

COULD POLAND HAVE REACTED TO THE SUBMISSION OF BYZANTIUM TO THE TURKS IN 1372-1373?

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Historians complain that there are no Byzantine narrative sources describing the second half of the 14th century, when Byzantium became a Turkish vassal-state. As for the other 15th-century chroniclers of the dying Empire, only one of them, Laonikos Chalkokondyles, noted briefly that "John entered in alliance with Murad who had recently crossed over Europe."² Lack of the sources we do not know what Byzantines felt when they learnt that "the Emperor exchanged envoys with King Murad and sent his younger son (Manuel) to the Sultan's court, asking Manuel to serve Murad as well as he could and to follow his troops wherever he was ordered, to respect his opinions and to take sufficient care not to offend the King in future."³ We do not know the Byzantine reaction, but we know the circumstances that led Byzantium to this humiliating situation.

Osmanlis, which seemed to be a small emirate in the second half

1. I am grateful to my sister, Dr Dorota Filipczak, who kindly corrected my English and to my colleagues and students from Poland, who supplied me with the necessary quotations. I was writing this text at Rice University, Houston, TX, which was not an easy personal task, as I was far away from my home files.

2. LAONIKOS CHALKOKONDYLES, *A Translation and Commentary of the Demonstrations of History (Books I-III)*, transl. A. NICOLOUDIS. Athens 1996, 131. Quotation curtesy of Adam Szczepanski.

3. *Ibidem*, 149. Chalkokondyles is not very reliable when it comes to the chronology of the events. Historians cannot say when exactly Byzantium became a Turkish vassal. It must have happened in the years 1372-1373: G. OSTROGORSKY, *Byzance, état tributaire de l'empire turc*. *ZRVI* 5 (1958) 49-58.

of the 13th century, soon became a real power. In the first half of the 14th century Byzantium lost its territories in Asia Minor to the Turks, but when they took control of Gallipoli in 1354, the first city on the European continent, the danger for Constantinople became inevitable. In 1361 Murad's army entered Thrace, and later he settled in Adrianople, where the Turks transferred their capital from Brusa⁴. Now they were three days of horse riding from Constantinople. The siege of the Byzantine capital was only a question of time.

In this situation John V Palaiologos, who had been reigning since 1354, left for Hungary in 1366. Louis the Great was a powerful Catholic neighbour, connected with the Papacy, and Byzantine diplomacy counted on his support. It was the first time that the Byzantine Emperor paid a visit to a foreign monarch. As D. Nicol has it: "It has always been assumed that it was the part of lesser princes to pay their respects to the one true Emperor in Constantinople. But the time had changed," he added, "and the precedent had been set."⁵ The King of Hungary had earlier been involved in the project of the crusade launched by Peter I of Cyprus, promoting his idea in Western Europe and then in Poland, when his arrival in 1364 gathered in Cracow Charles IV of Luxemburg, King of Bohemia and Holy Roman Emperor, Louis Anjou, King of Hungary and Casimir the Great, King of Poland. The rally in Cracow did not bring any support for Peter's *idée fixe*, so strongly promoted by the Pope.⁶ His expedition failed in Alexandria in 1365. Instead of joining Peter, Louis of Hungary turned against the Bulgarian province of Vidin. Its ruler, Prince John Stracimir, was accused of supporting the heretical Bogomils, and imprisoned. The Franciscan mission followed the Hungarian

4. IRÈNE BELDICEANU-STEINHERR, *La conquête d'Andrianople par les Turcs. TM 1* (1965) 439–461; ELISABETH A. ZACHARIADOU, *The conquest of Adrianople by the Turks. Studi Veneziani 12* (1970) 211–217; H. INALCIK, *The conquest of Edirne. Archivum Ottomanicum 3* (1971) 185–210.

