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The Endowment of the Vilnius Cathedral Chapter in the Years 1390-1662

The first donations to the cathedral chapter in Vilnius date back to 1390 and were bequeathed by King Władysław II Jagiełło. By giving the lands of Strzeszyn to the canons, the monarch provided the basis for the development of the capitular latifundium. It was expanded by the Grand Duke of Lithuania, Vytautas, who, after assuming power in 1391, in 1415 endowed the chapter, in addition to several minor estates, with the lands of Kamieńszczyzna, which, combined with the endowment from Jagiełło, gave the Vilnius canon corporation land goods that can already be called a latifundium. The estates belonging to the Vilnius Chapter gradually increased in the sixteenth and mid-seventeenth centuries owing to the generosity of successive rulers and magnate families. Over time, the chapter's endowment was increased by private donors, both from the clergy and laity.

This endowment, which by the middle of the 17th century included about 1000 farmsteads (so-called "smokes" – Pol. dymy or sochy) and covered around 21 300 hectares of various types of land, placed the Vilnius Cathedral Chapter among the five most generously endowed canon corporations in the Polish-Lithuanian state.

Moscow's invasion and the occupation of a huge part of the country by foreign troops in the years 1656-1662 brought about an economic collapse of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The capitular latifundium suffered greatly as a result of the war. Some of the land goods suffered losses of 80-90%. In 1662, the income from the whole endowment was less than half of what it had been before 1656. Although the chapter rebuilt its latifundium through careful efforts, it never regained the old dynamics of development.

Key words: Vilnius, cathedral, chapter, endowment.

Introduction

The basic endowment of each chapter consisted of prebendary property. Each prelature and canonry had its own foundational property, based either on land ownership or on tithes. The endowment of the canonry was extremely uneven. It was administered by prelates and canons individually. Since the order of the canonries was sometimes determined not so much by the years of their erection as by the size of their endowments, the canons were promoted to higher positions after the death of another, to increasingly better canonries, and moved closer and closer to the altar in the stalls.

The chapters also had joint property, which was administered by the procurator on behalf of the chapter. The income from the common property went towards daily distributions, the so-called refectations, and the common expenses of the chapter, such as restoration of the cathedral, the costs of court proceedings, travel and allowances of canons delegated by the chapter to diets and tribunals. Distributions were small amounts given to prelates and canons present in the choir and at the convent mass, and to those whose absence was justified. In some chapters, e.g. in Włocławek, all the prebends were counted towards the overall endowment, from which some of the income was paid to prelates and canons, and the rest was distributed as refectations and used to cover common expenses.

In addition, chapters had a separate part of estates, consisting of a number of villages, the so-called prestimonies, which were distributed by “option” (a request from individual prelates and canons) to their members according to seniority in the chapter (*secundum senium*). There were fewer such villages than seats in the chapter, which is why only older members of the corporation received them. In addition, prelates and canons had residential houses near the cathedral, so-called canon curiae. Some were spacious and impressive, others more modest, and some very modest, so after each death of a canon, the oldest member moved to vacant, higher quality lodgings.

Shaping the foundations of the benefice

The Vilnius Cathedral Chapter received its first endowment two years after its establishment. It was then, on May 15, 1390, that King Władysław II Jagiełło granted it a hamlet, formerly belonging to Olgierd Ponara, near Vilnius, a tithe on fish from the weir on the Neris river, a tithe on the fields in Niemża, and 12 poods of wax per year from

the Vilnius castle¹. Already the same year, the monarch granted the chapter the extensive Strzeszyn estate, covering an area of 1200 km² on both sides of the the Dnieper².

The endowment was expanded by the Grand Duke of Lithuania, Vytautas. Around 1395, he granted to the chapter tithes from Cudzeniszki near Medininkai, a honey tithe, and three villages with inhabitants in the Choreczko estates called Trusewicze, which was based around the following land goods: Korzeń Wielki, Korzeń Mały, Haniewicz Wielkie, Haniewicz Małe, and Wołcz, also known as Bihomel³. In 1410, he added the village of Drogimiszki on the Żyzna River⁴. The culmination of Vytautas's gifts to the chapter was the donation, made in 1415, of the powerful Kamieniec estate in the Kiev region, which was soon started to be referred to as Kamieńszczyzna⁵.

The lands of the Vilnius Chapter gradually increased thanks to the generosity of successive rulers and magnate families. After the death of Vytautas, in 1435, Duke Sigismund Kęstutaitis donated the village of Rukojnie in the Miednica estate to the endowments of the chapter, along with a manor, a honey tithe and peasants⁶, as well as probably Parfienowicze in the Kurzeniec estate⁷. In 1436, he donated the village of Wojniałgowo with all its land and several other minor estates to the chapter⁸.

