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The Relationship between the Regional and State Functions of Dietine Assemblies during the Reign of Stanisław August Poniatowski on the Example of the Trakai and Kaunas Dietines

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Abstract [1]. The activities of the dietines in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth were related to two main functions. The first was nationwide political activity manifested mainly in the election of representatives to the central authorities. The second involved regional government (or self-government) activities related to the needs and functioning of local communities. In this article, I describe the relationship between these two functions on the example of selected Lithuanian dietines functioning during the reign of Stanisław August Poniatowski. The aim is to consider how self-governing and political functions were manifested in the activities of the assemblies and which of them was dominant. I examine this issue not only by comparing the number of different dietines, but primarily by analysing the involvement of the assemblies' members in both indicated functions and the intensity of their activities.

Keywords: *Lithuanian dietines (sejmiki), self-government of the nobility, political parties, Trakai, Kaunas.*

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Anotacija. Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės seimelių veikla Abiejų Tautų Respublikoje buvo susijusi su dviem pagrindinėmis funkcijomis. Pirmoji – tai visos valstybės mastu vykdoma politinė veikla, kuri daugiausia pasireiškė renkant atstovus į centrinės valdžios institucijas. Antroji – regioninė valdžia (ar savivalda), orientuota į vietos bendruomenių poreikius ir veikimą. Šiame straipsnyje aptariamas šių dviejų funkcijų ryšys, remiantis pasirinktų Lietuvos seimelių, veikusių Stanislovo Augusto Poniatovskio valdymo laikotarpiu, pavyzdžiu. Straipsnio tikslas – išnagrinėti, kaip savivaldos ir politinės funkcijos atsispindėjo seimelių veikloje ir kuri iš jų buvo dominuojanti. Šis klausimas analizuojamas ne tik lyginant skirtingų seimelių skaičių, bet ir vertinant jų narių įsitraukimą į abi minėtas funkcijas bei veiklos intensyvumą.

Esminiai žodžiai: *Lietuvos seimeliai (sejmiki), bajorų savivalda, politinės partijos, Trakai, Kaunas.*

Introduction

In the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the dietines were both an element of the parliamentary system and organs of regional self-government. On the one hand, the nobility that gathered at the dietine assemblies elected their representatives to the central authorities, thereby taking part in state politics. On the other hand, the dietines dealt with local issues or elected functionaries operating on the level of the poviat or voivodeship. The origins of these assemblies were linked to the election of representatives to the Diet (i.e. the Sejm), but by the end of the 17th century, their self-governing functions increased. These were curtailed in 1717 by the Silent Diet, which, above all, truncated the treasury and military powers of the dietines, abolished voivodeship and poviat treasuries and banned capitation. In turn, during the reign of Stanisław August, reforms were introduced mainly aimed at reorganising the parliamentary system. Still, they also affected the functions of the dietines, culminating in fundamental changes under the Four-Year Diet.[2] According to researchers, especially during Stanisław August Poniatowski's reign, most of the activities of the dietines consisted of elections, namely of members of parliament and deputies, and less regularly of officials and other functionaries.[3]

[2] ZWIERZYKOWSKI, M. Geneza i konsekwencje reform sejmików w konstytucjach Sejmu Niemego. *Sejm Niemy. Między mitem a reformą państwa*. Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 2019, pp. 248–258; GLABISZ, G. *Sejmik Wielkopolski w latach 1764–1793*. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Adama Mickiewicza, 2022, p. 88.

[3] ZAKRZEWSKI, A. B. *Sejmiki Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego XVI–XVIII w. – ustrój i funkcjonowanie: sejmik trocki*. Warsaw: Liber, 2000, p. 24, 73; GLABISZ, G. *Sejmik Wielkopolski*, p. 92.

However, the relationship between the political and self-government functions of the dietines has yet to be studied in depth. It has only been touched upon in the margins of some monographs on these assemblies.[4] Meanwhile, description of this relationship is crucial to understanding the working of the parliamentary system in the Commonwealth, whether it was rather oriented towards a state-wide or self-governing function. The aim of the article is to analyse the performance of these two functions by the dietines to consider how they manifested in the activities the assemblies conducted. An important question is linked to which of these two functions was predominant, leading to the nobility's and political leaders' greater involvement. The times of Stanisław August Poniatowski are of particular interest due to the restriction, as mentioned above, of dietine self-government. The research was conducted only until the beginning of the Four-Year Diet, as the reforms it introduced significantly affected the functioning of the dietines. Of course, it is difficult to analyse the proposed issues within the whole of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth; thus, I will refer to only a few select dietines within the article.

As is known, the nature and functions of the dietines varied considerably not only depending on the period under study but also on the part of the Commonwealth where they were located. It is easy to guess that there were significant differences between the dietines of Lithuania and, for example, those of *Wielkopolska* (Greater Poland), but this could also be the case for those closer to each other territorially. Even within Lithuania, the dietines from various areas differed significantly, such as those in Samogitia and Minsk. Thus, I would like to discuss the relationship between the political and self-governing function of the assemblies using the example of two dietines operating in one period, namely between 1764 and 1788, but also in one territory, the Trakai voivodeship. The first is the Trakai Dietine, i.e. an assembly associated with the provincial capital and of greater formal importance. The other is the Kaunas Dietine, located in the same voivodeship and playing a more significant role in practice. The choice of these two poviats is justified because they are similar in terms of their administration, size or population. Both are medium-sized districts. According to Liudas Truska, in 1775, there were 878 landowners in the Kaunas Poviat (of whom 756 owned one house and 2 owned more than 500) and 713 in the Trakai Poviat (of whom 533 owned one house and two owned more than 500). In 1795, there were 4,931 noblemen in the Trakai Poviat and 6,320 in Kaunas.[5] Thus, these two poviats had a relatively similar number of noblemen, and their property structure did not differ much. The areas of these districts were also similar (over 8,000 square kilometres in Trakai and over 6,000 square kilometres in

[4] E.g. GIEROWSKI, J. A. *Sejmik generalny Księstwa Mazowieckiego na tle ustroju sejmikowego Mazowsza*. Wrocław: Nakładem Wrocławskiego Towarzystwa Naukowego, 1948, p. 28–29; JURGAITIS, R. *Nuo bojariškosios savivaldos iki parlamentarizmo: vilniaus seimelio veikla 1717–1795 m*. Vilnius: Lietuvos edukologijos universitetas, 2016, pp. 154–156.

[5] TRUSKA, L. XVIII a. pabaigos lietuvos bajorija (skaičius ir sudėtis). *Lietuvos istorijos metraštis* 1992 [1994], pp. 26–29.

Kaunas). As for the cities of Kaunas and Trakai themselves, both were listed in 1776 among the 11 most important Lithuanian self-governing municipalities. However, Kaunas was more than twice the size of Trakai regarding the number of households.[6] Nonetheless, it can be assumed that the size of the municipalities is of secondary importance when examining the political and self-governing activities of the nobility. Undoubtedly, the towns were the political centres of the lands, but sometimes, the local seats of the nobility were of greater importance. In undertaking this research, it was also crucial that sources for the Trakai and Kaunas Dietines are readily available, which can sometimes be a significant problem considering the political situation at the time.

Following Adam Lityński, historians assume that it should not be stated that there were many different dietines, but one performing various functions. The dietines focused mainly on state-wide politics, i.e. pre-diet dietines, including pre-convocation, pre-election, pre-coronation, and relational ones. Self-government issues were dealt with mainly by economic (PL: *sejmik gospodarski*) and electoral dietines.[7] In turn, the deputy dietines pose some problems here. Robertas Jurgaitis claims that they had both parliamentary and self-government functions. He believes they are closer to the latter group, as they were held immediately before the economic and electoral dietines and sometimes merged into one gathering. In addition, according to Jurgaitis, how the deputies were elected and how they functioned makes them similar to local administration officials. It seems, however, more meaningful to note the aspect, also mentioned by Jurgiatis, which brings tribunal dietines closer to a parliamentary function, namely that they elected local representatives to the Tribunal, i.e. a central state organ.[8] Moreover, during the reign of Augustus III, the Tribunal was the main field of political struggles, and even in other periods, the elections of deputies at the dietines were often associated with rivalry between the largest parties, which testified to their importance in state-wide politics. However, it should be noted that political leaders were also sometimes interested in the election of local officials, i.e. the marshal, grand chamberlain, grand ensign and members of the land court of law. In the case of the marshal or judges, this was linked to their function in the poviats, allowing them to influence the course of dietines or court trials. In addition, elections to both these and other, rather than purely representative offices, involved the acquisition or remuneration of partisans. It should, therefore, be stated that the boundary between dietines performing state-wide and self-government functions is somewhat fluid. Consequently, it is more meaningful to analyse the involvement of the members of the dietines in both indicated functions and the intensity of their activities than to compare the number of dietines, their length or

[6] VL, vol. 8, p. 567; KIAUPA, Z. *Lietuvos Istorija,* vol. 7, pt. 1, *Trumpasis XVIII amžius (1733–1795 m.)*. Wilno: Lietuvos Istorijos Institutas, 2012, pp. 179–181.

