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Sacerdotalisation. Changes in Clerical Private Lives in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth¹

Sacerdotalizacja. Zmiany w życiu prywatnym duchowieństwa w Rzeczypospolitej Obojga Narodów

Abstract

The Council of Trent expected priests to dutifully perform their professional obligations and to shine as examples of Christian life. Although this new ideal was treated as coherent and holistic by both Catholic reformers and historians, the article proposes to analyse it as two separate processes: clerical professionalisation and sacerdotalisation, which represent, respectively, the attempts to modify professional and private lives. Such a distinction not only sheds light on situations when both post-Tridentine goals were not fully aligned but also draws attention to the specificity of Catholic priests, who were expected to change their private lives more than other professional groups. The article offers a preliminary account of the sacerdotalisation in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth from 1569 to 1795. In an attempt to create an anthropological portrait, it is

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mostly based on egodocuments, with special attention given to the writings of Kazimierz Dziuliński, a parish priest in Słaboszów within the diocese of Kraków from 1676 to 1701. An argument is proposed that, by the final decades of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the private lives of priests had come to play a unifying rather than dividing role. Clergy were hierarchically divided and maintained close relationships with laymen according to their rank as well as shared with relative groups many everyday practices, especially feasting and trading. However, the belief in the power of ordination, seminary education, social influence and peer control fostered enough commonality for priests to feel and be perceived as members of a distinguished and relatively elevated group. Generally, at the end of the eighteenth century, priests kept celibacy, exhibited specific nonverbal communication, prayed the breviary, wore clerical garb, and usually read religious literature.

Keywords: clergy, professionalisation, private life, everyday life, Catholic Church, Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth.

Abstrakt

Sobór Trydencki oczekiwał od księży sumiennego wypełniania obowiązków zawodowych oraz bycia wzorem chrześcijańskiego życia. Choć oba cele były traktowane łącznie zarówno przez katolickich reformatörów, jak i przez historyków, w artykule zaproponowano ich analizę jako dwóch odrębnych procesów: profesjonalizacji oraz sacerdotalizacji, które odpowiadają próbom zmiany – odpowiednio – życia zawodowego i prywatnego. Takie rozróżnienie pozwala nie tylko uchwycić sytuację, w których oba cele nie były w pełni zgodne, ale także zwraca uwagę na specyfikę katolickich księży, od których oczekiwano głębszych zmian w życiu prywatnym niż od innych grup zawodowych. Artykuł przedstawia wstępną analizę zmian w życiu prywatnym w Rzeczypospolitej Obojga Narodów w latach 1569–1795. W próbie stworzenia antropologicznego portretu skorzystano przede wszystkim z egodokumentów, ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem pism Kazimierza Dziulińskiego, proboszcza w Słaboszowie w diecezji krakowskiej w latach 1676–1701. Wyszynęto tezę, że w ostatnich dekadach istnienia Rzeczypospolitej praktyki życia prywatnego księży sprzyjały tworzeniu wspólnej tożsamości. Duchowieństwo było hierarchicznie podzielone i utrzymywało bliskie relacje z ludźmi świeckimi zgodnie ze swoim statusem społecznym, dzieląc z nimi wiele codziennych praktyk, takich jak ucztowanie i handel. Jednak wiara w moc święceń, wykształcenie seminaryjne, wpływ społeczny oraz kontrola innych księży powodowały, że księża mogli czuć się i być postrzegani jako członkowie osobnej i wyróżnionej grupy. Pod koniec XVIII wieku księża zasadniczo zachowywali celibat, posługiwali się specyficzną komunikacją niewerbalną, odmawiali brewiarz, nosili strój duchowny i czytali przeważnie literaturę religijną.

Słowa klucze: duchowieństwo, profesjonalizacja, życie prywatne, życie codzienne, Kościół katolicki, Rzeczpospolita Obojga Narodów.

Introduction

The Council of Trent (1545–1563) decided that the reform of the clergy was crucial for strengthening Catholicism. Reformers envisaged a priest who would dutifully perform his professional obligations as well as shine as an example of Christian life. Although this new ideal of the “pastor bonus” was treated as coherent and holistic both by the Catholic reformers and historians of Early Modern Catholicism,² I propose to analyse it as two separate processes of clerical professionalisation and sacerdotalisation, which represent, respectively, attempts to modify professional and private lives. Such a distinction not only sheds light on situations when both post-Tridentine goals were not fully aligned but also allows for noticing similarities between the Catholic clergy and other occupational groups that were professionalised in early modernity. At the same time, it draws attention to the specificity of Catholic priests, who were also expected to significantly change their non-professional activities.

Professionalisation was the process of transforming the clergy into a group possessing confessionally specific knowledge and skills as well as fulfilling their occupational duties in accordance with the income they received. The success of professionalisation is relatively easy to assess because the criteria were simple and easy to verify, and it was regularly tested during canonical visitation. As a result, historians have already

2 Jean Delumeau, *Catholicism Between Luther and Voltaire: A New View of the Counter-Reformation* (London: Burns & Oates, 1977), 179–188; Rosemary O'Day, *The English Clergy: The Emergence and Consolidation of a Profession, 1558–1642* (Leicester: Atlantic Highlands, 1979); Ian Green, “Reformed Pastors’ and Bons Curés: the Changing Role of the Parish Clergy in Early Modern Europe,” *Studies in Church History* 26 (1989): 249–286; Gilles Deregnacourt, *De Fénelon à la Révolution : le clergé paroissial de l'Archevêché de Cambrai* (Lille: Presses universitaires de Lille, 1991); Marc Forster, *The Counter-Reformation in the Villages: Religion and Reform in the Bishopric of Speyer, 1560–1720* (London: Cornell University Press, 1992), 58–60; *Idem*, *Catholic Germany from the Reformation to the Enlightenment* (Basingstoke–New York: Macmillan Education UK, 2007), 117–128; Frans Ciappara, “Trent and the Clergy in Late Eighteenth-Century Malta,” *Church History* 78/1 (2009): 1–25; Michael Hayden, *The Catholicisms of Coutances: Varieties of Religion in Early Modern France, 1350–1789* (McGill-Queen's Press, 2013), 147–194.

concluded that the advent of clerical professionalisation was incremental and, until the end of the eighteenth century, not yet fully successful.³

On the other hand, sacerdotalisation could be defined as the process of shaping the private lives of priests, so that it would represent their separate and elevated status caused by special relations with God established during Holy Orders.⁴ It entailed changing everyday practices, by which priests communicated their social positioning such as, keeping celibacy, avoiding taverns, dressing clerically or praying the breviary. Whereas the Council of Trent initiated professionalisation, when it comes to sacerdotalisation, post-Tridentine reformers have been repeating and reinforcing the process which could be traced back as early as to the first centuries of Christianity.⁵

Sacerdotalization had more elusive criteria and was less methodically examined by the Church. Most synods focused only on direct transgressions against the moral norms of clerical behaviour such as breaches of celibacy.⁶ What is more, as Celeste McNamara discovered, the demands for maintaining a special standard of private life were less important

