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The Development of Clan Names in Medieval Poland

ABSTRACT

Based on his own, Janusz Bieniak's, and others' monographic studies as well as the extensive use of royal and regional primary sources, the author demonstrates the different origins and development of the "clan names" (nomina genealogiae) of seven Polish noble family clusters: the Rola, Junosza, Ołobok, Dołęga, Natęcz and Rawa clans. These collective names, used to denote the solidarity of a circle of related families, became generally used in the fourteenth century, even though their roots went back several generations, as personal or family names, heraldic charges or other specific signs of the kindreds. Their spread and extensive use is clearly connected to the solidification of noble privilege and noble status in the late fourteenth century, beginning from Louis of Anjou's charter, through the early Jagiellonian reigns.

Polish historians agree on the importance of the knightly clans, and on the degree to which they permeated later medieval society. Bringing together families varying in wealth and political influence, the clan formed a group which was based on ties of blood, but nevertheless dominated by its wealthiest members.¹ But there is still much disagreement over some issues relating to the clan, particularly regarding its ownership of property, and its development of "self-awareness." The clan expressed itself as a collective entity by means of coat of arms, common "battle cries" (*proklama*, Lat.: *proclamatio*), and by adopting a clan name. In this paper I will be examining the history of some of these "clan names." I start by summarising the debates about their origin, and then I look at some specific examples to see how far they support these theories. I hope a better understanding of the sorts of words that became clan names, and of the dates and circumstances under which they were adopted, may help to explain the rise of the clan and to improve our knowledge of social change in later medieval Poland.

Scholars are generally agreed on the earliest stages in the development of family names. Initially, names and symbols pertained not to a family or clan, but to the individual knight and his property. To describe a family circle, a scribe or notary would name a principal magnate of the family, and then describe the relationship of other members of the group to him, using such expressions as *cum suis consanguineis et amicis*, *cum sua societate* or *cum collateralibus*.² The first way names were used to identify family units was by giving male members of a family the same personal, or Christian, name. Sometimes the first names were complemented by a further term, a *cognomen*, to distinguish between men with the same given name. These *cognomina* were often directly related to the appearance or characteristics of the individual in question.³ The chronicler Gallus Anonymus gives *cognomina* not only to the monarchs of Poland (such as *gloriosus* or *magnus* for Bolesław the Brave), but also to the magnates (such as *venerabilis*, *sapiens*, but also *senex et informus*!). To show noble birth he employed further titles: *comites*, *principes* and *nobiles*.⁴ By the fourteenth century the term *dominus* was often used for anyone with some claim to nobility.

At the turn of the twelfth century, personal names began to express family allegiance, in particular, filiation. This was done by adding possessive or other qualifiers to the given name, or by adding as a complementary name the father's name, either in the genitive form, or with a suffix of *-ic* or *-icz*. The use of a complementary, patronymic "surname" quickly went out of fashion, but qualifiers referring to possession were used in given names throughout the Middle Ages. By the end of the thirteenth century, *cognomina* came to be used to define not only individuals, but also broader family circles. Already in the last century S. Linde considered that the late medieval cognomen had become "a name used to show the cohesion of one collateral family,"⁵ and most scholars have followed his lead. I concluded in an earlier study that the inherited *cognomen* could play a further role as an element of clan self-identification.⁶ However, *cognomina* were formed not only from patronymic surnames, but also from common, personal or toponymic names. Thus it sometimes happened that two groups unrelated by blood ties would choose the same *cognomen*. However, by the fifteenth century clans were normally distinguished from one another by a singular clan name. It is regarding the adoption of these names by clans in the later thirteenth and the fourteenth century that controversy still remains. Some scholars claim the clan names were of ancient origin, others trace them from clan *proclamationes*, still others consider them to have evolved as a substitute for the practice of giving common first names to members of the same family.⁷

The most extensive study of the *nomina genealogiae* has been carried out by J. Bieniak. He argued that for a denomination to be regarded as a clan name it must denote a group connected genealogically, and must be similar to one of the personal names used by members of the clan. After examining the origin of many clan names, he concluded that, as a rule, they were originally personal names, which were later used to denote an entire family. Eventually one of these family names would come to represent the whole clan.

Despite his research, some historians still try to deduce the date at which a clan name was adopted simply by looking for its first appearance in the chronicles or charters. But according to Bieniak's theory, that first appearance will usually have been as a family or personal name. To establish whether in such a text the clan name was used as a term referring to a group of families, rather than merely a family group, we have to examine closely the circumstances surrounding the use of the denomination, and to adduce whatever else we know about the self-awareness of that particular clan at that time.

