

More about Magnus, Count of Wroclaw

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Twentieth-century German medieval researchers saw Piotr Wlostowic, the famous Palatine of the Polish Duke Wladyslaw II the Exile, as a grandson of Magnus¹, the Count (Comes) of Wroclaw. They argued this from two sources, the records of Gallus Anonymus' "Polish Chronicle"², where he suggested the princely position of that Magnus in Silesia, and from the XII. century records about Piotr which gave him the title of a count (or even a prince). According to these researchers, Piotr inherited after Magnus key possessions in Silesia around the "burh" of Wroclaw and Sleza Mount. There was also a generational concordance of Magnus with the grandfather of Piotr. Magnus, as a leading representative of the local Silesian tribal dynasty, had to be the superior of the Silesian quarter of the Polish Piast State. These researchers described the Norman (North Germanic) origin of this dynasty, but the reality seems to be far more complex. One of them, Fedor von Heydebrand und der Lasa, has offered an attractive way to identify the origin of Count Magnus on the basis of the name "Magnus" itself. Its outcome would agree with the main thesis of an article by Tomasz Jurek³, that Count of Wroclaw, Magnus, was a son of the Harold II Godwinson, King of England, who was killed in the Battle of Hastings in 1066. The genetic method will perhaps allow us to verify these hypotheses.

Fedor von Heydebrand und der Lasa, Silesian aristocrat and erudite medieval researcher of the interwar period, has written two articles on Magnus, the Count of Wroclaw. The first one⁴, published in 1926, related mainly to the figure of Palatine Piotr Wlostowic, the other⁵ - from 1940 - concerned the state-legal position of Magnus. These articles were written from the viewpoint typical for Silesian-German patriotism of this time, but it should be honestly said, that there cannot be found the slightest trace of Nazi thinking⁶. Quite the opposite - even in the year 1940 (second article) - one can feel the sympathy of F.von Heydebrand for the Polish Piast-State. This stems to some extent from his belief in "normanistic" theories. These theories derived the first

¹ An introduction to the case of Magnus is in my article: M. Skarbek-Kozietulski, What was the true identity of Magnus, Count of Wroclaw?, Web Portal: Genealogia Mediaevalis Genetica, 2010, <http://medievalgenealogy.republika.pl/>.

² Galli Anonymi Cronica; Gallus Anonymus (Polish variant: Gall Anonim) was the name traditionally given to the anonymous author (fl. 11th-12th centuries) of Gesta Principum Polonorum (Deeds of the Princes of the Poles), composed in Latin about 1115. Gallus is generally regarded as the first historian to have described Poland.

³ T.Jurek, Kim był wrocławski komes Magnus? (Who was Magnus, the Count of Wrocław?), Venerabiles Nobiles et Honesti, Toruń 1997.

⁴ F.von Heydebrand und der Lasa, Peter Wlast und die nordgermanischen Beziehungen der Slaven (Piotr Wlast and North-Germanic relationships of Slavs), in: Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte Schlesiens, B.60, 1926, p. 247-278.

⁵ F. von Heydebrand und der Lasa, Die staatsrechtliche Stellung des "comes Magnus Wratislaviensis nomine" im Jahre 1093 (The State - legal position of "comes Magnus Wratislaviensis nomine" in the year 1093), Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte Schlesiens, Vol 74, 1940, p. 19-68.

⁶ In the second half of the XIX. century, a political dispute began to build up over the Polish-German history of western and northern territories of Poland, and the eastern territories of the German Reich, and in consequence - about the cultural-ethnic character of these lands. These antagonisms have reached extreme dimensions during the Nazi reign in Germany. This was ended with the Allies' decision in 1945 that Poland would receive the disputed territories to the east of the Oder (Odra) and Neisse (Nysa) Rivers. The disputes between Polish and German historians on the medieval history of these territories have, therefore, to be seen on the background of Polish-German political conflicts, which continued until the 90-ies of the XX. century.

Polish dynasty of Piasts and the Polish medieval nobility from Norman conquerors of Polish lands. They also suggested a leading role for Normans in creating the foundations of the Kingdom of Poland. However, after discounting the author's views deriving from this normanistic faith, there remain some insights worthy of consideration.



In the 50s of the XX. century the outstanding Polish medieval researcher, Henryk Lowmianski⁷, ultimately rejected theories about the crucial state-creational role of Normans in Eastern and Central Europe. However, he did not oppose the known claims formulated by Franciszek Piekosiński⁸. According to him the supposed early conquerors of Polish territories, Lechits, were a Western Slavic tribe. This tribe had to come from the lower Elbe River, but earlier it had to be subjected to Scandinavian influences, and especially to the use of Scandinavian rune characters in the coats of arms of some Polish nobility. This non-excluding view on this topic of H.Lowmianski says a lot, and it is a good starting point for genealogical-genetic studies of Polish medieval nobility. Its validity is supported by the numerous Norman ritual burials from the period of the early Piast-State found by archaeologists in Poland⁹. The role of Norman immigrants among the Piast-State establishment was probably significant, but not to the extent suggested by the normanists.

Normanistic concepts are important in the context of this article. Although quite unanimously opposed by medieval researchers in Slavic countries, they found support among German researchers, also in postwar times. This applies particularly to researchers who came from the German population deported after the WWII from territories that today are Polish, Czech and Russian. They have persistently sought Germanic roots in the areas lost by Germany to the east of the rivers Odra and Nysa Luzycka. The works of Fedor von Heydebrand, Eberhard Richtsteig and Karl Eistert illustrate these trends. Reference in those authors is made later in this article. Honesty makes me mention that they have not insisted on the ethnic German origin of Silesian tribes. That would definitely be against historical sources. However, they discerned the Nordic (not necessarily German) origin of the medieval elite of Silesia, and the impact of this origin on the early state-creation processes¹⁰.