3 Angelo Turchini, "La nascita del sacerdozio come professione," in *Disciplina dell'Anima, Disciplina del Corpo e Disciplina della Società tra Medioevo ed Età Moderna*, eds. Paolo Prodi, Carla Penuti (Bologna: Società editrice il Mulino, 1994), 225–256; Ulrich Pfister, "Pastors and Priests in the Early Modern Grisons: Organized Profession or Side Activity," *Central European History* 33/1 (2000): 41–65; Luise Schorn-Schütte, "Priest, Preacher, Pastor: Research on Clerical Office in Early Modern Europe," *Central European History* 33/1 (2000): 1–39; Kathleen M. Comerford, "The Care of Souls Is a Very Grave Burden for [the Pastor]: Professionalization of Clergy in Early Modern Florence, Lucca, and Arezzo," *Dutch Review of Church History* 85: *The Formation of Clerical and Confessional Identities in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Wim Jense, Barbara Pitkin (2005): 349–368; Wietse De Boer, "Professionalization and Clerical Identity," *Dutch Review of Church History* 85: *The Formation of Clerical and Confessional Identities in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Wim Jense, Barbara Pitkin (2005): 369–377; Joseph Bergin, "Between estate and profession: the catholic parish clergy of early modern western Europe," in *Social Orders and Social Classes in Europe since 1500*, ed. M. L. Bush (Hoboken: Routledge, 2014), 66–85; Frans Ciappara, "The Professionalization of the Clergy: Parish Priests in Early Modern Malta," *Historical Reflections/Réflexions Historiques* 49/1 (2023): 17–35; Stanisław Witecki, "Clerical Professionalisation and Catholic Enlightenment in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 76/1 (2024): 78–102.

4 I decided to coin the term referring to the Latin word *sacerdos* which means priests, but also bears the meaning of sanctity, and refers to the specificity of the group exercising function of intermediaries between man and the God and therefore having both special powers and obligations. In Polish I tentatively propose new word "sacerdotalizacja."

5 Robert Wiśniowski, *Chrześcijaństwo pierwszych wieków*. T. 1: *Wierni, biskupi, eremici* (Warszawa: Radio Naukowe, 2024).

6 An example from outside the Commonwealth, may be the synod of Trnava (1658) in the Kingdom of Hungary, and modern day Slovakia: Dávid Jablonský, "Selected Examples of Problematic Adoption of Regulations of Hungarian Catholic Synods in the 16th

for laymen compared to professional diligence, so sacerdotal standards were less frequently the cause of conflicts.⁷ In consequence, it was less frequently and less conclusively described and explained by historians. Only direct transgressions against the moral norms of clerical behaviour are an exception to the above rule. Such sins as greed, alcohol abuse, violence and, above all, breaches of celibacy, were noted by bishops' visitors, criticised by other priests during deanery congregations and punished by diocesan courts and deans. All of that left traces in written documents, which were investigated by historians.⁸

Analysis of these practices is important, but offers only selective, judicial portraits. Merely knowing if priests broke the rules does not reveal if their private lives differed from laymen. Hence, understanding Catholic reform requires attention to changes in clerical private lives interpreted as meaningful practices establishing social distinction or sacerdotal identity. To achieve this, I follow cultural studies of everyday life outlined by Erving Goffman, Andrzej Siciński, Pierre Bourdieu, Juri Lotman, and Michel de Certeau.⁹

The article provides a preliminary interpretation of the private life practices of Roman Catholic priests from the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth during its existence from 1569 to 1795.¹⁰ In an attempt to

and 17th Centuries in Religious Practice," *Konstantínove Listy/Constantine's Letters* 10/1 (2017): 222–232.

- 7 Celeste McNamara, „Conceptualizing the Priest: Lay and Episcopal Expectations of Clerical Reform in Late Seventeenth-Century Padua,” *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 104/1 (2013): 297–320.
- 8 Stanisław Kazimierz Olczak, *Duchowieństwo parafialne diecezji poznańskiej w końcu XVI i w pierwszej połowie XVII w.* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 1990); Andrzej Kopiczko, *Duchowieństwo katolickie diecezji warmińskiej w latach 1525–1821*, cz. 1 (Olsztyn: 2000); Stanisław Litak, *Parafie w Rzeczypospolitej w XVI – XVIII wieku. Struktura, funkcje społeczno-religijne i edukacyjne* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, 2004); Ciappara, „Trent and the Clergy,” 1–25; Frans Ciappara, „The Roman Inquisition Revisited: The Maltese Tribunal in the Eighteenth Century,” *The Catholic Historical Review* 103/3 (2017): 437–464; *Prawie wielebni* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Petrus, 2011); Halina Dudała, *Clerus Decanatus Plesnensis. W świetle protokołów kongregacji dekanalnych pszczyńskich z lat 1691–1757. Edycja źródłowa* (Katowice: Wydawnictwo Inforteditions, 2015).
- 9 Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Anchor Books, 1959); Andrzej Siciński, „Styl życia – problemy pojęciowe i teoretyczne,” in *Styl życia: koncepcje i propozycje*, ed. Andrzej Siciński (Warszawa: PWN, 1976), 15–32; Juri Lotman, *Rosja i znaki. Kultura szlachecka w wieku XVIII i na początku XIX* (Gdańsk: słowo/obraz terytoria, 2010); Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (London: Taylor & Francis, 2010); Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, transl. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).
- 10 I purposefully omit the Greek Catholic clergy, as their private lives was fundamentally different due to lack of celibacy. Everyday life of this group has been recently

create an anthropological portrait, the study focused on egodocuments, with special attention given to the writings of Kazimierz Dziuliński, a parish priest in moderately affluent Słaboszów within the diocese of Kraków from 1676 to 1701. His remarkably detailed personal diary¹¹ and parish baptism records enabled a deep qualitative and quantitative analysis of his everyday life.¹² This approach is akin in scope and purpose to the methodologies employed in the three significant anthropological studies of priests' lives, authored by Alan McFarlane and Giovanni Levi and Krzysztof Zamorski.¹³

This article argues that, by the final decades of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the private lives of priests had come to play a unifying rather than dividing role. Clergy were hierarchically divided and maintained close relationships with laymen according to their rank as well as shared with relative groups many everyday practices, especially feasting and trading. However, the belief in the power of ordination, seminary education, social influence and peer control fostered enough commonality for priests to feel and be perceived as members of a distinguished and relatively elevated group. Generally, at the end of the eighteenth century, priests kept celibacy, exhibited specific nonverbal communication, prayed the breviary, celebrated Mass, wore clerical garb and read religious literature.

Social background and relations

In Poland and Lithuania, as in other places, the clergy formed a highly hierarchical group. Only noblemen were eligible to become canons and bishops, making the position of a parish priest the highest step in the religious career accessible to the sons of peasants and townspeople.

described, Witold Bobryk, *Duchowieństwo unickiej diecezji chełmskiej w XVIII wieku* (Lublin: Towarzystwo Instytutu Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej, 2005).

11 All information about Dziuliński in this article is referring to his diary: Kazimierz Jan Kanty Dziuliński, „Dziennik potocznych rzeczy i wydatków na różne domowe potrzeby,” Jagiellonian Library in Kraków (JL): Rkps, 2433, 1–73.

12 „Akta urodzonych 1664–1707 i małżeństw 1669–1695,” Archives of Diocese of Kielce (ADK): Słaboszów Parish Documents: sygn. 3.