Janusz Bieniak analyzed the clans of Topór, Doliwa, and Ogon in this manner, and has concluded that they adopted those particular terms as their clan names in 1320-60, 1360-65, and 1367-81, respectively.⁸ He also studied the Jastrzembcy clan, concluding that it was closely associated with the Bolescice and Łazęki family groups, and that various clan names coexisted within it for some time.⁹ In the remainder of this paper I take the clans of Rola, Junosza, Ołobok, Dołęga, Nałęcz, Rawa, and Zaremba as examples of the variety of sources and dates of the adoption of clan names.

The clan of **Rola** has received some attention from Bieniak. He argues that by 1335 the term Rola had become a clan name, but that it was also still used to denote a family group. His principal evidence is a charter of that year, witnessed in Sandomierz by the king, in which nobility was confirmed for a knight Falisław of Gledzianow, of the region of Łęczya. The witnesses were, on his father's side, two members of the Rola clan; on his mother's side, two of the Junosza clan; and, on the paternal grandmother's side, two of the Jastrzembcy clan. The charter refers to the first two as *Nicolaus dictus Koth, et Paulus Rola de clenodio Rolye, rosam cum tribus bronya* [ploughshares] *in clipeo deferentes*. Furthermore, Bieniak suggested that the clan name was derived from the cognomen of Dominik *dictus Rola*, an ancestor of a family Lubieniecki from Kujavia. The clan arms, the rose with three ploughshares, may have been added in 1330 by Dominik's brother, Nasięgniew, since they are first found on the seal of a document of 1333 issued by him. That coat of arms is also seen on the notary sign of their descendant, Jakub of Świątkowice. A closer examination of the men associated with the clan provides evidence to support Bieniak's theory of the evolution of clan names. According to our present knowledge, Urban of Kujawy, chamberlain (1236), equerry (1243), and castellan of Łęczya (1248), is considered to be the earliest progenitor of the clan. Previous researchers have established that by the early fourteenth century it had "branched" to include several houses. Most famous are the knights of Parzęczew, a branch founded by Urban's great-grandson, Jasiiek Pucek. A brother of the Paulus Rola mentioned in the charter was possibly Stefan Rola of Łąkoszyn, the sub-huntsman of Łęczya, and the designation Rola was handed down as a family name to his son Jan of Łąkoszyn, castellan of Łęczya (1383-1430). Other magnates known to have belonged to the clan are Nasięgniew Kołaczek, his close relative Piotr of Mąkoszyc, Szczytno, and Chodecz. One example we have of "collective action" by the clan comes in a document from Little Poland of 1350 which gives a list of witnesses which included many eminent local magnates, but the only family name noted was that of Rola, suggesting that that name

was generally well-known. Nevertheless, family names continued to be used alongside clan names in the latter half of the fourteenth century. Jasiek Pucek's grandson Mikołaj continued to use his family name, as did Mikołaj's nephew Stefan. Nasięgniew Kołaczek's grandson Wojciech of Świątkowice, equerry of Brześć from 1393, continued to use the *cognomen* Kołaczek. However, another Mikołaj, a canon of Wislica, who became in 1364 a notary to King Casimir the Great, used Rola alone as a family name, as did Jan, a canon and knight of Włocławek, in 1383.

Thus we see "Rola" being adopted by several houses as a family name. The charters also provide evidence that it was simultaneously used by many houses as a clan name. In addition to the 1335 document from Sandomierz, the land acts of Łęczya of 1398 mention arms bearers *de genealogia et clenodio dicto Rola*. In 1406 at Pyzdry, the brothers Jan and Klemens of Skarboszewo near Słupca proved their affiliation to the clan by, among other things, *testes de clenodio Rola*. In 1424 during a land diet in Szadek, two defenders of a certain accused Janek of Pangow were the castellan of Łęczya, Jan of Łąkoszyn, and his huntsman, Wojciech of Parzęczew, *de clenodio proprio Rolye et proclamacionis Rolya, gestantes super clipeo tres scissuras vulgariter Croy*. At a Brześć diet in 1433 Bartosz of Kuźnice near Chocień and Wojciech called Baryczka of Wielewice represented the *clenodium Rola*. The clan name was also used as a *proclamatio*, and is often referred to alongside a seal of the clan arms, or a mention of it. The situation is captured perfectly in the land acts of Łęczya of 1441, where two witnesses are described as *de armis seu clenodio Role, qui in clipeo deferunt unam rosam cum tribus sicaturetis aratralibus vulgariter trzy croye, quorum proclamacio Rola*. The name Rola probably continued to be given from time to time as a personal *cognomen*, without implying family allegiance. The *rusticus* Jakub of Monackowice was "nicknamed" Rola in 1402, and he can hardly have been of noble stock. In the case of townsmen it is not so clear whether the denomination "Rola" is a personal cognomen or an expression of clan allegiance. In 1412 the affiliation to the Rolas of Pioty Mąkoszyc, a townsman of Przedecz, was proved by the testimony of two nobles, Dobiesław Baryczka of Czemievice, and Tadeusz of Świątkowice. A certain Stanisław Rola, described in 1457 as a townsman of Warsaw, may have been a knight as well, and thus eligible for the noble clan. The penetration of the gentry into the towns at this period is a topic which requires further study.¹⁰

