

MATTHIAS CORVINUS' REIGN IN SILESIA AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Radek Fukala

FUKALA, Radek: *Matthias Corvinus' Reign in Silesia and its Consequences*

The Hungarian and Bohemian king, Matthias Corvinus, was politically skillful and significant doer in Silesia. His strong reign and his steps resulting in the country's centralization, naturally, eventually disappointed many Silesian dukes and estates. But, with a lapse of time, Corvinus' integration of Silesian territory and the establishment of the estates' and duchy institutions throughout the country proved to be a progressive element from political and military as well as economic respects. It is undoubted that his reign represented a significant stage in the development of the incorporated lands of the Bohemian Crown.

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Contact:

Univerzita Hradec Králové, Česká republika; radek.fukala@uhk.cz

In both Silesia and Bohemia, the end of the Luxemburg reign resulted in the division of power into two spheres. In fact, the split of power in the lands of the Bohemian Crown fatally foreshadowed the further developments as well as the power aspirations of the Jagiello dynasty within Central Europe. After that, it was just a matter of time until a member of the dynasty ascended to the Bohemian throne. Hand in hand with the maintaining of close contacts of the pro-Polish side with the Jagiello royal court in the Czech lands, there was an increase in the efforts of many Silesian Piasts to solve their hereditary disputes and other selfish interests via local conflicts. This was one of the aspects that markedly reflected the specific situation caused by the existence of the powerful city of Wrocław which in no way planned to withdraw from its achieved positions. In addition, the Silesian administrative

and economic centre felt even more autonomous and more independent from the Bohemian ruler after the death of the Emperor Sigismund of Luxemburg.¹

The alternative of a Bohemian ruler originating from the Jagiellos was opposed by those who sided with the interests of Albrecht II of Austria. Sigismund's son-in-law was quick to strengthen his position in Hungary, which provided him a certain precondition to also court the Bohemian Crown. His most dangerous rival was Kazimierz Jagiello (Casimir IV of Poland) who was elected by his partisans in the Bohemian city of Mělník in late May 1438. At that moment, the minds of some politicians again recalled the reminiscent idea of a Bohemian-Polish union. If the Habsburg was to maintain his position as the Bohemian king on a permanent basis, he had to eliminate the power of his competitor in the Czech lands. If he wanted to guarantee himself the position of Bohemian king, he first had to remove all points of friction in Silesia – a country which was taken at face value in both camps.²

The Cracow court did not falter this time and resolutely underwent a new round in the fight for the Bohemian Crown. Two waves of Polish troops invaded Silesia in order to allow Kazimierz to take the initiative in Bohemia. During the Polish push, the Opole Dukes, Bernard of Falkenberg (Niemodlin), John I, Nicholas I, Boleslaw V (called the Heretic) and, last but not least, the Premyslide Duke Wenceslas of Opava and Racibórz on the one hand and the Jagiellos on the other agreed in writing, at an encampment near Strzelce on 6 October 1438, to respect Polish claims to the Bohemian throne. A similar response arrived from the city of Brzeg. The Polish campaign in Silesia was, however, halted by the diversionary invasion of Poland by the Hungarian army. The Jagiellos resigned from the critical situation at home and eventually withdrew from the lands of the Bohemian Crown, shifting their main battlefield to the Polish territory. Albrecht of Austria responded to Silesian calls for help by giving up the hopeless siege of the city of Tábor and rather demonstratively approaching Wrocław with his army to – solemnly and more or less effortlessly – accept the tribute as the Bohemian ruler in the Silesian capital. He moreover signed the offered armistice with Poland there and appointed the Brandenburg Margrave, Albrecht Achilles, to the office of Silesian district administrator. After his successful sojourn

¹ TAKÁCS, I. (ed.): *Sigismundus Rex et Imperator. Kunst und Kultur zur Zeit Sigismunds von Luxemburg 1387–1437. Ausstellungskatalog*. Budapest-Luxemburg 2006; MÁLYUSZ, E.: *Kaiser Sigismund in Ungarn 1387–1437*. Budapest 1990; BAUM, W.: *Kaiser Sigismund, Hus, Konstanz und Türkenkriege*. Graz 1993; KAVKA, F.: *Poslední Lucemburk na českém trůně. Králem uprostřed revoluce*. Praha 1998.

