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INCUNABULA FROM THE HOUSE OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION IN THE PŁOCK DIOCESE KEPT IN THE SEMINARY LIBRARY PRIOR TO WW II

DOI: 10.36155/PLib.10.00003

ABSTRACT

The Congregation of the Mission was founded by Vincent de Paul in France in 1625. Its goal was to work with the poor, preach sermons and provide Christian education in general. In the 18th century, two mission houses were established in Mława and Płock, both within the Płock Diocese. The preserved collection of thirteen 15th-century printed books, kept before 1865 in the two aforementioned houses, was interesting in many respects: because of the authors of the works, the fields of knowledge they concerned, their provenance records, the publishing houses the books came from or their bindings. This collections reflects the mentality, culture of spirit and intellectual interests of its owners. After the dissolution of the houses, together with other books from the dissolved monasteries of the Płock Diocese, the books were first transported to the Płock cathedral library and then, in the 1920s, included in the newly built

library building on the premises of the Theological Seminary. The present article contains a catalogue of this collection together with a commentary on its history.

KEYWORDS: incunables, provenance research, Płock Diocese, dissolution of monasteries

The Congregation of the Mission was founded by Vincent de Paul in France in 1625 with its main goal of working with the poor to preach, and to disseminate Christian education broadly conceived. The first group of missionaries was dispatched to Poland by Vincent de Paul at the request of Queen Marie Louise Gonzaga in November 1651.¹ The Queen offered them a wooden building located close to the Church of the Holy Cross in Warsaw, following which she acquired for them a Sokółka benefice near Białystok. Subsequently, in 1653, she installed them at the Parish of the Holy Cross in Warsaw. The Warsaw foundation was authorized on 1 December 1653 by Bishop Kazimierz Florian Czartoryski and this also coincided with the transfer of patronage to the Church of the Holy Cross.² In the 17th and 18th centuries, a total of over 30 houses of the Congregation of the Mission were founded throughout the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which testifies to the intense development of the Congregation.³

1 W. Umiński, *Polska prowincja zgromadzenia księży misjonarzy w latach 1918-1939*, Kraków 2009, p. 25.

2 In 1679-1699, the Congregation of the Mission raised a sumptuous church consecrated in 1694. The Monastery was suppressed in 1864. See. J. Nowacki, *Archidiecezja poznańska w granicach historycznych i jej ustrój*, vol. 2, Poznań 1964, p. 772.

3 By the late 17th century four houses had been created, in: Vilnius (Góra Zbawiciela 1685), Cracow (Stradom 1686), Przemyśl (1687), and Łowicz (1689). In the 18th century, 33 houses were founded: Mława (1712), Św. Wojciech n. Gdańsk (1713), Lublin (1714), Płock (1717), Siemiatycze (1717), Gniezno (1718), Włocławek (1719), Krasnystaw (1739), Horodenka (1743), Sambor (1743), Brzozów (1745), Śmiłowice (1747), Lipowiec (1748), Lviv (1748), Zasław (1748), Tykocin (1751), Łysków (1751), Orsza (1752), Krasław (1755), Warszawa (General Hospital 1761), Głogów Małopolski (1762), Wilno (St George Seminary 1764), Lviv (Cathedral Seminary 1765), Wornie (1775), Mikulińce (1779), Poznań (1781), Żytomierz (1783), Oświej (1786), Iłkuśzta (1787), Mohylew (1788). See. W. Umiński, *Polska prowincja zgromadzenia księży misjonarzy w latach 1918-1939*, p. 30, footnote 20.

This history of the growth of the Congregation of the Mission in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was enriched in the early 18th century with the foundation of the mission houses within the Płock Diocese in Mława and Płock.⁴ Chronologically speaking, the first Congregation of the Mission house was founded in Mława in 1712. This settling down in Mława was inspired by the Chełmno Suffragan and Płock Canon Seweryn Szczuka who came from the Płock Diocese.⁵ The first missionaries arrived from the Warsaw house of the Congregation of the Mission (Jakub Stanisław Mroczek, Michał Józef Melchier, Maciej Stanisław Znamięcki), and Wawrzyniec Stanisław Benik was assigned as their superior.⁶ The missionaries undertook the responsibilities of running a parish in Mława following the 1712 death from plague of its parish priest and Mława Dean, Fr. Andrzej Mączkowski.⁷ They contributed to consolidating religious life and preaching in Mława with much zeal for almost 150 years, until the moment when, as a result of the persecution following the January Uprising, the Congregation of the Mission was suppressed in the Płock Diocese.⁸