The **Junoszas** provide a second example of a clan which adopted its name from one of its families.¹¹ In the Sandomierz charter Falisław of Gledzianow was confirmed to the nobility on his mother's side by Piotr Rubel and Jan Radosz, *de armis Junosche agnum in clipeo portantes*. But does the term Junosza here represent an extended family, or a branched clan? An early ancestor of the family can be found in the late thirteenth century: Junosza Ziemak held high offices in Masovia, finally becoming palatine of Płock in 1301. Ziemak of Cieksyn, castellan of Gostyn (1350) and Wyszogrod (1359), was his son or grandson. Other Junoszas in this region at the same time include Dadźdog, successively chamberlain, palatine and *capitaneus* of Płock. Junosza of Zaborow, steward of Płock in

1372 and land judge of Zakroczym, was a knight, and so his name probably indicates he was a member of the clan. We can assume that as the fourteenth century progressed many families not closely related to the progenitor found it expedient to adopt clan membership, as offices were preferably given to clan members. By the last decades Junoszas begin to be found in the Łęczya region. We mainly know of those who held office and so appear in the charters, for example: the sub-huntsman Jacek of Jackowice, the palatine Ziemak of Piaski, the sub-equerri Pawel of Woźniki and the butler Jan of Łążki. By the early fifteenth century the clan had spread to Dobrzyń. Jan of Wichowo and Jan of Lochocin attached Junosza clan seals to the Act of the Dobrzyń diet of 1434.

By the early fifteenth century the charters begin to show more direct association of clan name, *proclamatio* and coat of arms which indicates that the clan name had gained a more comprehensive status. In 1405, in a dispute over nobility Jan Daszewski and Markusz are described as *clenodii Agni wlgariter Baranow, proclamacione Junoszey*. The writer strangely identifies the term *clenodium* (clan) with *clipeum* (shield emblem). Some documents of this period describe witnesses as *de genere Junoscha* and *de armis vero Junoscha*, where we might have expected the term *de clenodio*. Others give a description of the coat of arms to provide an additional identification. Even at this advanced stage of clan development, the notaries are not at all sure precisely what sort of allegiance is implied by the use of the clan name: to a lineage traced from a common progenitor, to a kinship group based around an influential family, or to some knightly regiment.

A clan prominent in the region of Cracow and Kalisz were the **Ołobok**. Unlike the Rola and the Junosza, they cannot be shown to have adopted their clan name from one of their constituent families.¹² The clan traced its progenitor to Cieszęta, of the late twelfth century. His great grandsons are later found in high offices around Cracow. Although representatives of the clan are occasionally discovered elsewhere, its members never achieved much prominence outside of this base. We start to find the use of the clan name in the late fourteenth century. A document of 1377 mentions four brothers, Cieszęta, Mikołaj, Ubyław and Bertold, calling them Ołobok. This in itself might suggest merely a family name. However, Gelre records in his armorial of that period the arms of the Ołobok—a silver fish head pointing diagonally upwards to the right, in a red shield. The arms effigy later metamorphised into a half-salmon: in 1388 a proof of nobility is sworn *pro vituperio Medium Salmonem clenodium et poclamacio Ołobog*. In another document, Jan and Jakub Niezwojowski are described as *nobiles de armis medii salmonis, que habent proclama Olbok*. The chronicler Długosz writes of Jakub Lipnicki as *nobilis ex familia, que medietatem Salmonis defert pro insigni, alias de armis Olbok*. So the denomination Ołobok had become an all-clan name by 1388, and possibly already by 1377. Since no family is specifically named Ołobok, the origin of the clan name and *proclamatio* is disputed: most likely it referred to the River Ołobok, a tributary of the River Prosna, where the estates of the earliest representatives of the clan were concentrated; perhaps it was derived from the estate Ołobok, on which the clan monastery was later founded.

