

Dissertation summary

“Defensive and residential buildings of Wenceslaus II (1291-1305) in Lesser Poland in the context of the Polish lands. Archaeological and historical study.”

PhD dissertation prepared in the Institute of Archaeology at the University of Rzeszów, under the supervision of prof. dr hab. Zbigniew Pianowski, dr hab. Andrzej Rozwałka, prof. UR and the assistant supervisor dr Leszek Poniewoźnik

There are several unexplored research gaps in Polish castellology (i.e a historical discipline for those who study castles and, more broadly, defensive and residential buildings of the Middle Ages) which have not yet been covered in monographs. Until recently, one of them was the subject of defensive-residential constructions of Wenceslaus II and his supporters (especially Jan Muskata, the Bishop of Cracow) on the Polish lands in the period of the so-called Bohemian episode. Such issues are the subject of the present doctoral dissertation entitled: *Defensive and residential buildings of Wenceslaus II (1291-1305) in Lesser Poland in the context of the Polish lands. Archaeological and historical study*. The aim of the dissertation was to collect, systematize and summarize information on the construction activities of Wenceslaus II in the field of defensive architecture in Lesser Poland between 1291 and 1305. The importance of this issue has been repeatedly pointed out by scholars involved in the study of defensive and residential construction in the Middle Ages. Among the more specific objectives, one should mention the issue of castle constructions under the tutelage of Jan Muskata, Bishop of Cracow in 1294-1320, who also held the office of Starosta of Lesser Poland and was Wenceslaus II's greatest supporter during his reign in Cracow. Above all, what was vital from the point of view of the discussed issues, was the identification of relevant buildings connected with the activities undertaken by these two figures. Given this context, it was therefore necessary to find out what types of castles were erected by the Bohemian king and whether their construction should be connected with the administrative reforms introduced by him. The author of the dissertation also aimed at creating a comparative analysis of the foundation capacity of Wenceslaus and his fellow Piast dukes.

The dissertation consists of two volumes: the first contains the analysis of the issue, while the second is a catalogue of defensive structures. Volume one is divided into seven main chapters. The first one, entitled *Preliminaries*, contains basic information about the dissertation, its territorial and chronological scope, as well as the aim and methodology of the work. It also includes the characteristics of the source database and the current state of research on the topic. The second chapter – *Clarification of terms* – includes basic terminology (*castle, bergfried, keep*), definitions of particular spatial arrangements, as well as Latin nomenclature for defensive structures. The third chapter, i.e. *The political and social situation of Bohemia and Poland at the end of the 13th and the beginning of the 14th centuries against the European background*, discusses historical issues, mainly by presenting the political situation of Czechia and Poland at the turn of the 13th and 14th centuries, including Wenceslaus's path to the throne of Cracow and then Poland, and the description of the Czech reign over Polish lands. This part operates as a background for the forthcoming analysis of the issue. The fourth chapter, *The defensive and residential constructions in the Kingdom of Bohemia at the end of the 13th and the beginning of the 14th centuries* is devoted to the castle construction of the last Přemyslids in Czechia. Its significance lies in the fact that it contains comparative material for the defensive structures erected by Wenceslaus in Lesser Poland. Chapter number five, *Wenceslaus II's defensive-residential building (1291-1305) on Polish territory*, is the most extensive part of the work, as it includes the analysis of defensive-residential constructions. It has been divided into five smaller parts, starting with a discussion about customs houses and their relationship with castles, followed by a description of Wenceslaus II's bergfried castles in Lesser Poland, a review of residential castles, a section on the remaining fortresses built under the initiative of the Bohemian king, and a final section on city walls dating back to the turn of the 13th and 14th centuries in the Cracow area. Regarding this chapter, it is worth mentioning that the described castles were grouped into confirmed and presumed investments. The sixth chapter – *The defensive and residential buildings of the Bishop of Cracow, Jan Muskata, in the years 1294-1306* – is entirely devoted to Jan Muskata's construction activity in the field of *militaris architecture*. The bishop's achievements were divided into two parts: the first one concerning castles built or extended by Jan Muskata as Bishop of Cracow, and the second one covering buildings erected in the years 1304-1306, i.e. during his office as Starosta. The seventh chapter, *The reign of Wenceslaus II and the so-called Bohemian episode versus the defensive-residential construction on the Polish lands in the Middle Ages* discusses the activities of the Bohemian king in the context of changes in defensive-residential construction on Polish lands between the late 13th and early 14th centuries. This part also dedicates some attention to Wenceslaus' castles

