

DOI: 10.15290/rtk.2017.16.1.11

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## Appointing Canonical Prebendaries in the Vilnius Cathedral Chapter During the 14<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> Centuries

The diocesan bishop enjoyed the right to fill cathedral chapter stalls and bestow patronages and benefices in medieval Western Europe, including in the Kingdom of Poland. However, a different practice developed in Lithuania in the Diocese of Vilnius, which was established in 1388. The King of Poland and the Grand Duke of Lithuania, Władysław II Jagiełło, founded the first Vilnius chapter when the Diocese of Vilnius was created. This chapter began with two prelates and ten canonical prebendaries. The next two prelatures: the custody (established before 1397) and the archdeacon (established in 1435) as well as the two canons, which were established in the early 16th century, were also grand-ducal or royal foundations. The king received and sustained these beneficiaries *ius patronatus*. The last two prelatures, cantoria and scholasteria, which Bishop Jan z Książąt Litewskich created, remained part of the bishops' patronage right from 1561 onward. The patronage right in the Vilnius chapter was established in the second half of the 16th century, when, in 1588, King Sigismund Augustus II gave the chapter the right to present candidates for the deanery. Compared to the cathedral chapters under the Polish crown, the diocesan bishop's influence in filling the seats in the Vilnius chapter was definitely more modest, and even minimal, as it pertained to only two prelatures. The monarch, who could nominate up to three prelatures and all twelve canons, had incomparably greater rights. The bishop was vested *ius patronatus* with only two prelatures, and the chapter was vested with only one prelatore. Once the chapter canon coadjutors appeared *cum futura successione* in the Vilnius capitular college, the Holy See was able to exercise a certain influence over filling the Vilnius chapter. A priest who was nominated as a canon coadjutor

had to legitimize his appointment by presenting a papal bull that indicated his right of succession. This state of affairs lasted until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

**Key words:** Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Vilnius, Diocese of Vilnius, cathedral, cathedral chapter, prelate, canon, coadjutor, patron, *ius patronatus*, prebendary.

## The Patronage of Prebendaries in the Cathedral Chapters in the Middle Ages

During the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries, the first Polish chapters were initially created when bishoprics were formed. Until the 13<sup>th</sup> century, these chapters based their legal system on the western model, thereby gaining financial independence and strengthening their positions in the dioceses. The cathedral chapters, however, were not diocesan offices, but rather groups intended primarily to minister in the cathedral church. The chapters' secondary role was to support the bishop in managing the diocese. Nevertheless, with time, they were able to exercise *de facto* authority over church administration, mainly by accepting or rejecting the bishop's decisions, particularly with regard to the land given to him by the king. By the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, the chapter had become an autonomous corporation with legal status, its own statutes, and benefice. The chapter also chose the bishops and capitulars when *sede vacante*. When the church judiciary was developed, the chapters presented candidates as episcopal vicars *in spiritualibus* and general officials. As the capitular prerogatives increased, the bishop ability to exercise authority within the diocese decreased. In response to this situation, the Council of Trent devised resolutions that limited the role of chapters by giving bishops the right to inspect cathedral churches, to reform and impose criminal sanctions on chapters, and to exercise jurisdiction over chapters as corporations and individual members. While these resolutions weakened the role and authority of capitular corporations, they nevertheless still had a particular role in managing the diocese and, therefore, remained something with which the bishop had to deal.<sup>1</sup> In this way, the matter of cathedral chapters appointing prebendaries was still a valid but sensitive issue.

<sup>1</sup> G. Duby, "Les chanoines réguliers et la vie économique des XI et XII siècles," *La vita comune del clero nei sec. XI e XII*, vol. 2 (Milan: 1962), 72-81; J. Szymański, "Problèmes de la 'vita canonica' dans la Pologne des XII et XIII siècles," *Aevum*, 38 (1964), 468-478.

Within the universal Church, diocesan bishops freely appointed prelates and canons until the 14<sup>th</sup> century, after which papal reservations decreased their monopoly on matters pertaining to the Holy See. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, ecclesiastical authorities finally decided that bishops would appoint canons if seats became vacant during even months (February, April, June, etc.), while the Pope would make appointments during odd months (January, March, May, etc.). As with other ecclesiastical beneficiaries, the initiative to appoint chapter prebendaries came from the patron of a given canon, and this came to be known as the so-called “present.”

The oldest source that provides information regarding the appointment of Polish chapters is Pope Innocent III’s bull, *Cum turpis*, which was issued in 1207. Within this document, Pope Innocent III rebuked Prince Władysław Laskonogi for filling the stall in the Gniezno Chapter. He stated that, “according to the whole province’s [of Gniezno] general practice, the right to grant prebendaries belongs to local bishops.”<sup>2</sup> Hence, from the time chapters of canons began in Poland, bishops had the right to appoint canonical prebendaries.

