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LUXURY, "MODEST BUT SATISFACTORY CONDITIONS",
APPROPRIATENESS. CLERGY'S LIFE IN THE PŁOCK
DIOCESE IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 18TH CENTURY

Research into the standard of the clergy's life has so far chiefly embraced the question of the size and distribution of church estates. Studies of the economic exploitation of those estates have been conducted and attempts made to estimate their profitability. Attention has been focussed on big church property, while parish property has had to wait until recently for its monographs¹.

This unilateral approach can be enriched if we take a closer look at the phenomenon of consumption, and notice articles that have set the standard of wealth, both average and extreme. Such analysis can produce conclusions concerning a life-style and its changes under the influence of fashion, models and innovations.

I would like to present my reflections concerning the possibilities given by the sources preserved in this field as well as the first, hypothetical conclusions, based on an incomplete material.

In research into the material conditions of life it is indispensable to use some terms of classification: luxury, prosperity, poverty, misery. This inevitably involves difficulties in interpretation, sometimes ambiguities. They result above all from a different understanding of the scope of these notions, their

¹ Major items of the extensive literature on the subject: J. Topolski, *Gospodarstwo wiejskie w dobrach arcybiskupstwa gnieźnieńskiego od XVI do XVIII wieku (Farming in the Estates of the Gniezno Archbishopric from the 16th till the 18th c.)*, Poznań 1958; L. Żytkowicz, *Studia nad gospodarstwem wiejskim w dobrach kościelnych (Studies of Farming in Church Estates)*, Warszawa 1962; idem, *Ze studiów nad wydajnością gospodarstwa wiejskiego na Mazowszu (The Studies of the Productivity of Farms in Mazovia)*, Warszawa 1969; D. Głowska, *Gospodarka w dobrach plebańskich na Mazowszu w XVI–XVIII wieku (Farming in Parish Priests' Estates in Mazovia in the 16th–18th cc.)*, Warszawa 1991.

semantic area, and the adopted convention. Underlying each of these notions there is a material reality that determines the style and standard of life, which find their expression in concrete objects.

I base my research on last wills and posthumous inventories. Contemporary historiography tends to analyse them separately. In this way a certain unity of a man's will, his actions and legal norms is broken. It would be ideal to view both these interconnected sources jointly. Of course, in many cases this is impossible; nevertheless from time to time the documentation happens to be complete. In the case of the clergy, the inventory fulfilled somewhat different functions and was of a different significance to that of the laity. It helped the executors to divide the mass of the succession; it clearly separated personal property; it also determined the scope of possible claims both by the successors and bishops. It could also be of assistance to the bailiffs of the diocese, who received from the executors of wills reports on the action taken.

The fact that I started my research with the Płock diocese was determined both by my earlier acquaintance with the material basis of the existence of the local clergy² and by my access to microfilm sets of records of the bishops' activity and records of consistory courts in Płock and Pultusk³. In the years 1773–1795, under the rule of bishop Michał Poniatowski and Krzysztof Szembek, 42 last wills, 10 posthumous inventories and 4 lists of objects concerning 53 priests were registered, and the death of 72 priests was recorded. Documentation has reached us in the form of last wills and inventories concerning 74% of deceased clergymen. Due to this, even a small (in absolute numbers) set of documents becomes representative. The relative profusion of clergymen's last wills is on the one hand due to the lack of direct inheritors, which entailed a necessity to draw the last will in writing, and on the other hand to the precise demands of ecclesiastical law.

In the Płock diocese as well as in all Polish Church the legal regulations concerning the right to dispose of personal property were clear. Of fundamental significance was the codification

² D. Głowka, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

³ The Archives of the Płock Diocese (henceforward APD), 159, 161, 164, 165, 167, 168, 170, 171, 229, 235, 236, 251, 252.

established at the provincial synod of 1628 summoned by the archbishop of Gniezno Jan Wężyk (published in 1630, it is called *Wężyk's Collection*). Clergymen were obliged to make a will in the presence of two witnesses. The executors of the will were obliged to list, also in the presence of witnesses, an inventory. Only following this pattern they could start the execution of the will. If a clergyman died without making a will, deans or parish priests⁴ who resided in the neighbourhood were obliged to list his posthumous inventory.

