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INCUNABULA IN THE LIBRARY OF THE HIGHER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY IN KIELCE

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ABSTRACT

It is the collection of incunabula amassed in the Library of the Higher Theological Seminary in Kielce as presented against the backdrop of the institution's history in the 18th–20th centuries that is discussed in the paper. The major facts which affected the creation and content of the present incunabulum collection are shown; the essential information on the number of titles and volumes is provided, summing up the to-date research.

KEYWORDS: incunabula, Library of the Higher Theological Seminary (BWSDK), Kielce, history of the book collection in 18th–20th centuries

The launch of works on the printing of the catalogue of incunabula in the Library of the Higher Theological Seminary in Kielce (below BWSDK), planned to celebrate the 300 years of the institution, prompts the attempt at giving an outline of the collection's content, the history of its accumulation, extraordinary vicissitudes in this history, as well as the collection's current state. All the more so the to date literature on the subject provides rather scant information on the topic. The present paper does not aspire to thoroughly characterize the collection, providing merely essential information on it.

1. History Outline of the Library of the Higher Theological Seminary in Kielce

The Kielce Seminary was established by Cracow Bishop Konstanty Felicjan Szaniawski in 1726 with a foundation act issued two years after the launch of the construction of the Seminary building.[1] Classes started in 1727, and the Bishop's foundation act was confirmed by Benedict XIII a year later. The organization of the Kielce Seminary was conducted by its first teachers, at the time members of the Institute of the Apostolic Union of Secular Priests, and it was most likely them who brought the basic book collection essential for studying to the Library, although the lack of archival materials related to the Apostolic Union does not allow us to claim this with certainty.[2] The above-shown sequence of events

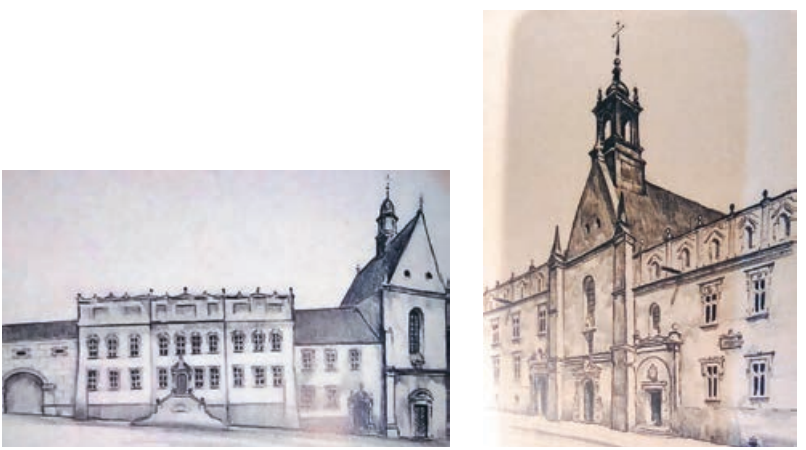


FIG. 1. Church of the Holy Trinity and the school, drawing. R. Prauss, 1943, *Sztuka Kielecczyzny po 1945 ze zbiorów Muzeum Narodowego w Kielcach*, Kielce 2005, ACNOs 1246, 1247, p. 121 (BWSDK's original location)

1 'Konstanty Felicjan Szaniawski', in: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* (below: PSB), vol. 47, 2010–2011, p. 19; K. R. Prokop, *Poczet biskupów krakowskich*, Kraków 1999; P. Nitecki, *Biskupi Kościoła w Polsce w latach 965–1999. Słownik biograficzny*, Warszawa 2000, p. 426; D. Olszewski, 'Seminarium Duchowne i szkolnictwo średnie w osiemnastym stuleciu', in: *Kielce przez stulecia*, Kielce 2014, pp. 93–96; M. Pieniążek-Samek, 'W czasach potrydenckiej reformy', in: ibidem, p. 83.

2 However, certain regularities can be pointed to, e,g., examples of diocesan seminaries run by the Apostolic Union of Secular Priests (*Institutum Clericorum Saecularium in Communi Viventium*), see: J. Zdanowski, *Seminarjum Duchowne w Kielcach. Szkic historyczny w dwóchsetną rocznicę założenia*, Kielce 1927, pp. 11–17; T. Wróbel,

points unequivocally to 1727 as the beginning of the operation of the Library of the Higher Theological Seminary in Kielce (BWSDK), also available to seminarians in harmony with the general rules adopted at the time.[3]

Despite the fact that the Seminary began to operate in one of the most prominent seats of the Cracow bishops: in the city where bishops had resided from the early mediaeval times, with the fourth Collegiate Chapter in the Diocese, following in precedence those of Cracow, Sandomierz, and Wiślica, the beginnings of the book collection were hardly impressive. On the grounds of the preserved source materials[4] and the manuscript chronicle tradition[5], as well as the state of research into BWSDK's history known from literature[6], what we can recreate is an incomplete image of the Library in the 18th–20th centuries, marked with numerous 'twists' in history, but also negligence and indolence of its carers.

All the studies on the topic present the number of 100 books, predominantly manuscripts serving as textbooks (mainly on theology, homiletics, and biblical studies) which constituted BWSDK's first book collection. More precise data preserved came only from around the mid-18th century. At that time, precisely under the date of 16 Au-

'Nauczanie filozofii i teologii w kieleckim seminarium duchownym (1727–1962)', *Nasza Przeszłość* 59, 1983, pp. 100–101; W. J. Górczyk, 'Szkolnictwo Bartolomitów na ziemiach polskich na przykładzie seminariów w Węgrowie, Kielcach i Sandomierzu. Zarys problematyki', *Archiwa, Biblioteki i Muzea Kościelne* (below: ABMK) 115, 2021, pp. 93–100.

3 Pamiętnik Sandomierski II, 1829, p. 308 (on the beginnings of the Library prior to 1809).

4 Diocesan Archives in Kielce, Records of the Kielce Chapter.

5 T. Wróbel, *Seminarium Duchowne w Kielcach*, part 1, pp. 228–300 (MS in BWSDK's reading room).

6 First of all: D. Olszewski, 'Wprowadzenie historyczne', in: *Katalog duchowieństwa i parafii diecezji kieleckiej*, Kielce 1999, pp. 36–38. Among others see: R. Nir, 'Informator o archiwach, bibliotekach i muzeach kościelnych w Polsce', *Chrześcijanin w świecie* 56/57, 1977, pp. 199–227; idem, 'Katalog rękopisów Biblioteki Seminarium Duchownego w Kielcach', ABMK, vol. 40, 1980, pp. 329–400; vol. 41, 1980, pp. 91–126; *Zbiory rękopisów w bibliotekach i muzeach w Polsce*, compiled by D. Kamolowa in cooperation with K. Muszyńska (ecclesial collections), Warszawa 1988, p. 67; *Biblioteki Kościoła katolickiego w Polsce. Informator*, compiled by W. Żurek, Kielce 2005; M. Pieniążek-Samek, 'W czasach...', op. cit., p. 81.