² Many inspiring thoughts to further contemplate this can be found in BAZYLOW, L.: *Śląsk a Czechy w II połowie XV wieku*. Sobótka 2, 1947, pp. 110–140 (where also see for more bibliography); PIOTROWICZ, K.: *Plany rewindykacji Śląska przez Polskę pod koniec średniowiecza*. Katowice 1936, p. 45 nn.; HECK, R.: *Tabor a kandydatura Jagiellońska w Czechach. 1438–1444*. Wrocław 1964; URBÁNEK, R.: *Konec Ladislava Pohrobka*. Praha 1924.

to Wrocław, Albrecht of Austria moved his forces to the Hungarian battlefield against the Turks – where he unfortunately died of dysentery on 27 October 1439. His involuntary departure from the Bohemian political scene once more gave the Jagiello diplomacy the chance to occupy one of the most significant Central-European thrones.³

Neither the election of Ladislaus V the Posthumous for the Bohemian king nor the tribute paid to the recently crowned ruler by the Silesian estates changed anything about the fact that a large part of Silesian political representation saw its independence and improvement of its economic, as well as social, position in its perspective liaison with the court of the Polish ruler. Under the protection of the Polish King, Kazimierz IV of Jagiello, the optimum solution of power and political matters was especially sought by dukes Bolesław II of Cieszyn († 1452), Nicholas V of Krnov and Racibórz († 1452) and the Opole Bernard of Falkenberg († 1455), Bolesław V, called the Heretic (or Wołoszek in Polish; † 1460), and Nicholas I († 1476).⁴

The policy of George of Poděbrady as administrator of the Bohemian lands was always preferential to the wealthy and strategically significant Silesia. In order to forestall Polish aspirations, George tried to support and fortify his position in the northern part of the Bohemian state via attempts to betroth his daughter Zdena († 1510) to Frederick I of Legnica († 1488). But Frederick chose instead to marry Zdena's step-sister, Ludmila († 1503), sometime later. The auspicious marriages to the Silesian Piasts and the deft manoeuvring to acquire Silesian properties were solely a prelude to the attempts to push the Polish king, along with other opponents, to the proper. In the course of George's reign, the Poděbrads (or the Kunštáts respectively) succeeded in transforming the Kłodzko County and the Münsterberg Duchy (including the important Żąbkowice Śląskie) into permanent family domains. Apart from the Piasts and the Premyslids, yet another regal line in the Silesian political arena – the dukes of Münsterberg – came to influence the course of events in the county for quite a long span of time.⁵

³ On the overall characteristics of the period, see: URBÁNEK, R.: *Věk poděbradský. České dějiny III/1*. Praha 1915 (where also see for quotes on earlier literature and primary editions of sources). On the personality of Margrave Albrecht Achilles and the Hohenzollern aspirations in Silesia, cf. FUKALA, R.: *Hohenzollernové v evropské politice 16. století. Mezi Ansbachem, Krnovem a Královcem (1523–1603)*. Praha 2005, p. 9 nn. (where also see for more German bibliography).

⁴ BOGUCA, M.: *Kazimierz Jagiellończyk i jego czasy*. Warszawa 1998, s. 103–104, who also states the Oświęcim Piast dukes as the supporters of Jagiello policy.

⁵ GŁOGOWSKI, S.: *Potomci krále Jiřího z Poděbrad. Genealogie knížat z Minstrberka*. Ostrava 1989; *Genealogia Podiebradów*. Gliwice 1997; for more on this, cf. edition HAAS, A. (ed.): *Archiv koruny České 6. Katalog listin z let 1438–1526*, Praha 1958; FELCMAN, O. – FUKALA, R. (eds.): *Poděbradové. Rod českomoravských pánů, kladských hrabat a slezských knížat*. Praha 2008.

The decision of George of Poděbrady to take consistent steps in the Oder territory not only departed from the interests of power but also of economy, which were mainly based on the Wrocław merchants' long-distance trade. The self-confident Wrocław with its almost fanatically Catholic patriarchy was a thorn in the side, first of Ladislaus the Posthumous and later, the Poděbrad. Libelling the royal majesty as well as the hostile measures assumed by the Silesian metropolis ignited the fight with the Bohemian king which, except for minor lulls, dragged on for several years. The punitive expeditions against Wrocław, the marriage policy and moreover, the gain of the Münsterberg Duchy as well as, soon afterward, of the large part of the Opava Duchy for George's own heirs; all this was only the first step taken by George of Poděbrady that was aimed at a deeper and much more perceptible interference in the power situation of Silesia where he was going to build his forefront supported by a reliable personnel cast.