The materials collected so far, primarily because of the small number of posthumous inventories, do not allow me to present in full the issue of my concern⁵. From among the 10 registered inventories only 8 were of service, since 2 others were incomplete. Perhaps I should have tried to enlarge my source, this, however, would delay the introduction of the question of the clergy's conditions of life into the scholarly circulation. A wish to share even my first observations made me elaborate the materials collected so far.

The types of sources I used, well-known to Polish historians, have not received many studies by source specialists⁶. Therefore I would like to draw attention to several problems characteristic of the posthumous inventories of the clergy.

The first problem is the distance of time dividing the moment of writing an inventory of movables from the moment of death. The frequent omission of the date of death is here an obstacle, but if this date is known, we may ascertain that the inventory was written a few days after death. The law said that the whole procedure connected with a will should be closed within a year. The registry of wills was not delayed, either. In 33 out of 42 cases,

⁴ More extensively on this subject see D. Głó w k a, *Introduction to the Study of Material Evidence on the Living Conditions of the Polish Clergy in the Post-Tridentine Era*, in: *Omnia res mobilia. Polish Studies in Posthumous Inventories of Movable Property in the 16th–19th Century*, ed. J. Kruppé and A. Pośpiech, Warsaw 1999, pp. 193–200.

⁵ It is worth recalling that e.g. A. Pośpiech, *Pułapka oczywistości. Pośmiertne spisy ruchomości szlachty wielkopolskiej z XVII wieku (The Trap of the Obvious. Posthumous Inventories of the Gentry's Movables in 17th c. Great Poland)*, Warszawa 1992, p. 27, collected over 300 posthumous inventories, while J. Kruppé, *Ze studiów nad materialnymi warunkami bytu w środowisku mieszczańskim Poznania w XVIII w. (The Studies of the Material Conditions of Life in the Burghers' Milieu of 18th c. Poznań)*, "Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej", vol. XX, 1974, № 3, pp. 445–466, had 56 inventories at his disposal.

⁶ A. Pośpiech, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

not more than 7 months elapsed between the drawing of the document and its registry in court records. Posthumous inventories, not recorded in court registers, were written at the same time.

Secondly, the above-presented legal regulations show that the posthumous inventory was not a private document. The persons responsible for it were the deans or parish priests from the neighbourhood, and the role of kinsfolk was reduced to attendance. It should also be emphasized that this document was written in the deceased person's house.

The next question is the order of writing the inventory. Most often objects were classified according to their material and function. In the first place there was money, silver or clothes. At the end of the list there were objects indispensable in any household.

This was also the practice of those testators who in their last will included a complete list of their possessions. A. Po ś p i e c h defined them as "death-bed registers of posthumous movables" and considered them as rare and extraordinary cases⁷. It seems to me we should rather define them as "testament lists of movables". We do not know as yet how widespread was this custom.

Out of 42 registered wills, in 3 cases the last will was accompanied by a list of movables or a posthumous inventory, and in 16 cases no object was recorded. Therefore I chose 23 wills for my further study.

One of the touchstones of the usefulness of the above-mentioned documents is the number of the listed objects. In 3 documents from 60 to 440 objects were listed, on average 242. In 8 posthumous inventories from 52 to 283 movables were listed, on average 141. The fewest things were mentioned in 23 wills, from 2 to 96, on average 39. This value will drop to 23, if we also take into consideration those documents where no object was included.

The initial analysis of the sources enables us to suppose that in the 1770s and 1780s parish priests in Mazovia owned about 150 objects each, i.e. as many as an average gentleman from Great Poland a hundred years before⁸.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

To summarise my remarks on sources I juxtapose the number of objects mentioned in particular categories of documents with A. Pośpiech's findings concerning the posthumous lists of movables of the gentry in Great Poland in the 17th c. (tab. 1)⁹.

