

The milieu of Bolesław the Chaste, Duke of Cracow and Sandomierz (1226 - 1279)

Summary

The purpose of this paper is to present the personal composition of the court and the milieu of Duke Bolesław V the Chaste, to present the relation of the ruler with the members of the court and with the nobles, and the influence - in various fields - of the milieu in the power exercised by the Duke.

Treacherously murdered in Gąsawa Leszek the White (the father of Bolesław V) left his son with many unsettled matters in the field of internal politics. During his reign, many times there were conflicts between families. Bolesław had to reconcile antagonized families and political groups.

The reasserting of the position of the nobles was ensured by the long period of protective governance when Bolesław was underage. With the period of protective governance in Bolesław's time, the phenomenon of the division of the knights of the Cracow and Sandomierz lands was established. More and more often, the nobles of Cracow and Sandomierz are mentioned in written works.

The year 1243 - when Bolesław the Chaste took the Cracow throne - opens a long period of relative calm after years of continuous fights of the Piast dynasty to rule in the capital city.

Political stability allowed for the economic development of the duchy. During this period, an event of great importance in the process of the unification of Poland took place, that is, the canonization of St. Stanislaus.

Bolesław the Chaste's attitude towards the nobles at the time of fighting for Cracow was characterized by a policy of forgiveness. This policy ended in 1273, when a group of the nobles tried to deprive Duke Bolesław of his power. In my opinion, one of the main incentives that pushed the knights to the revolt was to depose the most influential families, and to entrust the offices to members of less significant families until that time. This probably stemmed from the troubles in relations of the nobles in power with Bolesław the Chaste's successor, which Bolesław the Chaste anticipated. Probably, the Duke consciously tried to build an elite that only owed its position and wealth to him, and at the same time, to overthrow the most powerful of the nobles.

During the fight for the throne of Cracow after the death of Leszek the White, and during the period of Bolesław the Chaste's reign in Cracow, the church was of great importance. Its support was earned by endowing church institutions with numerous donations. Monasteries were an important political partner and their abbots were important people in the political elite.

In the area of Bolesław's court, the Duke's office was particularly well-formed. Chancellors and vice-chancellors were supported by numerous chaplains and clerics in their work.

In the times of the regency in Chaste's time and his proper reign of the Duchy of Cracow and Sandomierz, the sources show, for the first time, the appearance of many land and court offices. In the long epoch of Bolesław the Chaste, significant changes in the system and administration of the state were recorded. Court offices were transformed into land offices.

It can be clearly stated that Bolesław V's very long reign was characterized by good relations between the Duke and his milieu, which probably stemmed from both the personality and policy of the ruler.