

*An Ambiguous Golden Age
The Jagiellonians in Polish Memory & Historical Consciousness*

In a book published in Poznań in 1946, in the immediate aftermath of World War Two, the historians Maria and Zygmunt Wojciechowski wrote:

The times of the Sigismunds are and will remain a golden age of our past. When children want to learn about Poland, we direct their first steps to the Sigismund Chapel and to the courtyard of the Wawel castle... Here, we experience unforgettable moments of joyful wonder.¹

In Poland (broadly conceived), we find a particularly dense hotspot of Jagiellonian memory – multiple layers, centuries deep, in a dizzying range of media, depicting and interpreting what has established itself as arguably Poland’s most iconic royal dynasty.² From the coronation of the pagan grand duke of Lithuania, Jogaila (Jagiello) (d.1434), as king of Poland in Kraków cathedral in 1386, to the burial of his great-grandson Sigismund Augustus without heir in that same building in 1573, this family produced seven Polish monarchs.³ The subject of Polish cultural memory of the Jagiellonian rulers is vast, relatively unmined, and this foray into it will inevitably be selective, subjective and preliminary. Venturing into this enormous panorama, this essay has two aims. Firstly, it seeks to map the long-term patterns of Jagiellonian memory in Poland, and identify their evolving social-political functions, for the first time.⁴ It identifies distinct phases, or modes, of Jagiellonian memory from the 16th century to the 21st: the discourses and images already in circulation during the long Jagiellonian period itself (1380s to 1570s); early modern ‘genealogical’ memory cultivated by successor dynasties (1580s-1660s); a competing early modern ‘national monarchy’ memory popular among local elites (1570s-1790s); an elegiac 19th-century ‘national’ memory during the Partitions in which Jagiellonians embodied lost sovereignty (1800s-1918); state-directed memory (1918+), with Jagiellonians deployed as a Polish tool in Central European geopolitics; and finally civic-commercial memory (c.1989+), in which Jagiellonians provide pleasant entertainment and nostalgia, having been pushed well into the background of Polish cultural memory by the brutal events of the 20th century and their own ongoing memory wars.⁵

¹ M. Wojciechowsky and Z. Wojciechowsky, *Polska Piastów, Polska Jagiellonów*, Poznań, 1946, p. 467: ‘Czasy zygmuntofskie są i pozostaną złotym okresem naszej przeszłości. Pierwsze kroki dziecka poznającego Polskę kierujemy do kaplicy Zygmuntofskiej i do arkad zamku wzniesionego na Wawelu przez Zygmunta. Przeżywamy niezapominane chwile radosnego zachwytu’.

² By Poland in this essay, we will mean materials produced in the Polish language from the sixteenth century onwards, but also early modern Latin texts on the Jagiellonians composed within the lands of the Polish monarchy.

³ For the leading surveys of Polish Jagiellonian history, see A. Bues, *Die Jagiellonen: Herrscher zwischen Ostsee und Adria*, Stuttgart, 2010; P. Jasienica, *Jagiellonian Poland*, trans. Alexander Jordan, Miami, 1978, and U. Borkowska, *Dynastia Jagiellonów w Polsce*, Warsaw, 2011.

⁴ The memory of Polish royal dynasties is little studied. For an exception, see M. Eiden, *Das Nachleben der schlesischen Piasten: dynastische Tradition und moderne Erinnerungskultur vom 17. bis 20. Jahrhundert*, Cologne, 2012.

⁵ For Polish memory of modern history, see for example U. Blacker, A. Etkind and J. Fedor, eds., *Memory and Theory in Central Europe*, New York, 2013; R. Traba and H. Henning Hahn, eds., *Polsko-niemieckie miejsca pamięci*, 5 vols, Warsaw, 2012-15; M. Pakier and J. Wawrzyniak, *Memory and Change in Europe: Eastern Perspectives*, New York, 2016.

The essay's second purpose is to probe the mutual relationship between these different memory regimes. How far are memories of the Jagiellonians in one period shaped by, or recycled from, earlier memories? Where is, say, eighteenth-century memory of the Jagiellonians in Poland deriving its content from? This, as we saw in the volume Introduction, is currently a moot point in the interdisciplinary field of memory studies. Judith Pollmann has stressed how far historic memory is remediated – showing, for example, how in Leiden during medieval famine, the privations of the Dutch Revolt, and food shortages in 1945, the same distinctive local story about herrings and bread pops up again and again, presenting itself as a true recent anecdote.⁶ Feindt et al, in a series of major articles, have called on social scientists to recognise that memories are entangled across time as well as space, and for the historic dimension of cultural memory to form the focus of a new 'third wave' of memory research.⁷ The second part of this essay will therefore highlight the remediation of Jagiellonian memory in Polish tradition by identifying a handful of motifs or codes which pop up century after century, from medieval chronicle, to Romantic painting, to Communist stamp, to 21st century historical re-enactment. In this way, it looks at what Pestel calls 'the diachronic and synchronic dimensions of memory'.⁸ The discussion concludes by addressing the challenges posed by dynasty as a container for memory, and their wider implications for how we might investigate and conceptualise deep historic memory.

1) The Evolution of 'Jagiellonian' memory

In keeping with the volume's aim of linking up original material from the late medieval or early modern past with memories or renditions of it in subsequent centuries, let us start by outlining the rich but bifurcated local traditions about these kings already in circulation when Sigismund Augustus died at Knyszyn Castle in 1572. First, a highly critical discourse existed around these kings and their rulership – found in early texts such as an animal-fable satire composed circa 1417 on Jogaila, but most influentially expressed in the major chronicles of Jan Długosz (d.1480) and Miechowita (d. 1523), who recounted scandalous tales of the royal family, questioned the legitimacy of its children, and lambasted examples of poor kingship.⁹ Moral and political denunciations persisted throughout the sixteenth century: King Sigismund Augustus (1548-72), for example, generated a virtual sub-genre of polemical writing in his own right.¹⁰ Alongside this, however, the Polish royal court produced a considerable body of panegyric material

⁶ J. Pollman, plenary session lecture at 'Remembering the Reformation' conference, Cambridge September 2017; see also J. Pollmann and E. Kuijpers, 'Introduction', in E. Kuijpers, J. Pollmann, J. Muller and J. Steen, eds., *Memory Before Modernity: Practices of Memory in Early Modern Europe*, Leiden, 2013, p. 12.

⁷ G. Feindt, F. Krawatzek, D. Mehler, F. Pestel and R. Trimčev, 'Entangled Memory: Towards a Third Wave in Memory Studies', *History and Theory* 53, 2014, pp. 24-44 and Pestel et al., 'Promise and Challenge of European Memory', *European Review of History* 24/4, 2017, pp. 495-506

⁸ Pestel et al, p. 500.

⁹ For the satire, attributed to Bishop Stanisław Ciołek (d. 1437), see A. Lewicki and A. Sokołowski, eds., *Codex epistolaris saeculi decimi quinti*, vol. I, Kraków, 1876, pp. 47-52; J. Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae*, vols. 10-12, Warsaw, 1985-2005; Maciej of Miechów, *Chronica Polonorum*, Kraków, 1519 and 1521.

¹⁰ Anonymous chronicle, published in A. Przeździecki, *Jagiellonki Polskie w XVI wieku*, Kraków, 1868, vol. III, appendix 12, pp. 361-92; M. Kosman, 'Zygmunt August w opinii współczesnych i potomnych', *Pamiętnik Biblioteki Kórnickiej* 19, 1982, pp. 19-76. On this king's reputation, see also Mickūnaitė in this volume, pp. xxx.

about the ruling family, including dozens of orations for royal weddings, funerals and diplomatic meetings, and a three-volume praise-chronicle by the royal secretary Jodocus Ludovicus Decius in 1521.¹¹

It is also worth noting that the royal family's own artistic self-representation functions as a kind of original vanishing point for the many later depictions of Jagiellonians in visual media. The Jagiellonian era produced three principal image-types of these royals: printed family trees, sculpted royal tombs, and collective portrait representations, such as Lucas Cranach the Younger's series of Jagiellonian miniatures (1550s), or the medal cycles produced by Padovano (1532) and Cornelius van Herwijck (1561).¹² As a political phenomenon which unfolded over several generations rather than a single event such as, say, a battle, this ruling house had thus already generated a complex set of memories and messages within the Polish monarchy well before it technically died out in 1572. These were the diverse, contradictory, 'raw materials' available to those creating subsequent Jagiellonian memory.