It is impossible to prove such views in the light of sources, but it is also difficult to reject them. After all, Count of Wroclaw in 1093 carried the name Magnus that can not be seen as Slavic. Further, the nickname of Piotr Wlostowic - Dunin - means the Dane. We don't know this nickname from contemporary sources. Hence it was natural that these two names were easily associated with Scandinavia, and that these two leading representatives of the Silesian elites attracted the attention of normanists. In addition, the search by normanists for Nordic roots not only among the Silesian medieval elite, but also in the elite of the Kingdom of Poland, was

⁷ H.Lowmiański, *Zagadnienie roli Normanów w genezie państw słowiańskich* (The question of the role of Normans in the genesis of Slavic countries), Warszawa 1957.

⁸ F.Piekosiński, *O dynastycznym szlachte polskiej pochodzeniu* (About the dynastic origins of Polish nobility), Kraków 1888.

⁹ To the history of the Polish-German dispute about the ethnic nature of these burials is the article of Wiebke Rohrer "Wikinger oder Slawen? Die Interpretationsgeschichte frühpiastischer Bestattungen mit Waffenbeigabe" (Vikings or Slavs? History of the interpretation of early-Piast burials containing weapons), in a collection of articles "Mittelalterliche Eliten und Kulturtransfer östlich der Elbe, Universitätsverlag Göttingen, 2009, pp.27-41.

¹⁰ In his article from 1940 F.von Heydebrand expressed the view that in the X. century (until 990) Oder River divided Silesia into two parts: the right bank controlled by Polish Piasts and the left bank subordinated to the Kingdom of Bohemia. The capital of the Czech side had to be the burh of Niemcza. The name of this burh had to come from the word "Niemce" (Slavic equivalent of "Germans"), and had to suggest participation of German medieval elites in ruling this part of Silesia. Counts of Silesia, like Magnus, he perceived as descendants of the dynasty initiated by local Germanic rulers in the burh of Niemcza.

motivated partly by some works of Polish researchers. Many of them saw a Norman origin for some Polish noble clans, including the oldest and most powerful - like Awdaniec, or Labeledz (Labeledz means Swan in Polish). Regarding the origins of the Awdaniec clan there has been for long a consensus that they were Normans¹¹. The roots of the Labeledz clan (Piotr Wlostowic was perceived as its ancestor) were not so clear.

In light of these evidential weaknesses of the German articles recalling them here would be rather pointless if there had not occurred quite unexpectedly a new source of knowledge about medieval nobility. Genetic genealogy entails the opportunity to review concepts of genealogy, and seems to be particularly suited to verification of the normanistic concepts. In the case of Magnus and Piotr, it is about the alleged representatives of noble families, which arrived from lands quite far away of Poland. Therefore, this case is tempting for genetic genealogy due to an expected genetic foreignness of these two individuals to the Polish genetic substrate. The West Slavic area, to which Poland belongs, is dominated by people belonging to the genetic haplogroup R1a. Poland has the highest percentage in Europe of this haplogroup. But the Nordic and Anglo-Saxon area of Europe is associated mainly with the Norman haplogroup I1 - having rather a slight percentage in Poland.

Given this background, genetic tests of descendants of European medieval nobility can contribute a lot. The normanistic genealogic concepts of German researchers can present a handy set of hypotheses - definitely worthy of review.

Piotr, the grandson of Magnus

In the first of his articles F.von Heydebrand concludes that Piotr Wlostowic was a grandson of Magnus, Count of Wroclaw. This view derives from following facts:

- Piotr's succession of his father's and grandfather's possessions in the heart of Silesia at the "burh" of Wroclaw,
- records of his name with the title of a count or prince,
- generational concordance between Magnus and the alleged grandfather of Piotr,
- indicated by the Gallus princely position of Magnus, that could imply he had the key possessions in Silesia.

This thesis - in itself - does not seem to be firmly embedded in historical sources, although its disapproval is also not possible via records. The methodology used by F.von Heydebrand cannot be called worthy of attention. However, his conclusions could look quite different when looked at using genetic considerations. We should first note, however, that Piotr could be a grandson of Magnus though not necessarily in the male lineage. Genetic studies based on Y-DNA code, are adequate only for the male lines, because only such may prove useful in genetic genealogy. About this more later in this article.

Origin of the name Magnus

The fragment of the first article is significant for our considerations. I quote:

"Immediately, it is notable that the name Magnus for this "prince" was typically Nordic in the XI. and XII. centuries. However, in those centuries that name was not present in the Czech and Polish sources apart from its Silesian carrier. A thorough review of the register of the names of German sources gives a similar result - with the exception of Magnus, the Duke of Saxony-Brunswick.

Similarly the name Magnus was not regularly used in Nordic countries from the earliest records. That is clear from the usage in the Heimskringla. In that record the name first appears in

¹¹ M.Skarbek-Kozietulski, What was the true identity of Magnus, Count of Wroclaw?, Web Portal: Genealogiy Mediaevalis Genetica, 2010, <http://medievalgenealogy.republika.pl/> .

Northern countries¹². According to it, in the year 1024 Alfhilda, one of the wives (concubines) of King Olaf the Holy, bore in his absence a son. Skald Sigwat gave that son the name "Magnus." When King Olaf heard about the baby's name, he complained to Sigwat, that the name was very clumsy. Sigwat excused the name by saying he was thinking of Charles the Great, the best of all kings, when he picked it for the child. In this way, he placated the king.

When the baby grew up became known as Magnus the Good, the ruler of Norway in the years 1024 – 1047. His half-brother, Harald Sigurdson (Harald Hardrada – ref.MSK), gave the name to his eldest son, who later became Magnus II, and died in 1069. Magnus II had a brother, Olaf the Silent (d.1093), who named his son Magnus with Ingrida, daughter of the king of the Danes, Swend Ulfson. That Magnus, called Magnus the Barefoot, ruled between 1093 – 1103. His widow Margaretha was daughter of the king of Swedes, Inge Steinkelson, and named her son with Nikolaus, the king of Denmark, Magnus. That son became Magnus the Strong, King of the Danes (d.1134).

Alfhilda, sister of the king of Norway Magnus the Good, married the Duke of Brunswick - Ordulf¹³. Through their son, Magnus, Duke of Saxony, the name Magnus came to Germany¹⁴."

Name Magnus by Wessex-Godwinsons

The idea of using the statements in the Heimskringla, informing about the rather period in which the name "Magnus" was invented, was right. It gave the opportunity to narrow the search for the identity of Magnus, Count of Wroclaw.