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- 4 W. Graczyk, 'Płocka diecezja', in: *Encyklopedia Katolicka*, vol. 15, ed. E. Gigilewicz, Lublin 2011, column 861.
 - 5 Bishop Seweryn Szczuka was born in Gacki n. Grajewo (within the Płock Diocese) in 1651 Having been educated at the Reszel Jesuit College in Warmia in 1670-1672, he joined the Congregation of the Mission in 1678, to be ordained to the priesthood in 1682. Having been appointed the Chełmno Cathedral Canon in 1687, in 1712-1719, following the assignment of Bishop Teodor Potocki to the Warmia Bishopric, he served as *sede vacante* administrator of the Chełmno Diocese. See W. Jezusek, 'Biskup Seweryn Kazimierz Szczuka', *Miesięcznik Pastorski Plocki*, 1960, 4-5, p.126; A. Mańkowski, *Prałaci i kanonicy katedralni chełmińscy od założenia kapituły do naszych czasów*, Toruń 1928, p. 208; J.M. Marszalska, 'Kościół i duszpasterstwo w parafii xx. Misjonarzy w Mławie w świetle wizytacji biskupa Michała Jerzego Poniatowskiego z 1775 roku', in: *Zakony rzymskokatolickie na Mazowszu*, Ostrołęka 2008, p. 103; A. Nadolny, 'Szczuka Seweryn', in: *Encyklopedia Katolicka*, vol. 19, ed. E. Gigilewicz, Lublin 2011, column 14.
 - 6 L. Zygmier, 'Działalność misjonarzy św. Wincentego a Paulo w parafii mławskiej (1712-1864)', *Nasza Przeszłość*, 1995, 84, pp. 138-139.
 - 7 *Ibidem*, pp. 137-138.
 - 8 J.M. Marszalska, 'Kościół i duszpasterstwo w parafii xx. Misjonarzy w Mławie w świetle wizytacji biskupa Michała Jerzego Poniatowskiego z 1775 roku', in: *Zakony rzymskokatolickie Mazowszu (Z uwzględnieniem Kurpiowszczyzny). Materiały z sesji naukowej „Zakony męskie na Północnym Mazowszu do 1864 roku”*, ed. B. Kalinowska, Ostrołęka 2008, pp. 102-113; T. Żebrowski, *Zarys dziejów diecezji płockiej*, Płock

The second house of the Congregation of the Mission in the Płock Diocese was founded in the capital of Płock. Its foundation was associated with the canonical erection of the second seminary in the Diocese located by Bishop Ludwik Bartłomiej Załuski on 6 May 1710. The missionaries were asked to run this formative institution for future clergy. On the same day (6 May 1710), a contract was signed between the Congregation of the Mission and the Płock Diocese specifying the tasks for the fathers coming there.⁹ The responsibility of the missionaries included running missions, retreats, and the Seminary in Płock. They were given the villages of Ościsłowo and Kuniewko and a part of the foundation of Bishop Łubieński¹⁰ to provide for their seminarians. Complying with the instructions of the Council of Trent, the Seminary was to have two provisors: one assigned by the bishop, and the other elected by the Chapter. Additionally, the Superior of the house and of the Seminary was given full authority to admit and dismiss seminarians.¹¹ The Seminary was to be located in the house of Canon Stanisław Spinka and the house that belonged to Bishop Stanisław's foundation, with the latter also to be used by the missionaries. However, the missionaries did not move in right away to begin their educational and teaching formation. At first, the Chapter used their own resources to adapt those buildings to serve as a seminary. Further, the missionaries erected a new house, paved the street by the town gate, and built a

1976, p. 83. On the grounds of the ukase of Tsar Alexander II of 27 Oct (8 Nov) 1864 on the suppression of 115 male religious orders, including the Płock and Mława houses of the Congregation of the Mission in the Kingdom of Poland. See *Życie zakonne w Królestwie Polskim w latach 1832-1864. Polityka caratu - kasaty - represje*, eds. W. Graczyk, J.M. Marszałska, Kraków 2015, p. 7.

- 9 The following were representatives of Bartłomiej Tarło, Inspector of the Congregation of the Mission: Michał Walter and Tomasz Strzegocki; meanwhile, Bishop Adam Rostkowski, Dobrzyń Archdeacon, and Prelate-Custodian Bartłomiej Tłubicki represented him in the Płock Diocese. M.M. Grzybowski, 'Z dziejów Seminarium Płockiego 1710-1939', *Studia Płockie*, 1994, 22, p. 44.
- 10 W. Graczyk, *Stanisław Łubieński, pasterz polityk i pisarz 1578-1640*, Kraków-Tyniec 2005, p. 141.
- 11 Archives of the Płock Diocese (ADP), *Akta Kapituły Płockiej*, cat. no. 15, p. 35.

bridge over the moat connecting the seminary with the cathedral. However, after the seminary building was completed in 1717,¹² the missionaries came to Płock, and undertook the task of running the seminary.¹³ The missionaries and the Seminary remained at that location until 1781 when Bishop Michał Jerzy Poniatowski decided they should be transferred to the abbey abandoned by the Benedictines located across the street from the Cathedral. The seminary operated at this new location until 1865 when Bishop Wincenty Teofil Chościak-Popiel transferred it to the premises of the dissolved Monastery of the Reformed Friars Minor. Subsequent to the removal of the missionaries, the running of the seminary was assigned to the Diocesan clergy.¹⁴

The preserved set of thirteen 15th-century printed books kept before 1865 in the two houses of the missionaries in Płock and Mława were considered to be of great interest in terms of their authorship, the disciplines they represented, their provenance entries, the publishing houses that produced them, and their bindings. Following the suppression of the houses of the Collegiate of the Mission, the books together with others from other suppressed monasteries were first transferred to the Płock Cathedral Library to be subsequently moved to the newly erected library building on the premises of the Seminary.¹⁵

Before WW II, Kazimierz Piekarski made several attempts at registering the incunabula kept in the Płock Seminary Library. Kazimierz made records based on public, ecclesiastical, and private collections, thereby, providing the grounds for the creation, in the 1990s, of the second volume of the catalogue of incunabula cov-

12 D. Majewski, 'Seminarium Duchowne w Płocku w latach 1710-1864', in: *Wyższe Seminarium Duchowne 1710-2010*, ed. W. Graczyk, Płock 2010, pp. 18-20.