5. D.M. NICOL, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium 1261–1453*. Cambridge 1993 (2nd ed.), 266.

6. Cf. M. DABROWSKA, *Peter of Cyprus and Casimir the Great in Cracow. Byzantiaka (Thessaloniki) 14* (1994) 257–267; P.W. KNOLL, *Louis the Great and Casimir of Poland*, in: S.B. VARDY / B.G. GROSCMID / L.S. DOMONKOS (eds.), *Louis the Great, King of Hungary and Poland*. New York 1986, 105–127. This is a very general but important survey.

army in order to convert and rebaptize the Bulgarian neighbours. This idea was suggested by Pope Urban V and Louis' mother, Elisabeth of Poland, King Casimir's sister.⁷ There was little chance for John V's success in these circumstances. He could have expected that demands would be made on him in return for military help, but he had no choice and appeared in Buda in 1366, accompanied by his two sons: Manuel and Michael, and his chancellor, George Manikaites, already Catholic, which made a good impression at the Court. Louis seemed to be ready to lead the crusade under the condition of the Church Union. The messengers were sent to Avignon, and on 29 June 1366 they informed the Pope on the friendly relations between Louis and the Emperor. Urban V answered immediately, thanking the Hungarian King for encouraging John V to convert, and expecting his action against the Turks.⁸ One cannot say that Louis was enthusiastic about the project of attacking the Turks, but the Royal Court and the Queen Mother were.⁹ Gaining the Byzantines for Catholicism was a prestigious idea of the Papacy, and Urban V appealed especially to the Queen Mother, Elisabeth of Poland. In every political case concerning Louis, the Roman Curia addressed her, which is significant for this article.¹⁰ As for Louis himself, he was

7. J.P. RIPOCHE, *Louis le Grand et l'Orthodoxie*, in: *Louis the Great*, *op. cit.*, 94–95.

8. O. HALECKI, *Un empereur de Byzance à Rome. Vingt ans de travail pour l'union des Eglises et pour la défense de l'Empire de l'Orient 1355–1375*. Warsaw 1930, 116–120. The author based his profound analysis on the registers of Papal correspondence treasured in the Vatican Archives and on Venetian documents analyzed in Venice. Despite the many years that have passed since his research, his meticulous analysis is still valuable, even though it shows John's situation from the Western point of view. Much of the Papal correspondence was preserved in the so called Raynaldus collection, on which I worked in Paris. I decided to omit the references to these sources, since in the far Texas even my notes of Raynaldus are out of my reach. Cf. ODORICUS RAYNALDUS, *Annales Ecclesiastici*. Rome 1648–1659.

9. RIPOCHE, *op. cit.*, 96. The author gives his opinion, referring to: *Vetera Monumenta Historica Hungariam Sacra*, ed. A. THEINER, t. II, reed. O. ZELLER. Osnabruck 1968, no 140, 74. It seems that Halecki's work based on Papal documents has often been neglected or misinterpreted.

10. HALECKI, *op. cit.*, 124. Cf. J. DABROWSKI, *Elzbieta Lokietkowna 1305–1380* (Elisabeth of Poland). Krakow 1914, 37. It is interesting to notice that

more interested in his Balkan-Dalmatian policy than in helping Byzantium. Halecki may have been right in his suggestion that the Hungarian King asked the Pope in confidence to free him from the promises of military assistance for John V.¹¹ The author stresses *méfiance reciproque* of the two rulers.¹² Due to this attitude and modest knowledge about this visit, "it seems still difficult," writes J.W. Barker, "to have a definitive opinion on the timing of John's decision to convert to Catholicism. Clearly, he was pressured by Louis the Great in Buda to negotiate directly with the Pope and it seemed possible that the idea of his own conversion might at least have been discussed then."¹³ But the Hungarian military expedition did not follow these discussions. Empty handed, John V went back home, but he was stopped by the Bulgarians, who were afraid of the supposed Hungarian-Byzantine alliance. The assistance came from his cousin, Amadeo of Savoy, who in 1366 regained Gallipoli from the Turks with Papal blessing, and rescued John V from the Bulgarian trap. Amadeo appeared in Byzantium as the Papal emissary.¹⁴ According to O. Halecki's precious investigation, Urban V counted very much on the Savoyard prince, and was not disappointed. John pro-

those two Polish authors are still the most important for examining the relations between Papacy, Byzantium and Hungary. Unfortunately, the books by Dabrowski were written in Polish and are not quoted in the international literature. The Hungarian historiography is very poor when it comes to the Angevin period. Cf. A. POR, Nagy Lajos (Louis the Great). Budapest 1892, treated as out of date.