A powerful early mode of Jagiellonian memory, crystallising soon after their political extinction in 1572, was what we might term the 'genealogical-dynastic' memory cultivated by their cousins and successors on the Polish throne, the Vasas. After a period of turbulent interregna, in 1587 the Poles elected as their king the Swedish prince Sigismund Vasa (1566-1632), son of Princess Catherine Jagiellon of Poland (d.1583). Sigismund III established a line which would rule Poland-Lithuania for some eighty years (1587-1668), and for whom insistent invocation (and memorialisation) of their maternal Jagiellonian ancestors became central to claims regarding royal power, legitimacy and identity.¹³ A printed festival book of 1587, *Sigismundi III Cracoviam Ingressus*, can be read as a kind of opening master-text for Vasa dynastic memory of the Jagiellonians.¹⁴ It describes the triumphal entry of the newly-elected Sigismund III into his royal capital of Kraków. Jagiellonians were adopted as the dominant theme of this *ingressus*. Reaching the city's suburbs, we are told, the new king came to an arch depicting 'the Jagiellonians, his ancestors'.¹⁵ At each of the seven subsequent stops on the ceremonial route, a different Jagiellonian king 'spoke' to Sigismund III, acknowledging him as kin. The festival book reproduces the procession's 'images' and 'effigies' of the Jagiellonian kings in a series of full-page woodcuts. These represent the largest concentration of Jagiellonian images printed in a single volume in Poland since 1521. The book's anonymous author explicitly invokes memory and political pseudo-resurrection, writing that the Jagiellonians 'truly are worthy of memory, and it is not unjoyful for students of

¹¹ For Jagiellonian rhetoric in 16th-century orations, see N. Nowakowska, I. Afanasyev, S. Kuzmova, G. Mickunaite, S. Niiranen and D. Zupka, *Dynasty in the Making: the Idea of the Jagiellonians, c.1385-1660* (forthcoming); J. Ludovicus Decius, *De Jagiellonum familia, De Sigismundi regis temporibus*, Kraków, 1521.

¹² M. Gumowski, 'Trzy serie portretów Jagiellońskich', *Wiadomości Numizmatyczno-Archaeologiczne* XIX, 1937, pp. 41-66; J. Ruszczycówna, 'Nieznane portrety ostatnich Jagiellonów', *Rocznik Muzeum Narodowego w Warszawie* 20, 1976, pp. 5-119.

¹³ On Vasa self-presentation, see J. Chrościcki, *Sztuka i polityka: funkcje propagandowe sztuki w epoce Wazów, 1587-1668*, Warsaw, 1983.

¹⁴ *Sigismundi III... Poloniae et Sueciae Regis... Cracoviam ingressus*, Kraków, 1587.

¹⁵ *Sigismundi III*, fo. B.

the past to depict those effigies as if alive, as far as possible...'¹⁶ The *Ingressus* serves as a reminder of the historic layering of memory – a work printed to commemorate an ephemeral event, which was itself a commemoration of past kings.

The genealogical imperative in Vasa-led memory of the Jagiellonians can also be seen in series of striking 17th-century examples. In the 1640s, Sigismund III's son King Ladislas IV (1632-48) commissioned the so-called Marble Room in the castle in Warsaw, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth's new capital. Designed by the Italian architect Giovanni Battista Gisleni, this was to be the most splendid reception room in the complex.¹⁷ It was decorated with inlaid coloured marbles, a fountain-stove, scenes depicting Ladislaus IV's military triumphs, and a series of twenty-two octagonal portraits of the king's ancestors by Peter Danckers de Rij, hung around the walls of the chamber like a frieze. This portrait cycle included Sforza and the Habsburg queens of Poland, but its main subjects were Jagiellonians, with Jogaila himself (the earliest figure depicted) presented as the original founder-ancestor of Ladislaus IV's line. Jerzy Lileyko argued that the purpose of the Marble room was to assert the succession and electoral claims of Ladislaus IV's infant son, by functioning as a virtual family mausoleum for the Jagiellonians. The Danckers panels, he points out, match the funerary portraits popular among Polish nobles at the time in shape and size.¹⁸ The Vasa kings did indeed invoke the Jagiellonians in their own mourning and self-memorialisation. The new royal (or 'Vasa') burial chapel constructed in Kraków cathedral from 1655 was modelled directly on the Jagiellonian chapel adjacent to it, a mirror image, and its black marble plaques carried gilded inscriptions which explicitly identified Sigismund III and his line as descendants of the Jagiellonians.¹⁹ In the mid-17th century, Jagiellonians as blood ancestors thus still formed a core plank of the self-presentation of Polish kings – indeed, following his abdication in 1668, John Casimir, the last Vasa monarch, organised the completion of the Vasa chapel, with its genealogical claims, as one of his last acts upon leaving Kraków for exile in France. He would also leave money for this purpose in his will in 1672.²⁰

However, in the early modern period, the Jagiellonians could also be recalled in a rather different mode by poets, historians and artists – not as a self-contained family or distinct dynastic subset of royals, but rather as part of a much bigger, glorious, and (allegedly) unbroken continuum of Polish kings stretching back to the mythical founder Lech. In this 'national monarchy' mode, invocation of the Jagiellonians served principally to celebrate the broader institution and political community of the Polish monarchy itself. This approach is encapsulated in the popular 16th and 17th century genre

¹⁶ *Sigismundi III*, fo. B, 'verum quod & dignae memoriae sint, & antiquitatis studiosis non iniucundum id futurum putemus, ipsas effigies ad vivum, quantum fieri potuit, expressas cum epigrammatibus suis subiicere visum fuit.'

¹⁷ For the principle study, see J. Lileyko, 'Władysławowski pokój marmurowy na zamku królewskim w Warszawie i jego twórcy', *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* 37:1, 1975, pp. 13-29.

¹⁸ Lileyko, pp. 27-8.

¹⁹ M. Rózek, 'Źródła do fundacji i budowy królewskiej kaplicy Wazów przy katedrze na Wawelu', *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* XXV/1, 1973, pp. 3-9.

²⁰ Rózek, 'Źródła do fundacji', p. 7 and 'Uzupełnienie do fundacji królewskiej kaplicy Wazów', *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki*, XXXVI/2, 1974, pp. 393-96.

of the *icones regum Poloniae* - catalogues of the historic kings of Poland, consisting of verses and/or woodcuts. Klemens Janicki's *Vitae Regum Polonorum elegiaco carmine descriptae* (1563), for example, was followed by the *Icones* of Jan Głuchowski (1605), Salomon Neuberger (1620), and many more.²¹ In 1588 the polymath Tomasz Treter produced his influential *icones* woodcut, in which portraits of all Poland's kings were arranged to form the kingdom's heraldic eagle.²² In this type of narrative, or visualisation, the Jogaila-descended kings who ruled from 1386 to 1572 occupy only a small part of the crowded historical stage of the Polish past. Of the 44 kings depicted in Głuchowski's 1605 *Icones*, for example, only seven are 'Jagiellonians', and only 3 directly given that appellation.²³ The *icones* were not confined to the printed page. In the 1640s, the burghers of Thorn (Toruń) commissioned for their town hall a series of eighteen portraits of the kings of Poland, from Boleslaus the Bold (d. 1025) to Ladislaus IV.²⁴ The Warsaw Marble Room and the Thorn gallery - created in the same decade, in the same medium - therefore juxtapose these two different ways of invoking the Jagiellonians in Polish early modernity, as personal kin of the reigning king, versus as a few bricks in the much bigger edifice of the immortal institution of the Polish monarchy.

It was this latter tradition which triumphed after the 1660s, when the kings of Poland-Lithuania no longer had any Jagiellonian blood ties to plausibly claim. After the Vasas, the polity's electors chose kings from an array of new families, such as Jan Sobieski (1674-96), the Electors of Saxony August II and August III Wettin (1697-1763), and Stanisław August Poniatowski (1763-95). The royal-genealogical mode of recalling Jagiellonians fell away, and the Crown itself also started (along with its subjects) to invoke those 15th and 16th century rulers within the *icones regum poloniae* mode. The Jagiellonians were now presented by the Crown as venerable figures who glorified the monarchy and its elected incumbents as predecessors, not ancestors. This shift is epitomised by the whole-sale remodelling of the Warsaw Marble Room in the years 1769-91, on the orders of King Stanisław August Poniatowski. Marcello Bacciarelli was commissioned to produce an entirely new set of portraits for the room, which effectively transformed the Vasa 'Jagiellonian mausoleum' into a splendid *icones regum Poloniae* cycle. He ejected all portraits of queens-consorts, included only kings of Poland, and pushed back the series' starting point by three centuries to commence with Boleslaus the Brave (d. 1025). Jagiellonian kings deemed historically (not genealogically) significant were included - Bacciarelli, for example, painted Jogaila and Sigismund I prominently in victor's laurels, for the 1410 Battle of Grunwald and the 1519-21 Prussian war respectively.²⁵ The mnemonic purpose of these monarchs within Bacciarelli's Marble Room is to act as royal exemplars, not forefathers. The title of the new ceiling fresco made this very point: *Fame announcing the memorable deeds of Polish monarchs*.²⁶ This

²¹ See K. Janicki, *Vitae Regum Polonorum elegiaco carmine descriptae*, Kraków, 1565; T. Treter, *Regum Poloniae Icones*, Rome, 1591; J. Głuchowski, *Icones ksiąząt y krolów polskich*, Krakow, 1605; S. Neugebauer, *Icones et vitae principum ac regum Poloniae omnium*, Frankfurt, 1620; A. Obodziński, *Pandora starożytna monarchów polskich*, Kraków, 1640.