13 A.J. Nowowiejski, *Płock. Monografia historyczna*, Płock 1930, p. 461; F. Kacprzycki, 'Założenie Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku', *Studia Płockie*, 1974, 3, p. 150.

14 W. Jezusek, 'Troska biskupa Wincentego Popiela o seminarium duchowne 1863-1875', *Miesięcznik Pastorski Płocki*, 1966, 1, p. 42.

15 M.M. Grzybowski, 'Biblioteka Seminarium Duchownego od 1710 do 1990 roku', in: *Biblioteka Wyższego Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku*, ed. W. Graczyk, Płock 2003, pp. 86-92.

ering the list of losses suffered by Polish culture in the course of WW II.¹⁶ The notebook filled in by Piekarski, currently preserved in the National Library collection, registering the incunabula kept in the Płock Seminary Library before 1939, serves as the source for the present paper.¹⁷

According to scholars, the Płock Seminary Library until 1939 possessed one of the most precious collections of old books in Poland (about 80 mediaeval code manuscripts and 422 incunabula). In 1941, the collection was taken to Königsberg.¹⁸ To date, not a single item from that set has been returned to the genuine owner. From the set of 13 incunabula discussed, five featured an earlier provenance testifying to the fact that they had been the property of the Dominican Monastery of St Dominic in Płock. This was established by the following inscriptions: ‘Idem pro Bibliotheca conventem Plocen[sem] S[ancti] D[o]minici Ord[inis] Praed[icatorum] A[nno] D[omini] 1603’, featured on the work *Expositio mysteriorum missae* by Balthasar de Porta;¹⁹ ‘Conventus Plocen[sis] S[anti] Dominici liber’ on the work *Sermones de tempore et de sanctis et de diversis* by St Bernard;²⁰ ‘Conventui Plocen[sis] S[ancti] Dominici tempore P[atris] Antonini Prioris Donatus’ on Opera, the work by Jan Gerson;²¹ ‘Conventus Plocensis a P[atris] Aegidio dono accessit’ on *Dialogorum libri quattuor* by Gregory the Great;²² and ‘Conventus

16 *Incunabula quae in bibliothecis Poloniae asservantur*. Moderante Alodia Kawecka-Gryczowa, composuerunt Maria Bohonos, Michael Spandowski et Elisa Szandorowska. vol. 2. Addenda. Indices.Vratislaviae -Varsaviae - Cracoviae 1993.

17 National Library (BN), *Inkunabuly Biblioteki Seminarium Duchownego w Plocku. Rejestracja Kazimierza Piekarskiego sprzed 1 IX 1939 (Kazimierz Piekarski's Register)*. (No cat.no.)

18 M. Spandowski, ‘Polskie zbiory inkunabułów zniszczone, rozproszone i przemieszane w czasie i w wyniku II wojny światowej’, *Rocznik Biblioteki Narodowej*, 2013, 44, pp. 19-20; W. Graczyk, J.M. Marszalska, *Księgi rękopiśmienne i stare druki w zbiorach Biblioteki Wyższego Seminarium Duchownego w Plocku. Z dziejów kultury polskich bibliotek kościelnych w dawnych wiekach*, Płock 2010, pp. 20-30. S. Sawicka, *Straty wojenne zbiorów polskich w dziedzinie rękopisów iluminowanych*, Warszawa 1952, p. 43.

19 BN, *Kazimierz Piekarski's Register*, item 159

20 Ibidem, item 494.

21 Ibidem, item 479.

22 Ibidem, item 117.

Plocensis S[anti] Dominici' on *Sententiarum libri IV* by Pierre Lombard.²³ Before they were incorporated into the Seminary collection, the further six incunabula from the collection of the Congregation of the Mission had featured merely the provenance record indicating that they belonged to the house of the missionaries. These are: Congr[egatio] Miss[ionis] Dom[us] Ploc[ensis] in *The Bible*;²⁴ Ex libris Cong[regationis] Miss[ionis] Dom[us] Ploc[ensis] - Guillelmus Parisiensis in *Postilla super Epistolas et Evangelia*;²⁵ and Congr[egatio] Miss[ionis] Domus Ploc[ensis] in Petrus Lombardus, *Sententiarum libri IV*.²⁶ Last but not least, two incunables, before they were incorporated into the collection of the missionaries had earlier been the property of either an individual owner, e.g., Mikołaj Scherppnigk: Nider Ioannes, *Praeceptorium divinae legis, sive Expositio decalogi*,²⁷ or of a parish institution (Gradzanowo Parish, *The Bible*).²⁸

As for the Congregation of the Mission houses, out of the set covering 13 incunabula in total, 12 came from the Płock house of the missionaries and one from Mława. There is one work included in Kazimierz Piekarski's list of incunables, yet not covered in the discussed resource. The work in question is *Synonyma et aequivoca cum commento* by John of Garland published in Cologne in 1500 in Henri Quentell's typography.²⁹ It forms accedit /It is bound together with