11. HALECKI, *op. cit.*, 132. There is no room to consider here Louis's ambitious political plans. Cf. J. DABROWSKI, *Ostatnie lata Ludwika Wielkiego* (The Last Years of Louis the Great). Krakow 1918, 79–86.

12. HALECKI, *op. cit.*, 135.

13. E-mail from J.W. Barker dated 9 January 2007. Cf. his excellent book: J.W. BARKER, *Manuel II Palaeologus (1391–1425). A Study in Late Byzantine Statesmanship*. New Brunswick, N.J. 1969, 7.

14. Amadeo's father was a half brother of Anne of Savoy, John's mother. For the information about Anne at the Byzantine court cf. M. DABROWSKA, *Lacinniczki nad Bosforem. Malzenstwa bizantynsko-lacinskie w cesarskiej rodzinie Paleologow (XIII–XV w.)* (The Latin Ladies on the Bosphorus. Byzantine-Latin Marriages in the Imperial Family of the Palaiologoi [13th–15th centuries]). Lodz 1996, 95–96. I have no access here to the book on John V by R. RADIC, *Vreme Jovana V Paleologa (1341–1391)*. Belgrade 1993. The author did not reply to my email.

mised to go to Rome.¹⁵ I share J.W. Barker's opinion that Amadeo, who was the Emperor's kinsman, could have been the one to make the strongest argument for a personal gesture such as conversion. "I certainly think", writes Barker, "that John would not have journeyed personally to Rome if he had not already made up his mind to accept conversion publicly at that time. Otherwise, he could have dealt with the Pope on broader issues of Church Union through emissaries".¹⁶ John appeared in Rome on 18 August 1369, received the hospital of the Holy Spirit as his residence, and did not meet the Pope before accepting the Roman Creed. Then there was a pompous religious ceremony, well known from the literature.¹⁷ This ceremony, however, changed the Papal attitude to Byzantium. The Pope delivered an encyclical which was meant to draw the attention of the whole Catholic world to John V's situation.¹⁸ First of all, the Pope counted on Louis the Great, and he might have been more efficient in supporting Byzantium but for his death in December 1370. Before his death, Urban V managed to support Byzantine-Venetian alliance, the result of which was John V's visit to Venice. This stay turned out to be a disaster. John offered the island of Tenedos instead of his debts to the Republic but his son, Andronikos IV, the regent in Constantinople, preferred to give the island to Genoa. As a result of this political quarrel, the Emperor could not repay his debts and was blocked in Venice till 1371, when his son, Manuel, came with money and freed him.¹⁹ John V returned to Constantinople in the same year, just after the battle on the Marica river, where the army of two Serbian princes was crushed by the Turks, and Constantinople became seriously threatened. In 1372–1373 the Emperor signed a treaty with Murad and submitted to him. This submission was the result of a total failure in the relations with Hungary. What prevented Louis the Great from helping John V, now Catholic? He might have been afraid of John's alliance with Venice in 1370, but such was not the case.

15. HALECKI, *op. cit.*, 141–144.

16. J.W. BARKER, quoted e-mail.

17. HALECKI, *op. cit.*, 199.

18. *Ibidem*, 201.