Tab. 1. Objects mentioned in the posthumous inventories of the gentry in Great Poland in the 17th c. and in records concerning the clergy of Płock in the second half of the 18th c.

objects	Number of			
	inventories	list of objects in wills	wills	gentry registers
up to 50	—	—	13	32
50—99	4	1	10	56
100—149	1	—	—	44
150—199	—	—	—	20
200—250	2	1	—	15
over 250	1	1	—	33

It is difficult to define the position of movables in the structure of the clergy's personal property. It was certainly different than with the burghers or the gentry, primarily because of the lack of immovables. Benefices were only granted for usufruct. It is true that the profits coming from them were used to enrich the personal property of priests or their kinsfolk, but frequently were also assigned for the repairs of churches. Nor will it be easy to estimate the value of the land under cultivation. A survey of the pages of wills and inventories shows the importance of livestock. My studies of parish priests' farms show that it was often indispensable to own animals which made part of personal property¹⁰. Therefore I think that the property of clergymen, or at least parish priests, can be divided into four categories: cash, crops, livestock and movables. We can make such an analysis concerning 6 clergymen (tab. 2).

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ D. Głó w k a, *Gospodarka w dobrach plebańskich*, p. 55 ff.

Tab. 2. The structure of the personal property of clergymen in the Płock diocese in the second half of the 18th c.

Clergyman benefice	Date	Value in zlotys					
		a	b	c	d	e	f
Jan Rokitnicki	1782	1,138	1,522	1,023	708	1,397	4,650
p. Szreńsk	%		33	22	15	30	100
Piotr Jurasz	1791	683	2,159	—	297	799	3,255
p. Janów	%		66	—	10	24	100
Dionizy Kortez	1780	295	218	—	1,457	592	2,267
pr. Sterpc	%		10	—	64	26	100
Grzegorz Gacki	1791	314	—	616	943	595	2,154
p. Dobrze	%		—	29	43	28	100
Roman Miaszkiewicz	1783	—	—	—	218	454	672
p. Gozdowo	%		—	—	32	68	100
Jan Kaczyński	1795	—	134	—	164	198	496
alt. Goworowo	%		27	—	33	40	100

alt. — altarist; pr. — provost; p. — parish priest; a — annual income from the benefice estimated in 1776; b — cash; c — crops; d — livestock; e — movables; f — property in general.

The personal property of 4 parish priests placed them at the level of the poorer representatives of the moderately wealthy Poznań townsfolk, while the worth of the possessions of 2 remaining priests can be compared to that of the group of poor townspeople¹¹. Roman Miaszkiewicz, the parish priest of Gozdowo deceased in 1783, had a surprisingly modest property. This could probably be connected to his membership in the Norbertine Order. The parish priest's farm in Gozdowo had an area of about 50 ha, while the income from the tithes amounted to 140 zlotys¹²; he took this benefice after 1776. Because of the small number of examples and of the differences in the economic condition of the benefices under cultivation, we cannot detect any regularities in

¹¹ J. Kruppé, *op. cit.*, p. 446.

¹² *Materiały do dziejów ziemi płockiej. Z archiwaliów diecezjalnych płockich (Materials for the History of the Płock Region. From the Archives of the Płock Diocese)*, ed. M. M. Grzybowski, vol. 1, Płock 1981, p. 35 ff. (henceforward MHPR).

the structure of these estates. In each case other elements prevailed.

Nor do the data concerning the value of movables (tab. 3) lead to any definitive conclusions. In the first place one should not generalize the percentage share of particular categories of movables. The amounts I provide result from the imperfection of the sources and specific conditions of clergymen's life. Some of the indispensable objects did not belong to them, but to the so-called "inventory of the benefice". The records of the visitation of the Płock diocese in 1775–1776 show that the property of the benefices mostly included agricultural tools and various farm and farmhouse objects, in every fourth parish — furniture, while in a few parishes of the Maków and Wyszaków deaneries — pewter tableware as well¹³.

On the other hand, it is worthwhile looking closer at the objects in the presbytery and its surroundings. The gentry's minimum of possessions consisted of clothes, pewter and arms¹⁴. Of course, the latter can very rarely be found with the clergy, and if at all, they were only fowling-pieces¹⁵. The possession of side-arms signified that one belonged to the gentry. In the case of the clergy the same function was fulfilled by their clothes. The duty to wear appropriate clothes had been reiterated by the resolutions of synods since 1589¹⁶. The particular legislation of the Płock diocese copied the legislation of higher level in this respect. Only in 1643 silken clothes, especially with flower design, were acknowledged as unsuitable. This regulation was repeated in 1733¹⁷. The statutes of other dioceses were more detailed. The first precise description of clothes can be traced in *Epistola Pastoralis* (1601) by Bernard Maciejowski, bishop of Cracow, who said that the black gown should reach the ankles

¹³ MHPR, vol. 1–6, Płock 1981–1991; APD, 282–284, 286, 290, 291 A, 293, 294, 299–303.