FIG. 2. Diocesan Archives in Kielce, parchment document 54, 1728, fragment of *Beneplacitum Apostolicum* concerning the Kielce Seminary, in Latin, parchment 84 × 74 cm, leaf 1. Printed: F. Puchalski, *Seminarium kieleckie*, Kielce 1901, p. III; P. Kardyś, 'Wykaz dokumentów ze „Zbioru dokumentów pergaminowych i papierowych" Archiwum Diecezjalnego w Kielcach', *Studia Muzealno-Historyczne* 10, 2018, pp. 223–273, item 55

gust 1753, the Records of the Collegiate Chapter bore the entry with the information that in the course of the Chapter's session Fr Canon Eustachy Słonka was assigned to check the Seminary Library for the presence of Chapter books borrowed from the Chapter as authorized by Fr Bishop Cardinal Jan Lipski in 1747. In subsequent years, the Chapter assigned further inspectors to the Library, however, no information has been found as for the results of their work.[7]

At the time, the Library was located in a room on the other side of the Seminary Church of the Holy Trinity, on the first floor of the secondary-school building. The Library room had two windows from the side of the street, a door with a lock and a padlock; bookcases with the books were placed along the walls, and there was a large table in the middle. Seminarians were allowed to access the Library along the middle gallery of the Seminary Church of the

7 T. Wróbel, *Seminarium*..., op. cit. pp. 228–230.

Holy Trinity. Since, as mentioned above, the priests also ran the secondary school, it is likely that its students, too, could use the Library[8]. It seems that throughout the 18th century the most numerous was the deposit of books belonging to the Kielce Chapter, including mediaeval manuscripts[9], incunabula, and early-printed books[10] which ended up in the Seminary Library[11]. Subsequently, as for the number and quality involved there came donations from Seminary teachers and diocesan priests[12].

The next century was started with a fire which destroyed the Seminary and Library rooms in 1809. On 28 December 1809, injured

8 Ibidem, pp. 229–230.

9 J. Wolny, 'Inventaire des manuscrits théologiques médiévaux de la Bibliothèque du chapitre à Kielce', *Mediaevalia Philosophica Polonorum* 16, 1971, pp. 43–85; P. Kardyś, 'Przyczynki do dziejów księgozbioru kolegiaty kieleckiej w średniowieczu i okresie wczesnonowożytnym', *Biuletyn Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej* (below: BBJ) 56–57, 2006–2007, pp. 17–44; idem, 'Z dziejów pewnego rękopisu. Przyczynek do związków intelektualnych kanoników regularnych kłodzkich z Małopolską w XIV–XV wieku', in: *Realia życia codziennego w Europie środkowej ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem Śląska*, ed. A. Barciak, Katowice-Zabrze 2011, pp. 94–105; idem, 'Dwa rękopisy Adama wikarego kolegiaty kieleckiej z XV w. i jego księgozbiór', *Między Wisłą a Pilicą* 12, 2011, pp. 55–64; idem, 'Stanisław z Jankowic – kanonik kielecki z XV w. i jego księgozbiór', *Studia Muzealno-Historyczne* (below: SM-H) 3, 2011, pp. 87–97; idem, 'Inicjały z pieskiem w rękopisie średniowiecznym Rk-41/23 z Biblioteki Wyższego Seminarium Duchownego w Kielcach', in: *Zwierzęta w historii, literaturze i sztuce Europy*, eds. S. Konarska-Zimnicka, L. Kostuch, B. Wojciechowska, Kielce 2017, pp. 187–198; K. Bracha, 'Statuta vel praecepta scholarium. Przyczynek do dziejów najstarszej szkoły w Kielcach w XV w.', SM-H 3, 2011, pp. 31–51; idem, 'Średniowieczne rękopisy dawnej Biblioteki kieleckiej kapituły kolegiackiej. Badania i źródła', in: *Rękopiśmienne księgi dawnej Biblioteki kolegiaty kieleckiej*, Kielce 2019, pp. 9–26.

10 P. Kardyś, 'Inkunabuły „medyczne" z Biblioteki Wyższego Seminarium Duchownego w Kielcach', *ABMK* 118, 2022, pp. 147–170; idem, 'Szyszkowiana/pseudoszyszkowiana z dawnego księgozbioru bernardynów z Karczówki przechowywane obecnie w zbiorach Biblioteki Wyższego Seminarium Duchownego w Kielcach', *Z Badań nad Książką i Księgozbiorami Historycznymi* 12, 2018, pp. 429-442; idem, 'Stanisław z Bodzentyna, wikariusz kolegiaty kieleckiej z XVI wieku i jego księgozbiór', in: *850 lat Katedry pw. Wniebowzięcia Najświętszej Maryi Panny w Kielcach*, eds. K. Wojciechowska, T. Gocel, S. Konarska-Zimnicka, Kielce 2021, pp. 81–98.

11 A. Kwaśniewski, 'Księgozbiory prywatne zachowane w Bibliotece Kapituły Kieleckiej (XV–XVIII wiek)', BBJ 62, 2012, pp. 69–94; idem, 'Księgozbiór kapituły kieleckiej w świetle inwentarza z 1598 r.', ABMK 99, 2013, pp. 43-93; idem, 'Księgozbiór kanonika kieleckiego Wojciecha Strzemeskiego (†1602) w świetle inwentarza z 1650 r.', *Rocznik Kolbuszowski* 12, 2012, pp. 87–107; idem, 'Księgozbiór Kapituły Kieleckiej w świetle inwentarza z roku 1650', in: *Książka dawna i jej właściciele*, vol. 2, eds. D. Sidorowicz-Mulak, A. Franczyk-Cegła, Wrocław † 2017, pp. 207–227.