²² T. Chrzanowski, *Działalność artystyczna Tomasza Tretera*, Warsaw, 1984.

²³ Głuchowski, *Icones*.

²⁴ J. Flik, *Poczet królów polskich w zbiorach Muzeum Okręgowego w Toruniu*, Toruń, 2nd edition, 2000.

²⁵ See A. Chyczewska, *Marcello Bacciarelli, 1731-1818*, Wrocław, 1973, pp. 63-66; J. Lileyko, *Zamek Królewski w Warszawie*, Warsaw, 3rd edition, 1986, pp. 204-5.

²⁶ Chyczewska, *Marcello Bacciarelli*, p. 63.

artistic project glorified in particular the monarchy's current incumbent. Stanisław August's coronation portrait was the largest image in the room, and Adam Naruszewicz's poem praising the chamber stressed the 'splendid league' of kings who looked down from heaven to bless the reign of the current ruler.²⁷ Johann Christian Kamsetzer's drawings of the room's interior (1784) show visitors admiring (only) the portrait of reigning king himself. The Jagiellonians thus became useful background extras in a room which enshrined Stanisław August as its principal hero (see Plate). In the early modern period, then, we can trace a divergence or distinction between 'dynastic' and 'royal' memory of the Jagiellonians, with both ultimately legitimising the Crown, albeit from different angles. What happened, however, after the demise of the monarchy itself with the abdication of Stanisław August in 1795?

The long nineteenth century saw a wholesale recalibration of Jagiellonian memory in Polish culture, in the highly charged context of the Partitions. In 1795, Russia, Prussia and Austria-Hungary conducted their third and final Partition, or annexation, of Poland-Lithuania. The Polish monarchy ceased to exist as both territory and institution. In the European age of nationalism, Poland thus became a nation without a nation-state and 'Poland' itself a memory.²⁸ Polish cultural memory of the Jagiellonians in the 19th century had specific characteristics - the sheer outpouring of material about the dynasty; an intense cross-fertilisation between different media, such as scholarship, art and fiction; and an emphasis on the imagination, with the Jagiellonians' inner mental worlds, dress, political and private dramas reconstructed on a scale, and at an emotional pitch, not yet seen in Poland. In the Partitions era, the Jagiellonians (dead for almost 400 years) became a vehicle for debating the destiny of the Polish nation. These royals, who had stood at the fulcrum of the polity's rise and fall, thus functioned in the 19th century as a powerful if ambiguous cipher for lost Poland itself. Here, we will consider in turn several interlocking elements of this mnemonic system - historical scholarship, history-painting, historical fiction, preservation of material heritage, and the 1910 ceremonies to mark the quincentenary of Jogaila's victory at the Battle of Grunwald (1410).

The founding of the first university posts in History (in Lwów and Kraków), and of the prestigious historical journal *Kwartalnik Historyczny* (f.1887) led to a surge of 19th century publications on Polish history, a phenomenon which has been closely studied by Monika Baár and others. The important role played by the Jagiellonians in this scholarship can only be sketched here.²⁹ Meticulous studies of 15th and 16th century kings appeared, the fruits of decades of research: they included thick monographs on the reigns of Jogaila (d.1434) and Casimir IV (d.1492), or multi-volume source editions from the

²⁷ Chyczewska, p. 64. King Stanisław August also had Bacciarelli's *icones* reproduced as medals: M. Męclewska, 'Prawda i legenda o medalierskiej serii królów Polskich z czasów Stanisława Augusta', 2004, conference paper published online, [http://mazowsze.hist.pl/files/Kronika_Zamkowa/PDF_bez_tytulowych/Kronika_Zamkowa_r2005-t1_2_\(49_50\)/Kronika_Zamkowa-r2005-t1_2_\(49_50\)-s29-43/Kronika_Zamkowa-r2005-t1_2_\(49_50\)-s29-43.pdf](http://mazowsze.hist.pl/files/Kronika_Zamkowa/PDF_bez_tytulowych/Kronika_Zamkowa_r2005-t1_2_(49_50)/Kronika_Zamkowa-r2005-t1_2_(49_50)-s29-43/Kronika_Zamkowa-r2005-t1_2_(49_50)-s29-43.pdf), accessed 12.10.2014.

²⁸ For a history of Polish nationalism in this period, see B. Porter, *When Nationalism Began to Hate: Imagining Modern Politics in Nineteenth Century Poland*, New York, 2000.

²⁹ See M. Baár, *Historians and Nationalism: East Central Europe in the Nineteenth Century*, Oxford, 2010 and J. Maternicki, 'Miejsce i rola "Kwartalnika Historycznego" w dziejach historiografii polskiej', *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 95/1, 1988, pp. 3-20.

reign of Sigismund I (d.1548).³⁰ Such works, in addition to being scientifically pioneering, intervened in painful political debates about the causes of the Partitions. The epic *Poland and Her History* (published from 1858), by the father of Polish historiography Joachim Lelewel (1786-1861), here offered a powerful master-narrative of Polish history, imagining Poland as a suffering, innocent Christ among nations, preyed upon by wicked forces.³¹ However, from the 1860s the so-called Kraków history school rejected this view, instead blaming the disaster of the Partitions on centuries of Polish political error, with the Jagiellonian kings identified as particular culprits.³² Michał Bobrzyński, in his landmark *Sketch of Polish History* (1879), attacked these rulers for their short-sightedness, anarchy and weakness, while the Lwów professor Ksawery Liske portrayed them as gullible fools who in terrible 16th-century miscalculations had permitted the rise of the future Partitioning powers of Habsburg Austria and Prussia.³³ The Jagiellonians thus started to occupy a highly ambiguous place in modern Polish historical narrative – authors of both the country's Renaissance Golden Age and its later demise.

Arguably the most influential creator of Polish Jagiellonian memory in the 19th century was however not a university scholar, but an artist. Jan Matejko (1838-93), Director of the Kraków Academy of Fine Arts (from 1872), was one of the foremost cultural figures in Austrian-ruled Poland, and its most celebrated painter.³⁴ Throughout his long career he took as his chief subject scenes from the national past, and in particular the Jagiellonians. Matejko made his debut at a Kraków exhibition in 1856 with the painting *Władysław-Jagiello Praying Before the Battle of Grunwald*.³⁵ At least a third of his canvasses over the next 40 years featured Jagiellonians – 14 paintings, some of them gigantic, plus many additional drawings of the dynasty.³⁶ While contemporaries such as Józef Simmler (d. 1868) or Wojciech Gerson (d.1901) painted Jagiellonian subjects occasionally – particularly the tragic story of Queen Barbara Radziwiłł (d.1551) – nobody painted them as insistently as Matejko.³⁷ His canvasses, though mocked by some

³⁰ For example, M. Bobrzyński, *O ustawodawstwie nieszawskim Kazimierza Jagiellończyka*, Kraków, 1873; K. Szajnocha, *Jadwiga i Jagiello*, Warsaw, 1877; *Acta Tomiciana*, Poznań, 1852+.

³¹ J. Lelewel, *Polska: dzieje i rzeczy jej*, 20 volumes, Poznań, 1858-86. The publication history of this work is complicated, and its dates of printing are interpreted variously by scholars.

³² See Piotr Biliński and Paweł Plichta (eds), *Krakowska szkoła historyczna a Polskie Towarzystwo Historyczne*, Kraków, 2017.

³³ M. Bobrzyński, *Dzieje Polski w zarysie*, Warsaw, 1879; X. Liske, *Studia z dziejów wieku XVI*, Poznań, 1867. For these debates in Polish 19th-century scholarship, see N. Nowakowska, 'Jagiellonians and Habsburgs: the Polish Historiography of Emperor Charles V', S. C. Dixon and Martina Fuchs, eds., *The Histories of Emperor Charles V*, Aschendorff, 2005, pp. 249-73.

³⁴ J. Krawczyk, *Matejko i historia*, Warsaw, 1990; for Matejko in the context of Polish 19th-century art and its world, see A. Ryszkiewicz, *Malarstwo Polskie: romantyzm, historyzm, realizm*, Warsaw, 1989.

³⁵ Ryszkiewicz, p. 22.