The influential positions in Silesia were to be occupied by men who were unconditionally devoted to the king not only in order to create a firm background for him there, but also to support his dynastic policy and his European peace projects, which were basically aimed at isolating the power of the pope.⁶

In this stage, George of Poděbrady – still as the substitute for Ladislaus the Posthumous – realized the royal marriage of Kazimierz of Jagiello to Elisabeth von Habsburg († 1505), in which also Henry IV of Rožmberk († 1457) was engaged and whose successful diplomatic negotiation was awarded by the post of the royal district administrator. Henry's brother, John II († 1472), then betrothed the Piast Duchess Anne of Głogów († 1483) and his second brother, Jodocus († 1467), became the Wrocław bishop in 1456.⁷ By the above-mentioned moves and diplomatic confrontations, Poděbrad tied Silesia closer to Prague than to Cracow. Appointing Jodocus of Rožmberk to the bishopric see smoothed the anti-Bohemian trend of the Silesian clergy and eased the control over it. Rožmberk himself in his position tried to hold some kind of golden mean in the conflicts of Wrocław and its chapter with the Utraquist George of Poděbrady. The sermons of the charismatic John Capistran (Giovanni da Capestrano) in their results provoked both the Catholic citizens of Wrocław and the city patriciate to deranged and spiteful behaviour against Poděbrad. Capistran, the passionate missionary and Hussite adversary, escalated the situation in the Silesian metropolis to such an extent that he had to be admonished through the Wrocław bishop.

⁶ URBÁNEK, R.: *Věk poděbradský IV. Čechy za kralování Jiříka z Poděbrad. Léta 1460–1464*. České dějiny III/4. Praha 1962, pp. 141–159; for additional information, see POŠVÁŘ, J.: *Poznámky k politickému postavení Slezska v III. čtvrtině 15. století*. Slezský sborník 58, 1960, p. 48.

⁷ On this, see, most recently, KUBÍKOVÁ, A.: *Oldřich II. z Rožmberka*. České Budějovice 2004, pp. 133–134.

The deeply embedded hatred of the Bohemian Hussite movement made the Wrocław inhabitants – as the only ones in the whole of Silesia – to refuse to recognize the Prague ruler as the valid king. With the support of the papal anti-Hussite diplomacy, they not only undermined the international position of the Bohemian state but also illegitimately offered the Bohemian crown to other candidates. Their aim was to turn their city into a new royal residence.⁸

However, the position of the Bohemian Utraquist king in Silesia acquired weight and significance even under these circumstances. The Polish diplomacy ignored the appeals arriving from Wrocław and properly did not break the Głogów treaty of 1462.⁹

This almost obscure tangle of events and religious and political tension, which was apparent in Silesia at all sides, were heavily influenced by the ambitious and vigorous Hungarian ruler Matthias Corvinus. The chain of military campaigns and local clashes had an almost apocalyptic impact on Silesia, which was devastated by Hussite wars in the past decades. The Bohemian-Hungarian fights affected the western parts of Upper Silesia and the Moravian-Silesian borderline where many local villages perished.¹⁰ Pope Paul II did not hesitate to pronounce an anathema against George of Poděbrady, and Wrocław, along with Bishop Jodocus, joined the Zelená Hora (Green Mountain) union. Under this constellation, Poděbrad's Silesian supporters won with Münsterberg over the local Catholic alliance and the Polish king arranged armistice on 19 November 1467. The man of the golden mean, Bishop Jodocus of Rožmberk, however, did not participate in the peaceful settlement – he died before Christmas of the same year. The Silesians ruthlessly declared the recently closed armistice void in no time and burnt Münsterberg down in May 1468.

The Silesian actions were coordinated with the military campaign of Matthias Corvinus in Moravia. Only in the Upper-Silesian parts of the country, Poděbrad's side was consistently defended by the obdurate Opava District Administrator Bernard Bírka of Násile, who was able to suppress the resistance activities of the Hungarian partizans. Corvinus campaign was strongly supported by the newly elected Wrocław Bishop Rudolf of Rüdesheim (1468–1482) who opened yet another front in Silesia with his army of 8,000 thousand soldiers; it was, however, blocked by Poděbrad's son Henry I of Münsterberg the Elder († 1498). Conrad IX the Black of Oleśnica († 1471) and Przemysław of Cieszyn

⁸ The most recent overview of the religious conditions in Silesia was elaborated on by DRABINA, J.: *Kontakty Wrocławia z Rzymem w latach 1409–1517*. Wrocław 1981; *tyż: Rola argumentacji religijnej w walce politycznej w późnośrednowiecznym Wrocławiu*. Kraków 1984.

