

Mateusz Siembab

**Duchy of Siewierz in second half of 18th century:
study of a small political organism functioning under power of Krakow bishops'**

Summary

Duchy of Siewierz was a small independent state ruled by bishop of Krakow. Bishop's state benefited from protection of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth especially in area of border security. Duchy of Siewierz had its own judicial (Tribunal of Siewierz, city courts, Duke's Court), administrative and economic institutions (Government and Country Menagment). Nobility of Siewierz participated in own state political representation (sejmik siewierski). Political system in duchy based on silesian and polish legislation, but it was also created by episcopal edicts. Bishop's economic policy focused on development of iron mine industry. Incomes from sale of iron ore although were important did not balance unfavorable balance of trade with Polish Crown. As result of the Silesian Wars in half 18th century state borders of Poland and Siewierz were seriously threatened. In this time subjects of Krakow bishop suffered from invasions made by silesian landlords of Bytom and Woźniki. Planned by bishop Kajetan Sołtyk Bourder Commision between Siewierz and Prussia failed in 1765, because of prussian refusal. In the next decade polish troops was stationated in Siewierz to observe enemy movements from Silesia. After Kajetan Sołtyk's incapacitation in 1782 (brother of polish king) diocese's administrator Michał Jerzy Poniatowski came into power in Duchy of Siewierz. His reign in episcopal state was strong criticized especially in Poland, because of polish-sewerian bourder commision (in 1785) and numerous ennoblements for his protégés. Incorporation of Siewierz to Polish Crown in 1790 went ahead of very interesting sejmik in Siewierz (12th August 1789) that was probably only example of rebellion against sewerian duke (diocese administrator) at all history. Short integration period (1790-1795) between Siewierz and Poland shows support of Siewierz citizens for 3th May Consitution reforms and share in Kościuszko Rising in 1794. Discovering of coal deposits by polish mineralogists in lands of duchy about 1789 contributed to development for these lands as area of stone coal mining. First mines were founded there by prussian occupiers in end of 18th century.

Key words: bishop of Krakow, microstate, Duchy of Siewierz, diocese administrator, incorporation