³⁶ After the 1856 debut, these works were: *Zygmunt I conferring nobility on the professors of the Jagiellonian University* (1858); *The Poisoning of Queen Bona* (1859); *The jester at a ball at the court of Queen Bona* (1862); *Sigismund Augustus and Barbara Radziwiłł at the court of Vilnius* (1867); *The Union of Lublin* (1869); *The Raising of King Zygmunt's Bell* (1874); *The Battle of Grunwald* (1878); *The Battle of Varna* (1879); *The Prussian Homage* (1882); *The Death of Sigismund Augustus* (1886); *The Baptism of Lithuania* (1888); *The founding of the Jagiellonian University* (1889); *Dmitr of Goraj and Queen Jadwiga* (date unclear).

³⁷ For example, Józef Simmler, *The Death of Barbara Radziwiłł* (1860); Wojciech Gerson, *The Ghost of Barbara Radziwiłł* (1886) and *Sigismund Augustus as Widower* (1886). Henryk Rodakowski (d.1894) and

critics as garish, were exhibited in Warsaw, Berlin, Vienna and Paris (where they won a gold medal in 1865), and were distributed in lithographic form to the 3,000 members of the Kraków Society of Friends of Fine Arts (1870s).³⁸ Matejko's history-painting was also in direct dialogue with the disaster of the Partitions. In common with Kraków historians such as Bobrzyński, Matejko placed the Jagiellonian kings and queens in the central frame of Polish national history, offering a vision of these rulers which was at once melancholic, nostalgic and critical. This can be seen in one of his most famous works, *The Prussian Homage* (3.8 x 7.8 metres), undertaken in 1879, the year of Bobrzyński's *Sketch*. *The Prussian Homage*, which depicts King Sigismund I taking a vow of fealty from the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order in 1525, thereby creating the Prussian state, is ambivalent in its very composition. In this crowded pageant, there is no Polish hero or central protagonist: not the gilt-clad King Sigismund, or Queen Bona, or the infant prince Sigismund, or the huge crowd of anxious noble and burgher onlookers. Instead, the figure positioned to catch the eye is Matejko himself, as the prophesying royal jester Stańczyk, in meditative-melancholic pose at the king's feet. Through works such as these, Matejko's vivid images and historical judgements of the Jagiellonians would burn themselves into the Polish cultural imagination for well over a century to come.

Jagiellonians were also energetically re-imaged in long 19th-century Polish fiction. Leading literary figures were drawn to them – the prolific and best-selling Józef Kraszewski (d. 1887) penned multiple novels about Poland's Renaissance royalty, Lucjan Rydel (d.1918) and Stanisław Wyspiański (d.1907) wrote plays about the love affairs of King Sigismund August, while the Nobel-prize winning Henryk Sienkiewicz's 1910 masterpiece *The Teutonic Knights* recounted Jogaila's victorious 1410 military campaign.³⁹ This corpus of Jagiellonian historical fiction shared certain features. It was patriotic-didactic in tone, intent on imagining the Jagiellonians as fully as possible, and heavily indebted to (and in dialogue with) contemporary historical scholarship. Sienkiewicz, for example, wrote that historical fiction served society by 'illuminating and supplementing' knowledge of the national past, resurrecting figures from the gloomy twilight of the tomb and rendering them present again: here we have fiction as (patriotic) necromancy.⁴⁰ Kraszewski's novel *Infantka* (1884), on Princess Anna Jagiellon (d.1596), displays many of the traits of Polish historical fiction of this period. It offers a fine-grained, three-dimensional picture of the dying King Sigismund August's doctors, courtiers and mistresses, contemporary fears and rumours, the architecture, and daily routine of the royal court – all precisely rooted in the sixteenth-century sources recently published by the historian Aleksander Przeździecki.⁴¹ The emotional timbre of *Infantka*, like Matejko's contemporary canvasses, is one of bathos, calamity and bitter-sweetness. Kraszewski presents the last Jagiellonian king as magnificent but flawed, and the 16th-

Leon Wyczółkowski (d.1936) also painted one Jagiellonian subject each. For memories of Barbara in Lithuanian tradition, see Mickūnaitė in this volume, pp. xxx.

³⁸ Ryszkiewicz, *Malarstwo*, pp. 39, 51-52.

³⁹ Józef Kraszewski, *Matka Królów* (Warsaw, 1883), *Dwie Królowe* (Warsaw, 1884) and *Infantka* (1884); Lucjan Rydel, *Zygmunt August* (Kraków, 1913); Stanisław Wyspiański, *Zygmunt August* (Warsaw, 1930); Henryk Sienkiewicz, *Krzyżacy* (Gdańsk, 1900).

⁴⁰ H. Sienkiewicz, 'O Powieści Historycznej', *Słowo*, 1889, nr. 98-101, re-published at <http://hamlet.edu.pl/sienkiewicz-opowiesci>, accessed 20.09.2017, 'objaśnienie i dopełnienie'.

⁴¹ Przeździecki, *Jagiellonki Polskie*.

century courtiers bewailing the ‘catastrophe’, ‘doom’ and ‘mess’ of the country are, of course, in some sense also talking about the Partitions. The Jagiellonians are here indelibly associated with national loss.

This peculiar 19th-century Polish admixture of elegy and patriotic activism was also seen in campaigns to restore Kraków’s Wawel hill, another key element in Jagiellonian myth-making. The Wawel, a castle-cathedral royal complex dating back to at least the 10th century, from the 1870s inspired a movement to reclaim, restore and revitalise the site for the Polish nation.⁴² Restoration of the cathedral took place from 1891, led by the architect Sławomir Odrzywolski, diocesan authorities, Jan Matejko, Kraków City Council, and a local bank.⁴³ A ‘Fund for the Royal Tombs’ was administered by the Polish Academy of Sciences, and a restoration ‘cent-collection’ fund was organised by Aleksandra Ulanowska, whose tins circulated at aristocratic balls and in rural parishes alike.⁴⁴ Renovation of the Wawel was, to a large degree, Jagiellonian memory by another name: the celebrated Renaissance castle had been built by these kings, and a majority of the revered medieval royal tombs in the cathedral were of Jogaila’s line.⁴⁵ The chapels of Sigismund I (d.1548), Casimir IV (d.1492) and Jogaila’s queen Sophia (d.1461) were the first to be restored. In 1903, the Antoni Madeyski was commissioned to design a tomb monument for King Ladislaus, who had vanished at the Battle of Varna (1444). Jogaila’s tomb sculpture was moved, so that along with Madeyski’s neo-gothic creation, two Jagiellonian kings could now flank the approach to the altar-shrine of St. Stanisław, Poland’s patron.⁴⁶ These activities reached an apogee with Waław Szymanowski’s (unrealised) design for a monument to be placed at the Wawel hill entrance. *Procession to the Wawel* (1907-11, see Plate), an epic rendition of Polish history, featured 52 figures led by Fate, including ten key kings and queens (3.5 metres high), of whom seven were Jagiellonians and their wives. Critics declared of the design that ‘future generations will teach their children our history in the shadow of the cathedral, at the foot of *The Procession*’.⁴⁷ Szymanowski’s *Procession* was an (unconscious?) echo of Sigismund III’s 1587 *ingressus*, in which ‘effigies’ of Jagiellonian monarchs, arranged in historical order, had guarded the entrance to the royal spaces of Kraków. If Wojciech Bałus argues that the Wawel was in the 19th century definitively established as a place of metaphysical significance in the Polish cultural-national imagination through the three topoi of a readable text (speaking stones), ecclesiastical-historical shrine, and Polish (royal) pantheon, to this we might add that the memories of Jagiellonian kings formed a cornerstone of this vision.⁴⁸

⁴² For this period in Wawel’s history, see the special edition of *Waweliana*, III, 1994.

⁴³ See H. Górńska, ‘Restauracja katedry na Wawelu przez Sławomira Odrzywolskiego na przełomie XIX i XX wieku’, *Waweliana* III, 1994, pp. 123-141 and A. Petrus, ‘Fundusz centowy Aleksandry z Borkowskich Ulanowskiej na odnowienie Zamku Królewskiego na Wawelu (1894-1939)’, *Waweliana* III, 1994, pp. 109-122.

⁴⁴ A. Petrus, pp. 109-122.

⁴⁵ Although the tombs of earlier (Piast) kings were less numerous, it was the discovery of the tomb of Casimir the Great (d.1370) in 1869 which had arguably triggered the cathedral restoration movement, see P. Dabrowski, *Commemorations and the Shaping of Modern Poland*, Bloomington, 2004, pp.1-2.

⁴⁶ A. Sołtys, ‘Pomniki Antoniego Madeyskiego na tle problemu restauracji katedry krakowskiej’, *Studia Waweliana* III, 1994, pp. 157-67.

⁴⁷ See M. Piszczatowska, ‘Pochód na Wawel’, *Spotkania z Zabytkami* 8, 2008, pp. 38-9, ‘Przyszłe pokolenia dzieci swoje uczyć będą historii naszej w mrokach Katedry, u stop *Pochodu*.’