¹⁴ A. Pośpiech, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

¹⁵ A rifle was recorded as a property in the will of Szymon Włockowski, parish priest in Piski, APD, 165, k. 48; a carbine in that of the parish priest of Dobre, Grzegorz Gacki, APD, 168, pp. 503–513; 2 pistols in that of the parish priest of Gzy, Kazimierz Borzyszkowski, APD, 167, pp. 567–569.

¹⁶ *Decretales summorum pontificum pro regno Poloniae et constitutiones synodorum provincialium et dioecesanorum regni eiusdem ad summam collectae*, ed. Z. Chodyński, E. Likoński, vol. 3, Poznań 1883, p. 81 ff.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 83.

and be *modesto, non sordidi tamen*¹⁸. In 1607 the synod of the Łuck diocese said that parish priests, curates and altarists could wear clothes made of *fein lündisch*, camlet and *narasio* textiles, while silk was reserved for the prelates and cathedral canons¹⁹. The round headgear should also be black. In 1694 in the Chełm diocese it was allowed to wear fur caps, but only of beaver and sable. Fox fur, on the other hand, was forbidden²⁰. One can see that much attention was paid to clothes. This was dictated by a need to distinguish a clergyman by his clothes and a wish to oppose the fashion followed by the lay persons.

Tab. 3. The value of the clergy's movables in the Płock diocese in the second half of the 18th c. (in zlotys).

Clergyman	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	sum
J. Rokitnicki	120	527	101	108	316	103	87	35	—	1,397
%	8.7	37.5	7.3	7.7	22.7	7.4	6.2	2.5	—	100
P. Jurasz	—	518	60	54	23	108	36	—	—	799
%	—	64.8	7.5	6.8	2.9	13.5	4.5	—	—	100
G. Gacki	27	229	206	23	19	44	—	17	30	595
%	4.5	38.5	34.6	3.9	3.2	7.4	—	2.9	5.0	100
D. Kortes	—	325	40	107	—	64	2	18	36	592
%	—	55.0	6.8	18.1	—	10.8	0.3	3.0	6.0	100
R. Miaszkiewicz	16	244	71	8	—	48	2	9	56	454
%	3.5	53.7	15.6	1.8	—	10.6	0.4	2.0	12.3	100
J. Kaczyński	—	48	15	—	2	34	64	35	—	198
%	—	24.2	7.6	—	1.0	17.2	32.3	17.7	—	100

a — jewels; b — clothes; c — vehicles; d — furniture; e — tableware; f — bedclothes; g — kitchen furniture and utensils; h — farm tools and objects; i — books.

The frequent heading of the list of movables with clothes seems to confirm their importance and value. Most frequently mentioned were "gowns". This term most probably denotes an attire conforming with the injunctions of ecclesiastical law, identical

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 82.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 88.

with the *rewerenda* described by J. Kitowicz²¹. This is all the more probable because the term *rewerenda* appears only once in all those wills and inventories. The outer gown could be identified with a cassock, however, this is contradicted by Andrzej Bromirski, the deputy administrator in Krysko, in his will of 1777, where he mentions side by side a gown and a cassock²². Among materials for clergymen's clothes the most frequent were: woollen cloth, camlet, *gros de Tours*, French woollen cloth and less frequently mentioned: *barakan*, Manchester, *damis*, *terkles*, *damask*, *Kutzbaje*²³. Woolen textiles prevailed, silk and cotton were less frequent. Except for French cloth, woollen textiles were cheaper. Some gowns were lined with sheepskin or fox fur. Only a few priests had clothes styled after West-European fashion: frock-coat, jacket, breeches, trousers. Outer clothes, suitable for harsh climate, were more diversified. The most widespread was *kiereja* with wolves, but also *delta*, *opończa*, wolfskin, and even sheepskin coats. To make the clothes warmer they were lined with quite common fur of the fox, wolf, bear, as well as sheep and goat skins. Heads were most often covered with caps, less frequently with calpacks, at any rate forbidden by synod constitutions, as well as hoods. They were made of sheep, marten, fox, wolverine as well as sable skins.