[7] GIEROWSKI, J. A. *Sejmik generalny Księstwa*, p. 28–29; JURGAITIS, R. *op. cit*., pp. 154–155.

[8] JURGAITIS, R. *op. cit*., p. 155.

resolutions. Nonetheless, for the sake of order, it is worth first comparing the number of different dietines.

Parliamentary Function of Dietines

Let us first look at the state-wide activity of the Trakai and Kaunas Dietines. As mentioned above, I do not find the statistical aspects particulary authoritative for the problem under study. This is confirmed by comparing the number of pre-diet dietines, of which there were 13 in Trakai between 1764 and 1788, while 14 in Kaunas. The number was similar for all poviats, as it was related to the number of Diets. Only minor differences were possible, for example, because most of the dietines before the would-be 1768 Diet did not meet, with Kaunas being one of the exceptions.

Similarly, there are minor differences in the number of deputy dietines, which should have gathered every year with minor exceptions, for example, during the confederation. There were 24 each in Trakai and Kaunas. We can also associate two Trakai and one Kaunas confederate dietines with political activity. As can be observed, the numbers of the Trakai and Kaunas Dietines fulfilling state-wide functions are almost identical, while the course of these assemblies was notably different.

First, it can be noted that the Kaunas nobility showed a lot of initiative in terms of political activity. Since Saxon times, the Zabiełłos family had played a dominant role there, whose representatives held the key office of marshal in the poviat from 1730. Their main rival was Szymon Siruć, who held the office of Kaunas starost between 1742 and 1763.[9] During the reign of Augustus III, they manoeuvred among the political factions, preventing the dietines from dissolving.[10] Due to the predominance of the Familia during the last *interregnum*, the Zabiełłos became closer to this faction. Still, in the event of a contradiction between the will of the king and the Czartoryskis, they followed the monarch; for example, at the 1766 Candlemas dietine, they elected Józef Meysztowicz as a land judge in accordance with the king's will, and against Czartoryski's recommendations. In addition, the Kaunas dietine was one of the few at which a point supported by the ruler on the rights of dissidents was written into the instructions to the 1766 Diet. The Zabiełłos also strengthened their position; for example, at the 1765 Diet, which elected the majority of poviat election officials, they filled all offices with their own or the Familia's supporters, and in 1767 Jan Truskowski, the Zabiełłos' adherent, became one of the deputies.[11] Similarly, during the Radom and Bar Confederations, the Zabiełłos manoeuvred between the two sides of the conflict. Although

[9] *Urzędnicy*, vol. 2, p. 381, 435.

[10] JUSUPOVIĆ, M. *Prowincjonalna elita litewska w XVIII wieku. Działalność polityczna rodziny Zabiełłów w latach 1733–1795*. Warsaw: Instytut Historii PAN, Neriton, 2014, *passim*.

[11] JUSUPOVIĆ, M. *Prowincjonalna elita litewska*, pp. 258–264.

they collaborated with Russia and obeyed the orders of Ambassador Stackelberg, their closest relatives and associates were leading activists in the confederation; for example, the Zabiełłos' nephew Szymon Kossakowski was one of the Bar leaders.[12] At that time, the Kaunas deputy dietines proceeded quite peacefully, rather to Zabiełłos' liking, but the assembly soon began to cause trouble for the royal court. When, in 1772, the king tried to elect delegates to it in connection with his kidnapping, it succeeded at most of the dietines, but the Kaunas one caused trouble. No delegates were elected during the session, and only after it was over did the Russian officer Hausenberg force the Kaunas citizens to do so.[13] This shows the problems with the subordination of Kaunas leaders, be it to the royal court or the major political factions.

In the case of the Trakai dietines, it is much more difficult to see local leaders acting on their initiative. In most cases, the dietines proceeded by the will of the leaders of the political factions, especially the Vilnius voivode, Karol Stanisław Radziwiłł. Earlier, in the time of Augustus III, the Trakai leaders were divided between the partisans of Radziwiłł, such as the Römers,[14] and those of the Familia, such as the De Raëss.[15] Nevertheless, during the last *interregnum* and the beginning of Stanisław August's reign, the main Trakai activists went over to the side of the victorious Familia. During the election, they supported Stanisław August's candidacy.[16] However, signs of the return of Radziwiłł influence were quickly observable. At the pre-convocation dietines, deputies associated with the Familia were elected.[17] However, the attitude of one of them, Ludwik Pociej, was ambiguous since he continued, like Stefan Römer, to communicate with Radziwiłł.[18] The instructions for them contained pro-Saxon points,[19] and this was even more the case for the instructions for the coronation Diet.[20] Moreover, the citizens of Trakai joined the confederation led by the Familia quite late.[21]

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[12] JUSUPOVIĆ, M. *Prowincjonalna elita litewska*, pp. 265–269; DOLINSKAS, V. *Simonas Kosakovskis. Politinė ir karinė veikla Lietuvos Didžiojoje Kunigaikštystėje 1763–1794*. Vilnius: Vilniaus Universitetas, 2003, *passim*.

[13] JUSUPOVIĆ, M. *Prowincjonalna elita litewska*, p. 275–276; KOŚCIAŁKOWSKI, S. *Antoni Tyzenhauz. Podskarbi nadworny litewski*. London: wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Stefana Batorego, 1970, p. 85.

[14] MACUK, A. *Barac'ba magnackih grupowak u WKL (1717–1763*). Mińsk: Medysont, 2010, pp. 394–411; KAMOLOWA, D. *Römer Stefan Dominik*. PSB, vol. 31, p. 656.

[15] KOŚCIAŁKOWSKI, S. *op. cit*., p. 117.

[16] *Elektorów poczet, którzy niegdyś głosowali na elektów Jana Kazimierza r. 1648 Jana IV r. 1674, Augusta II r. 1697 i Stanisława Augusta r. 1764 królów polskich Wielkich Książąt Litewskich,* ed. by Father Zaprzaniec of Siemuszowa Pietruska. Lwów, 1845, p. 274, 306.

[17] Laudum sejmiku przedkonwokacyjnego 7.2.1764, LVIA, SA 5965, c. 1032; SZWACIŃSKI, T. Sejmiki poselskie przed konwokacją 1764 r. *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 63, 2006, 1, p. 28.

[18] S. Römer to K.S. Radziwiłł, 8.2.1764, AGAD AR V, 13258a, p. 44.

[19] Instrukcja na sejm konwokacyjny 6.2.1764, LVIA, SA 5965, c. 1034–1041v; SZWACIŃSKI, T., *op.cit*., p. 48, 51.

[20] Instrukcja na sejm koronacyjny 29.10.1764, LVIA, SA 5965 c. 1494–1501v.

[21] Akces do konfederacji 23.7.1764, LVIA, SA 5965, c. 1387–1390v.

Thus, in Trakai, Radziwiłł influences were reviving, and they also impacted the selection of officials in 1766, when Stefan Dominik Römer became the grand ensign, while his brother Jan was selected as the land judge.[22] In 1766, a parliamentary dietine was also held, at which Andrzej Ukolski and Jan Antoni Wazgird were elected. Rozalia Kosińska considers them to have been linked to the Familia, but this is only justified by Ukolski's activities at the pre-convocation dietine.[23]

The sphere of influence of the Radziwiłł expanded in connections with the Radom Confederation, which was set up very efficiently in Trakai as early as May.[24] Stefan Dominik Römer became the confederate marshall, which confirms his consistent ties with the Radziwiłł faction. At that time, he mediated between Radziwiłł and Nikolai Repnin on the confederation's efforts to return the prince's estates, particularly the lease of the Šiauliai economy.[25] Römer and his father-in-law, Antoni Michał Pac, were also members of the 1767 Diet, while their instructions were entirely republican in tone.[26] Much less is known about the involvement of Trakai citizens in the Bar Confederation, but it seems it was not significant.[27]

In the meantime, Prince Radziwiłł found himself in exile, which limited his influence over the dietines in the country. Michał Fryderyk Czartoryski tried to take control of the Trakai dietine. From 1771, he regularly corresponded with the newly elected voivode of Trakai, Tadeusz Franciszek Ogiński, encouraging him to participate in the Trakai dietine and ensure its successful outcomes. It seems, however, that the voivode did not come to the dietines, and the implementation of Czartoryski's recommendations was done primarily by Józef Piotr Eytmin, elected as a deputy in 1771.[28] Similarly, in subsequent years, deputies were elected at least partly to Czartoryski's liking.[29] It was worse in the case of the election of officials. The king and the Familia did not manage to elect the land judge to their satisfaction, as a vote ensued in which Józef Sienkiewicz defeated Tadeusz Strawiński, proposed by the king.[30] A similar situation took place the following year on the occasion of the election of the land scribe, a position for which Stanisław Paszkiewicz was chosen rather than Jerzy Żeromski or Leon Radoszewski,

[22] Laudum sejmiku elekcyjnego 5.2.1766, LVIA, SA 5966, c. 739–742v.

[23] KOSIŃSKA, R. Sejmiki poselskie 1766. *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 135, 2018, 4, p. 887.