⁴⁸ W. Bałus, ‘Wawel dziewiętnastowieczny: poziomy interpretacji’, *Waweliana* III, 1994, pp. 11-18.

In a final twist in Partition-era memory, on the eve of World War One the Jagiellonians suddenly came into sharper, edgier political focus, with the 500th anniversary of Jogaila's victory at the Battle of Grunwald/Tannenburg (1410). In 1910, a Polish king's defeat of Prussia's Teutonic Knights was a highly resonant medieval event, given both official repressions against Poles in Prussia/Germany, and Kaiser Wilhelm II's enshrining of the Teutonic Knight's Castle at Marienburg as a key site of German imperial-nationalist memory from 1902.⁴⁹ In Kraków, the church, city council, novelist Sienkiewicz, musician Ignacy Paderewski, and the Falcons youth movement organised commemorations on a massive scale. In July 1910, 150,000 people, including foreign journalists, attended three days of events – sporting/martial displays on Błonie field, a six-hour procession, and the unveiling of a new Grunwald monument near the city-centre, at a ceremony complete with full orchestra, folk displays, singing, and speeches.⁵⁰ Poles from beyond Galicia participated: a woman from Bydgoszcz, in Prussian-ruled Poland,, offered to bring tins of soil from the northern battlefield to the Kraków celebrations.⁵¹ In 1910, Jogaila himself came, briefly if forcefully, to the very forefront of Polish historical memory - as a hero personifying the nation at the moment of its greatest military victory. Antoni Wiwaldski's Grunwald monument in Kraków took the form of a four metre high equestrian sculpture of the king.⁵² Delegations laid wreaths the size of cartwheels decked with Polish flags at Jogaila's tomb in Kraków cathedral.⁵³ Kraków's leading cultural institutions organised a major exhibition on Jogaila and his times.⁵⁴ A one-hundred page souvenir brochure (*księga pamięci*, literally 'book of memory') of the commemorations was dominated by images of Jogaila: his seal, tomb, bust, woodcuts.⁵⁵ It is less well known that the 1910 anniversary also held resonances well beyond Kraków, as across the Austrian-ruled province of Galicia small towns commissioned their own more modest busts or statues of Jogaila, mounted on columns or civic buildings, e.g. in Nowy Sącz, Mrzygłód, Przeworsk and Dynów.⁵⁶ These became enduring, charged sites of national memory in the local setting. These towns relate on their websites today the attempted destruction of these Jogaila statues by invading German forces in 1939 – claiming, from oral tradition, that locals smuggled bits of the king to safety in a cellar, or disguised his

⁴⁹ Dabrowski, *Commemorations*, pp. 161-2.

⁵⁰ For studies of the 1910 commemorations, see D. Radziwiłłowicz, *Tradycja grunwaldska w świadomości politycznej społeczeństwa polskiego w latach 1910-1945*, Olsztyn, 2003; Dabrowska, *Commemorations*, pp. 163-183 and M. Gałęziowska, 'Świętowanie wybranych rocznic bitwy pod Grunwaldem formą komunikacji rytualnej państwa i narodu', *Kultura i Społeczeństwo* 4, 2012, pp. 83-108.

⁵¹ Radziwiłłowicz, *Tradycja grunwaldzka*, p. 45.

⁵² For the monument, see Dabrowski, *Commemorations*, pp. 165-70

⁵³ K. Bartoszewicz, *Księga pamiątkowa obchodu pięćsetnej rocznicy zwycięstwa pod Grunwaldem*, Kraków, 1911, plate 28.

⁵⁴ Radziwiłłowicz, *Tradycja grunwaldska*, pp. 47-48. Some 130 objects were displayed.

⁵⁵ Bartoszewicz, *Księga pamiątkowa*.

⁵⁶ These are featured on civic websites: <http://www.nowysacz.pl/pomniki-sdeckie>; https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pomnik_kr%C3%B3la_W%C5%82adys%C5%82awa_Jagie%C5%82y_w_Przeworsku; https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pomnik_W%C5%82adys%C5%82awa_Jagie%C5%82y_w_Mrzyg%C5%82odzie; http://dynow.fotopolska.eu/Dynow/b4353,Pomnik_krola_Wladyslawa_II_Jagielly.html, accessed 15.11.2016

statue as that of a saint.⁵⁷ In 1910 therefore, after a century of partitions, Polish public, state-less memory thus briefly galvanised around Jogaila, not just as a soft-focus representative of a lost romantic past, but specifically as a leader of Polish anti-German armed struggle.

In all these ways, at the turn of the 19th century the now self-consciously national or nationalist Polish memory of the Jagiellonians merged the two main memory regimes of the early modern period – embracing the (genealogical) idea of Jagiellonians as a special, distinctive, named royal dynasty, while simultaneously taking from the *icones* tradition a sense of these people (as kings) as a powerful embodiment of Polish statehood.

With the recreation of a Polish state in the 20th century (Second Republic, 1918-45; Polish People's Republic, 1945-89; Third Republic, 1989+), a new mode of Jagiellonian memory can be detected, a cipher for debating Poland's place within Central European geopolitics. An inter-war golden age of Jagiellonian scholarship at Polish universities, led by figures such as Fryderyk Papeć (1856-1940), Ludwik Kolankowski (1882-1956) and Władysław Pociecha (1893-1958), took place in an atmosphere in which the Second Republic's relationship with its eastern neighbours was intensively debated in scholarship, politics and diplomacy.⁵⁸ The head of state Marshal Józef Piłsudski, having annexed Vilnius and fought a major war against Boleshevik Russia, and facing a restive Ukrainian minority, argued for a union of Central European states led by Poland, looking to the Jagiellonian monarchs (who had yoked together so many peoples and states of the region) as his model.⁵⁹ The definitive formulation of this idea was expressed by the historian and diplomat Oskar Halecki in a hugely influential and controversial 1937 article entitled 'The Jagiellonian Idea'. Halecki argued that the Jagiellonians had realised Poland's true historical destiny – one of paternal, civilising, Catholic tutelage over its Lithuanian, Ukrainian and Belarusian neighbours. Newly independent Poland, he wrote, 'is seeking a new guiding idea, and intuitively turns to the old, yet eternally fresh

⁵⁷ See local history accounts for Dynów and Mrzygłód, where the 'rescuers' are all carefully named.

<http://mariten.blog.onet.pl/2010/06/16/pomniki-grunwaldu-w-rzeszowie-i-okolicach-cz-5-dynow-blazowa-hermanowa-strazow-palikowka/>, accessed 10.2015, and

http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pomnik_W%C5%82adys%C5%82awa_Jagie%C5%82y_w_Mrzyg%C5%82odzie, accessed 27.09.2017.

⁵⁸ To cite just a very few examples, F. Papeć, *Jan Olbracht*, Kraków, 1936 and *Aleksander Jagiellończyk*, Kraków, 1949; W. Pociecha, *Geneza holdu pruskiego, 1467-1525*, Gdynia, 1937; L. Kolankowski, *Polska Jagiellonów: dzieje polityczne*, Lwów, 1936, see also B. Stachoń, *Polityka polska wobec Turcji i akcji anty-tureckiej w wieku XV do utraty Kili i Białogrodu, 1484*, Lwów, 1930.

⁵⁹ See P. Wandycz, 'Poland's Place in Europe in the Concepts of Piłsudski and Dmowski', *East European Politics & Societies* 4/3, 1990, pp. 451–468.

Jagiellonian ideal'. Jagiellonians function here as code for de facto Polish hegemony in inter-war Eastern Europe.⁶⁰

If the Second Republic's leaders had invoked the Jagiellonians to look east, from 1948 the Communist regime instead used them to look west. In general, the Polish People's Republic and its Marxist ideology had limited use for Renaissance kings: the 1960 celebrations of the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Grunwald, for example, dispensed with Jogaila altogether, their speeches and statutes instead presenting 1410 as a victory of the united Slav masses.⁶¹ However, the Jagiellonians could be usefully pressed into the service of one key domestic and international message of the government: that the formerly German territories acquired by Poland in 1945 (Prussia, Pomerania, Silesia) were historically, authentically, and now permanently Polish. The Jagiellonians' 15th and 16th century rule, conquests, and presence in the Baltic littoral were emphasised in state-sponsored scholarship, and in concrete and sandstone.⁶² In 1966, the city of Elbląg renamed its central square after King Casimir IV and placed a modernist statue of him outside the House of Culture, celebrating the 1466 treaty which had placed the town under Polish royal rule.⁶³ In 1974, a statue of Princess Anna Jagiellon (d.1503) was erected in Szczecin to assert Pomerania's historic links with the Polish Crown – Anna had been married to the Duke of Pomerania.⁶⁴ Here, Jagiellonian memory could be deployed to legitimise the post-World War Two redrawing of European borders.