23 Ibidem, item 417. The Church and Monastery of St Dominic survived until 1804 when the Prussians suppressed the Order and gave the Monastery buildings to Protestants. Following the suppression of the Dominican Monastery in Płock, the Seminary Library run by the missionaries received the Dominicans' book collection. The books transferred at that time included 96 volumes as the legacy of the Goślicki brothers of Goślice Wielkie: that of Fr Marcin, Płock Canon in the 16th century, and of his nephew Wawrzyniec Goślicki, Poznan Bishop. That was also the time when a large 120-volume collection, earlier property of Fr Cypran Stefanowski, Abbot of the Płock Dominicans, reached the Seminary library. See M. M. Grzybowski, 'Biblioteka Seminarium Duchownego od 1710 do 1990 roku', in: *Biblioteka Wyższego Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku*, ed. W. Graczyk, p. 76; J.M. Marszałska, W. Graczyk, 'Zakony na Mazowszu od XVI do końca XVIII wieku', in: *Dzieje Mazowsza lata 1527-1794*, vol. 2, ed. J. Tyszkiewicz, Pułtusk 2015, pp. 386-387.

24 BN, Kazimierz Piekarski's Register, items 329, 408, 410, 419.

25 Ibidem, item 388.

26 Ibidem, item 444.

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28 Ibidem, item 379.

29 Ibidem, item 201.

the following post-incunabula: 1. Nicolaus de Błonie. *Tractat[us] de sacramentis*. Strassbourg, Martinus Flach 1503. 4°. [defect from page b₂ poor];³⁰ 2. Donatis [...] *et moralitatis*. Nürberg, Ioannes Weissenburger 1507. 4°; 3. *Lilium grammaticae magistri Wilhelmi Weert modo discipulis imo magistris etiam prouectis necessarium*. [Köln, Henricus Quentell] [16th c.?]; 4. [Methodius: *Opusculum divinorum revelationum*]. [16th c.] 4°. [a₃-l₆ defect], binding: card[board], parch[ment]. [17th c.]; 5. Nicasius de Voerda. *Lectura quattuor librorum Institutionum*. [Köln, Ioannes Koelhoff Senior] [early 16th c.]; 6. *Regulae grammaticales antiquorum*, [Basel, Michael Furter] [16th c.]. Post-incunabulum No. 4 features information referring to the binding, while the provenance on post-incunabulum No. 6 reads: *Ex libris Congr[egationis] Miss[ionis] Mlaviens[is]* [19th c.]; *Płock Sem[inary] XII.6.6.- stamp. [1st half of the 20th c.]*. The fact that Kazimierz Piekarski classified the work with the provenance of the Mława Congregation as 16th-century led to its exclusion from the analysis within the set.

It is hard to retrace today the process that allowed the books which had previously been in private hands or owned by institutions of which we know hardly know anything to reach the houses of the missionaries being discussed. Such an example can be found in provenance records: '1529 liber [illegible] D[omi]ni Stanislai Prepositi et commendarij Sendzischoviensis', found in the work *Dialogorum libri quattuor* by St Gregory the Great;³¹ 'Liber d[omi]ni Nicolai Scherppnigk emptus pro 4 [quattuor] marcis Anno D[omi]ni 1483' in the work *Praeceptorium divinae legis, sive Expositio decalogi* by Nider Ioannes;³² or 'Ex libr[is] Eccl[esiae] Gradzanoviensis' [18th c.], found in the *Bible*.³³ After the suppression of the Congregation of the Mission houses (1864) in the Płock Diocese, the books were first incorporated into the collection of the Cathedral Library, and sub-

30 The square brackets contain quotes from Piekarski. He recorded that the incunabulum was damaged.

31 Ibidem, item 117. *Księga dochodów beneficjów diecezji krakowskiej z roku 1529 (tzw. Liber retaxationum)*, ed. Z. Leszczyńska-Skrętowa, Wrocław 1968.

32 Ibidem, item 328.

33 Ibidem, item 379; 'Gradzanowo,' in: *Słownik Geograficzny Królestwa Polskiego*, vol. 2, eds. F. Sulimierski, B. Chlebowski, Warszawa 1881, p. 790.

sequently the Seminary Library. The fact that they were included in the Seminary Library is testified to by the preserved stamps defining their location among the library's resources, e.g.: Płock Sem. XI.10.22 – stamp [1st half of the 20th c.].³⁴ About 40 per cent of the discussed set features the earlier provenance of the Dominican Monastery in Płock. In this very case, it is known that the incunabula were added to the house of the Płock missionaries after the Prussian oppressor had occupied both the St Dominic Monastery and the Church, moved out the monks, and had given the premises to Protestants.³⁵