[24] Akt konfederacji 22.5.1767, LVIA, SA 5966, c. 1365–1368v; ŁUKOWSKI, G. *The szlachta and the confederacy of Radom*. Romae: Institutum Historicum Poloniae, 1977, pp. 153–154.

[25] S. Römer to K.S. Radziwiłł 19.6.1767, ARV 13258a, p. 45; ŁUKOWSKI, G. *op.cit*., p. 166.

[26] Instrukcja na sejm nadzwyczajny 24.8.1767, LVIA, SA 5966, c. 1448–1453v.

[27] KONOPCZYŃSKI, W. *Konfederacja barska*. Vol. 2 Poznań: Zysk i S-ka, 2017, pp. 136–138; KOŚCIAŁKOWSKI, S., *op.cit.*, p. 83.

[28] Stanisław August to L. Pociej, 14.1.1770, BC 683, p. 180. The letter is dated incorrectly in terms of its year.

[29] M.F. Czartoryski to T. Ogiński, 11.1.1773, BK 01336, c. 5v–6.

[30] Sufragia na sęstwo 6-7.2.1771, LVIA, SA 5917, c. 606–609v; Sufragia na sęstwo 6–7.2.1771 LVIA, SA 5917, c. 604–605v; ZAKRZEWSKI, A. B. *Sejmiki*, p. 85.

who was supported by the King and Czartoryski.[31] However, the question arises whether the failure of royal court candidates was due to the independent actions of the Trakai leaders or to the continuing popularity of Radziwiłł functionaries. Nonetheless, the court did try to recruit the latter; for example, in 1771, by the plans of the king and the Czartoryskis, Stefan Römer, hitherto associated with Radziwiłł, was elected as grand chamberlain.[32]

In Trakai, there were no more significant problems with the election of deputies to the king in 1772,[33] when Czartoryski attempted to convince Ogiński to take care of this issue, while the potential citizens' fears were to be offset by assurances in the laudum and instructions that the delegates would only express outrage at the kidnapping and joy at the king being rescued. Eytmin, who became a delegate to the king along with judge Franciszek De Raess, collaborated with Ogiński.[34]

As can be seen, the royal court quickly gained the upper hand at the Trakai dietine and increased Radziwiłł supporters. It was much more difficult for the regalists to gain control of the Kaunas dietine. From 1773 onwards, Antoni Tyzenhauz took an interest in their proceedings, and the same was true of those of the Trakai dietine. It seems that in 1775, at least one of the Kaunas deputies was elected to the royal court's liking.[35] The treasurer initially contacted Szymon Siruc about the dietines and later made his nephew, Józef Prozor, the leader of the Kaunas regalists. However, they constantly had to compete with the Zabiełłos and complained about their considerable forces and unscrupulous conduct. The royalist faction tried to take control of the whole Grand Duchy of Lithuania during the 1776 dietines. In Kaunas, a dispute over the election of deputies resulted in a vote during the deputy dietine. The Zabiełłos won it, but there was bloodshed and accusations of fraud and assault. Similarly, the deputy dietine elected the Zabiełło candidates, and Prozor and some of the regalists abandoned the fight due to fear of their opponents.[36]

Despite the failure at the Kaunas dietine, the royalist faction managed to capture most of the Lithuanian dietines that year and take control of the Grand Duchy. As a result, also at the 1777 deputy dietine, the Zabiełłos ceded to the regalists. However, already a year later, after the 1778 Candlemas dietine, a conflict arose between Szymon

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[31] Stanisław August to L. Pociej, 15.1.1772, BC 683, p. 219; M.F. Czartoryski to T. Ogiński, 27.1.1772, BK 01336, c. 4v–5; Kredens na pisarstwo 5.2.1772, LVIA, SA 5917, k. 715–716; *Urzędnicy*, vol. 2, p. 155, 163; ZAKRZEWSKI, A.B. *Sejmiki*, p. 85.

[32] M.F. Czartoryski to T. Ogiński, 24.12.1770, 21.1.1771, BK 01336, c. 4, 47; Kredens dla podkomorzego 6.2. 1771, LVIA, SA 5917, c. 598–601; *Urzędnicy*, vol. 2, p. 174.

[33] KOŚCIAŁKOWSKI, S. *op. cit*., p. 86.

[34] M. F. Czartoryski to T. Ogiński, 27.1.1771, BK 01336, c. 5–5v; Instrukcja dla delegatów 4.2.1772, LVIA, SA 5917, c. 711–712v; Laudum 5.2.1772, LVIA, SA 5917, c. 713–714v; Vilnius gazette 10.2.1772, BC 836, p. 393; ZAKRZEWSKI, A.B. *Sejmiki*, p. 119.

[35] JUSUPOVIĆ, M. *Prowincjonalna elita litewska*, pp. 276–278.

[36] Stanisław August to A. Tyzenhauz, 26.2.1776, BC 716, pp. 142–145; J. Prozor to A. Tyzenhauz, 29.6.1776, BC 716, p. 490; JUSUPOVIĆ, M. *Prowincjonalna elita litewska*, p. 281.

and Jerzy Zabiełło and Michał Montwiłł, one of the regalists. This affected the course of the 1778 parliamentary dietine, at which seats were divided between the two factions. This led to the regalists agreeing to a compromise that was, incidentally, as per Stanisław August's will.[37] In the following years, the conflict between the Zabiełłos and the regalists intensified with the removal of Tyzenhauz from power. However, even when the situation calmed down later, in Kaunas, there was, at best, a division of seats between the factions, and often, the opposition had the upper hand; for example, deputies to the 1782 Diet were elected exclusively from the Zabiełło family. Supporters of the royal court had to cede due to orders from Stanisław August seeking a compromise.[38]

The situation of the regalists was quite different in Trakai. Similarly, as in Kaunas, Antoni Tyzenhauz became interested in its dietine in 1773.[39] In 1774, deputies were elected, which was recommended to Tyzenhauz by Römer, while Czartoryski also ultimately expressed satisfaction with the election results.[40] Only in 1775 did open conflict between the Prince Chancellor and the Grand Treasurer erupt, as Czartoryski instructed Ogiński to think of candidates for deputies who would not be associated with Massalski or Tyzenhauz, as these two were then collaborating so they could rule despotically over Lithuania.[41] Against Czartoryski's plans, Adam Turczynowicz and Antoni Römer were elected as deputies,[42] most probably in accordance with Tyzenhauz's will, who received a few accounts of the proceedings.[43] After Czartoryski's death in 1775, the course of the Trakai dietine was controlled only by Tyzenhauz.

When 1776, the regalist party was fighting to take control of the Grand Duchy, in Trakai the Candlemas dietines proceeded quite peacefully. Nevertheless, the royal court had to abandon the idea of putting forward its candidacy of Mikołaj Łopaciński as the head of the Tribunal[44] because the Trakai leaders did not agree to his election. At the same time, the treasurer did not want to complicate the situation before the parliamentary dietine.[45] Eytmin provided an account to Tyzenhauz that Tadeusz de Raess and Piotr Kleczkowski were elected as deputies.[46] Czartoryski's hitherto intermediary thus became closer to the grand treasurer. Before the parliamentary dietine that year, the King wrote to Andrzej Ogiński that Tyzenhauz, both of his own accord and on the King's recommendation, was ready to support his candidacy for the post. In the meantime, Römer and de Raess were competing for the position of Trakai envoy, so Tyzenhauz

[37] JUSUPOVIĆ, M. *Prowincjonalna elita litewska*, pp. 287–290.
[38] JUSUPOVIĆ, M. *Prowincjonalna elita litewska*, pp. 299–302.
[39] A. Tyzenhauz to Stanisław August, 11.2.1773, BC 715, p. 156–157; Regestr treści listów Antoniego Tyzenhauza, AGAD, Arch. Tyzenhauzów, vol. 2, p. 457.
[40] M.F. Czartoryski to T. Ogiński, 28.2.1774, BK 01336, c. 56.
[41] M.F. Czartoryski to T. Ogiński, 16, 24.10., 7, 14.11.1774, BK 01336, c. 82v, 83v, 85–86v.
[42] Kredens dla deputatów 7.2.1775, LVIA SA 5917, c. 1079–1080v.
[43] Regestr treści listów, vol. 1, p. 1194, vol. 2, p. 389, 565, 1003.
[44] Stanisław August to A. Tyzenhauz, 29.1.1776, BC 716, p. 92.
[45] A. Tyzenhauz to Stanisław August, 5.2.1776, BC 716, p. 324.
[46] Regestr treści listów, vol. 1, p. 838.

is to have persuaded one of them to resign.[47] The grand treasurer complained that he had to divert his friends from attempts to become envoys to help Ogiński, who himself was not undertaking any efforts to gain support.[48] Ultimately, Stefan Römer was chosen along with Ogiński, and Gabriela Tomczyk listed both these Trakai representatives to the Diet among the most distinguished regalists in the parliament.[49] It seems that deputies to Tyzenhauz's liking were also elected at the 1777 Candlemas dietine.[50]