Subsequent rulers also gave gifts to the chapter and the cathedral. The donors included: Casimir IV Jagiellon, Alexander Jagiellon,

¹ *Kodeks dyplomatyczny katedry i diecezji wileńskiej*, ed. J. Fijałek, W. Semkowicz, vol. 1, z. 1, Kraków 1948, (hitherto: KDKDW), no. 17, pp. 30-31; Vilniaus Universiteto Biblioteka (hitherto: VUB), fond (hitherto: f.) 4, no. 39098, Kopie nadań..., 1387-1676, p. 46.

² KDKDW, no. 20, pp. 33-35; Lietuvos Mokslų Akademijos Vrublevskių Biblioteka (hitherto: LMAVB), f. 43, no. 141, Summa privilegiorum foundationis super certis bonis Capitulo Vilnensi..., XVIII w., p. 4.

³ KDKDW, no. 25, pp. 41-42; VUB, f. 4, no. 39098, Kopie nadań..., 1387-1676, p. 46.

⁴ KDKDW, no. 51, pp. 78-79; LMAVB, f. 43, no. 141, Summa privilegiorum, p. 5.

⁵ KDKDW, no. 67, pp. 98-99; LMAVB, f. 4, no. 39098, Kopie nadań..., 1387-1676, p. 46.

⁶ KDKDW, no. 139, pp. 157-158; LMAVB, f. 43, no. 141, Summa privilegiorum, p. 7v.; J. Ochmański, *Biskupstwo wileńskie w średniowieczu. Ustrój i uposażenie*, Poznań 1972, p. 98.

⁷ KDKDW, no. 236, pp. 266-268; J. Ochmański, *Powstanie i rozwój latyfundiów biskupstwa wileńskiego (1387-1550). Ze studiów nad rozwojem wielkiej własności na Litwie i Białorusi w średniowieczu*, Poznań 1963, pp. 63-64.

⁸ KDKDW, no. 146, pp. 164-165; LMAVB, f. 4, no. 39098, Kopie nadań..., 1387-1676, pp. 105-106.

Sigismund I the Old⁹, Stephen Báthory¹⁰, Sigismund III Vasa¹¹. Lithuanian feudal lords, who were still building up their own latifundia, played a significant, though definitely smaller, role in this matter. Nevertheless, the Kęsgaila family donated to the Vilnius cathedral their estate of Bakszta¹², and some property was also added by Jonas Goštautas, Andrius Daugirdas, and Aleksandras Alšėniškis¹³.

Over time, the chapter's endowment was increased by private donors from the clergy and laity. Notable donations came from Bishop Valerian Protasewicz, Canon Stanisław Kiszka, or Wojciech Stanisław Radziwiłł. As a result of these grants, the Vilnius Cathedral Chapter in the mid 17th century owned about 270 villages¹⁴.

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In addition, Duke Vytautas confirmed Jogaila's donations, giving to the chapter squares in Vilnius, the place where, among others, the cathedral bell tower, the church of St. Mary Magdalene, and capitular houses were located. This original donation gave rise to the rapidly growing capitular jurisdiction in the capital of the diocese¹⁵.

Already at the beginning of the formation of the Vilnius Chapter's latifundium, its endowment, according to the intention of the founder and the needs of the corporation, was supported by common lands, called table estates (Pol. *dobra stołowe*), the total income from which, among others, the entire chapter was shared as well as prebendial lands, which the chapter shared regardless of dignity and already holding a prebend, and prebends, i.e. chapter goods attached to a certain position. In addition, the endowment of the chapter included other prebends – for the altar, chapter vicars and their lodgings, cathedral preachers and a number of offices and institutions functioning at the cathedral. These were founded both from land estates, as well as cities, lakes, mills, breweries, tenement houses, bequeathals, tithes, and others.

⁹ J. Ochmański, *Powstanie i rozwój latyfundium biskupstwa wileńskiego*, p. 67 et seq.

¹⁰ *Księga Batoriańska. Zbiór dokumentów ku uczczeniu 350-letniej rocznicy zgonu króla Stefana Batorego*, ed. R. Mienicki, Wilno 1939, no. 22, pp. 45-48.

¹¹ J. Kurczewski, *Kościół zamkowy czyli katedra wileńska w jej dziejowym, liturgicznym, architektonicznym i ekonomicznym rozwoju*, pt. 2, Wilno 1910, p. 166.

¹² J. Ochmański, *Biskupstwo wileńskie w średniowieczu*, p. 96.

¹³ KDKDW, no. 281, pp. 328-329; J. Ochmański, *Powstanie i rozwój latyfundium biskupstwa wileńskiego*, p. 66.

¹⁴ J. Ochmański, *Powstanie i rozwój latyfundium biskupstwa wileńskiego*, p. 97.

¹⁵ J. Maroszek, *Ulice Wilna w XIV-XVIII wieku*, "Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej", 1-2 (1999), pp. 177-179.

