

Summary of the PhD thesis: Piotr Pajor, Architecture as a means of representation of ducal and royal authority in Lesser Poland at the age of reunification and consolidation of Kingdom of Poland 1243-1370

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The general scope of the presented thesis is an analysis of the ways in which architecture was used as a means of self-presentation and propaganda by the rulers of Lesser Poland during the last phase of internal fragmentation of the Kingdom of Poland. This includes the reign of Boleslaus the Chaste, Leszek the Black, Wenceslaus II as well as the last two kings of the Piast house, Ladislaus the Short and Kasimir the Great.

Presented research concentrates on area and time which were crucial for history of medieval Poland – land of Cracow, which during the time was considered as the city opening the way to control a whole country, and duchy of Sandomierz, traditionally controlled by the same ruler. Moreover, it was just a milieu of Cracow clergy when in the mid-13th century a new idea of reunification of divided Kingdom was shaped, with ideological foundation was considering local bishop and martyr St Stanislaus as a main patron. It was also this area where outstanding patronage of Kasimir the Great was concentrated.

Among the most important phenomena which are discussed in the dissertation, one should stressed foundation of a many Franciscan and Clarissian monasteries taken by Boleslaus the Chaste. Duke's sister, Salomea, joined the convent in Zawichost herself and both of them were buried in Friars Minor church in Cracow. Boleslaus' widow, Kunegund, also followed Salomea's example. Thus boundaries between duke's family and Franciscans were extraordinary strong. Exceptional significance of these monasteries in shaping of the image of Boleslaus' authority are stressed by following deeds of Ladislaus the Short who legitimized his own rules by taking the care of his predecessor's foundations. He supported Franciscans in Cracow and moved the Poor Clares convent from Skala to Croacow. On the other hand, Leszek the Black and Wenceslaus II presented their power in completely different way, mostly supporting towns and their defence skills. Despite to its practical advantages, surrounding Cracow by earth ramparts, later replaced with stone walls, and perhaps constructing several castles in Cracow land, was symbolically significant in a way hard to be stressed enough. Leszek the Black was also an active patron of Dominicans.

After the reunification of the Kingdom, executed by Ladislaus the Short, not only the political, but also ideological centre of the state was moved to Cracow. Gothic cathedral, which was constructed then an become a new coronation site, was a real breakthrough in development of local architecture and was a kind of exquisite presentation of St Stanislaus, a new patron-saint, whom as it has being believed, Poland owed its reunification. Following foundations by Kasimir the Great were focused rather on presentation of his person as legal and just ruler. Lands possessed by him were presented on the vaults in several churches (Wiślica, Sandomierz, Stopnica) while countless castles and residences memorized his subjects about king's presence and power.

One of the most interesting features of royal patronage was the action of legitimization of king's authority by presentation of its historic legacy. It was appeared by preserving some parts of the ancient buildings within the walls of the new ones, as it was done with the Romanesque facade of the collegiate church in Wiślica. The language could be an instrument of such an action as well. Kasimir the Great commemorated his father in the name of the castle of Ojców and himself in the town of Kazimeirz whose name may be a reference to king Krak, legendary establisher and eponymous of Cracow.

Piotr Pajor