Correspondence with the Holy See confirms that bishops’ appointed canonical prebendaries in the Diocese of Cracow. Specifically, the bishop of Cracow, as the head of the canonical corporation at the time, had been appointing prebendaries in the Cracow chapter without its consent.<sup>3</sup> In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Holy See granted monarchs patronage rights over some of its prebendaries. In the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the royal *ius patronatus* extended to the deanery, provost, and one canon. In the case of the Cracow chapter, this consisted of thirty-six prebendaries, over which the royal court had no particular influence.<sup>4</sup>

In the Middle Ages, it was clear that canonical corporations within the majority of the oldest royal chapters strove to collaborate with the bishop in conferring capitular honors. In the Diocese of Płock, for example, the bishop had to present the candidates for all prelates and canons, but he had to do so *capituli consensu et consilio accedente*.<sup>5</sup> In the Włocławek chapter, the diocesan bishop filled all capitular stalls.

<sup>2</sup> I. Sułkowska-Kurasiowa and S. Kuraś, eds., *Bullarium Poloniae*, vol. 1, no. 59 (Rome: École française de Rome, 1982).

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, vol. 1, no. 1912; and S. Zachorowski, *Rozwój i ustrój kapituł polskich w wiekach średnich* (Cracow: Akademia Umiejetnosci, 1912), 95-96.

<sup>4</sup> T. Wierzbowski, ed. *Matriculum Regni Poloniae Summaria*, par. 3, no. 2383 (Warsaw: Typis Officinae C. Kowaleski, 1905); *Bullarium Poloniae*, vol. 4, no. 2235.

<sup>5</sup> W. Góralski, *Kapituła katedralna w Płocku XII-XVI w. Studium z dziejów organizacji prawnej kapituł polskich* (Lublin: Płockie Wydawnictwo Diecezjalne, 1978), 121; and A. Radziwiński, *Duchowieństwo kapituł katedralnych w Polsce*

The only appointment he did not regularly make was that of prelate of the archdeacon of Pomerania; this appointment was made alternately with the chapter (*per turnum*).<sup>6</sup> Within the Poznań chapter, it is likely that the right to present the three canonical prebendaries was transferred from the bishop to the provost at the turn of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>7</sup> With regard to the appointment of capitular prebendaries on royal lands, there are also examples of the so-called *collationes simultaneae*, which essentially means that a compromise had been made and a legal formula established such that the bishop and chapter alternately presented candidates for the prebendaries. The dioceses of Cracow, Włocławek, and Lubuskie provide the few but distinct examples of this practice.<sup>8</sup>

From the 13<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the Holy See influenced the designation of the chapters in Poland. In this regard, the Licet Constitution of 1265 was crucial; for, as a result of this constitution, Pope Clement IV reserved for the Holy See the right to fill the vacancies of all offices lower than that of bishop in the Roman Curia. Successive popes, including Boniface VIII and John XXII extended the legal scope of this constitution. As a result the right of papal commission expanded during the 8<sup>th</sup> century. In Cracow, the papal commission appointed the canonical prebendary for the first time in 1264, when Pope Urban IV granted the first *expectativa*.<sup>9</sup> From then on, the reservations, *expectativa*, and provisions given by popes to Polish beneficiaries increased.

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XIV i XV w. na tle porównawczym. *Studium nad rekrutacją i drogami awansu* (Torun: Uniwersytet Mikołaja Kopernika, 1995), 174-175.

<sup>6</sup> J. Fijałek, "O archidiaconach pomorskich i urzędnikach biskupich w archidiaconacie pomorskim diecezji włocławskiej w XII-XV w.," *Roczniki TNT*, 6 (1899), 131, 146; S. Librowski, *Kapituła katedralna włocławska. Zarys dziejów i organizacji* (Warsaw: 1949), 35-36.

<sup>7</sup> A. Radziwiński, *Duchowieństwo kapituł katedralnych*, 176.

<sup>8</sup> B. Ulanowski, ed., "Formulae ad ius spectantes ex acti Petri Wysz, episcopi cracoviensis (1392-1412) maxima parte depromptae," *Archiwum Komisji Historycznej Akademii Umiejętności* 5 (1889), 317; "Trzydzieści osiem niedrukowanych oryginałów pergaminowych Archiwum Diecezjalnego we Włocławku z pierwszej połowy XV wieku," *Archiwa, Biblioteki i Muzea Kościelne*, vol. 56, no. 7 (1988); W. Góralski, *Kapituła katedralna w Płocku*, 116; A. Weiss, *Organizacja diecezji lubuskiej w średniowieczu* (Lublin: Rozprawy Wydziału Teologiczno-Kanonicznego, KUL, 1977), 114, antn., 183 i 184; A. Radziwiński, *Duchowieństwo kapituł katedralnych*, 177.

