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The Magnates of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 16th-18th century: towards *Sejmiks*. Ciechanowiec May 24-27, 2022

<https://doi.org/10.34739/his.2022.11.25>

Abstract: *Overview and description of the 6th edition of Scientific Conference “The Magnates of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 16th-18th century” in Ciechanowiec (2022.05.24-27).*

Key words: History, History of Poland, Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the scientific conference

The matter of Polish nobles in 16th and 17th century remains an interesting field for both experienced scholars and young researchers specialising in modern times. Every year there appear publications concerning this social stratum and its influences. Klio adepts discuss matters of noble establishment there. Those matters are quite broad – from politics and religion to economy and society, etc. That is the reason why frequent meetings of researchers are needed. This way they can share their findings and simply debate. It is worth mentioning that there are still some matters that remain unclear or dubious, i.e. criteria of membership to this stratum. To meet those expectations researchers from Faculty of History and International Relations at the University of Białystok in cooperation with the Krzysztof Kluk Museum of Agriculture and Technical and General Education School Complex in Ciechanowiec organised the 6th edition of Polish Scientific Conference “The Magnates of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 16th-18th century” (Polish: *Magnateria Rzeczypospolitej w XVI-XVIII wieku*) which took place from 24th to 27th May 2022. This time it was in Ciechanowiec so, the primary topic was the relation between the nobility and the *sejmiks*.

The exact proceedings started on May 25 with a plenary panel and the Andrzej Rachuba’s (The Polish Academy of Sciences) paper on the areas of influence of nobility in Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the 17th century and how they reflected on the decisions made on *sejmiks*. In the paper this historian focused on actions taken by

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the most important members of nobility in order to force some issues during gentry's meetings. The next to take the floor was Andrzej Zakrzewski (University of Warsaw) who focused on postulates of nobility, which were discussed during the assembly. In Michała Zwierzykowski's (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań) paper the most significant turned out the role of senators in the functioning of *sejmiks* of Poznań and Kalisz Voivodeships between 1696 and 1763. This panel was closed by the paper Adam Kaźmierczyk (Jagiellonian University) on the attitude of nobility towards Jewish *sejmiks*. The paper focused on the role of nobles in shaping of local government in the Crown in modern times.

After the plenary panel the conference was continued in to separate sections. The first one started with the paper of Justyna Gałuszka (Jagiellonian University), who analysed the actions of Stanisław 'The Devil' Stadnicki (ca. 1551-1610) during the debate of Wiszeń *sejmik*. Gałuszka, as a representative of the younger generation of historians pointed to some facts proving that Stadnicki was one of the leaders of that organisation. The next paper was presented by a Belarusian researcher Andrej Radamanow (University of Białystok). He presented his findings on Aleksander Chodkiewicz as well as his activity during *sejmiks* of Nowogród Voivodeship. Another speaker, Radosław Lolo (Academy of Finance and Business Vistula), focused on Krasieński house and the role they played during Ciechanów *sejmik* in 17th century. Konrad Bobiatyński (University of Warsaw), the next speaker, analysed the details of political battle during the proceedings of Oszmiana *sejmik* in the 2nd half of 17th century. The last speaker was Jolanta Marszałska (Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw), who highlighted the issue of book censorship during nobility assemblies.

The second part of this section started with Łukasz Gołaszewski's paper (University of Warsaw) who shed light on the use of proceedings of *sejmik* of Bielsk in achieving private and political goals by nobles. Another paper was presented by rev. Waldemar Graczyk (Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw), who focused on the influence of Płock Bishop Stanisław Łubieński (1627-1640) on Mazovia *sejmiks* and discussed the meaning of these meetings in local and home politics. Marta Kupczewska (University of Białystok) presented political influence of Kiev Voivode Tomasz Zamoyski on noble *sejmik* up to 1628. The incoming papers focused on the most distinctive magnates in the 17th century. Artur Goszczyński (Siedlce University of Natural Sciences and Humanities / Janusz Kurtyka Foundation) described the attitude of assemblies of nobles towards the postulates of Jeremi Michał Wiśniowiecki (1612-1651) which were linked with his private conflicts. Jan Jerzy Sowa (University of Białystok) analysed the letters of Grand Crown Hetman Stanisław Jabłonowski on royal *sejmiks*.

The second section began with the paper of Robert Kołodziej (University of Wrocław) which focused on activity of Jan Chryzostom Pieniążek under the reign of Jan III Sobieski. Consecutive papers took the participants further in time to the 18th century. Grzegorz Głabisz (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań) analysed

actions of supporters of Jerzy August Mniszech during magnate assemblies in Greater Poland in the period 1764-1768. He discussed the issue of political influence of magnates in political life outside of their province. The next researcher Kamil Jakimowicz (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin), focused on the activity of royal clubs' leaders in Kraków and Sandomierz Voivodeships during 'Sołtyk' crisis. In this matter he analysed their influence strategy on the local gentry in 1782. After that we were able to hear a paper of Witold Filipczak (University of Lodz) who described the influence of magnates who stood in opposition to Chełm *sejmik* proceedings between 1778 and 1786. This conference panel was concluded with Panel Dariusz Rolnik's (University of Silesia in Katowice) paper on the involvement of the most significant members of nobility in Mińsk *sejmik* proceedings in the years 1778-1788 to show the influence of Radziwiłł House and other magnates on the politics in Mińsk Voivodeship.