Unfortunately, F.von Heydebrand didn't know to use this opportunity. Instead, he derived the name of Count of Wroclaw directly from the said first bearer of this name - Magnus I, the Good, the king of Norway. That king's daughter, Ragnhild, married Hakon Ivarson (d.1062). They had a daughter Sunnifa, who became the wife of the king of Norway, Magnus Haraldson (d.1069). The Count of Wroclaw had to be the younger son of the latter (the elder son was Hakon d.1096). However, historical sources did not mention of such a person as Magnus Magnusson. Rather, that figure was invented by F.von Heydebrand. He did that to support his already stated thesis. In this context, elucidating the kinships of that lineage of Norwegian kings with the Grand Dukes of Russ, which would well fit in turn with the life circumstances of the alleged grandson of Magnus of Wroclaw - Piotr Wlostowic, loses its sense.

In 1960 this thread was again undertaken by Eberhard Richtsteig¹⁵. This author - clearly showing normanistic tendencies - saw in the first Silesian ancestor of Piotr a Norman earl. This earl had to arrive in Poland as a member of the detachment of the Piast conquerors (in E.Richtsteig's account a Norman detachment). He also had to be a vassal of the Piasts and had to become the ruler in Silesia. In addition, the last of this lineage of Silesian earls had to have a daughter, who about the year 1035 married a descendant of a Norman family bearing a "swan" in its coat of arms. E. Richtsteig have seen him as a son of Sven, who in turn was a son of Hakon the Strong. This grandson of Hakon would have had previously to have married Sunnifa, a daughter of Hakon Ivarsson and Ragnhilda (a daughter of Magnus the Good). She would have had to have borne a son Hakon about 1030. That Hakon later became a king of Norway, and probably died shortly afterward. Soon after her death, the widowed dynast went to Silesia in order to marry the daughter of the local earl. She had to have born him around 1037 a son, Magnus. Her husband was the first Silesian carrier of "swan" in his coat of arms. Returning to Magnus, E. Richtsteig

¹² Thule XV, p.213 (Thule, Altnordische Dichtung und Prosa, Band I-XXIII, Verlag Diederichs, Jena 1923, also Darmstadt 1965 – ref.MSK).

¹³ Idem - XVI, p.47.

¹⁴ Compare Lorenz "Genealogisches Handatlas" (the author probably had in mind a book of Ottokar Lorenz's "Handbuch der europäischen Genealogisches Staatengeschichte" Wilhelm Hertz, Berlin, 1895 - ref.MSK).

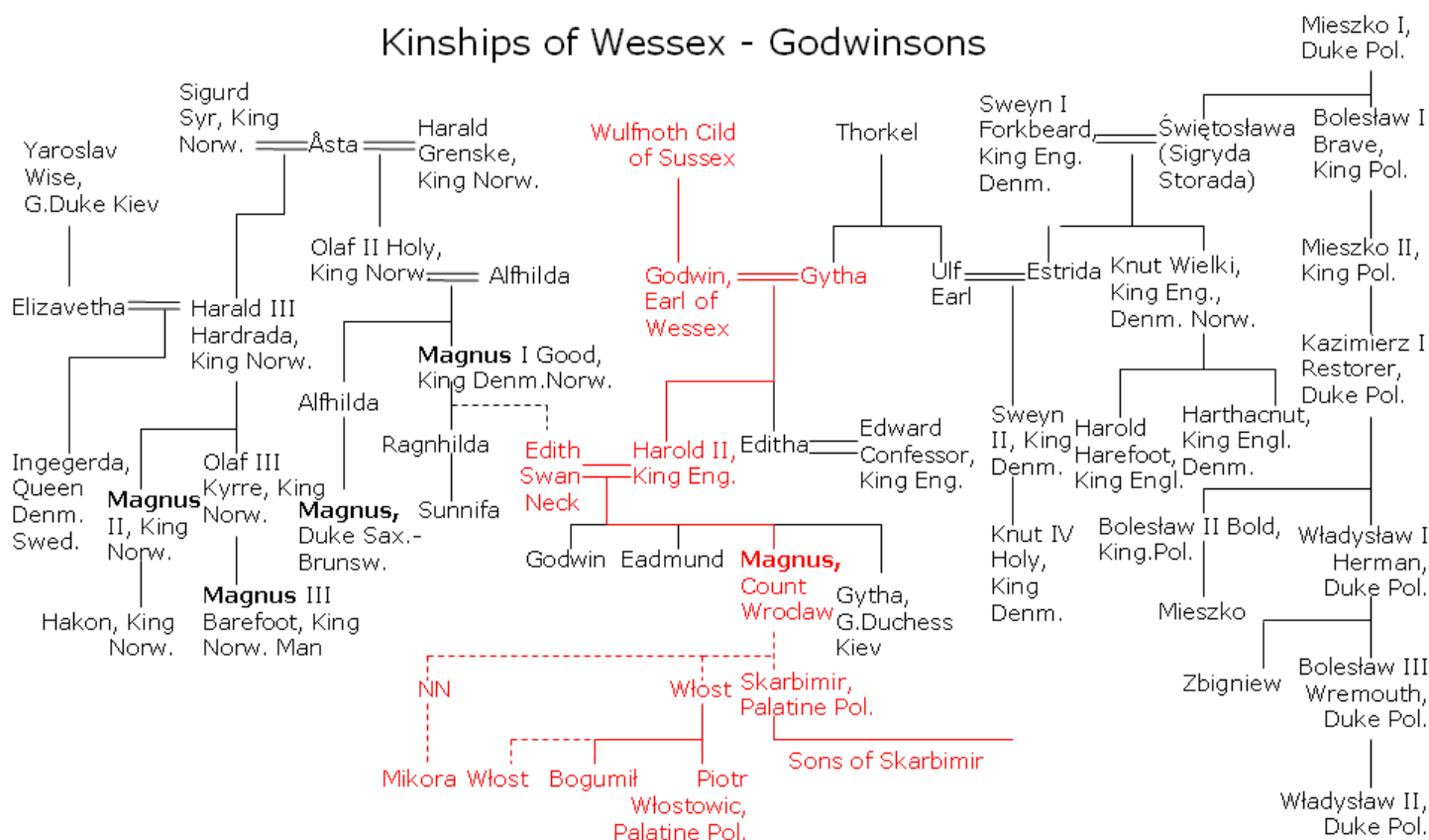
¹⁵ E.Richtsteig, Peter Wlast, Teil I, Archiv für Kirchengeschichte Schlesische, B.18:1960, pp. 6-9.