13 Alan MacFarlane, *The Family Life of Ralph Josselin, a Seventeenth-Century Clergyman. An Essay in Historical Anthropology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970); Giovanni Levi, *Inheriting Power: The Story of an Exorcist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985); Krzysztof Zamorski, *Pleban i wieś. Historia życia proboszcza teneczyńskiego z początków XVIII wieku. Studium mikrohistoryczne* (Kraków: Universitas, 2025).

The social hierarchy was deepened in seminaries. Affluent students who could finance their education were treated differently by professors, enjoyed significantly better living conditions and meals, and could be certain of having a different career path compared to their financially disadvantaged colleagues.¹⁴

The benefice and patronage system played a crucial role in further restricting the career opportunities for priests of peasant origin.¹⁵ The wealthiest benefices, which allowed for the delegation of duties to assistants, were typically reserved for the nobility. Priests from towns usually began as assistant parish priests (vicars) but had a reasonable chance to advance to the position of parish priests in parishes with moderate and poor benefices. Peasants seldom received any benefices and remained in the positions of vicars, carrying out the tasks assigned by parish priests, who were often of noble origins.¹⁶

There is evidence to suggest that the social origin of priests, and consequently the positions they held, influenced their closest social relations. In general, it can be said, with some risk of oversimplification, that canons and employees of diocesan administration (often the same individuals) maintained close ties with noble courts and urban elites. For instance, Wilhelm Kaliński, a Lazarist and professor of moral theology at the University of Vilnius and cooperator of Bishop Ignacy Massalski of Vilnius, described in the diary his close relations with nobility residing in town, as well as educated burghers, including physicians. Similarly, Józef Kossakowski, a canon of Vilnius Cathedral Chapter and later the bishop of Livonia, recounted in his memoir that his social background enabled him to associate with individuals of high rank and effectively leverage these connections to advance his career.¹⁷

14 Hugo Kołłątaj, „Pamiętnik o stanie Kościoła polskiego katolickiego i o wszystkich innych wyznaniach w Polsce,” in *Stan oświecenia w Polsce w ostatnich latach panowania Augusta III (1750–1764)* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 2003), 207–208; Józef Kossakowski, *Pamiętniki Józefa Kossakowskiego biskupa inflanckiego. 1738–1788*, ed. Adam Darowski (Warszawa: Księgarnia Gebethnera i Wolffa, 1891), 36–37; Jan Kossakowski, „Pamiętnik ks. Jana Nepomucena Kossakowskiego, biskupa wileńskiego,” *Biblioteka Warszawska* 2 (1895): 228–229.

15 Jan Kracik, „Potrydencki system rekrutacji duchowieństwa w diecezji krakowskiej XVI–XVIII wieku,” *Analecta Cracoviensia* 10 (1978): 471–493.

16 Olczak, *Duchowieństwo*, 97–106; Kopiczko, *Duchowieństwo*, 38–44; Litak, *Parafie w Rzeczypospolitej*, 181–86; Jan Szczepaniak, *Duchowieństwo diecezji krakowskiej w XVIII wieku. Studium prozopograficzne* (Kraków: Antykwa, 2010), 165–168; Kracik, *Prawie wielebni*, 47–56; Dudała, *Clerus*, 90–91.

17 Wilhelm Kaliński, *Dziennik 1787–1788*, T. 4. *Archiwum Dziejów Oświaty*, ed. Michał Kurdybacha (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1968); Kossakowski, *Pamiętniki Józefa Kossakowskiego*.

Parish priests typically maintained relations with either the local nobility or the municipal middle class, depending on their place of residence. Ignacy Krasicki, in his novel *Pan Podstoli* [Mr Deputy Pantler], and Józef Kossakowski, in his novel *Ksiądz Pleban* [The Parish Priest], as well as in his memoir, depicted the priests and the local gentry visiting each other during dinners and engaging in leisure activities such as political and cultural discussions and playing cards. In the memoir, an anonymous priest Jan even described having a relationship with his noble patron, which could be called an uneven friendship.¹⁸

The diary of Dziuliński offers an especially detailed account of the social relations of parish priests. Although he did not explicitly disclose his family's social status, it is highly probable that his parents were burghers from one of the small towns in Małopolska. Based on the number and quality of his contacts, his closest friend was Rozalia Omańska, a member of the burgher elite in Kraków. It is possible that they became friends while he was studying at the University of Kraków.¹⁹ Despite the significant distance of around fifty-three kilometres between Ślaboszów parish and Kraków, Dziuliński and Omańska visited each other regularly and sometimes stayed for extended periods. They engaged in trade, exchanged gifts, and, above all, provided assistance to one another during times of trouble. For instance, Omańska took care of Dziuliński when he was sick, and Dziuliński helped arrange a new marriage for Omańska's daughter after her first son-in-law passed away. Their bond was so strong that Omańska's sons even spent their vacations at the parsonage with Dziuliński.

Despite his burgher origins Dziuliński found his place within the community of local gentry. He was regularly chosen to be a godfather at their children's baptisms and officiated at their weddings. One notable instance was when Krzysztof Wielopolski, a nobleman who had recently moved to a nearby village, invited Dziuliński and three other priests for an official dinner. Dziuliński also formed special clientelistic relations with the families of his patron, Stanisław Pieglowski and his brother Jan. They invited him annually for courteous dinners during carnival, and

18 Ignacy Krasicki, *Pan Podstoli*, ed. Krystyna Stasiewicz (Olsztyn: Wyższa Szkoła Pedagogiczna, 1994); Kossakowski, *Pamiętniki Józefa Kossakowskiego*, 45; „Wspomnienia księdza Jana. Urywek ze starego pamiętnika,” *Niwa* 34/335, ed. Bronisław Komierowski (1888): 801–816; *Idem*, „Wspomnienia księdza Jana. Urywek ze starego pamiętnika,” *Niwa* 34/336 (1888): 883–900.

19 Kazimierz Jan Dziuliński (Id: 2003405), in *Corpus Academicum Cracoviense (CAC)*, http://cac.historia.uj.edu.pl/osoba/2003405_Kazimierz_Jan_Dziuli%C5%84ski (access: 2.11.2021).

they also dined with the priest at his parsonage. Additionally, Dziuliński hunted with Jan at least once, and he corresponded privately with Józef, the son of Jan.

