

Humanistic Ideology of Power in the Political Speeches and Painted Decoration of the *Pontifical* of the Bishop of Płock – Erazm Ciołek (Ms. Czart. 1212 IV)

Summary

This article constitutes the first attempt to examine the preserved oratorical legacy of the Bishop of Płock, Erazm Ciołek (1474–1522), comprising four political speeches delivered during his diplomatic missions to successive popes: Alexander VI, Julius II and Leo X, as well as to Emperor Maximilian I. The themes concerning the ideology of power extracted from these speeches were juxtaposed with similar topics contained in the works commissioned on his behalf: the poem *Carmen de Stature, feritate ac venatione bisontis* by Mikołaj Hussowski and particularly in the illumination of his *Pontifical*. This unfinished book – a kind of chronicle of Erazm Ciołek's pontificate, which had a direct impact on its shape – clearly stands out against other pontificals with its innovative content layout. In an unprecedented manner, it emphasised the rites connected with the person of the king, endowing them with outstanding artistic expression.

In all these works, both his own and the commissioned ones, the above mentioned elements associated with the person of the ruler are heavily accentuated, often presented in a symbolic and allegorical way. They are repetitive and complementary, and express the same thoughts – therefore they cannot be analysed in isolation. By using various forms of artistic expression – prose, poetry and fine arts – Erazm Ciołek, a clergyman and a diplomat, made reference to the functioning contemporary ideology of spiritual and secular power and their interrelationship, and took a stand in the ongoing and heated Renaissance discussion about the qualities of the perfect ruler, thereby expressing his own beliefs. [DP]