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**THE MILIEU OF CATHEDRAL CHAPTERS:
THEIR CORPORATE TIES
AND RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE
IN LATE-MEDIEVAL POLAND**

Andrzej Radzimiński¹ presents the various conditions and factors that influenced the disintegration of the cathedral chapter groups in medieval Poland. Their coherence was threatened by the accumulation of prebends, due to which the richest prelates and canons being in possession of them in a few cathedral or collegiate chapters did not take residence in any of them, staying at one or another only for a short time and not even appearing at general chapters. Among the best endowed members of chapters were above all those remaining in the service of the king – in his chancellery, while chapter prebends were the main source of their income. They were not eager to take major orders, and obtained from the pope a dispensation of this obligation. Radzimiński also draws attention to the fact that chapters were a kind of ‘temporary refuge’ for the gentry. Indeed, the sons of the gentry received the minor orders and were free to choose their career, ready to leave the ministry in the case they were bound to prolong their family after the death of a brother, or, as we may surmise, in view of receiving a high civil office from the king. A large number of chapter members without priestly ordination were exempted from some liturgical and pastoral obligations, above all from saying the Mass, but also deprived of many material privileges: the quotidian distribution, or some part of it, and the right to the possession of prestimonial villages. Andrzej Radzimiński also does not forget to recall that from as early as the 13th century various chapters gave up exacting the canons’ obligation of performing the Liturgy of the Hours,

¹ See his article in the present volume, pp. 207–26.

shifting this duty onto the vicars. Nevertheless, he underlines clearly that this was not a rule, because for example the Chapter of Kórnik, founded in 1495, exacted this duty from canons. Hence, since some canons did not reside at the cathedral or collegiate church, and some (sometimes the same) did not take the major orders, one can hardly speak of the religiosity of a group, or rather groups, marked by such a high degree of disintegration, or about their engagement in performing religious functions.

I cannot deny that all those phenomena, destructive to the coherence and power of chapter corporations, had actually taken place. Also the members of chapters themselves were aware of them and of the danger they entailed. The statutes of each of those corporations contain a regulation about residence and the definition of this word. We might add that in the 15th century, according to the statutes of the Gniezno Chapter, to fulfil this duty it was enough to stay at the cathedral for three months and to participate in both general chapters.²

While recognising these omissions, I will try to present another side of this picture, showing the continued clearly corporate character of the late-medieval Polish chapters. I will also try to outline the framework of the religiosity of those groups and to show the historical sources where we can find its expression.

The accumulation of prebends by some members of chapters was inevitably connected with neglecting the principle of residence. In the case of the most zealous individuals it led to travelling around Poland in cyclical annual tours, so as to participate in general chapters of each corporation.³ Those canons who visited, for example, Cracow,

² *Statuta capitulorum Gneznensis et Poznaniensis ecclesiarumque collegiatatum Varsoviensis et Lancieniensis*, ed. Bolesław Ulanowski, *Archiwum Komisji Prawniczej*, v (Cracow, 1897) (hereafter: *Statuta capitulorum*), part 1: *Statuta capituli Gneznensis*, cap. 37, p. 466 ff.: 'Item statuimus, quod non residens circa ecclesiam Gnezn. per tres menses iuxta ordinacionem statutorum per Rmum in Christo patrem dnum Nicolaum Archiepiscopum editorum non veniens ad capitulum generale bis in anno, videlicet in Natali s. Adalberti in Aprili et in ipsius Translacione de mense Octobri celebrari solitum, possit privari sua provisione absque alia vocacione, sicut presens ibidem interest et canonicum non allegaret impedimentum'. Cf. Marta Czyżak, *Kapituła katedralna w Gnieźnie w świetle metryki z lat 1408–1448* (Poznań, 2003), 84–92.

³ Antoni Gašiorowski, 'Kanonicy włocławscy w najstarszej metryce kapitulnej (1435–1500)', in Andrzej Radzimiński (ed.), *Duchowieństwo kapitulne w Polsce średniowiecznej i nowożytnej. Studia nad pochodzeniem i funkcjonowaniem elity kościelnej* (Toruń, 2000), 9–51.

