

Dan Mills

Poland, its legendary, semi-legendary, and historic rulers—an abridged history,
2020
words

the complete typeset text printed onto the “Poland” painting, and color coded to connect ruler and reign with the relevant outline of the country at that time of their rule

Poland, its shifting borders, and all its legendary, semi-legendary, and historic rulers 6th century – 1795 (when it disappeared from the map for 123 years), 2020
acrylic and ink on paper laid down on board, 67 x 71 ¾ inches

I. LEGENDARY RULERS 6TH – 9TH C.



LECH I (6th c.)

1 of 3 Slavic brothers who went hunting, he found Poland



KRAKUS also Krak and Gratch (8th c.)

ruler of Lechitians, founder of Krakow



KRAKUS II (8th c.)

defeated dragon of Wawel with brother Lech II



LECH II (8th c.)

killed by Krakus II after defeating dragon



PRINCESS WANDA (8th c.)

invading Germans saw her beauty, stopped; prince committed suicide



LESZKO I (8th/9th c.), Duke

tricked & defeated Hungarians with fake army of armor on poles



LESZKO II (8th c.), Duke

alleged progenitor of Popielids dynasty



LESZKO III (8th c.), Duke

had 23 children, as did Samon in Chronicle of Fredegar; same person?



POPIEL I (8th c.), Duke of Popielids

son of Leszko III, father of Popiel II



POPIEL II (9th c.), Duke of Goplans and Polans

cruel, corrupt, poisoned 12 conspiring uncles; hid, eaten by rodents



PIAST THE WHEELWRIGHT (Piast, 9th c.), Duke of the Polans

made prince after receiving spell making cellar ever full

II. SEMI-LEGENDARY DUKES 9TH – 10TH C.



SIEMOWIT also ZIEMOWIT (Piast, 9th c.), Duke

son of the Wheelwright; 1st ruler of Piast dynasty



LESTEK (Piast, c. 870/80–930/40), Duke

married to Moravian princess?



SIEMOMYSŁ (Piast, d. 950/60), Duke c. 930/50–c. 950/60

last pagan ruler; expanded kingdom/united many tribes

III. PIAST DUKES & KINGS 960–1138



MIESZKO I (930 – 992), Duke 960–92

1st Christian ruler; father of Scandinavian Queen Sigrid the Haughty?



BOLESŁAW I THE BRAVE (967–1025), Duke 992–1025

●
BOLESŁAW I THE BRAVE, King 1025

1st king; fought many wars

●
MIESZKO II LAMBERT (990–1034), King 1125-31

●
BEZPRYM (986–1032), Duke 1031-32

murdered for extreme cruelty

●
OTTO BOLESŁAWOWIC (1000–1033), Duke 1032

probably murdered in conspiracy organized by half-brothers

●
DYTRYK (ca. 992–ca. 1032), Duke 1032

went into exile?