The map of printing centres which can be identified on the grounds of the discussed set of incunabula covers Germany, Switzerland, and Italy. In total, that small set represents eight printing centres: Germany (Leipzig, Speyer, Strasbourg, Nuremberg, Reutlingen, Cologne), Switzerland (Basel), and Italy (Venice). The largest number, as many as four, are the output of the Basel typography from three different printers: Johann Amerbach (*Bible*, 1482³⁶), Michael Furter (St Gregory the Great, *Dialogorum libri quatuor*, 1496³⁷), and Nicolaus Kessler (Peter Lombard, *Sententiarum libri IV*, 1488, 1489³⁸). German printing centres are represented by two works each: in Speyer printed by Peter Drach (St Bernard, *Sermones de tempore et de sanctis et de diversis*, 1481/1482; *The Bible*, 1489)³⁹, and from Strasbourg: in Martin Flach's typography (John Gerson, *Opera*, P. I-IV, 1494-1502)⁴⁰ and that by Johann Prüss (*The Bible*, 1489).⁴¹ The remaining works are represented by the following publishing centres and printers: Leipzig (Balthasar de Porta, *Expositio myste-*

34 BN, *Kazimierz PiekarSKI's Register*, itemitem 159.

35 As a result of the third partition of Poland on 24 Octobr 1795 Płock together with the whole Diocese was incorporated into the Prussian partition [ta sama informacja przypis 23]. T. Żebrowski, *Zarys dziejów diecezji płockiej*, Płock 1976, p. 81.

36 Ibidem, item 410.

37 Ibidem, item117.

38 Ibidem, item 418, 444.

39 Ibidem, item 329, 494.

40 Ibidem, item479.

41 Ibidem, item379.

riorum missae, 1494; typographer: Konrad Kachelofen),⁴² Venice (*The Bible*, 1483; typographer: Johannes Herbort),⁴³ and Reutlingen (Johannes Nider, *Praeceptorium divinae legis, sive Expositio decalogi*, 1479; and typographer: Michael Greyff).⁴⁴ With respect to one work, Guillermus Parisiensis' *Postilla super Epistolas et Evangelia*, neither the second volume of the incunabulum catalogue containing the list of losses, nor the Kazimierz Piekarski's register contains its typographic description.⁴⁵

The common feature of all the discussed 15th-century printed books is that they were all printed in Latin. Although the discussed set of incunabula is not large quantity-wise, it deserves some analysis because of its content, particularly more so, since the majority of its 12 items come from the house of the Congregation of the Mission in Płock, where until the 1864 suppression, the Seminary for the Płock Diocese was run.⁴⁶

In the view of scholars studying 15th-century books, the whole typographic output at the time was focused on theology, so it is not surprising that the majority of the 15th-century works preserved to-date contain theological pieces and the Bible.⁴⁷ The Bible as the source of revealed scholarship was always the most important and, undoubtedly, the most disseminated book. Biblical questions were most commonly discussed in combination with dogmatic theology. It was only in the late 17th century that biblical exegesis was added to seminary studies.⁴⁸ The new *Ratio studiorum*

42 Ibidem, item 159.

43 Ibidem, item 419.

44 Ibidem, item 328.

45 *Incunabula quae in bibliothecis Poloniae asservantur*, vol. 2, item 1108, p. 298; BN, *Kazimierz Piekarski's Register*, item 388.

46 ADP. 'Catalogus librorum Congregationis Missionis domus in seminaria Plocensis comparatus AD 1777', in: *Akta Seminarium Plockiego*, no cat. no. The first catalogue of the books of the Płock Seminary Library was made on 25 May 1777. It includes the list of ca 850 titles classified in 21 sections.

47 M. Spadowski, 'Inkunabuły dawnej biblioteki miejskiej w Lubaniu,' *Rocznik Biblioteki Narodowej*, 2013, 44, p. 16.

48 D. Majewski, 'Seminarium Duchowne w Płocku w latach 1710-1864', in: *Wyższe Seminarium Duchowne 1719-2010*, ed. W. Graczyk, p. 37.

introduced into the Płock Seminary by Michał Jerzy Poniatowski, Płock Bishop, on 30 September 1774, assumed three weekly hours of biblical exegesis.⁴⁹ The set contained in total four different Bible editions from four different printers: Johannes Amberbach (Basel), Johannes Herbort (Venice), Peter Drach (Speyer), and Johann Prüss (Strasbourg). They were, namely, *Biblia. (Basel, Ioannes Amberbach 1482)*;⁵⁰ *Biblia, cum additionibus Francisci Moneliensis et Quintii Aemiliani. (Venezia, Ioannes Herbort, 31 October 1483)*;⁵¹ *Biblia. (Speyer, Petrer Drach 1489)*;⁵² *Biblia. (Strassburg, Ioannes Prüss 1489)*.⁵³ One of the tendencies in the Middle Ages was to bring closer ‘the world of the Bible’ to that of man and his surrounding world, and also to facilitate man’s understanding of the Bible and assimilating it with the latter assisted by the scholarly discipline called exegesis. Importantly, the discussed set could not do without the work *Postilla super Epistolas et Evangelia* by Guillelmus Parisensis⁵⁴ which in the 15th century alone boasted hundreds of editions.⁵⁵

The best-known and most disseminated work in the Middle Ages, serving as the grounds for academic lectures on theology, was *Libri IV Sententiarum* by Peter Lombard. In his work, the author included the theological thoughts of St. Augustine as well as of the representatives of scholasticism, such as, Walafrid Strabon, Anselm of Laon, Gratian, Hugh of St Victor, and Abelard. The work was divided into four sections: *res quibus fruendum* on God, His unity and three natures of God; *quibus utendum*, on creation, angels, man, and grace; *res quae fruuntur et utuntur*, on incarnation, redemption, virtues, and gifts of the Holy Spirit; and finally, *signa*, on the sacra-

