused unjustly of adultery with the queen consort. He was found innocent in a court trial and later accepted a position at the court of Grand Duke Vytautas, where eventually he was appointed marshal. Malicious gossip accompanied the king's third marriage, this time given the age of Queen Elisabeth. His fourth wife, Zofija Alšėniškaitė (Sofia Holszańska) faced similar accusations of adultery after the birth of Jogaila's sons, Władysław and Casimir-Andrew. In 1428 Vytautas, who was probably one of Władysław's numerous godfathers and was certainly active in arrangements for the boy's baptism, was a zealous defender of the queen's honour and gave places to ladies in waiting who had become embroiled in the adultery trial. It is obvious that a certain faction or factions within Polish high society sought to undermine the dynastic rights of Jogaila the only way they could, namely by questioning the legitimacy of his children's birth; it is also clear that Vytautas did what he could to support these dynastic rights actively.

The position of the Jagiellonian dynasty was strengthened further even before the Treaty of Horodło in October 1413 when Lithuanian boyars gained a greater role in implementing the Polish-Lithuanian Union. It is most likely in spring of that same year at Jedlno that the Polish lords swore to be loyal to Jogaila's daughter as their rightful queen after the death of her father and accept Vytautas as her guardian: [...] *vor vyer joren czu Jedeldaw gescheen ist, das wir vor euwer tochter mustin hildigen und sweren sye czu haldin vor eyne konyginne und musten auch holdigen und sweren Wytolde in czuhalden vor eynen rechten vorweser der jungin konigynne.*²⁸ That same year together with Vytautas Jogaila set out for Lithuania together with his wife and daughter to christen the Žemaitijans officially.

Wincentego [Domini naturales. Porträts der polnischen Herrscher im Chronicon Polonorum des Meisters Vincentius], Bydgoszcz 2010.

27 For wider literature see KRZYSZTOF BACZKOWSKI, „Panowie przyrodzeni“ a elekcyjność tronu w Polsce średniowiecznej [Die natürlichen Herrscher und die Wählbarkeit des Throns im mittelalterlichen Polen], in: Zeszyty naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Prace historyczne 135 (2008), pp. 53-63. I argue elsewhere for accepting the natural rights of the Jagiellonians to the Polish throne and not representing dynastic natural rights and noble rights of election as mutually exclusive principles – ROWELL, Kodėl (wie Anm. 20).

28 Codex diplomaticus Lithuaniae, hg. von EDWARD RACZYŃSKI, Poznań, 1845) caput XVIII (undated

In conclusion we may assert that after Grunwald, albeit not because of Grunwald, Vytautas and Jogaila collaborated ever more closely to strengthen their common interests so much so that when reading the extant bulls of Pope Martin V we get the impression of these two rulers as an officially recognised ‘push me-pull you’ – for example, when Jogaila was appointed papal vicar general *in temporalibus* for Poland and Rus’ on April 5 1417, eight days later a bull was issued granting Vytautas the same role in Lithuania and Novgorod and Pskov. The grounds for such collaboration were set long before the great Victory of 1410.

documents), Nr. VI, Coronatio regine Polonie, p. 386. During Lent 1413 Jogaila travelled through Jedlno on his way to Kraków – IOANNIS DLUGOSSII, *Annales seu cronicae incliti regni Poloniae*, liber xi, 1413-1430, hg. von D. TURKOWSKA, Warsaw 2000, p. 13.