●
MIESZKO II LAMBERT, Duke 1032-34

ruled unstable kingdom; probably killed in nobles' plot

●
BOLESŁAW THE FORGOTTEN (ca. 1016 –1038/9), Duke 1034-38/9

semi-legendary; killed for cruelty & tyrannical rule

●
CASIMIR I THE RESTORER (1016 -1058), Duke 1040-58

reunited kingdom; died in suspicious circumstances

●
BOLESŁAW II THE GENEROUS also Bold and Cruel (1042-1081), Duke 1058-76

●
BOLESŁAW II THE GENEROUS, King 1076-79

excommunicated, killed Bishop during mass; deposed, banished, probably poisoned

●
WŁADYSŁAW I HERMAN (1044 –1102), Duke 1079-1102

long suffered terrible poxes on face & ailments in legs

●
ZBIGNIEW (1073 – ca. 1113/14), Duke 1102-07

after fratricidal war with Bolesław III, blinded by him



BOLESŁAW III WRYMOUTH (1086 – 1138), Duke 1107-38

led many conquests and wars; circumstances of death unknown

IV. PIAST HIGH DUKES 1138-1290



WŁADYSŁAW II THE EXILE (1105 - 1159), High Duke 1138-46

many internal conflicts with royals; blinded, muted & exiled by Mieszko III



BOLESŁAW IV THE CURLY (ca. 1125 – 1173), High Duke 1146-73

many fraternal struggles; expelled Wladyslaw II

MIESZKO III THE OLD (1126/7 – 1202), High Duke 1173-77



CASIMIR II THE JUST (1138-1194), High Duke 1177-91



MIESZKO III THE OLD, High Duke 1191

honorific title "the Just" given later; probably poisoned



LESZEK THE WHITE (1184/85 – 1227), High Duke 1194-98



MIESZKO III THE OLD, High Duke, 1198-99



LESZEK THE WHITE, High Duke 1199



MIESZKO III THE OLD, High Duke 1201

constant squabbles & battles with royals; lost, exiled, & regained kingdom



WŁADYSŁAW III SPINDLESHANKS (1161/67 – 1231), High Duke 1202-06



LESZEK THE WHITE, High Duke 1206-10



MIESZKO IV TANGLEFOOT (1130 – 1211), High Duke 1210-11

died months after becoming Duke



LESZEK THE WHITE, High Duke 1211-27

Constant struggles with other royals; assassinated while bathing



WŁADYSŁAW III SPINDLESHANKS, High Duke 1227-29

murdered in exile by girl he tried to rape



KONRAD I (Masovia, 1187/8 – 1247), High Duke 1229-32



HENRY THE BEARDED, High Duke 1232-38

became Duke after 3 older brothers died; defeated Ottomans



HENRY II THE PIOUS (1196 – 1241), High Duke 1238-41

beheaded in Mongol invasion; wife identified him by Polydactyly (6 toes)



BOLESŁAW II THE HORNED also the Bald (1220/25 - 1278), High Duke 1241

married mistress; Duke briefly



KONRAD I, High Duke 1241-43

lost Baltic coastline to Teutonic Knights



BOLESŁAW V THE CHASTE (1226 – 1279), High Duke 1243-79

adopted as infant/succeeded Spindleshanks; married at 13 to 15 year old Kinga



LESZEK II THE BLACK (1241 – 1288), High Duke 1279-88

adopted by the Chaste in his 20s/made successor; killed in violent dispute among royals



BOLESŁAW II OF MASOVIA (1253/58 – 1313), High Duke 1288



HENRYK IV PROBUS also Henry IV (ca. 1258 – 1290), High Duke 1288-89

- **BOLESŁAW II OF MASOVIA, High Duke 1289**

2 very brief reigns; died childless

- **WŁADYSŁAW I THE ELBOW-HIGH (ca. 1260–1333), High Duke 1289**

- **HENRYK IV PROBUS, High Duke 1290**

poisoned by false lawyer, probably on behalf of Henry the Fat

V. PŘEMYSLID DUKES & KINGS 1290 - 1306

- **PRZEMYŚL II (1257 – 1296), High Duke 1290-91**

- **WENCESLAUS II (Czech, 1271 – 1305), High Duke 1291-95**

MEANTIME...

- **1293-1295**

- **PRZEMYŚL II, Prince**

- **WŁADYSŁAW I THE ELBOW-HIGH, Prince**

- **CASIMIR II OF ŁĘCZYCA, Prince**

in a secret agreement, the princes forged anti-Bohemian alliance to recover Krakow from Wenceslaus II; succeeded, elevating Przemysl to king--briefly

- **PRZEMYŚL II, King 1295-96**

murdered during failed kidnapping by Brandenburg loyalists or Polish nobles and left on the roadside

●
WENCESLAUS II, High Duke 1296-1300

●
WENCESLAUS II, King 1300-05

empire included Bohemia, Hungary; probably died of tuberculosis

●
WENCESLAUS III (Czech, 1289 - 1306), King 1305-06

King of Hungary at 11, as 15 year old Polish king gave lots of land away to young Bohemian friends; assassinated by stabbing

VI. PIAST KINGS 1320 - 1370

●
WLADYSLAW I THE ELBOW-HIGH, also Ladislaus the Short, King 1320-33

it's unclear whether he was nicknamed for physical stature or for being petty; tried to unite Poland

●
CASIMIR III THE GREAT (1310/15 - 1370), King 1333-70

bigamist; paid the Blind to give up claim to throne; died of hunting injury

VII. ANJOU KING & QUEEN 1370 - 1399

●
LOUIS I also the Great (Hungarian, 1326-1382), King 1370-82

only Hungarian ruler with epithet "Great"; waged wars almost every year of reign

●
JADWIGA also Hedwig (Hungarian, 1373/4 - 1399), King 1384

●
JADWIGA, Queen 1384-99

initially crowned king, then queen at 10, married pro tem at 11; ruled for 15 years;

died from complications during childbirth at age 26

VIII. JAGIELLONIAN KINGS 1386-1572



WLADYSLAW II JAGIEŁŁO (Lithuanian, 1352/62 - 1434), King 1386-1434

pagan, converted to Catholicism to wed Jadwiga; ruled with her for 15 years, king for 35 more; died of a cold