Sandomierz, Gniezno and Poznań every year, were certainly among the best-informed people in Poland, both in spiritual and secular matters. They had a chance to meet their colleagues in other chapters, as well as bishop-ordinaries. The latter usually did not fail to visit the capitals of their dioceses at the time of general chapters, taking a more or less active part in them, or at least residing in their palaces in the course of them, if only because most documents issued by ordinaries required the consensus of the chapter, shown by attaching to them its big seal. Whether more or less devout servants of the Church, the members of chapters who accumulated most benefices (including chapter benefices in the first place), were generally outstanding individuals, frequently enjoying the confidence of the king; they were also the candidates for taking over sooner or later some episcopal see. If we come to know the biographies of bishops from the days of the last Piasts, and especially the first three Jagiellons, with the help of Jacek Wiesiołowski's excellent study of the Polish episcopate,⁴ we will see that all the bishops without exception, at least in central Poland and the old bishoprics, were derived from the milieu of the royal chancellery. Hence even those members of chapters who ignored all the synodal regulations, for the king's protection guaranteed them possession of prebends, from time to time did attend the chapter sessions. It is worth citing here an act of election of Tomasz Strzępiński to the office of the bishop of Cracow – the document was signed on 25 May 1455, and the electors embraced 28 members of the Cracow Chapter, while two were represented by their deputies.⁵ In the 15th century the Cracow Chapter numbered 30 members. Research on the attendance at general chapters in Gniezno, carried out by Marta Czyżak on the basis of the chapter register of the first half of the 15th century shows that about 20 persons were usually present, which is a little less than two third of the whole chapter (31 persons – 7 prelates and

⁴ Jacek Wiesiołowski, 'Episkopat polski w XV w. jako grupa społeczna', in Stefan K. Kuczyński (ed.), *Spółczeństwo Polski Średniowiecznej*, iv (Warsaw, 1990), 236–95.

⁵ Cracow, Biblioteka Jagiellońska, perg. 291 – a severely damaged document, extracted from a book cover. This is a transcript of the act of Strzępiński's election to the office of bishop, addressed to the pope with a request for provision. Cf. Maria Koczerska, 'Elekcja Tomasza Strzępińskiego na biskupa krakowskiego w 1455 roku', in Zenon Piech (ed.), *Miasta, ludzie, instytucje, znaki. Księga jubileuszowa ofiarowana Profesor Bożenie Wyrozumskiej w 75. rocznicę urodzin* (Cracow, 2008), 319–47.

24 canons), although sometimes not even one third of members (less than 10 persons) turned up.⁶

While assessing the role played in the chapter by those members who accumulated most prebends, I want to show how profitable was the presence of influential prelates in the chapter. These dignitaries also derived much benefit from attending, even if rarely, the general chapters in a few episcopal sees, meeting people and gaining experience indispensable to them as advisors to the king, as well as in the later performance of the function of bishop in one or another see. It should be added that the Cracow Chapter, on account of its capital situation had the least ground for complaining about non-residence or non-attendance of its members in the general chapters. Besides, the dates of general chapters the day after the Feast of Purification of the Virgin Mary, after St Stanislas Day in May, and after Michaelmas in the autumn coincided with the dates of the Cracow judicial assemblies, being an excellent occasion for a meeting between the clergy and the landlords of the whole of Lesser Poland. The attractiveness of Gniezno – the Polish metropolitan see – was in this respect minimal, and Jan Długosz gave full vent to his pride when he wrote in the *Annals* that it was only renowned due to its name and former splendour, and if not for its most ancient cathedral in the country, it would remain unknown.⁷ Gniezno, in fact, had problems with the archbishop's residence in the cathedral, since most metropolitans preferred living in one of the archbishop's castles, first at Żnin, and later at Łowicz, and they only came to Gniezno at periods designated by canon law, that is at the time of Lent, or – more rarely – of Advent.⁸

What certainly integrated the chapter was the factor of living in the vicinity of a given cathedral – on Cathedral Island in Poznań and Wrocław and on Cathedral Hill in Płock. In the High Middle Ages only the members of the Cracow chapter did not live (at least in their

⁶ Czyżak, *Kapituła*, 92–8.

⁷ *Joannis Długossii Annales seu cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae*, ed. Jan Dąbrowski et al., 11 vols. (Warsaw, 1964–2005) (hereafter: *Długossii Annales*), lib. i-ii, 110: 'Item Gnezna altera Polonorum metropolis nomine magis quam re et veteri potius splendore quam novo lumine insignis, et nisi primacialis ecclesia illam diffunderet, ignorata a plerisque foret'.