The estates of Strzeszyn and Kamieńszczyzna formed the core of the table estates of the Vilnius Chapter around the middle of the 16th century. In 1559, the property of Strzeszyn included 104.5 *sochas*, i.e. peasant farms with draught animals, and 10 poorer farms without yoke animals, as well as two gardens, i.e. plots belonging to even poorer peasants, so-called gardeners.¹⁶ In total, this amounted to about 120 households¹⁷. Kamieńszczyzna had about the same number of households¹⁸. They were complemented by smaller estates, such as Ponary near Vilnius, consisting of 13 *sochas* and 32 poorer farmsteads¹⁹, Jeziornica with four and one respectively²⁰, six *sochas* from Szpingle, acquired by the chapter in 1535 from secular landowners, and tithes from Cudzeniszki²¹. In total, therefore, there were about 300 households in the table estates of the Vilnius Chapter in the middle of the sixteenth century²².

At the same time, the capitular prebendial estates included two settlements called Korzeń, one of which had 58 *sochas* and two gardens, while the other had 50.5 *sochas*, three poorer farmsteads, and two gardens. Haniewiczze had 41 *sochas*²³, Wojnilgowo – 45.5²⁴, two settlements called Trusowicze – one with 54.5 farmsteads and the other of indeterminate size, as well as Bakszty with 33.5 *sochas*. The larger estates also included the property of an unknown provenance called Kuźmiszki, numbering 38 *sochas* and three poorer farmsteads, and Wołcz, whose size cannot be determined. Smaller estates included Szyłany – 12 *sochas* and 5.5 lesser farmsteads, Rzesza – 8.5 *sochas* and two poorer farmsteads, as well as Kupiecko with 20.5 *sochas* and one

¹⁶ The size of individual estates was determined by J. Ochmański based on information from the source: *Rejestr skarbowy wybierania srebszczyzny z dóbr duchownych kapitulnych i plebańskich biskupstwa wileńskiego*, 1559, and described in *Biskupstwo wileńskie w średniowieczu...*, pp. 96-99.

¹⁷ KDKDW, no. 20, p. 35. J. Ochmański discusses whether this was indeed Jagiełło's foundation in *Najdawniejsze przywileje Jagiełły i Witolda dla biskupstwa wileńskiego*, "Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. A. Mickiewicza", Historia, 5 (1961), pp. 26-29.

¹⁸ KDKDW, no. 67, p. 99; J. Ochmański, *Powstanie i rozwój latyfundium biskupstwa wileńskiego*, p. 51.

¹⁹ KDKDW, no. 17, p. 31.

²⁰ It is impossible to determine the founder of the Jeziornica estate today.

²¹ KDKDW, no. 25, pp. 41-42.

²² J. Ochmański, *Biskupstwo wileńskie w średniowieczu*, p. 97.

²³ KDKDW, no. 25, p. 41.

²⁴ Ibidem, no. 146, p. 164.

lesser farm²⁵. In total, the prestimonial goods of the Vilnius Chapter around 1550 numbered 300 households, to which should be added the estates of indeterminate size – Trusewicze and Wołcz. Assuming they could have numbered approx. 50 households each, this would bring the total to around 400 households²⁶.

By the middle of the 16th century, prelate prebends had also been introduced²⁷. The oldest of these donations was made by duke Vytautas in 1410 to provide for the salary of the provost. It was based on the estate of Drogimnizki, which included 38 farmsteads (*sochas*)²⁸. The prelate provost's fund did not change for the next 150 years, as by 1559 he was still in command of 38 farmsteads.

The prelate dean had the lowest salary, as he drew income from the estates of Rubno and Dziekaniszki. This original fund was expanded in 1562 by Bishop Valerian Protasewicz, who added to the emoluments of the vice-dean the estate of Suderwa, granted to the bishops of Vilnius by royal decree, henceforth known as Poddziekaniszki. In the middle of the 16th century, the dean drew income from only 11 farmsteads²⁹.

The greatest prebend was granted to the archdeacon prelate. He drew income from the villages of Rukojnie and Parfieniewo, which in 1559 constituted a total estate of 66.5 *sochas* and 17 lesser farmsteads³⁰.

The custodian's salary was small. In the mid-sixteenth century, he collected income from 14 *sochas* and three lesser farms. This was probably based in the property of Kiemiesz, belonging to the estate of the bishops of Vilnius – Tauroginie³¹.

The founder of the lowest dignities in the Vilnius chapter, the Vilnius bishop John of the Dukes of Lithuania, turned out to be a generous donor. The scholastic prelature founded by him was the second largest

²⁵ Ibidem, no. 469, pp. 551-553; J. Ochmański, *Powstanie i rozwój latyfundium biskupstwa wileńskiego*, p. 42 et seq.; Idem, *Biskupstwo wileńskie w średniowieczu*, pp. 97-98.

²⁶ J. Ochmański, *Biskupstwo wileńskie w średniowieczu*, p. 98.

²⁷ Data concerning the size of the prelate prebends, based on the Treasury Register of 1559, is cited from J. Ochmański, J. Ochmański, *Biskupstwo wileńskie w średniowieczu*, p. 98.

²⁸ KDKDW, no. 51, p. 58.

²⁹ J. Kurczewski, *Kościół zamkowy*, pt. 2, p. 157; J. Ochmański, *Biskupstwo wileńskie w średniowieczu*, p. 98.