49 Ibidem, pp. 34-35.

50 BN, *Kazimierz Piekarski’s Register*, item 410.

51 Ibidem, item 419.

52 Ibidem, item 329.

53 Ibidem, item 379.

54 Ibidem, item 388.

55 *Encyklopedia Wiedzy o Książce*, eds. A. Kawecka-Gryczowa, H. Więckowska, S. Pazyra, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1971, column 1955.

ments and the eschata.⁵⁶ The discussed set contains two copies of this work, both printed by Nicolaus Kessler in Basel in 1488 (*Sententiarum libri IV, cum Conclusionibus Henrici de Gorichen et Problematibus s. Thomae Articulisque Parisiensibus. Basel, Nicolaus Kessler, 22 September 1488*).⁵⁷

The theology, called practical, is provided in *Dialogues*: a hagiographic work by Pope Gregory the Great. *The Dialogues* are composed of four books showing daily sanctification through numerous examples, both positive and negative, referring to three evangelical counsels: poverty, chastity, and obedience.⁵⁸ The pre-war collection of the Płock Seminary Library owned that work published in Basel by Michael Furter in 1496 (*Dialogorum libri quattuor, Lat. Basel, Mich. Furter, 1496*).⁵⁹ Another book that can be classified into this scholarship category is *Praeceptorium divinae legis, sive Expositio decalogi* by Johannes Nider printed in Michael Greyff's typography in 1479⁶⁰ in which the author explains the Decalogue.⁶¹

Apart from the theological works contained in the set of the 15th-century Płock books, there are also those addressing preaching. For many centuries, preaching was considered in the Church to be an important form of religious teaching.⁶² In the discussed set of incunabula, preaching is represented by the work *Sermones de tempore et de Sanctis et de diversis* (Speyer, 1481-1482) by St Bernard of Clairvaux.⁶³ A historic work bearing testimony to mediaeval preaching can also be seen in *Sermones Dormi secure de Sanctis* by Johannes de

56 E. Wójcik, 'Piotr Lombard, Petrus Lombardus', in: *Encyklopedia Katolicka*, vol. 15, ed. E. Gigilewicz, Lublin 2011, column 679.

57 BN, *Kazimierz Piekarški's Register*, item 418, 444.

58 A. Pawlak, 'Nauka o cnotach w dialogach św. Grzegorza Wielkiego', *Łódzkie Studia Teologiczne*, 2019, 2, pp. 189, 202.

59 BN, *Kazimierz Piekarški's Register*, item 117.

60 Ibidem, item 328.

61 Nider Johannes, *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft. The Western Tradition*, ed. Richard M. Golden, vol. 3, Santa Barbara 2006, pp. 826-828.

62 J.M. Marszałka, 'Piętnastowieczny księgozbiór Biblioteki Wyższego Seminarium Duchownego w Tarnowie', *Archiwa, Biblioteki i Muzea Kościelne*, 2003, 80, p. 189.

63 BN, *Kazimierz Piekarški's Register*, item 494

Verdena, an outstanding canonist and preacher of his times. These were published in the Nuremberg typography by Anton Koberger in 1494.⁶⁴

The output of theological and reformatory thought of the turn of the 15th century is also contained in *Opera*, P. I-IV by John Gerson (printed in Martinus Flach's typography in 1494-1502).⁶⁵ Affiliated with the Paris University circles, its author being a disciple of Pierre d'Ailly and follower of the views of William of Ockham (nominalism), emphasized the supremacy of Church councils over the pope (conciliarism), and proclaimed that deepening faith should occur through a mystical union with God.⁶⁶

Some attention should also be paid to the bindings of the discussed incunabula. They are contemporary with the printing time, which is the piece of information provided by Kazimierz Piekarski recording the binding as 'contemporary'.⁶⁷ On other occasions, he would specify its type by referring to it as, e.g., Polish,⁶⁸ Polish-Cracow,⁶⁹ Cracow,⁷⁰ Gdansk-type,⁷¹ or Wrocław-type.⁷² In one case, Piekarski remarked that the binding was made of cardboard with leather stretched over it.⁷³ We can speculate that the last was provided in the 18th century, since this binding type dominated then. In the vast majority of the incunabula, lime or beechwood board was the basis for the brown leather stretched over it. Some bindings featured elaborate protective brass corner bosses and the centre one.⁷⁴ With respect to some incunabula, Piekarski recorded the item as