⁸ Antoni Gąsiorowski, 'Gniezno monarsze i Gniezno biskupie w średniowieczu. Problem rezydowania', in Jerzy Strzelczyk and Janusz Górny (eds.), *1000 lat Archidiecezji Gnieźnieńskiej* (Gniezno, 2000), 157.

majority) near their cathedral, for they were ousted from there in the 14th century by the Royal Castle and the towers of the greatest magnates of Lesser Poland. For this reason only vicars remained on Wawel Hill, while the bishop and the chapter moved into its vicinity. Nevertheless, especially in the 15th century, they formed a chapter district on both sides of the road to the Castle, first called Grodzka (Castle) Street and later renamed as Kanonicza (Canons) Street, while the bishop's palace was erected nearby, in Franciszkańska (Franciscan) Street.⁹ Nevertheless, their chapter house was situated by the cathedral, or strictly speaking inside it.

What linked the chapter everywhere was the cathedral choir; the prelates and canons sat in its stalls in the order established at the moment of installation, and which could not be changed. The vicars, who were called the minor chapter, sat in the lower stalls of the choir, below the chapter, while the central part of the choir was occupied by the cathedral *schola*. The canons were obliged to wear a tonsure and suitable clothes. Bishop Jan Grot's Statute of 1328, issued for the Cracow Chapter, obliged the canons to shave the tonsure so that it would reach their ears. If anybody who did not observe this regulation turned up, the Mass had to be interrupted.¹⁰ The choir costume of the canon consisted of a choir cope [*cappa choralis*] and a biretta. Hence the obligatory fee at the installation of a new member in the chapter was called *cappalia*. In the 15th century in Cracow the respective fee was 12 *grzywnas* (marks), of which 3 *grzywnas* covered the cost of the cope, while with the rest the canon was obliged to buy wine for the whole chapter, the prelates receiving four (a double number) barrels of Hungarian wine. Attempts at changing this custom were made by Bishop Zbigniew Oleśnicki who decided, with the approval of the chapter, that the whole sum should be paid into the chapter treasury and be used for the needs of the cathedral.¹¹ The customary vestment both of the members of the major and minor chapter, was

⁹ Cf. Maria Koczerska, 'Związki kanoników katedry krakowskiej z mieszczaństwem Krakowa w XV wieku', in Halina Manikowska and Hanna Zaremska (eds.), *Ecclesia et civitas. Kościół i życie religijne w mieście średniowiecznym* (Warsaw, 2002), 161–74.

¹⁰ Udalryk Heyzmann (ed.), *Statuta capituli ecclesiae cathedralis Cracoviensis a. MCCCXXVIII-MCCCCLXXVIII* (Starodawne Prawa Polskiego Pomniki, 4, Cracow, 1875) (hereafter: Heyzmann), 119 ff.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, 131 ff.

the *almutum* – a cape decorated with fur. The two groups differed only by the quality and cost of the fur with which the cape was fringed. In such a vestment (with a tight-fitting cap on head) the prelates and canons are represented on tombstones and in most paintings, where they play the role of adorers.

It is worth considering the question of accommodation where chapter members performed their corporate and liturgical duties. Near the cathedral or in it, there was the chapter-house, another place that united the whole chapter. The statutes of some chapters forbade holding chapter meetings outside the chapter-house, although in the majority of chapters people assembled, especially because of cold, in the houses of canons, for example in the large residences of the provost or dean. Chapter meetings had their special setting and rules, they were called by a great bell, there was some order of taking seats in the stalls and taking the floor.¹² All the chapter statutes contained respective regulations that set the penalties for not observing the order, the infringement of which could arouse quarrels that were difficult to subdue. The Poznań Chapter introduced to its statutes a special regulation that forbade the bishop's vicar *in spiritualibus* being a chairman or holding the principal seat.¹³ This was not the only statute of this chapter that fought against the domination of the group of canons that continually surrounded the bishop.¹⁴

Anyhow, the cathedral clergy – the bishop in his palace, the cathedral chapter, the congregation of cathedral vicars, the *mansionarii* and psalterists in Cracow, as well as the clergy of collegiate churches (of St George in Gniezno and Cracow, of St Michael in Cracow and Płock, of the Virgin Mary in Poznań, of the Holy Cross in Wrocław) which were situated near cathedral churches, and in each bishop's see usually headed by cathedral canons – all of them constituted a cathedral group that lived in the territory embraced by ecclesiastical immunity and was isolated from the town, sometimes also by natural barriers. This gave rise to a sense of tie that linked such a group and isolated it from the external world, including also the urban agglomeration.