12 T. Wróbel, *Seminarium...*, op. cit., p. 232.

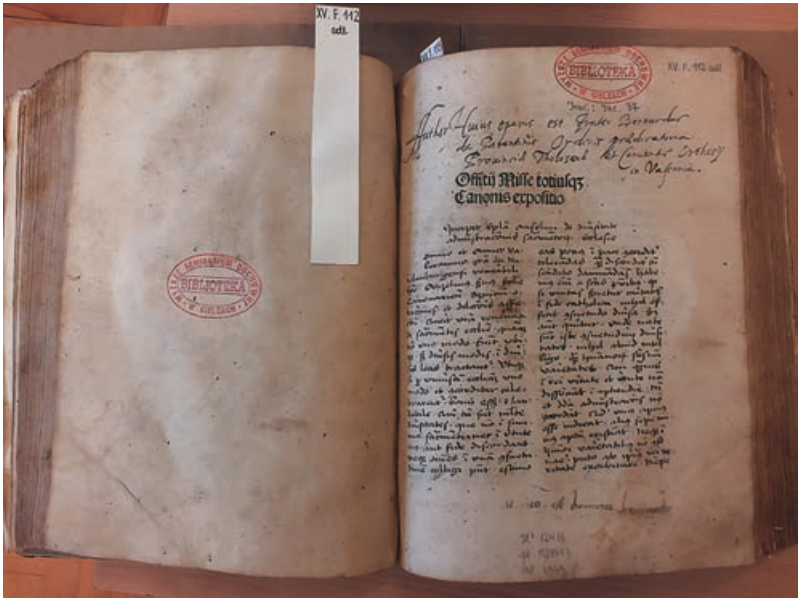


FIG. 3. Bernardus de Parentinis, *Expositio officii missae*, Speyer: I[oannes et] C[onrad] H[ist], 1487, BWSDK Inc. 37/XV.F.112 adl, IBP 4543, H 12416, GW M29413, ISTC ip00111000, leaf 1r, (with 15th-c. manuscript prologue: 'Incipit epistola Anselmi De divinitate administrationibus sacramentorum Ecclesiae')

soldiers of the troops of the Duchy of Warsaw (the building was serving as a field hospital) accidentally set fire which consumed a large part of the building. During the fire the books were thrown onto the street, into mud, and collected only once the fire had been extinguished, following which they were taken to the Bishop's Palace, where they were kept until 1813, namely to the end of the reconstruction of the destroyed part of the building.

In 1813, the Library was transferred back to the premises adjacent to the Church of the Holy Trinity, yet this time it was placed in a room on the ground floor next to the church, from the side of the street. The number of the books saved remains unknown; neither is it known whether a part of the books were separated from the collection to serve the voivodeship school founded at the time and located in the same building. Even more regrettably, in the Decree of 1 August 1820 (signed by Fr S. Staszic) the Committee of

Religious Denominations and Public Education of the Kingdom of Poland issued an instruction to have the Seminary Library transferred to Sandomierz, since plans were made to close down the Seminary, the latter decision, however, eventually cancelled following some protests.

It was only in 1823 that Bishop Jan Paweł Woronicz[13] ordered to have the Library collection put in order and catalogued (by then the collection encompassing over 2,000 items), and assigned a librarian to organize the collection. The total number of 2,609 books were divided into sections: 505 dealing with theology, 296 with Canon Law, 231 with Church history, 250 with philosophy, 158 with the Holy Scriptures, 124 with Polish preaching, 108 with French preaching, 54 with Italian preaching, and 213 with Latin preaching (this amounting to 1,939 books, thus with as many as 670 missing!).

In subsequent years reports emphasized the lack of acquisitions, while also pointing to enormous needs in this respect; nonetheless, the collection had increased substantially by 1841 (by as many as 1,300 books) containing the following numbers assigned to respective sections: 215 to the Holy Scriptures; 705 to moral and dogmatic theology + 33 manuscripts, most likely untitled; 336 to Canon Law; 760 to preaching (125 Polish, 108 French, 54 Italian, 40 German, 443 Latin); 376 to asceticism; 319 to philosophy and literature; 65 to grammar, rhetorics, and elocution; 10 to the Church Fathers; 29 to Latin and Polish literature; 29 to liturgy, 180 being priests' legacy; in total amounting to 3,293.[14]

However, in the 19th century the one who contributed most to turning the Seminary Library into an academic and teaching tool was Fr Maciej Majerczak[15], serving first as the Seminary Rector

13 E. Gigilewicz, 'Woronicz Jan Paweł', in: *Encyklopedia katolicka*, vol. 19, 2014, cols. 923–925.

14 T. Wróbel, *Seminarium...*, op. cit., pp. 233–237.

15 Idem, 'Maciej Majerczak', in: PSB, vol. 19, 1974, pp. 168–169; J. Szczepański, 'Sylwetki biskupów krakowskich', in: *Pamiętnik Świętokrzyski. Studia z Dziejów Kultury Chrześcijańskiej*, Kielce 1991, pp. 331–333.

(the 1840s) responsible for the Library, and later as the administrator of the Cracow-Kielce Diocese, to finally become its Bishop (1849–1870). It was thanks to, among others, his commitment that the collection was enriched with the *Patrologiae Cursus Completus* series. Nonetheless, the beginnings were not easy: when becoming the Rector in 1841, Fr Maciej Majerczak is said to have encountered the Library in a bad state: 'Incomplete, scattered, unorderly'. He was immediately instructed to multiply the number of shelves and bookcases; in consequence, he prepared a new room, and having transferred the collection, he organized it to be shared with readers. The major challenge to the Library resulted from the fact that the building once housing the Seminary and the Library had been given to house the voivodeship school already in 1816 when the Apostolic Union of Secular Priests were not allowed to run the lower secondary school any longer. Following the 1830 November Uprising the problem was even more acute. In 1844, a school system reform was introduced, with the school building taken over by a county school; at that point Rector Fr M. Majerczak prepared a three-window room on the first floor of the boarding school, previously referred to as a 'museum', to receive the transferred collection. As of 1844, seminarians supervised by deputy rectors catalogued the collection, the fact observed by Andriej Storożenko, Member of the Council of State of the Kingdom of Poland who expressed his appreciation for the Library and the organization introduced there. On the whole, while serving as the Seminary Rector, Fr M. Majerczak imported many foreign books, having found financing for the purpose; including the cost of arranging the Library premises, he spent over 10,000 zlotys on the purpose.[16]