19. D.M. NICOL, *Byzantium and Venice. A Study in Diplomatic and Cultural Relations*. Cambridge 1988, 305–308.

In the same year Louis the Great became the King of Poland. In September 1370 Casimir the Great, the Polish ruler, had had a hunting accident and did not recover from it. He died on 5 November 1370.²⁰ Married four times, he did not leave an heir; he had no brother, but he had a sister, Elisabeth of Poland, Queen of Hungary, and her son, Louis the Great, became his successor according to the old agreement between Casimir and Louis's father.²¹ Contemporary Polish chronicler, Janko of Czarnkow, complains that Casimir listened to his advisers and accepted Louis. He underlines that the Hungarian ruler was faced with an obligation to regain the access to the Baltic Sea which Poland lost to the Teutonic Order in 1308. Moreover, Louis was not supposed to appoint foreigners to positions of authority, or to impose new taxes. In return, Polish clergy and gentry promised to be his faithful subjects.²² Louis arrived in Poland immediately after Casimir's death and crowned himself before the funeral. Janko does not hide his disapproval of the new ruler, and emphasizes the fact that during the funeral ceremony people openly mourned their King Casimir, as his rule had been very peaceful. They were afraid of the foreigner (*i.e.* Louis) who might want to change Polish tradition and introduce strangers to the court.²³ Jan Dlugosz noticed that Queen Elisabeth, Louis's mother, appeared in Poland immediately after her brother's death in order to secure the succession. She did her best to exclude from inheritance Casimir's daughter, the fourth wife of Charles IV of Luxemburg, who was greatly interested in ruling Poland. Elisabeth exerted pressure on the Pope, who acknowledged her rights to the Polish crown, and then those of her son.²⁴ Poland was not interested in Bohemian or Hungarian king. Dlugosz describes a very picturesque scene in Buda, when Polish

20. Cf. J. WYROZUMSKI, *Kazimierz III Wielki (Casimir the Great)*. Wrocław 1982, 217–218.

21. The Polish-Hungarian treaty was supposedly signed by Casimir and Charles Robert of Hungary in 1339 but Wyrozumski questions this date. J. DABROWSKI, *Ostatnie lata*, *op. cit.*, 116, 134; J. WYROZUMSKI, *op. cit.*, 63.

22. *Kronika Janka z Czarnkowa*, ed. J. SZLACHTOWSKI in: *Monumenta Poloniae Historica (MPH)*, vol. II, ed. J. A. BIELOWSKI, 637. I am grateful to Dr. Tadeusz Grabarczyk for supplying me with necessary Latin quotations.

23. *IBIDEM*, 649.

24. J. DABROWSKI, *Ostatnie lata*, *op. cit.*, 166.

envoys encouraged Louis to come to Cracow. The hypocritical ruler who knew well that the Kingdom had been promised to him, behaved like a naïve boy, saying that one shepherd could not protect against wolves the two herds so widely separated from one another. According to Dlugosz, he also said that it was inconvenient for one man to pledge himself to two women, or for one bishop to look after two sees!²⁵ After lavishing such brilliant aphorisms on the Poles, he decided to come over. "It would have been better", says Dlugosz, "if the Poles and the Hungarians had left the King to his thoughts. Poland would not have suffered the damages caused by his rule."²⁶

Unfortunately for Poland and for Byzantium, Louis appeared in Cracow. Though his mother was Polish, he was an Anjou, and a perfect stranger. Casimir's death meant the end of the long rule of the Piast dynasty, reigning in Poland for four centuries. A radical change was coming. Louis was supported by the diplomatic milieu of the so called Lesser Poland, but Great Poland, which was the cradle of the Polish state, was not enthusiastic about his arrival. According to Jan-ko of Czarnkow, Louis did not pay much attention to his new Kingdom and quickly went back to Buda. His Hungarian companions made a terrible impression, robbing people in their houses. None of the harmed could complain, as the Hungarians blocked the access to the ruler.²⁷ Louis left in Cracow his mother, Queen Elisabeth, who

25. JAN DLUGOSZ, *Annales seu cronicae incliti regni Poloniae*, lib. X. Var-savie 1985, 14: "aliquando tempore recusavit, ignorare asserens utrosque quid suaderent, satisne dubitans, si sanirent, cum utrumque regnum ad periculum illa suasionem traherent, astruens non convenire duos greges locis distantes ab uno pastore probe a morsibus luporum servari nec uni viro duas uxores legitime posse coniungi nec duos pontificatus in unum rite conferri". This is a very tasteful quotation if one takes into consideration that the King suffered from a sexually transmissible disease and could not have children for a long time. It is interesting what was Dlugosz's source of information about the quoted dialogue, as Janko does not write about it. Without any doubt, both of them did not like the Angevin rule in Poland and treated it as a disaster.