The documents written by assistant priests have not survived, and the available data primarily comes from court registers and second-hand accounts. Nevertheless, it seems that unlike parish priests, assistant priests maintained relationships with peasant parishioners who shared similar economic statuses. These relationships were significant as the payment for sacramental services directly impacted the vicars' income. A case illustrating such relations can be found in the protocols of the court of the diocese of Chełm, where a conflict between two assistant priests is described when they participated in a feast at a local peasant's house.²⁰

Priests typically maintained relations with laypeople of similar social rank, but they also forged a sense of community with other priests, regardless of their social position. Mandatory participation in deanery congregations and spiritual retreats served as the primary, though not exclusive, venues for clerical integration. Józef Kossakowski described that after deciding to become a priest, he formed alliances within the clerical order. Jan Kossakowski, who later became the bishop of Vilnius (unrelated to Józef), faced challenges in finding an ecclesiastical position suitable for his social standing, and there was a delay in receiving Holy Orders for several years. Nevertheless, during this time, he already felt a part of the clergy, attempted to give sermons, and primarily associated with other priests, especially those in high offices.²¹

Dziuliński maintained contacts with clergymen from the local area and from Kraków, especially with those who, like him, had graduated from the University of Kraków. What is more, his diary provides valuable insight into the relationships between parish priests and their assistants. On one hand, he employed vicars for specific periods (2–6 years), and entrusted them with the majority of pastoral duties. On the other hand, Dziuliński appointed two of his first cousins, Wojciech Rudzki and Jan Moskalski, to the position of vicars. While relying on their work, he also actively supported their career development and cared about their personal relations. For instance, he travelled to Kraków to participate in the first service of Moskalski and another cousin, Aleksy, whom he also visited to listen to the defence of a master's thesis. Dziuliński also

20 Jan Kracik, *Prawie wielebni*, 148–189; Archives of Archdiocese of Lublin (AAL): Acta Curiae Episcopalis Chelmensis (ACEpC): sygn. rep 60 A 137.

21 Kossakowski, *Pamiętniki Józefa Kossakowskiego*; Kossakowski, „Pamiętnik ks. Jana Nepomucena Kossakowskiego.”

attended the first service of vicar Kazimierz Kręgielski from a nearby parish in Mały Książ, who was related to the parish priest Jan Maruchowicz.

In the novel *Ksiądz Pleban*, Józef Kossakowski illustrated a gulf between parish and assistant priests, by making one priest satirically described in his novel, call his vicar a “spiritual servant.”²² However, based on the diary of Dziuliński, the cultural and social gap between parish and assistant priests may not have been as extreme as the novelist satirically described

Sexuality

Sexuality played a crucial role in distinguishing Catholic priests from other social groups, including clergy of other Christian denominations. While Protestant churches abandoned celibacy, and the Orthodox and Greek-Catholic churches never fully adopted it, the Council of Trent reinforced the longstanding requirement of celibacy. In the Commonwealth, the provincial synod of Piotrków in 1577, reaffirmed this norm, and diocesan synods in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries consistently prohibited the practice of keeping concubines.²³ Celibacy has already been the subject of much research, so here only the general picture will be presented without providing detailed evidence.

At the dawn of the post-Tridentine reforms in the Commonwealth, concubinage, although not in line with the priestly ideal, was socially accepted and did not create significant scandal.²⁴ However, it is important to stress that it was primarily practiced by parish priests and rarely by vicars. Parish priests, with stable income and proper housing, were more able to support families, while vicars relied on modest salaries and uncertain sacramental fees (*iura stolae*). Thus, having concubines was often a matter of possibility rather than conviction. This situation deepened the division between beneficed and non-beneficed clergy at the beginning of the post-Tridentine reform, making the private lives of parish priests more similar to those of their parishioners.

22 AAL, ACEpC: sygn. rep 60 A 137. k. 60–62; Kossakowski, *Ksiądz pleban*, 26.

23 Kopiczko, *Duchowieństwo*, 132–134; Olczak, *Duchowieństwo*, 169–170; Litak, *Parafie w Rzeczypospolitej*, 207–210.

24 The case of Jerzy Anabat, a parish priest of Długobórz in the diocese of Warmia, serves as a compelling illustration, Kopiczko, *Duchowieństwo*, 137–138, 142. Statistical evidence can be found in, Kracik, *Prawie wielebni*, 169–172; Olczak, *Duchowieństwo*, 170–174; Litak, *Parafie w Rzeczypospolitej*, 208–210.

The Church in the Commonwealth took active measures to impose celibacy, going beyond merely reminding priests of the expected ideal. For example, in the diocese of Kraków in 1601, severe penalties were imposed on priests, including suspension, orders to expel concubines and children, compulsory re-education during spiritual retreats, and imprisonment. Although these penalties may not have resulted in immediate changes in the behaviour of convicted priests, they effectively discouraged their successors from following the same path in life.

Decades of pressure exercised by supervisors during visitations and peers during the deanery congregations, as well as the development of seminary education clearly made a difference. Before the end of the eighteenth century, celibacy in the Commonwealth became a fully accepted and practiced social norm.²⁵ This does not imply that there were no instances of sexual misconduct among priests, but rather that revealed violations were treated as serious scandals.²⁶ The success of this reform not only distinguished priests from anybody else but also eliminated one of the most important differences in lifestyles of parish and assistant priests, existing before the post-Tridentine reform.

Feasting

Although the church desired priests to exemplify temperance, the social practice of alcohol consumption undoubtedly tested the boundaries of post-Tridentine sacerdotalisation, as priests' feasting was no different from that of other social groups. In the Commonwealth, as early as 1326, the provincial synod of Archbishop Janisław in Uniejów had already prohibited drunkenness and gluttony among the clergy, especially during feasts, and directly forbade frequenting taverns and inviting others to indulge in drinking. In 1523, the synod of Archbishop Jan Łaski even banned the clergy from making toasts. After the Council of Trent, the prohibition of excessive drinking and visiting taverns was reiterated

25 Very similar tendency is observable in Hungary: Mihalik Béla, „Mérfoldkövek az egri egyházmegye megújulásában. Az 1635. évi jászói és az 1734. évi egri zsinatok,” in *Katolikus zsinatok és nagygyűlések Magyarországon a 16–20. sz. században*, eds. Balogh Margit, Varga Szabolcs and Vértési László (Budapest–Pécs: Pécsi Püspöki Hittudományi Főiskola, Pécsi Egyháztörténeti Intézet és a Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpontja, 2014), 155–156; Jablonský, „Selected Examples,” 227.

26 Jan Kracik, „Duszpasterstwo parafialne w dekanacie Nowa Góra w pierwszej połowie XVIII wieku,” in *Studia Kościelno-historyczne*, T. II (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Towarzystwa Naukowego Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, 1977), 216–217; Kopiczko, *Duchowieństwo*, 144; Dudała, *Clerus*, 183–184.

by the provincial synod in 1577, as well as subsequent diocesan synods and pastoral letters.²⁷

Only the prohibition of attending taverns was a norm that was easily evident and straightforward to check, while the call for moderation in alcohol consumption posed questions about what constituted excessiveness. As a result of this ambiguity, along with pressure from the general culture, the effectiveness of the reforms concerning sobriety was much weaker than the reforms related to sexual behaviour. Until the end of the eighteenth century, feasting was not only tolerated but, in numerous cases, expected from priests.