The source material I collected does not corroborate the opinion that many clergymen wore Polish national dress (*żupan* and *kontusz*) for daily use or while travelling²⁴. At any rate this did not happen in Mazovia in the 1770s. What prevailed was a definitely separate clergymen's attire.

²¹ J. Kitowicz, *Opis obyczajów za panowania Augusta III (The Description of Customs in the Reign of Augustus III)*, Warszawa 1985, p. 100: "Parish priests, and other priests of that status always wore long black gowns, commonly called priests' *rewerendas*, both around the home and while travelling, tailored after the then fashion; a German gown, apart from being short, which was not copied by a priest's *rewerenda*, and apart from buttons, while in a priest's under-gown there were small black buttons made of silk or thick woollen thread (*kamelar*), made by a haberdasher. The outer gown had no buttons, except for a big one close to the neck, and in some cases two on the abdomen".

²² APD, 160, p. 24.

²³ J. Kitowicz, *op. cit.*, p. 100, writes on this subject: "The textiles of gowns differed according to wealth: cloth, camlet, *gros de Tours*, satin, *kitaj*, velvet".

²⁴ I. Turnau, *Ubiór narodowy w dawnej Rzeczypospolitej (National Costume in Old Poland)*, Warszawa 1991, p. 143.

The differences in the number of various kinds of clothes were not significant. In the group under analysis a priest had at best 5 gowns lined with fur, and 4 pieces of headgear. A slightly bigger difference, from 1 to 8, can be observed in clothes made of textile alone. What differed indeed, was the number of shirts (the inventories list from 2 to 20).

Not only the number of things one owned, in this case clothes, determined the standard of life. What counted was also quality. The textiles worn were usually Polish produce, not very fine, but sometimes also the silk *gros de Tours*. If somebody could not afford velvet, he had clothes made of Manchester textile (corduroy). Both in the eyes of priests and laymen sable caps, gowns made of imported cloth or silk as well as canes provided with silver ferrules were treated as articles of luxury. Dionizy Kortez, the dean of Sierpc, did not have too many clothes, but they were made of fine textiles. His 2 gowns made of Manchester cotton were considered the most valuable and were priced at 108 zlotys; one of them was lined with foxskin. In the privacy of his presbytery the dean wore a much cheaper camlet under-gown and an outer one made of silken *gros de Tours*, or 2 gowns made of woollen *szarszedron*, priced at 10 zlotys. For colder days he used either "cats covered with *szarszedron*" or a "wolfskin covered with woolen cloth", estimated at 54 zlotys, as well as 2 sheepskin caps, one grey, another black, as well as a calpack made of martens covered with velvet²⁵. Father Jan Rokitnicki, the parish priest of Szren, wore equally fine clothes. His posthumous inventory records 2 gowns made of *gros de Tours* (100 zlotys) and 2 equally valuable gowns "made of *droguet*", as well as 2 gowns made of French cloth trimmed with silk textiles, velvet and *felpa*. A cloth *klereja* lined with wolf's fur and a coat with fox fur served him as outer clothes. A sable calpack made this outfit complete²⁶.

The opposite of this wealth was represented by the belongings of Jan Kaczyński, an altarist in Goworowo. Before his death he enumerated 2 gowns with fox- and sheepskin, 2 gowns made of *barakan*, and 2 cassocks. His posthumous inventory records gowns with fox- and sheepskin, a short sheepskin coat, a cap as well as cloth and leather breeches²⁷.

²⁵ APD, 252, pp. 166–175.

²⁶ APD, no call number, pp. 148–151.

²⁷ APD, 170, pp. 209–211.

Apart from clothes, wealth was signified by jewels. Among the clergy such ostentatious display of wealth was at variance with the repeatedly emphasized principle of moderation. The silver objects owned by the clergy were mainly those of daily use, such as a watch or snuff-box. Less frequent were silver ornaments, such as clasps, chains, rings or a signet with a coat-of-arms, which additionally informed of the owner's noble descent. Only 8 priests owned valuables. The largest number of them, i.e. 5 objects: a watch, snuff-box, clasp, chain and ring were recorded in the inventories of the parish priest of Radzików and canon of Chełm, Ignacy Ostaszewski²⁸. The only gold jewel, "a little signet", belonged to Jan Rokitnicki²⁹.