³⁰ KDKDW, no. 139, p. 157; J. Ochmański, *Powstanie i rozwój latyfundium biskupstwa wileńskiego*, pp. 63-64.

³¹ J. Kurczewski, *Kościół zamkowy*, pt. 2, p. 158.

prebend of a prelate (after the archdeaconry)³². The scholastic prelates salary was probably drawn from the estates of Tołociszki and Kapłańce, with a total of 60.5 *sochas*, eight lesser farmsteads, and three gardens³³.

However, the bishop assigned a much smaller salary to the prelate cantor. The estates of Gietaniszki and Piotrowo, assigned to this position, only brought income from 33 farmsteads³⁴.

Summing up the size of all the prebends in the mid-sixteenth century, we get an income from 223.5 *sochas*, 28 lesser farmsteads, and three gardens, a total of about 260 homesteads. Since one provided a tithe in the amount of about 60 Lithuanian grosze, it is easy to estimate the income the prelates drew from their prebends, which would have amounted to a gross sum of about 260 grosze, albeit unevenly distributed among individual capitular dignities³⁵.

In this context, it should be noted that this distribution of prelate prebends did not last long. The prelates were not canons. They were supported by prebendal estates assigned to every position, but they were not entitled to emoluments drawn from the distribution of refectioes due to the canon chapter, nor did they have the right to sit in chapter sessions during which cases concerning the canon college were resolved. This was the source of the conflict in the chapter, which flared up in 1551, when prelates Józef Jasiński – archdeacon and Paweł Wiszeński – custodian, were introduced to the canon college without observing the proper formalities and began to demand participation in the canon refectioes. In July 1551, canons Bartłomiej Sabinusz and Wojciech Narbut, as well as Wacław Wierzbicki, the bishop of Samogitia, and Walerian Protasewicz, the bishop of Lutsk, protested against this practice³⁶. This was a signal to the other canons, who gathered at the general session on October 1, citing the statutes defining the constant number of members of the college, collectively protested against the new practice of the newly established prelates – canons³⁷ participating in their sessions, and on October 3, appreciating the achievements and work for the dioceses of the prelates introduced to

³² Biblioteka Polskiej Akademii Nauk w Krakowie (hitherto: Bibl.PAN.Kr), sygn. 8903, Akta różne, pp. 207-208, 211-220.

³³ J. Kurczewski, *Kościół zamkowy*, pt. 2, pp. 159, 293.

³⁴ Bibl.PAN.Kr, sygn. 8903, Akta różne, pp. 211-220; J. Kurczewski, *Kościół zamkowy*, pt. 2, p. 159.

³⁵ J. Ochmański, *Powstanie i rozwój latyfundiów biskupstwa wileńskiego*, p. 111.

³⁶ LMAVB, f. 43, no. 211, Acta Capituli Vilnensis (hitherto: ACV), vol. 3 (1550-1560), p. 12.

³⁷ Ibidem, pp. 17-19.

their group, they renewed the protest, claiming that the income from their refectory estates was barely enough to support 12 canons³⁸. The conflict within the chapter was resolved by King Sigismund II Augustus, who first transferred the right of patronage to the deanry, and then, by virtue of a privilege issued in 1558, incorporated the prebends of the royal prebendary benefices, the prepositure, archdeaconry, and custody into the canon estates³⁹. This resulted in canon Jan Wirbkowski, elevated to the chapter by the deaconry, resigning in 1559 from the position of prelate and remaining at the canonry⁴⁰. The same year, on May 10, the provost, archdeacon, and custodian joined the group of canons, after donating a part of the income from their prebends⁴¹, and on May 25, 1560 the prelates of the episcopal college, the cantor, and the scholastic did the same⁴². Henceforth, the prelates managed the refectory estates of the chapter together with the canons, who would occupy stalls vacated by the prelates⁴³.

In total, therefore, in the middle of the 16th century, the estates of the Vilnius cathedral chapter consisted of about 1000 households or farmsteads. Assuming, with some simplification, that the Lithuanian *socha* corresponded to the later *włoka* (21.3 ha), it turns out that at that time there were approx. 21 300 ha of various types of lands in the endowment of the Vilnius Chapter. To put the size of these estates in the context of the emoluments of the Catholic Church in Lithuania, it is worth comparing this data with the endowment of the cathedral chapter in neighbouring diocese of Samogitia. According to information from 1552, the Samogitia Chapter paid a tax on 362.5 farmsteads, which constituted about 36% of the assets of the Vilnius Chapter⁴⁴.

In this context, we may ask what the income of the Vilnius Chapter from such an endowment would have been. In 1573, the total income from table estates and canon prestimonies was determined at 84 794 Lithuanian groszy⁴⁵. If one adds to this the income from prelates' pre-

³⁸ Ibidem, p. 20.