⁹ HECK, R.: *Zjazd głogowski w roku 1462*. Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, Historia 8, Wrocław – Warszawa 1962; *tyż: Czeski plan związku władców europejskich z lat 1462–1464 a Polska*. In: MALECZYŃSKI, K. a kol.: *Studia z dziejów Polskich i Czechosłowackich. T. I*. Wrocław 1960, s. 155–182, pp. 155–182.

¹⁰ TUREK, A. – JISL, L.: *Ostravsko za česko-uherské války ve světle písemných pramenů i archeologických nálezů*. Časopis Slezského muzea, B – vědy historické 3, 1953, pp. 1–24.

(† 1477) sided with him. Although the anti-Hussite party proclaimed Matthias Corvinus the Bohemian anti-king in the Bohemian lands, the Silesian Catholic league could not prove itself with any noticeable military successes. Its war in Silesia arrived at a deadlock and only brought more disillusion.¹¹

It was clear to King George of Poděbrady that the necessary point of departure was to resuscitate the Bohemian-Polish alliance. It, however, was not easy to tie Poland to the Bohemian “*national*” monarchy, since George of Poděbrady had to resign his family interests,¹² offering the Bohemian throne to the son of the Polish king as his successor in return for his collaboration. The Jagiellonian Central-European political strategy in the long run calculated that, as a consequence, giving up the Bohemian crown would only benefit its interests, especially after the Toruń peace treaty closed with the order of the German Knights (19 October 1466), and would open the way towards strengthening the position of the dynasty, Lithuanian by origin, on the map of Central and Eastern Europe.¹³

The web of new relations caused disillusionment among the Silesian politicians. Corvinus stood on the defence and Wrocław experienced the bitter fruit of its anti-Bohemian and anti-Hussite activities: there was a danger that any confrontation with the prepared Bohemian-Polish alliance would inevitably result in the fall of the Hungarian king. Poděbrad's death in March 1471, however, pushed the Jagiellonian diplomacy into defence for a change. Under the new circumstances, the rival candidate of Wladislaw Jagiello (Wladislas II Jagiello) in most countries of the Bohemian Crown became the always determined Hungarian King Matthias Hunyadi-Corvinus, a ruler traditionally unpopular with the Bohemian historiography.¹⁴ Although he represented a politically skilful and significant agent in the Bohemian lands, he acted with exceptional imperiousness and arbitrariness that later raised aversion even in Silesia. The firm reign and centralization understandably dis-appointed many of Corvinus' Silesian allies who only unwillingly conformed themselves to the Hungarian rules of reign and only hardly coped with the loss of freedoms and autonomy in their own country. It came down on the self-confident Wrocław, similarly as on the Piast and Premyslid dukes that they gambled on an unsuitable partner.

¹¹ On Silesian policy of King Matthias Corvinus, cf. WENDT, H.: *Die Stände Fürstenthums Breslau im Kampfe mit König Matthias Corvinus 1469–1490*. Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte (und Alterthum) Schlesiens (= ZGS) 32, 1898, pp. 157–176; GRIEGER, R.: *Die Pläne des Ungarnkönigs Mathias Corvinus mit Schlesien*, *Jahrbuch der Schlesien Friedrich-Wilhelm Universität zu Breslau* 24/1983, pp. 163–180.

¹² BOUBÍN, J.: *Česká „národní“ monarchie*. Praha 1992.

¹³ BISKUP, M.: *Trzynastoletnia wojna z Zakonem Krzyżackim 1454–1466*. Warszawa 1967; týž: *Wojny Polski z Zakonem Krzyżackim (1308–1521)*. Gdańsk 1993.

¹⁴ This is also suggested by the results delivered by MACEK, J.: *Jagellonský věk v českých zemích, 1471–1526 1. Hospodářská základna a královská moc*. Praha 1992, pp. 263–291; týž: *Král Jiří a král Matyáš. Od přátelství k nepřátelství (1458–1469)*. Časopis Matice moravské 109/1991, pp. 297–311; also cf. VÁLKA, J.: *Matyáš Korvín a Česká koruna*. Tamtéž, pp. 313–323.