erected in Greater Poland, central lands, Kuyavia and Pomerania. It concludes with a short summary with research recommendations, a list of abbreviations and a bibliography divided into manuscript materials, printed sources, unpublished documentation and studies. The analytical part is accompanied by a catalogue of defensive structures, found in the second volume of the dissertation. Here one can find basic data on 56 fortified settlements (castles, city fortifications, defensive manors and encastellated churches) attributed to Wenceslaus II and Jan Muskat. The volume lists both confirmed and presumed strongholds that are hypothetically linked to the activities of both figures. The alphabetically arranged catalogue entries include a set of source references (quoted *in extenso*) connected to a given monument. They also include the history of the object, data on the original appearance of the establishment as well as its later transformations, conducted scientific research, and dating. Moreover, the catalogue offers a description of the investments related to the discussed subject matter, as well as an unpublished and published bibliography. Finally, the catalogue includes iconographic material in the form of plans and layouts of the buildings.

The territorial scope covers the area of the Kingdom of Poland at the turn of the 13th and 14th centuries, when its ruler was Wenceslaus II of the Přemyslid dynasty. From 1291 to 1300 said monarch ruled only over the lands of Cracow and Sandomierz. However, as a result of various actions, in 1300 he managed to conquer also the remaining districts, i.e. the lands of Sieradz, Leczyca, Wielkopolska and Gdansk Pomerania. The chronological framework is based on written sources and the findings of historians dealing with this issue. It covers the period from 1291 to 1306, when the Přemyslid dynasty, i.e. Wenceslaus II and his son Wenceslaus III, ruled Poland. The bottom chronological line is marked by the accession of the Bohemian monarch to the Cracow throne, while the upper one is marked by the death of Wenceslaus II on August 4, 1305. In some respects, the final limit has been shifted to the short reign of Wenceslaus III in 1305-1306, as it was in fact, an extension of his father's reign.

The source database used in this work should be divided into two, clearly distinct groups: the first includes written sources in historiographic, narrative and normative forms, while the second comprises the results of archaeological and architectural research. Indeed, Přemyslid rule over the Polish territory represents one of the most significant stages in the reunification of the country after its disintegration into districts. The so-called Bohemian episode was mentioned very frequently in Polish written sources, mainly in the context of Wenceslaus II's conquest of the Cracow and Sandomierz lands in 1291-1292, Łokietek's capitulation at Sieradz, the subsequent military campaign and coronation of the Bohemian

monarch as the King of Poland in 1300, and events related to the years 1304-1306 (Łokietek's invasion of Lesser Poland, Wenceslaus' death and the murder of his son Wenceslaus III). Among the most important Polish sources, one should mention the Polish Yearbooks (i.e. *Roczniki polskie*, including *Małopolski*, *Kujawski*, *Świętokrzyski*, *Wielkopolski*, *The Yearbook of Cracow Chapter*, *Traska's Yearbook*), as well as the *Catalogues of the Bishops of Cracow* (i.e. *Katalogi biskupów krakowskich*), the *Yearbooks* of Jan Długosz (i.e. *Roczniki Jana Długosza*), and the *Chronicle* of Jan from Czarnków (i.e. *Kronika Jana z Czarnkowa*). In the context of the discussed issues, it was also necessary to consult Czech sources, of which the most valuable is the *Zbraslav Chronicle*, while others include the *Chronicle of the so-called Dalimil* and *Chronica Bohemorum*. When analyzing the building activity of Jan Muskata, it is impossible to ignore the trial records from the years 1304 and 1306-1308, which contain valuable information concerning the events at the time of the decline of the Přemyslid rule in Lesser Poland. Another type of material used were source publications in the form of Codes of Poland, Lesser Poland, Greater Poland and their Czech counterparts (*The archive of the Crown of the Kingdom of Bohemia*, *Regesta Diplomatica nec non epistolaria Bohemiae et Moraviae*), which included documents issued by Wenceslaus II and Jan Muskata.

The second set of sources consists of movable materials and documentation from archaeological and architectural research stored at various conservatories and museums. Numerous queries were carried out in the Archaeological Museum in Cracow, the National Heritage Institute, the Regional Museum in Rzeszów, the Museum of Biecko Land, the National Archive in Cracow, the Historical-Geographical Dictionary Workshop in Cracow, and the provincial offices for the protection of historical monuments in Cracow, Lublin, Katowice, Kielce, as well as their respective offices.