<sup>9</sup> E. Długopolski, ed., *Monumenta Poloniae Vaticana*, vol. 3, no. 98 (Cracow: Wydawnictwo Komisji Historycznej Akademii Umiejętności w Krakowie, 1914), 56-57.

## The Patronage Right of the Prebendary Canons of the Vilnius Cathedral Chapter

In this context, the Vilnius Cathedral Chapter found itself in a unique situation. What Cracow was for the Polish king, so too was Vilnius for the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Both cities were centers of authority—both royal and grand ducal. It is not surprising, then, that, in its organization and structure, the metropolitan chapter of Vilnius modeled itself after the chapter in Cracow, with a few exceptions—namely, the Vilnius chapter followed the practice of filling the capitular prebendaries. The reason for this difference can be found in the influential role that the Polish monarchs and Grand Dukes of Lithuania played in the Christianization of Lithuania, especially with regard to organizing the Catholic Church their own lands. The Vilnius chapter was established at the same time as the Diocese of Vilnius. At that time, the King of Poland and the Grand Duke of Lithuania, Władysław II Jagiełło, appointed two prelates and ten canon prebendaries. The next two prelate prebendaries: the *custodia*, who was appointed 1397, and the archdeacon, who was appointed in 1435, and two canon prebendaries, which were founded in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, were also grand ducal or royal foundations. The king received and sustained *ius patronatus* these beneficiaries. The last two prelates—the *cantoria* and *scholasteria* prebendaries—were created based on Bishop Jan z Książąt Litewskich's income and initially presented by the marshal of his court "whoever he was, if only a Catholic orthodox." From 1561 onward, they remained under the bishop's patronage. Patronage rights in the Vilnius chapter were finally established in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when King Sigismund II Augustus gave the chapter the right to present candidates for deanery in 1558. Compared to the cathedral chapters under the Polish crown, the diocesan bishop's influence in filling the seats in the Vilnius chapter was definitely more modest, and even minimal, as it pertained to only two prelatures. The monarch, who nominated up to three prelatures (50%) and all twelve canons (100%), had incomparably greater rights, which he ceded to the leader of the diocese. For example, in 1501, Prince Alexander gave Bishop Tabor the right to present the four lowest-ranking canons, but only during his administration of the diocese.<sup>10</sup> By virtue of the law, the bishop had *ius patronatus* the right to appoint only prelate prebendaries (33%). The chapter was able to present only one prelate (17%).

<sup>10</sup> J. Ochmański, *Biskupstwo wileńskie w średniowieczu. Ustrój i uposażenie* (Poznan: UAM, 1972), 26.

Once the chapter canon coadjutors appeared *cum futura successione* in the Vilnius capitular college, the Holy See was able to exercise a certain influence over filling the Vilnius chapter. A priest who was nominated as a canon coadjutor *expectativa* had to legitimize his appointment by presenting a papal bull that indicated his right of succession. The cathedral chapter of Vilnius did not see the need to introduce canon of coadjutors to its ranks until the 17<sup>th</sup> century. This did not mean, however, that all of its existing members enjoyed perfect health or did not need the support of coadjutors throughout this time. Rather, the reason that officials were not interested in receiving help from “supporting” canons regarding the law of succession is probably because they were reluctant to share their benefits with them. In addition, the chapter was also probably reluctant to have the canon coadjutors interfere in their personal issues, since they did not like the idea of someone from the outside who had patronage rights presenting and appointing titles and positions. The monarch was nominated for most of the capitular faculties in Vilnius, and he did not wish to share this right with anyone, including the Holy See.

It was not until the end of 1618 that the Vilnius cathedral chapter decided to admit canons into their group *cum futura successione* for the first time. At that time, the canon priest, Paweł Górnicki, who wanted to resign from his position, requested a coadjutor. On December 28, 1618, his nephew, Father Łukasz Górnicki, joined the chapter.<sup>11</sup> The capitular documents do not speak extensively about this nomination; therefore, it is only known that as a coadjutor he had the right (should a coadjutor not be present) to occupy the last stall in the choir, to vote at the chapter sessions, and to be paid by his uncle.<sup>12</sup> One can guess that, through his decision to give up the canonship, Canon Górnicki secured the title for his family member. After his actual resignation on April 10, 1619, his relative was installed as the current canon.<sup>13</sup> Despite this precedent, the chapter was not enthusiastic about this manner of filling its stalls and, as a result, the topic of the canon coadjutors with the right to succeed ceased to bother the heads of the chapter members of the college for more than thirty years. Bishop Jerzy Tyszkiewicz re-introduced the issue, however, in 1664. Facing the threat of the Moscow invasion, he turned to the chapter with the recommendation that its