As of 1864, a characteristic correspondence with the government regarding taking over the libraries of the dissolved monasteries was exchanged, this, regrettably showing that the Seminary Rector was unwilling to take over the books of the Franciscans from Nowy Korczyn and Lelów, the Augustinians from Książ Wielki,

16 T. Wróbel, *Seminarium...*, op. cit., pp. 243–244.

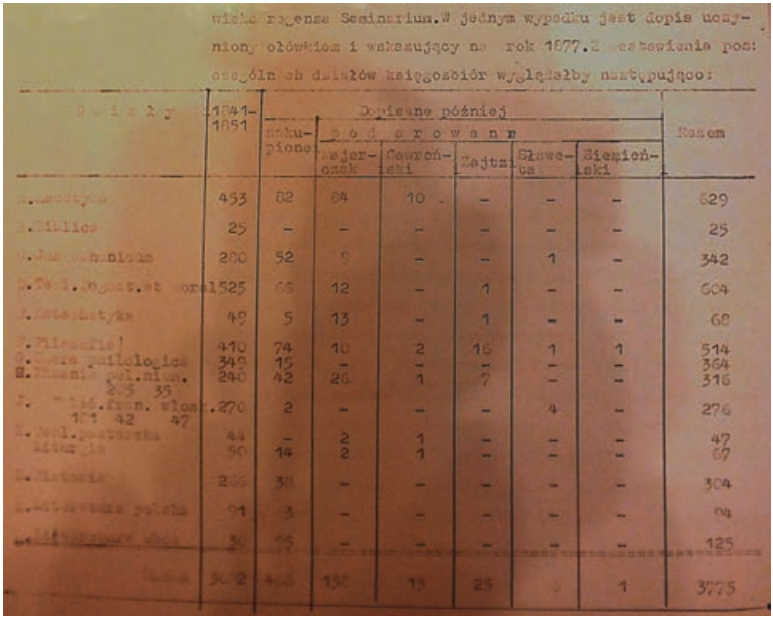
the Wolborz Collegiate, the Bernardines from Karczówka, and of the Pauline Fathers from Leśniów, claiming they were damaged and worthless, adding that he had no room to store them.[17] What is more, having looked through the catalogues, he claimed that it was not worth having these books brought over owing to a high cost; he accepted only the books from Karczówka and partially from Nowy Korczyn (without specifying the actual number). In consequence, he requested the permission from the consistory to have the 'warm-infested' books burnt which the consistory granted.

On the grounds of the catalogue preserved from that time (essentially, based on the additional entries to the catalogue it can be assumed that it reflects the Library's state as of 1872) the Library featured 13 sections, bearing letters from A to X. They were as follows:

- Asceticism 629;
- Biblica 25;
- Canon Law 342;
- Dogmatic and moral theology 604;
- Catechesis 68;
- Philosophy 514;
- Filologica 364;
- Preaching: Polish 285, German 35, Latin 101, French 42, Italian 47 (?= 316+276);
- Pastoral theology: 47;
- Liturgica: 67;
- History: 304;
- Polish literature: 94;
- Foreign literature: 125.

Regrettably, there is no information available in the documentation on the incunabula, although works on the collection from e.g.

17 Ibidem, pp. 250–251. For the Karczówka Bernardines see: P. Kardyś, 'Patrum Bernardinorum Conventus Sancti Caroli Kielcijs ad Bibliothecam. Biblioteka oo. Bernardinów z Karczówki od założenia konwentu do XIX wieku', in: *Dzieje Karczówki w Kielcach w latach 1624–2024*, t. 6, *Biblioteka bernardynów na Karczówce od 1632 roku do kasaty klasztoru w 1864 roku*, ed. J. Michta, Kielce 2019, pp. 13–270.



wiska regensa Seminarium. W jednym wypadku jest dopis uczyniony ołówkiem i wskazujący na rok 1877. Z zestawienia poszczególnych działów księgozbiór wyglądałby następująco:

Działy	1841–1851	Dopisane później						Razem
		zakupione	podarowane					
			Wajerczak	Gawroński	Zajtz	Sławeta	Siemieński	
[illegible]	453	82	84	10	–	–	–	629
[illegible]	25	–	–	–	–	–	–	25
[illegible]	280	52	9	–	–	1	–	342
[illegible]	525	66	12	–	1	–	–	604
[illegible]	49	5	13	–	1	–	–	68
[illegible]	410	74	10	2	16	1	1	514
[illegible]	349	15	–	–	–	–	–	364
[illegible]	240	42	26	1	7	–	–	316
[illegible]	270	2	–	–	–	4	–	276
[illegible]	44	–	2	1	–	–	–	47
[illegible]	50	14	2	1	–	–	–	67
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	–	–	–	–	304
[illegible]	91	3	–	–	–	–	–	94
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	–	–	–	–	–	125
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	15	25	[illegible]	1	3775

FIG. 4. Page from T. Wróbel's typescript distinguishing sections and volume numbers for 1841–1851, BWSDK, Seminarium Duchowne w Kielcach, p. 1, portfolio 1, p. 247

Karczówka, unequivocally demonstrate that such were admitted to the Seminary Library at the time.[18]

The late 19th century yielded new negative consequences for the collection, particularly on part of the Russian administration who sealed off the Library in 1893 as instructed by Governor General Hurk. By 1897 the Library had 'experienced' three searches conducted by the Russian military police, an arson, and fire extinguishing by firemen. The 'theoretical' Russian reform of the Seminary ended up in the situation in which books were scattered around the Library room, and whoever entered was free to take what they wanted.

The situation like this continued until 1905 when works were begun to tidy and catalogue the Library.[19] Finally, so-called 'librar-

18 See: ibidem, passim.

19 T. Wróbel, *Seminarium...*, op. cit., pp. 258–259.

ians' were selected from among the seminarians; they were the most avid readers vitally interested in tidying and inventorying the collection.

Around that time also the remains of the old book collections of the dissolved monasteries were arriving; and so were books left after deceased bishops, as well as legacies of diocesan priests and Kielce canons. Thanks to this in the early 20th century (1907) the collection contained already 5,970 titles. Fortunately, WW I and II did not cause any damage to it, despite some dangerous moments, and the quantitative growth of the collection was substantial throughout the whole 20th century.