Nor have I noticed any ostentation in tableware. I found no silver vessels or cutlery. Only Jan Rokitnicki owned a set of 12 silver spoons³⁰. Of different character, may be that of a family memento or personal property, were 3 spoons and a cup of Szymon Więckowski and 1 spoon of Franciszek Koszewski, parish priest of Wierzbowiec³¹. If we give credit to the testimony of wills and posthumous inventories, pewter tableware could not be seen on the table of every parish priest. It is mentioned only in 2 inventories, 2 testamentary lists as well as 6 last wills, and the number of pieces is from 8 to 67, mostly 20–30. We may suppose that neither pewter, the basic furnishing of a gentleman's table in the 17th and 18th cc., nor faience or china, which had conquered elegant homes of the magnates and burghers, reached the presbyteries. The materials I collected contain only one example of a set of pewter tableware. Father Paweł Dziegielewski, the parish priest of Bonisław, had 13 spoons, 12 dishes, 3 bowls and one vegetable dish, all in one box³². The objects recorded most frequently were 1 bowl, a few dishes and plates as well as a couple of or a dozen-odd spoons. Characteristically, there were more spoons than plates. Was it so that spoons, which were cheaper, sufficed as an indication of wealth? Earthenware and glassware were indispensable. Although their worth was not big, they were recorded in two lists. These lists were so detailed not

²⁸ APD, no call no., pp. 57v–58.

²⁹ APD, no call no., pp. 148–151.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 148–151.

³¹ APD, 165, pp. 43–51; 236, pp. 198v–201.

³² APD, no call no., pp. 107v–109.

only because of their makers' scrupulosity, but also of the indispensability of these objects. Franciszek Głaszyński, the parish priest of Poręba, had 6 glazed bowls, 9 Danzig plates, 5 ordinary plates, 9 glasses and 5 wine-glasses, and the parish priest of Leków, Józef Kawczyński, owned 20 earthenware plates, 15 bowls, 3 jugs, 3 half-gallon flasks, 7 glasses, and 2 wine-glasses³³. Tableware in presbyteries was mainly for daily use. Parish priests did not have to emphasize their status in the local community with a richly and luxuriously laid table. It seems that they less frequently than their gentry neighbours participated in sumptuous feasts, although the invaluable Jędrzej Kitowicz mentions two- or even three-day feasts connected with decanal congregations³⁴. Apart from the host, a parish priest's table seated daily, at the most, merely a few persons: a curate, an organist, and servants. This also determined the use of cheaper tableware.

It is worth mentioning table utensils serving the preparation of alcoholic and other beverages. In the presbyteries they served both as medicine and drink, although one cannot tell whether daily or festive. Cauldrons or kettles for tea have been mentioned in the case of six priests. One of them had a coffee-pot and a coffee-mill. Four priests prepared vodka in alembics.

The belongings of the priests in the Płock diocese did not feature costly equipages drawn by fool-blood horses. The vehicles used were mainly small carts, britzkas or flies. In winter they were replaced by sleighs. The most elegant vehicle was used by Ignacy Ostaszewski, canon of Chełm and parish priest of Radzików. This was "a coach upholstered with cloth"³⁵. Horse-riding was not very popular, probably because it was considered as unbecoming to the dignity of a clergyman³⁶.

I find no foundation for sharing the opinion that beddings and linen testified to wealth³⁷. I can only isolate two groups, considering the number of objects. The first, more numerous,

³³ APD, 161, pp. 419-425; 159, pp. 9-12.

³⁴ J. Kitowicz, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

³⁵ APD, no call no., pp. 57-58v.

³⁶ Having no vehicle, Jan Kaczyński, an altarist in Goworowo, probably had to travel in this way. APD, 170, pp. 148-151.

³⁷ M. Bartkiewicz, *Odzież i wnętrza domów mieszczańskich w Polsce w drugiej połowie XVI i w XVII wieku (The Clothes and the Home Interiors of Polish Burgheers in the Second Half of the 16th and in the 17th c.)*, Wrocław-Warszawa 1974, p. 102.

would contain records enumerating a dozen-odd (8–16) pieces, the second 20–40 pieces of beddings and bedclothes. Quilts were usually covered with more expensive silk textiles (*kitajka*, satin, shagreen) rather than cotton (*bagazja*, *cyc*). It seems that only the indispensable amount of bedclothes was used. The average set consisted of: 1–2 quilts, 2–3 feather-beds, 2–4 sheets, 3–5 pillows. Eiderdowns and bolsters were less frequent. Beddings were made of feathers, only three times there is a note about down.