<sup>11</sup> Biblioteka Litewskiej Akademii Nauk – manuscript department, hereafter abbreviated as BLAN); fond 43, no. 216 (hereafter abbreviated as f.43-216); *Acta capituli vilnensis* (hereafter abbreviated as ACV); vol. 8 (1602-1624), k. 354-354v.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, k. 354 v.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, k. 361.

members welcome coadjutors with the right of succession. In the points that he passed on to the chapter on October 12, 1654 for the purpose of Autumn General Session, he explained that such activities would secure the chapter's ability to continue operating in the near future. However, the chapter did not express a particular interest in this matter, and it was postponed until the following general session.<sup>14</sup> Yet, as the bishop predicted, the chapter's college officiated *in hostiche* in a group of only four members in Braszewicz from February 3-6, 1656.<sup>15</sup> No one thought it necessary to address the issue that the bishop had raised a year and half earlier. Therefore, the matter was inevitably put off *ad acta*, such that it took the chapter one hundred years to remember about instituting a canon coadjutor. In 1766, the chapter itself returned to this issue when Prelate Cantor Adam Kołłątaj, who was advanced in age and ailing, desired to become deputy of the choir and succeed the priest Antoni Zawadzki.<sup>16</sup> From then on until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the coadjutors became permanent members of the Vilnius cathedral chapter. In 1783, the prelates had coadjutors *cum futura successione*: a provost, dean, and cantor, and six of the twelve canons. Ten years later, however, the prelates had not only coadjutors, but also: an archdeacon, *scholasteria*, and barely four canons.

## Conditions for Obtaining a Prebend

### Presentation and nomination

Vacant stalls could be filled after the death, resignation, or promotion of an existing member of the chapter only by—as the chapter statutes and privileges state—a “moral and learned” priest. Before he was admitted to the ranks of the chapter, the ordained man had to be presented by the one had the right to do so (the monarch, the bishop, the chapter, and—in rare cases—the Holy See—*littera provisionis*).<sup>17</sup> The candidate had to present the right of presentation to the ordinary bishop, who then officially nominated the individual, appointed a jury to examine the candidate's suitability, and issued a *litteram cridae*,

<sup>14</sup> BLAN, f.43-221, ACV, vol. 13 (1652-1663), k. 178-179.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, k. 200.

<sup>16</sup> BLAN, f.43-236, ACV, vol. 28 (1753-1766), pgs. 454, 460-461, 463.

<sup>17</sup> BLAN, f.43-154, Sprawozdanie Kapituły Wileńskiej do Rzymskokatolickiego Kolegium w Petersburgu, [The Vilnius Chapter's Report to the Roman Catholic College in St. Petersburg] April 10, 1819, pg. 1, par. 3.

meaning a letter that was usually affixed to the main door of the cathedral, which allowed the faithful to become familiar with the nominee's profile and notify the jury of any legal objections, including whether the individual was in the process of being tried, had received a court order, or if he had any duties that could be transferred to the chapter and with which the nominee could accuse the chapter of defamation.<sup>18</sup> If no objections were brought forward, then the nominee received episcopal investiture and the case was referred to the chapter. The income of the members of the Vilnius chapter was so attractive, and the prestige affiliated with its membership was so great, that sometimes several candidates from a given family would apply to be admitted to its stalls when they anticipated a quick vacancy, but none of them met the criteria for canonical corporation. There were also cases when two or more candidates took advantage of family connections, were supported financially, and, thereby, were successfully presented for a vacant canon. This problem occurred throughout the entire 18<sup>th</sup> century. In this regard, at the request of Bishop Ignacy Jakub Massalski, King August Sas III issued an act in 1763 that promised that the Vilnius canon would not introduce clerics who have not been recommended by the ordinary bishop. In turn, in accordance with the agreement, the bishop committed to recommending only those candidates whose suitability would be confirmed in agreement with the chapter. The chapter college also promised not to accept the capitulars from among those who obtained the privilege to be presented by deception (*ad false narrata*) and without the bishop's knowledge. King Stanisław August Poniatowski confirmed this act three years later.<sup>19</sup>

After identifying or ruling out any obstacles, the case of filling the vacant stall was passed on to the chapter, which scrupulously examined the documents and files presented by the candidate and officially confirmed their authenticity during the next general session. The cleric who had been presented had to identify himself by providing a verified biography that demonstrated his usefulness, abilities, education in the field of theology or canon law, previous achievements in the diocese, and (when applicable) his positive activities within the state-public domain. He also had to submit evidence proving that he was from the nobility, including the coat of arms of five generations on both side of

<sup>18</sup> BLAN, f.43-217, ACV, vol. 9 (1625-1632), k. 134; BLAN, f.43-218, ACV vol. 10-11 (1632-1643), k. 83-84v., pg. 89; BLAN, f.43-232, vol. 24 (1727-1731), k. 117v.