Consumption of alcohol was an integral part of even those events in the lives of priests that were designed to impose special religious standards of behaviour. For example, annual deanery congregations were always accompanied by banquets. Furthermore, deans who did not organize receptions lavish enough were seen as stingy and subjected to strict judgment by their colleagues. The deans of Pszczyna attempted to limit drinking during congregations but without success.²⁸

Feasting was indeed a regular element of pastoral visits. In 1786, Bishops Józef Olechowski, the suffragan bishop of Kraków, and Michał Poniatowski, the archbishop of Gniezno and administrator of the diocese of Kraków, attempted to prohibit this practice, arguing that it caused scandal among the laity. However, how it could be considered scandalous when, as noted by Dziuliński, the priests themselves were invited to feasts by the parishioners. In 1722, when the dean of Pszczyna prohibited drinking during pastoral visits, one of the parish priests replied that nobody could forbid such customary practices.²⁹

Alcohol consumption began to be treated as a social problem only when it led to other unacceptable behaviours. In the documents of episcopal courts, there are descriptions of priests who, under the influence of alcohol, committed blasphemy, theft, assaults, and even murder. However, to be clear, such cases were an exception. Information gathered by visitors, who noted not socially unacceptable misconduct, but alcohol

27 Olczak, *Duchowieństwo*, 167–168.

28 Jan Kracik, „Najstarsze akta kongregacji dekanalnych w archiwum Kurii Metropolitalnej w Krakowie,” *Archiwa, Biblioteki i Muzea Kościelne* 29 (1974): 261–272; Jędrzej Kitowicz, *Opis obyczajów za panowania Augusta III*, ed. Marek Adamiec, <https://literat.ug.edu.pl/kitowicz/> (access: 30.06.2025); Dudała, *Clerus*, 188.

29 Józef Olechowski, „Zarządzenie odnośnie zachowania duchowieństwa w czasie kolędy,” in Archives of Archdiocese of Kraków (AAK): *Książąt biskupów krakowskich pisma*, k. 681; Michał Poniatowski, *Zalecenie spisania dusz po parafiach i przypomnienie przy tej okoliczności niektórych dawnych przepisów* (Warszawa: 1786); Dudała, *Clerus*, 189.

abuse according to the stricter standards of post-Tridentine reformers, illustrates the real, albeit less severe, extent of the problem.

For instance, during a visitation of the Nowa Góra deanery in 1728, the visiting suffragan, Kunicki, reprimanded four out of twenty-eight priests, accounting for 14 percent of them. In 1748, alcohol abuse was observed among six out of forty-eight priests (thirty-six residing), constituting 16.7 percent. Between 1751 and 1755, usually only one out of the thirty-four priests present in the parishes was reprimanded each year.³⁰

Doing business

The processes of professionalisation and sacerdotalisation often overlapped, but when it came to the requirements regarding earning money, they conflicted with each other. The post-Tridentine Church required priests to refrain from engaging in direct economic activities, particularly physical labour, and admonished them to be modest and generous, while condemning legal wrangling and excessive fees for sacraments. On the other hand, the Church expected benefice holders to professionally take care of church property. In the Commonwealth, if priests were criticized by visitors, it was usually because they neglected parish buildings or did not collect tithes diligently enough. If they were praised, it was often due to church renovations, redecoration, successful court disputes over property, or increased income through investments in agriculture.³¹

Parish priests with significant benefices theoretically could have leased them or hired administrators to free their time and focus on ministry. However, the visitation of the diocese of Płock conducted between 1774 and 1781 shows that significant number of priests did exactly the opposite. They used their surplus earnings to employ assistant priests, directing their own attention towards the proper management of the parish benefice. Interestingly, for numerous priests, engaging in agriculture was not seen as a burdensome obligation but rather as a desirable way of life

30 Kracik, *Prawie wielebni*, 166–67; Olczak, *Duchowieństwo*, 166–168; Kracik, „Duszpasterstwo,” 216.

31 Dariusz Główna, „Akta wizytacji kościelnych z wieków XVI–XVIII jako źródło do historii kultury materialnej: gospodarstwo wiejskie w dobrach parafialnych w archidiecezji warszawskiej,” in *Szkice z dziejów materialnego bytowania społeczeństwa polskiego*, ed. M. Dembińska (Warszawa–Kraków–Gdańsk–Łódź–Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1989), 233–254; Tomasz Moskal, „Duchowieństwo dekanatu koprzywnickiego w świetle wizytacji z 1782 r.,” *Archiwa, Biblioteki i Muzea Kościelne* 89 (2008): 321–231.

that provided a great deal of satisfaction. Some known parish chronicles from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries exclusively focused on the collection of tithes, investments in parish folwarks (farms), and the renovations of churches and other buildings.³²

The life of Dziuliński serves as a good illustration of these tendencies. Despite his burgher origin, higher education, and lack of necessity, he actively engaged in various economic activities such as trading oxen, grain, wool, and especially horses. Additionally, Dziuliński invested surplus income in the parish economy by constructing a new bread oven or initiating the production of vodka. He also took it upon himself to renovate the bell tower. He also diligently collected the appropriate tithes.

Clearly, for the majority of parish priests whose benefices did not allow them to employ vicars or land managers, both ministerial and managerial activities were a necessity. This lifestyle, which combined ministry with agricultural responsibilities, was also praised as an ideal by Józef Kossakowski and Ignacy Krasicki. However, while they envisioned harmonious cooperation between priests and parishioners, they also depicted a bitter reality. Laymen often fought with priests over the right to land, refused to pay tithes, and avoided helping with church renovations. In such situations, priests not only had an interest but also an obligation to fight for the church's rights, which inevitably led to conflicts and court trials.³³

In the benefice system based on agriculture, assistant priests led lives least resembling those of landowners. However, their usually modest salaries turned their attention to customary *iura stolae* fees for administering sacraments like baptisms, weddings, and funerals. When impoverished vicars encountered particularly poor parishioners trying to organize these crucial rites of passage, scandalous conflicts erupted. By the end of the eighteenth century, these conflicts became so problematic that bishops established diocesan fee schedules for sacraments. While these

32 Nowa Góra Parish Archives: Monumenta Ecclesiae Novimontis seu Regestra; Niegowić Parish Archives: Liber iurium ecclesiae Niegowicensis; Górką Kościelnicką Parish Archives: Kronika parafii w Górcie Kościelnickiej; Waldemar Kowalski, „ks. Mateusz Sowicki pleban - gospodarz w Niekrasowie drugiej połowy XVIII w.,” *Nasza Przyszłość* 93 (2000): 279–399; Krzysztof Benyskiewicz, „Małachiasz Kramski komendant kościoła w Nowym Kramsku (przel. XVII i XVIII w.),” *Studia Zachodnie* 20 (2018).

33 Kossakowski, *Ksiądz pleban*; Krasicki, *Pan Podstoli*; Wacław Urban, „Wieś a plebania, czyli notatnik plebana z Gdowa z lat 1597–1604,” *Przegląd Historyczny* 83/1 (1992): 93–104; Waldemar Kowalski, „Środowiska parafialne dekanatu jędrzejowskiego doby recepcji ustaw trydenckich,” in *Kościół katolicki w Małopolsce w średniowieczu i we wczesnym okresie nowożytnym*, eds. Waldemar Kowalski, Jadwiga Muszyńska (Kielce, Gdańsk: KTN, Officina Ferberiana, 2001), 237–257.

schedules were designed to prevent scandals, they had further commercialized the relationship between parishioners and priests, undermining the effectiveness of sacerdotalisation.³⁴

Although Frans Ciappara was mistaken in suggesting that priests' preoccupation with earning money contradicted the post-Tridentine requirements of professionalisation, he would be correct in stating that it went against the sacerdotal ideal. The nature of the benefice system inevitably led to conflicts with parishioners over money, which undermined their status as sanctified intermediaries between people and God.³⁵

Piety

The distinction between professionalisation and sacerdotalisation is crucial when discussing the piety of clergy. While priests may have been responsible for organizing worship and had a monopoly on certain religious practices, this alone does not necessarily indicate their level of religiosity. The mere performance of liturgy does not provide a complete picture of their faith.