³⁹ *Summaryjny wypis z protokołów Kapituły Katedralnej Wileńskiej od r. 1501 do r. 1783 Października 22, przez i. w. Xawierego Bohusza, Prałata Kantora Katedry Wileńskiej uczyniony*, in: *Opisanije rukopisnago otdielenija Wilenskoj Publicznoj Biblioteki*, выпуск 1, Wilna 1895 (hitherto: *Summaryjny wypis*), p. 55.

⁴⁰ LMAVB, f. 43, no. 211, ACV, vol. 3 (1550-1560), p. 210.

⁴¹ Ibidem, p. 211; *Summaryjny wypis*, p. 55.

⁴² LMAVB, f. 43, no. 211, ACV, vol. 3 (1550-1560), p. 270.

⁴³ *Summaryjny wypis*, p. 57.

⁴⁴ J. Ochmański, *Biskupstwo wileńskie w średniowieczu*, p. 107.

⁴⁵ J. Kurczewski, *Kościół zamkowy*, pt. 2, p. 332.

bends (approx. 15600 groszy), the total annual income of the Vilnius Chapter amounts to about 100 800 Lithuanian groszy, which also included the income from the 21 homesteads in Vilnius. In 1569 it gave a general income of 4800 groszy⁴⁶.

The sum of 84 780 groszy from the canon table and prestimonial land estates determined here was divided between 12 canons, which gave an average of 7020 groszy per person. By comparison, a canon of the Samogitia chapter received an average of about 4800 groszy from table and prestimonial estates⁴⁷. It should be noted that the canons and prelates, in addition to the chapter prebends, held well-endowed parishes, holding 100 and more farmsteads. Therefore, their real annual income, after deducting a part of the revenues allocated to the maintenance of vicars and church servants, was much higher than just emoluments from participation in income from capitular estates.

Development of the benefice from the mid-16th century to 1656

Over the next hundred years, until the Muscovite invasion in 1656, capitular estates were increased by donations made almost exclusively by the nobility. The poor prebend of the dean prelate increased, though it is difficult to say when, by 166 households in the estate of Świranki and 18 households in the property of Stołpienięta⁴⁸. The endowment of the Vilnius custody was expanded in 1641, owing to the donation of Andrzej Dowgierdowicz, to include the village of Świątniki with 20 households⁴⁹.

The size of the canon prestimonial lands did not change significantly, unlike its table estates. These were enlarged as a result of the donation from the suffragan of Vilnius, bishop Mikołaj Pac, who in 1608 expanded the royal estate of Trusowicze (granted earlier) with the villages of Prudki and Pliszczyce, with 37 households⁵⁰, and the farm estates of Cielechowicze, Dekszniany, Wieprzacze, and Koladycze⁵¹. In 1609, the chapter accepted another great donation, the estate of

⁴⁶ Ibidem; J. Ochmański, *Biskupstwo wileńskie w średniowieczu*, p. 108.

⁴⁷ J. Ochmański, *Biskupstwo wileńskie w średniowieczu*, p. 109.

⁴⁸ LMAVB, f. 43-223, ACV, vol. 15 (1667-1672), p. 134; J. Kurczewski, *Kościół zamkowy*, pt. 2, p. 157.

⁴⁹ KDKDW, no. 261, p. 272.

⁵⁰ LMAVB, f. 43, no. 236, ACV, vol. 28 (1753-1766), p. 140.

⁵¹ LMAVB, f. 43, no. 203, *Liber Privilegiorum*, vol. 2 (1387-1618), pp. 275-276.

Hoduciszki, from the Vilnius canon Stanisław Kiszka, who held the bishopric of Samogitia from 1618 on. These lands included the estate of Hoduciszki with 247 households and the farm estates Mirkliszki, with 112 households, Stojaciszki, with 126 households, and the smaller Rokity, with 67 households. Another major donation was made in 1612 by a nobleman from the county of Świącin, Krzysztof Komar. He donated the property of Syczynięta with 24 households to the table estates of the chapter⁵². The capitular estates were expanded even further by a donation from Wojciech Stanisław Radziwiłł, who in 1636 donated to the Vilnius canonical corporation the well-managed estate of Braszewicze in Kobryń county, with 150 households⁵³, as well as the farm estates of Czechowce, with 103 households, and Tolkowo, with 49, which were a part of the Braszewicze estate⁵⁴. In 1649, just before his death, Bishop Abraham Woyna bequeathed to the chapter the estate of Michniszki in Trotsk county with 98 households and Łosk in Oshmiana county, whose size was not specified. Both of these estates were soon, at the will of the founder, donated for the endowment of an altar in the Vilnius cathedral, named after the benefactor: *altaria Woyniańska*⁵⁵. Some of the last endowments before the war were probably purchased from various landowners and handed over to the chapter by the prelate dean, Wojciech Żabiński in 1651. These were the estates of Sory, which would support the upkeep of the Cathedral cantors' dormitory⁵⁶, and most likely Mickuny, obtained from the Sanguszko family⁵⁷. The size of these estates is not specified in the sources. Nor is it possible to determine the exact date of this donation.