In subsequent years, the Trakai Dietine proceeded favourably for the regalists. This was due to the agreement of the royal court with Radziwiłł, who, following his return from exile in 1778, cooperated with the regalists until the Great Diet.[51] Even in times of crisis for the royalist faction, the situation at the Trakai Dietine deteriorated only temporarily. Only the 1779 deputy dietine caused some issues, during which Bernard Szwykowski and Józef Jeleński were elected in a vote,[52] while the regalist Franciszek de Raess was not.[53] The dietine gathering did not proceed problem-free,[54] with the representative of the opposition, Michał Zaleski, stating that the deputies were elected against Tyzenhauz's will, as those he supported were to lose during the vote.[55] However, Stanisław Kościałkowski claims that the treasurer agreed to the elected deputies on the king's order.[56] It should be noted that Szwykowski had been supported by the king for a position as wojski of the Trakai, emphasising that he was the son-in-law of Karaś, marshal of the royal court.[57] Nonetheless, Tyzenhauz believed he could not be recommended for deputation as he had no history of merits for the poviat, which would lead to dissatisfaction among the more popular families.[58] Later, Tyzenhauz criticised him for not communicating well with his opponents.[59] Ultimately, Tyzenhauz listed Szwykowski among the unfavourable deputies.[60] In turn, according to Dariusz Rolnik, Józef's brother, Jan Jeleński, had supposedly stood against Tyzenhauz during

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47 Stanisław August to A. Ogiński, 28.6.1776, BC 680, p. 355; ZIELIŃSKA, Z. *Ogiński Andrzej*, PSB vol. 23, p. 598.

48 A. Tyzenhauz to Stanisław August, 8, 11.7.1776, BC 716, p. 569, pp. 575–576.

49 TOMCZYK, G. Stronnictwo królewskie na sejmie 1776 r. *Folia historica* 49, 1993, pp. 37–38.

50 Kredens dla deputatów, LVIA SA 5917, c. 1445–1446v; *Regestr treści listów*, vol. 1, p. 838, 1030, vol. 2, p. 391, 446.

51 MICHALSKI, J. Wokół powrotu Karola Radziwiłła z emigracji pobarskiej. In: J. Michalski. *Studia i szkice historyczne z XVIII i XIX w.* Kraków: Arcana, 2020, pp. 456–457.

52 Kredens dla deputatów, 10.2.1779, LVIA SA 5918, c. 220–221v.

53 Sufragia dla deputatów, 8.2.1778, LVIA SA 5918, c. 217–218v

54 Regestr treści listów, vol. 2, p. 929.

55 *Pamiętniki Michała Zaleskiego, wojskiego Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego, posła na Sejm Czteroletni*, ed. by J.K. Żupański. Poznań, 1879, pp. 105–106, 112; ZAKRZEWSKI, A.B. *Sejmiki*, p. 48, 97.

56 KOŚCIAŁKOWSKI, S. *op. cit.*, p. 193.

57 Stanisław August to A. Tyzenhauz, 1.2.1779, AGAD APP 310, p. 618.

58 A. Tyzenhauz to Stanisław August, 4.2.1779, BC 717, pp. 259–260.

59 A. Tyzenhauz to Stanisław August, 11.2.1779, BC 717, pp. 294–295.

60 A. Tyzenhauz to Stanisław August, 22.5.1779, BC 717, pp. 739.

this dietine meeting.[61] Thus, it can be assumed that Tyzenhauz, in fact, had accepted these candidates for deputies but ultimately was not satisfied with them.

The 1780 deputy dietine was more successful for the regalists and Radziwiłł, as Antoni Römer and his nephew Adam Turczynowicz were elected.[62] This was not hampered by Zaleski's opposition, which was supported by key political figures, and Tyzenhauz wrote to the king about it.[63] The next day, the electoral dietine occurred in connection with a vacancy for the position of land scribe, for which Adam Turczynowicz,[64] who had previously asked Tyzenhauz for the function, was elected.[65] In turn, at the 1780 parliamentary dietine, the mandates were divided between the regalists and the opposition. The latter's representative was Zaleski, but the king supported his candidacy and convinced Tyzenhauz that even if, up until then, Zaleski had acted against the royal court, he would surely change his behaviour when he saw what was happening in Lithuania.[66] Zaleski himself provided an account that in preparing for the dietines in Trakai, he had to overcome various obstacles, gather his friends around him, and then come to an understanding with his opponents, as a result of which the dietines proceeded peacefully.[67] Andrzej Zakrzewski, referring to Kościałkowski, states that a political change occurred then and that Tyzenhauz's opponents were elected at this assembly. Still, it is doubtful whether Römer can be assessed in this way.[68] In subsequent years, members of parliament and deputies were mainly elected according to the plans of the royal court, or at least those of Radziwiłł.[69] As can be observed, in Trakai, it was difficult to find dietines controlled by the opposition; even in the most challenging periods for the royal court, reaching a compromise and dividing the seats between the two factions was usually possible. On the other hand, most of the dietines were controlled by the regalists, especially Radziwiłł, who cooperated with the royal court.

Some problems appeared in the Trakai dietine only ahead of the 1786 Diet, which complicated things for the royal court when it became impossible for Michał Zaleski, supported by the leader of the regalists Joachim Chreptowicz, to be elected as envoy to the Diet. Instead, the sons of regalist Andrzej Ogiński, Michał, and Adam Turczynowicz,

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61 ROLNIK, D. *Województwo mińskie i Jeleńscy w życiu publicznym Rzeczypospolitej w latach 1764–1795 w świetle ich korespondencji*. Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2018, p. 194.

62 Kredens dla deputatów 8.2.1780, LVIA SA 5918, c. 404–405v; S. Römer to K.S. Radziwiłł, 19.2.1780, AGAD AR V 13258a, p. 63–64; Regestr deputatów 1780, BC 718, p. 243.

63 A. Tyzenhauz to Stanisław August, 3.2.1780, BC 718, p. 198.

64 Laudum sejmikowe 9.2.1780, LVIA SA 5918, c. 410–411v; ZAKRZEWSKI, A.B. *Sejmiki*, p. 86, 199–202, 206.

65 Regestr treści listów, vol. 2, p. 1126.

66 Stanisław August to K.S. Radziwiłł, 1.8.1780, BC 686, p. 128; Stanisław August to A. Tyzenhauz, 15.2.1779, AGAD APP 310, p. 630.

67 *Pamiętniki Michała Zaleskiego*, p. 134–135; ZAKRZEWSKI, A.B. *Sejmiki*, p. 87.

68 ZAKRZEWSKI, A.B. *Sejmiki*, p. 87

69 E.g. members of parliament in 1782 and 1784, deputies in 1783, Projekt posłów na sejm 1782, BC 686, p. 323; S. Römer to K.S. Radziwiłł, 8.2.1783, AGAD ARV 13258a, p. 70–71; J. Jeleński to K.S. Radziwiłł, 16.8.1784, AGAD ARV, p. 3.

promoted by Radziwiłł, were elected as members of parliament.[70] Thus, we can observe some discrepancies between the positions of Radziwiłł and the leader of the royal court faction.[71] Zaleski himself wrote to Adam Chmara that despite the intercession of the addressee and the grand chancellor, he was prevented from becoming an envoy due to the reluctance of the De Raesses.[72] At the same time, opposition points appeared in the Trakai instruction alongside regalist points, most notably including Branicki's name in the context of the Dogrum case, which was the primary opposition demand.[73]

The 1788 deputy dietine was more difficult for the regalists. Römer gave an account to Radziwiłł that it was impossible to have Dederko elected, even though the prince supported him, while Kuszelewski did not make it to the proceedings. Römer had wanted to counteract Krzywobłocki's efforts to be made deputy. Thus, Römer agreed to Wincenty Desztrunka, ensuring he was faithful to Radziwiłł, as he stated to the prince. Jakub Godaczewski became the second deputy.[74] In turn, Kazimierz Dederko tried to explain to the prince that his brother had not been chosen due to him being late, Brzostowski's dealings and the citizens' resentment towards Radziwiłł.[75] That same year, the parliamentary seats for the Great Diet were divided between the two factions. On behalf of the royal court, the Primate handled the Diet, which supported the candidacy of Michał Brzostowski, related to Radziwiłł. The Puławy candidate was Michał Zaleski, who, according to Jerzy Michalski, was also endorsed by Chreptowicz.[76] These two candidates became members of parliament.[77] At the same time, their instructions were rather regalistic in nature, or at least did not contain any points against the Permanent Council.[78]

As can easily be guessed, the Kaunas dietines of that time were even less successful for the regalists. The 1786 pre-diet assembly took place relatively peacefully, as the regalists gave in to the Zabiełłos, who conducted the dietine according to their plans. At the 1787 deputy dietine, seats were divided between the two parties, while the 1788 deputy dietine did not occur. The parliamentary dietine before the Four-Year Diet was again controlled by the Zabiełłos, with Stanisław August's consent. The instructions to Kaunas deputies were also oppositional.[79]

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[70] M. Ogiński to K.S. Radziwiłł, 23.8.1786, AGAD AR V 10715a, c. 1; J. Jeleński to K.S. Radziwiłł, 25.8.1786, AGAD ARV, p. 15.