The most popular piece of furniture was a chest; it was functional and easy to move. Parish priests' benefices were not held for life. It was always possible that one would move to a new benefice, more suitable to one's aspirations or better endowed. While moving house, chests were easy to handle, and this was their asset. Similar reasons determined the popularity of coffers, used not only while travelling, but also in daily life. Less frequent were wardrobes, chests of drawers and cupboards. One can get the impression that there was little furniture in presbyteries. More than 50 lists mention a few tables, chairs and stools. The most valuable objects, cash or documents were kept in caskets and boxes. The authors of lists and testators did not forget beds, although not always. They were mentioned in 11 documents, featuring e.g. "a Saxon bed with calico" and "a bed with cloth"³⁸. Wall-clocks or grandfather's clocks were indispensable in a presbytery, since it was obvious that a priest had to know exact time. They were recorded in documents. It seems that little attention was attached to hygiene. The sources I saw, only once mention a lavatory, and towels were also rarely recorded. Serving partly as furniture and partly as ornament were screens. They delineated a small "private" space, and may have surrounded beds.

One can get the impression that the interior decoration of presbyteries was rather simple and austere. Wooden walls were rarely covered with coloured rugs or with linen or paper. The same goes for carpets. It seems that sacred images and crucifixes, indispensable in a presbytery, escaped the attention of the testators and inventory-makers³⁹.

³⁸ APD, 252, pp. 166–175; 161, pp. 420–425.

³⁹ "8 big, 14 small pictures" belonged to the parish priest, Dydak Jagielski, at Winnica. APD, 165, pp. 305–311; Franciszek Gostomski, the canon of the collegiate church in Pułtusk, had two. APD, 162, 111–115. Crucifixes were recorded in the belongings of Piotr Jurasz, the parish priest of Janowiec, and Józef Kawczyński, the parish priest of Leków. APD, 168, pp. 433–444, 159, pp. 7–12.

An important complement to the furniture were tables and stools, wardrobes and beds belonging to the benefice.

It is hard to define the origin of all this furniture. Only twice "Danzig [Gdańsk] coffers" have been mentioned⁴⁰.

Of exceptional interest, not only because of its minuteness of detail, is the description of a presbytery in Brańszczyk, made on its visitation: "The tapestry in one chamber and the alcove is uniform, pink with yellow flowers, 7 linen pieces, 2 reliquaries under glass, 2 pictures made of plaster of Paris, 2 small pictures painted on canvas, 6 Chinese paper tablets on the walls, 4 little tables, an oaken oval table on pine easels, 1 old armchair, upholstered with dark blue cloth, 12 stools with arms, a corner cupboard with a drawer, painted walnut"⁴¹. This furniture taken together emphasizes the devotional character of the interior as well as its exceptional splendor and elegance. In accordance with the fashion of the era, there were also some oriental accents. One can suppose that this interior owed such decoration to one of the canons of the Pułtusk chapter who was at the same time the parish priest of Brańszczyk⁴².

Normally there were books. They were indispensable for everyday prayers and for teaching at Sunday sermons. Some priests were satisfied with the mere breviary and the diocese *ordo*, others reached for various collections of sermons and theological literature. I will present them in more detail in a special study, since the specificity of parish book collections deserves a separate discussion.

Scales for weighing gold seem to be the most intriguing object encountered in presbyteries. They were recorded in the posthumous inventories of Jan Rokitnicki, the parish priest of Szeńsk, and the altarist of Goworowo, Jan Kaczyński. Their other possessions seem to show that their standard of life differed completely. Still, one can suppose that both of them engaged in money-lending on the security of jewels. This seems to be corroborated by "the gilded silver bureau with precious stones, given as security by His Lordship Walewski, member of the national

⁴⁰ APD, 161, 294-297; 160, pp. 241-246.

⁴¹ MHPR, vol. 6, p. 120.