While discussing the current state of research, it should be noted that for many years the architectural activity of Wenceslaus II on the Polish territory did not arouse the interest of defensive architecture researchers. Historians focused mainly on political and administrative issues, the legal basis of the Přemyslids claim to the thrones of Kraków and Wielkopolska, and the assessment of the reign of the Wenceslaus family. Regarding the latter, the evaluation in the earlier literature was usually negative, and the reign itself was treated as an occupation. However, in recent years a certain change has taken place and positive aspects of the Bohemian episode were noticed. On the other hand, art and architecture historians treated this period with neglect, considering it as "dark" times, devoid of distinct architectural forms. The breakthrough came in the 1990s when S. Kołodziejcki identified a group of castles with cylindrical towers,

which he attributed to Wenceslaus II. Within this group he included Czorsztyn, Biecz, Rytro, Czchów, Nowy Sącz, Myślenice and Dobczyce. The researcher also concluded that the investments made by the Bohemian king were related to administrative and judicial reforms. Another major area of interest for Kołodziejcki was the castles of the bishops of Cracow, including those of Jan Muskata, a supporter of Wenceslaus II. In his published writings on the subject, he identified and described a group of strongholds erected or expanded by Muskata. These included, among others, Lipowiec, Sławków, Przymiłowice, Muszyna, Ostrężnik, and Pełczyska. According to Kołodziejcki, the reason for the high number of buildings erected by the bishop was the support he received from Wenceslaus II, as well as his desire to maintain Czech rule. The findings of the said researcher were accepted in the relevant literature. Over the past 30 years, his catalogue of castles was considerably expanded. This was due to archaeological and architectural research conducted on numerous defensive sites, which provided new and valuable evidence. Here we should mention the achievements of Z. Pianowski and J. Firlet within the Wawel castle, or the works of W. Gliński and Cz. Hadamik conducted on the castles in Chęciny, Olsztyn near Częstochowa, Kielce and Wiślica. The subject was also explored recently by younger researchers, e.g. P. Lasek, T. Olszacki or T. Ratajczak, who link selected sites in Greater Poland and Kuyavia (Poznań, Brześć Kujawski) with the architectural activity of Wenceslaus II.

The conducted analysis enabled us to answer the research questions. First of all, the suggestions made in the literature about the significant influence of the Czech rule on defensive architecture in Lesser Poland was confirmed. The arrival of Wenceslaus II in 1291 in Cracow gave a powerful impulse for the development, not only of defensive and residential buildings, but also sacral and municipal ones. The capital of Lesser Poland, Cracow, experienced a dynamic development of construction at that time, with the erection of numerous churches as well as city fortifications and the expansion of Wawel Castle, which, according to Cracow scholars, was then transformed into a late medieval brick castle. Moreover, the Czech king should be credited with the erection or expansion of 14 defensive castles on the territory of the Cracow and Sandomierz lands (Będzin, Biecz, Czchów, Czorsztyn, Chęciny, Dobczyce, Kazimierz Dolny Myślenice, Rabsztyn, Rytro, Smoleń, Kraków-Wawel, Nowy Sącz, Wiślica and Białowoda) and 11 presumed ones (Bochnia, Wieliczka, Krajowice, Pińczów, Wytrzyszczka, Bobolice, Solec nad Wisłą, Szaflary, Nowy Żmigród, Skalka in Kraków, Wielka Wieś). This gives us a total of 26 castles, which puts Wenceslaus in second place, just behind Casimir the Great, when it comes to erecting defensive buildings. The castles of the Bohemian

king can be divided into several categories. The first and most numerous includes the so-called bergfried castles. These were small structures, consisting of a cylindrical tower, enclosed or incorporated into a wooden, earthen or stone defensive perimeter. These castles were built relatively quickly and at low cost. The King of Bohemia built them only on the territory of Lesser Poland, while their largest concentration occurred on the Polish-Hungarian and Lesser Silesian borders. The construction of these castles should be linked primarily with the administrative and economic reforms introduced by the Přemyslids. They protected the borderland, guarded the routes and customs houses and were the seat of local officials. The second group includes residential castles, i.e. Cracow and Nowy Sącz. These were larger structures, whose spatial layout was, to some extent, modeled on castellum-type castles. They were supposed to serve administrative and residential purposes, as the seat of important officials (Starosta) and a temporary residence of the monarch. Most probably, the castles in Poznań and Brześć Kujawski, which were extended by Wenceslaus after he conquered Greater Poland and Kuyavia, fulfilled the same function. The third group consists of structures which cannot be assigned to the earlier categories and have diversified spatial layouts. These are, for example, the typical military strongholds, such as Lemiesz or Wiślica, or saltworks castles in Bochnia and Wieliczka.