suggested his marriage in about 1057 to a Ruthenian princess whose name is not known. She was either a daughter of Yaroslav the Wise, the Grand Duke of Kiev, or a daughter of his son, Vladimir II. Her name was unknown, but if her name was Wlostonissa, as it was sometimes been suggested, that could be a name derived from the name of her father. In that case he would have been called Wlost. Around the year 1058 a son was born in this marriage, who was usually called Wlast, but more likely his name was Swietoslaw. This Wlast¹⁶ had to spend his life mainly in Denmark, as a treasurer of king Knut Lewart, and perhaps also the guardian of the latter.

Historical sources do not mention this alleged marriage of Sunifa with this dynast, who would have had to move from Scandinavia to Silesia, and where he would marry into a local dynasty. However, the very notion that Magnus, Count of Wroclaw, would have obtained his commanding position in Silesia as result of the marrying into the Silesian dynasty (or the marrying into it of one of his ancestors), is worth attention. Also, the suggestion, that Magnus might be a descendant in a straight lineage, but not paternal one, of king Magnus I the Good, is worth considering.

In further considerations I accept tacitly an assumption that I am interested only in Magnus, the son of King Harold II of England, as if I had not known the hypothesis of T. Jurek about its identity with Magnus of Wroclaw. More particularly, I would like to trace, how this name came into the lineage of Wessex.

Kinships of Wessex - Godwinsons



In the arguments of F.von Heydebrand and E. Richsteig is notable that they knew nothing about the very early occurrence of the Magnus name among the descendants of Godwin, Earl of Wessex,

¹⁶ An interesting explanation of the name was proposed by Karl Eistert in "Peter und die Wlast Ohlauer Blasiuskirche (Piotr Wlast and the Catholic church of St Blasius in Olawa/Ohlau)", Archiv für Schlesische Kirchengeschichte, Vol 13, 1955, pp. 1-16. He derived it from the name of "Blasius" = "Basilius", in which "B" passes in early Slavic languages into "W", as Basil and Vasil. As an interesting illustration he gave the fact that in Bavaria the day of St Blasius is called "Wlasyttag".

the father of king Harold II of England. This name was carried by the son of Harold. That rivets our attention.

In the family tree of Wessex, shown here, the Harold the Second's lineage is in the middle. The dynastic kinships of king Harold were significant. This one, which provided him with the crown of England, was the marriage of his sister Edith with the king of England, Edward the Confessor. The colligations to the right – the kinship through his grandmother Gytha with Knuth the Great, and through the mother of Knuth - Storada Sigryda – reveals a somewhat more distant kinship with the Polish Piasts. So in the middle and to the right of the tree there is no kinship with the Norwegian dynasty, in which the name Magnus occurred for first time.

But keep in mind that Magnus Haroldson got that name one generation after its first carrier, King Magnus I the Good. That happened almost simultaneously both with the Saxony-Brunswick nephew of the king, and his Norwegian cousin - the son of Harald Hardrada. This fact surprises. It could not happen without any serious connection of kinship.

It seems that the mother of Magnus Haroldson - Eadgyth / Edith, who probably because of her great beauty was called "Swan Neck", and whose origin was not mentioned in historical sources, could be a close relative, or even the daughter of King Magnus the Good. In this proposed understanding, the offspring of Harold would carry blood of the royal dynasty of Norway and of Denmark. It would be a closer kinship with this dynasty than through the Danish kinships on the right side of the tree, in addition providing - by Elizaweta Jaroslawowna, the wife of Harald Hardrada – a kinship with the Ruthenian House of Rurikids.

It seems likely that to the son of Harold Godwinson was given the name "Magnus" around the year 1052 because of political situation of Harold at this time. His putative father in law, or a close relative of his wife - the king of Norway and Denmark, Magnus the Good – had died few years earlier in struggle with fights with Sweyn II - his rival for power. Sweyn II had already strengthened in Denmark, and in Norway another putative relative of his wife - Harald Hardrada. In addition Sweyn and Hardrada were in sharp conflict over the crown of Denmark. At that time, Harold with his father, Godwin, were in exile somewhere outside England. It cannot be excluded that they participated in fights on the side of Hardrada against Sweyn II. Giving the name Magnus to the son of Harold would be logical under those circumstances, as Magnus the Good, a close relative of his wife Edith, was killed by Sweyn's people.

In the years after the Battle of Hastings in 1066 the situation had changed. Harald Hardrada – by this time already a strong competitor for the crown of Harold II of England - was killed at the Battle of Stamford Bridge. A few days later at Hastings Harold II Godwinson has lost his life. His sons might well have called for help from their father's former enemy - Sweyn II of Denmark. Sweyn was both a kinsman and himself strongly interested in eliminating the new king of England, William, and winning the crown of England for himself. A half-century earlier his maternal grandfather, Sweyn I had this crown. To understand this situation, kinships of Sweyn II with Piasts might be helpful. In fact, Polish forces participated in an intervention in York in 1069.

Danish treasure

In his article of 1926 F.von Heydebrand – in a reference to earlier Danish connotations of the name Magnus – stated further:

"In any case, the occurrence of the name Magnus can be exactly genealogically traced in all cases. It would be surprising if its occurrence in Silesia were the single exception.

In this manner, the connections of the son of this Silesian Magnus with Denmark can be considered as proven."