26. DLUGOSZ, *op. cit.*, 14-15: "Quodsi illum tam Poloni, apud quos regnatus erat, quam Hungari, apud quos iam regnabat, suis ingeniis uti passi fuissent, latius et tunc et hactenus regnum Poloniae, quod eo regnante in pluribus suis provinciis, in clenodiis, in thezauris spoliatum et mutilatum fuit, presidenciae sue funiculos extendere valuisset."

27. *Kronika Janka z Czarnkowa*, *op. cit.*, 649: "Hoc vero fiebat, quod Un-

called herself "Regina Poloniae", and whose rule was even worse than her son's.²⁸ Janko says that nothing was stable or certain. If somebody appealed to the Queen, she sent him to her son, who, in turn, sent them back to her, so there was no end to the case, unless it suited her taste."²⁹ This relation sounds very malicious, and one can say that Janko was not objective. And yet he was, because he became the witness of that time.³⁰ The correspondence between the Papacy and Queen Elisabeth proves that Louis was not independent, and he reckoned with every single opinion of his mother. Let us remember the negotiations concerning John V's conversion started in Buda. It seems that what disappointed Polish subjects most was the fact that Elisabeth, who ruled Poland, did not feel Polish herself. She realized the great plans of Anjou in Hungary. If one looks at the map presenting Louis's realm after the union with Poland, it looks very impressive. Hungary with Dalmatia, Poland with Ruthenia of Halicz! Here you have the Central European Empire with the access to the Adriatic and Black Seas. Only the access to the Baltic is missing and this was the problem that Polish statesmen concentrated on in contrast to the Anjou whose great interests were in the south,

gari sui per villas eundem sequentes, frangebant domos habitantium et res eorum violenter rapientes secum asportarunt, nulli autem pauperi, ad regem praedictum injuriam passo, Ungaris prohibentibus aditus patebat."

28. J. DABROWSKI, *Ostatnie lata...*, *op. cit.*, 185. The author, obviously, disagrees with Janko's "black legend" of Elisabeth of Hungary.

29. Kronika Janka z Czarnkowa, *op. cit.*, 649: "In ipsiuaque absentia dilecta genitrice sua, nomine Elizabeth, Ungariae regina, regnum Poloniae gubernante, pejora fiebant quam antea, quia nulla stabilitas seu constantia in ipso regno viguit seu viget ad presens. Nam cum ad matrem recursus haberetur, remisit ad filium et filius ad matrem vice-versa, sique nullus finis in negotiis nisi sibi beneplacitis haberi potuit seu potest."

30. J. KLOCZOWSKI, Louis the Great as King of Poland as seen in the Chronicle of Jan of Czarnkow, in: Louis the Great, King of Hungary and Poland, *op. cit.*, 138-141. The author compares two opposite attitudes to the chronicler, expressed by Polish historians; J. Dabrowski, who showed the Angevin rule in good light and O. Halecki, who did not like Louis's policy. Therefore the first questioned Janko's testimony, the latter was far from condemning him. J. Kloczowski expects some more comparative research, which does not seem to change the general opinion that despite Janko's dislike for Anjou, he can be reliable as he was the witness of the time.