Did this mean that the clergy of the cathedral chapter was isolated from the parish clergy? In Cracow the members of the cathedral

¹² *Statuta capitulorum*, part 2: *Statuta capituli Posnaniensis*, cap. 44.

¹³ *Ibidem*, cap. 51.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, cap. 42.

chapter did not hold the benefices of other churches of the Cracow agglomeration, especially the parish churches. There was one exception – that of the chief parish of the Virgin Mary, since they were the arch-presbyters of that church. However, they did hold among their benefices some parishes, especially the rich ones, that remained under the bishop's or royal patronage, and were situated in the Cracow diocese. The revenue from them equalled that of the best chapter benefices (this concerned, for example, the parish of Dzierążnia village – 89 *grzywnas*, Kunów town – 64 *grzywnas*, Pełczyska village – 89 *grzywnas*, Piotrawin village – 51 *grzywnas*, Podegrodzie village – up to 95 *grzywnas*, Wawrzeńczyce village – 87 *grzywnas*).¹⁵

Vicars were another matter. This group of the cathedral clergy, of much lower social status, having multiple connections with the town, among other things due to their many possessions in it, and frequently originating from the petty gentry, after a certain period at the cathedral did acquire parish benefices.¹⁶ However, since there has been no prosopographic research into this group, it is difficult to say to what extent, and whether at all they could come into the possession of the Cracow municipal parishes. We may suppose that in those parishes where benefices of parish priests were held by members of cathedral chapters or masters of Cracow University, the quality of religious practices was raised, even when most of their pastoral duties were shifted on the vicars they nominated.

In all the episcopal sees the integration of the whole clergy – both of the cathedral with the chapter at the head, and of all the urban parishes, monastery and hospital churches – took place during the processions, and not only on the Feast of Corpus Christi etc., but above all during the celebration of king's entry,¹⁷ who was welcomed before the town gates by the whole city and all the clergy, and then followed by them to the cathedral which he entered to venerate the

¹⁵ These parishes are not always acknowledged as benefices of a given canon, since in documents signed by witnesses the names of benefice-holders are only mentioned in connection with the major chapter benefices.

¹⁶ They are mentioned in Bodzanta's Statute of 12 May 1356, where he says that moving to a parish was a promotion for a vicar; see Heyzmann, 127.

¹⁷ Maria Koczerska, 'Jak duchowieństwo krakowskie witało króla i królową w XV wieku?', in Paweł Kras *et al.* (eds.), *Ecclesia – cultura – potestas. Studia z dziejów kultury i społeczeństwa. Księga ofiarowana siostrze Profesor Urszuli Borkowskiej OSU* (Cracow, 2006), 477–87.

relics of its patrons. On such an occasion all the reliquaries held in the cathedral treasury were exhibited in the high altar. It is worth mentioning that when at the beginning of the 1450s the bishop of Cracow Zbigniew Oleśnicki, provided with a special papal permission, for trading in relics was forbidden, bought from Czech merchants some relics together with reliquaries, their first exhibition took place in the chief parish church of the town – that of the Virgin Mary, from where they were carried by a procession to the cathedral.¹⁸ This resembles the case of the restoration of the Polish regalia that under the Anjou reign had been taken away to Hungary; returned by Sigismund of Luxemburg in 1412, they were exhibited by King Ladislas Jagiello in the stalls of the Virgin Mary Church in Cracow. The King coming back from Hungary with his restored regalia was welcomed then by Queen Anne and a procession of all the churches.¹⁹

There can be no doubt that the strongest ties connected those members of a cathedral chapter who resided there permanently. In his article about the Włocławek Chapter²⁰ Antoni Gąsiorowski drew attention to the fact, mentioned also by Andrzej Radzimiński,²¹ that in each cathedral there existed such a group, numbering from a few up to ten persons. The canons from this ‘hard core’ of the chapter made all the decisions concerning the cathedral and chapter that were not taken at the general chapter, and one can presume that they also influenced the order of the debate of general chapters. They also obtained the greatest profits in the form of quotidian distribution, which was a considerable remuneration both in kind and cash. This ‘hard core’ of the chapter included its superintendents who managed all the current economic affairs, and had a daily access to its small seal. They also knew best when a given prebend was to be vacated and could inform of it anybody they preferred. The canons in this group were usually derived from the local gentry and they were to a certain extent responsible for the mechanism of ‘prebend inheritance’, mentioned by Radzimiński.