This latter conclusion was in fact rather poorly supported by the cited arguments, especially in the context of creating artificially the identity of Magnus of Wroclaw as the alleged son of Norwegian

Magnus Haroldson. However, F.von Heydebrand needed the connection of Magnus to Denmark to refer to a legend that linked Piotr Wlostowic with a dynastic treasure taken from Denmark:

"He (the father of Piotr - MSK) hid the treasure after a king of Danes was assassinated. His son, Piotr Wlostowic, about the year 1124 brought this treasure to Poland. But around the year 1124 no king of Denmark was murdered. F.von Heydebrand's story rather refers to either the murder of Knuth the Holy in 1087, or to fact that the Polish expedition to Denmark did not take place in the year 1124, but in the 1134. Then this might refer to the murder of the king of Hedeby, Knut Lawart, by his cousins Heinrich Halti and Magnus the Strong in 1131. The latter is more likely."

Turning back to the connections with Denmark suggested by F.von Heydebrand, they would be more probable, if we could identify Magnus of Wroclaw as Magnus, the son of King Harold II, as did that T. Jurek. Moreover, that would be supported by my hypothesis that the mother of Magnus Haroldson could be a close relative of the Danish king. Also the intervention in 1069 in York, which was initiated by the Harold's sons, was executed by Swen II of Denmark. Moreover, the Adam of Bremen's list of the allied forces lists second after the Danes, the Poles. That further strengthens my argument.

The story of the Danish treasure does not interest Polish medieval researchers. They consider it a late clan legend of Dunins. From the standpoint of medieval sources such an approach is probably justified. If we go beyond the methodology which considers only written sources, and we include into our instrumentarium genetic genealogy, then the area under consideration expands strongly.

In my opinion there are three possible events, which could result in the murder of a king, and transferring the treasure to Poland. I will present them in a reverse time order:

1 Thesis of F.von Heydebrand, namely the murder of Knut Lewart in 1134 selected as a canvas of events relating to the Danish treasure, is the least likely. All what we know about Piotr Wlostowic proves rather that his fabulously great fortune was probably acquired during his father's or grandfather's time. The Danish treasure, therefore, was already in the hands of his ancestors - probably even in the XI. century, that is, before Piotr was born. The strong support for the F.von Heydebrand's theory is that the expedition for the treasure is placed in the period after the Gallus' Chronicle was written. This automatically explains why, in the Magnus' context Gallus did not mention Piotr's fabulous wealth. That undoubtedly strongly excited the imagination of his contemporaries. However, by its very nature the Gallus' Chronicle focused exclusively on the rulers of the Piast dynasty. There was no place in it for the deeds of the barons of the kingdom unless in a strong connection with rulers.

2. The death of Knuth the Holy, king of Denmark, in 1087 is quite a strong support for the theory. That event could be logically linked to the hypothetical Magnus Haroldson's stay in exile aftermath the failed intervention in York in the year 1069. As a result of the chaos after the assassination of the king Knuth, the treasure might have fallen into someone's hand, then be hidden somewhere in Denmark. The individual, who hid it, might flee to Poland. Being a relative of the ruler of Poland the new owner of the treasure could get support for an expedition to get the hidden treasure. That person could be Magnus Haroldson, the ruler - Duke of Poland, Wladyslaw Herman. This version does not explain, however, the earlier participation of Poles in the Danish 1069 intervention in York, and this is its essential weakness.

3. The death of King Harold II at Hastings in 1066 is the most likely factual basis of the legend. In this case, it was about a treasure of the king of England hidden by his immediate associates after his defeat at Hastings. The expedition after this hidden treasure would be the Danish expedition (1069) undertaken three years after the death of the king. For unknown reasons Polish troops participated in that. As a result of the interplay of events the treasure probably was first been moved to Denmark, and then to Poland. Therefore, only Denmark would be remembered in the context of the legend. The murdered king of Denmark would replace in the legend the king of England who fell in battle. It is also possible that during the formation of this legend the Danes

were not really distinguished from the English in Poland. Yet shortly before these events Kanuth the Great wore the crowns of both kingdoms.

State position of the Count of Wroclaw

The second of the articles of F.von Heydebrand - that from 1940¹⁷ - was devoted to the state position of the Count of Wroclaw.

Very detailed legal comparative analysis led the author to conclude that the Count of Wroclaw, Magnus, was a head of the Silesian region of the Piast State as the leading representative of the local Silesian tribal dynasty. However, his superior position had to be quite autonomous, because in Silesia there was still a strong memory of the region's independency from the Piast dynasty¹⁸. At the same time, F.von Heydebrand saw in the Polish-Silesian relationships some system-political patterns derived from the Franco-Saxon state-legal arrangements, what he felt derived from the alleged North-Germanic roots both of the local Silesian dynasty, and the Polish Piast dynasty. Some modern medieval researchers¹⁹ agreed with his views, as to how he derived Magnus from the local Silesian dynasty.



Tomasz Jurek rejects the views of F.von Heydebrand about the Silesian origin of Magnus, and he thinks Magnus was son of Harold II, king of England. The T.Jurek thesis seems to be correct, and the very name of Magnus testifies about this correctness, because its appearance in the local Silesian dynasty cannot be rationally explained in the context of the previously presented history of that name. But we can not exclude the possibility that Magnus Haroldson reached the ducal power in Silesia by marrying into the Silesian dynasty, as suggested by E. Richtsteig²⁰, or into Piast dynasty itself²¹. We can also not exclude that his state-legal position was highly unusual - both because of untypical local political conditions in Silesia and Poland, as well as because of his dynastic

¹⁷ F. von Heydebrand und der Lasa, Die staatsrechtliche Stellung des "comes Magnus Wratislaviensis nomine" im Jahre 1093 (The state - legal position of "comes nomine Magnus Wratislaviensis" in the year 1093), Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte Schlesiens, Vol 74, 1940, pp. 19-68.

¹⁸ F.von Heydebrand rejected the identity of the Magnus, Count of Wroclaw in the year 1093, with Magnus, Count of Mazovia, mentioned by Gallus as being in the year 1109. The transfer of a local dynast to another region - now an integral part of the Piast State, and unlike Silesia, no longer an autonomous region, was in contradiction to the main thesis asserted by him. In the light of such transfer Magnus seemed to be only a ducal official. Therefore, F.von Heydebrand excluded, that in the case of Mazovia Gallus had in mind the same Magnus. But that was inconsistent, because in the previous article about Piotr Wlostowic he claimed that at times of the Count of Wroclaw the name Magnus was extremely rare - even in the Holy Empire, let alone in Poland.