[71] T. De Raess to K.S. Radziwiłł, 23.8.1786, AGAD AR V 12820, p. 1.

[72] M. Zaleski to A. Chmara, 22.8.1786, BJ 6657II, p. 206.

[73] Instrukcja na sejm zwyczajny 21.8.1786, BJ 5103; DANILCZYK, A. *op. cit*., p. 119–131.

[74] S. Römer to K.S. Radziwiłł, 8.2.1788, AGAD ARV13258a, pp. 87–88;

[75] K. Dederko to K.S. Radziwiłł, 7.2.1787, AGAD AR V 2911, pp. 4–5.

[76] MICHALSKI, J. Sejmiki poselskie 1788. *Studia historyczne;* MICHALSKI, J. *Stanisław August Poniatowski*. Warsaw: Instytut Historii PAN, 2009, p. 266.

[77] *Kredens dla posłów* 18.8.1788, LVIA SA 5919, c. 903–904.

[78] *Instrukcja na sejm zwyczajny* 19.8.1788, BN akc. 16165, vol. 2, c. 59–60v*;* MICHALSKI, J. *Sejmiki poselskie 1788*, pp. 273–280

[79] JUSUPOVIĆ, M. *Prowincjonalna elita litewska*, pp. 318–322.

After 1764, the law prohibited the breaking off of the dietines, but it still sometimes occurred that the nobility lodged protests against the proceedings. Another method of preventing political opponents from dominating the dietines was to split the assemblies. This happened several times in the case of the Kaunas ones, for example, during the crisis of the royal faction due to a conflict with Antoni Tyzenhauz. Already during the 1779 Candlemas dietine, achieving a compromise was impossible. The dietine was split into two separate assemblies due to a dispute over the election of one of the deputies, as the Zabiełłos did not agree to divide the seats between the two factions. Fearing an unsuccessful vote outcome, they prolonged the deliberations until finally the regalists, led by Dominik Medeksza, brought in a manifesto and organised a separate dietine, to which the Zabiełłos responded with a remanifesto. At the tribunal trials (*rugi*), the dietines organised by the court supporters were finally recognised as legitimate.[80] In 1780, there was once again a split during the February dietine due to a conflict over the choice of deputies, as a result of which both sides put forward manifestos. Once again, the regalist deputies won during the tribunal trials.[81] Exceptionally, the Kaunas parliamentary dietine was also split that year, even though the king had previously proposed to the Zabiełłos to divide the seats between the two factions. This was the only case in which the assembly organised by the Zabiełłos was considered legitimate when the Kaunas Dietine was split into two gatherings. As a result, Kaunas was represented at the Diet by opposition representatives, equipped with instructions unfavourable to the royal court.[82]

After Tyzenhauz was removed from power, the situation in Lithuania and Kaunas calmed down. Still, the struggle between the parties intensified on the occasion of the election of the Kaunas grand chamberlain in 1784. Dominik Medeksza was to relinquish this office in favour of Zabiełłos' nephew, Antoni Kossakowski, but he postponed it until he finally died in 1783. At the electoral dietine the following year, the proceedings were split, and the Zabiełłos did not recognise the victory of the regalist Tomasz Wawrzecki.[83] The dispute dragged on for years, contributing to the splitting of successive Candlemas assemblies, with only the 1784 parliamentary dietine succeeding. During the 1785 assembly, however, Zabiełło supporters did not even allow the regalists to enter the meeting place, which led to a manifesto being brought against them. Eventually, the regalist deputies were recognised as legitimate.[84] The situation was similar in the case of the 1786 Candlemas dietine. Efforts to find compromise candidates before the

[80] *Akta sejmiku kowieńskiego z lat 1733-1795*. Ed. by M. Jusupović. Warsaw: Instytut Historii PAN, Neriton, 2019 (hereinafter ASK), p. 293–301; JUSUPOVIĆ, M. *Prowincjonalna elita litewska*, pp. 291–292.

[81] ASK, p. 311–318; JUSUPOVIĆ, M. *Prowincjonalna elita litewska*, pp. 294–295.

[82] JUSUPOVIĆ, M. *Prowincjonalna elita litewska*, pp. 296–297.

[83] JUSUPOVIĆ, M. *Prowincjonalna elita litewska*, pp. 303–304.

[84] ASK, p. 405–411; JUSUPOVIĆ, M. *Prowincjonalna elita litewska*, pp. 308–314.

session did not help, as the pretext for the split of this dietine was a dispute over the session's venue.[85]

As observed, the Kaunas Dietine was split into separate gatherings as many as seven times during Stanisław August's reign, and five manifestos were lodged against the sessions. There were no such occurrences in the case of the Trakai Dietine.

The differences between the dietines discussed are reflected in the correspondence of the leaders of the political factions. In one of his letters to Chreptowicz, the king indicated that in the case of the Trakai dietines, he would only send proposals, not pressing for their implementation, but he was much more concerned with the Kaunas Dietine.[86] Stanisław August had a completely different approach to both discussed assemblies, as he would devote an exceptional amount of his attention to the dietine taking place in Kaunas. He made a great effort to get the Zabiełłos to cooperate with his faction so that he could use their influence. He often ordered the regalists to make concessions, sometimes unsuccessfully, not to cause unrest at the dietines. This was a different approach from that of Tyzenhauz, who would make attempts to defeat the Zabiełłos as he did not trust them. However, both considered the Zabiełłos to be difficult opponents and attached a lot of significance to the Kaunas Dietine.[87] Similarly, in the case of the Trakai Dietine, the king's approach was more compromising than that of the grand treasurer. Both, however, subordinated the holding of the sessions there to the aims of the regalist party, sometimes only taking allowance for the will of the citizens of Trakai.[88]

It is worth looking at how much space was devoted to both dietines in the letters of the dignitaries, as mentioned earlier. It is best to refer here to the correspondence of the king and the leader of the regalists from the years when the political struggle was quite intense throughout Lithuania. A good example would be 1776, when the regalists fought for supremacy. We find more than 20 mentions of Kaunas in Stanisław August's correspondence with Tyzenhauz from that year. These are frequently extensive fragments, sometimes even a few pages long, containing discussions between the correspondents concerning various problems with the dietine.[89] In turn, the Trakai Dietine is mentioned six times, frequently between discussions of other dietines, with only two longer fragments.[90] For comparison, it is worthwhile to refer to 1780, a year of crisis for the

[85] JUSUPOVIĆ, M. *Prowincjonalna elita litewska*, pp.315–317.

[86] Stanisław August to J. Chreptowicz, 4.7.1784, BC 724, pp. 241–243.

[87] JUSUPOVIĆ, M. *Prowincjonalna elita litewska*, pp. 279–281.

[88] A. Tyzenhauz to Stanisław August, 5.2.1776, BC 716, p. 324; Stanisław August to A. Ogiński, 28.6.1776, BC 680; A. Tyzenhauz to Stanisław August, 8, 11.7.1776, BC 716, p. 569, pp. 575–576.

[89] Stanisław August's correspondence with A. Tyzenhauz, BC 716, pp. 107–113, 121–122, 132, 142–145, 150, 275, 305, 328–329, 333–335, 341–342, 355–357, 366–368, 403, 415, 446, 493, 513, 517–520, 529–530, 568, 575, 593–596, 623, 636–642.

[90] Stanisław August's correspondence with A. Tyzenhauz, BC 716, p. 92, pp. 323–324, 569, 575–576, 590, 601.

royal court faction. In the correspondence between the king and Tyzenhauz that year, the Kaunas Dietine was mentioned seven times, but these were not long fragments.[91] In turn, the Trakai Dietine was mentioned only two times that year.[92] It should again be emphasised that the dietines from that year were exceptionally difficult for the royal court. Thus, the Trakai Dietine was mentioned even less often in other years.

Therefore, in general, the Kaunas dietines were much more turbulent than the Trakai ones, and the Kaunas leaders were less inclined to make concessions and to subordinate themselves to the more prominent factions. Therefore, it can be concluded that they paid much more attention to the political or representative function of the dietines than in the case of Trakai. The situation was different for the self-governing function of these assemblies.

Self-Governing Function of Dietines

As mentioned, this function was mainly performed by economic dietines, which, according to the law, were to be held annually. At least 19 were held in Trakai during the period in question, or at least that is the amount for which we have source evidence. This is thus a high number for the 24 years on which we are focused. Kaunas held far fewer: only seven are documented in the sources. Of course, sources may have yet to survive from others. Perhaps the nobility did not see the need to issue documents from the dietines, or they had not survived. However, the latter option is unlikely due to the good state of preservation of the Kaunas court books. Additionally, the difference between the numbers of the two dietines is significant, and can hardly be considered to be due only to the state of preservation of the materials. Moreover, the dietine resolutions in Trakai's case are longer and richer in content than those of Kaunas. It can be considered that the administrative function was performed by electoral dietines, and there were 9 of these in Trakai. In Kaunas, there were again significantly fewer, only five. Their number, however, depended on the necessity of electing officials to vacant posts.