64 Ibidem, item 408.

65 Ibidem, item 479.

66 J. Rajman, *Encyklopedia średniowiecza*, Kraków 2006, p. 322.

67 BN, *Kazimierz Piekarski's Register*, items 329, 418, 444, 479

68 Ibidem, item 117.

69 Ibidem, item 479.

70 Ibidem, item 418.

71 Ibidem, item 328.

72 Ibidem, item 329.

73 Ibidem, item 410.

74 Ibidem, items 117, 328, 329, 418.

missing binding or merely that it remained preserved.⁷⁵ When discussing the binding, attention should be drawn to the copy of the work *Expositio mysteriorum missae* by Balthasar de Porta, published in Leipzig in 1494 and typographed by Konrad Kachelofen,⁷⁶ featuring the ‘Ogończyk’ stamp on the book cover (supralibross) with the following initials: F-B-K-O-P-C-P.⁷⁷ Before the incunabulum was incorporated into the library of the Congregation of the Mission in Płock, it had been part of St Dominic Monastery, also in Płock. Two preserved provenances testify to this fact: 1. F[ratri] Benedicti Konopinskij Ord[inis] Praed[icatorum] Conv[entus] Plocen[sis] sunt [illegible] v[a]ria opuscula in quatro volumine [illegible] Anno D[omi]ni 1600; 2. Idem pro Bibliotheca conventem Plocen[sem] S[ancti] D[o]minici Ord[inis] Praed[icatorum] A[nno] D[omi]ni 1603. Thus, the work was initially the property of the Dominican Friar Benedykt Konopiński, and following his death, it was transferred to the Monastery library collection.

Recapitulating, let us emphasize that the preserved 15th-century set of incunabula, legacy of the missionaries active in the Płock Diocese in the 18th and 19th centuries, although not homogenous as for the books’ provenance, in a way reflects the intellectual background and interests, and the spiritual culture of its owners. The content of the set allows us to draw the conclusion that it represented a typical book collection satisfying the spiritual need for education. It was also meant to help shape the religious awareness of the faithful, thus, assisting the pastoral work. The practical function of the set was applicable to that part of theological literature which went beyond the framework of speculative considerations, focusing first of all on the practical needs of the faithful. Thus, the set contains the Bible, sermon collections, treatises on practical theology as well as those which reflected the current theological debates and polemics.

75 Ibidem, items 408, 419, 494.

76 Ibidbidem, item 159.

77 F-B-K-O-P-C-P F[rater] Benedicti Konopinskij Ord[inis] Praed[icatorum] Conv[entus] Plocen[sis]

LIST OF INCUNABULA

HOUSE OF THE COLLEGIATE OF THE MISSION IN PŁOCK

1. BALTHASAR de Porta, *Expositio mysteriorum missae*.- Ioannes Faber de Werdea: *Carmen de vita s. Onufrii*. Leipzig, Conr. Kachelofen, 1494. 4°.

IBP II (copy on the list of losses+322).

Provenance:

1. F[ratri] Benedicti Konopinskij Ord[inis] Praed[icatorum] Conv[entus] Plocen[sis] sunt [illegible] v[a]ria opuscula in quatuor volumine [illegible] Anno D[omi]ni 1600.
2. Idem pro Bibliotheca conventem Plocen[sem] S[ancti] D[o]minici Ord[inis] Praed[icatorum] A[nno] D[omini] 1603
3. Ex libris Congreg[ationis] Missionis Domus Plocen[sis] [19th c.]
4. Płock Sem. XI.10.22 - stamp [1st half of the 20th c.]

Binding: board, [leather] br[own], [embossed] 'Ogończyk; coat of arms, initials: F[rater] B[enedicti] K[onopinskij] O[r]dinis] P[raedicatorum] C[onventus] P[locensis], [supralibros], damaged [16th/17th c.]

Inc. Piekarski 159; bound together with items 20, 25, 45, 115

2. BERNARDUS Claravallensis s., *Sermones de tempore et de sanctis et de diversis*. [Speyer] Petr. Drach [post 31 August 1481, non post 1482]. 2°.

IBP II (copy on the list of losses+428).

Provenance:

1. Frater Michael de [ven ...] [15th c.]
2. Conventus Plocen[sis] S[ancti] Dominici liber [late 16th c.]
3. Congr[egatio] Miss[ionis] Dom[us] Ploc[ensis] [18th/19th c.]
4. Płock Sem. XX.1.1.- stamp [1st half of the 20th c.]

Binding: remains of the boards

Inc. Piekarski 494

3. Bible. [Basel, Io. Amerbach] 1482. 2°.

IBP II (copy on the list of losses+461).

Provenance:

1. Congr[egatio] Miss[ionis] Dom[us] Ploc[ensis] [19th c.]
2. Płock Sem. „1854” - stamp [1st half of the 20th c.]

Binding: cardboard, leather [18th c.]

Inc. Piekarski 410

4. Biblia, cum additionibus Francisci Moneliensis et Quintii Aemiliani. Venezia, Io. Herbort, 31 X 1483. 2°.

IBP II (copy on the list of losses+464).

Provenance:

1. Ex libris Congr[egationis] Miss[ionis] Dom[us] Plocen[sis] [18th/19th c.]
2. Płock Sem. I.1.12.- stamp [1st half of the 20th c.]

Binding: no information on the binding

Inc. Piekarski 419

5. Bible. [Speyer, Petr. Drach] 1489. 2°.

IBP II (copy on the list of losses+472).

Provenance:

1. Congr[egatio] Miss[ionis] Dom[us] Ploc[ensis] [19th c.]

Binding: board, [leather] br[own], [embossment] bl[ind], bosses and parts missing on the spine ‘A 87’, Wroc[ław], contemp[orary], damaged [15th/16th c.]