<sup>19</sup> BLAN, f.43-236, ACV, vol. 28 (1753-1766), pgs. 371, 479.



his family, as well as the testimony of at least two credible witnesses from the nobility.<sup>20</sup>

## Social Status and Education

At the beginning of the Vilnius chapter, its legal acts did not contain any stipulations concerning the social status and education of its canons and prelates. In addition, the statutes of 1515 and 1584 did not include any stipulations, even though most of the royal chapters accepted only members of the nobility and, in limited numbers, only plebeians who had doctorate or masters degrees.<sup>21</sup> Bishop Jerzy Tyszkiewicz suggested this practice in 1650 as a positive response to one of the points made to him: “that candidates for the prelature and canons would not be admitted to the chapter until, just like the Cracow chapter, they proved their nobility through the testimony of the least two credible nobles or at the academy where they received a theology or law degree.”<sup>22</sup>

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After analyzing the sources of information, it is difficult to determine how educated plebeians were ranked in the stalls of the Vilnius chapter. One can only speculate that there were not many of them, only because the local bourgeoisie, whose representatives could, for example, obtain scientific degrees due to their social and financial status, held so little power in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania that they did not pose much competition for the nobility. There were not large numbers of bourgeoisie sharing the same nationality. A high percentage of them were foreigners who were also considered to be born under the Crown. Therefore, it was extremely difficult for them to attain honors and offices both in the church and in the secular society of Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Peasants had an even smaller chance of obtaining church prebendaries in the greatly stratified society. However, there were cases where educated plebeians were granted a place in the chapter, as highlighted in one of the points of agreement that the chapter presented to the bishop's nominee Michał Stefan Pac in 1676. According to this point, the chapter asks that no plebeians be introduced to the chapter, even if they have academic degrees, because “there is no

<sup>20</sup> BLAN, f.43-260, ACV, vol. 50 (1819-1822), k. 33-44.

<sup>21</sup> The earlier publications of this author have confirmed this thesis concerning the origin, recruitment, and promotion of the clergy of cathedral chapters in Poland. See mentioned A. Radziwiński, *Duchowieństwo kapituł katedralnych*, 91-98.

<sup>22</sup> BLAN, f.43-220, ACV, vol. 12 (1644-1652), 825-826.

reason for such individuals.”<sup>23</sup> These words prove that no locally applicable ecclesial legal premises would prevent the clergy from seeking what the nobility also sought: a seat in the capitular stalls.<sup>24</sup>

The chapter diligently analyzed the documents submitted by the nominee. If the chapter saw no objections, and if they agreed by majority vote, then the candidate was admitted to the group. If the documentation was questionable or the chapter did not believe that the candidate was suitable, then the chapter would either disqualify the nominee as a future member, or, more frequently, recommend that the nominee provide the information that was the missing in the files that he submitted.<sup>25</sup>

### Nationality and Age

Over the years, the candidate’s nationality, which meant his place of origin, determined his admission to the chapter.<sup>26</sup> In this case, only a Lithuanian or an individual born within the borders of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (which, in practice, is equivalent to the territory of the Dioceses of Vilnius, of Samogitia, and later also of Smolensk and Livonia Polska) could belong to the cathedral chapter in Vilnius. From the beginning of its existence until the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Vilnius cathedral chapter was not really noticed due to the fact that, practically speaking, there really were no clergymen who came “from Lithuania” and fulfilled the remaining conditions. Moreover, the Polonized Vilnius chapter was reluctant to notice the locals seeking a vacancy at the stalls. As a result, in 1570, there was only one Lithu-

<sup>23</sup> BLAN, f.43-225, ACV, vol. 17 (1683-1681), 292-293.

<sup>24</sup> It was not until the beginning of the 19th century that royal privileges and resolutions of the Polish Sejm began to be referred to *expressis verbis*. On April 13, 1819, the constitution of King Sigismund I, which was issued in Cracow in 1510, was consulted. Since the monarch did not like that plebeians were receiving church appointments, he promised in his constitutions that he would not to appoint them to these positions. They also referred to the Sejm’s constitution of 1633 and the fact that it upheld that church positions should not be given to “simple people,” which was subsequently confirmed in 1636. The documentation was supplemented with a reference to the constitution of 1768, thereby ensuring in point 11 that church appointments could only be bestowed on the nobility. See BLAN, f.43-260, ACV, vol. 50 (1819-1822), k. 35-39 v.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid; A. Lipnicki, *Historia Wileńskiego Katedralnego Kościoła*, b.m. 1888 [MS in Bibliotece Polskiej Akademii Umiejętności w Krakowie – sygn. 1232)], k. 117-120; J. Kurczewski, *Biskupstwo wileńskie od jego założenia aż do dni obecnych* (Vilnius: 1912), 124-125, antn. 2.