The most common task at the Trakai economic dietines was to elect local functionaries. First, contractors were elected to collect taxes on alcohol and liquor.[93] Exceptionally, in 1765, it was impossible to elect them due to the large number of candidates, so this task was handed over to the Trakai Voivode, Pociej. Andrzej Zakrzewski allows for two interpretations here – that the tax was paid directly to the municipal chancellery or that the municipal clerks acted as contractors.[94] In later years, contractors were also

[91] Stanisław August's correspondence with A. Tyzenhauz, BC 718, pp. 232–233, 243, 251, 280, 286, 298, 669–670.

[92] Stanisław August's correspondence with A. Tyzenhauz, BC 718, p. 61, 198.

[93] E.g. Laudum sejmiku deputackiego, gospodarskiego i elekcyjnego 5.2.1766, LVIA, SA 5966, c. 739v; Laudum 10.2.1767, LVIA, SA 5966, c. 1249–1250v; Laudum 6.2.1770, LVIA, SA 5917, c. 543v.

[94] Laudum sejmiku gromnicznego 6.2.1765, LVIA, SA 5966, c. 51–56v; ZAKRZEWSKI, A.B. *Sejmiki*, p. 183.

commissioned to list new, abandoned and illegally-run inns.[95] Similarly, in Kaunas, the selection of contractors was the task of the economic dietine. Still, only one attestation (PL: *kredens*) for such a functionary has survived, namely from 1771 for Kazimierz Eymont. Again, the question arises as to whether this is due to the incompleteness of the documents or the failure to carry out elections for other contractors.[96]

It was much more common in Kaunas to elect poviat rotmistrzs, for whom we have as many as 11 attestations, but all data from 1766, 1768 and 1769. The rotmistrzs were supposed to watch over order in the poviat and ensure the readiness of citizens for military service.[97] They were also elected several times in Trakai; for example, in 1766 Stefan Wazgird was chosen, after which he was granted the right to appoint lieutenants and ensigns, ordered to look after the flag, send out universals (*uniwersały*) and direct the nobility during military demonstrations (*popisy*).[98] Thus, both of the dietines discussed began electing rotmistrzs in 1766. Still, in Kaunas, numerous ones were elected within four years, while in Trakai, the elections were repeated over a more extended period. Perhaps this was connected with the reorganisation of the situation in Lithuania after the reforms of the last *interregnum*.

As of the 1764 reform, Lithuanian dietines elected the grand chamberlain, marshal, grand ensign and the total composition of the land court of law, while the king only granted privileges to electors chosen by the dietines. This change was intended to end the long-standing vacancies of elective offices, which caused disruptions in the functioning of the land courts of law. In connection with this reform, the 1765 Trakai Dietine elected the total composition of the then-enlarged land court of law.[99] After the reform, there were as many as four judges, so there were a few more occasions during Stanisław August's reign to elect judges in connection with the death or resignation of a predecessor.[100] In addition, the land scribe was chosen twice.[101] In the discussed period, a grand ensign was elected on three occasions following the death or promotion of the person performing the function thus far,[102] while, in 1771, the grand chamberlain was chosen after the death of his predecessor.[103]

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[95] Laudum 5.2.1772, LVIA, SA 5917, c. 714.

[96] ASK, p. 243; JUSUPOVIĆ, M. Funkcjonowanie kowieńskich sejmików gospodarskich po reformach Sejmu Niemego, *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 127, 2020, 4, p. 865.

[97] ASK, p. 189–196, 225, 238; JUSUPOVIĆ, M. *Funkcjonowanie kowieńskich sejmików*, pp. 865–866.

[98] Kredens dla rotmistrza 4.2.1766, LVIA SA 5917, c. 1317–1318; Laudum 6.2.1770, LVIA, SA 5917, c. 543v; Laudum, 6.2.1781, LVIA SA 5918, c. 611–612v; Laudum sejmikowe, 7.2.1787, LVIA SA 5919, c. 658–661.

[99] Laudum sejmiku gromnicznego 6.2.1765, LVIA, SA 5966, c. 52–53; *Urzędnicy*, vol. 2, p. 163, 197–198.

[100] Kredens dla sędziego ziemskiego 6.2.1771, LVIA, SA 5917, c. 589–592; Kredens dla sędziego ziemskiego 10.2.1773, LVIA SA 5917, c. 835–838v; *Urzędnicy*, vol. 2, p. 198.

[101] Kredens na pisarstwo 5.2.1772, LVIA, SA 5917, c. 715–716; Laudum sejmikowe 9.2. 1780, LVIA SA 5918, c. 411; *Urzędnicy*, vol. 2, p. 163.

[102] Kredens dla urzędników 12.2.1784, LVIA SA 5919, c. 38-39; Laudum sejmiku deputackiego, gospodarskiego i elekcyjnego 5.2.1766, LVIA, SA 5966, c. 740v; *Urzędnicy*, vol. 2, pp. 104–105.

[103] Kredens dla podkomorzego 6.2.1771, LVIA, SA 5917, c. 598a–601; *Urzędnicy*, vol. 2, p. 174.

On the other hand, immediately after introducing the electoral dietine reform in 1765, the Kaunas Dietine chose almost a complete set of electoral officials, i.e. the grand chamberlain, marshal, grand ensign, four land judges and land scribe.[104] The nobility was probably anxious to put the situation in the poviat in order, as, for example, the land court of law had been vacant for 20 years.[105] In later years, vacancies were systematically filled; for example, in 1769, a grand ensign was elected after the death of the previous one,[106] while in 1782, the marshal, grand ensign, magistrate and land scribe were appointed after the resignation or promotion of their predecessors.[107] In 1784, the split election of the grand chamberlain took place and, as a result of the resulting promotion, also of the grand ensign,[108] while in 1785, again the split election of the land scribe.[109] As seen above, these elections were the cause of political struggles between the factions in Kaunas. They can, therefore, be both part of the political function of the dietine and its self-government role, as they enable the proper functioning of local institutions.

Similarly, the pre-convocation dietine during the *interregnum* elected hooded judges (PL: *sędzia kapturowy*). In 1764, the procedure of these courts of law was regulated in Trakai, and a salary was set for them.[110] After this assembly, a manifesto was brought against Ignacy Kuczewski, who illegally, against objections, appointed himself a hooded judge and then occupied the municipal chancellery, preventing the manifesto from being acted upon.[111] There are, therefore, also elements of political struggle here, although the broader context of the situation is missing. Essentially, however, we are dealing with actions of a self-government nature.

At the economic dietines, officials' resignations from their posts were sometimes announced, and citizens who had recently received privileges from the king assumed local offices. This happened several times in Kaunas and Trakai,[112] but it can hardly be considered a manifestation of the nobility's activities, as they were not dependent on them. Nor did it have much influence on the functioning of the self-government, as these were primarily titular offices, not linked to any tasks.

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[104] ASK, p. 178–186; *Urzędnicy*, vol. 2, p. 360, 382, 394, 400, 419.

[105] *Urzędnicy*, vol. 2, p. 419.

[106] ASK, p. 234; *Urzędnicy*, vol. 2, p. 361.

[107] ASK, p. 347–351; *Urzędnicy*, vol. 2, p. 361, 382, 394, 421,

[108] ASK, p. 360–375; *Urzędnicy*, vol. 2, p. 400.

[109] ASK, p. 393–399; *Urzędnicy*, vol. 2, p. 421.

[110] Laudum sejmiku przedkonwokacyjnego 7.2.1764, LVIA, SA 5965, c. 1032–1033v; ZAKRZEWSKI, A. B. *Sejmiki*, p. 186

[111] Wpis w księdze grodzkiej, LVIA SA 13709, c. 514–515; SZWACIŃSKI, T. *op. cit*., p. 28; Interestingly, among the judges elected at the dietine, Ignacy Kuczewski, the Deputy Steward (PL: *podstoli*) of Kaunas, is listed, while the manifesto was brought against the Deputy Steward of Mielnica, but this may be a mistake in the copy, Laudum sejmiku przedkonwokacyjnego 7.2.1764.

[112] E.g. Laudum sejmiku deputackiego, gospodarskiego i elekcyjnego 5.2.1766, LVIA, SA 5966, c. 739v; Laudum 6.2.1771, LVIA, SA 5917, c. 587v; ASK, p. 410; JUSUPOVIĆ, M. *Funkcjonowanie kowieńskich sejmików*, p. 870.

The economic dietines also dealt with the election of delegates to the king after the kidnapping attempt, as described above. The Kaunas economic dietines also sent delegates to Primate Michał Poniatowski in 1785 in connection with his assumption of that dignity. It may be suspected that the hierarch's affinity with the king and his political role was crucial here, as we have no testimony that this was done when other primates were nominated. However, the instructions to the envoys mention the custom. Many other dietines did likewise, but we have no information on whether delegates were also sent by the Trakai one.[113] Even though the economic dietine handled this, this can be seen instead as a political function.