The endowment of the Vilnius Cathedral Chapter was supplemented by the income from rents from burghers, donations to anniversaries and the altar. This should also include income obtained from the estates intended for the upkeep of chapter vicars and the seminary in Vilnius.

⁵² Ibidem, p. 304; J. Kurczewski, *Kościół zamkowy*, pt. 2, pp. 164-165.

⁵³ LMAVB, f. 43, no. 4835, Akta Wizyty Kościoła Katedralnego Wileń. [...] na Rok 1830ty, knlb.

⁵⁴ LMAVB, f. 43, no. 266, ACV, vol. 56 (1836-1838), p. 49.

⁵⁵ In 1822, the Michniszki and Łosk estates returned to the chapter's endowment and became part of its table estates. LMAVB, f. 43, no. 4835, Akta Wizyty Kościoła Katedralnego Wileń. [...] na Rok 1830ty.

⁵⁶ LMAVB, f. 43, no. 220, ACV, vol. 12 (1644-1652), p. 968.

⁵⁷ J. Kurczewski, *Kościół zamkowy*, pt. 2, p. 165.

In total, the capitular benefice built over the centuries provided an income of about 810 000 Lithuanian groszy in 1643⁵⁸. Although this number is so impressive as to be outright unbelievable. It is difficult to accept that in less than a hundred years, despite some increase in emoluments, population growth, and modernization of farming and management methods, the income from the chapter estates increased almost tenfold in comparison to the income from the middle of the sixteenth century, which amounted, as indicated above, to about 100 800. To clarify the matter, it is necessary to look at the evolution of the value of money used at that time. On 5 January 1580, King Stephen Báthory extended the Polish monetary system to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, as a result of which the Polish grosz began to displace the Lithuanian one. Therefore, it is highly probable that the author of the annual revenue accounts of the Vilnius Chapter in 1643 stated their amount in the Polish grosze, while retaining the Lithuanian name of the coin (Pol. *kopa grosza*). If so, the actual income from the estates would amount to 810 000 Polish groszy, which also seems unlikely given the 100 800 Lithuanian groszy of income a century before, even taking into account the fact that the value of the Lithuanian grosz in the second half of the 16th century was 20% higher than that of the Polish grosz. The situation seems to be explained by the state of Polish currency at the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries, when the value of the Polish silver coin fell, in a devaluation so rapid that in 1620 the Lithuanian grosz was the equivalent of 4.5 Polish groszy (while in 1559 the ratio of the value of both coins was 1 to 1.2)⁵⁹. Taking into account these circumstances, the chapter's actual revenue from its benefice in 1643 amounted to about 180 000 Lithuanian groszy.

⁵⁸ LMAVB, f. 43, no. 573, Przychód pieniędzy wszelkich z majątności Wielebnej Kapituły Wileńskiej z roku 1642 na rok 1643 i inszych rozmaitych pensji i fundacji niżej mianowanych do rąk moich, mnie Adama Zabłockiego kanonika i podskarbiego tejże Wielebnej Kapituły Wileńskiej, passim. Information on the income of the chapter based on this source was published in the form of a table by J. Kurczewski in: *Kościół zamkowy*, pt. 2, pp. 206-210.

⁵⁹ The reasons for this were as follows: in the German countries, there was a sharp decrease in the value of money at the time, while the value of Polish coins remained relatively constant, after the Báthory's reforms. This resulted in the outflow of better quality Polish coin to Germany and the flooding of Poland with worse German coin. A. Jezierski, C. Leszczyńska, *Historia gospodarcza Polski*, Warszawa 2010, p. 62.

Losses of the capitular latifundium in 1656-1662

Capitular estates suffered severely as a result of Moscow's invasion. The war damage from the years 1656-1662 can be estimated in a large approximation thanks to the preserved household registers, on the basis of which a comparative analysis of their condition in 1653⁶⁰ and 1673⁶¹ can be made. However, it should be noted that these are incomplete data, as they do not contain information about all the assets of the chapter.

From the above, it can be seen that the largest losses, reaching over 80% of the state from before 1656 were recorded in as many as seven estates (Sorzyca, Korzeń, Haniewicze, Trusewicze, Prudki, Rubno, and the church jurisdiction in Vilnius). Of the above-mentioned estates, only Rubno and the city properties were located in the vicinity of Vilnius, while the others were located in the eastern voivodeships: Sorzyca in the Vitebsk region and the others in the Minsk voivodeship. No less devastation was recorded in the estates of Rukojnie, Szyłany, Tołociszki, Bakszty, Hoduciszki, and Kołpienica, where over 70% of farms were completely destroyed. More than half the households were also lost in Parafanów, Wołcz, Syczyniet, and Rzesza, and nearly half in Braszewicze and Wojniałgów. The overall losses in the estates recorded here amounted to 64% of the state from before 1656.

The largest estate recorded in the registers of households, Sorzyca, although it suffered as much as 87% losses, still brought some income. However, it did not supply the capitular treasury. From 1660 it was used by Orthodox monks under the protection of the Tsarist garrison from Vitebsk. The one positive effect of this was that it protected Sorzyca from even greater damage⁶².