WLADYSLAW III also of Varna (1424 - 1444), King 1434-44

killed and beheaded at Battle of Varna in the Crusades



CASIMIR IV (1427 - 1492), King 1447-92

defeated Teutonic knights in 13 Years War; strengthened dynasty, parliament, & senate



JOHN I ALBERT (1459 - 1501), King 1492-1501

humiliated Teutonic Order, then died suddenly



ALEXANDER I JAGIELLON (1461 - 1506), King 1501-06

last ruler to speak Lithuanian; considered weak, moved Poland closer to a Noble's Democracy



SIGISMUND I THE OLD (1467 - 1548), King 1506-48

developed Polish Renaissance; ailments included gout (drank large amounts of beer & mead)



SIGISMUND II AUGUSTUS (1520 - 1572), King 1548-69

IX. POLISH-LITHUANIAN COMMONWEALTH KINGS & QUEEN 1569 - 1795



SIGISMUND II AUGUSTUS, King 1569-72

stable leader, reign, united Poland & Lithuania; died of bleeding & consumption



HENRY III (French/Valois-Angoulême, 1551 - 1589) King 1573-75

abandoned throne upon inheriting the French throne; assassinated by stabbing



ANNA JAGIELLON (Jagiellon, 1523 - 1596), King 1575



ANNA JAGIELLON, Queen 1576-86

from socially neglected spinster to dynastic heiress who married at 52;
promoted Sigismund



STEPHEN BÁTHORY (Hungarian/Báthory, 1533-1586), King 1576-86

married Anna when Duke of Transylvania; sponsored own legend in literature



SIGISMUND III (Swedish/Vasa, 1566 - 1632), King 1587-1632

Anna's nephew, also king of Sweden, Grand Duke of Lithuania & Finland; died of stroke



WLADSLAW IV (Vasa, 1595 - 1648), King 1632-48

at 33 words, longest title; died from incorrect kidney or gallstone medication



JOHN II CASIMIR (Vasa, 1609 - 1672), King 1648-68

last monarch from House of Vasa; patron of the arts, died of apoplexy



MICHAEL I (Wiśniowiecki, 1640 - 1673), King 1669-73

spoke Latin, German, Italian, French, and probably Tatar & Turkish; died of food or other poisoning



JOHN III (Sobieski, 1629 - 1696), King 1674-96

hero king, defeated Ottomans; Queen had 13 children, 9 died before age 4



AUGUSTUS II THE STRONG (Saxon/Wettin, 1670 - 1733), King 1697-1706



STANISLAW I (Leszczyński, 1677 - 1766), King 1706-09



AUGUSTUS II THE STRONG, King 1709-33

patron of arts & architecture; broke horseshoes with bare hands, said to father over 365 children



STANISLAW I, King 1733-36

forced to abdicate in 1734 but allowed to keep title while defacto regional duke; longest living king (88); died of burns when clothes caught fire dozing near fireplace



AUGUSTUS III (Wettin, 1696-1763), King 1734-63

only legitimate son of the Strong; patron of arts, viewed as obese, lazy & ugly



STANISLAW II AUGUSTUS (Poniatowski, 1732 - 1798), King 1764-95

Polish enlightenment's most important patron of arts; died of a stroke

X. PRETENDERS TO THE THRONE 1085 – 1335



VRATISLAUS II (Bohemia/Premislid, ? – 1092), 1085–1092

honorific non-hereditary title bestowed by Holy Roman Emperor;
died from hunting wound



RUDOLPH I (Bohemia/Habsburg, 1281 – 1307), 1306-07

titular king; probably died of gastrointestinal perforation



HENRY also of Bohemia (Bavarian/Meinhardiner, 1265 – 1335), 1307-10

titular king & last dynastic male heir; weak, wasteful, Louis IV cheated daughter Margaret from crown



JOHN THE BLIND (Bohemia/Luxembourg, 1296 – 1346), 1310-35

titular king, gave up rule for life of travel after Casimir III the Great gave him lots of money;
went blind at 40, died in battle 10 years later