¹⁹ M.Cetwiński, Rycerstwo Śląskie do końca XIII wieku (Knights of Silesia until the end of the XIII. century), Pochodzenie — Gospodarka - Polityka, PWTN, Wroclaw 1980.

²⁰ Richtsteig E., Peter Wlast, Teil I, Archiv für Schlesische Kirchengeschichte, t 18:1960, pp. 6-9.

²¹ In the previous paper I have taken into account the possibility that either Magnus married a sister of Boleslaw II the Bold (and of Wladyslaw I Herman), or the daughter of Swen II the Danish could be a sister of the still never properly identified wife of Boleslaw the Bold.

kinships. Unfortunately, in his very thorough historical and legal analysis F.von Heydenbrand relied solely on comparisons with known analogies of this period with other European medieval countries. They were not necessarily adequate to explain the case of Magnus.

Origin of the Labeledz – Dunin clan

Regarding the background given above, it is useful to stress the differences of views among medieval researchers on the origin of the Labeledz (Eng. Swan) clan. The descent of this clan from Piotr Włostowic as an ancestor is not a certainty. Nor is everyone certain, that the Labeledz clan and the Dunin family had the same origin, nor the Dunin branches had the same paternal ancestor.

Marjan Friedberg²² in the famous pre-war monograph of the Labeledz clan opted for their rather Danish origin. He has accepted the arrival of their ancestor in Poland in the X. century. He also noted the ducal grants of the first Silesian possessions of Piotr's grandfather - in the times of the duke Kazimierz the Restorer (the 5th decade of the XI century). However, he did not stated explicitly, when Skrzynsk estates in Little Poland were acquired by the clan. However, many years after writing this monograph - after the World War II – he inclined to see the native Polish origin of Piotr²³.

Teresa Kiersnowska²⁴ has written an article on archaeological excavations in the XI. century cemeteries in Konskie and Zukow near Skrzynsk. They were historically linked to the Labeledz-Dunin clan. She has argued for their origin from Ruthenian Varangians, and expressed some doubts about the fabulous size of the Silesian possessions of Piotr. She has argued that the Skrzynsk possessions were from the very beginning the main property of his ancestors. They had to arrive in Poland as the military support to the duke of Poland, Kazimierz the Restorer by his brother-in-law, the Grand Duke of Kiev, Yaroslav the Wise, in order to recover the rebellious Mazovia. Later they would participate in the recovery of Silesia from the Czechs. That could explain how they got possessions near Wroclaw and Sobotka. Her arguments about the Ruthenian-Varangian origin of the lineage are supported by the fact that as many as five topographical names in the territory of Skrzynsk-Opoczno refer to Russ.

In addition, Marek Cetwinski²⁵ tied Piotr Włostowic to Kiev Russ.

Janusz Bieniak²⁶ supported the theory of the local Polish origin of Piotr Włostowic and of the Labeledz clan. However, he considered also it possible that the origin of Piotr was from the "aborted" Czech dukes in the first half of the XI. century. I will discuss his arguments in more detail, because they give a wider view of the early genealogy of this clan, which should be reflected in genetic tests.

J. Bieniak came to the conclusion that the Labeledz clan, which inherited possessions mainly around Skrzynno, came from the descendants of Wszebor – the eldest son of Piotr. This lineage also inherited the Piotr's possessions in Kujavia. From the Wszebor's descendants J. Bieniak derives also "the lords on Wierzbica". He does that regardless of his views on their later coats of arms²⁷.

²² M.Friedberg, *Ród Łabędziów w wiekach średnich* (The Labeledz clan the Middle Ages), in: *Rocznik Towarzystwa Heraldycznego we Lwowie*, T.VII, Rocznik 1924-1925, Kraków 1926, pp.1-100.

²³ M.Friedberg, *Kultura polska a niemiecka* (Polish and German culture), T.1, Poznań 1946, p. 133.

²⁴ T.Kiersnowska, *Jeszcze o Piotrze Włostowicu i pochodzeniu rodu Łabędziów* (More about Piotr Włostowic and the origin of the Łabędź clan), in: *Spółeczeństwo Polski Średniowiecznej*, T.9, Warszawa 2001, pp.55-64.

²⁵ M.Cetwiński, *Piotr Włostowic czy Piotr Rusin* (Piotr Włostowic or Piotr the Ruthenian), „Sobótka”, T.XXIX, 1974, pp.429-443.

²⁶ J.Bieniak, *Polska elita polityczna XII wieku*, Cz.III – Arbitrzy książąt – krąg rodzinny Piotra Włostowica (Polish political elite of the XII. century, Part III – The arbiters of dukes – the family circle of Piotr Włostowic), in: *Spółeczeństwo Polski Średniowiecznej*, T.IV, Warszawa 1990, p.13.

²⁷ In addition to identifying them as a branch of the Labeledz clan, they were sometimes considered to be also a branch of the Gozdawa clan, or descendants of Czech immigrants, from whom the Rawicz clan was derived.

In addition to Wszebor, Piotr also had a son Swietoslaw. The youngest son – Idzi (Giles), probably died early and heirless. Swietoslaw, bearing the middle name of Konstantyn, co-founder with his mother of the church of Holy Mary on Sand (in Wrocław), was count palatine of the younger sons of Boleslaw III at the end of their war against their elder stepbrother Wladislaw II. Even in the XIII. century, descendants of Swietoslaw held the highest offices in Little Poland, and inherited the Little-Polish and Silesian possessions after Piotr - but we do not know which exactly. One of their lineages was holding the Ksiaz possessions in Little Poland, probably acquired later.

Piotr also had two brothers, Boguslaw and Wlost. The latter – the benefactor of the Wrocław Cathedral and the Monastery in Trzemeszno - was perhaps a cousin of Piotr. Wlost can be seen as an ancestor of the Kujavian lineages. Boguslaw, whose descendants inherited mainly in Silesia, was presumably an ancestor of the chronicler Wincenty Kadlubek (1161 – 1223). In addition there was comes Mikora, cousin of Piotr and a leader of the Cracow-Silesian uprising against Vladislav II. Mikora was rather childless.