not in the north. But even with such a discrepancy the country had a great economic and military potential, if only the King would have bothered about John V's vicissitudes in 1370–1371. But he did not. Polish chroniclers did not notice the Emperor's conversion or the Pope's appeals to organize the expedition against the Turks. One can say it was not Polish *raison d'état*, but one should take into consideration that there were no independent Polish interests at that time. Louis the Great and his mother combined them with their Angevin perspective. Therefore Dlugosz is right in his statement that Louis did not think about strengthening Poland, or about regaining the territories lost to Bohemians, Saxonians (Brandenburgians M.D.) and the Teutonic Order. He did not care about the prosperity of Poland. On the contrary, he tried to dismember and weaken the State.³¹ Therefore the Poles looked back with nostalgia to Casimir the Great's rule and treated Louis's reign as God's punishment.³² Elisabeth surrounded herself by her own milieu and turned a deaf ear to Polish problems.³³ She clearly belonged to those Queen-Mothers who dominated their sons and daughters-in-law. The situation changed when Elisabeth of Bosnia, Louis's wife, who married him in 1353, finally gave birth to their child in 1370. It was Catherine, followed by Maria, born in 1371. The first one died quickly, the latter was betrothed to Sigismund of Luxemburg, Charles IV's son as early as 1372.³⁴ It is visible that both of them: Elisabeth of Poland and Louis cared about the succession to the Kingdom. He still hoped for a son, but the third child was also a girl, Jadwiga, born in 1373. These dates are very important from the perspective of the Byzantine Empire and Papal appeals for the crusade.

31. DLUGOSZ, *op. cit.*, 18: "Nihil pensi de Regno Polonie stabiliendo aut de his, que illi a Bohemias, Saxonibus et Cruciferis abstracta erant, vindicandis habuisse neque de illis profectu et incremento, sed de dismembracione cogitaciones et curas intendisse."

32. *Ibidem*, 21: "Ex cuius morte (*i.e.* Casimir's) genus vetustum regum Poloniae, in ea usque tempora continuatum, extinctum est, quantum ad reges et diadema regni Polonie a veris, iustis et naturalis principibus, ob varias prevaricaciones et dolos in alienigenas et externos iusto Dei permittente iudicio translatum."

33. *Ibidem*, 25.

34. *Ibidem*, 31.

Urban V was succeeded by Gregory XI, who was really shaken by the battle of Marica. On 14 May 1372 he delivered a bulla in which he urged Louis and both Elisabeths: the Old Queen and Elisabeth of Bosnia, Louis's wife, to help Byzantium.³⁵ He promised the assistance of Venice and intended to gather Byzantines and Latins in Greece for a rally in Thebes, where the details of the expedition were to be settled. One cannot lose sight of the fact that the Pope acted as the protector of the Latins settled on the previous Byzantine territories since the Fourth Crusade (1204) but at the same time he had consideration for his new brother in faith, the Catholic Emperor John V, for the reasons connected with prestige, and despite the awkward situation. The Latins never gave up their dreams about coming back on to the Bosphorus. The inheritors of the last Latin ruler there still treasured the title of the Emperors of Constantinople. The present ruler of Achaia at that time, Philip II of Taranto, was just a titular Emperor. The Pope asked him to come to Thebes as his territories at Peloponnesus were also threatened by the Turks.³⁶ And here we may have the explanation of the Hungarian attitude towards the supposed assistance for John V. Since 1370, Philip of Taranto had been the husband of Elisabeth of Slavonia, the niece of Louis, and the beloved granddaughter of Elisabeth of Hungary.³⁷ This particular question does not appear in Polish sources, but as the countries were united, Philip of Taranto, the titular Emperor of Constantinople, was closer to the Hungarian-Polish State than John V, a true Emperor of Byzantium, converted to Catholicism in vain.

Elisabeth of Hungary married Charles Robert in 1320. She was fifteen and he was twenty two. Born in 1305, she was in a perfect nubile age. In the years 1321–1332 she bore him five sons, which was a nice perspective for the dynasty. The first two boys died soon, while Louis was designated as an heir to the throne. After losing his next brother, Andrew, the husband of Joanna of Sicily, he was left with Stephen, Duke of Slavonia, whose only child was Elisabeth, the beloved granddaughter, mentioned above. This young lady, born in

35. HALECKI, *op. cit.*, 252. Cf. *Vetera Monumenta Historica, op. cit.*, I, no 230.

36. *Ibidem*, 256.