In addition to the damage done by enemy troops, capitular properties were often devastated by their administrators, assigned by

⁶⁰ LMAVB, f. 43, no. 609, Trzecia rata podymnego na Sejmie Brzeskim dwuniedzielnym, 1653.

⁶¹ Lietuvos Centrinis Valstybės Archyvas, (hereinafter: LCVA), Akta Dawne, no. 3435, vol. 1. Wiadomość oddanych pieniędzy ze wszystkich dóbr duchownych diecezji wileńskiej podług konstytucji Sejmu Walnego Warszawskiego w tymże roku *ut supra* pisanego (...) oddanej ode mnie Benedykta Żuchorskiego, kustosa prałata wileńskiego, dziekana żmudzkiego, poborcy duchownego, 1673.

⁶² Archiwum Archidiecezjalne we Włocławku (hitherto: AAW) – no sign., Materiału historycznego do dziejów rocznych czyli kroniki Litewsko-Katolickiego Kościoła, a szczególnie wileńskiej diecezji z akt kapituły katedralnej oraz konsystorza wileńskiego i rozmaitych dokumentów oryginalnych przez x. Mamerta z Felsztyna Herburtą (...) zebranego (hereinafter: Herburt), vol. 2 from 1601 to 1679 r., k. 166v., 169v., 171v.

the chapter itself. The steward of Kołpienica took advantage of the turmoil of war and began to pressure his subjects so much that it led to the ruin of some farmsteads, while other peasants left their village and fled from their own administrator. In the end, without even having the fields sown, he himself fled⁶³. An exceptional perversity was shown by the administrator of Hoduciszki, who, having sold out to the enemy, managed capitular estates on behalf of the Muscovites, oppressed his subjects and meticulously lined his own pockets as long as he remained under Moscow's protection, which led to the "ruination of capitular estates" (Pol. *kapitulne dobra zmarnował*)⁶⁴. The income from the Brasewicze estate was appropriated in the first months of the war by their administrators appointed by the chapter, and through cut and slash management they caused mass escapes of their subjects. The situation of these estates changed little after they were recovered by Polish troops. At first, the estates were plundered and the peasants were oppressed "beyond measure" (Pol. *nad miarę wszelką*) by Hetman Gosiewski's troops, then the same was done by the soldiers of the starost of Samogitia, Chlebowicz. The measure of misfortune was completed by the occupation of Braszewicze by the Cossacks in 1657 and their armed raids in 1658⁶⁵. Despite these experiences, miraculously, these estates were still able to bring the chapter some revenue, which, together with the income from less devastated goods, provided a lean but permanent livelihood.

No register makes note of the Strzeszyn estate, the largest and most profitable capitular estate located on the Dnieper. Their condition immediately after the beginning of hostilities is evidenced by the account of canon Judycki. At the session of the chapter, held in Braszewicze, he informed that all the villages on the left, eastern bank of the river were almost intact, while a part of the estate located on the west bank was almost completely devastated, the villages had been burned, and many subjects scattered in the woods. Although, according to Judycki's account, they were ready to return in "calmer times" (Pol. *spokojniejsze czasy*)⁶⁶. It seems that Strzeszyn, due to its strategic location, became fully available only after the complete cessation of hostilities.

The most accurate account of the capitular beneficium in the areas covered by hostilities at the end of the conflict was provided by the

⁶³ Ibidem, p. 167v.

⁶⁴ LMAVB, f. 43, no. 221, ACV, vol. 13 (1652-1663), pp. 264-264v., 283, 286, 309, 331.

⁶⁵ AAW, Herburt, vol. 2, pp. 167-170v.

⁶⁶ LMAVB, f. 43, no. 221, ACV, vol. 13 (1652-1663), p. 237.

report on the state of the Sorzyca estate from 1661. On May 10 it was recorded in the files that

the overseer of the estate (...) reported that this year it would bring no income at all for close proximity to the enemy who clings to the vicinity of Vitebsk and often makes raids from there, which the informer himself had narrowly escaped. Some villages have been completely burned down, while others have mostly survived with serfs living in them, but you have no cattle at all, so now he decides not to require anything from the peasantry for danger from the Muscovites, while maintaining further management of the estate. (Pol. *opiekun tych dóbr (...) doniósł, iż nic zgola w tym roku nie przyniosą dochodu dla bliskiego sąsiedztwa z wrogiem, który trzyma się okolic Witebska i częste czyni stamtąd wycieczki, których zaledwie i sam donoszący uniknął. Niektóre wioski zupełnie są spalone, a inne w większej połowie ocalały i poddani w nich mieszkają, bydła zaś wcale nie masz, przetoż postanawia nic teraz od włościan nie wymagać dla niebezpieczeństwa od Moskali, zachowując przy nim dalszy tych dóbr zarząd*)⁶⁷.