Although medieval researchers rejected it, it is worth considering the ideas of August Mosbach²⁸. He considered the descent of the Labeledz clan from a German family of Donins. Donins took their name from the castle Dohna near Pirna on the Elbe river (Upper Saxony). Some of them moved from there to Poland and Bohemia. According to A.Mosbach, the name Dunin, corrupted to Dohnin, went from them to some branches of the Labeledz clan.

Besides, there is the issue of the Zarembo clan. Jan Dlugosz²⁹, Polish chronicler and genealogist of the XV century, has attributed their coat of arms to a fictitious Bishop of Wrocław called Magnus (1141-1146). His view is probably based on the Zarembo clan's legend. Bartosz Paprocki³⁰, Polish genealogist of the XVI century, has used this fact to infer the Zarembo origin from Count Magnus of Wrocław, mentioned by Gallus Anonymus. T. Jurek³¹ did not share these ideas. However, even already M. Friedberg³² in his monograph on the Labeledz clan noticed a strange lack of Labeledz branches in Silesia in times after Piotr Wlostowic. Therefore, it is possible that the Silesian descendants of this family have never joined the later formed heraldic clan of Labeledz. So perhaps, they already earlier had dissipated among families, which later formed other heraldic clans. The ancestral roots of the Zarembo clan did not exist before the thirteenth century, but their ancestral memory could accurately locate ancestors in the land of Wrocław, and could be well able to keep the name of their ancestor called Magnus.

M. Friedberg took also into account the possibility that after the XII. century - in the situation of advancing Germanizing Silesia and the early seizure of the region by Czechs - the remaining Silesian Labeledz branches penetrated into the powerful families of Czech lords on Swamberk (having also a swan in their coat of arms), and moved to a new homeland.

Labeledz versus Awdaniec clan

In the previous article I offered the hypothesis that Magnus was father of Skarbimir, the famous palatine of Boleslaw III the Wrymouth. Therefore the role of the ancestor of the powerful Awdaniec clan – in my opinion - should be traced from the Skarbimir's alleged father, Magnus.

We have to be aware that late-medieval heraldic clans (using the same coat of arms) probably were not simultaneously genealogical families (that means having the same male or sword side

²⁸ A.Mosbach, Piotr syn Włodzimierza, sławny dostojnik polski wieku XII (Piotr, son of Włodzimierz, famous Polish dignitary of the XII. century), 1865.

²⁹ J.Długosz, Annales, Ks.V, p.16.

³⁰ B.Paprocki, Herby Rycerstwa Polskiego (Coats of arms of Polish knights), ed. K.Turowski, Kraków 1858, p.677.

³¹ T.Jurek, Kim był wrocławski komes Magnus? (Who was Magnus, the Count of Wrocław?), Venerabiles Nobiles et Honesti, Toruń 1997.

³² M.Friedberg, Ród Łąbodziów w wiekach średnich (The Labeledz clan in the Middle Ages), in: Rocznik Towarzystwa Heraldycznego we Lwowie, T.VII, Rocznik 1924-1925, Kraków 1926, pp.1-100.

ancestor). Heraldic clans began to form much later, at least a century after Magnus. During his time, it is more appropriate to consider families and kin groups, cemented by relationships of both a paternal and a maternal character. Only much later, did heraldic clans emerge from branches of these families. They stood to battles under common clan banners.

Therefore, it can be expected that not one heraldic clan, but probably many branches of many different heraldic clans, stem from one important personality of the pre-heraldic period. In this way, every bigger heraldic clan consisted of branches deriving on the male or sword side from different dignitaries of the pre-heraldic times.

Therefore, for the Labeledz clan the possibility arises that they came from the same Count Magnus as the Awdaniec clan. Several observations support this hypothesis.

As noted by J. Bieniak³³ – the Kujavian region was dominated by both the offspring of Skarbimir and Piotr Włostowic. After the Duke Zbigniew has lost his Kujavian land, significant possessions there were awarded to both Skarbimir and the father of Piotr, two dignitaries particularly close to Boleslaw the Wrymouth. If my hypothesis about the filiation Magnus-Skarbimir proves to be true, as is also the thesis of F.von Heydebrand, that Piotr was a grandson of the same Magnus, then Skarbimir and the father of Piotr were brothers. In that case, either they would receive the Kujavian possessions jointly, or their father Magnus received them all – perhaps awarded for a spectacular victory over Pomeranian troops in 1109, as the chronicler Gallus mentioned.

The Skrzynsk possessions of the Labeledz branches were also interwoven with quite a number of the old possessions of Awdaniec around the burh of Radom³⁴. There, from immemorial times a number of Skarbek lineages inherited estates. Those in turn were close to Magnuszew on the Vistula River, associated with Magnus as the Count of Mazovia. This whole chain of possessions from Opoczno and Końskie up to Vistula River, similarly the possessions in Kujavia, could be land grants received yet by Magnus, but scattered among many of his descendants, who much later found themselves in different heraldic clans.

In addition, in Silesia we can notice some manifestations of Piotr's possessions neighboring with the estates of Awdaniec, which the fact corresponds to the previously mentioned observation of M. Friedberg³⁵ of the lack of Labeledz families in Silesia in times after Piotr Włostowic. K. Eistert has associated a number of old estates in the area of Olawa near Wrocław with the land grants in favor of the Church made by Piotr, among others the foundation of the church of Sw. Blazej (St Blasius) in Olawa. It is worth noting that north of Olawa lay two possessions, which at least from the XIV. century were in hands of the Wrocław patrician branch of the Awdaniec lineage³⁶. One of them was the village Jenkowice (German Jenkwitz), near Olesnica, which Skarbeks von Jenkwitz originated from (after moving to Little Poland in the XVI. century they were called Skarbeks Ankwicz³⁷). The second possession was the village Posadowice / Posadowa (German Postelwitz), which was inherited by the noble family of Posadowski von Postelwitz³⁸, which primarily also used the ancestral nickname Skarbek, and also originally came from Jenkowice. These were undoubtedly two branches of the same family, because both were used to sign themselves von

³³ J.Bieniak, *Polska elita polityczna XII wieku, Cz.III – Arbitrzy książąt – krąg rodzinny Piotra Włostowica* (Polish political elite of the XII. Century, Part III – The arbiters of dukes – the family circle of Piotr Włostowic), in: *Spółczesność Polski Średniowiecznej*, T.IV, Warszawa 1990, p.46.