37. I have not been able to find any article on Elisabeth of Slovenia, of whom so little is known.

1353, in the year when her childless uncle Louis the Great married for the second time, and a year before her own father's death, became an attractive bride. Three important men were taken into consideration as her suitors before she married Philip III Anjou, Prince of Taranto, in 1370. He was twenty four years older. His five children by the first wife did not survive. Elisabeth bore him a son in 1371, who also died very quickly.³⁸

In this decisive time for Byzantium, it was clear that Elisabeth of Hungary had quite different ambitions than supporting John V. When her son, Louis, finally became the father of Maria (1371), the dynastic policy of the Polish-Hungarian Kingdom was evident. One can admire the determination of the Old Queen and her son. They wanted to keep Hungary and Poland for the Angevin dynasty at all cost. He was a forty five year old sick man, and his daughters, Maria and then Jadwiga, became his great hope.³⁹ But after the battle of Marica he was afraid for the safety of his realm and started to consider the crusade against the Turks, but only under the condition that the Pope would exempt his clergy from paying the tithe.⁴⁰ This tithe, by the way, was needed to support the Papal estates against Barnaba Visconti of Milan, rather than to organize military assistance against the Turks. Visconti was so powerful that the Pope insisted on having his way. As the problem concerned the Polish-Hungarian Kingdom, the Papal appeal was made public in Poland, and the tithe was finally paid, but it went to the Italian war.⁴¹ Time was passing. Instead of attacking Osmanlis, Louis turned against Venice, together with the Habsburg, with whom he connected his family, betrothing his younger daughter, Jadwiga, to William.⁴² Then all his effort was made to ensure the succession to the Polish throne for one of his daughters. To gain Polish elite for this idea, he granted a privilege in Koszyce in 1374, due to which Polish gentry was almost freed from

38. "Filippos III" (als Fürst of Tarent II), in: *Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit*, fasc. 12, ed. E. TRAPP. Vienna 1994, no 29867, 116–117.

39. DABROWSKI, *Ostatnie lata*, *op. cit.*, 397–398.

40. HALECKI, *op. cit.*, 266–267.

41. J. DUDZIAK, *Dziesięcina papieska w Polsce średniowiecznej* (The Papal Tithe in the Medieval Poland). Lublin 1974, 88–92.

42. HALECKI, *op. cit.*, 270; DABROWSKI, *Ostatnie lata*, *op. cit.*, 338.

taxes in return for accepting one of the Hungarian princesses as a future King (sic!) of Poland.⁴³

So, if one looks at Poland from the perspective of Turkish danger and Byzantine fate, one will easily find out that these questions do not appear in Polish sources, even though Poland was connected with Hungary by a personal union. And one cannot be surprised. We shall not find any trace of the treaty, which connected Byzantium and the Turks as vassal and senior. Only the Pope called it the "impium negotium"⁴⁴. At that time Elisabeth ruled Poland on behalf of her son, and she did it with great success according to J. Dabrowski, who appreciated the Angevin rule.⁴⁵ She was a strong woman, eclipsing her son, Louis, and she ruled for sixty years, which is a real record for a queen.⁴⁶ She was nice, kind, pious and devoted to the Franciscan order. She made a nice donation for the reconstruction of the Mulvian Bridge in Rome.⁴⁷ At the same time she behaved like "Rex feminus."⁴⁸ As a young woman she did not hesitate to defend her husband against the assault at the court. During this accident she lost four fingers of her right hand.⁴⁹ Though Polish by birth, she did not feel Polish, perfectly realizing the interests of her Angevin empire.⁵⁰ She was not interested in the fight for the access to the Baltic Sea or against the Teutonic Order. To her surprise, her

43. For the privilege of Koszyce see Kodeks dyplomatyczny Wielkopolski (The Code of Documents of Great Poland), ed. I. ZAKRZEWSKI, vol. III. Poznan 1879, no 1079, 425–427; DLUGOSZ, *op. cit.*, 23–24.

44. HALECKI, *op. cit.*, 301.

45. DABROWSKI, Elzbeita, *op. cit.*, 107–109, and IDEM, Ostatnie lata, *op. cit.*, 404.

46. Cf. M. SAGHY, Aspects of Female Rulership in Late Medieval Literature: The Queens' Reign in Angevin Hungary. *East Central Europe* 20–23, part 1 (1993–1996) 71–77.