¹⁸ Maria Koczerska, *Zbigniew Oleśnicki i Kościół krakowski w czasach jego pontyfikatu 1423–1455* (Warsaw, 2004), 269–71.

¹⁹ *Długossii Annales*, lib. x-xi (Warsaw, 1997), 207 ff.; cf. Franciszek Sikora, ‘Sprawa insygnialna 1370–1412 a genealogia Rożnów’, *Rocznik Polskiego Towarzystwa Heraldycznego*, 1 (12) (1993), 39–58.

²⁰ Gąsiorowski, ‘Kanonicy włocławscy’, 18–21.

²¹ See his article in the present volume.

To close this part of my article I would like to mention the possibility of doing research into the relations within the chapter – and more broadly – between all the members of the cathedral clergy, by including in it all its groups that held benefices in the territory of the cathedral in a given episcopal see. I conducted such research into the ties within the groups of the clergy who held benefices on Wawel Hill in Cracow (mainly within the cathedral chapter and the minor chapter, that is between the vicars). I found that the indications of such a tie were: 1. the granting of loans or guarantees for the borrowers from this group; 2. appearing as somebody's plenipotentiary in financial matters, for example in tithe-trading; 3. nominating the executor of a given clergyman's will, or accepting such a role. The members of the chapter appear in all these three functions in its records or in the records of the officials of the bishop, the two latter functions, of a plenipotentiary and executor – being also performed by the vicars of the canonry. It should be added that among the executors of canons' wills their brothers from the chapter appear much more often than their closest lay relatives. I consider such ties of friendship and cooperation to be an important proof of integration within the cathedral chapter – or more broadly speaking – the cathedral clergy.

It will not be out of place to add that the sense of a strong tie of the canons with the minor chapter is also confirmed by their many legacies made for the vicars, the documents of which can be found in the *Kalendarz Katedry Krakowskiej* [The Calendar of the Cracow Cathedral]. The significance of those legacies has already been underlined in Andrzej Radziwiński's book about the clergy of cathedral chapters.²² 'Magnus amicus vicariorum', 'benefactor vicariorum',²³ these kinds of phrases concerning the Cracow canons appear most frequently in the obituary records of the 14th and 15th centuries, that is of the period when the Calendar of the Cracow Cathedral turned into a calendar of its vicars. There can be no doubt that all the legacies for the vicars had devotional aims, just as Długosz's foundations of houses for the *mansionarii* in Sandomierz, for the vicars at Wiślica and for the psalterists in Cracow were *par excellence* devotional foundations.

²² Andrzej Radziwiński, *Duchowieństwo kapituł katedralnych w Polsce XIV i XV w. na tle porównawczym. Studium nad rekrutacją i drogami awansu* (Toruń, 1995).

²³ *Kalendarz Katedry Krakowskiej*, ed. Zofia Kozłowska-Budkowa, *Monumenta Poloniae Historica* (hereafter: MPH), s. n., v (Cracow, 1978), 138, 139, 151.

What stimulated the members of the chapter and vicars to integration was also the custom of standing a feast for the canons who assisted, and vicars who served at Mass by the member of the chapter who performed his *hebdomada*, that is High Mass in the high altar from Monday till Thursday or Friday. This custom was known in all the cathedrals.²⁴ A canon who would not like to stand such a feast should share a considerable part of his quotidian distributions in money with his assistants.

Other events that integrated and raised the significance of the chapter in the eyes of its members were occasional feasts organised for the members of the Cracow Chapter by the king in Wawel Castle. This, however, does not change the fact that it was precisely the royal power, and especially such authoritarian kings as Casimir Jagiellon and John Olbracht, who in the highest degree contributed to the destruction of the chapters, by repeatedly suppressing their election rights. Hence, in my opinion, an act of the royal power that was most disastrous for this community was not endowing chancellery officials with chapter prebends, but depriving the chapters of their most important right – of the bishop's election.