<sup>26</sup> J. Ochmański, *Biskupstwo wileńskie w średniowieczu*, pgs. 14, 49.

anian among the group of prelates and canons, who came from royal lands or were foreigners. This situation began to slowly change after the Council of Trent, which emphasized that the members of chapters should be required to come from the local dioceses. At this time, the people had to face the serious reality of Union of Lublin, which had taken shape. The Lithuanians began to insist that they secure secular and church offices only in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.<sup>27</sup> Based on the files from the chapter office, it is clear that the nobles of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania became more and more vigilant in defending their offices and titles against the aspirations of candidates under the leadership of the Crown.

Neither the statutes nor any other legal acts referring to the Vilnius chapter contain any information regarding a candidate's required age. At that time, Roman Catholic Church law stipulated that a man could be accepted to receive the tonsure at age fourteen, which was also the age at which a church benefice could be granted. In order to obtain all of the entitlements due to a canon, particularly the right to vote at chapter sessions, it was necessary to be ordained a subdeacon, which was possible only after a person reached the age of twenty-one.<sup>28</sup> However, in the acts of the Vilnius chapter, especially those written during the 16<sup>th</sup> century, there was no information that could confirm the law regarding age. The Diocese of Vilnius' gradual acceptance of the Council of Trent's resolutions seemed to regularize the issue and, according to the conciliar provisions "no one (especially those to whom the directing of souls is assigned) will be raised to a certain dignity unless he has reached the age of at least twenty-five years, be ordained, and have the appropriate education and customs necessary for such a title."<sup>29</sup> Although many references mention that chapter members were temporarily relieved of their duties within the chapter in order to further their education,<sup>30</sup> the documents do not state that anyone was refused admission into the chapter on the grounds of age or not being ordained. It is possible to conclude only that all members of the

<sup>27</sup> "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," *Opisanie rękopisnego oddzielenia Wileńskiej Publicznej Biblioteki*, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition (Vilnius: 1895), 132-133.

<sup>28</sup> A. Radziwiński, *Duchowienstwo kapituł katedralnych*, pgs. 82-89.

<sup>29</sup> Tridentinum, Sesio IV: *De reformatione*, cap. XII.

<sup>30</sup> BLAN, f.43-212, ACV, vol. 4 (1561-1570), k. 35; f. 43-215, ACV, vol. 7 (1586-1601), k. 111; f.43-222, ACV, vol. 14 (1663-1666), k. 40; f.43-223, vol. 15 (1667-1672), k. 60, pg. 150; f.43-232, ACV, vol. 24 (1727-1731), k. 4; f.43-234, ACV, vol. 26 (1739-1744), pg. 397; f.43-236, ACV, vol. 28 (1753-1766), pgs. 118, 279.

capitular college were (*in sacris ordinis constituti*) in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It is not clear, however, whether any among them were ordained to the presbyterate.<sup>31</sup>

## Installation

After all of the documentation was received, and finding none of the obstacles described in the canonical statutes, the chapter permitted the installation ceremony to take place. According to this ceremony, the canon nominee was introduced to the cathedral and given his stall and altar in the choir. Only general references to the rite of the installation are preserved in the acts of the Vilnius chapter; consequently, there are no detailed descriptions of the introduction, which makes it possible to assume that the introduction did not differ from the formula that was used universally in the Catholic Church. A document from 1524 speaks about a cleric of lower orders, Andrzej Nadbor, who sought to fill a stall in the Vilnius cathedral that had been previously held by the deceased canon, Bishop Jan Filipowicz from Kiev. After the candidate had provided the chapter with the required documents, which were confirmed by the Bishop of Vilnius, Jan z Książąt Litewskich, and authenticated by the public notary, he was immediately presented by the chapter on the following day, when he asked for admission to the group of canons and, subsequently given the prebendary. After considering the submitted files and confirming their authenticity, “all members [of the chapter] immediately left and went to the church gate on the right, he was received as a confrere by being introduced before the high altar wearing an alb. He made his formal oath before the notary and acts and was then appointed the seat in the sixth stall of the choir on the left side of the treasury and, likewise, the last place by the door between the chapter canons.”<sup>32</sup> In this context, it is worth pointing out the essential elements of the act of installation, their sequence, and their order. Until the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the ordinary bishop, his suffragan, or a member of the capitular college led the installation. Beginning in 1680, in accordance with the chapter’s decision, one of the prelates could lead.<sup>33</sup> Soon, this function was only entrusted to the bishop or

<sup>31</sup> T. Kasabuła, *Ignacy Massalski biskup wileński* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 1998), 297-299, tab. 4-9.