47. DABROWSKI, Elzbieta, *op. cit.*, 34–41.

48. SAGHY, *op. cit.*, 81.

49. This is connected with the unfortunate love-affair of Casimir, her brother, with Klara Zach, her lady-in-waiting. Klara's father attacked Charles Robert at the Court, and Elisabeth stood between them. Even though S. Sroka dismisses the whole story, the handicap of Elisabeth remains obvious. With her strong hand without the four fingers she ruled the great Kingdom. Cf. S. SROKA, Elzbieta Lokietkowna. Bydgoszcz 1999, 19–25.

50. DABROWSKI, Elzbieta, *op. cit.*, 128.

late born granddaughter, Jadwiga, realized Polish expectations. She accepted the wish to break the betrothal with William of Habsburg, though not without anger or even fury. She married the Lithuanian Prince Ladislas Jagiello, much older than she was, and they created the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which was definitely a more successful union from the Polish point of view.⁵¹ But Elisabeth of Hungary did not live to see it; she died in 1380, and her son, Louis, followed her two years later.

Elisabeth's will contains interesting information, which is very important for the conclusion of this article. Strong and ruthless as she was, the Queen had a soft spot for Elisabeth of Slovenia. In her last words she stated that a substantial sum of money should be devoted to the transportation of the remains of the Slovenian Princess to Buda. Her husband, Philip of Taranto, had died in 1373. She came back to Hungary. The date of her death is unknown, but it happened shortly before the Old Queen's death. The note about Elisabeth of Hungary's decision is very brief but it shows how much she cared for her beloved granddaughter and was impressed by her title, as it is clearly written that: "Fiflty golden florens should be spent on the rites during the funeral and then on the funeral itself of our once famous Elisabeth, the former Empress of Constantinople."⁵²

But one should be fair in judging this Queen. We cannot accuse her of distracting the attention of Polish diplomacy from Byzantium. She was as pragmatic as were her Lithuanian successors, who avoided being involved in Byzantine troubles, offering, for example, as a solution the transfer of the Teutonic Order to the famous Tenedos island. Getting rid of the knights and gaining access to the Baltic Sea was the Polish *raison d'état*. Then, when the Venetian diplomacy, using Uzun Hasan's project, tried to involve Poland in the war against the Turks, Casimir the Jagellonian remained as adamant as

51. For the information on Jadwiga see O. HALECKI, *Jadwiga of Anjou and the Rise of East Central Europe*, ed. T. GROMADA. Highland Lakes, New Jersey 1991; J. WYROZUMSKI, *Królowa Jadwiga między epoką piastowską i jagiellońską* (Queen Jadwiga at the Turn of the Piast and Jagiellonian Times). Krakow 1997.

52. Elisabeth of Poland's will was made in Buda on 6 April, 1380. It was translated into Polish by B. SOBILO in: S. SROKA, *op. cit.*, 75 on the basis of *Codex diplomaticus Hungariae ecclesiasticus ac civilis*, t. IX, 5, ed. G. FEJER. Budae 1832.

earlier when he refused to take part in any expedition and was only willing to get rid of the Teutonic knights.⁵³

Politics is a tough game. John V knew it perfectly well and preferred to sign a treaty with the Turks instead of waiting for the promises that would never be fulfilled. We can only speculate whether he realized that Elisabeth of Hungary, his powerful neighbour, cherished the hope for the imperial future of her granddaughter, the wife of the titular emperor of Constantinople.

53. M. DABROWSKA, *From Poland to Tenedos. The project of using the Teutonic Order in the fight against the Turks after the fall of Constantinople*, in: *Byzanz und Ostmitteleuropa 950–1453. Beiträge zu einer Table Ronde des XIX Congress of Byzantine Studies*. Copenhagen 1996, eds. G. PRINZING and M. SALAMON. Wiesbaden 1999, 165–176; EADEM, *Uzun Hasan's project of alliance with the Polish King (1474)*, in: *Byzantina Lodziensia II. Mélanges offerts au Professeur Oktawiusz Jurewicz à son soixante-dixième anniversaire* 1998, 171–185.