In the 21st century, the Jagiellonians continue to haunt Polish foreign policy. A rhetoric, or short-hand, has developed to describe two competing visions of Poland's place in European geopolitics: a 'Piast' western-facing orientation, versus a 'Jagiellonian' stance projecting influence instead to the east.⁶⁵ Thus in 2009, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Radek Sikorski expressed support for the 'Jagiellonian idea', defining this as the promotion of stability and European culture among Poland's eastern neighbours, which could find new expression in Poland's support for further eastwards expansion of the European Union.⁶⁶ The political commentator Jakub Wojaś too concluded that 'if Poland succeeds in creating an eastern wing of the EU, it is possible that in the near future we will regain the international position enjoyed by Jagiellonian Poland.'⁶⁷ Here, the

⁶⁰ O. Halecki, 'Idea Jagiellońska', *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 51, 1937, pp. 486-510, at p. 510: 'ogłada się za nową ideą przewodnią i intuicyjnie zwraca się w tym celu ku dawnej, lecz zawsze świeżej idei jagiellońskiej'.

⁶¹ For the 1960 monument and depicted faces of anonymous Slav soldiers, see I. Grzesiuk-Olszewska, *Polska rzeźba pomnikowa w latach 1945-1995*, Warsaw, 1995, pp. 219-21; for the ceremonies, Gałęziowska, 'Świętowanie wybranych rocznic', pp. 89-93.

⁶² See for example H. Zins, *Ród Ferberów i jego rola w dziejach Gdańska w XV i XVI wieku*, Lublin, 1951; G. Labuda, *Szkice z dziejów Pomorza*, vol. I, Warsaw, 1958.

⁶³ <http://www.polskaniezwykla.pl/web/place/30785,elblag-plac-kazimierza-jagiellonczyka.html>, accessed 20.11.2017.

⁶⁴ See official article on Szczecin city webpages, http://www.szczecin.pl/chapter_59232.asp?soid=5074F05E915C46CCA57B66C998F77328 accessed 20.11.2017.

⁶⁵ R. Ślązak, 'Polityka piastowska, czy jagiellońska', *Sobieg.pl*, November 2013, <http://Sobieg.pl/polityka-piastowska-czy-jagiellonska>, accessed 23.11.16; see also A. Górski, 'Idea jagiellońska', *Niezależna* website, December 2013, <http://niezalezna.pl/49037-idea-jagiellonska>

⁶⁶ Discussed in M. Przydacz, 'Polityka zagraniczna wobec Białorusi', pp. 279-94, Paweł Musiałka, ed., *Główne kierunki polityki zagranicznej rządu Donalda Tuska w latach 2007-11*, Kraków, 2012, at p. 282.

⁶⁷ J. Wojaś, 'Idea jagiellońska w XXI wieku', *Portal Spraw Zagranicznych*, June 2009, <http://www.psz.pl/122-opinie/idea-jagiellonska-w-xxi-wieku>, accessed 23.11.16: 'Jeżeli Polsce na stałe uda

enlarged EU is in essence presented as the Jagiellonians' natural geopolitical successor. As Poland's domestic politics undergo intense polarisation in the 2010s, both explicitly and implicitly the Jagiellonians are again coming to the fore. The Polish Foreign Ministry-funded 'Jagiellonian Ideals' project (2017) frames toleration and peaceful co-existence with eastern partners as the dynasty's key legacy, in apparent echoes of Halecki. Meanwhile, President Andrzej Duda's 'Three Seas' diplomatic initiative (2017) advocates tighter co-operation among Central European states lying between the Baltic, Adriatic and Black Seas, in a move described by some commentators as a revival of Piłsudski's vision of a Polish-lead 'Jagiellonian' eastern federation.⁶⁸ In these strands of post-1918 political memory, the Jagiellonians have become a slogan for Polish debates over the role, nature and destiny of Central Europe itself in the modern world.

Alongside these official rhetorics, there exists a final category of Jagiellonian memory in post-1989 Poland, which we might term civic and commercial. Some memory theory suggests that fragmentation, pluralisation and growing heterogeneity of social memory is a characteristic of the digital age.⁶⁹ While not all historians agree, the growth of the internet and civil society in Poland since 1989 do enable us to observe local communities, and local consumers, in the act of remembering the Jagiellonians – in statutes of the dynasty appearing across provincial Poland, in historical re-enactments and in heritage merchandise.⁷⁰ A wave of Jagiellonian statue-building, commissioned by local history societies or town councils, has swept Polish small towns since the 1990s. New monuments of Jogaila, for example, have sprung up in Leżajsk (1997), Jedlnia (2010), Niepołomice (2010), Legnica (commissioned 2012), with a further planned in Nałęczów.⁷¹ Statues of Casimir IV have been erected in Malbork (2010) and Chojnice (2012), and mooted in Gdańsk and Kuźnica (2009).⁷² In 1993, a mounted bust of

się tworzyć wschodni wymiar UE to być może w najbliższym czasie odzyskamy pozycję jaką miała na arenie międzynarodowej Polska Jagiellonów.'

⁶⁸ For media discussion of 'Three Seas', see Marcin Kuśmierczyk, 'Trójmorze: czym jest koncepcja forsowana przez Prezydenta Andrzeja Dube?', Onet news website, 4th July 2017, <http://wiadomosci.onet.pl/kraj/trojmorze-czym-jest-koncepcja-forsowana-przez-prezydenta-andrzeja-dude/7mmjm4f>, accessed 09.2017, and Anon., 'Czesi popsują plany PiS na Trójmorze? Nie chcą być częścią anyniemieckiego paktu', *Newsweek Polska*, 19th June 2017. <http://www.newsweek.pl/swiat/polityka/trojmorze-pomysl-polskiego-rzadu-na-antyniemiecka-koalicje-w-ue.artykuly.412012.1.html>, accessed 09.2017.

⁶⁹ See J. Pollmann et al, *Memory Before Modernity*, and discussion of this point by Kuzmová in this volume, pp. xxx.

⁷⁰ J. Pollmann, *Memory in Early Modern Europe, 1500-1800*, Oxford, 2017.

⁷¹ Niepołomice, http://www.metalodlew.pl/ogloszenia/aktualnosci/aktualnosc/pomnik_krola_wladyslawa_jagielly_na_600_lecie, accessed 21.11.16; Leżajsk, <http://aordycz-lezajsk.blogspot.co.uk/2012/05/pomnik-wadysawa-jagiey.html>, accessed 21.11.16; Legnica, http://fakty.lca.pl/legnica.news.53376.Na_Tarninowie_stoi_pomnik_krola_Jagielly_.html, accessed 21.11.16, Nałęczów, <http://naleczow.net/galeria-sztuki/marian-pudelko/853-jagiello-popiersie-marian-pudelko.html>, accessed 21.11.16.

⁷² Malbork, <http://malbork.naszemiasto.pl/artykul/zdjecia/malbork-pomnik-krola-kazimierza-jagiellonczyka-juz-stoi.594122.gal.582698.t.id.tm.zid.html>, accessed 27.09.2017; Chojnice, <http://czas.tygodnik.pl/a/rzezby-w-parku-tysiaclecia-juz-stoja> (accessed 5.10.2015), in the Park Tysiąclecia;

Sigismund I was erected in Kleszczele (population 1,300).⁷³ King Sigismund Augustus has been newly memorialised in Knyszyn (1997) and Augustów (2007), and his sister Anna in Kalisz (2014).⁷⁴ Most of these monuments seek to commemorate a specific link between the Jagiellonians and the town's own history: the bronze Jogaila in Jedlnia, for example, holds a reproduction of his 1387 founding charter for the town. Town websites present these statutes as tourist attractions, and as a source of civic pride and identity – these royals thus acquiring a range of locality-specific meanings, in a devolution of national memory. The Polish historical re-enactments studied from an anthropological perspective by Małgorata Gałęziowska also reveal a sense of local ownership of the national past, with costumed participants even identifying with the Jagiellonians *against* politicians and elites. Jacek Szymański, who played King Jogaila at the 2010 Grunwald battle re-enactment, for example, complained to local media that the re-enactors suffered in the heat (in their commitment to the dignity of Polish history), while the Polish President and other officials in attendance ignored them, instead drinking coffee behind closed doors in the local museum.⁷⁵

Since 1989, a certain commercialisation of Jagiellonian memory is detectable. Gałęziowska found that a large part of the Grunwald re-enactment site is given over to stalls selling medieval or Jogaila souvenirs, and this trend is reflected more broadly on the internet, where Jagiellonian-heritage merchandise abounds on Polish websites. One can purchase T-shirts emblazoned with Matejko's portrait of Jogaila, a 'Sigismund Augustus' strategy board game, or hand-decorated, costumed dolls of Jagiellonians, in porcelain, papier mâché or plastic (e.g. as repurposed Matel Barbie and Ken figures).⁷⁶ Since c. 2000, there has been a boom in Jagiellonian-themed historical novels – while some are markedly experimental, such as Twardoch's fantasy time-travel novel *Eternal Grunwald*, most focus on royal love affairs and royal women as a form of relatively light entertainment.⁷⁷ Despite the apparent continuities of form with the 19th-century (local

Gdańsk proposal, <http://www.mmtrojmiasto.pl/257305/o-jagiellonczyku-i-jego-pomniku>; accessed 21.11.16; Kuznica statue design competition, http://www.kuznica.org.pl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=79:jagiellonczyk&catid=1:latest-news&Itemid=50, accessed 1.10.14.