The deliberation of this section was renewed by Karol Łopatecki (University of Białystok) and his research on the role of nobility in election and appointment of land judges and subjudges in Poland. He drew his attention to the importance of this office for the business of nobles. Zbigniew Hundert (The Royal Castle in Warsaw – Museum) attempted to characterise the nobility's impact on Mazovia *sejmiks* under Jan III Sobieski. This historian using the documents of proceedings and correspondence pointed to people, their ways and benefits of subordination of those proceedings. It showed the mechanisms of both royal and party politics in this province in the last years of the 17th century. The consecutive research focused on the organisational side of noble assemblies and the importance of behind-the-scenes talks during such meetings. Tomasz Ciesielski (University of Opole) presented doings Józef Kante Ossoliński to prepare sufficient amount of wine for preconvocational *sejmik* proceedings of 1764. After that Monika Jusupović (Polish Academy of Sciences) described the influence of Tyszkiewicz family during Wilno *sejmik* in the period of building the royal party of Stanisław August Poniatowski. This section was concluded by the presentation of paper of a then-absent researcher Adam Kucharski (Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun), who analysed the attitude of magnates toward *sejmiks* in the 2nd half of 18th century based on handwritten press.

The second day of this conference (May 26) started with plenary proceedings and the paper by Dariusz Makiłła (University of Economics and Human Sciences in Warsaw) entitled "Polish *sejmiks* in the 17th and 18th century. Whose were they?". He presented his thoughts on the influence of magnates on noble assemblies in that period. Przemysław Gawron (Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw) gave a speech on means of communication of royal hetmans with gentry under the Vasa dynasty. He thoroughly discussed the ways of communication between leaders with particular people as well as the whole group of nobles. Edward Opaliński (Polish Academy of Sciences) analysed the impact of magnates on noble assemblies by showing their attitude toward *sejmiks* and conventions in Greater Poland in the period of Zebrzydowski's rebellion. Jerzy Urwanowicz (University of Białystok)

focused on the stance of Jan Klemens Branicki toward *sejmik* proceedings from 1729 to 1767.

In the afternoon the proceedings were renewed in two separate sections. In the first section Łukasz Godlewski (University of Białystok) presented a paper on the attitude of magnates towards the postulate raised by executional movement on royal *sejmiks* 1562-1566, which pointed to unlawfully obtained lands belonging to the Crown. Anna Podlecka (University of Białystok) focused on the attitude of gentry towards the French candidate to the Polish throne after Sigismund II August's death. She highlighted activity of Jan Dymitr Solikowski who eagerly supported Henry of Valois's succession. Kornelia Wasiak (Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw) in her findings tried to analyse propaganda mechanisms under Batory's reign. She analysed royal instructions for Korczyn convention of May 1578. This conference panel was concluded with the paper by Paweł Krokosz (The Pontifical University of John Paul II in Cracow) entitled "Ferram, opes patriae, sibi nomen – The Stroganow activity in Russian province from 16th to 18th century".

The second conference section began with the paper Maciej Franz (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań) on the image of nobility in historiography. The researcher presented the image of magnates and their role on *sejmiks* based on manuscripts by young representatives of Lviv history school. Iwona Dacka-Górzyńska (DiG Publishing) focused on heraldic inspiration in Old Polish parliamentary oratory. Mariusz Drozdowski (University of Białystok) focused on the persona of Great Crown Chancellor Jerzy Ossoliński and his attitude towards Chmielnicki Uprising. Andrzej Stroynowski (Jan Długosz University in Czestochowa) considered parliamentary oratory of magnates under the rule of Stanisław August Poniatowski.

The last conference day consisted of two panels. The first one began with the paper of Emil Kalinowski (The National Library) on the impact of Podlasie Voivode Mikołaj Kiszka on *sejmiks*. Kiszka intended to dominate local citizens despite their animosity towards his persona. Adam Moniuszko (University of Warsaw) discussed the impact of western Mazovia magnates on noble assemblies under the rule of Sigismund III Vasa. Andrzej Korytko (University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn) focused on senators' stance towards *sejmiks* under the rule of Władysław IV Vasa. In his paper the researcher discussed the presence of senators in proceedings of *sejmiks*. The last speaker Ewa Dubas-Urwanowicz (University of Białystok) analysed the issue of political advancement to power elite based on magnates' sons in the 18th century.

The final conference panel began with the paper of Mariusz Sawicki (University of Opole) who presented the attitude of 1695 Lithuanian *sejmiks* towards the curse cast on Sapieha family. Barbara Krysztopa-Czupryńska (University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn) presented thoughts of British diplomats on mechanisms of *sejmik* policy under Wettin dynasty. The last but one paper was presented by Maria Czeppe (Polish Academy of Sciences) who described the process of creating *sejmik* campaigns

by the royal court in the last years of August III's rule. Andrej Macuk (Polish Academy of Sciences) thoroughly discussed the involvement of magnates Lithuanian *sejmiks* under August III.

The number of papers presented during the conference proves that nobility remains a matter of interest for both younger and more experienced historians. The issues discussed there concerned various aspects of the involvement of magnates in *sejmik* proceedings. The papers shed some light on problems that are present in historiography. Behind-the-scenes discussions showed the interest of participants in the issues touched upon. Such meetings are necessary for those who research and want to discuss the matter of nobility throughout the recent centuries. After the conference there will appear a publication consisting of the presented papers.

To cite this article: Goszczyński, A. (2022). The Magnates of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 16th-18th century: towards *Sejmiks*, Ciechanowiec May 24-27, 2022. *Historia i Świat* 11, 385-389, DOI: 10.34739/his.2022.11.25



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