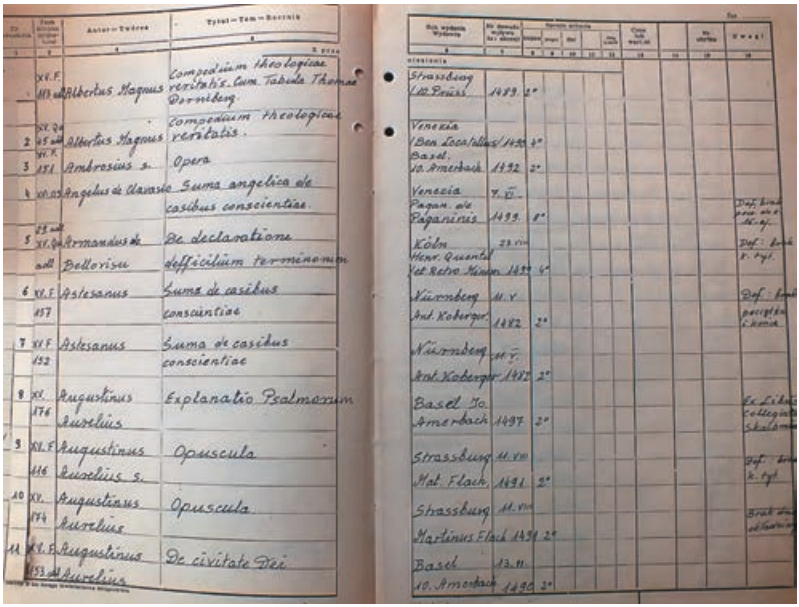


FIG. 5. Fragment (items 1–11) of BWSDK's inventory of incunabula from the 1990s. Photo by P. Kardyś

2. Concise Description of the Collection of Incunabula at the Library of the Higher Theological Seminary in Kielce

The history of research into BWSDK's incunabula goes back to 1963 when the first works on cataloguing all 15th-century books in the Library resources, while also registering their bookplates, were conducted on behalf of the National Library. The registering performed for the needs of IBP[20] asservantur being established at the time was the first attempt at systematizing the knowledge of BWSDK's incunabula, forming the departure point for conducting further and more thorough research. As the result of the work of the team headed by Alodia Kawecka-Gryczowa showed, BWSDK received copies of catalogue records of 104 incunabula.[21] This clearly demonstrating that the to-date history of research into the Library's incunabula brings much catalogue-wise information. The aforementioned elaboration of catalogue cards carried out by A. Kawecka-Gryczowa's team allowed to disseminate much precious bibliographic and typographic information retained in IBP and GW.[22] However, what remains the research recommendation is the attempt at a complex study in view of the collection's provenance and its factual and content analysis. The incunabula as such, or their respective collections[23] contained within the Library collection, have only been dedicated one study. I mean here the paper dealing with the incunabula of medical content.[24] Interestingly, the 1998 catalogue provides information on over 300 manu-

20 *Incunabula quae in bubliothecis Poloniae asservantur*, t. 1, moderante A. Kawecka-Gryczowa, composuerunt M. Bohonos et E. Szandorowska, t. 2, *Addenda. Indices*, moderante A. Kawecka-Gryczowa, composuerunt M. Bohonos, M. Spandowski et E. Szandorowska, Wratislaviae–Varsaviae–Cracoviae 1970–1993.

21 T. Wróbel, *Seminarium*..., pp. 289–290.

22 *Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke*, herausgegeben von der Kommision für den Gesamtkatalog de Wiegendrucke, Bd. 1–11, Leipzig - Stuttgart 1925–2008, https://www.gesamtkatalogderwiegendrucke.de/.

23 When I use the term 'collection' in this particular Library I mean sets of incunabula grouped in view of ownership, provenance, topics, or binding type.

24 P. Kardyś, 'Inkunabuły...', op. cit., pp. 147–170.

scripts, 92 incunabula, and about 10,000 early-printed books.[25] Actually, all the remaining information to be found in the literature on the subject is limited to signalling the basic statistical information or ownership characterization in the context of discussing the Library's collection as a whole in compendia or on the occasion of characterizing respective institutional or private book collections from the Library.[26]

For the moment the Author has personally investigated 124 incunabula[27] which thanks to BWSDK's staff have been identified in the existing Library collection. Importantly, some of them are co-bound, so the number of volumes is lower. As there are at the moment two BWSDK's incunabulum catalogues (one of paper cards and a digitalized one) and two inventories, the necessary move to make a concord between the incunabula identified in personal examination and the items in all the catalogues and inventories had to be made. The oldest card catalogue contains 158 items, of which a majority are co-bound. It is highly likely that this card catalogue at least partially reflects the cards produced in the 1950s by the team studying incunabula and headed by A. Kawecka-Gryczowa,[28] but it also contains catalogue cards produced by librarians or Seminary Rectors responsible for the Library prior to WW II. The next digitalized catalogue available on the desktop computer at BWSDK is the amplest, boasting all the qualities of a modern digitalized catalogue, yet at the moment it is not fully complete. Among the two remaining inventories in the form of A4 format ring binders the earlier one dates to the late 20th century. The other one was

25 See: D. Olszewski, 'Wprowadzenie...', op. cit, pp. 36–38; T. Wróbel, 'Dzieje Seminarium Duchownego w Kielcach na przestrzeni 150 lat', in: *Księga Jubileuszowa 1727–1977. 250 lat Seminarium duchownego w Kielcach*, Kielce 1977, pp. 51–176; *Księga jubileuszu diecezji kieleckiej (1883–1983)*, Kielce 1986; *Skarby Kielc*, ed. H. Witczyk, Kielce 1992; A. Kaleta, 'Powstanie i rozwój Biblioteki wyższego Seminarium Duchownego w Kielcach', *Kielecki Przegląd Diecezjalny* 4, 1998, pp. 335–341.

26 See footnotes 7, 10–12.

27 From 130 listed in inventories; we have been unable to reach 6.

28 This is suggested by the information provided earlier by Fr T. Wróbel claiming that BWSDK had received copies of the catalogue cards produced by the team of the National Library.

started in 2012. Despite certain discrepancies in the recording format, their analysis shows that the Library boasted a common 'cataloguing' tradition.