⁷³ <http://www.polskaniezwykla.pl/web/place/gallery.1.24172.html>, accessed 22.11.16.

⁷⁴ Knyszyn, http://www.ciekawepodlasie.pl/info.htm#52/pl/i/pomnik_krola_zygmunta_augusta; Augustów, http://augustow.fotopolska.eu/Augustow/b79379.Pomnik_krola_Zygmunta_II_Augusta.html; Kalisz, <http://www.kopernik.kalisz.pl/index.php/wizualizacja-pomnika-anny-jagiellonki>, all accessed 21.11.16.

⁷⁵ Gałęziowska, 'Świętowanie wybranych rocznic', p. 98.

⁷⁶ T-shirts, <http://koszulki-historyczne.spreadshirt.pl/wladyslaw-jagiello-czern-D1110837933>, accessed 22.11.16; boardgame, <http://przystanekplanszowka.pl/2013/07/sigismundus-augustus-wyrok.html>, accessed 22.11.16; dolls, http://www.polartcenter.com/King_Zygmunt_II_August_1520_1572_p/9190007.htm; <http://galeria-barbie.blogspot.co.uk/2011/07/kolekcja-historyczna.html>, accessed 22.11.16. For heritage merchandise at Grunwald reenactments, see Gałęziowska, pp. 95-6.

⁷⁷ A. Sapkowski, *Narrenturm*, Warsaw, 2002, *Boży bojownicy*, Warsaw, 2004 and *Lux Perpetua*, Warsaw, 2007 and S. Twardoch, *Wieczny Grunwald*, Warsaw, 2010; R. Czarnicka, *Signora Fiorella: kapeluszniczka królowej Bony*, Kraków, 2010 and *Barbara i król* Poznań, 2013; Z. Gołaszewski, *Aleksander i piękną Helena*, Warsaw, 2014; A. Zerling-Konopka, *Izabela Jagiellonka: Los tak chciał*, Warsaw, 2015.

monuments, ceremonies, historical fiction), the tenor of Jagiellonian memory in the 21st century is quite different. In tone, this civic-commercial memory might be said to cover a spectrum from outright trivialisation, through light entertainment, to relatively painless nostalgia. Gałęziowska, indeed, adds that even the Battle of Grunwald has become ‘a rather neutral plane for remembering the past’.⁷⁸ Here the wider context of the current (and intensively studied) mnemonic landscape is crucial: the extreme traumas of World War Two and Communist totalitarianism, and the unresolved memory wars raging around these, have displaced Jagiellonians well into the background of Polish cultural memory and identity discourse. Most local town statues erected since 1989, for example, commemorate 20th century atrocities or Pope John Paul II. The emotional and political power wielded by these royals in the Partition period has started to ebb away: the colours on Matejko’s Jagiellonian canvasses still glitter, but the sense of national tragedy they once conveyed so forcefully has dissipated, and migrated elsewhere.

Enduring Motifs?

While the functions of Jagiellonian memory have shifted substantially over the centuries, it is also the case that many of the actual contents of this memory, its chief motifs, have stubbornly recurred. Erll has enjoined scholars to study ‘travelling memory’ as stories pass geographically through space, but segments of memory also travel persistently across time, vertically not horizontally.⁷⁹ We may touch on a few of those motifs here, the first of them being a Polish ‘golden age’ under these rulers. Golden Age rhetoric first emerged in the immediate aftermath of Sigismund Augustus’ death (1572), as an early modern retrospective judgement on this ruling house. The late king’s sister Sophie, dowager duchess of Brunswick-Lüneburg (d.1575), wrote to the Polish royal council in 1573 of the ‘flowering age’ seen ‘over the past two hundred years, under the rule of the Jagiellonians’.⁸⁰ In 1585, a poem composed for the wedding of Princess Anna Jagiellon praised the royal line which had ‘given Poland golden centuries’.⁸¹ Jan Matejko’s visual cycle of Polish history included the canvass *The Golden Age of Literature* (1888/9), with scholars disputing beneath portraits of Jagiellonian rulers.⁸² Zygmunt and Maria Wojciechowski’s 1946 history praised the Jagiellonians as ‘a golden age of our past’.⁸³ The historian Aleksander Gieysztor introduced a 1987 Jagiellonian

⁷⁸ Gałęziowska, , ‘Świętowanie wybranych rocznic’, p. 105: ‘Obchody grunwaldzkie są dość neutralną płaszczyzną świętowania przeszłości.’

⁷⁹ A. Erll, ‘Travelling Memory’, *Parallax* 17:4, 2011, pp. 4-18; Feindt et al., ‘Entangled Memory’; Pestel et al., ‘Promise and Challenge of European Memory’.

⁸⁰ Przeździecki, *Jagiellonki Polskie*, IV, p. 23: ‘I któż nie doczyta się tego, co się działo przed dwiema stuleciami, co przez ten czas wszystek rządu a sprawy Jagiellów? Co za kwitnący wiek oni z sobą wnieśli...’

⁸¹ Anon., *Pieśni nowe o królu polskim Stefanie Pierwszym... wespółek y o Krolewnie Annie*, ?Kraków, 1576, fo. Aiv: ‘Plemia Zygmunta onego swiatego... któregoś dał Polsce złote wieki’.

⁸² Sigismund I, Sigismund Augustus and Anna Jagiellon are all depicted. See E. Suchodolska and M. Wredet, *Jana Matejki dzieje cywilizacji w Polsce*, Warsaw, 1998.

⁸³ Wojciechowski, *Polska Piastów*, p. 467. Henryk Łowmiański’s *Polityka Jagiellonów*, composed between 1942-8, also conveyed the sense of a golden age: ‘The name of the Jagiellonian dynasty invokes the former greatness of Poland’ in politics, economy and culture, ed. Krzysztof Pietkiewicz, Poznań, 1999, p. 1: ‘Z nazwą dynastii jagiellońskiej kojarzy się pojęcie dawnej świetności Polski, potęgi politycznej i tężyzny narodowej, pomyślności gospodarczej i rozkwitu kulturalnego...’.

exhibition in Warsaw by invoking ‘these golden centuries’.⁸⁴ This trope persists – in 2014, the *Economist* magazine featured on its cover Matejko’s *Prussian Homage*, under the headline ‘Poland’s new Golden Age: the Second Jagiellonian Age.’⁸⁵ News stories in Poland have regularly claimed since 2013 that a major new costume drama on the Jagiellonians is soon to be filmed by HBO, entitled *Złoty Wiek*, ‘The Golden Age’.⁸⁶ Here, we find one aspect of Jagiellonian rhetoric conspicuously recurring in Poland from the 1570s to the 2010s.

A second major motif in Jagiellonian memory which has likewise persisted since the early modern period is that of the *poczet królów polskich*, the portrait cycle of Polish kings. We have seen how this genre flourished in the early modern period: in printed *icones* from the 1560s, on the walls of Thorn town hall (1640s), in King Stanisław August’s Marble Room (1769-71), and even outside major cities, for example in the *poczet* cycle commissioned by the Pauline monastery of Częstochowa in the 18th century.⁸⁷ Jan Matejko’s own 1892 *Poczet Królów Polskich*, a series of 44 drawings, has been hugely popular – painstakingly painted onto the walls of Mielec town hall in south-eastern Poland in 1907-8, and the book itself reprinted at least 26 times in Poland, in the 1990s running to virtually a new edition every year.⁸⁸ This key mode of Jagiellonian memory also has appeal to contemporary artists: a set of wooden statues of Polish kings was carved in Szydłów castle in 2012, while a life-size waxwork figure of Jogaila has been made in Kraków, to initiate a *poczet* cycle on the Kościuszko mound outside the city (2010).⁸⁹ Indeed, the *poczet* is so well-established a trope in modern Polish culture, that in 1995 it inspired an album by the Polish rap group *T-Raperzy z nad Wisłą*, which included four comic-pedagogic tracks on the Jagiellonians.⁹⁰ This memory motif, connected to the legitimisation of monarchy, statehood and nationhood, has travelled effectively down the centuries as a powerful long-term transmitter, or container, of Jagiellonian memory.