<sup>32</sup> The National Museum in Cracow - Czartoryski Library, sygn. 3516, Aktów, czyli dziejów kapituły wileńskiej katedralnej z siedmiu pierwszych tomów od 1501 do 1600 roku przez M. Herburta (...) krótko zebranych.

<sup>33</sup> BLAN, f.43-225, ACV, vol. 17 (1673-1681), pg. 1046.

prelate dean, who would lead the installation in the presence of the ordinary majority of the chapter members. The person who led the installation solemnly brought the candidate for the chapter stall into to the cathedral. In the choir, he would recite the psalm, verses, and orations over the kneeling candidate. Next, the nominee made a profession of faith before the leader, and he pronounced the oaths according to the statues, in which he promised obedience to the bishop; loyalty to the church in Vilnius; respect for the Church's laws, traditions, and customs; observance of capitular statues, especially those regarding the capitular secret; agreeable cohabitation with his confreres; care of the property entrusted to his care; and the obligation to reclaim them. After these acts, the new canon and his introducer exchanged the kiss of peace. The capitular notary then read the investiture document, and the canon declared in a loud voice to assume the stall, the role of prebendary, and the canonical altar, after which the notary prepared an appropriate notarial deed. The rite of the installation ended with the singing of the *Te Deum*.<sup>34</sup>

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Initially, the act of the installation could only take place during the general chapter meeting, which was held only twice a year. Beginning in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, a change was implemented and a candidate could be installed based on power of attorney outside of these meetings by a dispensation given by the chapter to a delegated deputy.<sup>35</sup> This agreement allowed the new chapter member to take advantage of his capitular privileges, including the profits from refectory goods. However, it also entailed the danger that the individual would lose precedence with regard to the canon who personally installed him.<sup>36</sup>

After the rite of installation, the newly created canon entered into in a five-month long novitiate (*annus carentiae*), during which time he participated in choir prayers and served in the cathedral without any compensation. The financial compensation for this period was added to his income for the whole quarter (*annus gratiae*) and provided after his death either as a gift to his heirs or as payment for his debts or funeral.<sup>37</sup> In practice, depending on the circumstances, the beginning of the novitiate was often shortened and even dispensed of beginning

<sup>34</sup> BLAN, f.43-157, Nota przywilejów w aktach kapitulnych znajdujących się, 1819, k. 1; A. Lipnicki, *Historia Wileńskiego Katedralnego Kościoła*, k. 120.

<sup>35</sup> BLAN, f.43-227, ACV, vol. 19 (1685-1698), pg. 56.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> BLAN, f.43-154, Sprawozdanie Kapituły Wileńskiej do Rzymskokatolickiego Kolegium w Petersburgu, 10 IV 1819, p. 1, par 3; J. Kurczewski, *Biskupstwo wileńskie*, 107-108.

in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Based on the information preserved in the Vilnius chapter's files, it is clear that candidates for the novitiate had to apply for the novitiate. However, if the period for the novitiate passed, and the novitiate was to last less than five months, then they would also seek dispensations from participating in the novitiate altogether.<sup>38</sup> Documents confirm that the length of the novitiate gradually grew shorter in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century; often it lasted only a few months or even a few days to several weeks.<sup>39</sup>

In the case of coadjutors and the law of succession, the process of filling stalls and installing canons did not essentially differ from the procedures pertaining to current members of the chapter college. The only exception was that members of the chapter were required to submit a papal bull regarding the right of succession. Within the Diocese of Vilnius, this document served as a confirmation *litterae provisionis*, which was issued by a legal person, who held the patronal right for a given canon or prelate.<sup>40</sup>

## Summary

The high rank that the Vilnius cathedral chapter enjoyed within the organization of the Diocese of Vilnius meant that it had considerable influence on the diocese—its goods and the bishop's income, how the diocese's institutions were managed, and who was chosen as bishop. These and other extensive privileges and rights made the capitular stalls extremely attractive to individuals in terms of easily obtainable income. In this context, the right to bestow these privileges allowed chapters to exercise a strong influence on the entire bishopric. Therefore, wishing to become independent from the influence of secular factors, Church authorities ensured that this privilege was entrusted to the diocesan bishop or directly to the Holy See.

The model of the patronage of the capitular prebendaries was established in the oldest royal dioceses, where the colleges of cathedral canons were formed at a time when the diocesan structures were

<sup>38</sup> BLAN, f.43-235, ACV, vol. 27 (1753-1766), pg. 458.

<sup>39</sup> BLAN, f.43-228, ACV, vol. 20 (1698-1709), k. 140; J. Kurczewski, *Biskupstwo wileńskie*, 107; Ibid, *Kościół zamkowy czyli katedra wileńska w jej dziejowym, liturgicznym, architektonicznym i ekonomicznym rozwoju*, cz. 3 (Vilnius: 1916), 335, 437.