The *Dołęgas* are an interesting case. In spite of high social status and a genealogy dating back to the twelfth century, they adopted their clan name towards the end of the fourteenth century, later than some less distinguished clans.¹³ The progenitor of the clan is thought to be Hugon Butyr, a Dutch knight in service with Duke Boleslaw Curly. He probably came to Poland at the instigation of the bishop of Płock, Alexander of Malonne, or his brother Walter, provost of the Płock chapter. He obtained the office of castellan of Chełmno as a reward for his service in the war of 1146. One son settled in Kujavia, the other remained in Masovia, where his descendants are found in the next centuries. The importance of the clan is shown by the fact that one of its representatives, Jan the Tall, was raised to the rank of bishop of Płock (1297-1310). Knights of the clan are also found at an early date in the Dobrzyń region. We know the family circle of the Dobrzyń judge Myślibór (1345-1350), who was the first to use the clan seal, in 1345. But it is not until 1400, in a manuscript found near Płock, that we find evidence linking the seal, the family name, and the clan name. One record in this document, reads *Clenodium genealogiae do Langa dicte cuius particeps est dominus Johannes de Lang plebanus, huius codicis possessor*. Another speaks of *Johannes Grabe unicus de Lang heredis canonicus corporalis Plocensis et de Lang plebanus et patronus...* Both these records are accompanied by the Dołęga clan arms: a horseshoe with calks facing downwards containing an arrow pointing down with a cross on the shoulder. The shield had changed only a little when it is found in the French Golden fleece Armorial, of the early fifteenth century.¹⁴ Undoubtedly the author of this document considers Dolanga (Dołęga) to be a clan name, its earlier form being "do Langa."

We find many references in the next decades confirming that the denomination had become an all-clan name by this time, and that the clan was recognized by shield insignia, clan name and *proclamatio*. In 1416 in Łęczya Mikołaj of Zduny, standard keeper of Łęczya, and Zdzisław, huntsman of Gostynin, confirmed the affiliation to the Dołęgas of Mikołaj of Weżyca, saying that he was *genealogiae Dolangy de signo babatum et in babato sagitta et supra crux*. We find men using clan arms as their personal seals to many documents from the area of Dobrzyń; for example, Mikołaj, vicar of St Martin's Church near Płock in 1403; Stanisław of Strzygowo, in 1444 and 1449; the Judge of Dobrzyń Andrzej of Wierzbick, and sub judge Mikołaj of Złotopole, in 1408. Sometimes court writers give the *clenodium* through such a description of arms, but then they list additionally the *proklama: de proclamacione que dicitur Dolanga*. In 1402 a certain Stanisław gave the *proclamationem* Dolaga in a land court in Radomsko. The clan had families belonging to it all over Poland. For example, the Dołęgas are found in Horodlo in 1413, when Polish clans gave their arms to the boyars of Lithuania. In Brześć, Stefan and Jan of Szczkowo near Izbica *de clenodio Dolaga* appeared in court. The derivation of the clan name is disputed. It may be from a village Dołęga or Leg, or from a personal call derived from the name of a clan ancestor.

Evidence for the early use of clan names can be found not only in legal documents, but also in the narrative chronicles of the latter part of the fourteenth century. J. Bieniak has

shown that the archdeacon Janko of Czarnków used all-clan nomenclature for the Doliwas and Palukis.¹⁵ Janko also uses the clan name of the Nałęcz clan, and this helps us to establish when they adopted their clan name. The Nałęcz are particularly interesting because they are first designated as a group by heraldic insignia.¹⁶ Although this geographically diffuse family, descended from Dobrogost Stary, the magnate of Great Poland of the early twelfth century, does not seem to have used a name to describe itself in the fourteenth century, we can trace its members by their use of a common sign on the seal. Some time between 1306 and 1308 the knight Kielcz of Great Poland received the estate Przywieczersk in Kujavia from Prince Władysław Łokietek. His affiliation to the clan later known as the Nałęcz, and its related branches in the region of Dobrzyń, the Ustronskis and the Moszczenskis, is confirmed by their use of similar seals on some documents of the Dobrzyń and Brześć diet. The seal which later became the clan seal is, however, only known from 1343, where it was attached to one of the charters of the Kalisz peace by Tomisław, castellan of Gniezno. It became widely used in the third quarter of the fourteenth century. The arms can also be found on the keystone of the collegiate church in Wislica, founded by Casimir the Great around the mid-fourteenth century. In Gelre's book they appear as a golden looped line, with tied and unraveled ends, in a red shield. Over the shield a golden helmet appears *en face* with red *labras*, on it there are two antlers with four branches, with banners on each branch.