To give a final example, the 1410 Battle of Grunwald is another major carrier of Jagiellonian memory. The basic narrative of the battle has for centuries derived primarily from the detailed Latin description given by the chronicler Jan Długosz (d.1480) in his *Annales Regni Poloniae*. The memory ‘script’ offered by Długosz’s chronicle, written

⁸⁴ A. Gieysztor, ‘Przedmowa’, in *Polska Jagiellonów, 1386-1572*, Warsaw, 1987: ‘tych złotych stuleci’, p. 9.

⁸⁵ V. von Bredow, ‘Poland’s New Golden Age: the Second Jagiellonian Age’, *The Economist*, June 2014,

⁸⁶ http://superseriale.se.pl/newsy/zloty-wiek-nowy-serial-o-jagiellonach-w-tvp-zastapi-klan_786752.html, accessed 1.12.16.

⁸⁷ K. Szczekocka-Mysiek, *Jasnogórski poczet królów i książąt polskich*, Warsaw, 1990.

⁸⁸ I. Sapetowa, *Malarski poczet królów i książąt polskich według rysunków Jana Matejki w sali obrad Rady Powiatowej w Mielcu*, Warsaw, 1992; J. Matejko, *Poczet królów i książąt polskich*, with text by Stanisław Smolka i August Sokołowski, Vienna, 1893 and reprinted in at least 26 editions: e.g., Warsaw, Alfa (1957); Kraków, Wydawnictwo Artystyczno-Graficzne (1958, 1960, 1961, 1967, 1969, 1971); Warsaw, Wspólna Sprawa (1960); Warsaw, Czytelnik (1978, 1980, 1987, 1991, 1993, 1996, 1998); Warsaw, Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza (1980); Warsaw, Wydawnictwo Radio i Telewizji (1988); Kraków, Oficyna Parol (1993 1994); Warsaw, Świat Książki (1996, 2011); Warsaw, Interpress (1996); Warsaw, Diogenes, (2000); Warsaw, Świat Książki (2003); Katowice, Media Partner (2003).

⁸⁹ <http://www.polskaniezwykla.pl/web/place/28964,szydlow-poczet-krolow-polskich.html>, accessed 20.9.17 and <http://krakow.naszemiasto.pl/artukul/krakow-wladcy-z-silikonu-stana-na-kopcu-kosciuszki,468472.art.t.id.tm.html>, accessed 2.12.16.

⁹⁰ <https://www.discogs.com/T-Raperzy-znad-Wis%C5%82y-Poczet-Kr%C3%B3l%C3%B3w-Polskich/release/1450898>, accessed 2.12.16.

seventy years after the event, directly informed 19th century historical novels and Matejko's paintings, and continues to underpin Grunwald re-enactments and children's story collections, which lavishly illustrate and re-tell Długosz's passages.⁹¹ Grunwald, as the most celebrated battle in national history, has a complex mnemonic field of its own, but it overlaps directly with, and can serve to amplify, the memory of Jagiellonian kings. In Polish cultural memory, Jogaila himself has arguably become a signifier of Grunwald, rather than vice versa.

Historians are primed to examine change over time, contingency and context – how, then, are we to interpret the disconcertingly stubborn, long-term repetition of the same phrases, stories or iconography? Here, it can be useful to consider scholarship on fairy tales. Folklorists and literary theorists have stressed the one-dimensional, symbolic qualities of fairy tale characters, as figures existing in some sense outside historic time. As Jo Eldridge Carney has pointed out, 'the fairy tale as a form consistently includes various motifs and discrete narrative units that are recycled and reassembled.' She points that that it is the repetition of known motifs which makes fairy tales predictable and legible to the reader/listener.⁹² Max Lüthi's observation that 'the form of folk-tales does not derive from their content but has a life of its own' is one that scholars of memory might choose to ponder.⁹³ Long-term Jagiellonian memory in Poland might thus have acquired similarities with the narrative structure, or genre, of the fairy tale. Perhaps memory of the deep past, structurally, reconfigures itself over time as fairy tale – part morality tale, part fantasy. Indeed, the Polish children's book *A Treasury of Polish Fairy Tales and Legends* (2014) overtly does just that, presenting Jogaila at Grunwald as fairy story, alongside tales of mermaids, dragons and magical sub-aquatic cities.⁹⁴

Conclusions

Like all memory, Polish cultural recollections of Jogaila-descended royalty over 500 years are built on certain persistent omissions: a glossing over of the problematic non-Polishness of these kings (the family being of Lithuanian-Ruthenian-Austrian-Italian descent), their status as regularly absentee rulers who spend extended periods in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania rather than the Polish polity, and their membership of a highly international network of royals which also ruled Bohemia and the enormous kingdom of Hungary, with kinship ties all over the Holy Roman Empire. A negation of and hostility towards extra-Polish dynasticism is, for example, a recurring feature of Polish national historiography of this royal line.⁹⁵ Polish traditions of Jagiellonian memory have thus been built, in the long term, on a denial of or deafness to the very different experiences and memories of this royal line in neighbouring societies in the ex-Jagiellonian region.

⁹¹ Długosz, *Annales*; Gałęziowska, 'Świętowanie wybranych rocznic'; Marta Berowska, 'Dwa krzyżackie miecze', in Marta Berowska & Magdalena Grądzka, *Skarbiec Baśni i Legend Polskich*, Warsaw, 2014, pp. 21-15.

⁹² J. Eldridge Carney, *Fairy Tale Queens: Representations of Early Modern Queenship*, New York, 2012, pp. 2, 5, drawing on the work of M. Lüthi, *The European Folk Tale: Form and Nature*, trans. John D. Miles, Bloomington, 1986.

⁹³ Lüthi, *The European Folk Tale*, p. 3.

⁹⁴ Berowska & Grądzka, *Skarbiec*.

⁹⁵ See for example K. Baczkowski, *Zjazd wiedeński 1515: geneza, przebieg i znaczenie*, Warsaw, 1975, pp. 5-6; Gieysztor, 'Przedmowa'; Łowmiański, *Polityka*, p. 460; A. Sucheni-Grabowska, 'Jagiellonowie i Habsburgowie w pierwszej połowie XVI w.', *Sobótka* 4, 1983, pp. 449-67, at pp. 449-50.

These gaps in memory merely point, however, to some more fundamental problems revealed by this story – dynasty as a very slippery container for memory (national or otherwise).⁹⁶ It is not just that the most successful Renaissance dynasties, with their composite states, cosmopolitanism and supra-national political frameworks, are awkward vehicles for national or single-monarchy memory.⁹⁷ Rather, the problem with investigating memory of ‘the Jagiellonian dynasty’ is that the idea of dynasty itself evolves, and is not a historic constant. In recent years, memory studies have become alert to the problems posed by ‘nation’ as a mnemonic category – because this word is itself a complex construct with its own dynamic history, accepting it as the ‘natural’ object or focus of collective memory is problematic.⁹⁸ Similar problems occur with ‘dynasty’. The idea or phrase ‘Jagiellonian dynasty’ is not a historical given, or a historical constant, but a notion which evolved slowly over time. ‘Dynasty’ is not a word used in 16th century Polish texts, for example. The actual nomenclature of a ‘Jagiellonians’ itself only meaningfully entered Polish politics in the late 16th and 17th centuries, and it is only in the 19th century that ‘Jagiellonian dynasty’ became a dominant, self-evident phrase in Polish historical scholarship and wider cultural discourse.⁹⁹ There are thus risks in accepting ‘Jagiellonian dynasty’ as a natural subject/object of Polish memory and historical consciousness. We risk projecting the notion of a Jagiellonian dynasty backwards, looking for evocations and memories of it in periods when that idea *per se* might not yet have existed in the form in which we understand it, if at all. Some of what has been discussed in this essay, from the 1570s to the 2010s, was indeed conscious memory of a Jagiellonian royal house *per se*; but not all of it. The ‘what’ being remembered risks dissolving, the further back we look, if it is rooted in modern or at least retrospective concepts. What we call memory of the Jagiellonian dynasty in Poland is, from one point of view, a kaleidoscope of detachable fragments or narratives which might interact, join forces or split up at different moments: its constituent particles might include individual kings (e.g. Sigismund Augustus), the collective kings of Poland, a Jagiellonian family, the monarchy, the Polish nation, Wawel, the battle of Grunwald, or the Polish Renaissance. So we have to take care that we do not falsely or anachronistically reify dynasty, any more than nation, in studying their long-term cultural representations. Benedict Anderson famously argued that nationalism is a work of the imagination; the same is true of dynasty, and its memory, in every century.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ An issue addressed in this volume also in the essays on Bohemia and Hungary.

⁹⁷ See also the Introduction, above, pp. xxx.

⁹⁸ See Introduction, above, pp. xxx.

⁹⁹ See Nowakowska et al., *Dynasty in the Making*.

¹⁰⁰ B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, London, 1983.