Until his death in 1490, Matthias consistently and systematically opposed the Jagiellos in Silesia, uncompromisingly asserted his family interests to the detriment of the dukes and rampantly exploited the country's economy.¹⁵

But apart from the negative phenomena connected with Corvinus' administration in Silesia, we cannot omit its positive features. The centralization policy of the Hungarian ruler involved establishing the institution of the head land district administrator in 1474; the two district administrators in the Upper and Lower Silesias were subordinated to him. Corvinus also began to summon regular all-Silesian duchy assemblies (*Fürstentag*), where the country was represented by delegates of three curies of dukes and estates. Moreover, all-Silesian judicial authorities were constituted during the Hungarian and Jagiellonian reign. From 1498, the decisive word belonged to the duchy court (*Fürstenrecht, Oberrecht*), which consisted of three curies and was obliged to assemble twice a year; once in Wrocław and once in some Upper-Silesian city.¹⁶ The introduction of the regular tallage from the whole of Silesia understandably faced a negative response. Corvinus' reign nevertheless represented a significant stage in the development of the country.

The Hungarian king aimed to turn Silesia into the dominion of John Corvinus, and proceeded analogically to the Premyslids, Luxemburgs and Piasts before him as well as, later, the Hohenzollerns, Jagiellos and Habsburgs. Silesia became subject to dynastic family interests. Corvinus had only one goal in mind: to prepare a reliable base for the future power and political arrival of his illegitimate progeny. In 1482, he stipulated for the territory of the childless Duke John II of Żagań († 1504) for John of Corvinus and, several years earlier, he forced the Premyslid John III of Krnov to give up his own duchy under pressure. In Milan, Matthias then ceremonially betrothed John to the daughter of the local duke, Bianca Maria Sforza, insuring her dowry by the properties of the Oleśnica and Żagań duke. Through his administrator, István of Szapolyai (Stephen of Zapolya, Zápolský), Corvinus decimated the Silesian dukes one by one, planning to gloriously deliver the title of the Bohemian king, as well as the reign, to his son in Wrocław in the spring of 1490.

¹⁵ See, most recently, BACZKOWSKI, K.: *Walka Jagiellonów z Maciejem Korwinem o koronę czeską w latach 1471–1479*. Kraków 1980; WENDT, H.: *Schlesien im Kämpfe des Königs Mathias mit dem Kaiser 1482*. ZGS 31/1897, pp. 231–242; FUKALA, R.: *Potomci krále Jiřího z Poděbrad a jejich zápas o hlohovské dědictví*. Kladský sborník 7, 2006, pp. 53–84.

¹⁶ RACHFAHL, F.: *Die Organisation der Gesamtstaatsverwaltung Schlesiens vor dem dreissigjährigen Kriege*. Leipzig 1894; ORZECOWSKI, K.: *Ogólnośląskie zgromadzenia stanowe*. Warszawa – Wrocław 1978; *týž: Historia ustroju Śląska 1202–1740*. Wrocław 2005; there is some rather comprehensive literature on both the legal history of Silesia and its individual duchies; cf., for example, PTAK, M.: *Śląskie ordynacje ziemskie*. Sobótka 34/1979, pp. 17–35; for older German production, see WEBER, M. – RABE, C. (eds.): *Silesiographia. Stand und Perspektiven der historischen Schlesienforschung*. Würzburg 1998, pp. 273–274.

In consequence of the Hungarian dictate, only five dukes remained in Silesia at the end of the Corvinus' reign, compared to the twenty in the pre-Hussite period.¹⁷

Corvinus attached the Koźle, Bytom and Głubczyce regions to the Opava, Krnov and Racibórz duchies, thus constituting a new Hunyad enclave in Upper Silesia. The Opole dukes understandably reflected the critical situation around them and strove to reverse the power imbalance in Silesia. They, along with the Münsterberg Poděbrads and the Żagań-Głogów Duke John II the Mad (also Hanus II the Wild), refused to rely solely on their titular authority and began to accept the Jagiellonian political plans somehow more willingly.¹⁸