Within the clan at the same time family names came into being, such as Świdwa and Grochola. Nałęcz also appears as a family name for the first time, possibly from the name of a lake near Poznań. Janko of Czarnków, writing an interpolation of the Great Poland Chronicle in 1375-87, added that two knights whom Przemysł I put in jail in 1248 were *de cognatione Nalanecz*. This implies that the Nałęcz family had attained a considerable degree of solidity by at least 1387. But it is only at the turn of the century that we find the name Nałęcz used clearly as a clan name and *proclamatio*. At Sieradz in 1401 two dignitaries from Great Poland, Sedziwoj Świdwa and Wincenty of Czarnków are recorded as *de clenodio Nalanecz*. For a short time the form *Nałęcz Jezioro* was used as *proklama*. In 1398 at the Poznań diet Piotr *videlicet Nalocz Yezoro* witnessed nobility to Maciej of Nądnia. In 1407 at that court two witnesses Jan and Tomasz of nearby Otusz are described as *de proclamacione wlgariter Nalanecz Yezoro*. The denomination Nałęcz was quite popular early in the fifteenth century not only as a clan name, but also as a *nomen personale*. In 1406, a certain Nałęcz inherited Piotrowice in the Łęczyża region. In 1423 a Nałęcz of Ustronie in Kujawy stood before the court of Brześć.

We are able to understand the origin and reception of the denomination **Rawa** from the detailed research of J. Wroniszewski.¹⁷ The clan name is interesting because it was formed in a different way from our previous examples. The ancestor of the clan was a magnate of Little Poland, Grot, who died in the first half of the thirteenth century. Two main clan lines evolved: Warszowice and Grotowice. Their oldest settlements are near Sandomierz and the Świętokrzyskie mountains. Large concentrations of Rawicz clan members are found in

Masovia. We can establish a timeframe within which the coat of arms developed: the point *post quem* is 30 September 1279, when the castellan of Cracow Warsz attached a seal with his personal sign to a privilege of the duke Boleslas the Shy. The date *ante quem* is 2 September 1306 when Warsz's son, Prędota of Michowo, used the picture of a maid on a bear as a seal sign. The basis of this image may be the legend about a girl of the Rawicz clan who was kidnapped by a bear. The sign was later used by Prędota's relatives, two sons of Grot, castellan of Cracow: Jan, bishop of Cracow (1334) and Jakub, judge of Sandomierz (1353). The arms appear in the keystones of the Cracow cathedral and the Wislica collegiate church, with slight modifications.

Despite this early use of a coat of arms, the clan name appears late. According to annals of the Cracow mansionaries of the late fourteenth century, the bishop of Cracow was *de Ursinis*, or *Niedzwiedzice*. The name Ursini is still present at the beginning of the fifteenth century. In 1414 two witnesses Mszczuj of Jankowice and Grot of Gora are described as *de Ursinis*. This denomination obviously comes from the coat of arms: but simultaneously a new clan name appeared. The witnesses of nobility to Klemens of Szydłowiec in Radom in 1413 were Jan of Konin and Goworek of Bleszno, described on the father's side as *de clenodio Rawa*. Rawa is recorded by the court of Łęczys of 1415 as a *proclamatio* of Warsz of Żelazna, judge of Rawa, and of his nephew, Grot. A year earlier it was noted in the same court that defendant Jan of Piaskowice and his relatives Warsz of Krzciowice and Rafal of Bowętow were knights *de proprio clenodio genealogiae Rawa*. In 1424 the squires of Moszna of the region of Mazowsze are *proclamacionis Rawy*. These and other examples presented by Wroniszewski clearly show that the name Rawa became an all-clan name in the early fifteenth century, supplanting the term *Ursini*. It is not clear why Rawa achieved this prominence. It has neither a connection with the coat of arms, nor with an important family. Many family names appeared as late as the fifteenth century, such as Grotowice or Gutowice, but none of them became an all-clan denomination.¹⁸