Wenceslaus II's architectural activity was concentrated mainly in Lesser Poland, whereas fewer constructions appeared in the lands conquered after 1300, as they were limited to a few buildings located in the most important district centers. The reason for such a situation was primarily a short reign over those territories, as well as Wenceslaus' involvement in the affairs of Hungary and Germany. One has to agree with the suggestions made by researchers (e.g. S. Kołodziejcki) that the castles built by Wenceslaus are connected with the reforms implemented by him. The end of the 13th century marked the decline of the castellan system, which was replaced by the Starosta's administration, with Starosta being the royal governor and a number of lower-level officials, the most important of whom were burgraves, who managed individual castles and districts. The former wood and earth strongholds, most of which had declined by the middle of the 13th century, had to be replaced by modern brick castles. However, as noted in the dissertation, by the time Wenceslaus II ascended to the Cracow throne, there were not many stone castles in Lesser Poland which would also serve as the administration of territorial possessions. The fortresses erected by Henry the Bearded, or Konrad I of Masovia were of purely military nature and served military purposes. The only stone castles built up to 1291 were the Pieniny Castle, erected through the efforts of Duchess Kinga of Poland together

with the Poor Clares of Stary Sącz, and the castle in Sławków, built by Bishop Paweł from Przemanków Sławków. The reign of Wenceslaus provided a powerful impulse for the development of defensive architecture, as the monarch managed to introduced political principles which had been successfully implemented in Czechia (as well as Austria, under his father Ottokar II of Bohemia) into Lesser Poland. The analysis of this issue has therefore confirmed that there was a distinct revival in the construction of castles during the Bohemian episode. The reign of Wenceslaus lasted from 1291 to 1306; however, the foregoing period can be divided into two separate stages. The first one started with the conquest of Cracow in 1291 and ended in 1300, whereas the second one was connected with the reign of Wenceslaus II after his coronation as the king of Poland and lasted until his son's death in 1306. The first period, in which Wenceslaus ruled only over Lesser Poland, was characterized by greater intensity and the introduction of reforms. The second phase, though occurring during his reign over the majority of Polish territories, is no longer characterized by such a large number of foundations. This can be explained by the fact that at that time, the Bohemian king was involved in many other matters in Hungary and Germany, and he also found himself in dispute with both the Roman king Albert I of Germany and Pope Boniface VIII.

The research material collected for this dissertation allows us to claim that in the case of Lesser Poland, the development of royal castles, which according to Bohdan Guerquin began in 1320 and lasted until 1410, should be shifted to the period between the 13th and 14th centuries. It seems obvious that the development had already started in the times of Wenceslaus II, when a robust and extensive network of royal castles was created. At that time, the main investment initiative was demonstrated by the ruler, who built not only castles but also city fortifications (Cracow, Nowy Sącz, Biecz, perhaps Bohnia, Olkusz). It should be noted, however, that the turn of the 13th and 14th centuries also brought an increase in the number of magnate foundations. In this context, the activity of Jan Muskata, Bishop of Kraków from 1294 to 1320 and the Starost of Lesser Poland from 1304 to 1306, who enjoyed great favour with the Bohemian monarch, is particularly noteworthy. He is credited with the erection or expansion of several castles, including Sławków, Lipowiec, Iłża, Muszyna, Pełczysk, Kurów, and Przymiłowice. These strongholds can be divided into two groups; some of them fulfilled not only the military purpose, but above all, they served as administration centers for the estates and as temporary residences of the bishop. Their creation must be associated with the private territorial government created by Jan Muskata, which was intended to reach the western areas of the Cracow region. The second group consists of typically defensive strongholds, built

between 1304 and 1306, during the battles with Władysław Łokietek for the control over Lesser Poland.

The reformation campaign undertaken by Wenceslaus, which started with great vigour and culminated in his coronation as the king of Poland in 1300, was interrupted five years later by the sudden death of the monarch. In the following years, under the reign of Łokietek, the development of castles was not favourable; moreover, the monarch himself was not interested in castle construction due to many political problems. A change occurred only after 1320, particularly during the reign of Casimir III the Great.

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