

Summary

JACEK WITKOWSKI / The Duke and the Dame on the Tournament. Signs of tournament customs in the art of the Silesian Middle Ages

The first known tournament in Silesia was given by the duke Bolesław II the Horned in Lwówek Śląski in 1243. Henry IV Probus, the duke of Wrocław, was a particular tournament lover, what is commemorated in the Codex Manesse from the first quarter of the 14th century. The given by him tournaments of 1284 and 1287/88 are well certified. In the 14th century also Bolesław III the Generous, the duke of Legnica, was an amateur of chivalry games. Frederick I and Frederick II, the dukes of Legnica, erected in the years 1473-1525 a specially designed tournament castle of St. George in Grodziec. There is a complete tournament outfit left behind Frederick II, deriving from 1512-15 and commissioned on the occasion of his marriage to Elizabeth Jagiellon, a king's daughter. A modern, late Medieval tournament armour is depicted as early as ca. 1435 on the duke Ludwik II's tomb.

Three groups of seals should be also related to tournament habits. The first one, from the period of the mid 13th to the mid 14th century, is connected mainly with the Piasts of Głogów and depicts dukes entering the tournament lists, accompanied by dames handing in tournament helmets and pennants to them. These presentations have no analogies in European sphragistics. Therefore it seems to be the concept of the duke Conrad I of Głogów, who had been studying in Paris and got to know chivalric customs and court culture of Western Europe personally. The idea was also influenced by tournament habits, works of literature and works of so called small-sized art. The duchess Jutta's of Ziębice seal is related to this group, too.

The second group is constituted by horse seals with the images of dukes dressed in tournament outfits at the moment of charging. They were in use in the period between the 1250s to the 1380s. The 14th-century seals since ca. 1321 refer to French sigilla by following royal and magnateship Bohemian seals.

The third group of walkers' seals depict the dukes themselves heading for a tournament in rich outfits and helmets. These are seals of the Piasts of Świdnica-and-Jawor and the Piasts of Legnica from the period between the end of the 13th and the beginnings of the 15th century.

The greatest of the horse seals is the one of Bolesław III the Generous, which can be related to the king John of Luxembourg. Along with some other patterns it became the basis for a monumental stone sculpture of ca. 1320-30, placed on the keystone of his burial chapel at the Cistercian church in Lubiąż, which is yet another unique example of chivalrous and court culture.