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Under the same date there is a record of the situation in the Kamieńszczyzna estate:

from our Polish soldiers, more than from enemies, the estates are also devastated and what they could bring, from the income only 60 złoty (...). Some villages ravaged by plague, you have no cattle and hives with bees were plucked by soldiers.” (Pol. *od naszych polskich żołnierzy bardziej, niż od wrogów też dobra są spustoszone i zaledwie co przynieść mogą, z których dochodów tylko złotych 60 (...). Niektóre wsie morową zarazą spustoszone, żadnego nie masz bydła i ule z pszczołami żołnierze powydzierali*)⁶⁸.

This shows that the capitular benefice was not spared by any of the possible war calamities.

Conclusion

The Vilnius Cathedral Chapter arose by virtue of the decision of the Holy See expressed in the bull of Pope Urban VI *Romanus Pontifex* of March 12, 1388. This document was a canon act of erection of the Vilnius bishopric. Its executor, the bishop of Poznań, Dobrogost received all powers of attorney to establish central diocesan offices, including the cathedral chapter. It was the summer of 1388 when Bishop Dobrogost began to implement the papal decisions. This was when

⁶⁷ Quote after W. F. Wilczewski, *Spustoszenia wojenne w diecezji wileńskiej w połowie XVII wieku*, Lublin 2001 (mps BU KUL), p. 215.

⁶⁸ Ibidem.

a cathedral chapter was established, consisting, for the time being, of two prelates and 10 canons.

The first donations to the cathedral chapter in Vilnius date back to 1390 and were bequeathed by King Władysław II Jagiełło. They gave rise to a dynamically developing chapter with the introduction of subsequent dignities, offices, and canons. They were greatly enlarged by the Grand Duke of Lithuania, Vytautas, in 1391-1415. As a result of these donations, the chapter benefice began to take on the character of a *latifundium*. The estates belonging to the Vilnius Chapter gradually increased in the sixteenth and mid-seventeenth centuries, due to the generosity of successive rulers and magnate families. Over time, the chapter's endowment was increased by private donors, both from the clergy and laity.

This endowment, which by the middle of the 17th century included about 1000 farmsteads and covered around 21 300 hectares of various types of land, placed the Vilnius Cathedral Chapter among the five most generously endowed canon corporations in the Polish-Lithuanian state.

Moscow's invasion and the occupation of a huge part of the country by foreign troops in the years 1656-1662 brought about an economic collapse of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. For the Catholic Church in Lithuania and its income, the events of 1656-1662 were disastrous. The properties of the chapter suffered significant war damage. Some of the estates suffered losses of 80-90%. In 1662, the income from the whole endowment was less than half of what it had been before 1656. Although the chapter rebuilt its benefice owing to careful operations after a dozen or so years, it never reached a state that would give grounds for describing it as a *latifundium*.

Losses in the number of households in the estates of the Vilnius Cathedral Chapter in 1653-1673*

No.	Estates	Status	Number of households		Losses	
			1653	1673	In numbers	In percentage
1.	Sorzyca	vicars' estates	578	112	466	87%
2.	Hoduciszki	table estates	498	123	366	73%
3.	Braszewicze and Borodziecze	table estates	332	173	159	48%

No.	Estates	Status	Number of households		Losses	
			1653	1673	In numbers	In percentage
4.	Parafianów	archdeacon's prebend	257	90	167	65%
5.	Wołcza	table estates	240	85	155	65%
6.	Poswol	vicars' estates	186	149	37	20%
7.	Kamieńszczyzna	table estates	175	132	41	23%
8.	Korzeń Mały and Korzeń Wielki	table estates	88	7	81	92%
9.	Haniewicze	canon prestimony	86	11	75	87%
10.	Kołpienica	saminar estates	68	18	50	73%
11.	Syczynięta	table estates	48	19	29	60%
12.	Bakszty	canon prestimony	41	9	32	78%
13.	Tołociszki	scholastic's prebend	37	9	28	76%
14.	Trusewicze	canon prestimony	36	4	32	89%
15.	Prudki	table estates	35	2	33	94%
16.	Rukojnie	archdeacon's prebend	29	8	21	72%
17.	Wojniałgów	canon prestimony	28	16	12	43%
18.	Sołok	cantor's prebend	27	17	10	37%
19.	Rubno	deans prebend	16	2	14	87%
20.	Szyłany	canon prestimony	9	2	7	78%
21.	Rzesza	canon prestimony	8	3	5	62%
22.	Kiemieszyszki	canon prestimony	8	5	3	37%
23.	Mickuny	table estates	7	6	1	14%
24.	Ponary	table estates	7	9	gained 2	gained 28%

No.	Estates	Status	Number of households		Losses	
			1653	1673	In numbers	In percentage
25.	Szpingle	table estates	1	1	-	-
26.	Jurydyka wileńska	table estates	63	12	51	81%
Overall			2.908	1.033	1.875	64%

* Source based on: W. F. Wilczewski, *Spustoszenia wojenne w diecezji wileńskiej w połowie XVII wieku*, Lublin 2001 (mps BU KUL), pp. 209-210.

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