The Trakai Dietine appointed delegates to deal with local problems. This can be seen, for example, in the problem of supplying forage to the Russian army. In 1770, Franciszek De Raëss and Jan Skarzyński, appointed by the Trakai Dietine, were to go to General de Kolong in connection with the overburdening of the Trakai poviat by army forage imposed by his universal. The situation was aggravated by the exemption of the Serijai estates leased by the King of Prussia, the royal economies and other select estates from forage.[114] In 1772, a response was also made to Field Hetman Sapieha's requisition on wages and grain prices, stipulating that the Trakai voivodeship would pay its dues.[115] In 1772 and 1773, a forage commissioner was selected, i.e. a person to collect provisions and deliver them to the Russian army's stores. A tax was passed for him, but in 1775, the commissioner, Tadeusz Danilewicz, accounted for money taken from Russian troops. In connection to the resignation of this commissioner, he is said to have bought forage and wood and delivered it to the Russian warehouse from the remaining money.[116] No information is available on the selection of forage commissioners in Kaunas. It is possible that commissioners for the whole voivodeship were elected in Trakai. However, this is doubtful, as the Trakai records almost always refer to the Trakai voivodeship and not to the poviat, even though they actually refer to this smaller territorial unit.[117] Also, it is unlikely that the Trakai Dietine would pass taxes to cover the other poviats of the voivodeship.

Another phenomenon we observed in the case of Trakai was the conduct of trials across the land. In 1777, Michał Tański reported on the actions of the deceased Deputy Starost Dominik Tański in the case of the Trakai voivodeship against the Alytus economy over the households.[118] Undoubtedly, this was one of the disputes with economies

[113] ASK, p. 389–391; JUSUPOVIĆ, M. *Funkcjonowanie kowieńskich sejmików*, p. 868.

[114] Laudum 6.2. 1770, LVIA, SA 5917, c. 543–546v; Kredens dla posłów do generała de Kolonga 6.2.1770, LVIA, SA 5917, c. 549–550v; ZAKRZEWSKI, A.B. *Sejmiki*, p. 119.

[115] Laudum 5.2.1772, LVIA, SA 5917, c. 713–714v.

[116] Kredens na komisarstwo 4.2.1772, LVIA, SA 5917, c. 709–710; Kredens dla komisarza 9.2.1773, LVIA SA 5917, c. 824–825v; ZAKRZEWSKI, A.B. *Sejmiki*, p. 183.

[117] It seems the only exception is a document from 1785, issued by "a citizen of the Trakai Poviat", Testymonium 8.2.1785, LVIA SA 6111, c. 993v.

[118] Laudum sejmiku 4.2.1777, LVIA SA 5917, c. 1443–1444v.

that occurred frequently during Antoni Tyzenhauz's management of them. We have no information that the Kaunas Dietine dealt with such issues. However, in 1766, it elected persons to appoint the inspectors of roads and bridges, i.e. relevant citizens who were to be in charge of inspecting the infrastructure.[119] It is possible that this was linked to the 1765 Diet constitution ordering the repair of bridges and roads.[120]

In 1770, Franciszek De Raess and Jan Skarzyński became delegates to the trustees of the Trakai parish church to remedy its neglect and deal with securing funds for it.[121] This may have been related to the fact that services were usually held in this church before the dietine.[122] Similarly, the Kaunas economic dietines in 1767, 1768, and 1770 passed a *laudas* for the Bernardines, whose church held the sessions. Adding one more resolution from before the period we are interested in, it can be concluded that this was the most common subject of interest to Kaunas economic dietines. The first of these *laudum* briefly describes the damage resulting from the proceedings, such as broken benches and doors.[123] This tax was enacted despite the 1768 Diet forbidding the dietines to do so.[124]

The Trakai dietines violated this prohibition much more frequently. Most often, they adopted collections to benefit private individuals, such as victims of fires,[125] or religious orders, especially the Bernardines.[126] In turn, the Kaunas Dietine during the reign of Stanisław August did not enact taxes to benefit private individuals, although this had happened previously.[127] On several occasions, the Trakai dietines also dealt with the confirmation of nobility.[128] For example, at the 1778 economic dietines, a certificate of nobility was issued to Franciszek and Józef Grodzicki and interceded on their behalf in the case brought in by Jerzy and Regina Rodziewicz for Ginczany.[129] However, such documents were sometimes issued outside of the dietines.[130] In turn, in the case of the Kaunas dietines, this did not happen in the discussed period, and even in earlier

[119] ASK, p. 188; JUSUPOVIĆ, M. *Funkcjonowanie kowieńskich sejmików*, p. 866.
[120] VL, vol. 7, p. 22.
[121] Laudum 6.2.1770, LVIA, SA 5917, c. 543-546v; Kredens dla posłów do generała de Kolonga 6.2.1770, LVIA, SA 5917, c. 549–550v; ZAKRZEWSKI, A. B. *Sejmiki*, p. 119.
[122] ZAKRZEWSKI, A. B. *Sejmiki*, p. 57.
[123] ASK, p. 212–213, 226, 240; JUSUPOVIĆ, M. *Funkcjonowanie kowieńskich sejmików*, p. 862.
[124] ZAKRZEWSKI, A.B. *Sejmiki*, p. 201.
[125] Laudum 5.2.1772, LVIA, SA 5917, c. 713–714v; Laudum 8.2.1775, LVIA SA 5917, c. 1081–1082v; Laudum sejmikowe 9.2.1780, LVIA SA 5918, c. 410–411v; ZAKRZEWSKI, A. B. *Sejmiki*, p. 199.
[126] Laudum sejmiku 4.2.1777, LVIA SA 5917, c. 1443–1444v; Laudum 10.2.1767 LVIA, SA 5966, c. 1249–1250v; ZAKRZEWSKI, A. B. *Sejmiki*, p. 203.
[127] JUSUPOVIĆ, M. *Funkcjonowanie kowieńskich sejmików*, p. 864.
[128] Zaświadczenie 9.2.1775, LVIA SA 6108, c. 586–589v; Laudum 8.2.1774, LVIA SA 5917, c. 948–949v; ZAKRZEWSKI, A.B. *Sejmiki*, p. 198.
[129] Zaświadczenie 10.2.1778, LVIA SA 5920, c. 5–6v; ZAKRZEWSKI, A. B. *Sejmiki*, p. 198.
[130] E.g. Testymonium Jerzemu Pietkiewiczowi 13.2.1786, LVIA SA 6111, c. 1204–1205v.

times, it was rare. According to the 1601 constitution, requests of this kind were to be considered by the dietine and then sent on to the Tribunal.[131]

The Trakai Dietine devoted much attention to the place of its meetings and other administrative premises. As late as 1678, the Diet approved the foundation of a Trakai Dominican monastery in the castle. Still, the nobility opposed the idea, as the building housed the dietine chambers, archives and a prison. This constitution was not implemented over the following decades. However, in 1720, the citizens agreed to construct a church in the castle, but in return, the Dominicans were obliged to erect a building where the dietines would meet.[132] The matter dragged on almost until the fall of the Commonwealth. During the reign of Stanisław August, taxes for the construction of the archive and the land office were passed several times in Trakai, and people were appointed to oversee it. In some cases, it was specified that the taxes collected were to be given to the Dominicans for the construction of a monastery, church, and archive, as well as for the dietine building and civic tower. The construction of the municipal archive, in turn, was recommended in 1766 to Voivode Pociej.[133]

In 1768, the Diet ordered the Treasury Commission to pay out money for the construction of the archive, chancellery and building for the dietine meetings in Trakai, while the Dominicans were to build a civic tower and a dietine building. These orders were not carried out.[134] According to Zakrzewski, an agreement was eventually reached whereby the Dominicans were to build the archive, but with the financial assistance of the dietine. The monks still needed to carry out their tasks, and the delay was due to a lack of funds, resulting in the nobility passing further taxes to be used for this purpose.[135] The issue of the Dominicans' obligation to complete the construction was frequently raised in the Trakai instructions. It was mentioned already during the *interregnum*, and the issue was returned to in subsequent instructions.[136] The archive building was finally completed in 1793.[137]

The Kaunas Dietine dealt much less frequently with the issue of the premises needed for the functioning of the administration and did so only in a political context. The exploitation of the venue issue by rival factions has already been pointed out due to the possibility of holding the dietine gatherings both at the castle and in the Bernardine

[131] JUSUPOVIĆ, M. *Funkcjonowanie kowieńskich sejmików*, p. 870–871.

[132] ZAKRZEWSKI, A. B. Budowa archiwów szlachty trockiej, *Miscellanea historico-archivistica* 11, 2000, p. 115.

[133] Laudum sejmiku deputackiego, gospodarskiego i elekcyjnego 5.2.1766, LVIA, SA 5966, c. 740; Laudum 10.2.1767, LVIA, SA 5966, c. 1249–1250; Laudum 6.2.1771, LVIA, SA 5917, c. 587–588v; Laudum 8.2.1775, LVIA SA 5917, k. 1081–1082v; ZAKRZEWSKI, A. B. *Budowa archiwów*, pp. 115–116.

[134] VL, vol. 7, p. 385, 401; ZAKRZEWSKI, A. B. *Budowa archiwów*, p. 116.

[135] Laudum sejmikowe 9.2. 1780, LVIA SA 5918, c. 410–411v; Instrument 12.2.1784, LVIA SA 5919, c. 34v; Laudum sejmikowe 7.2.1787, LVIA SA 5919, c. 659; ZAKRZEWSKI, A. B. *Budowa archiwów*, p. 116–117.