As an example let us use two oldest Seminary incunabula: *Mammotrectus super Bibliam* by Joannes Marchesinus from 1472 published in Strasbourg by Henrici Ariminensis/Georg Reyser (XV.F.159, item 62 in the old inventory; in the current BWSDK inventory Call No 83/IBP 3585, HC 10522, GW M20806, ISTC im00234000) and *Biblia* from the same year published in Mainz by Peter Schäffer (XV.F.166, item 22 in the old catalogue; in the current BWSDK inventory Call No Inc. 90/IBP 988, GW 4211, ISTC ib00536000).[29]

Inside the catalogues and inventories constructed in such a way there are further divisions, this exemplified by the inventory from

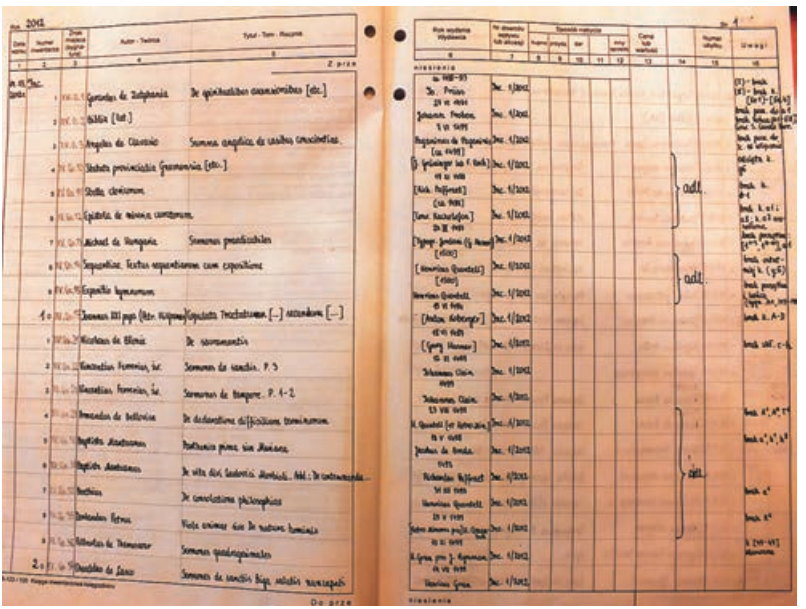


FIG. 6. Fragment (items 1–20) of Inventory of BWSDK's incunabula initiated in 2012. Photo by P. Kardyś

29 Different inventory numbers resulted from different rules for making entries; in the older of the entries into inventory books, the alphabetical order was complied with.

the 1990s.[30] For instance, the incunabula under letter K, with their number standing at 36, actually refer to the number of titles co-bound in 26 volumes which came from the former Chapter library, and which were not as yet BWSDK's 'property', remaining as if out of its integrated book collection. Even in the card catalogue the cards containing the description of the incunabula in question have been kept separately, featuring no alphabetical order. The remaining 94 of them marked with the Roman numeral 'XV' and the letters F, Qu, or Q, as well as Arabic numerals are also co-bound in their majority.

In the 1997 inventory notes reading 'missing' were entered in different handwriting on an ongoing basis next to over twenty items, which were also crossed out at that point, just as it happened in the card catalogue. The most up-to-date inventory in the form of the ring binder, put together and completed by BWSDK's staff, since 2012 has contained only 110 titles, with no information on the incunabula marked with the letter K, thus those from the former Chapter library, as they were entered into this inventory omitting old call numbers, having been given new ones in harmony with IBP, thus following the scheme: Roman numeral 'XV' and letters and Arabic numerals. These incunabula need to be added the incunabulum found at BWSDK during the preliminary research when the Author was studying the library of the Bernardine Fathers from Karczówka near Kielce, added a subsequent Call No which, however, has been included only in the most recent inventory.[31] The above-mentioned remarks concerning the catalogues in use at BWSDK indicate the amount of work required on the part of a researcher of the topic.

A certain compensation for the confusion observed in the card catalogue and the later inventories can be seen in the digitalized catalogue available at BWSDK, and made meticulously, with refer-

30 *Księga inwentarzowa księgozbioru. Inkunabuły*, BWSDK. The inventory starts with the date: 11 September 1997.

31 P. Kardyś, 'Patrum...', op. cit., p. 180.

ences to the major online incunabulum catalogues (*Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke*, *Icunabula Short Title Cataloque*) as well as printed ones by Hain, Coppinger, Reichling, and obviously *Incunabula quae in bibliotecis Poloniae asservantur* (in some exceptional situations also Bodleian Library/Bod-Inc. and Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Inkunabelkatalog/BSB-Inc.), as of 2022 containing merely 86 incunabula. At this point one could possibly claim reference to the online WorldCat currently containing the broadest title database, however, this should not be treated as criticism of the authors of the digitalized version of the BWSDK catalogue. The online BWSDK catalogue contains all the necessary information for a researcher: author and title, place of publication, information on potential illuminations, initials, and rubrications, information on notes and marginalia, endpapers, added leaves, defects, above-mentioned references to catalogues and online databases, basic information on the state of preservation, elements missing, binding type and decoration. One could perhaps consider extending it by including identified watermarks[32] and possibly a more precise deciphering of more extensive notes (provided this is possible owing to the preservation state and paleography), for example, the manuscript prologue 'Officii Misse totiusquae Canonis Expositio' which precedes *Expositio officii missae* by Bernard de Parentis (provided this is possible owing to its preservation state and paleography).[33] However, this is not an *ad meritum* criticism. Therefore the data from the digitalized catalogue and the physical examination of all the incunabula found at BWSDK will be extremely helpful in the study preparing the BWSDK incunabulum catalogue planned for print.[34]

32 For a current model study for catalogued collections of seminary incunabula on the Polish territories see: J. Tondel, *Inkunabuły w zbiorach Biblioteki Wyższego Seminarium Duchownego w Pelplinie*, Pelplin 2007, passim.

33 Bernardus de Parentinis, *Expositio officii missae*, Speyer: I[oannes et] C[onrad] H[ist], 1487, BWSDK Inc. 37/XV.F.112 adl, IBP 4543, H 12416, GW M29413, ISTC ip00111000, leaf 1r.

34 It goes without saying that these works as well as the identification of all the essential details with respect to BWSDK's catalogues and inventories and reaching all the incunabula would not have been possible had it not been for the assistance provided by BWSDK's Director and the Library staff.