⁴² It could have been Rev. Szulc, the founder of the presbytery in 1750, *ibid.*, p. 119.

cavalry, *florents 72*"⁴³, mentioned in Rokitnicki's inventory right after these "scales for gold", priced at 3 zlotys. On the other hand during the visitation of 1781 it was stated: ... "Rev. Kaczyński, who leaves church at the most important moments, and even when admonished by the Pułusk consistory and the local dean, does not reform himself. Rev. Kaczyński attributes his departures to his poverty and the impossibility to subsist on the benefits from his parish"⁴⁴. What was the reason of these departures? Was it only assistance in the priestly duties of other clergymen, more generous than the parish priest of Goworowo, or going with ministration to richer manor-houses?

We are not yet in a position to define the boundaries of wealth, to indicate with any certainty the articles that determined the standard of life. Nevertheless, one can presume that the status of the clergy in this respect was not uniform. Despite the similarities of legal regulations and customs, despite fulfilling the same function, that of priestly ministration, the conditions and styles of life differed. Of course, there was a special set of movables accessible and indispensable to any clergyman, adequate to the above-mentioned "modest but satisfactory conditions". Here we can mention both the indispensable objects (basic furniture, tableware, beddings, household utensils), and those connected with priestly duties (breviary, clothes), but even in this elementary set of articles the standard of wealth was rather determined by the quality and kind of textiles used than by the number of objects. Some articles of luxury were bought even by priests. However, their use was limited on the one hand by financial possibilities of the latter, and on the other by the injunctions of ecclesiastical and customary law. Therefore it seems advisable to introduce, after W. Tatariewicz and T. Chrzanowski, the term "appropriateness"⁴⁵. In accordance with this "appropriateness", specially tailored "gowns" were used, the gentry custom of wearing gala side-arms or jewels was rejected, as well as ostentatious pomp, unbecoming the clergy.

⁴³ APD, no call number, pp. 149.

⁴⁴ MHPR, vol. 6, p. 176.

⁴⁵ W. Tatariewicz, *Historia estetyki (The History of Esthetics)*, Wrocław 1962 (2nd ed.), pp. 117, 225, 239, 247, makes a note that in Cicero *decor* (suitability, appropriateness) signifies moral beauty; T. Chrzanowski, *Sarmackie decorum (Old Polish Decorum)*, in: *Wędrowki po Sarmacji europejskiej (Wanderings Around the European Sarmatia)*, Kraków 1988, p. 118.

In 1607 at a provincial synod the archbishop of Gniezno, Bernard Maciejowski, emphasized: *il qui spirituale ministerium suscipiunt, non addivitas aut luxum, sed ad labores pro Gloria Dei vocati sint*⁴⁶, and half a century later the bishop of Chełm Andrzej Stanisław Załuski wrote in a similar tone: *non ad commoditates et voluptates, sed ad labores et sollicitudines vocatos esse*⁴⁷. It seems impossible to decide what limited luxury consumption more — the lack of money or the adoption of a certain life-style. Of even more appeal to the clergy than to the ordinary people might have been *ars moriendi* treatises and manuals, with their conviction, derived from medieval times, of the vanity and transience of the world⁴⁸. In one of them, published in 1771 by the Jesuit Father Krzysztof Niepokojczyk, we can read: “[The body] will go away, not clothed in rich garments, but covered with a thick, dark and funeral shroud. ... It will be carried not to a rich palace or an apartment adorned with luxurious tapestry, but to a dark, horrible and stinking grave. There its bed will be bare earth, full of pus, a mattress of rotten bones, a head-rest of dust, worms and rot. However much you are after the excessive comfort and fondling of your body, of what avail will it be all after your death?”⁴⁹

(Translated by Agnieszka Kreczmar)

⁴⁶ *Conclium provincialae Regni Poloniae [...] Bernardus Maciejowski [...] archiepiscopo Gnesnensis, Cracoviae 1630, p. B 2.*

⁴⁷ *Constitutiones synodales [...] Andrea Stanslao Kostka Zaluski [...] episcopo Culmensis et Pomesaniaensis [...] A.D. 1745, Brunsbergae 1746, p. 67.*

⁴⁸ Cf. A. Nowicka-Jeżowa's interesting study, *Pieśni czasu śmierci. Studium z historii duchowości XVI-XVIII wieku (Death-Chants. A Study in the History of 16th-18th c. Spirituality)*, Lublin 1992.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 342.