[136] Instrukcja na sejm koronacyjny 29.10.1764, LVIA, SA 5965 c. 1498; Instrukcja na sejm nadzwyczajny 24.8. 1767, LVIA, SA 5966, c. 1451v; Instrukcja na sejm zwyczajny 15.7. 1776, LVIA, SA 5917, c. 1322.

[137] ZAKRZEWSKI, A. B. *Budowa archiwów*, p. 117.

Church. Due to the 1785 split assembly, the Zabiełło faction at the economic dietine recognised the church as the proper place for deliberations. The economic dietines made similar decisions in 1783, but this was part of a political struggle with no practical consequences.[138]

In the instructions to the diets, in addition to the issue of the gathering place of the dietines, there were other points concerning local administration. The Trakai Instruction of 1764 demanded the Merkinė term of office of the land courts of law be erased, and that only the Trakai term of office be retained. The Coronation Diet implemented this postulate.[139] This was later followed by a demand to restore the term of office of the Trakai land courts of law.[140] In addition, in 1767, at least one regiment (PL: *chorągiew*) was demanded to be stationed in Trakai.[141] The renovation of the Trakai church was also tackled,[142] and often the foundations for other churches and religious orders in the province, drawing particular attention to their educational role.[143] One instruction demanded the confirmation of privileges for Trakai Karaites.[144]

The Kaunas instructions also frequently included points on local government affairs, and most notably, the 1788 Kaunas instructions demanded compliance with the powers of the economic dietines, drawing attention to neglect in the poviat, especially regarding public infrastructure and the judiciary.[145] In addition, the instructions sought to preserve the privileges of municipalities and exempt them from tax-reparated interest in clergy foundations.[146]

Conclusion

In summary, significant differences exist in the exercise of the political and self-governing functions on the Trakai and Kaunas dietines. These should rather not be seen as quantitative issues, since most dietines are analogous to assemblies from different poviats, as their convening resulted from higher imperatives. We can see a significant difference only in the case of the number of economic dietines, but we should consider the incompleteness of source information. Much more noticeable are the qualitative

[138] ASK, p. 392-393; JUSUPOVIĆ, M. *Funkcjonowanie kowieńskich sejmików*, p. 862.
[139] Instrukcja na sejm koronacyjny 29.10.1764, LVIA, SA 5965, c. 1497v; VL, vol. 7, 181.
[140] Instrukcja na sejm zwyczajny 15.7.1776, LVIA, SA 5917, c. 1319–1328v.
[141] Instrukcja na sejm nadzwyczajny 24.8.1767, LVIA, SA 5966, k. 1448–1453v.
[142] Instrukcja na sejm zwyczajny 19.8.1782, LVIA, SA 5918, c. 958–969v.
[143] E.g. Instrukcja na sejm zwyczajny 15.7.1776, LVIA, SA 5917, c. 1322v; Instrukcja na sejm zwyczajny 17.8.1778, LVIA, SA 5918, c. 1369-140; Instrukcja na sejm zwyczajny 21.8.1780, LVIA, SA 5918, c. 526–527v
[144] Instrukcja na sejm zwyczajny 16.7.1784, LVIA, SA 5919, c. 128–135v.
[145] ASK, p. 439; JUSUPOVIĆ, M. Instrukcje kowieńskie z lat 1733–1795 jako głos szlachty w sprawach powiatowych, *Klio. Czasopismo poświęcone dziejom Polski i powszechnym* 50, 2019, 3, pp. 41–42.
[146] JUSUPOVIĆ, M. Instrukcje kowieńskie, pp. 50–52.

differences in the intensity of dietine activities in various fields or the involvement of the nobility in them. The Kaunas Dietine had a much more turbulent political history. Often, the political struggle at these assemblies escalated, manifestos were brought forward, and the sessions were broken off several times. This was linked with the functioning of the local political faction, which opposed the royal court party, dominant in Lithuania. Its activities can also be linked to the political initiatives taken by the local nobility. The result was a great interest in the Kaunas Dietine shown by the leaders of the major political parties. In Trakai, meanwhile, local activists subordinated themselves to the central Lithuanian factions. There were some fluctuations in this regard, but mostly, the dominant one was the Radziwiłł party, which had allied with the royal court since 1777. As a result, we have almost no information about unrest at the local dietines, with the opposition only sometimes managing to share influence at the assemblies with the regalists.

At the same time the activities of the Trakai Dietine were quite intensive in terms of local and regional affairs. Economic dietines were held frequently, poviat officers and delegates were regularly appointed to handle local affairs, and much attention was paid to the dietine meeting place and other public buildings. The opposite was the case in the Kaunas Poviat, whose self-governing activities, according to surviving sources, were very modest, limited mainly to the election of rotmistrzs and the enactment of taxes for the Bernardine Church. However, lacking sources makes it difficult to say something definite here. Therefore, it can be concluded that the relationship between the representational and self-governing functions of the dietines, even functioning in the same period and the same area, may have had opposite proportions. We have an example of a dietine where political function was predominant, as well as a dietine where self-governing function was significantly prevailing. As a result we cannot assume that one of these functions dominates on all dietines, although the preformed study suggests that one of them prevails on singular dietines.

Finally, it is worth asking what was the reason behind the described differences in the activities of the dietines. Undoubtedly, the critical role here was that of the Zabiełłos, who managed to create a local faction with political ambitions whose influence reached far beyond the poviat. As a result, it was much more difficult for the central political parties to subjugate the Kaunas Dietine, leading to frequent power struggles. However, we should ask why we have so little testimony about the self-governing activities of Kaunas citizens. Were they suppressed by political leaders wielding strong power in the poviat? Or did the Zabiełłos take care of some of the economic tasks themselves, without the participation of the dietines? Due to the lack of sources, further investigation of this hypothesis is impossible.

On the other hand, for the leaders of the Radziwiłł or royal court party, the affairs of the self-governing Trakai poviat, one of many subordinates to them, may not have been crucial. They had little impact on state politics, making it possible to leave the

citizens some freedom to act. These considerations led to the question of whether the unequal balance between the political and self-government functions of the dietines was a typical phenomenon. It is probably possible to find similar cases in other Lithuanian dietines. In this context, it is worth noting Vilnius. Robertas Jurgaitis, who researched the Vilnius dietines between 1717 and 1795, observed much more self-government activities than general ones at the Vilnius assemblies. However, he has analysed this mainly by looking at the types of dietines held.[147] On the other hand, there can be no doubt that the political life of the Vilnius Dietine was very intense, and we also have testimonies bearing witness to the many profound upheavals it faced.[148] The comparison of the relationship between the political and self-governing functions for other Lithuanian dietines requires further research.

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[147] JURGAITIS, R. *op. cit*., pp. 155–156.

[148] Manifestos were brought to the dietines, e.g. in 1770 and 1771. Manifest na Krzysztofa Giedrojcia 7.2.1770, LVIA 21 1 128, c. 26; Manifest na Kajetana Podbereskiego 7.2. 1770, LVIA 21 1 128, c. 25; Manifest 8.2.1771, LVIA 21 1 30, c. 26; Manifest Zajączkowskiego 8.2.1771, LVIA 21 1 30, c. 27-28; Proces Tadeusza Żaby z Romanowiczami 1771, LVIA 21 1 130, c. 29-30.

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Regioninių ir valstybinių funkcijų sąveika seimelių veikloje Stanislovo Augusto Poniatovskio valdymo laikotarpiu: Trakų ir Kauno seimelių pavyzdys

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Santrauka

Straipsnyje nagrinėjamas seimelių veiklos padalijimas Abiejų Tautų Respublikoje į savivaldos ir valstybės masto funkcijas. Trakų ir Kauno seimelių pavyzdžiai pasirinkti dėl jų panašaus administracinio ir socialinio pobūdžio bei regioninio artumo. Straipsnyje analizuojamas laikotarpis nuo 1764 iki 1788 m., kai, pasak daugelio tyrėjų, seimeliai daugiausia dėmesio skyrė atstovų rinkimui į centrines valdžios institucijas. Kauno seimelių atveju dominavo bajorijos politinė veikla. Buvo įprasta į seimelius pateikti manifestus arba svarstymus skirstyti į atskirus susirinkimus, nes vietos lyderiai dažnai nesutiko laikytis Lietuvos politinių partijų vadovų nurodymų.

Trakų seimeliai vyko kur kas ramiau ir dažniausiai buvo dominuojami reikšmingiausių politinių partijų, ypač Radvilų frakcijos. Priešingai, savivaldos veikla Trakuose buvo ypač aktyvi. Trakų bajorija reguliariai rinko vietinius pareigūnus ir sprendė pavieto reikalus. Ypatingas dėmesys buvo skiriamas viešųjų pastatų priežiūrai. Apie Kauno bajorijos savivaldos veiklą išliko kur kas mažiau įrodymų. Siekiant nustatyti, ar tokios savivaldos ir valstybės masto funkcijų proporcijos būdingos visiems Lietuvos seimeliams, reikia tolesnių tyrimų.

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