LDR *a*: +++++ *b*: n *c*: a *d*: m *e*: + *f*: + *g*: 2 *h*: 2 *i*: +++++ *j*: + *k*: i *l*: + *m*: 4500
001 *a*: WSD_KAN
008 *a*: 130403 *b*: s *c*: 1488 *d*: ++++ *e*: fr+ *f*: ++++ *g*: + *h*: + *i*: ++++ *j*: ! *l*: 0 *n*: 0 *o*: 0 *p*: + *q*: s *r*: + *s*: lat *t*: + *u*: !
040 *a*: WSD_K *c*: WSD_K
100 0. *a*: Pseudo-Petrus de Palude. *0*: n 98009606
245 10 *a*: Sermones Thesauri novi de sanctis.
260 *a*: Strassburg : *b*: Martin Flach, *c*: 1488.
300 *c*: 2º.
500 *a*: Nazwy aut. i druk. wg IBP.
500 *a*: Wg GW online autorstwo nieokreślone.
510 4. *a*: Reichling, *c*: 5425.
510 4. *a*: IBP, *c*: 4371.
510 4. *a*: GW online, *c*: M41806. *u*: http://gesamtkatalogderwiegendrucke.de/docs/M41806.htm
510 4. *a*: ISTC online, *c*: ip00513000. *u*: http://data.cerl.org/istc/ip00513000
530 *a*: Dostępny również w formie elektronicznej.
561 *a*: Anno D[omi]ni 1617 Ego joannes a Przyrow Plebanus in jrządze comparans... [nota na k. a2r]
561 *a*: Ex libris V. Joannis Luskj Plebanus D...ens[is] [nota na k. a2r]
561 *a*: M. Michael Stąporkiewicz PhD Can[onicus] C... Kiel[censis] Semin. [nota na k. a2r]
561 *a*: Ex libris M. Michaelis ... Stąporkiewicz thD Can[oni]ci Kielcen[sis] ... [nota na k. c1r]
563 *a*: Deski, skóra jasna, tłoczenia ślepe. Okł. przednia: w ramie 2 radełka z personifikacją cnót (figurki Caritas, Spe, Fides, Iustitia), w zwierciadle kompozycja złożona z 4 lilii, drobnych kwiatów i słabo widocznej plakiety, tłoczony majuskułą napis: SERMO: THESAVR: NO DE SANCTIS. Okł. tylna: w ramie 2 radełka z personifikacją cnót (figurki Caritas, Spe, Fides, Iustitia), w zwierciadle kompozycja złożona z 4 lilii, drobnych kwiatów, plakiety i liter I P I P. Dwie klamry skórzane z metalowymi okuciami (część. zachowane). Na grzb. biało-niebieska papierowa naklejka z dawną sygn. (3261).
569 *a*: Brak k. a1 oraz b6 (czystej). K. l6 i B4 przedarte.
655 .4 *a*: Kazania *x*: katolicyzm
655 .4 *a*: Inkunabuły
700 1. *a*: Flach, Martin *d*: (14..-1500). *e*: Druk. *0*: n 2010140208
752 *a*: Francja *d*: Strasburg.

856 41 *u*: http://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/0007/bsb00073269/images/
900 0. *a*: Jan z Przyrowa.
900 1. *a*: Luski, Jan.
900 1. *a*: Stąporkiewicz, Michał *d*: (16..-1725).
923 *z*: WSD_K *s*: XV.F.105 *n*: Inc.33
960 *u*: XV.F.105 - Obj. [262] k. Inicjały czerwone, niebieskie. Rubryki. Noty marginalne łac. Na wyklejce okł. przedniej nota: Dum transis effigiem quem cernis honora. Non effigiem, sed quem designat adora oraz dawna sygn. (3261). U góry k. a2r nota biblioteczna: Ex Bibliotheca Semin[arii] Kielcen[sis]. Na k. Q5v rps łac. 2 szp. Proweniencja: Michał Stąporkiewicz był kanonikiem Kapituły Kieleckiej (kanonia kaznodziejska 2 ministerium prebendy Tumlin).

An exemplary description of an incunabulum available in the digitalized catalogue available at BWSDK

Among the more interesting issues connected with the study of incunabula is the question of provenance. Only few of the preserved incunabula have no provenance records noted. This problem essentially applies to strongly defected copies, lacking the first pages traditionally featuring information on book's ownership or information on the subsequent locations of the volume. The provenance of the Kielce incunabula is most often contained in handwritten notes in the classical, well-known schematic and concise form, typical of ecclesiastical institutions, limited to several words, e.g.: *Conventus FF. Recollectorum Kielcensium. . .*; *Iste liber datus est ecclesiae . . .*: *Iste liber Byblie est testamentaliter legatum pro Ecclesia collegiata Kyelcensis . . .*, and others, frequently showing complex history of respective incunabulum's ownership, yet additionally containing substantial information on their owners, showing if they were private individuals.[35]

35 E.g., BWSDK, Call No Inc. 33/XV.F.105, Pseudo-Petrus de Palude, *Sermones Theasuri novi de sanctis*, Strassburg: Martin Flach, 1488: 'Anno D[omi]ni 1617 Ego Joanne a Przyrow Plebanus in Jrządze comparens', folio a2r; 'Ex Libris V[enerabilis] Joannis Dluskj Plebanus D[...]ens[is]', folio a2r; 'M. Michael Stąporkiewicz PHD Can[onicus] C[...] Kiel[censis] Semin[arii]', folio a2r.

However, it is sometimes the case that only external features are the elements permitting identification of earlier owners, meaning inventory stickers, a supralibros, or the binding.[36] This particularly applies to volumes from large catalogued book collections of monastic orders or the Kielce Collegiate Chapter. Importantly, it has to be borne in mind that at least some of the incunabula feature bindings which are definitely later than those they had originally.

It is only exceptionally that we find records informing on the place where the book was purchased, or how much it cost, or how much the binding cost. The notes on purchasing the book may often inform on the 'long duration' of the content of the incunabulum in the career of its owners, as was the case of several co-bound medical texts by Michele Savonarola and Gentilis de Fulgineo[37] or the incunabula which belonged to the Canons of the Kielce Collegiate Chapter.[38] The latter also constitute the richest provenance set (36 incunabula in 26 volumes).[39] At the current stage of research other collections significant as for the number of volumes with preserved provenance that can be distinguished among BWSDK's book collection is that from the former library of the Franciscans from Nowy Korczyn, the Franciscans of Primitive Observance from Pińczów, and of the Bernardines from Piotrkowice. Identifying this is possible thanks to accidental findings when on the bindings in view of the lack of provenance notes we find signatures typical of the aforementioned monastic collections or references to patrons of particular congregations, to the purpose, or the location,

36 As a good example of this let us give the effective search for the Karczówka Bernardines' book collection among around 10,000 early-printed books at BWSDK; it was possible to a great degree thanks to the identification of characteristic inventory stickers from the former Karczówka library. See: P. Kardyś, 'Patrum...', op. cit., passim.