If we were to judge clerical piety solely based on their engagement in ministerial duties, it might lead to the conclusion that many parish priests with sufficient benefices to employ vicars had a lukewarm faith. However, it is important to consider that delegating duties to assistants was a socially and legally accepted norm for parish priests. Those who did so might have genuinely believed that they were fulfilling their professional duties of parish management and supervision.

An example of this attitude is seen in the case of Dziuliński, who delegated the majority of ministerial duties to his vicars. He personally administered sacraments only to distinguished parishioners or in the absence of vicars, and did not celebrate Mass very often. However, it is evident that he cared deeply about the quality of religious service in his parish. He purchased liturgical garments and equipment and invited renowned preachers to celebrate the feast day of the patron saint, St. Nicholas.³⁶

34 Henryk Karbownik, *Ofiary iura stolae na ziemiach polskich w latach 1285–1918: Studium historycznoprawne* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, 1995).

35 Ciappara, „The Professionalization of the Clergy,” 22–23.

36 ADK, SPD, sygn. 3.

In his private life, Dziuliński held a special devotion to the cult of saints. He showed reverence to his personal patrons, St. John and St. Casimir, by acquiring their images from an artist in Krakow. However, his strongest devotion was directed towards Wincenty Kadłubek. Dziuliński prayed to him not only during his frequent and severe illnesses but even when his horse fell sick. After experiencing recoveries, he had been undertaking thankful pilgrimages to the sanctuary in Jędrzejów, where the relics of Kadłubek were kept. It is noteworthy that Wincenty Kadłubek was not officially beatified until 1764, however, at the time of Dziuliński, his cult was nevertheless very popular among all social classes.³⁷

Dziuliński was not the only priest who participated in the not-yet-officially approved cult, and priests' belief in the healing power of saints is just one example of how they shared lived religion with the Catholic laity. Until the second half of the eighteenth century, priests, along with other groups, believed in the ubiquity of harmful spells, despite theologians proposing that witchcraft was possible only as a consequence of idolatry and was extremely rare. Moreover, both parish and religious clergy participated in, and even organized, non-liturgical rituals such as nativity and passion play. In the Commonwealth, the banning of such practices was limited to only a few dioceses and occurred at the end of the eighteenth century. Even intellectualist Kaliński described his participation in the traditional visiting of the Tomb of Christ on Good Friday and Holy Saturday.³⁸

If professional diligence says nothing about piety, and lived religion was generally shared with laity, the practice of praying canonical hours was the one that distinguished clergy and therefore contributed to their sacerdotalization. In 1568, Pope Pius V published the Roman Breviary, making it obligatory for all secular priests to pray it daily. This decree was soon embraced by local churches, including those of Poland and

37 Maciej Zdanek, „Kult Wincentego Kadłubka w świetle procesu kanonicznego ‘super cultu immemorabili seu casu excepto’ z lat 1687–1691,” *Cistercium Mater Nostra* 2/2 (2008): 273–300.

38 Tomasz Wiślicz, „Miraculous Sites’ in the Early Modern Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth,” in *Religion und Magie in Ostmitteleuropa. Spielräume theologischer Normierungsprozesse in Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit*, ed. Thomas Wünsch (Berlin: LIT, 2006), 287–299; Jacek Wijaczka, *Wijaczka, Jacek. Kościół wobec czarów w Rzeczypospolitej w XVI–XVIII wieku (na tle europejskim)* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Neriton, 2016); Kaliński, *Dziennik 1787–1788*, 22.

Lithuania, which reiterated the call for priests to pray the breviary, under the threat of ecclesiastical punishment.³⁹

It is reasonable to assume that praying canonical hours was a common social practice or, at the very least, a fully accepted norm, violations of which were to be concealed. By the end of the eighteenth century, the breviary had become the most common book in parish libraries in dioceses such as Płock, Kraków, Chełm, and Vilnius. While some priests may have encountered copies left by their predecessors, evidence from last wills indicates that buying a breviary was also a common practice. In the diocese of Płock alone, nineteen priests bequeathed twenty-seven copies of the breviary by the end of the eighteenth century.⁴⁰

The presence of the Roman Breviary, along with other religious texts, in the parsonage of Regulice in the diocese of Kraków, as well as the absence of other books that were clearly not in use, can be considered indirect evidence of the usage of the breviary by the parish priest. Additionally, in the diocese of Poznań at the beginning of the sixteenth century, visitors only found one parish priest who did not possess a copy of the breviary.⁴¹

Cultural consumption

Cultural consumption of the clergy in the Commonwealth resulted in three faceted socio-cultural distinctions. Firstly, it was distinguishing all priests from laymen, secondly it was marking the hierarchical divisions within the clerical order and finally it was communicating their beliefs, especially their attitudes to the new fashions and political ideas. Although clerical income did not determine the cultural consumption, it was certainly affecting it by limiting available choices, and presenting priests with opportunities resembling those of different groups of laity.

Among other consumption practices dressing was clearly dependent on earnings, and in the post-Tridentine Church of the Commonwealth,

39 Ignacy Subera, *Synody prowincjonalne arcybiskupów gnieźnieńskich. Wybór tekstów ze zbioru Jana Wężyka z roku 1761* (Warszawa: Akademia Teologii Katolickiej, 1981), 113.

40 Witecki S. The base of the parochial book collections of the Catholic church in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth during the Stanislaus era: <https://ksiegozbioryparafialne.omnino.com.pl/> (access: 15.07.2023) Dariusz Główka, „Księgozbiory duchowieństwa płockiego w XVIII wieku,” *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 102/2 (1995): 24–25.

41 Jan Kracik, „Biblioteka parafialna a prywatne księgozbiory duchowieństwa. Dekanat Nowa Góra w XVII – XVIII wieku,” *Archiwa, Biblioteki, i Muzea Kościelne* 32 (1976): 268; Olczak, *Duchowieństwo*, 165.

priests were not only accepted but even expected to emphasize their ecclesiastical rank with their clothing. Despite their disposable income, priests also used fashion choices to accentuate personal taste and beliefs. However, on the other hand, the clergy generally adhered to the post-Tridentine regulations of clerical garb, and clothes served as the most obvious signs of clerical identity, contributing significantly to sacerdotalisation.

Unlike some French or Italian reformers who mandated priests to wear cassocks, synods and bishops in the Commonwealth did not specifically encourage clergy to adopt any particular type of clothes. Polish and Lithuanian reformers, however, did order priests to dress modestly, neatly, and tidily in black attire. They also forbade the clergy from wearing short dresses, flowery patterns, and colours such as red, violet, and blue. In certain dioceses, luxury fabrics like silk and clothes such as mantles and rochets were reserved for higher-ranking priests, such as prelates and cathedral canons.⁴²

In the novel *Ksiądz pleban*, Józef Kossakowski satirically described a few types of priests, two of whom did not adhere to the recommended clerical dressing guidelines. The first priest deliberately concealed his ecclesiastical status under the traditional national Polish costume, including clothes like kontusz and żupan. Kossakowski associated such fashion choices with republican ideology, suggesting that this satirized priest signaled his disagreement with the centralized and hierarchical structure of the Church, desiring the clergy to have the same rights as noblemen in the Commonwealth.