Inc. Piekarski 329

6. GERSON Ioannes, Opera. P. I-IV. Strassburg, Mart. Flach, I-II) 13 December 1494, III) 11 August 1494, IV) 1502. 2°.

IBP II (copy on the list of losses+990).

Provenance:

1. Conventui Plocen[sis] S[ancti] Dominici tempore P[atris] Antonini Prioris Donatus [18th c.]

2. Congr[egationis] Miss[ionis] Do[mu]s Ploc[ensis] [18th/19th c.]

3. Płock Sem. IX.3.14.1.- stamp [1st half of the 20th c.]

Binding: board, [leather] br[own], [embossment] bl[ind], Cra[cow], Pol[ish], contemp[orary] [ca 1510]

Inc.Piekarski 479

7. GREGORIUS I Magnus papa s., Dialogorum libri quattuor, Lat. Basel, Mich. Furter, 1496. 4^o.

IBP II (copy on the list of losses+1046).

Provenance:

1. 1529 liber [illegible] D[omi]ni Stanislai Prepositi et commendarij Sendzischoviensis

2. Fr[ater] Antonius Grodicius emit et Fr[at]ri Melchior donavit quod postea Fr[at]ri Aegidio Leopolitae vendidit (16th c.)

1. Conventus Plocensis a P[at]ri Aegidio dono accesit (16th c.)

2. Liber Congr[egationis] Missionis Domus Plocensis (19th c.)

5. Płock Sem. V.4.35 - stamp [1st half of the 20th c.]

Binding: board [leather] br[own], [embossment] bl[ind] clasps, Polish [15th c.],

Inc. Piekarski 117

8. GUILLERMUS Parisiensis, Postilla super Epistolas et Evangelia. [Sine ulla nota]. 2^o.

IBP II (copy on the list of losses+1108).

Provenance:

1. Ex libris Cong[regationis] Miss[ionis] Dom[us] Ploc[ensis] [19th c.]

2. Płock Sem. XVII.2.4.- stamp [1st half of the 20th c.]

Binding: board, leather, on the sp[ine]: 'F. 476' [17th/18th c.]

Inc.Piekarski 388

9. IOANNES de Verdena, Sermones Dormi secure de sanctis. Nürnberg, Ant. Koberger, 5 I 1494. 2^o.

IBP II (copy on the list of losses+1378).

Provenance:

1. [Remains of the signature] House of the Mi[ssionaries] Płock [18th c.]

Binding: remains of the back [binding]: board, no leather, [16th c.?)

Inc.Piekarski 408

10. NIDER Ioannes, Praeceptorium divinae legis, sive Expositio decalogi. [Reutlingen, Mich. Greyff, ante 8 July 1479]. 2°.

IBP II (copy on the list of losses+1689).

Provenance:

1. Liber d[omi]ni Nicolai Scherppnigk emptus pro 4 [quattuor] mar-
cis Anno D[omi]ni 1483

2. Congr[egatio] Missionis Domus Plocen[sis] [19th c.]

3. Płock Sem. IV.10.4.- stamp [1st half of the 20th c.]

Binding: board, [leather] br[own], [embossment] bl[ind], bosses,
on the spi[ne]: 'D-302', Gd[ansk] [1483]

Inc.Piekarski 328

**11. PETRUS Lombardus, Sententiarum libri IV, cum Conclusioni-
bus Henrici de Gorichen et Problematibus s. Thomae Articulisque
Parisiensibus. Basel, Nic. Kessler, 22 September 1488. 2°.**

IBP II (copy on the list of losses+1829).

Provenance:

1. Conventus Plocensis S[anti] Dominici [16th/17th c.]

2. Congr[egatio] Miss[ionis] Dom[us] Ploc[ensis] [18th/19th c.]

3. Płock Sem. V.11.5.- stamp [1st half of the 20th c.]

Binding: board, [leather] br[own], [embossment] bl[ind] bosses, on
the spine: 'B.75', Cra[cow], contemp[orary] [15th/16th c.]

Inc.Piekarski 418

**12. PETRUS Lombardus, Sententiarum libri IV, cum Conclusioni-
bus Henrici de Gorichen et Problematibus s. Thomae Articulisque
Parisiensibus. Basel, Nic. Kessler, 29 November 1489. 2°.**

IBP II (copy on the list of losses+1830).

Provenance:

1. Congr[egatio] Miss[ionis] Domus Ploc[ensis] [18th/19th c.]
2. Płock Sem. V.11.4.- stamp [1st half of the 20th c.]

Binding: board, h[alf] binding, tra[ces] of emboss[ment], on the sp[ine] Cat. No.: 'B. 76', contemp[orary] [15th/16th c.]

Inc.Piekarski 444

HOUSE OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION IN MŁAWA

1. Biblia. [Strassburg, Io. Prüss] 1489. 2°.

IBP II (copy on the list of losses+473).

Provenance:

Ex libr[is] Eccl[esiae] Gradzanoviensis [17th c.]

Ex libr[is] Cong[regationis] Miss[ionum] Dom[us] Mlaven[sis] [18th c.]

Płock Sem. Stamp '1852'

Binding: leather, embossment, damaged [1st half of the 16th c.]

Inc.Piekarski 379

Translated by Magdalena Iwińska