37 See: idem, 'Inkunabuły...', op. cit., pp. 141–170.

38 See: A. Kwaśniewski, 'Księgozbiory...', op. cit., passim; idem, 'Księgozbiór kanonika...', op. cit., passim.

39 Idem, 'Księgozbiór Kapituły Kieleckiej...', op. cit., passim.

e.g.: 'Pro cella Praedicatoris in heremo 1534'[40] or 'Liber Bonaventura monasterio opatouien[sis]'.[41]



FIG. 7. Gilded initial R[elictis], BWSDK, Inc. 34/XV.F.106, *Manuale parochiale sacerdotum*, Leipzig, Conradus Kachelofen 1489, folio 3r

A very superficial topo- and typographic analysis allows to characterize the collection of BWSDK's incunabula as a typical one. What dominates in them are German publishing houses (mainly Strasbourg, Nuremberg, Cologne); among the remaining ones there are numerous books from Venice and Basel. The whole collection contains incunabula in the 2⁰ and 4⁰ formats published in Latin. A number of them feature numerous decorations such as coloured initials; some have preserved gilded initials, similarly as

40 In this particular case it is the Bernardine monastery at Św. Katarzyna, BWSDK, Call No Inc. 39/XV.F.114 adl., Cyprianus [Pseudo], *Opera*, Stuttgart: Typographus „Erwälhlung Maximilians" 1486.

41 The Bernardines from Opatów, BWSDK, Call No Inc. 47/XV.F.122, Bonaventura, Opuscula, Strassburg: Tyopographus Iordani = Georg Husner 1495.

fleurons. Merely a fraction of the incunabula boast genuine 15th-century bindings, and even if so, they are substantially defective, e.g., the aforementioned incunabula of medical content[42]. However, the majority of the preserved bindings are of the 16th-century Renaissance provenance.[43]

3. Conclusions

To recapitulate, let us conclude that the incunabulum collection at BWSDK is on the one hand a collection of incunabula typical of ecclesiastical collections on Polish territories, both in terms of the topics, state of preservation, and of tegumentological and internal features (ornaments, marginalia, provenance) on the

42 The incunabulum binding is made of boards covered with dark-brown leather featuring numerous stampings: of presses and knurl. The upper cover is enclosed within a double frame with floral and animal motifs knurled inside rhombuses and ovals. The central part of the cover is taken by a plaque with numerous stampings of the rue motif. Badly damaged, the bottom cover lacks a part of the board, and the whole has been destroyed by woodworms, the leather has peeled, while the stamping remains unidentifiable, therefore without a full conservation of the volume it is impossible to conduct any bookbinding comparative studies. Both the top and the bottom covers feature three brass corners each with circular buttons (the top cover lacking the top left button, while the bottom cover missing the bottom right one). The central part of the top and bottom cover centres feature preserved rhomboidal plaques with buttons identical with those on the corners, though featuring differently stamped copper sheet than on the corners: the characteristic feature is Gothic letter 'm' stamped centrally in each of the plaque rhombuses. Another element preserved on the top cover are brass fixings of two clasps with the motif of a six-leaf punched rosette on a plant runner; on the bottom cover a fragment of one clasp has been preserved. The whole is sewn with four double cord binds, see: A. Chmiel, 'Introligatorzy cudzoziemscy i zamiejscowi w Krakowie w latach 1574–1646', Exlibris 7, 1929, fasc. 2; J. Dobrowolski, *Zarys dziejów introligatorstwa w Krakowie*, Kraków 1968, passim;, *Inkunabuły Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej*, comp. A. Lewicka-Kamińska, Kraków 1962, passim; A. Lewicka-Kamińska 'Rzut oka na rozwój oprawy książkowej w Krakowie', *Roczniki Biblioteczne* 16, 1972, fascs. 1–2, pp. 49–68; J. Tondel, *Inkunabuły...*, op. cit., pp. 147–177, 549–551; J. S. Van Leeuwen, *The Golden Age of Bookbindings in Cracow 1400–1600*, Kraków 2011, passim; *Katalog inkunabułów Biblioteki Naukowej PAU i PAN w Krakowie*, compiled by T. Dąbrowska, E. Knapek, J. Wojtowicz, Kraków 2015, passim.

43 E.g: St Augustine, *Opuscula*, Strassburg: Martin Flach 11 August 1491, – 2°. Binding: boards, light leather, lack of a part of leather of the bottom cover, stamping, knurls with images of Reformers: M. Luther, P. Melanchthon, J. Hus, and figural ones in the form of heads in medallions encircled in arabesques; traces of two clasps' fastening, BWSDK Inc. 41/XV.F.116.



FIG. 8. Hand-rubricated woodprints, Farinator Mathias, *Lumen animae*, Strassburg, Typogr. Legendae aurae, 1482, BWSDK Inc. 43/XV.F.123

other.[44] Nonetheless, from the perspective of the history of books and book collections on Poland's territory, particularly in the region conventionally referred to in historiography as the land 'between the Vistula and the Pilica Rivers', it is a unique and significant legacy, greatly worth being studied in a form of a book catalogue. In this respect we are of a contradicting opinion to that of IBP's authors considering this book collection of slightly over 100 incunabula as ranking among the least interesting. Importantly, its exceptional value actually stems from the circumstances of its creation, since it was composed of bequests of diocesan clergy, collection fragments reaching it after the dissolution of monasteries,[45] the turbulent history of BWSDK, and a number of other circumstance impossible to identify at this point. Currently, the incunabula kept at BWSDK are deposited in one of the bookcases, however, it is likely that a complete inventory will reveal other missing early-printed books or post-incunabula, as was precisely what happened in the case of the book collection of the Karczówka Bernardines studied by the Author of the present paper.[46]

Translated by Magdalena Iwińska

44 See: *Katalog inkunabułów Biblioteki*, passim; *Catalogue of Incunabula in the National Library of Poland*, vols. 1–2, Warszawa 2021.

45 See: J. Rył, 'Katalog inkunabułów zespołu seminaryjnego Biblioteki Katedralnej w Gnieźnie', *ABMK* 25, 1972, pp. 115–208; J. M. Marszalska, *Katalog inkunabułów Wyższego Seminarium Duchownego w Tarnowie*, Tarnów 1997.

46 See: P. Kardyś, 'Patrum...', op. cit., pp. 139–140, 184.