The second satirized priest who did not wear clerical garb was a young dean aspiring for the position of a cathedral canon and hoping for a career at the bishop's court. He opted for a modern Western costume, including a vest, frock coat, and wig. Kossakowski associated such clothes not only with careerism but also with a general interest in new economic and political ideas, as well as being up to date with the latest fashions.⁴³ These observations by Kossakowski were in line with the general patterns of Polish literature, which extensively explored the significance conveyed by the opposition of *kontusz* and frock coat.⁴⁴

42 For example it was required by Charles Borromeo the archbishop of Milan and the synod of Bourges in 1608, Dariusz Główna, *Majątek osobisty duchowieństwa katolickiego w Koronie w XVII i XVIII wieku* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Instytutu Archeologii i Etnologii PAN, 2004), 57–58.

43 Kossakowski, *Ksiądz pleban*, 18–29, 49–57; Główna, *Majątek*, 12, 76–77.

44 Agata Roćko, *Kontusz i frak. O symbolice stroju w XVIII-wiecznej literaturze polskiej* (Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2015).

Last wills prove that there were priests who dressed in Polish traditional costume, but they were an insignificant minority. Out of 342 documents analysed by Dariusz Głowka, the *żupan* was mentioned only three times, and the *kontusz* twice. Furthermore, Dziuliński's diary described a few occasions of buying such costumes for his servants, raising the possibility that the traditional secular Polish dresses mentioned in clerical wills might not have been worn by priests. Westernisation of clerical garb was noticed and banned by Feliks Turski, the bishop of Kraków,⁴⁵ however, the real scale of the problem was not significant. Frock coats appeared only in the second half of the eighteenth century, and only one-tenth of priests had chosen them. Wigs were present in just two wills.⁴⁶ Although it seems that neither priests wearing westernized nor traditional secular clothes were irreligious, their fashion choices were communicating their unorthodox views about the church from within the church, and if more popular, would certainly undermine the sacerdotalisation.

According to last wills and the recollections of Kitowicz, the majority of priests were dressing in black and in a way that clearly communicated their clerical position. Additionally, priests were generally wearing cassocks, even though there was no precise requirement to do so. The definition of moderation in dresses was evidently ambiguous, leading to debates and conflicts. Priests attempted to present and elevate their status with the quality of fabric, craftsmanship of canes, and the presence of jewelry. They played a subtle game, not explicitly breaking the ideal of hierarchical moderation. The safest way to legally communicate their social position was to wear clothes or accessories allowed only for certain offices. Kitowicz described that from the reign of August III, canons were receiving orders in the shape of a star with the national coat of arms on one side and the image of the patron of the cathedral church on the other. This decoration was so desirable that priests sought even purely nominal affiliation with the chapter in order to gain the right to wear them.⁴⁷

Other socially distinctive, cultural practice was reading. Most of the parish priests and vicars in the Commonwealth primarily read books that were useful in performing their professional duties, which set them apart from the laity and contributed to sacerdotalisation. However, similar to clothing, there were social and ideological differences within the broader context of professional priestly libraries.

45 Feliks Turski, *Edictum de veste talari ab universo Clero Seculari Diaecesis Cracoviensis semper in publico ferenda* (Kraków, 1791).

46 Głowka, *Majątek*, 12, 76–77, 88, 99.

47 *Ibidem*, 55–110; Kitowicz, *Opis obyczajów*.

During synods and in pastoral letters, Polish and Lithuanian reformers recommended priests to acquire books necessary for their ministerial duties, such as the Bible, catechisms, sermon collections, hagiographic books, and moral theology handbooks. Liturgical books, on the other hand, were meant to be bought for the parishes and not for personal reading by the priests.

From the sixteenth century onward, the presence of liturgical books in the possession of priests was not a significant issue, and they generally had volumes that were useful for teaching faith and hearing confessions. This professional characteristic of parish libraries is not surprising. However, the last wills demonstrate that private libraries were not much different in terms of their content, consisting mostly of volumes practical for performing ministerial duties.⁴⁸

In the novel *Ksiądz pleban*, Kossakowski associated certain books with aspirations or affiliation with the court elite or local gentry society. The ambitious dean mentioned in the novel, possessed works by contemporary authors like Voltaire, Franciszek Bohomolec, and Jean Baptiste Massillon. Interestingly, he did not actually read these books but kept them as visible evidence of erudition, using them to enhance his image.

Books on history, philosophy, and natural sciences were linked by Kossakowski to a former member of a scholarly religious order, most likely a Jesuit. This individual read these books for personal satisfaction, aiming to combat ignorance and superstition. Additionally, reading such works helped to maintain a good reputation and build friendships with neighbouring nobles, as priests generally shared their education in the Jesuit and Piarist colleges with these elite individuals.⁴⁹

Both types of book culture certainly existed among the parish clergy, yet they attracted the minority of clergy. Among the twenty priests whose wills were examined by Główna, only seven had any books on secular

48 Hieronim Wyczawski, „Biblioteki parafialne w diecezji krakowskiej u schyłku XVI wieku,” *Polonia Sacra* 6–7 (1953–154): 114–142; Kracik, „Biblioteka”; Główna, „Księgozbiory”; Joanna Szady, *Księgozbiory parafialne w prepozyturze wiślickiej w drugiej połowie XVIII wieku* (Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego Jana Pawła II, Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski Jana Pawła II, 2008); Tomasz Moskal, *Biblioteki parafialne w archidiakonacie sandomierskim w XVIII w.* (Sandomierz: Wydawnictwo Diecezjalne, 2005); Stanisław Witecki, „Oświecony katolicyzm trydencki. Księgozbiory duchowieństwa parafialnego diecezji płockiej w okresie pontyfikatu bp Michała Jerzego Poniatowskiego,” *Wiek Oświecenia* 33 (2017): 149–186; Stanisław Witecki, *Przekaz kulturowy w parafiach katolickich Rzeczypospolitej Obojga Narodów czasów stanisławowskich* (Kraków: Towarzystwo Naukowe Societas Vistulana, 2018), 167–196, 217–230, 245–257, 272–276.

49 Kossakowski, *Ksiądz pleban*, 10–29.

topics, accounting for a mere 7.6 percent of all copies. Moreover, among them, primarily rhetoric textbooks and dictionaries were found, with historical books being less frequent, and only one book each on geography and medicine. These compositions were significantly different from the book collections of the nobility, which were rich in history, socio-political writings, belle-lettres, along with pious books.⁵⁰

Customs concerning dwelling and eating where among the factors that undermined the process of sacerdotalisation. Not only was there nothing like the special priestly house architecture, furniture, or cuisine, but all of these things also contributed to the distinctions within the clerical estate. The consequences of the dynamic changes of customs in the eighteenth century were picturesquely described by Kitowicz. His rich body of detailed observations can be boiled down to a few more general changes, as described by historians of private life.⁵¹

In the latter half of the eighteenth century, houses, furniture, and food choices remained crucial for communicating social status. However, the focus shifted from merely displaying the quantity, size, and cost of goods to making an impression through refined taste and staying up to date with ever-changing fashion. Wealthy and fashionable individuals distinguished themselves by replacing old tapestries with delicate wallpapers and trading gold and silver chalices for porcelain cups. Additionally, they supplemented traditional alcoholic beverages like spirits, wine, and beer with caffeinated drinks such as coffee, tea, and chocolate.