While passing on to the forms of religiosity of the chapter milieu, I will confine myself to remarks concerning the research questionnaire and to citing the types of sources that enable carrying it out. I understand religiosity as a way of performance and scope of religious practices that were obligatory for Christians, as well as a personal tie with God and forms of its expression. Here I distinguish participation in practices of communal character, and observance or non-observance of practices of individual piety. In the Middle Ages this also involved material duties in the form of tithes and similar contributions.

²⁴ *Statuta capitulorum*, part 1: *Statuta capituli Gneznensis*, no. 105, p. 482: 'quicumque dns prelatus vel canonicus huius ecclesie quinque missas summas ad altare maius compleverit per se et non per alium, talis eisdem quinque diebus habebit duplicatas pecuniarum refectiones, eciam si essent communitati suspense et die dominico tantum duplatos panes, faciatque prandium secundum antiquam consuetudinem pro dominis presentibus'. Cf. *ibid.*, vol. 2, *Statuta capituli Poznaniensis*, no. 33, p. 496: 'Item statuerunt et ordinauerunt, quod iuxta antiquam et laudabilem consuetudinem dicte ecclesie cantans primam sue ebdomade diei dominice missam, duos ministrantes presbiteros et duos campanatores in prandio illius dominice sue habere teneatur vel loco prandii duobus presbiteris ministrantibus cuilibet per unum et campanatoribus simul ambobus unum grossum dare sit astrictus'.

Moreover, being religious, requires from a Christian persistent striving for observing the moral principles contained in the Decalogue.

As regards research into the religiosity of medieval chapters, it has to be admitted that these problems have been carefully by-passed by most authors of monographs about individual chapters in the Middle Ages and in early modern times. They rather focussed on the genesis, and even more on the organisation of chapters in a given period, and did not go deeply into the problem of the functioning of a given chapter, but generally presented meticulously the biographies of its members. This concentration of most studies on systemic and biographical matters could be seen in the titles or subtitles of works of the type: 'Organisation and Property',²⁵ or 'History – Organisation – Members'.²⁶ Marta Czyżak's work is among the exceptions, for the author who had predecessors in Rev. Stanisław Librowski's work about the Włocławek Chapter, Rev. Kazimierz Dola's about the Liturgy of the Holy Week in the Wrocław Cathedral,²⁷ and Helmut Sobeczko's about the Liturgy of the Hours in the same cathedral,²⁸ devoted an extensive chapter to *officium divinum* in her monograph of the Gniezno chapter.²⁹

If we regard the statutes of chapters as the main source for learning about their religiosity, we have to come to the conclusion that those of old chapters contain much less material concerning that subject, in comparison with a mass of other information that dealt with financial matters. However, we find there decisions concerning the following questions: 1. the requirement imposed on the members to accept complete ordination and the reduction of membership rights of those who have not taken it; 2. the designation of duties connected with saying the High Mass by individual canons during their *hebdomada* in the chapter; 3. the duty to take part in the High Mass concerning all the resident canons, who in the course of it could also hear confes-

²⁵ Konrad Lutyński, *Kapituła katedralna w Poznaniu w XVI wieku. Organizacja i majątek* (Poznań, 2000).

²⁶ Ewa Wólkiewicz, *Kapituła kolegiacka św. Mikołaja w Otmuchowie. Dzieje – organizacja – skład osobowy (1386–1477)* (Opole, 2004).

²⁷ Kazimierz Dola, 'Liturgia Wielkiego Tygodnia w katedrze wrocławskiej w XV wieku', *Studia Teologiczno-Historyczne Śląska Opolskiego*, 7 (1979), 179–215.

²⁸ Helmut Sobeczko, *Liturgia godzin katedry wrocławskiej według przedtrydenckiego 'Liber Ordinarius' z 1563 roku* (Opole, 1993).

²⁹ Czyżak, *Kapituła*, 113–43.

sion; 4. the obligation to take part in the Liturgy of the Hours, if it was obligatory in a given chapter; 5. remarks concerning the clothes worn, and a suitable behaviour at church; 6. the duty to take part in the funeral liturgy after the death of a member; 7. the description of the liturgical ritual and setting of the general chapter, which started in the morning (after vicars' Mass) with a Mass attended by the whole chapter and ended with an anniversary for the dead members; 8. some statutes describe in detail the installation of a member, sources also survive that are their records. It should be noted that not all chapter statutes take into account all these questions, nevertheless we find there more data, than it might have seemed at first glance.