The period of Silesian “*medieval autumn*” is characteristic of the general deterioration of economic conditions, resulting from the Hussite invasions, the wars between Bohemia and Hungary, the Polish intervention and the activities of the marauding mobs. In the long run, the negative business balance of Wrocław and other Silesian cities was moreover negatively – and substantially – influenced by shifting the main centres of international trade from the Mediterranean area to the Atlantic shores. The positive factor of the Silesian economy during that period was a developing mining business, for example in Zlaté Hory (or, in German, Cukmantl), Horní Benešov, and Złotoryja, i.e. cities especially supported by Wrocław bishops, the Fuggers, Thurzós and the Krnov Honenzollerns.¹⁹

This period at the “turn of the eras” is moreover interesting from the linguistics aspect: throughout the 15th and 16th centuries, the German language was gradually superseded by Czech in the local authorities of the Upper-Silesian duchies as well as in the Opava region. The predominating “*czechized*” predicates of the originally Polish and German aristocratic families, which can be found in the contemporary documents, as well as the Czech-written business and church records and the increasingly significant Czech printed media prove that the standard Czech language took firm roots there and was undoubtedly comprehensible to the local Slavic ethnic. This linguistic process also vividly illustrates the complex character of the cultural stimuli in Silesia. However, we certainly must take into

¹⁷ HECK, R.: *Piastowie śląscy a Królestwo Polskie w XIV–XV w.* In: *Piastowie w dziejach Polski*. Wrocław – Warszawa – Kraków – Gdańsk 1975, pp. 69–95; SADOWSKI, T.: *Książęta opolscy i ich państwo*. Wrocław 2001, pp. 183–193; on the power fights for the Głogów Duchy and on the policy of John II of Głogów and Żagań, called the Mad, cf. SZCZEGÓŁA, H.: *Koniec panowania piastowskiego nad środkową Odrą*. Poznań 1968, pp. 75–147; TECHMAŃSKA, B.: *Nispokojny książę Jan II Żagański*. Kraków 2001.

¹⁸ FARBAKY, P. – SPEKNER, E. – SZENDE, K. – VÉGH, A. (eds.): *Matthias Corvinus, the King. Tradition and Renewal in the Hungarian Royal Court 1458–1490. Exhibition catalogue*. Budapest 2008.

¹⁹ FINK, E.: *Die Bergwerksunternehmungen der Fugger in Schlesien*. ZGS 28, 1894, pp. 294–295; WUTKE, K.: *Studien über die Entwicklung des Bergregals in Schlesien*. Berlin 1897.

account that the inhabitants of Lower Silesia (especially the city patriciate), the Jews and the imperial aristocracy stuck to German.²⁰

An immensely acute question in the Jagiellonian era was the dispute of constitutional law concerning the appurtenance of Silesia to the Hungarian Crown, which also threatened the territorial integrity of the Bohemian union. The particular family interests of the Jagiellos, Hohenzollerns and Piasts in the economically and strategically significant Silesia long doubted the country's liaisons in the framework of the lands of the Bohemian Crown. Although the Silesian dukes and estates were assured in the first quarter of the 16th century that Silesia was not part of the St Stephen Crown, they consistently strove for their own separate (or, in more modern terms, regional) policy in the forthcoming years in opposition to the bloated Bohemocentrism. The Silesian political representation definitely abandoned its anti-Bohemian standpoints, but without giving up its emancipation goals. The 16th century experienced a distinct turn in the policy of the Silesian dukes and estates both towards the Bohemian Kingdom and the Moravian Margraviate, and thus also towards the multilateral collaboration. As soon as Bohemia broke up the religious barriers, it gradually disentangled itself from the post-Hussite provincial isolation in all spheres of life, and Silesia held enormous credit in this process.

Yet another unsolved argument appurtenant to the constitutional law was the issue of Opava. Simply put, the problem at stake was whether the Opava region belonged to Silesia, or was the Moravian autonomous region. The Opava estates themselves only hitherto opportunistically pended among the disunited sides and jealously guarded both their own rights and their certain extent of autonomy against the Silesian neighbours. In the spirit of the contemporary estates' mentality, we thus must consistently differentiate between the terms "*Opava region*" and "*Silesia*" in the discussed period.