The case of the **Zaremba** clan name is similar. The problem has already been raised in the literature, so we will limit ourselves to a few summarising remarks.¹⁹ The ancestor of the clan is thought to be Janek, who lived late in the twelfth century. His grandsons Olbracht, castellan of Poznań in 1232, and Wawrzyniec, huntsman of Poznań in the same year, gave rise to two clan branches whose members are found in the thirteenth century in various offices of Great Poland. In the beginning the clan did not use collective designations; they appear gradually. The earliest was the family name "Lis" or "Lisowic." Lis was used in 1253 for Marcin, Olbracht's son, the later castellan of Międzyrzec. The *cognomen* was inherited by two of his sons, Waclaw Lis of Lutomiersk, castellan of Sieradz (1317), and Maciej "Lisowic." We do not know whether the same *cognomen* was used by their elder brothers Żegota and Andrzej. Waclaw already possessed a seal with the Zaremba clan arms. His own younger sons, Wawrzyniec and Ubyszek, and those of Maciej,—Andrzej, Marcin and Przybek—, were also called "Lis." However, his elder son Waclaw did not take over the family name. It finally died out with Tyfan, the son of Ubyszek, probably shortly after 1368.

In the meantime, i.e., between 1289 and 1301, the clan coat of arms, a lion jumping from behind a wall, was developed in the family of Marcin's brother Janek, palatine of Poznań. In 1301 it was adopted by the bishop of Poznań, and we find many examples in the following decades. In 1319 we first find the name Zaremba, applied as a personal *cognomen* to Marcin's grandson, Marcin Mikolaj, palatine of Kalisz and Gniezno. Marcin Mikolaj's son, Janek of Komorowo, inherited the *cognomen*. Wawrzyniec of Krolikowo, a distant relative of Marcin Mikolaj, is found using the clan name and seal in 1333. Until 1368 the denomination Zaremba coexisted with the family name Lis. But eventually the name Zaremba became the *nomen genealogiae*, and the name Lis was dropped altogether, probably because by then another clan had begun to use it as their own clan name. Late in the fourteenth century many knights are thought to have belonged to the Zarembas. Mikolaj Nalezionek of Siedlemin is described as *verus Zaramba*. Mikolaj Zatomski and Piotr Wilk Lubosinski, according to a statement of 1398, came *de genealogia Zarabi*. Outside of Great Poland, diets at Zakroczym in 1434 considered Wojciech and Stefan of Zarebin *de armis Zarebina*. We nevertheless still find some family names in use alongside the clan name. Early in the fifteenth century there is a record of an Ogankos family, which undoubtedly belonged to the Zaremba clan.

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The above examples show clearly that in the early stages of Polish clan formation, clan names were not used. From the thirteenth century personal signs on the seal began to be replaced by common clan symbols. It was only in the fourteenth century that clans began to give themselves names. This applies both to the older clans of twelfth century provenance, such as the Ołobok or Dołęgas, and to the ones of more recent genealogy, such as the Nałęcz. Some *nomina genealogiae* came from family names (Rola, Zaremba), others from clan properties, such as villages, territories, bodies of water (Ołobok, Dołęga, Nałęcz). The names were usually identical with the *proclamationes*, but only occasionally had some relationship with the coat of arms. In some clans the new names were swiftly adopted (Ołobok), in others various names coexisted for some time (Jastrzebce, Rawicze). Most clans had relatively few family branches. Doubtless some of the smaller clans never evolved a clan name. For example, even the Piast dynasty was only labelled "Piast" by chroniclers of the sixteenth century.

However, by the fifteenth century all-clan names were the rule. An explanation for their adoption may lie in the social changes affecting Poland at this time. Privileges granted by the king were leading to an improvement in the status of the nobility, and this gave them an incentive to defend their rank against pretenders. Conversely, a loss of noble status meant a loss of political, social and financial prestige. As we have seen, it was often when involved in court proceedings to prove his *nobilitas* that an individual claimed clan allegiance. If he could find trustworthy witnesses who would swear he was a member of a certain knightly clan, the case was proved, since this would guarantee noble blood. An example is the case

of Krystyn of Chudzewo. Challenged by Jelitczyk Rafał of Tarnow, he went to Dobrzyń, summoned six witnesses, and in front of the diet of 31 January 1441 proved that he belonged to the Pobog clan. The court issued an official document, which Krystyn then took to a meeting of nobles in Mosciska near Lvov, where he confirmed to all and sundry that he was, in fact, a member of the nobility.²⁰