The source which informs us best about the religiosity of the prelates and canons of the Polish chapters consists of their testaments. But the specimens that have survived are very few, a couple or more for each chapter. However, although we have at our disposal so few last wills, the books of the bishops' officials and *acta actorum* of the chapters frequently contain reports about their execution, so we know at least of some of the testamentary legacies.

Another important source consists of tombstones and epitaphs, which just like the medieval decoration of the church in the benefice or family estate of a chapter member, can tell us something about his religiosity. Some indications on that subject can be also found in the seals and notaries' signs. I have in mind mainly 15th century seals on which we find many devotional representations, for very few seals of that type have survived from the 14th century, and towards the end of the 15th and in the 16th centuries the seals of bishops and higher ecclesiastical dignitaries underwent from this point of view an unfavourable evolution (deprived of devotional representations, they turned exclusively into heraldic insignia). However in cases when individual canons in their young days performed the function of public notary, their signs, full of religious symbols, are also an interesting source for studying their religiousness.

We are all aware that the study of medieval book collections may bring – and has already brought – due to the progress of the cataloguing work in the Jagiellonian and other libraries – many interesting data about the provenance of individual manuscript codices, and the study of chapter book collections may bring further interesting results. The series *Katalog zabytków sztuki w Polsce* [A Catalogue of Art Monuments in Poland], enriched by an analysis of medieval inventories of chapter

and collegiate church treasuries, has already added to our knowledge about the foundation of liturgical utensils, and consequently about the religiousness of the individual members of chapters.

Especially interesting data may be provided by an analysis of foundation documents of the *altaria* situated in the cathedral, as well as by checking whether the altars in other churches of the town (collegiate churches in the first place, but also hospital and other monastery churches) – have been founded by chapter members. Here we should remember that the right of patronage over the *altaria* frequently passed on the local bishop.

Of interest for our knowledge about the religiosity of the Cracow Chapter will also be data concerning the part taken both by the major and minor chapter in two canonisation processes – that of Queen Hedwig, started with a document of Metropolitan Wojciech Jastrzębiec, issued in Cracow on 30 September 1426,³⁰ as well as of Bishop Prandota, whose remains were discovered in the cathedral's St Peter's Chapel on 4 June 1454.³¹ The clergy in general, and especially the well-educated chapter clergy was a milieu rather sceptical about miracles, hence it would be interesting to check its participation in the group of persons who experienced miracles in all the *miracula* (whether published or not). It would also be interesting to know the percentage of the chapter clergy who took part in pilgrimages at home and abroad.

Although none of the corporations under discussion could be compared to Jan Długosz who founded three monasteries: of Canons Regular at Kłobuck, Paulines, and Carthusians in Cracow, we must consider any foundations of monasteries made by this milieu of special value to our studies.

Although we are discussing chapter milieus, I would suggest taking also bishops into consideration. They came from the same circle,

³⁰ Cracow, Archiwum Kapitulne, perg. 301; cf. *Miracula beatae Hedwigis reginae Poloniae*, ed. Wojciech Kętrzyński, in MPH, iv (repr. Warsaw, 1961), 762–6 (ed. from a copy, with many mistakes); see also *Miracula*, *ibid.*, 767–9. Cf. another edition from the original (with mistakes) Idalia Rusnaczyk CSS, “Niezaginione” dokumenty dotyczące zabiegów o kanonizację Jadwigi, króla Polski’, in Kazimierz Panuś (ed.), *Nie w blasku kamieni, ale w pokorze i łagodności. Wokół duchowości św. Jadwigi Królowej* (Cracow, 2007).

³¹ *Miracula venerabilis patris Prandothe episcopi Cracoviensis*, ed. Wojciech Kętrzyński, in MPH, iv (repr. Warsaw, 1961), 439–500.

and before acquiring a bishopric they stayed for a shorter or longer period in the chapter. They certainly belonged then to the group of canons who as officials of the Royal Chancellery accumulated chapter benefices and, as we have said, did not show much activeness in the chapter. However, their roots were in this milieu, where they made long-lasting friendships and acquaintances, and some of them remembered those times of their career with much sentiment. Their figures, as well as their religiousness, find a much better illustration in the sources, hence while learning of statutes issued by them, their devotional foundations, and forms of personal piety, we should always bear in mind the milieu they came from, and whose ways of life they later followed.

transl. Agnieszka Kreczmar