The development of the estates' status in the lands of the Bohemian Crown, which climaxed in the deep, but also contradictory turns of the social and power-political structures, also sensitively echoed the changes occurring on the Silesian territory. The Silesian society of estates and dukes in the 15th and the early 16th centuries displayed numerous features which were either utterly non-existent in Bohemia and Moravia, or could solely have

²⁰ FUKALA, R.: *Zápas o opolsko-ratibořské dědictví a mocenské aspirace slezských knížat na prahu novověku*. Slezský sborník 100/2002, Nr. 2, pp. 81–102; on the cultural conditions, see, most recently, CZECHOWICZ, B.: *Książęcy mecenat artystyczny na Śląsku u schyłku średniowiecza*. Warszawa 2005 (who also provides more comprehensive bibliography); on the linguistic aspect, cf., for example, STIBOR, J. (ed.): *Zemská kniha opolsko-ratibořská z let 1532–1543*. Ostrava 1991–1993; ŠEFČÍK, E. (ed.): *Zemské zřízení těšínského knížectví z konce 16. století*. Český Těšín 2001; on this, also see earlier works – KAPRAS, J.: *Zemské zřízení opolsko-ratibořské a těšínské*. In: Sborník věd právních a státních 22. Praha 1922, pp. 243–265. On the significant Upper-Silesian documents, see, most recently, KUBICIEL, R.: *Wybrane problemy badawcze związane z Wielkim Przywilejem Ziemskim księcia Jana II opolskiego z 1531 roku*. In: BARCIAK, A. (ed.): *Z dziejów Śląska. Zbiór studiów*. Katowice 2000, pp. 55–84.

been found in the two countries in a seemingly related form. Silesian history contains many parallels to Bohemia, but it is at the same time characteristic of a certain inconsistency. Many trends of development in the Silesian duchies grew from roots which were much more deeply embedded in the past than we might assume on the basis of the brief overviews published by German, Polish and Czech historians. The post-Hussite era of Silesian history, including all its consequences for the Bohemian state, was moreover accompanied by the extraordinary effort of the Polish king, aimed at establishing significant positions in Central Europe (not excluding the Utraquist partisans) and thus at opening a way towards the expansive variant of the power policy of the Jagiellos in Europe. Let us only add that, in the period of the “medieval autumn”, the seemingly marginal Silesian territory had indubitable economic and strategic significance. The extensive religious and political transformations which it had undergone also affected the power-political structures of the northern part of the Bohemian state.²¹

As it follows from the biographical research, many Silesian personalities exceeded the regional average and found firm positions in the arena of Central-European powers. On the other hand, Silesian dukes only remained to be fiefholders of the Bohemian king, and their status, superior to the community of the Bohemian estates, often pragmatically drove them to the anti-Bohemian camp. In the power confrontation with Hungarian and Polish interests, Silesia eventually retained its constitutional appurtenance to the unit of the lands of the Bohemian Crown.²² In the lapse of time, Corvinus’ integration of the Silesian territory, linked with the establishment of the all-Silesian estates’ and duchy institutions, proved itself to be a progressive feature from the political, economic and military aspects. From the view of long-term perspectives, however, the activity of John Corvinus in Silesia turned to be solely a historical episode, and the same was true as concerns the reign of this son of Matthias in the Opava region.

²¹ MACŮREK, J.: *Slezsko a jeho úloha ve vývoji česko-polských vztahů na přelomu 15. a 16. století*. In: Česko-polský sborník vědeckých prací I. Praha 1955, pp. 223–269.

²² WEBER, M.: *Das Verhältnis Schlesiens zum Alten Reich in der frühen Neuzeit*. Köln – Weimar – Wien 1992.

Contrary to this, the establishment of the Hohenzollern domains in Silesia in the 15th century and their stabilization during the 16th century represented a political reality worth respecting in the Reformation period. The members of the Brandenburg dynasty became significant side-by-side players on the Silesian power stage with the Saxon Wettins, all of the Silesian Piasts, the descendants of King George of Poděbrady, and the Opava Premyslids with the property basis of their family.

(Translation into English Lucie Vidmar)

Resumé

VLÁDA MATYÁŠE KORVÍNA VE SLEZSKU A JEJÍ DŮSLEDKY

Radek Fukala

Uherský a český král Matyáš Korvín byl politicky obratným a významným činitelem ve Slezsku. Jeho pevná vláda a centralizace pochopitelně zklamala celou řadu slezských knížat a stavů. Přesto se Korvínova integrace slezského území a zřízení celoslezských stavovských a knížecích institucí prokázala s odstupem času jako progresivní prvek v politickém, vojenském a ekonomickém ohledu. Jeho panování bylo bezesporu důležitou etapou ve vývoji vedlejších zemí Koruny české.