The spread of clan names is a part of a more general proliferation of interest in genealogy and the use of heraldic signs in the early fifteenth century. This is doubtless connected with the increased political importance of the clans themselves. The branched knight clans, possessing their own coats of arms, names and *proclamaciones*, appear as acknowledged entities in laws and charters. Their representatives appear at confederations and land diets alongside royal and municipal officials. In 1424 the Little Polish nobility were represented at the diets in Korczyn and Wislica not only by *duo de domini*, but also by messengers of the clans: *duo de quolibet domo seu clenodio*. When the succession to the throne of Władysław Jagiello was considered at the diets of Brześć in 1433 and of Dobrzyń the following year, the documents were confirmed by the seals of the land officials, *domini*, and also by the representatives of the popular knightly clans from Kujavia and the Dobrzyń region: *duorum de quolibet clenodio terrigenarum*. It would have been a little awkward for the knights to have identified themselves before such an august diet solely by pointing to their shields and uttering their fearsome war cries.

Notes

1. See, e.g., J. Bieniak, "Rody rycerskie jako czynnik struktury społecznej w Polsce XIII-XIV wieku" [Knightly clans as elements of the social structure in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Poland], in: *Polska w okresie rozdrobnienia feudalnego* [Poland in the period of feudal division], ed. H. Łowmiański, Wrocław 1973, p. 182ff.; Idem, "Knight Clans in Medieval Poland," in: *Polish Medieval Nobility*, Warsaw 1984, pp. 123-76; Idem, "Heraldyka polska przed Długoszem. Uwagi problemowe" [Polish heraldry before Długosz], in: *Sztuka i ideologia XV wieku* [Art and ideology of the fifteenth century], ed. P. Skubiszewski, Warsaw 1978, p. 185.

2. Bieniak, *Heraldyka*, p. 185.

3. For comparisons, see: Lehmann, "Mittelalterliche Beinamen und Ehrentitel" *Historisches Jahrbuch* 49 (1929): 215-239; A. Wrackmeyer, *Studien zu den Beinamen der abendländischen Könige und Fürsten bis zum Ende des XIII. Jahrhunderts*, Marburg 1936.

4. K. Liman, "Epitety dotyczące osób w kronice polskiej Anonima Galla" [Epithets referring to person in the Polish chronicle of Gallus Anonymus], in: *Ars Historica*, Poznań 1976, p. 344; J. Hertel, *Imiennictwo dynastii piastowskiej we wcześniejszym średniowieczu* [The name of the Piast dynasty in the earlier Middle Ages], Warsaw 1980, pp. 155 ff.

5. *Słownik języka polskiego* [Dictionary of the Polish language], v. 4, Lwów 1858, p. 631.

6. J. Pakulski, "Geneza, recepcja i znaczenie przydomków rycerskich w średniowiecznej Polsce [Origin, reception, and meaning of knightly *cognomina* in medieval Poland]. in: *Genealogia-problemy metodyczne w badaniach nad polskim społeczeństwem średniowiecznym* [Genealogy: methodical problems in the research on Polish medieval society], Toruń, 1982, pp. 102 ff.

7. The state of research is well summarized in T. Wasilewski, "Topograficzne nazwy rodowe w Polsce średniowiecznej i ich znaczenie dla badań nad genezą rodów [Topographical clan names in medieval Poland and their significance in the research about the origin of clans], in: *Genealogia-studia nad wspólnotami krewniaczymi i terytorialnymi w Polsce średniowiecznej na tle porównawczym* [Genealogy: Comparative Studies on kindred and territorial communities in medieval Poland] ed. J. Hertel, Toruń 1987.

8. J. Bieniak, *Heraldyka*, p. 176, 179, 184.

9. *Ibid.* pp. 169-72.

10. Most of the primary evidence for the above (and the following) can be found in the major source publications, such as: *Codex diplomaticus Poloniae Maioris. Kodeks Dyplomatyczny Wielkopolski*, ed. A. Gąsiorowski and H. Kowalewicz, Warsaw Poznań; *Codex diplomaticus Poloniae Minoris. Kodeks Dyplomatyczny Małopolski*, ed. Piekosiński, Cracow 1876; *Cod. dipl. Cath. Cracoviensis S. Venceslai. Kodeks Dyplomatyczny Katedry Krakowskiej św. Wacława 1166-1366*, ed. F. Piekosiński, Cracow; *Codex diplomaticus Poloniae. Kodeks Dyplomatyczny Polski*, ed. L. Ryszczewski and A. Muczkowski, Warsaw, 1847; K. Małczyński, *Zarys dyplomatyki polskiej wieków średnich*, part. 1, Wrocław 1951. – We regret that typographical and economic reasons hinder us in adding all the individual references, which can be found in the author's monographical studies, see notes 6, 16, 19.