<sup>40</sup> BLAN, f.43-154, Sprawozdanie Kapituły Wileńskiej do Rzymskokatolickiego Kolegium w Petersburgu (April 10, 1819), p. 1, par. 3; BLAN, f.43-157, Nota przywilejów w aktach kapitulnych znajdujących się, 1819, k. 1; BLAN, f.43-176, Summariusz konstytucji statutu Kapituły Katedralnej Wileńskiej, 1810, k. 3v.

already well-established and subject to a large extent to the diocesan bishop's authority. The Diocese of Vilnius was formed in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century, and its organization largely depended on the will of the Polish monarch and the Grand Duke of Lithuania. In this way, secular authorities basically organized and influenced the religious life of non-Christian Lithuania. This model was imbalanced, however. The chapter (two prelatures and ten canons) appeared here almost simultaneously with the office of the diocesan bishop and was created on the basis of earnings granted only by the monarch. The king had the same authority to fill the chapter. In addition, because of a lack of suitable candidates from among the local clergy of Vilnius, the king appointed first capitular prebendaries from among the clergy in Poland or foreigners. As a result, in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when the Vilnius cathedral chapter was organized, the royal *ius patronatus* extended to the half of the prebendaries as well as the prebendaries made up of canons only. Consequently, the bishop could present only two prelatures, while the cathedral chapter could present only one. Based on the information above, it is clear that secular factors did not influence the bishop's authority or management of the diocese to such a degree that he was unable to effectively carry out his pastoral office. The monarch also had the right to give the bishops the right to present candidates within their dioceses, since these dioceses, including the Diocese of Vilnius, were under the king's jurisdiction. Moreover, universal church law, synodal acts and statutes, commonly accepted customs, and, in the matters of doubt and contention, the will of the Holy See governed the relationship between the bishop and a chapter. Since both were traditionally confident in the monarch's power in Poland and in areas that were strictly religious, the chapters settled disputes so as not to disrupt strictly ecclesiastical matters and respected the position of the ruler. In practice, this meant that issues were resolved through bilateral talks between adversaries. Such a compromise, however, could only work effectively in situations where both church and secular parties shared a common goal in their overriding interest of the state and the Church in order to guarantee the moral order within the state.

## OBSADZANIE PREBEND KANONICKICH W KAPITULE KATEDRALNEJ WILEŃSKIEJ W XIV-XVIII WIEKU

Obsadzanie stali w kapitułach katedralnych związane z prawem prezenty i patronatu w średniowiecznej Europie zachodniej, w tym także w Królestwie Polskim, należało do biskupa diecezjalnego. Inna praktyka ukształtowała się natomiast na Litwie w powstałej w 1388 r. diecezji wileńskiej. Już pierwsze fundacje na rzecz miejscowej kapituły katedralnej z 1388 r.: dwie prałatury i 10 kanonii, były dziełem króla Polski i wielkiego księcia litewskiego, Władysława II Jagiełły. Kolejne dwie prałatury: kustodia (przed 1397 r.) i archidiaconia (w roku 1435) oraz dwie kanonie, powstałe w początkach XVI w., także były fundacjami wielkksiążęcymi lub królewskimi. Król otrzymał i utrzymał *ius patronatus* na te beneficja. Dwie ostatnie prałatury, kantoria i scholasteria, utworzone przez biskupa Jana z Książąt Litewskich, od 1561 r. pozostały przy prawach patronatu biskupiego. Prawa patronackie w kapitule wileńskiej ustaliły się ostatecznie w drugiej połowie XVI stulecia, gdy król Zygmunt II August w 1558 r. przekazał kapitule prawo przedstawiania kandydatów na dziekanę. W porównaniu z kapitułami katedralnymi w Koronie, wpływ biskupa diecezjalnego na obsadzanie miejsc w kapitule wileńskiej był zdecydowanie skromniejszy, wręcz minimalny (tylko dwie prałatury). Natomiast nieporównanie większe prawa miał monarcha, który nominował aż do trzech prałatur i wszystkich dwunastu kanonii. Biskupowi przysługiwał *ius patronatus* tylko na dwie prałatury. Kapituła prezentowała na jedną prałaturę. Pewien wpływ na obsadę stali kapituły wileńskiej zdobyła Stolica Apostolska z chwilą pojawienia się w wileńskim kolegium kapitulnym kanoników koadiutorów *cum futura successione*. Duchowny nominowany na kanonika koadiutora ekspektanta musiał wylegitymować się bulą papieską na prawo sukcesji. Taki stan rzeczy utrzymał się do końca XVIII w.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Wielkie Księstwo Litewskie, Wilno, diecezja wileńska, katedra, kapituła katedralna, prałat, kanonik, koadiutor, patronat, *ius patronatus*, prebenda.

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