

The gord in Koźle

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Opole is the name of a Slavic ancestral and territorial community from the tribal period. Over time, the larger opoles transformed into kasztelania, whereas the smaller ones became sub-districts. In case of danger, the inhabitants of a given opole would hide in the centrally located gord.

We know that there was a gord in Koźle from the Chronicle of Gall Anonim. There we read that “meanwhile, it was announced to him [Bolesław Krzywousty] that the Koźle gord [lat. castrum - sometimes translated as castle] on the Bohemian border had burned down by itself, not by the hands of the enemies. He, however, believing that someone had done it deceitfully, and worrying that the Bohemians would rush off to fortify the gord, immediately hurried there with a very small retinue and began the work with his own hands.”

Unfortunately, as Gall Anonim did not include any dates in his chronicle, whereas any chronology is the effect of laborious comparisons, we cannot be certain about any of the abovementioned dates.

What constitutes a separate issue is a question of where the Koźle gord was situated initially. The research conducted in recent years on the Castle Hill has definitely ruled out the location of the gord in this place. According to some researchers, the etymological and toponymic analyses of Koźle and Stare Koźle indicate that after the increase in the population of Stare Koźle, it was necessary to create a new center, that is, Koźle. The demographic increase was probably not the only factor in the relocation of the center, as, during the discussed period, the Koźle Region was often invaded by Bohemians. Therefore, it can be assumed that after one of such invasions took place and the gord was burned down, it was decided that the location of the gord should be changed.

The hypotheses that have appeared in the recent years assume that the localization of the gord was in Rogi or the old Odra river bend southeast of the center of Koźle (in the area of the estuary of the Kłodnica river). The current state of knowledge on this subject does not make it possible for these hypotheses to be confirmed or completely ruled out. However, in Rogi, aside from the archeological research confirming the existence of a settlement in this place dating back to the 6-10th centuries and 10-13th centuries, there is no evidence pointing towards the functioning of a fortress.

When was the Koźle gord functioning? We do not know the answer to this question yet, just as we do not know where exactly it was situated. The development of science gives hope that in the future, more precise answers will be found to the questions that we have been wondering about for ages.