11. On the Junosza, see also: A. Boniecki, *Herbarz Polski* [Polish armorial], v. 1, Warsaw 1906, p. 225; J. Piętka, *Mazowiecka elita późnego średniowiecza* [The Masovian elite in the late Middle Ages], Warsaw 1975, p. 32.

12. On the Olobok, see also "Z ksiąg rekoپیsmiennych dotąd nieużytych głównie z ksiąg dawnych sądowych ziemskich i grodzkich ziemi krakowskiej [From unpublished manuscript books, legal-, land-, and city records of the region of Cracow] ed. A. Z. Helcel, *Starodawne Prawa Polskiego Pomniki* [Monuments of Ancient Polish Law], v. 2, Cracow 1870, no. 4992; Clenodia Długosii. Klejnoty Długoszowe, ed. M. Friedberg, *Rocznik Polskiego Towarzystwa Heraldycznego* [Yearbook of the Polish Heraldic Society], v. 10, 1930, p. 81.

13. On the Dołęga, see also: Z. Lasocki, *Dołęga czy Do Łęga*, Cieszyn 1932; Piętka, *Mazowiecka elita*, pp. 28, 57. W. Brzeziński, *Ród Dołęgów na Mazowszu w średniowieczu*, Toruń 1992, typescript.

14. See: *A European Armorial. An armorial of knights of the Golden Fleece and 15th Century Europe*, ed. by R. Pinches and A. Wood, London 1971, p. 153.

15. Bieniak, *Heraldyka*, pp. 182 ff.

16. See: J. Pakulski, *Natęcze wielkopolscy w średniowieczu* [The N. of Great Poland in the Middle Ages], Warsaw-Poznań 1982

17. J. Wroniszewski, *Ród Rawiczów* [The clan R.], Toruń 1992.

18. Pakulski, Geneza, p. 108.

19. See: J. Pakulski, Ród Zarembów w Wielkopolsce w XIII i początkach XIV w. [The clan Zarembów in Great Poland in the 13th and early 14th century], *Prace Komisji Historii BTN*, 1975, no. 16, pp. 112 ff.

20. *Akta grodzkie i ziemskie z czasów Rzeczypospolitej z Archiwum tzw. Bernardyńskiego we Lwowie* [Records of town and country from the time of the First Commonwealth in the archives of the Bernardines in Lvov/Lemberg], ed. K. Liske, A. Prochaska vol. 14, no. 3746.

**HISTORY & SOCIETY
IN CENTRAL EUROPE**
2
MEDIUM ÆVUM QUOTIDIANUM
29

**Nobilities in Central and Eastern
Europe:
Kinship, Property and Privilege**

edited by

János M. Bak

**Hajnal István Alapítvány
Budapest**

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LECTORI SALUTEM!

The aim of the editors and publishers of this series of occasional papers is to present recent results of research in social history to the international public. In the spirit of the Hungarian historian of Europe, István Hajnal (1892-1956), we believe that the history of "small nations" may highlight aspects of general development that are less visible in the life of major civilisations.

The volumes in this series will address specific aspects of social development in medieval and modern central Europe. We intend to focus on the region between the German lands and the Byzantine-Russian world, and explore similarities and differences in this area. Instead of arguing the validity of the term, we shall publish studies that may enable our readers to decide to what extent is "central Europe" a historical reality or merely a dream of intellectuals and politicians. That is why we chose a medieval map for our cover: it emphasizes the centuries-old connecting function of the great rivers but contains no ephemeral political boundaries.

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The volume editor wishes to express his gratitude to those friends and colleagues who assisted in the - often almost unseemingly - task of translating and editing the Czech, Magyar and Polish contributions: Catherine Allen, Simon Carne, Tamás Domahidy, Vera Gáthy, Ryszard Grzesik, and Paul Knoll. Needless to say that he alone feels responsible for the remaining shortcomings, which are, probably, many. Maybe, we shall publish once a volume only on the intricacies and pitfalls of translating medieval and medievalist texts.

H & S

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