³⁴ W.Semkowicz, *Ród Awdanów w wiekach średnich* (The Awdaniec clan in the Middle Ages), Poznań 1920, pp.195-201

³⁵ M.Friedberg, *Ród Łabędziów w wiekach średnich* (The Labeledz clan in the Middle Ages), in: *Rocznik Towarzystwa Heraldycznego we Lwowie*, T.VII, Rocznik 1924-1925, Kraków 1926, pp.1-100.

³⁶ W.Semkowicz, *Ród Awdanów w wiekach średnich* (The Awdaniec clan in the Middle Ages), Poznań 1920, pp.134-135.

³⁷ A.Boniecki, *Herbarz Polski*, T.1, p.42, Warszawa 1899-1913.

³⁸ E.H.Kneschke, *Deutsches Adels-Lexicon*, T.VII, Leipzig 1867, pp.221-222.

Postelwitz, and used the surname Skarbek. Both also inherited the nearby estate Lampersdorf, and used the same Awdaniec (Habdank) coat of arms³⁹.

Not too far from the properties von Jenkwitz and von Posadowskis were possessions which had been inherited since the Middle Ages by two other families with the Awdaniec coat of arms. Both were near the border with the Kingdom of Poland. First, the family Packisch (Backisch) von Festenberg (Polish: Twardogóra)^{40 41}. Admittedly in recent centuries that family had a "chamois" in the coat of arms. However, older records recall that in earlier centuries Packisch used to seal with a coat of arms very close to Awdaniec. The medieval ancestors of Packisch carried names undoubtedly typical for the Awdaniec clan. The second was the family Salawa von Radow⁴² (now Radawie in Poland - north-east from the city of Opole in Silesia). The area close to Radawia does not lack villages with names indicating their very early inheritance by the Awdaniec clan.

Genetic references

All the genealogical topics discussed above should, given its usefulness, be verified by using the methods of genetic genealogy, insofar as the descendants of these lineages on the sword side have survived until now. A wider introduction to the genetic genealogy I did in my previous article⁴³, to which I redirect readers interested in the basics of this field.

The intention of this publication was to present the genealogical knowledge about the family started by Magnus, Count of Wroclaw, derived from earlier medieval studies, and reconstructed according to the concept of F.von Heydebrand, deriving Piotr Wlostowic from Magnus. In such a case the genetic method can be used for verification and possible modification of that theory.

In fact, medieval research bases its reasoning always on the same set of old written sources, which are analyzed with ever greater subtlety. This area, however, collides with a severe lack of any possibility to obtain additional old sources. If such would suddenly appear, then in the face of fragmental character of existing sources about medieval times a number of already proven theories would probably collapse. However, a similar effect should be expected as a result of the development of the genetic genealogy, which has particularly a great chance to shake genealogical findings about medieval times. This will bring into view entirely new facts, to which there was no access in times of great disputes on genealogies of medieval lineages. There was not even any awareness that knowledge generated by genetic genealogy might someday become available.

A recent Y-DNA test result of a genealogically documented descendant of the Dunin-Wąsowicz family – from the Wszebor branch in the cited classification of J. Bieniak – has placed him in the Slavic haplogroup R1a.

There is an urgent need for further genetic tests of families deriving from both the Wszebor branch and the Swietoslaw branch, as well as families who could come from the lords on Wierzbica. Also, tests of the descendants of lords on Swamberk or Dohna could further illuminate the Labeledz genealogy, as well as the tests of descendants of the Zarembo clan.

We can also expect that the family group of Dunins/Labeledz, holding Skrzynno possessions, will not be haplotypically homogeneous. This may be a kinship group related with each other both on the paternal and the maternal sides. This was indicated by the interpreted by Teresa

³⁹ From the standpoint of the genetic method, it is important that the latter noble family von Posadowsky-Wehner survived to our times in a male lineage. Skarbeks Ankicz de Poslawice in Little Poland probably extincted in the XX. century.

⁴⁰ W.Semkowicz, Ród Awdańców w wiekach średnich, Poznań 1920, p.124.

⁴¹ E.H.Kneschke, Deutsches Adels-Lexicon, T.III, Leipzig 1861, pp.236-237.

⁴² W.Semkowicz, Ród Awdańców w wiekach średnich, Poznań 1920, p.137.

⁴³ M. Skarbek-Kozietulski, What was the true identity of Magnus, Count of Wroclaw?, Web Portal: Genealogia Mediaevalis Genetica, 2010, <http://medievalgenealogy.republika.pl/> .

Kiersnowska⁴⁴ archeological excavations of the cemetery in Opoczno (second half of the XI. century). Those were undoubtedly associated with the Dunins' territory around Skrzynno. In the center of the cemetery were discovered five elite graves of armed warriors-riders that create a consciously planned and exposed lords' necropolis, surrounded by numerous tombs of sub-ordered warriors. At least three burials were made in the Norman rite, using stone casing and paving covering the graves, while two of them – in the Slavic rite rather than Norman.

The three burials of the Norman rite give much food for thought. In light of my previous article one would expect that among the Labeledz lineages of Skrzynno will show representatives of Norman subclades I1-ASP and I1-T2, already present among genetically tested descendants of the Awdaniec clan. Their appearance would strengthen the suspicion that precisely the carriers of one of these subclades are descendants of Magnus through male lineages - although not necessarily of Piotr Wlostowic. He could be a grandson of Magnus through the female lineage. This in turn would make probable the possibility that Skarbimir was uncle of Piotr Wlostowic.

⁴⁴ T.Kiersnowska, Jeszcze o Piotrze Włostowicu i pochodzeniu rodu Łabędziów (More about Piotr Wlostowic and the origin of the Łabędź clan), in: Społeczeństwo Polski Średniowiecznej, T.9, Warszawa 2001, pp.55-64.