Observations made by Kitowicz concerned mainly the nobility, but the analysis of goods described in the last wills and posthumous inventories conducted by Główna confirms that these changes also occurred among more affluent parish priests. Józef Kossakowski, in the novel *Ksiądz Pleban*, noticed that such consumption patterns depended not only on the affluence of the parish priests but also on their ambitions to

50 Helena Bogdanow, „Literatura społeczno-polityczna jako wyraz zainteresowań szlachty krakowskiej w XVIII wieku,” *Studia o książce* 3 (1973): 345–374; Helena Bogdanow, „Literatura piękna jako wyraz zainteresowań szlachty krakowskiej w XVIII wieku,” *Studia o książce* 5 (1975): 129–159; Helena Bogdanow, „Piśmiennictwo religijne w księgozbiorach szlachty krakowskiej w XVIII wieku jako wyraz jej zainteresowań czytelniczych,” in *Problemy kultury literackiej polskiego Oświecenia*, ed. Teresa Kostkiewiczowa (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1978), 83–118; Helena Bogdanow, „Piśmiennictwo historyczne w księgozbiorach szlachty krakowskiej w XVIII wieku jako wyraz jej zainteresowań czytelniczych,” *Roczniki Biblioteczne* 27 (1984): 117–58; Główna, „Księgozbiory.”

51 Kitowicz, *Opis obyczajów*; Phillippe Ariès, Georges Duby, *A History of Private Life, Volume III, Passions of the Renaissance*, ed. Roger Chartier, transl. Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1989); Witold Rybczyński, *Dom. Krótka historia idei* (Gdańsk–Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Marabut, Oficyna Wydawnicza Volumen, 1996).

serve in worldly bishop courts and stay up to date with the latest fashion. It was the dean and wannabe canon who was depicted as treating guests with tea, coffee, and chocolate. From the physiocratic point of view, Kossakowski criticized this consumption of imported goods and praised the idealized priest for producing food or buying locally from markets.⁵²

An unequivocally negative assessment of the consumption of imported goods was given by priest Jan. In his memoir written after 1794, he described a visit by Canon Konstanty Kuszel, who was dissatisfied with the provincial cuisine, drinks, and accommodation. Priest Jan condemned his customs as vain, excessively extravagant, and offensive to God – a reflection of the mores typical of the capital city of Warsaw. Similar sentiments can be found in popular novels written by Ignacy Krasicki, such as *Pan Podstoli*. Clearly, the customs of dwelling and eating were creating social distinctions within the clerical estate, but they were also seen as indicative of the tension between a pious, conservative province and a modernized and secularized centre.⁵³

Nonverbal communication

Manner of speaking, posture, gestures, and facial expressions, often leave little trace in written accounts, and as a result, historians tend to overlook them. However, these culturally relative and learned methods of nonverbal communication played a significant role in shaping a distinctive clerical identity. Hugo Kołłątaj, in his memoirs, highlighted that nonverbal communication was cultivated in seminaries and played a pivotal role in setting priests apart from the wider society. Alumni from schools run by different religious orders displayed distinct countenances, enabling them to be identified. For instance, students from Lazarist schools were characterised by modesty in speech and “a superficial outward bearing as meticulously arranged and prescribed (...) as military tactics.”⁵⁴

Józef Kossakowski's memoirs further exemplify the impact of seminary education on nonverbal communication. Upon graduating from the Lazarist seminary in Warsaw, he adopted a clerical manner of behaviour. However, this unintended consequence of his education became evident to Kossakowski when he returned to court politics and was taken aback

52 Główna, *Majątek*, 111–196; Kossakowski, *Ksiądz pleban*, 18–29.

53 Komierowski, „Wspomnienia”; Krasicki, *Pan Podstoli*.

54 „układność powierzchowna tak dobrze ułożona i przepisana (...) jak taktyka dla żołnierzy.” Kołłątaj, „Pamiętnik,” 205–206.

by the perception that such mannerisms were viewed as mere hypocrisy by the elite. The mockery he faced led him to reluctantly abandon this style of being.⁵⁵ Later, in his novel, Kossakowski praised the idealised priest who “did not artificially lower his gaze, fold his hands in a pretentious manner, or engage in elaborate and self-indulgent displays of piety, his modesty, politeness, prudence, and priestly spirit seemed most pleasant in their inherent simplicity.”⁵⁶

Both Kossakowski and Kołłątaj described the clerical way of being, more or less critically. However, judging by their recollections, priests functioning in the parish environment did not have a reason to abandon the clerical manner, as it suited their public image of the good priest. This indicates that seminaries had succeeded in implementing the program of post-Tridentine sacerdotalization through the means of indirect enculturation.

Conclusion

Despite some tendencies holding back sacerdotalisation, in general the changes in clerical private lives were more profound than those in professional activities. Surely, they had affected all priests, while the requirement to work, until the end of the eighteenth century omitted a significant minority consisting of higher clergy and affluent parish priests. Although priests were hierarchically divided, on the whole their lifestyle was sufficiently distinguished to create the commonality which overcame internal distinction.

The benefice and patronage system, along with post-Tridentine legislation, which was similar across Catholic states, suggests that changing private lives of priests were likely successful not only in the Commonwealth. However, this hypothesis needs proper testing, enabled by the distinction between professionalisation and sacerdotalisation. Enriching the picture of the latter could be achieved by analysing other source materials. Notably, last wills are particularly promising, not only for understanding cultural consumption. The size of assets left to ecclesiastical institutions and the poor has been shown to be crucial for analysing

55 Kossakowski, *Pamiętniki Józefa Kossakowskiego*, 71.

56 Kossakowski, *Ksiądz pleban*, 63.

beliefs about the afterlife in dioceses like Lyon and Malta, and similar research should be replicated in other locations.⁵⁷

To comprehend the evolving forms of clerical piety, it would also be beneficial to examine the popularity of various saints and religious orders to which priests bequeathed their possessions. Additionally, purposeful choices made by individuals to whom priests left their money and goods would enable statistical analysis of the clerical social networks. This analysis would reveal with whom they traded, befriended, and the importance of their family relations. Such investigations can provide valuable insights into the changing dynamics of clerical life and piety during that period.

Finally, the concept of sacerdotalisation can and should be applied to the study of the clergy beyond the post-Tridentine period. An especially interesting area of inquiry would be the examination of changes in their private lives following the abolishment of the benefice and patronage system. It not only played a significant role in professionalising clergy but also resulted in more equal clerical incomes and reduced the direct influence of social background on ecclesiastical rank, which likely influenced the shape of clerical private lives.

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57 Philip T. Hoffman, *Church and Community in the Diocese of Lyon, 1500–1789* (New Haven–London: Yale University Press, 1984), 21–24; Frans Ciappara, „Strategies for the Afterlife in Eighteenth-Century Malta,” *Studies in Church History* 45 (2009): 301–310.

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